

AL-MURĀJA'ĀT:
A Shī'i-Sunni
Dialogue

By

Sayyid 'Abdūl Ḥasayn Sharafud-Dīn al-Mūsawwi

Translated from the Arabic by

Yasīn T. al-Jibourī

AL-BAYAN
PUBLICATIONS



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Sharafud-Din Al-Musawi, Abdul Husain, 1873 - 1958

Al-Muraja'at A Shi'i -Sunni Dialogue/ by Abdul Husain Sharafud-Din Al-Musawi; Translated from the Arabic by Yasin T. al-Jibouri.- Qum: Ansariyan, 2008.

520 P.

ISBN: 978-964-438-278-9

Original Title: المراجعات

I. Shi'ia Defense and Answers. 2. Shi'ia beliefs. 3. The Sunnis Defense and Answers. L. Al-Jibouri, Yasin, Tr. II. Title: III. Title: Al-Muraja'at. IV. Title: Al-Muraja'at: A Shi'i Sunni Dialogue.

297.4172

BP212.5

المراجعات (الحوار الشيعي السنّي) بالّلغة الانجليزية

AL-MURAJA'AT: A Shi'i-Sunni Dialogue

Author: Sayyid Abdul-Husain Sharafud-Din al-Musawi

Translated from the Arabic by: Yasin T. al-Jibouri

Publisher: Ansariyan Publications – Qum

Second Reprint 1380-2001-1422

Tired Reprint 1384 – 2005 - 1426

Forth Reprint 1387 – 2008 - 1429

Ofuq Press

Quantity: 2000

No. of Pages: 568

Size: 162 X 229

ISBN: 978-964-438-278-9

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ANSARIYAN PUBLICATIONS

P.O. Box 187

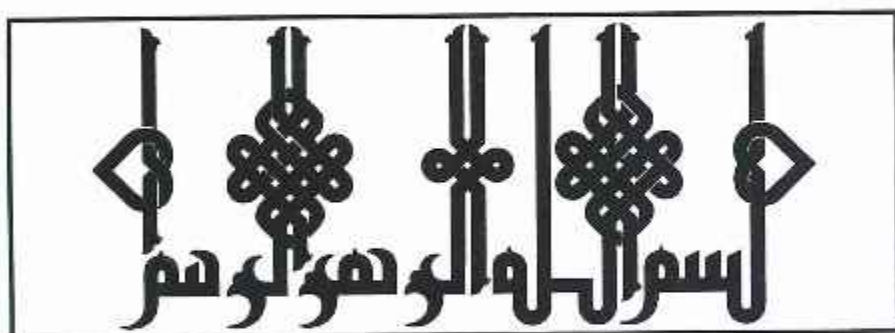
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In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

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In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

This is the fourth book by Yasin T. al-Jibouri, this time as the Translator, which Ansariyan Publications is pleased to publish and market globally through its distributors. The first three books were of his own writing: *Fast of the Month of Ramadan: Philosophy and Ahkam* (168 pages), *Allāh: the Concept of God in Islam* (744 pages), and *Kerbala and Beyond* (331 pages). They all are available with us and with our distributors for sale. We hope there will be many, many more! Since the reader is most likely interested in knowing who the translator of this book is, we would like to state the following:

Al-Jibouri was born on August 14, 1946 in Baghdad, Iraq, and he lived most of his life in the holy city of Kazimain. In 1969, he graduated from the College of Arts, Baghdad University, where he majored in English which he taught at a high school in Babylon (Hilla) then at a vocational institute in al-Ahsa, Saudi Arabia, from which he flew in 1972 to the United States in order to study for his Graduate degree which he earned in 1978. In the Winter of 1973, he founded the Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc. and started in January of 1974 editing and publishing its newsletter *Islamic Affairs* which evolved from a four-page newsletter to a twelve-page bulletin, becoming the most widely circulated Shi'a publication in the United States with readers in all the 50 U.S. States and in 67 countries world-wide.

In 1975, al-Jibouri received instructions to facilitate the entry to the United States of the very first representative of the then Supreme Ayatullāh Abul-Qasim al-Khoei, may Allāh reward him, in North America, namely Shaikh

Muhammed Sarwar of Quetta, Pakistan who, due to the sponsorship of the author, did, indeed, arrive at the U.S. on January 25, 1976; a few days later, the Shaikh became al-Jibouri's room-mate. A few months later, the Shaikh moved from Atlanta to New York where there has been a much larger Shi`a population.

The translator has also edited and revised three English translations of the Holy Qur'an by: 1) S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, 2) A. Yusuf Ali, and 3) M.H. Shakir. He has edited and typeset several newsletters and magazines including *Middle East Business Magazine* of which he became Senior Editor. Among the other books which he edited are: *Socio-Economic Justice with Particular Reference to Nahjul-Balagha* by Dr. S.M. Waseem, and *A Biography of Leaders of Islam* by Sayyid Ali Naqi Naqwi, English translation by Dr. Sayyid Nazir Hasan Zaidi. He also edited 14 pamphlets for the youths titled *The Fourteen Infallibles* which were published in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1419 A.H./1998 A.D. and which were originally written by M.N. Sultan. They are very professionally produced pamphlets that employ pictorial narratives and an easy and flowing style, and they ought to be in the possession of each and every Muslim family raising children and caring for the youths.

The Author has also translated five other books where his name as the Translator was deliberately omitted for selfish reasons; these are: 1) *Best Month, Best Night*; 2) *The Book of Istikhara*; 3) *Weapon of the Prophets*; 4) *Miracles of the Holy Qur'an* and 5) *The Great Names of Allāh*.

So far, the list of the books which he has written includes the following titles in addition to the three listed above arranged chronologically according to their completion but not necessarily the date of publication: 1) *Memoirs of a Shi`a Missionary in America: Two Decades of Da`wah* (his auto-biography which details his experience in Islamic work in the U.S.), 2) *Mary and Jesus in Islam*, 3) *Muhammed: the Prophet and Messenger of Allāh*, 4) *The Ninety-Nine Attributes of Allāh*., and 5) *Ghadir Khumm: Where Islam was*

Perfected, totalling eight.

In 1980, when Imām Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr was martyred, al-Jibouri shifted his attention to politics, putting out several pamphlets, circulars, letters to the news media and two newsletters, *Islamic Revival* and *Rafidain News*. *Islamic Revival* was dedicated to the Islamic liberation movements throughout the Muslim world in general and in Iraq in particular, and it strongly supported the Islamic Revolution in Iran which was being viciously attacked and distorted by the anti-Islamic racist and hateful Jewish Zionist news media in the U.S. Such glorious Revolution has been, indeed, hailed as the most significant event of the past twentieth century.

Our brother al-Jibouri is a well known translator, and he is the very first person ever to translate the works of the Martyr Ayatullāh Sayyid Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr, the greatest economist, philosopher, author and political figure in the modern history of Iraq, such as: *A General Outlook at Rituals* (which was printed in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, in 1979), *Contemporary Man and the Social Problem* (which was also published in Tehran in 1980), *The General Bases of Banking in the Muslim Society* (which was published in Maryland, U.S.A., in 1981), and *What Do You Know About Islamic Economics?* which was published by the Imāmia Center of Lanham, Maryland, U.S.A., in the month of Ramadan 1410 A.H./April 1990 A.D. Al-Jibouri twice published his translation titled *A General Outlook at Rituals* here in the U.S., getting their latest registered with the Library of Congress of Washington, D.C. He also translated and/or published many other titles; among them are: *A Biography of Muhammed Baqir al-Sadr*, *The Form of Islamic Government and Wilayat al-Faqeeh*, *About the World Political Situation from a Muslim's Viewpoint*, and *Our Faith*. The latter work is written by Sayyid Muhammed Husain al-Jalali, a famous scholar, researcher, critic and theologian now living in Chicago, Illinois. Other works he translated are: *A Biography of Imām al-Ridā* (by the late Shaikh Muhammed Jawad Fadlallah; this book was published in the United Kingdom),

Al-Murāja`āt: A Shi`i-Sunni Dialogue (by Sharafud-Deen Sadr ad-Deen al-Mūsawi; the First Edition of this book was published in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1415 A.H./1995 A.D. by Imam Hussain Foundation and had previously been translated and published under the title *The Right Path*), *Shi`as are the Ahl al-Sunnah* (by Dr. Muhammed al-Tijani al-Samawi; this book was published in New York in 1996 in New York by Vantage Press and is available for sale on the Internet from both Amazon Books (www.amazon.com) and from Barnes and Noble Books; its ISBN number is: 0-533-12055-1 and the reader is strongly urged to get his/her own copy of it. Its first copies were sold "like hot cakes;" therefore, Vantage Press had to reprint it, so far, twice. Add to the list *Maqal al-Husain* by the late `Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram, which is so far his greatest translation work. He is now translating *Al-Ihtijaj* by `allāma Abū Mansūr Ahmed ibn `Ali ibn Abū Talib al-Tibrisi, a 6th century A.H. (12th century A.D.) scholar.

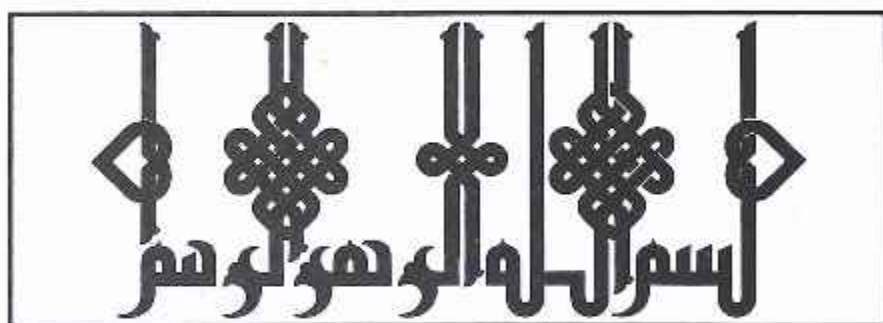
Al-Jibouri has also written numerous essays and articles dealing with various themes. Most of them were published in more than one publication, whereas he circulated the others on his own throughout the U.S. and abroad. Several of his articles were published in *Islamic Monitor*, a fairly short-lived magazine (lived for less than 3 years) which used to be published here in Washington, D.C. A good deal of his writings is available on the Internet mostly on this website: www.al-Islam.org. Among the articles published in *Islamic Monitor* are: "An Interview with Professor Fazlallah Reza" (once chancellor of the University of Tehran, Ambassador at Paris to the United Nation's UNESCO and Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Canada), "Violation of Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia," "Bahrain: A Shameful Human Rights Record," "The Drug Epidemic," and many others. Some of his political writings appeared in *Echo of Islam*, which is published in the Islamic Republic of Iran. His other writings also appeared in magazines such as *Mahjubah* of Tehran and *Ja`fari Observer* of Bombay, India..

Yasin T. al-Jibouri has received recognition from both

Muslims and non-Muslims in the U.S. and abroad. He is discussed in detail by Prof. Larry Poston in his book *Islamic Da`wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (New York, United States, and Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1992; ISBN No. 0-19-507227-8). One of the essays which he wrote and circulated is an extensive, thorough and extremely well researched rebuttal to Samuel P. Huntington's famous article "The Clash of Civilizations?" which appeared in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in the Summer of 1993. His rebuttal is actually a laborious research which exhausted two weeks of his time and many sleepless nights and is dated October 26, 1993. May the Almighty assist us and keep our feet firm on His Right Path, *Assirāt al-Mustaqeem, Allāhomma Āmeen.*

Ansariyan Publications





In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Only a few names of men, who were distinguished for their gifts and genius which lifted them to the highest peaks of recognition, are etched upon the horizons of our Islamic world. Such names, like bright stars, have kept glittering in the depth of the skies.

As for those whose names are portrayed in every horizon of the Islamic world, these, indeed, are even fewer. They are a minority. They are none other than those whom nature has elevated, achieving such rare genius that made them unique throughout all Islamic lands. Among such people is our master-author, may Allāh rest his soul in peace. The Supreme Will has decreed to bless his knowledge and pen, producing from them the best intellectual output. I may not exaggerate if I allow my pen to record this: the master-author is advanced through what he produced to the very front row

of Shī'a scholars. The latter dedicated their entire lives to the service of their religion and school of thought. He, therefore, deservedly occupies the front seat among the Muslim world's contemporary elite.

Within such a limited undertaking, I do not find myself inclined to elaborate on what Sayyid `Abdul-Husayn Sharafuddīn had accomplished in life's spheres and undertakings. The task may have been easier had the author being discussed been someone else. It would have been easier had the author been among those men whose lives and works were limited. But a man whose calibre is as vast as this author makes it very difficult for any writer to describe and be fair to. When the writer stands for such an undertaking, he will surely feel as though he is facing an entire generation reverberating with hues of life, overflowing from all sides and directions. He can hardly refer each hue to its source except through research with full responsibilities of logic and knowledge. This may even be beyond the capacity of trustworthy historians to tackle.

THE AUTHOR:

Birth and Upbringing

Sayyid `Abdul-Husayn Shrafuddīn, may Allah expand his shade, was born in Kazimiyya (north Baghdād, Iraq) in 1290 A.H. for good parents linked to one another by kinship and united through a family-tree of good roots. His father is noble Yousuf son of noble Jawād son of noble Isma`īl. His mother is the virtuous Zahrā daughter of Sayyid Hādi son of Sayyid Muhammad `Ali, ending in a short kinship to Sharafuddīn, one of the renown dignitaries of this good family.

He grew up in a house for which the avenues of scholarly mastership had been paved, whose pillars were erected upon renown dignitaries of good reputation, whose

favour and services are acclaimed and appreciated throughout the Islamic world.

He grew up in that lofty house, nurtured in the gardens of knowledge and ethics, ascending the heights of dignity. When he reached tender adolescence, he became fully acquainted with the causes of goodness, the following of which made him the embodiment of virtue. Upon making his first stride in the scholarly life, he was distinguished by notable accomplishments and achievements. His students and admirers kept him company. He had a reverberating voice in the learning centers of Samarrā and al-Najaf al-Ashraf where he achieved distinction.

Ever since that day, his star had always been shining amidst the circles of knowledge, its light extending far and wide as his knowledge expanded. He advanced his stages until the scholarly life was cultivated for him at the hands of many a genius among the pillars of knowledge in al-Najaf al-Ashraf and Samarrā such as Ṭabaṭabā'i, Khurasāni, Faṭḥ-Allāh al-Aṣfahāni, Shaykh Ḥasan al-Karbalā'i, and many other renown pillars of religion and imāms of knowledge.

At `Āmila

When his maturity received recognition, his star in the circles of research and meetings of debate and learning started shining, he, at thirty-two, went back to the mountain of `Āmil, south Lebanon, dignified, renown, self-satisfied, promising, articulate, glowing in brilliance. The day of his arrival was memorable. `Āmila sent her sons to welcome his arrival, so luminous in lands and skies, welcoming him in demonstrations containing men of scholarship and public leadership, up to the borders of the mountain from Syria's highway, celebrating as though it was `Īd.

His Reforms

A new life started in `Āmila aiming at strict implementation of religion, improvement of manners, the strengthening of right with might, kindness to the weak, the enjoining of right and the forbidding of wrong, comfort with the masters of religion and humbleness towards the men of knowledge.

His Eloquence

His eloquent lectures and terse methods of directives had the largest share in producing the much desired reform. This comes as no surprise when we know that the Sayyid possessed such an eloquence of speech which made him the envy of Arabia's orators. Religion, scholarship and ethics are all proud of him.

He was great, besides his eloquence, in choosing the jewels of his thoughts, the garbs of his opinions which he masterly fitted and organized, breathing life into whatever he desired of arguments, explanations, logic, expositions, additions, and into all his works which are organized through harmony and equilibrium.

His Services

As regarding his contributions to the struggle against foreign colonialism, you may elaborate on these as you please. This undertaking does not allow us to go into such struggle in detail; however, I may summarize it in one statement: His great services during the Turkish regime, then the French occupation, then the post-independence, were simply extensions of the movements of liberation. He raised their level of effectiveness and directed them towards the noble objectives of securing justice and stability, thus bringing fresh hope to the masses. All authorities during these regimes, however, spared no effort to oppose him and undermine his plans through the implementation of whatever plots, persecution and harmful means they could improvise.

The calamities from which this great imam suffered while trying to make his people happy may not have been endured except by the most outstanding Arab chiefs and leaders, those who struggled heroically and suffered a great deal in the process.

I do not need to elaborate on the surprise the occupying French authorities had in store for him when they felt sick and tired of him. They instructed some of their hoodlum hardliners to assassinate him. Ibn al-Hallāj suddenly broke into his house when he, together with members of his family and kin, had none of his supporters around. Allah the Glorious and Sublime willed for him the opposite of their will. He kept their evil away from him, and they retreated in humiliation, stumbling in their failure and shame. As soon as the news of this surprise attack was broadcast in `Amila, crowds rushed to Şūr from each and every direction in order to be under the command of their master as to what to do about that incident. Yet the Sayyid dispersed them after thanking them, advising them to simply overlook it.

This incident was succeeded by many, many other similar ones. The gap became wider, and dissension exploded until, eventually, the Sayyid, together with his kith and kin among the chiefs of `Āmila, had to seek refuge in Damascus which he reached despite the French army's attempt to close the highway in his face. The aggressive authority was chasing him with some of its armed troops in order to forbid him from reaching Damascus. When it lost hope of capturing him, it went back to set his house in Shaḥūr on fire, leaving it in ashes strewn in the air; then it set its hands on his big house in Şūr after allowing the sinful hands to plunder and loot it until they left nothing valuable or otherwise in it. The most damaging in that tragedy was the burning of the Sayyid's library with all its precious books and most distinguished works including nineteen of his own which were still hand-written manuscripts.

Then he travelled to Egypt during the climax of upheavals which inflicted the region. When he arrived there, the Egyptians warmly welcomed him and recognized him in spite of his disguise behind a kaffiyya and iqal, outfits common to the bedouins of the desert. He took in Egypt certain stands which attracted the attention of the elite among the scholars of knowledge, the pillars of literature, and the men of politics, according to the demands of his revered personality.

That was not his first visit to Egypt. Egypt knew him eight years earlier when he visited it at the close of 1329 A.H., staying in it till the year 1330 A.H. during a trip in pursuit of knowledge. He met then with the researchers and master-minds of learned Egyptians. After that, he and Shaykh Salim al-Bishri, the then rector of al-Azhar, met quite often and exchanged discussions dealing with the significant matters of *Kalām* (logic) and *Usūl* (basics of jurisprudence). Among the results of those meetings are the *Murāja`āt* with which we are dealing here.

His Quest for Knowledge

Noting the preface above, you may first get the impression that the social problems surrounding him have diverted his attention from pursuing knowledge and kept him away from literary work. In fact, anyone who is afflicted as our Sayyid was is normally diverted from attainable knowledge and authorship. The problems surrounding him would have indeed limited his chances to look into the library, or to write. But the fact is that his time is blessed, his heart is spacious, and his mind is powerful.

While dealing satisfactorily with the problems which he encountered, he also quenched his thirst for knowledge. He obtained from his library the portion of knowledge his practical life demanded. Ever since leaving al-Najaf al-Ashraf, he continuously kept researching, reading, writing

and debating. During his leisure hours, he daily went to his library in order to find his peace of mind in its subjects and forget whatever busy and exhausting life lay beyond its precincts.

His Works

1) *Al-Murāja`āt* is but a true specimen of his writing, and I cannot tell you enough about it here. His own tongue is, indeed, much more eloquent and outspoken than mine. It was printed at al-`Irfān Press, Ṣaida (Lebanon), in 1355 A.H., and all its copies were immediately sold out. It was translated into Persian, and I have heard that it has been translated into English by Dr. Zayd, an Indian, and also into Urdu.

2) *Al Fuṣūl Al Muhimmah fī Tālīf Al Ummah* ["The Important Chapters in Unifying the Nation"] is one of the best Islamic books which deal with controversial matters regarding which Sunnis and Shī`as dispute in the light of *Kalām*, reason, deduction and analysis. It was finished in 1327 A.H. and was twice printed in Ṣaida, `Āmil mountain. The text of its second edition (1347 A.H.) was increased. In its own subject-matter, *Al Fuṣūl Al-Muhimmah fī Ta'līf Al-Ummah* suffices for an entire library. It contains 192 small size pages.

3) *Ajwibat Masā'il Mūsa Jar-Allah* ["Answers to Mūsa Jār-Allah's Questions"]. Although small in size, this is a magnificent book of tremendous knowledge. As the title suggests, it contains answers to twenty questions put forth by Mūsa Jār-Allah to Shī`a scholars. He thinks they include some embarrassing questions such as why Shī`as consider some Companions *kāfir* and denounce them, and the allegation that Shī`as altered the text of the Qur`ān and made *Jihād* unlawful, and also matters like *Badā'* (change of destiny by Allāh), *mut`a* (temporary marriage), *barā'a* (dissociation from the enemies of Allāh), `awl (a law of inheritance

adopted by the Sunnis), etc. His answers were most authentic, derived from abundant knowledge and based upon proofs and logic, leaving no room for doubt. It has an Introduction about the call for unity and a Conclusion regarding the ignorance of those who raise such issues and propagate such allegations about Shī'a literature, and also of the confusion which exists in some Sunni books. It is in 152 small pages, printed at al-`Irfan Press, Şaida, in 1355 A.H./1936 A.D.

4) *Al Kalimah Al Gharrā' fī Tafdīl al-Zahrā'* ["The Convincing Statement in Preferring al-Zahrā'"]. Its 40 half-size pages have combined with the text of the second edition of *Al Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*. It contains the deepest studies. It is most authentic in style and derivation. It testifies to the overflow of the writer's pen, his fountain-head.

5) *Al Majālis Al Fākirah fī Ma'ātim al-`Itrah Al Tāhirah* ["The Magnificent Commemorative Speeches in Honour of the Purified Progeny"]. The Introduction to this book has already been printed. The total number of its half-size pages is 72. The author explains in it the philosophy of conducting commemorative Husayni ceremonies, and the secrets of the Taff martyrdom are very nicely and precisely explained.

6) *Abu Hurairah*, printed in 1365 A.H. at Al-`Irfan Press, Şaida. It is a new method in authorship and a victory in the world of biographies because of its absorbant analytical style. In its depth and style, it may well be compared with the most respectable works of its category. It deals in the light of knowledge and reason with the life of Abu Hurairah, his time, circumstances, friends, traditions, and the special attention meted to him by the six *sahīh* books which quote his traditions.

7) *Bughyat Al-Raghibīn* ["Quest of the Willing"] is a unique family manuscript tracing the Sharafuddīn family tree and close relatives. It stands as a grand, magnificent and excellent work among the literature of diaries in its own accomplished method of classification. He narrates in it the biographies of some renown master-authors, as well as their times and circumstances. You will, therefore, find it an excellent and interesting literary book, nay, an entire history of generations and dignitaries.

8) *Thabt Al Athbāt fī Silsilat Al Ruwāt* ["The Ultimate Proof in the Chain of Narrators"]. In this book, the author lists his mentors among renown Muslim sects in a sequence which goes back to the Prophet (ص) and Imāms (ع), to works and their authors traced through various numerous avenues. He narrates some of them by way of reading or hearing, or depending on the authority of renown men belonging to the Shī'a Ithna-Asheri or Zaydi creeds, as well as from renown Sunnis. To elaborate on all his methods here will require lengthy details; therefore, I content myself with referring to the contents of *al-Thabt* which was twice printed in Saïda.

He has authored other books not mentioned above such as *Masā'il Khilāfiyya* ["Caliphate-Related Issues"] and *Risāleh Kalāmiyya* [Dissertation in Theological Philosophy (i.e. derived from `ilm al-Kalām)].

His Precious Lost Works

Besides all these immortal jewels, he has written other precious works. Had they not been burnt or shredded during the 1920 raid, they could have been included among the few distinguished treasures of reason and thought. But alas; these were lost during such painful events; therefore, the institute of knowledge has suffered a severe loss. I wish our master's time will extend in order to compensate by bringing them back to life anew. Here we list them as the author does at the

end of his commentary on *Al-Kalemah Al-Gharrā'* (The Precious Word):

1) *Sharḥ Al-Tabṣirah* ["Explicating the *Tabṣirah* Book], i.e. Proofs in *Fiqh* Concerning Enlightening Deductions: They are three bound volumes containing chapters on cleanliness, justice, witness and inheritance.

2) His commentary, in one volume, on the topic of *Istishāb* from Shaykh al-Anṣārī's letters deals with the principles of jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*).

3) *Risāleh fī Munjazāt Al-Marīd* ["Dissertation on A Sick Person's Road to Recovery"] written in a rationalizing approach.

4) *Sabīl Al-Muminīn*, in three volumes, deals with the topic of Imāmate.

5) *Al-Nuṣṣ Al-Jaliyyah* ["The Obvious Texts"] also deals with Imāmate, and it contains forty texts unanimously agreed upon by Muslims in addition to forty others narrated through Shī'a ways polished by analysis and philosophy.

6) *Tanzīl Al-Ayāt Al-Bāhira* ["Revelation of the Dazzling Verses"] also deals with the topic of Imāmate. It is written in one volume based upon one hundred Qur'ānic verses revealed in praise of the holy Imāms (ع) according to *ṣaḥīḥ* books.

7) *Tuḥfatul Muhaddithīn fima Akhrajā `anhū Al-Sittah minal Muḍa`afīn* ["Ornament of the Entertainers from the ḥādīth Regarded by the Authors of the Six (*ṣaḥīḥs*) as `Weak"]. This is a book totally new in its subject-matter, one the like of which has never been written before.

8) *Tuhfatul Ashāb fī Hukm Ahlel-Kitāb* ["The Companions' Ornament in Judging the People of the Book"].

9) *Al-Tharī'a* ("The Pretext") is a book rebutting al-Nabahāni's *Badī'a*.

10) *Al-Majālis Al-Fākhira* ["The Excellent Sessions"] is a four-volume book. Its first volume deals with the Prophet's biography, the second with the biographies of Amīrul-Muminīn, al-Zahrā and al-Ḥasan (ع), the third with the biographies of Imām Husayn (ع), and the fourth with the biographies of the nine Imāms, Allāh's peace be upon all of them.

11) *Mu'allifū Al-Shī'a fī Sadr Al-Islām* ["Shī'a authors at the Dawn of Islam"]. Some of this book's chapters were published in *Al-'Irfan* magazine of Saīda (see *Al-'Irfan*, Vols. 1 & 2).

12) *Bughyatul Fā'iz fī Naql Al-Janā'iz* ["The Winner's Quest in Coffin Bearing"]. Most of this book's text was published in *Al-'Irfan*.

13) *Bughyatul Sā'il `an Lathm Al-Aydi wal Anāmīl* ["Quest of the Inquirer about Hand and Finger Kissing"]. This is a scholarly thesis in literary and intelligent humour containing eighty traditions from our way and the way of others.

14) *Zakāt al-Akhlāq* ["Behavioural Purification"]. *Al-'Irfan* published some of its chapters.

15) *Al-Fawā'id wal Farā'id* ["The Benefits and the Rareties"] is a useful inclusive book.

16) His commentary on Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

17) His commentary on Muslim's *Sahīh*.

18) *Al-Asalīb Al-Badīah fī Rujhān Ma'ātim Al-Shī'a*: [“The Witty Methods in the Propriety of Shī'as' Commemorations”] is a book based on logical and traditional proofs, and it is, in its subject-matter, a new production.

He has written an Introduction, besides these, dealing with different topics some of which were lost while others were resurrected and are yet to be finished.

His books are characterized by keen observation, vast investigation, inclusive research, authentic conclusion, good finish, honest quotations and inter-relation of chapters in qualities which wear the critic out and challenge the mischievous.

His Manners and Gifts

He is very patient, dignified, open-minded, gentle, brave, and highly-respected. He inspires an awe which forces you to respect and love him even if you do not know him.

He does not compromise justice, nor does he admit relaxation or leniency when an effort is exerted to counter injustice or wrong-doing, yet he remains humble, generous, maintaining a pleasant countenance.

Even-handedness has such a position within him that he is fair to both strangers and kin; doing right is his motive and motto.

He is a model of piety, self-ease, clarity of conscience, and the speaking of what is right. Besides, he is wise in his views, far-sighted. He sifts people's temper and reaches the reality and depth of affairs. He cannot be deceived by appearances, nor can he be cheated outrightly. He does not deviate from accuracy nor be tempted into hypocrisy.

These good manners may have contributed to his accomplishments, influence, and true qualifications. He is, then, counted among the most eloquent Arabs when he talks,

the most outspoken when he lectures, the most heart-touching when he preaches, the most efficient in implementing the law, the most fair in judgment and clarity of argument, and he is the most deep in philosophy of life.

His Travels

In 1329/1330, he undertook a scholarly visit of Egypt, as we mentioned above. During that visit he met with the most distinguished intellectuals in Egypt headed by Shaykh Salīm al-Bishri al-Māliki, the then rector of Al-Azhar Mosque. The outcome of meeting him and corresponding with him is this book which suffices to be the sweet fruit of that visit.

By 1338, he made his religio-political migration about which you have learned a short while ago. In it he visited Damascus, Egypt, and Palestine. In all these countries, he reaped the fruits of knowledge and delivered invaluable lectures.

He was the first learned Shī'a to lead the thronged stampeding masses which assembled at the Haram mosque (the Sacred Mosque) in the holy precincts of Mecca for prayers. It was the first time that people in thousands openly prayed behind a Shī'a Imam without resorting to *taqiyya*.

This is why the news of his performing the pilgrimage earned such a great fame that people kept talking about it in all Muslim lands. King Husayn son of `Ali offered him the best welcome, and they met more than once and together washed the Ka`ba.

By the close of 1355 A.H., he visited the Imāms' shrines in Iraq and had a reunion with his family and kinfolk. On the day of his arrival, the Iraqi cabinet ministers, dignitaries, and chiefs, headed by his holiness Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, welcomed him and escorted him the entire distance from Baghdad to Fallūja's bridge in motorcades. At Kerbalā and Najaf, he was met with a magnificent welcome from learned men as well as the general

public. The similitude of that fantastic welcome is indeed rare.

I imagine him saying, when he reached the playgrounds of his childhood and youth:

Tears overcame me when the Tawbad did I see;
And it glorified the Merciful upon seeing me...

It was only natural that he would burst into eager tears because of his anxiety to see such heart-comforting institutes, and the latter would glorify Allah while welcoming him, ecstatic at his arrival after an absence which lasted for many long years.

Had he not left them satisfied? Had they not acclaimed him when he was filling their halls with the best that fills an institute thronged with outstanding students?

Yes, indeed. They both exchanged passion, eagerness, anxiety and greetings. Such a purely spiritual exchange was reciprocated by all elements of goodness and sincerity at Najaf, Kerbalā, Kazimiyya and Samarrā'. There were many merry and colourful celebrations from which time had kept him away and obstructed him from seeing them and their distinguished dignitaries.

His meetings with the distinguished pioneers of knowledge and research were full of benefits in the different scholarly branches of knowledge.

He proceeded travelling from Iraq to Iran. In the latter country, he was blessed by visiting the mausoleum of Imām Rida, peace be upon him. While he was en route, he passed by Qum and Tehran and other Iranian cities. In all of those cities, he was met with all sorts of welcome his beloved personality deserved.

His Legacies and Construction Projects

1) He inaugurated his construction projects with a *waqf* Husayniyya which he built so that people might meet there on different occasions and circumstances to uphold the tenets and receive religious education and spiritual guidance, and also to offer their prayers. Shī'as, when he visited Sur, did not have a mosque there.

2) He erected, in the first stages, six stores at the city's entrance. He had a spacious house built on their rooftops wherein he planned that it would hopefully be converted into the desired school. Unfortunately, the completion of the project was not possible then because of the ruling authority's opposition as well as that of seekers of self-interest who followed its line; therefore, he had to content himself with that portion, waiting for the opportune chance.

3) Over the other side of the building he had a unique club erected which he named Imām Jafar al-Sādiq Club, 22.5 meters long and 15.5 meters wide, which he reserved for celebrations, learning, religious, social and academic occasions. Then he established in 1361 A.H. a school for girls. Like the one for boys, this school implemented a curriculum which promoted the education of useful topics that would secure a more ideal norm of life.

The location of the school and the club is the best in beauty, landscape and spacious openness. The view is the beautiful water, extending endlessly, and if you are tired of the sea and its waves, look in another direction: towards the plains and mountains embracing the villges as far as your eyes can see. Your sight will wander from here to there, active, dazzled, dreaming of that captivating and enchanting beauty of natural scenery, extending in felicity, roaming unobstructed in pleasure and joy.

If you stand by the row of all these huge adjacent buildings, you will see in them a great structure very well put together, strongly erected, inspiring an awe within you because of their engineered beauty and magnificent design. Then your awe will increasingly intensify when you come to know its fertile output which combines both abundance of quantity with goodness of quality.

All of this, in its completion and perfection, is but a seed, considering the ambition of our master-author who purchased to the south of its location a vast tract of land and linked it to the institution in order to complement through it his charitable projects and achieve his Islamic objectives. He hoped that in the end he might lay the foundation of a university that would teach its students the best principles in the widest fields of knowledge. He saw that that way was the best to deal with any imminent danger, to protect the new generation descending from our own to generations which might force it to be an enemy to ours. May Allāh take his hands and lead him to whatever brings forth the well-being of this life and religion and the welfare of Islam and Muslims; praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Universe.

Murtada Āl-Yasīn,
Kazimiyya, Iraq
1365 A.H./1946 A.D.

INTRODUCTION AND FOREWORD

These pages have not been written today, and these thoughts have not been born recently: they have been organized for over quarter of a century; they could have appeared in print sooner barring hostile circumstances and calamities that put strong obstacles in their way. They had, therefore, to remain waiting for a chance to gather whatever limbs they squandered and parts they lost, for the events that delayed their publication did, at the same time, alter their organization.

As for the book's idea, this has long preceded its debates. It shone within my chest ever since my young days just like lightning shining among the clouds, and were boiling in my blood enthusiastically, searching for a straight avenue to stop Muslims at a deadline terminating their chaos and lifting the veil from their vision so that they might look at life more seriously and go back to the roots of their religion as they are enjoined to do. It is only then that they will be able to make their strides to uphold the Rope of Allah all together under the banner which calls unto them to educate themselves and behave as dutiful Brethren strengthening each other.

But the sight of these brethren, who are linked to one another by one principle and one creed, has unfortunately been a violent controversy that gets heated during arguments, just as ignorant folks go to extremes, so much so that it seemed as if controversy in the methods of pursuing knowledge was an etiquette in debating, or a final resort. This, indeed, is enough reason for worry which calls for contemplation. This, indeed, invites grief, agony and sorrow; so, what is the solution? What should be done? These circumstances have been plaguing us for hundreds of years, and these calamities have been endangering us from front and

back, right and left. That is a pen twisted with barrenness once and harmed by greed another; partisanship pushes it once and once it permits itself to yield to emotion, and between this and that there is reason for embarrassment; so, what should we do? What is the solution?

I have been fed up with all this, and grief has filled my heart; therefore, I reached Egypt by the close of 1329 A.H. hoping to achieve my objective. I was inspired by the hope that I would succeed in satisfying at least part of my desire and be in direct contact with someone with whom I might exchange my views. I hoped that by discussing useful advice, Allah might assist us in achieving our objectives in the land of Kināna (Egypt) and cure the persisting disease endangering Muslims with tearing them apart and plaguing their groups with dissension. I have been able, Praise to Allāh, to achieve that goal, for Egypt is a country which plants knowledge and the latter grows in it nurtured by sincerity and submission to the deep-rooted Truth through the power of evidence. This distinguishes Egypt and puts it even above all its other unique distinctions.

There, my circumstances being good, my mind peaceful, my soul delighted, I was lucky enough to come in contact with one of its distinguished renown personalities who possessed a broad mind, gentle manners, throbbing heart, vast knowledge and high honour which he rightly enjoyed due to the quality of his religious leadership.

How good are the spirits men of knowledge are known to have, how acceptable their sayings, and how prophetic their manners! As long as an `alim is so well attired, he will always remain good and prosperous, people will be safe and blessed, and nobody will hesitate to voice his opinion or unveil his thought to him.

That was the renown dignitary and Imām of Egypt, and such were our meetings for which we thanked the Almighty without an end or limit.

I complained to him about my worries, and he complained to me about similar worries and uneasiness, and it was a right hour for both of us to contemplate upon that which would, by the Will of Allāh, unite ourselves and our nation. We have agreed, thereupon, that: both groups, i.e. the Shī'a and the Sunni, are Muslims who indeed follow the right religion of Islam, that they all are in unanimous agreement regarding the Prophet's message, that there is no basic difference among them on fundamental issues which would impair their adherence to the glorious principles of Islam, that there is really no dispute among them about the basic tenets except that which naturally occurs among *mujtahids* regarding some rules because of the latter's derivations from the Book or the Sunnah, the consensus, or the fourth proof, and that this does not in any way justify such a huge gap or bottomless pit. What then caused all of this dispute of which the flashes have been sparkling ever since there were two nouns: "Sunni" and "Shī'a"?

If we scrutinize the Islamic history and discern the beliefs, views and precepts which bred therein, we will come to know that the causing factor for this dissension is agitation for a particular belief, a defense of a theory, or partisanship for an opinion, and that the greatest dispute which has occurred to the nation is the dispute about Imāmate, for there have never been more swords unsheathed because of an Islamic principle as they have been because of Imāmate. The issue of Imāmate, then, has been among the most direct factors causing such a dissension. The various generations that differed among themselves concerning Imāmate became used to being fond of such fanaticism, and such partisanship was created without precautions or care. Had either of these groups looked into the explanations of the other in understanding eyes, not in those of a cursing antagonist, the truth would have then become very clear and morning light could have been noticed by all those who can see.

We have made it incumbent upon us to deal with this issue by looking into the arguments of both groups in order to thoroughly comprehend them, without being motivated by our own personal inclinations derived from environment, habit, or custom. Instead, we must be stripped of all emotions and fanaticism and aim at reaching the truth from its generally acclaimed route, and touch upon it. This may attract the attention of Muslims, bring tranquility of mind with its decided facts from us to them and put, by the Will of Allah, a definite deadlock.

We decided, therefore, that he would present his own question in writing so that I would provide him with my written answer stating the correct conditions and supported them by either reason or authenticated quotations from both groups.

Thus were all of our debates conducted, through the help of Allāh, the Sublime and Mighty. Later on, we wanted to have them published so that we could enjoy the fruits of our labour purely seeking the pleasure of Allāh, the Exalted, the Sublime, but cruel days and overcoming fates discouraged us, and maybe that was, after all, for the best.

I do not claim that these pages are confined to the texts composed then by us, or that any of the forthcoming statements is not written by my own pen. The circumstances that delayed their publication also altered their organization, as we said above. But the sessions concerning the issues we debated are included herein *verbatim* with some necessary additions called forth by counsel and guidance, or they may have been caused by the sequence of discussion without violating our mutual agreement.

I have today the same wish I had yesterday: that this book will cause reform and goodness. If it wins the attention and acceptance of Muslims, then that is a grace from my Lord, and that is what I wish for my labour to accomplish: I want nothing but reform, as much as I can get, and my

success depends upon Allāh; in Him do I trust, and unto Him do I return.

I present my book to each and every man of reason who pursues knowledge, to the keen researcher who is acquainted with the intricate facts concerning the quest for knowledge, and to the learned outspoken scholar whose speech is an authority on the sayings and practices of the Prophet (ﷺ), to the philosopher who has mastered the science of speech, and to each and every educated youth who is free from all chains or shackles, who can be depended upon for the new life of freedom: if all of these accept it, realizing the advantage therein, then I am most pleased.

I have painstakingly produced this book by providing its answers in the best way from all aspects, aiming thereby at inspiring the fair-minded people with its thought and taste with evidences which do not leave out any probability, and arguments which do not permit any loophole. I have paid a special attention to the authentic evident texts and the sayings and practices of the Prophet (ﷺ), a care which has made this book suffice for a library entirely well-equipped with the most precious books on Islamic theology, traditions, biographies, and the like. The latter are all related to this most significant subject. I have applied therein a philosophy which is very well balanced and authentic, and methods which force anyone who is acquainted with such books to walk behind this work while they, I mean the lovers of the truth, are its own followers from its beginning till the last paragraph. If my book, therefore, is accepted by fair-minded readers, then this is exactly what I desire and for which I thank Allāh.

As regarding my own self, I am well satisfied with this book, pleased with my life after it. It is, I believe, a work which must make me forget all that which has made me fed up: life's heavy burdens, the impoverishing worries of time, and the enemy about whom I complain to none but Almighty Allāh; He alone is his Judge and Muḥammad (ﷺ) his

adversary. Forget about the looting called for in its own quarters... I have also endured the calamities pouring like a flood from every direction, bearing woeful presentiments, combined with uneasiness and grief. But my life, which will be immortalized through this book, is one of mercy in this life and the life to come; within it my soul has been pleased and my conscience eased. Therefore, I implore to Allah to take my labour with acceptance and overlook my mistakes and faults; my reward for this book will insha-Allāh be the benefit and guidance of believers.

Those who believe and do good deeds: their Lord guides them through their faith; rivers flow from beneath them in the Gardens of Immortality; their prayer therein is: "Lord! Glory to Thee!" and their greeting has peace therein, and they conclude their prayers with: "All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Qur'ān, 10:9-10)

LETTER 1
Thul Qi`da 6, 1329 A.H.

- I Greeting the Debater,**
II Asking Permission to Debate.

1) Peace and Allāh's mercy and blessings be upon the learned honourable Shaykh `Abdul-Husayn Sharafuddīn Al-Musawi.

I have not been acquainted yet with Shī`as' conscience, nor have I tested their manners, for I have never kept company with any of them, nor come to know the traditions of their folks. But I have always been eager to debate with their renown scholars, anxious to mix with their commoners, in order to sift their trends and attempt to know their inclinations, until Allāh helped me stand by the spacious shore of your ocean of knowledge, and you let me taste of your brimful cup; thus, Allāh helped me quench my thirst. I swear by the city of Allāh's knowledge, your Chosen Grandfather, and by its gate, your pleased ancestor, that I have never tasted anything so satisfying to the thirsty, and so curing to the sick, like your overflowing stream. I used to hear that you, Shī`a folks, prefer to avoid your brethren, the Sunnis, and keep away from them, and that you find your ease in loneliness, resorting to isolation, and so on and so forth. But I have found your person to be gently charming, keen in debating, courteous, strong in argument, well humoured, honest in duel, appreciated in misunderstanding, cherished in competition; therefore, I have found the Shī`a a pleasant fragrance to sit with, and the quest of every man of letters.

2) While standing by the shore of your tumultuous sea, I ask your permission to swim in it and dive deeply in pursuit of its jewels. If you grant me your permission, we will dig deeply for the root causes of particulars and obscurities which have

long been agitating me; if not, it is entirely up to you. In raising my questions, I do not look for a fault or a defect, nor do I oppose, nor refute; instead, I have only one quest: searching for the truth. When truth is manifest, it then deserves to be followed; if not, I am only like one (poet) who said:

We in what we have, and you in what you offer,
Are all satisfied, even when our views differ.

I will, if you permit me, confine my debate with you to two topics: one deals with the sect's Imamate, in its roots and branches,¹ and the other deals with the general Imāmate, i.e. succession to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. My signature at the close of all my debates shall be "S," and let yours be "Sh." In advance, I solicit your forgiveness for every fault, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 2

Thul Qi`da 6, 1329 A.H.

- I Greetings Reciprocated,
- II Permission to Debate Granted.

1) Peace of Allāh be with Maulana Shaykh al-Islam, His mercy and blessings.

Your very kind letter has granted me and bestowed upon me so many graces for which the tongue can hardly thank you enough, nor can it fulfill a portion of its duty even in a lifetime.

You have placed your hopes on me and brought me your request while you yourself are the hope of anyone with a quest, the refuge of whoever seeks refuge. I myself have come to you all the way from Syria in order to relish your knowledge and seek your favours, and I am sure I will leave you strong in optimism except if Allah wills otherwise.

2) You have asked permission to speak up. You have the right to bid and forbid. Say whatever you will: you have the favour; your judgment is final, your verdict fair, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Having sought permission to debate, he starts explaining the debate's subject-matter, thus demonstrating his moral accomplishments and excellence as far as the norm of debate is concerned. The use of the initials "S" and "Sh" is an obviously suitable vehicle for carrying such a debate on, since "S" denotes his name "Salīm" and his being a Sunni, while "Sh" signifies the author's surname "Sharafud-Dīn," and his being a Shī'a.

LETTER 3
Thul Qi`da 7, 1329 A.H.

- I** **Why do Shī`as not Uphold the Majority's Sects?**
II **The Need for Unity,**
III **Unity Achieved Only by Adhering to the**
 Majority's Sects.

1) I ask you now about the reasons why you (Shīas) do not follow the sect of the majority of Muslims, I mean the sect of al-Ash`ari, in determining the principles of the creed, and the four sects in its branches. Muslims agreed to abide by them in each time and clime, unanimously acclaiming their founder's fairness and *ijtihād*, their trustworthiness, piety, renunciation of worldly riches, straightforwardness, good morals and lofty status in knowledge and deeds.

2) How great our need today for unity and uniformity is! This can be achieved through your own adherence to these sects according to the general consensus of Muslims, especially when the religion's enemies have made up their minds to harm us by all possible means. They have set their minds and hearts upon such goals while Muslims are heedless, as if they are overcome by slumber, assisting their enemies against their own selves by letting them split their own ranks and tear their unity apart through partisanship and fanaticism, leaving them disunited, divided, leading each other astray, excommunicating one another; hence, wolves preyed on us while dogs coveted our flesh.

3) Do you see other than what we state here, may Allāh lead your steps to unite our ranks? Tell me, for you will be heard

when you speak and obeyed when you command, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 4
Thul Qi`da 4, 1329 A.H.

- I Juristic Proofs Mandate Adherence to the Sect of
Ahl al-Bayt,**
- II There is No Proof for Mandating Adherence to
the Majority's Sects,**
- III Generations of The First Three Centuries Never
Knew Those Sects,**
- IV Possibility of *Ijtihad*,**
- V Unity can be Achieved by Respecting Ahl
al-Bayt's Sect.**

1) Our adherence, in the principles of the creed, to a sect other than that of al-Ash`ari, and our following in the branches of Islam of a sect other than those four sects, has never been due to partisanship nor fanaticism, nor has it been because of doubting the *ijtihad* of the Imāms of these sects, of their fairmindedness, trustworthiness, integrity, or loftiness in knowledge and deeds.

Juristic proofs, rather, have mandated upon us to follow the sect of the Imāms from the Household of Prophethood, the cradle of the Message, and the place the angels frequent, the abode of revelation and inspiration. We have always, therefore, referred to them in order to comprehend all matters related to the creed's branches and doctrines, in the roots and in the bases of *fiqh*, in the

knowledge of ethics, behaviour, and manners. We have done all this in accordance with the judgment of evidence and proof, following the Sunnah of the Master of Prophets and Messengers, peace of Allāh be upon him and all his progeny.

Had the proofs allowed us to differ from the Imāms of Muḥammad's progeny, or had we been able to achieve nearness to Allāh, Glory to Him, by following others' sects, we would then have followed in the general public's footsteps, asserting the friendship and strengthening the ties of fraternity. On the contrary, positive proofs stand in the believer's way, diverting him from following his own inclinations.

2) Still, the majority cannot prove that their own sect must be preferred over those of others, let alone making it obligatory. We have looked into Muslims' pretexts as one inquiring in depth with keen eyes, but we have found no proof for your argument except what you mentioned of their *ijtihad*, trustworthiness, fair-mindedness and loftiness.

You, however, know that *ijtihad*, trustworthiness, fair-mindedness and loftiness of status are not a monopoly of them only; therefore, how, since the case is as such, can their sects be obligatory by your merely pointing them out?

I do not think that there is anyone who dares to advocate their preference in knowledge or deeds over our Imāms who are the purified *`itra*, the nation's life-boats, the Gate of Salvation, the security against dissension in religion, the flags of its guidance, the descendants of the Messenger of Allāh and his remnant in his nation. He, Allāh's peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "Do not go ahead of them lest you should perish, nor should you lag behind them lest you should perish. Do not teach them, for they are more learned than you." But it is the dictates of politics at the dawn of Islam.

I wonder about your claim that the good previous generations adhered to those sects, finding them the most fair and the best of sects, and that they agreed to adhere to them in every time and clime. You say so as if you do not know that our predecessors, the good past generations that followed the progeny of Muḥammad and that, literally, constituted half the Muslim population, followed only the faith of the Imāms among the descendants of Muḥammad, peace of Allāh be upon him and his progeny. They did not find for it any substitute, and they have been this way ever since the days of `Ali and Fātima, when neither al-Ash`ari nor any Imām of the other four sects, or even their fathers, existed, as you very well know.

3) The generations of the first three centuries, then, never followed any of those sects at all. Where were those sects during those three generations, the best generations ever? Al-Ash`ari was born in 270 A.H. and died in 320 A.H. Ibn Hanbal was born in 164 A.H. and died in 241 A.H. Al-Shāfi`i was born in 150 A.H. and died in 204 A.H. Mālik was born in 95 A.H.¹ and died in 179 A.H. Abu Hanīfah was born in 80 A.H. and died in 150 A.H. Shī`as follow the sect of the Imāms from the Prophet's Household, and the household surely know what their house contains. Non-Shī`as follow the sects of the learned *ṣaḥābah* and *tabi`īn*; so, what makes it "mandatory" on all Muslims, after those three centuries had gone by, to follow those sects instead of the one followed before them? What made them divert their attention from those who were peers only to the Book of Allāh and its own companions, the descendants of the Messenger of Allāh and his trustees, the nation's ark of salvation, the leaders, the security, and the Gate of Salvation?

4) What caused the door of *ijtihād* to be shut in the face of Muslims after it had been kept widely open during the first three centuries other than resorting to reluctance, comfort, laziness, the acceptance of deprivation and the satisfaction with ignorance? Who would permit himself, knowingly or unknowingly, to say that Allāh, Dignity and Glory to Him, has not sent the best of His Messengers and Prophets with the best of His religions and codes, nor has He revealed unto him His best Books and Tablets, judgment and doctrines, nor has He completed His Religion for him and perfected His blessing unto him, nor has He taught him the knowledge of the past and the present, except for the sole purpose that the whole matter would end to the Imams of those sects to monopolize for their own selves? They would then forbid all others from acquiring it from any other source, as if the Islamic faith, in its Book and Sunnah, and in all other signs and testaments, a property of their own, and that they forbade faring with it in any way contrary to their own opinions... Were they the Prophets' heirs, or had Allāh sealed through them the successors and Imams, or taught them the knowledge of the past and the present, and that He bestowed upon them what He had never bestowed upon anybody else among all human beings?

No! They were just like many others, pillars and care-takers of knowledge, ministers and callers. Those who call for knowledge are far above closing its doors against others or forbidding others from reaching it. They never curb the minds, nor confine public attention only to their own selves, nor can they seal people's hearts or make others deaf, blind, dumb, handcuffed, or chained. This can never be attributed to them except as a liar's allegation, and their own statements bear witness to ours.

5) Let us now concentrate on the matter to which you attracted our attention: the unity of Muslims. What I see is that this matter does not depend on Shī`as forsaking their faith, nor the Sunnis forsaking their own. Asking Shī`as to do so without asking others (Sunnis) to do likewise is to prefer without preponderance, or even to favour the less preferable. It is demanding what is beyond one's capacity as it is known from our Introduction.

Yes. Unity and uniformity can be achieved if you release Ahl al-Bayt's sect and view it as you view any of your own sects so that the Shāfi`is, Hanafis, Mālikis and Hanbalis may consider the followers of Ahl al-Bayt just as they consider each other. Only then can the unity of Muslims be achieved, and they will be unified in one fold.

The difference among Sunni sects is not less than it is between the Sunni and Shī`a schools of thought as thousands of books on the principles and branches of the creed of both groups testify; therefore, why have several people among you condemned the Shī`as for differing from the Sunnis? Why have they not, by the same token, condemned the Sunnis for differing from the Shī`as, or even for differing from one another? If sects can be four, why cannot they be five? How come it is alright to have four sects but not five? How can four sects be considered as "unifying" Muslims, and when they increase to five unity is shattered and Muslims are divided unto themselves? I wish when you invited us to "sectarian unity" you also invited the followers of the four sects to the same. The latter will be a lot easier for you and for them. But why have you singled us out for your invitation anyway? Do you find the followers of Ahl al-Bayt breaking the unity while the followers of others unite the hearts and determination eventhough their sects and minds are different, their tastes and inclinations are numerous? I think of you to be

above that, knowing your love for your kinfolk, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹In his biography of Mālik, Ibn Khallikān indicates in his *Al-A`yān* that the man lingered in his mother's womb for almost three years. The same is mentioned by Ibn Qutaybah who includes Mālik among wise sages on page 170 of his book *Al-Ma`ārif*, recounting him on page 198 among men whose mother's pregnancy outlasted the normal period.

LETTER 5
Thul-Qi`da 9, 1329 A.H.

- I Admitting Our Argument,**
II Asking for Detailed Proofs.

1) Your letter has been quite clear, very well arranged, praiseworthy. It is eloquent, powerful in determination, and strong in argument. It spares no attempt to prove that it is not compulsory to follow the majority's sects in the principles and branches of religion, saving no effort to confirm that the doors of *ijtihad* must remain open. Your letter, therefore, is strong in both matters, correct in proving each one of them, and we do not deny your careful research in their respect, your clarification of their obscurities, although we really were not acquainted with them, and our view in their regard is identical to yours.

2) We had asked you about your reason for not accepting the sects followed by the Muslim majority, and your answer was that because of "judicial proofs," whereas you were expected to explain that in detail. Could you please yield now to explaining them with positive proofs from the Book (Qur`ān) or the Sunnah which, as you mentioned, divert the believer from following his own inclinations? Thank you, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 6
Thul-Qi`da 12, 1329 A.H.

- I** **References to Proofs Mandating Following the `Itra,**
- II** **The Commander of the Faithful (ع) Invites to Ahl al-Bayt's Sect,**
- III** **Relevant Statement of Imām Zainul-`Ābidīn.**

You, thanks to Allāh, can be convinced by a mere hint, without the need for an explanation, and you are above doubting the very fact that the purified offspring (*`itra*) are superior to all others. Their case is quite clear: they have surpassed those with qualifications and have distinguished themselves from seemingly equal peers. They have carried from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, the knowledge of the prophets, and from him have they digested secular and religious jurisdictions.

1) The Prophet, hence, has made them equal only to the Glorious Book and set them models of conduct for those endowed with reason, and the ark of safety when hypocrisy with its tumultuous waves overwhelms the security of the nation, safeguarding it against dissension if the tempests of division rage, the Gate of Salvation: whoever enters it is forgiven, and the strong Rope of Allāh which is unbreakable.

2) The Commander of the Faithful is quoted in sermon 86 in *Nahjul-Balāgha* as saying:

“Where are you heading (Qur’ān, 81:26),’ and `where are you straying (Qur’ān, 6:95, 10:34, 35:3, 40:62),’ since the flags are poised up high, the Signs are clear, and the light-house is erected? So, where are you straying? Nay!

How can you be blindfolded while you have among you the household (*‘itra*) of your Prophet? They are the reins of righteousness, the religion's flags, and the tongues of truth; therefore, accord them as you accord the Qur`ān and approach them as thirsty camels approach the water. O people! Take this¹ from the last of the Prophets, Allāh's peace be upon him and his progeny: `whoever among us passes away, he is not really dead, and whoever disintegrates (after dying) from among us does not really disintegrate; therefore, do not say what you do not know, for there is the greatest truth in what you deny. Accept the argument of one against whom you have no argument and it is: `Have I not dealt with you according to the Greatest Weight² (Qur`ān)? Have I not left among you the Lesser Weight (Ahl al-Bayt) and laid firm among you the flags of faith?"

He, peace be upon him, said, in sermon 96 of *Nahjul-Balāgha*, "Behold the Household of your Prophet; emulate their example and follow in their footsteps, for they shall never take you out of guidance, nor shall they ever bring you back into destruction; halt when they halt, and rise when they rise, and do not go ahead of them lest you should stray, nor should you lag behind them lest you should perish." He, peace be upon him, has mentioned them once, as stated in sermon 237 of *Nahjul-Balāghah*, saying: "They are the life of knowledge and the death of ignorance; their forbearance informs you of their knowledge, and their outward appearance informs you of their conscience. Their silence indicates the wisdom of their speech. They neither differ from truth, nor do they differ among themselves about it. They are the pillars of Islam and the gateways to salvation. Through them, justice was achieved and wrong-doing was removed, and its tongue was uprooted. They comprehended the creed with care and concern, not like hearing and reporting, for the `reporters' of knowledge are many indeed, but those who safeguard it are

few." He, peace be upon him, as stated in sermon 153 in *Nahjul-Balāghah*, has also said, "His offspring (*'itra*) is the best, and his family is the best. His tree is the best of trees: it was planted in the sacred place (*Harām*), and it grew like a vine; it has long branches and its fruit is not unattainable."

He, peace be upon him, is quoted in sermon 153 of *Nahjul-Balāghah* saying: "We are the banner, the companions, the trustees and the gates. Houses are not supposed to be approached except through their gates: whoever approaches them otherwise is called a thief," until he said, describing the purified offspring (*'itra*), "They are the vital portions of the Qur'ān, and they are the treasures of the Merciful. They tell the truth when they speak, or when they remain silent; none can speak ahead of them. Therefore, let the forerunner speak the truth to his people, maintaining his reason."

He has said in sermon 146 of *Nahjul-Balāghah*: "You should know that you will never know guidance unless you know who abandons it, nor will you abide by the Book (Qur'ān) unless you know who contradicts it, and you will never uphold it unless you know who has discarded it; so, seek that from those who possess it, for they are the life of knowledge and the death of ignorance. They are the ones whose judgment informs you of their knowledge, their silence of their power of speech, their outer appearance of their inner selves; they neither violate the religion, nor do they differ among themselves about it, while it is among them a truthful witness and a silent speaker."

There are many similarly impressive statements of his, peace be upon him, in this regard; consider this one which is excerpted from sermon 4 in *Nahjul-Balāghah*: "Through us you received guidance in the darkness, ascending the zenith of nobility, and through us you reached the light and dissipated the gloomy night. May the ears that do not listen to the summoner be deafened."³ He is quoted in sermon 104 of

Nahjul-Balāghah saying: "O people! Secure your light from the flame of the lamps of a preacher who follows what he preaches, and drink from a spring cleansed from impurity."

He has also said the following in sermon 108: "We are the tree of Prophethood, the place of the Message, the ones to whom the angels make a pilgrimage, the treasures of knowledge, the springs of wisdom. Our supporter and lover awaits the mercy, while our enemy or antagonist us awaits the wrath."⁴

Among what he has said in this regard is sermon 143 of *Nahjul-Balāghah* wherein he says: "Where are those who claimed to be deeply versed in knowledge other than our own selves? (See also Qur'ān, 3:7 and 4:162). It is a lie and a transgression against us, for Allāh has raised us high while putting them down; He bestowed upon us while depriving them, and He permitted us to enter (in the fortress of knowledge) while turning them out. Through us, guidance is achieved and blindness is removed. Surely the Imams from Quraysh have been planted in Hāshim's loins. Imāmate can never fit anyone else, nor can government either." Then he stated: "But they preferred a speedy gain to a later one, forsaking a pure well to drink from an impure one," up to the end of his statement. He has also said at the conclusion of *khutba* (sermon) 189 of *Nahjul-Balāghah*: "Whoever among you dies on his bed knowing the rights of his Lord and knowing the rights of His Messenger and his family (Ahl al-Bayt) dies as a martyr, and his reward will be incumbent upon Allāh, and he deserves the reward of what good deeds he has intended to do: his own intention will make up for his use of his sword (in *jihad*)."

Also, he, peace be upon him, has said: "We are the virtuous; our descendants are the descendants of Prophets; our party is the party of Allāh, the Sublime, the Glorified, while the transgressing party is the devil's; whoever equates us with our enemy is certainly not of us."⁵

Imām al-Mujtaba Abu Muhammad al-Hasan, the patient, master of the youths of Paradise (ع), has said the following in one of his sermons: "Fear Allāh regarding us, for we are your rulers."⁶

3) Whenever Imām Abu Muhammad, `Ali son of al-Husayn Zainul-`Abidīn, master of those who prostrate in prayer, used to recite this verse of the Almighty: "O ye who believe! Fear Allāh and be with the Truthful," he would make a lengthy invocation to Allāh containing his plea to be included among "the Truthful" to attain the high ranks. He would then count the calamities and innovations of the group that split from the Imams of Faith and the Tree of Prophethood. Then he would say: "Some people went as far as underestimating us, making excuses for the Qur'ānic verses which seem to them to be alike, giving their own interpretation thereof, and casting doubts about the transmitted narrations in our honour," until he would say: "With whom shall people in this nation seek refuge, since the pillars of this creed have been forgotten and the nation has divided upon itself with dissension, each party accusing the other of *kufr*, while Allāh says: `Do not be like those who became divided and disagreed (with each other) even after receiving the Clear Evidences (Qur'ān, 3:104)?' Who can be trusted to convey the Divine proofs and interpret the Judgment other than the peers of the Qur'ān and the descendants of the Imāms of Guidance, the lamps amidst the darkness, those whom Allāh made as His Arguments against His servants? He has never left His creation alone without a Proof. Do you know them or find them except from the branches of the Blessed Tree, the remnant of the Elite from whom Allah has removed all impurity, purifying them with a perfect purification, clearing them from sinning and decreeing their love in His Book?"

That was his own speech, peace be upon him, *verbatim*.⁷ Look into it and into our quotations from the

speech of the Commander of the Faithful; you will find them both representing the Shī'a School of Muslim Thought in this regard very clearly. Consider this much of their speech as a specimen for all such speeches of the Imāms from Ahl al-Bayt. They all are unanimous in this respect, and our *sahīh* books quoting them are *mutawātir* (consecutively reported), and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹He means to say: "Learn this from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny: 'When a member of the Prophet's Household dies, he in reality does not die,' that is, his soul remains shining in the real world. This is also stated by Shaykh Muḥammad `Abdoh and others.

²The Commander of the Faithful (ع) acted upon the Greater Weighty Thing, namely the Holy Qur'an, leaving the Lesser Weighty Things, i.e. both his sons, behind. It is also said that his progeny are the models of conduct for others, as stated by Shaykh Muḥammad `Abdoh and other commentators of *Hahjul Balāghah*.

³In his commentary, Shaykh Muḥammad `Abdoh says: "The `sarār,' pronounced like `saḥāb' and `kitāb,' is the last night of the lunar month during which the moon disappears. The meaning would be: 'You entered into the dawn,' meaning 'You used to live in utter darkness, the darkness of polytheism and misguidance, till you emerged into the light through our guidance and instruction,' a reference to Muḥammad, peace be upon him and his progeny, and his cousin Imām (ع), the one who supported his mission.

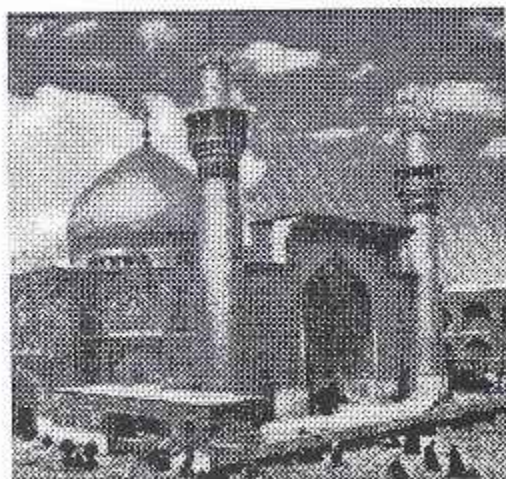
⁴See the conclusion of sermon 105, page 214, Vol. 1, of *Hahjul Balāghah*. Ibn `Abbās has said: "We are members of the Prophet's Household whose homes are the visiting places of the

angels, the Ahl al-Bayt of the Messenger of Allāh, and members of the household of mercy and knowledge.” He is quoted saying so by a group of most reliable Sunni traditionists and as stated at the conclusion of his chapter on the characteristics of Ahl al-Bayt (ع), on page 142 of Ibn Hajar's *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

⁵This statement is quoted by many authors, including Ibn Hajar at the conclusion of his chapter on the characteristics of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) near the conclusion of page 142 of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa* where he makes quite a few lies about them, being grossly unfair to them.

⁶Refer to it at the conclusion of his chapter on the will of the Prophet (ص) in their regard on page 137 of Ibn Hajar's *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

⁷Refer to it on page 90 of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa* where Ibn Hajar explains the meaning of the fifth verse: “And uphold Allāh’s rope all of you together” as one of many others which he explains in Section 1, Chapter 11.



LETTER 7
Thul-Qi`da 13, 1329 A.H.

- I Requesting Proofs from Statements by Allāh and His Messenger,**
II Proofs from Ahl al-Bayt are Circumventive.

1) Bring the proofs from the statements of Allāh and His Messenger bearing witness to the mandatory allegiance to the Imams among the Ahl al-Bayt exclusively, and leave aside what anyone else says in this regard except Allāh and His Messenger.

2) Your Imams' statements cannot serve as arguments against their rivals, and such an argument creates a logical cycle, as you know, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 8
Thul-Qi`da 1329

- I Overlooking Our Previous Statements,**
II Error in Necessity of (Logical) Cycle,
III *Hādīth* of the Two Weighty Things,
IV Its *Tawatur*,
V Non-Adherents to the `Itra Shall Stray,
VI Their Similitude to the ark of Noah, the Gate of Salvation, and the Security Against Religious Dissensions,
VII What is Meant by "Ahl al-Bayt" in this Regard,
VIII Reasons for Similitude to Noah's Ark and the Gate of Salvation.

1) We have not neglected deriving our proofs from the traditions of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him and his progeny. As a matter of fact, we referred to them at the beginning of our letter which clearly stated that following the Imams from Ahl al-Bayt exclusively is mandatory. We did so when we stated that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, had compared them with the Glorious Book, setting them as a model for those endowed with reason, equating them with the ark of salvation, the nation's security, the gate of salvation—all in reference to and quotations from the well-known clear texts in the *sahīh* books. We have also said that you would be satisfied with the hint instead of the details, without the need for further explanations.

2) The statements of our Imāms, then, as we have explained, do fit to be used as an argument against their opponents, and using it as such a manner cannot be regarded as a (vicious) cycle, as you yourself know.

3) Take, for example, the statements of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him and his progeny, to which we referred whereby he struck an awe in the heart of the ignorant, calling upon the indifferent, as quoted by al-Tirmithi and al-Nisā'i from Jābir and they, in turn, are quoted by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi at the beginning of his chapter on those who uphold the Book and the Sunnah in his work *Kanzul-'Ummāl*, Vol. 1, page 44, saying:

“O people! I am leaving with you the Book of Allāh and my household (*‘itra*), my family (my Ahl al-Bayt). As long as you uphold them, you shall never go astray.”

He has also said:

"I have left with you that which, as long as you uphold, you shall never let you stray after me: Allāh's Book, a Rope extending from heavens to earth, and my *'itra*, my Ahl al-Bayt. These twain shall never separate from one another till they reach me by the Pool; therefore, see how you succeed me in faring with them."¹

He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said:

"I am leaving among you two successors: the Book of Allāh, a rope extending from heavens to earth—or between heavens and earth—and my household (*'itra*) from my family (Ahl al-Bayt); they shall never separate from each other until they reach me by the Pool."²

He, peace be upon him and his progeny, also said:

"I am leaving among you the Two Weighty Things: the Book of Allāh and my Ahl al-Bayt; they shall never separate from each other till they reach me at the Pool."³

He, peace be upon him, has said:

"Methinks I am going to be called upon and shall answer the call, and I am leaving among you the Two Weighty Things, the Book of Allāh Almighty and my offspring, my Ahl al-Bayt. The Sublime and omni-Scient has informed me that they shall never part from each other till they reach me by the Pool; so, see how you succeed me in faring with them."⁴

Having returned from the Farewell Pilgrimage, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, camped at Ghadīr Khumm and ordered the area underneath a few huge trees to be swept clean then said in his sermon:

“It seems as if I am going to be called upon and shall answer the call, and I am leaving with you the Two Weighty Things, one of which is greater than the other: the Book of Allāh Almighty, and my Household; so, see how you succeed me in faring with them, for they shall never separate from each other until they reach me at the Pool.”

Then he (ص) added the following:

“Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime, is my Master, and I am the master of every believer.” Having said so, he took `Ali's hand and said: “To whomsoever I have been a master, this `Ali is his master. O Allāh! Befriend whosoever befriends `Ali, and be the enemy of whosoever opposes him, etc.”⁵

`Abdullāh ibn Ḥantab has said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ص) delivered a sermon to us at Al-Juhfa wherein he asked us: ‘Don't I have authority over your own selves more than you yourselves do?’ Attendants there answered: ‘Yes, indeed, O Messenger of Allāh!’ Then he said: ‘I shall then question you about these two: the Qur'ān and my `itra.’”⁶

4) The *ṣahīh* books which deem it mandatory to follow the Two Weighty Things are successive through more than twenty companions who all are in consensus in this regard. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has emphasized these things on numerous occasions: on Ghadīr Khumm's Day, on the `Arafāt day of his Farewell Pilgrimage, after leaving Tāif, from his pulpit in Medīna, and inside his blessed chamber during his sickness, when the room was full of his companions. He said in the latter incident: “O people! I feel I am going to die very soon, and I had previously informed you as my duty, and to leave no excuse for you, that: I am leaving with you the Book of Allāh, the Glorious and Mighty, and my `itra, my Ahl al-Bayt.”

Having finished, he took `Ali's hand and lifted it saying: "This `Ali is with the Qur'ān, and the Qur'ān is with `Ali: they shall never separate from one another till they reach me by the Pool."⁷

A learned group among the majority has admitted the above. Even Ibn Hajar, quoting the tradition of the Two Weighty Things, says, "Be informed, then, that the tradition calling for upholding both of them comes through numerous ways narrated by more than twenty companions." Further he says, "Here a doubt arises about when he said so. Some traditionists say he said so at Arafāt during the Farewell Pilgrimage and others that he said so in Medīna when he was sick, while his room was crammed with his companions. Another group say that he made that statement at the Khumm swamp, and in yet another that he made it, by way of preaching, after having left Tāif as mentioned above." Ibn Hajar furthermore says, "There is no contradiction here, for there is no objection to his repeating it at those places, and at others, out of his own concern for the unassailable Book and the Purified *`itra*," up to the end of his statement.⁸

Suffices the Imams from the Purified *`itra* the fact that their rank with Allāh is similar to that of the Book which falsehood cannot approach from front or from back. This must be sufficient testimony that takes people by the neck and obligates them to abide by their sect. A true Muslim does not accept any substitute for the Book of Allāh; therefore, how can he deviate from the path of those who are its own peers?

5) The gist of his saying "I am leaving unto you that which, as long as you uphold to it, shall never let you stray: the Book of Allāh and my *`itra*" is that anyone who does not uphold both of them spontaneously will eventually stray. This is supported by his saying, peace be upon him and his progeny, in the tradition of the Two Weighty Things, as Tabrāni narrates it, "Do not go ahead of them else you should perish, and do not

teach them for they are more learned than you.” Ibn Hajar has said: “In his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, ‘Do not go ahead of them else you should perish, and do not teach them for they are more learned than you,’ there is proof that whoever among them is elevated to high offices and religious vocations must be preferred over all others,” up to the end of his statement.⁹

6) What makes it compulsory to follow and refer to Ahl al-Bayt is this ḥādīth of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny: “The similitude of my household among you is that of the ark of Noah: whoever embarks upon it is saved, and whoever lags behind it is drowned,”¹⁰ and his statement (ص), “The similitude of my Household among you is that of the ark of Noah: whoever boards it is saved, and whoever lags behind it is drowned. And the similitude of my Household among you is the Gate of the Israelites: whoever enters it is forgiven.”¹¹ Also, consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “The stars protect the inhabitants of earth against drowning, and my Ahl al-Bayt protect my nation against dissension (in religious matters). If a tribe among the Arabs differs (regarding the commandments of Allāh, the High, the Mighty) from them, they will all then differ and become the party of Satan.”¹² This is fully sufficient to oblige the nation to follow them and to protect it against differing from them. I do not think that there is any language of man more clear than this ḥādīth to support my argument.

7) What is meant by his word, peace be upon him and his progeny, “Ahl al-Bayt” (i.e. “Household”) here is their entirety, collectively, as being their Imāms, not merely their entirety inclusively, for this status is nothing but a testimony for the Proofs of Allāh—particularly those who stand for His Commandments—as reason and scholarship would rule. A learned group among the majority has admitted the same,

such as Ibn Hajar in his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa*. Some of them have said that what is probably meant by 'Ahl al-Bayt' who are a security are their own learned men, for they are the ones who are like guiding stars; when lost, inhabitants of the earth will get what they were ominously warned against. Ibn Hajar said: "That will be during the time when al-Mehdi (ع) appears, and the tradition indicates that Jesus will pray behind him, and the anti-Christ will be killed during his time; after that, unusual events will succeed one another," up to the end of his statement which is quoted in the exegesis of verse 7, in Chapter 11, page 91, of *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa*. Somewhere else he indicates that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was asked once: "How would people live after them?" and he answered: "They will live like an ass whose spleen has been broken."¹³

8) You know that likening them with the ark of Noah implies that whoever resorts to them in matters related to the creed, deriving the branches and basics of religion from their virtuous Imams, will certainly be saved from the fire of hell, and whoever lags behind them is like one who seeks shelter during the flood with a mountain so that it may save him from Allāh's destiny, but he will eventually be drowned in water while the first will be hurled in the inferno, may Allah protect us from it.

The reason why they, peace be upon them, are compared to the Gate of Salvation is that Allāh has made that Gate a symbol of humility before His Greatness and submission to His Judgment; therefore, it becomes a reason for forgiveness. This is the reason for the similitude. Ibn Hajar, in the exegesis of Chapter 7 of the Holy Qur'ān, in Chapter 11, page 91, of his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa*, has accepted it while saying, after quoting these and other similar traditions, "The reason for their similitude to the ark is that whoever loves and highly respects them as means of thanking

the One Who gave them honours, following the guidance of their learned men, will be saved from the darkness of dissension, and whoever lags behind it is drowned in the sea of ingratitude and will perish in the paths of tyranny." Then he adds the following: "As to the Gate of Salvation (meaning thereby their similitude thereto), Allah has made entering that gate, which probably was the gate of Shittīm or of Jerusalem, in humility, seeking forgiveness, a reason for salvation, and He (likewise) has made loving Ahl al-Bayt a reason for this nation's salvation."¹⁴ The *ṣahīh* books are consecutive in stating that following Ahl al-Bayt is mandatory especially quoting the purified *ʿitra*. Had I not curbed my pen for fear of boring you, I would have elaborated in detail, but what I have stated here must suffice for the purpose, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
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¹Al-Tirmithi quotes it from Zayd ibn Arqam. It is *ḥādīth* 874 of the *ahādīth* quoted in, on p. 44, Vol. 1, of *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*.

²Imām Ahmed includes it among the *ahādīth* narrated by Zayd ibn Thābit from two sources one of which is stated at the beginning of page 182, and the other at the conclusion of page 189, Vol. 5, and also by Ibn Abu Shaybah, Abu Ya`li, and Ibn Sa`d, from Abu Sa`īd. It is *ḥādīth* 945 on p. 47, Vol. 1, of *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*.

³It is included by al-Hākim on page 148, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*. The author comments thus: "This is one *ḥādīth* the narrators of which are trustworthy according to both Shaykhs, though the latter did not transmit it." Al-Thahbi includes it in his abridged volume of *Al-Mustadrak*, admitting its authenticity due to the endorsement of both Shaykhs.

⁴Included by Imām Aḥmed in the ḥadīth narrated by Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri from two sources one of which is mentioned on page 17, and the other at the end of page 26, Vol. 3, of *Al-Musnad*. It is also quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah, Abū Ya`li, and Ibn Sa`d from Abu Sa`īd. It is ḥadīth 945 as listed in page 47, Vol. 1, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

⁵It is sequentially quoted by al-Hākim from Zayd ibn Arqam on page 109, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*. The author adds: "This ḥadīth is authentic according to both Shaykhs who did not narrate it in its entirety." He quotes it from another source from Zayd ibn Arqam on page 533, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, adding: "This ḥadīth is narrated by reliable narrators, yet they (both Shaykhs) did not publish it themselves." Al-Thahbi has included it in his *Talkhīs*, admitting its authenticity.

⁶Al-Tabrāni has included it, as referred to in Nabḥāni's *Al-Arba`īn*, and in Sayyūṭi's *Ihyā'ul Mayyit*. You are aware of the fact that his *khutba*, peace be upon him and his progeny, was not confined to this much, for nobody who narrates just this much can claim that he had heard it. But politics tied many tongues of traditionists and chained the pens of many writers. In spite of all this, such a drop of the ocean suffices; praise be to Allāh.

⁷Refer to it at the conclusion of Section 2, Chapter 9, of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa* by Ibn Ḥajar, after the forty aḥādīth referred to in that Section on page 57.

⁸Refer to it in the exegesis of the fourth chapter: "And stop them, for they shall be questioned (Qur`ān, 37:24)," which is quoted in Section One, Chapter 11, of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*, at the conclusion of page 89.

⁹Refer to it in the chapter dealing with the Prophet's will on page 135 of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*, then ask him why he preferred to follow al-Ash`ari in the roots of religion, and the four jurists in its branches, and how he came to consider as superior to them in the narration of ḥadīth men like `Umrān ibn Ḥaṭṭān and his likes

among the Kharijites, favouring over them in exegesis Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, the Murji'ite who believes that Allāh has a physical form, and favoured to them in the sciences of ethics, etiquette, conduct, and psychology Ma`rūf and his likes, and how he disregarded the Prophet's own brother and *wali*, the one and only executer of his will, for general caliphate and representation of the Prophet (ص). Then ask him how he came to prefer to the descendants of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, the descendants of cowards. What would one who turns away from the purified progeny of Muḥammad (ص) in all such lofty stations and religious obligations and follows in the footsteps of those who oppose them do with the *ṣaḥīḥs* of the Two Weighty Things and the like? And how can he claim that he is upholding the progeny and embarking upon their Ark and entering through their Gate of Salvation?

¹⁰Al-Hākīm quotes it from Abu Tharr on page 151, Vol. 3, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Mustadrak*.

¹¹Al-Ṭabrānī quotes it in his *Al-Awṣat* from Abu Sa`īd. It is ḥādīth 18 of the 25th *Al-Arba`īn* [forty] aḥādīth of Nabḥānī's *Al-Arba`īn Al-Arba`īn* (the sixteen-hundred aḥādīth), p. 216.

¹²This is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 149, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak* from Ibn `Abbās. Al-Hākīm adds: "This is an authentic ḥādīth though they (both Shaykhs, i.e. Bukhāri and Muslim) did not include it (in their own books)."

¹³Refer to the conclusion of his chapter on the predictions of the holy Prophet (ص) of hard times following his death, near the conclusion of page 143 of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*. We ask Ibn Hajar: "Since this is the status enjoyed by the scholars of Ahl al-Bayt (ع), why do you then turn away from them?"

¹⁴Consider this statement of his, then tell me why he did not follow the guidance of their Imāms in the branches and tenets of the faith, or in the principles and bases of jurisdiction, or in the sciences of the Sunnah and the Book, or in anything related to

ethics, conduct, and etiquette, and why he lagged behind and thus drowned himself in the oceans of those who deny Allah's favours, ruining themselves in the avenues of oppression. May Allah forgive him for telling lies about us and unfairly assaulting our beliefs.

LETTER 9
Thul Qi`da 1329

Requesting More Relevant Texts

Do not curb your pen, and do not worry about boring me. I am all ears listening to you; my chest is wide, and in learning from you, my heart is at ease and soul in peace and tranquility. All the proofs and arguments which you have stated made me even more enthusiastic, thus removing the obstacle of boredom. Send me, therefore, more of your captivating speech and manifestations of wise genius. I find in your speech the quest of the wise, and it is thus more saturating to my heart than crystal-clear cool water; so, let me have more, may Allāh bless your father, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

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LETTER 10
Thul-Qi`da 1329

A Glimpse of Sufficient Texts

If you have been pleased by receiving my letter, and if you have approached it with self-satisfaction, then I have often placed my hope on you for victory and concluded my effort with success. Whoever intends well, adopting a good attitude while being humble, amiable, dignified, crowned with knowledge, well-mannered with patience, is surely worthy of being truthful in what he says and writes, while equity and integrity are in his hand and on his tongue.

It is you to whom I owe my thanks when you asked for more, for who else can be more graceful, kind and humble? In order to grant your quest and cool your eyes, I would like to state the following:

Both al-Ṭabrānī's *Al-Mujma` al-Kabīr* and Rāfi`i's *Musnad*, quoting Ibn `Abbās, state that "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "Let whoever is pleased to live like me and die like me and inhabit Eden's Paradise which my Lord cultivated take `Ali as his master after me, and let him obey whoever he places in charge over him, and let him follow the example of my Ahl al-Bayt after me, for they are my progeny: they are created of my own mould and blessed with my own comprehension and knowledge. Woe unto those who reject them and separate me from them! May Allah never permit them to enjoy my intercession."¹

Al-Maṭīr, al-Bārūdī, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Shahīn, and Ibn Mundah have all quoted Ishaq citing Ziyād ibn Matraf saying: "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh saying: "Whoever wishes to live my life and die my death and enter the Garden which my Lord promised me, the Garden of eternity, then let him take `Ali and his progeny after him as his masters, for they shall never take you out of guidance, nor let you stray."²

Similarly, Zayd ibn Arqam is quoted in one ḥādīth saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "Whoever wishes to live like me and die my death and inhabit the perpetual Garden promised to me by my Lord, let him take `Ali as his master, for he shall never get you out of guidance, nor shall he let you stray."³

Also, consider this tradition narrated by `Ammār ibn Yāsīr: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "I admonish whoever believed in me and held me truthful to accept the government of `Ali ibn Abu Ṭālib, for whoever accepts him as the ruler accepts me as such, and whoever loves him loves me too, and whoever loves me loves Allāh. Whoever hates him hates me, and whoever hates me hates Allāh, the Sublime, the Almighty."⁴ `Ammār quotes others stating this ḥādīth: "O Lord! Whoever believed in me and held me truthful, let him take `Ali as his master, for his government is also mine, and mine is that of the Almighty Allāh."⁵

He, peace be upon him and his progeny, once delivered a sermon wherein he said: "O people! Favours, honours, prestige and government are for the Messenger of Allāh and his progeny; therefore, let no falsehood divert you."⁶ He, peace be upon him and his progeny said: "In every generation of my nation there are members of my Household who equal only my own self and who safeguard this religion from the distortion of wrong-doers and the interpretation of the ignorant. Be informed that your Imams are your deputies to Allāh; so, see who you send to Him as your deputies."⁷ He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said: "Do not go ahead of them else you should perish, nor should you lag behind them else you should perish. Do not teach them, for they are more learned than you."⁸ He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "Consider my Ahl al-Bayt among you as you consider the head of the body, and the eyes in the head, for the head is guided by the eyes."⁹ He, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Uphold loving us, we Ahl al-Bayt, for whoever faces Allāh loving us shall enter Paradise through our intercession. I swear by the One in Whose Hands my soul is placed that the good deeds of a believer shall never avail him except through recognizing our rights."¹⁰ And he has also said: "The knowledge of the progeny of Muḥammad brings salvation from the Fire, and loving Ahl al-Bayt is walking on the Straight Path. Allegiance to the progeny of Muḥammad is a security against the torture."¹¹ He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "The feet of any servant of Allāh shall never move on the Day of Judgment unless he is asked about four things: how he spent his life, what he wore his body out for, how he made and spent his wealth, and about loving us, we Ahl al-Bayt."¹²

He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "If a man stands in prayer between the Rukn and Maqām, hating Muḥammad's progeny, he shall still enter Hellfire."¹³ He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said: "Whoever dies because of his love for the progeny of Muḥammad dies a martyr. Whoever dies because of loving the progeny of

Muhammad dies as a believer of a perfect faith. Whoever dies for loving Muhammad's children will be given the glad tiding of entering Paradise by the angel of death, then by Munkir and Nakir. Whoever dies for loving Muhammad's descendants will be taken to Paradise like a bride taken to her groom's house. Whoever dies loving Muhammad's progeny will have two doors in his grave overlooking Paradise. Allāh will make the grave of whoever dies for loving Muhammad's children a visiting place for the angels of mercy. Whoever dies for loving Muhammad's progeny dies adhering to the Sunnah and consensus. Whoever dies hating Muhammad's progeny will come on the Day of Judgment with this inscribed between his eyes: "He should despair of Allāh's mercy," up to the end of his unmatched sermon,¹⁴ the sermon whereby he, peace be upon him and his progeny, intended to divert the inclinations and whims.

The implication is that all these traditions are unanimously agreed upon, especially those narrated through the authority of the purified *itira*. Their status would not have been confirmed had they not been the obvious Proofs of Allah and the fountainhead of His Jurisprudence, the obvious Proofs of Allāh, the fountainhead of His Jurisprudence, the ones who represent the Messenger of Allāh in bidding or forbidding, his own deputies in the most clear terms. Whoever loves them, therefore, is also a lover of Allāh and His Messenger, and whoever hates them is an enemy of Allāh and His Messenger. He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "None loves us except a God-fearing and sincere believer, and none hates us except a hypocritical wretch."¹⁵ It is for these reasons that al-Farazdaq, the poet, has said these verses in their praise:

You are ones loving whom is belief, hating an abomination;

Nearness to you is indeed a rescue and a salvation.

If the pious ones are counted, you will be their Imams; it is true.

If one asks: "Who are the best of man?" the answer will be you.

The Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, used to say:

"I and the virtuous among my descendants are the best in manners when young, and the most learned when old. Through us does Allāh obliterate lies, and through us does He turn the wild fox's teeth ineffective. Through us does Allāh cure your barrenness, and through us does He emancipate you. Through us does Allah begin and conclude."¹⁶

Suffices us a reason for preferring them over others the fact that Allāh, the Sublime, the Almighty, has preferred them over all others, making sending prayers unto them part of the obligatory prayers, albeit if the one saying his prayer were a *Ṣiddīq* or *Farūq*, with one light, or two, or with numerous lights. Nay! Everyone who worships Allāh by performing His obligations also worships Him while doing so by sending blessings unto them, just as he worships Him when testifying through the two parts of the *Shahāda*. This, indeed, is a status before which the nation's heads were lowered, and in front of which the eyes of whoever you mentioned of the imāms have submitted. Imām al-Shāfi'i, may Allāh be pleased with him, has said:¹⁷

O Household of Allāh's Messenger! Loving you is an obligation
 Which Allāh has enforced in His Honored Revelation;
 Suffices you a great honour if one sends no prayer unto
 you all,
 It will be as though he did not say his prayers at all.

Let us now be satisfied with this much of the sacred Sunnah in testimony to the fact that following their Sunnah is compulsory; so is emulating them. In the Book of Allāh Almighty, the Sublime and the omni-Potent, there are clear verses which make that, too, compulsory. It is to such verses that we would like to attract your aware conscience and sensitive reason. You can be satisfied with an indicative hint,

and a signal suffices to attract your attention; all praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all the world.

Sincerely,

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¹This *ḥādīth*, *verbatim*, is *ḥādīth* 3819 of the ones included on page 217, Vol. 6 of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*. He also quotes it in *Muntakhab al-Kanz*; so, refer to the latter's text at the beginning of the footnote on page 94 of Vol. 5 of Ahmed's *Musnad*, although the author states: "They were endowed with my comprehension," rather than "comprehension and knowledge." The copier may have committed a mistake. Al-Hāfīz Abu Na`īm, in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā`*, has also quoted it, and he in turn is quoted by the Mu`tazilite scholar on page 450, Vol. 2, of his commentary on *Nahjul Balāghah*, Egyptian edition. He also quoted something similar on page 449 from Abu `Abdullah Ahmed ibn Hanbal in both his *Musnad* and his book titled *Manāqib `Ali ibn Abu Tālib* (ع).

²This *ḥādīth* is number 2578 of the ones quoted in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, Vol. 6, page 155. It is also quoted by *Muntakhab al-Kanz*; so, refer to the latter and read the last line of the footnote on page 32, Vol. 5, that quotes Ahmed's *Musnad*. It is also quoted by Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalāni abridged in the biography of Ziyād ibn Mutraf in Part One of his *Isāba*, then he adds: "This *ḥādīth* is quoted by Yahya ibn Ya`li al-Muḥārbi, a weak traditionist." This is strange coming from al-`Asqalāni, for Yahya ibn Ya`li, according to the consensus of scholars of *ḥādīth*, is quite trustworthy. In his *Sahīh*, al-Bukhārī quotes his *ahādīth* related to the Hudaibiya treaty. He taught *ḥādīth* to Muslim Ghaylān ibn Jāmi`. Moreover, al-Thahbi, in his *Mīzān*, takes the man's integrity for granted, and so do many authorities held reliable by both Shaykhs as well as by others.

³This is quoted by al-Hākīm at the end of page 128, Vol. 3, of his authentic book *Al-Mustadrak*. He adds the following: "The narrators of this *ḥādīth* are all trustworthy, and they (both Shaykhs) did not quote it." It is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Al-Jāmi` al-Kabīr*, and by Abu Na`īm in his book dealing with the

excellences of the *ṣahābah*. It is ḥadīth 2577 of the ones included in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* on page 155, Vol. 6. The author also quotes it in his *Muntakhab al-Kanz*; so, refer to the footnote on page 32, Vol. 5, of the *Musnad*.

⁴Al-Tabrāni has quoted it in his *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*, and so has Ibn 'Asākir in his history book, and it is ḥadīth 2571 of the ones included in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* at the end of page 154, Vol. 6.

⁵Al-Tabrāni has quoted it in his *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr* as narrated by Muḥammad ibn Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Umayr ibn Yāsir who quotes his father citing his grandfather 'Ammār. It is ḥadīth 2576 of the ones included in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, page 155, Vol. 6. It is also quoted in *Muntakhab al-Kanz*.

⁶It is narrated by Abul Shaykh in a lengthy ḥadīth and transmitted by Ibn Hajar at the end of *maqṣad* 4 of his *Maqāsid* while explaining, on page 105 of his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, the verse enjoining kindness to the Prophet's kin after having scrutinized it, and in the supreme *maqṣad* of his book *Ghayat Al-Marām*. Do not overlook his statement: "Do not accompany the wrong-doers."

⁷This is quoted by al-Malla in his *Ṣirāt*, as in Ibn Hajar's explanation of the verse "And follow in their footsteps, for they shall be questioned" in his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, page 90, suggests.

⁸This is quoted by al-Tabrāni who discusses the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things, and he is quoted by Ibn Hajar when the latter explains the meaning of this verse of Chapter Four: "And follow in their foot steps, for they shall be questioned," a verse which he discusses in Chapter 11 of *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, page 89.

⁹This is quoted by a group of authors of books of traditions from Abu Tharr, and it is transmitted by Imām al-Ṣabbān while enumerating the excellences of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) in his work *Is'āf al-Raghibīn*, and by Shaykh Yusuf al-Nabhāni on page 31 of *Al-Sharaf al-Mu'abbad*, and by many other authorities. It is a text

which enforces their leadership and implies that guidance to righteousness can be attained only through them.

¹⁰This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Al-Awsat* as transmitted by al-Sayyūti in his *Ihyā`ul Mayyit*; by al-Nabhāni in his Forty Forty [ahādīth]; by Ibn Hajar in his chapter discussing enjoining their love in *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, in addition to many other renown authorities; so, consider his statement: "Nobody's good deeds will avail him unless he is mindful of our rights," then tell me what these rights are, the ones that are considered by Allāh as prerequisites to the acceptance of good deeds. Is it not obeying them and attaining Allāh's Pleasure through following their RIGHT PATH? What is the commandment to which both Prophethood and caliphate attach such a great significance? But we have simply been inflicted by people who do not contemplate; so, "We are Allāh's, and unto Him is our return."

¹¹This is quoted by the judge `Iyāz in a chapter explaining the fact that to venerate the Prophet (ص) and be worthy of pleasing him is to please his progeny and descendants, as indicated at the beginning of page 40, Part Two, of the book titled *Al-Shifā`* which was printed in Istanbul in 1328 A.H. You know that "knowing" them in this text does not mean just knowing their names and persons, and that they are kin of the Messenger of Allāh, for even Abu Jahal and Abu Lahab knew all of that, but it means recognizing the fact that they are the authorities after the Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, as he himself has said: "Whoever dies not knowing the Imām of his time surely dies the death of *Jahiliyya*," and the meaning of loving them and their *wilāyat* is the love and *wilāyat* that are obligatory upon "those who follow righteousness," i.e. the Imāms of Truth, a fact that is quite obvious.

¹²This is so due to the fact that Allāh has granted them a special status which requires obedience to them. Loving them as such is rewardable. This ḥadīth is quoted by al-Tabrāni from Ibn `Abbās, and it is transmitted by al-Sayyūti in his *Ihyā`ul Mayyit*, and by al-Nabhāni in his *Al-Arba`m*, besides many other renown authorities.

¹³This is quoted by al-Tabrāni and al-Hākīm, and it also exists in Nabhāni's *Al-Arba`m*, in Sayyūti's *Ihyā'ul Mayyit* and in others. This ḥadīth is akin to his saying, peace be upon him and his progeny, as in one ḥadīth which you have already heard, "By the One in Whose Hands my life is, nobody's good deeds will be of any avail without recognizing our right." If hating them is not hating Allāh and His Messenger, the good deeds of those who hate them would not have been rendered vain even if they spend their life between the Rukn and the Maqām [of Ibrahīm, as] praying and supplicating; even then, they would not have enjoyed such a status. Al-Hākīm and Ibn Hayyān, in his *ṣahīh*, as stated in Nabhāni's *Al-Arba`m Arba`m* and Sayyūti's *Ihyā'ul Mayyit*, from Imām al-Hasan, the Prophet's grandson, who said to Mu`āwiyah ibn Khadij once: "Beware of hating us, we Ahl al-Bayt (ع), for the Messenger of Allāh has said: 'Whoever hates or envies us would be pushed away from the Pool [Kawthar] with whips of fire.'" The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, delivered a sermon once and said: "O People! Anyone who hates us, we Ahl al-Bayt (ع), will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment as a Jew." This ḥadīth is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Al-Awṣat* as stated in al-Sayyūti's *Ihyā'ul Mayyit* and Nabhāni's *Al-Arba`m Arba`m* and in other books.

¹⁴This is quoted by Imam al-Tha`labi in his explanation of the verse enjoining the love of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) in *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* from Jarīr ibn `Abdullah al-Bijli from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. Al-Zamakhshari takes its authenticity for granted in his own exegesis of the same verse in his book *Al-Kashshāf*; so, refer to it.

¹⁵Al-Malla has recorded it in the second *maqsad* of Chapter 14 of the Holy Qur'an in his own Chapter 11 of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*.

¹⁶This is quoted by `Abdul-Ghani ibn Sa`d in his *Eizah al-Ishkāl*. It is ḥadīth 6050 of the ones included in *Kanz al-Ummāl* at the end of page 396, Vol. 6.

¹⁷These two couplets of al-Shafī'i are very well-known and in wide circulation. Many trustworthy authorities have taken this

fact for granted, indicating that he is the one who has composed them. Among them are: Ibn Hajar, who quotes them while explaining the verse "Allāh and His angels send prayers unto the Prophet (ص)," on page 88 of his *Al-Sawāiq al-Muhriqa*; al-Nabhāni on page 99 of his *Al-Sharaf al-Mu'abbad*, Imam Abu Bakr ibn Shihabud-Dīn in his *Rashfatul Šādi*, and by many others.

LETTER 11
Thul-Qi`da 1329

- I Admiring Our Clear Texts,**
II Wondering at Compromising Them With the
Majority's Beliefs,
III Asking for Clear Signs from the Book.

1) I have been honoured to receive your highly-esteemed letter which I found to be authentic in its mainstream, comprehensible. You have filled your bucket to the brim. The flood of your eloquence has surmounted the highest peaks. I have scrutinized your letter very carefully, and I have found you to be far in vision, firm, strong in argument, outspoken.

2) Having deeply considered your argument and dug deep into your proofs, I found myself in a very dangerous situation: When I look into your proofs, I find them convincing. When I consider your explanations, I find them indicative. When I look at the Imāms of the Purified `itra, I find Allāh and His Messenger commending their status, highlighting its greatness and prestige. Then when I look at the majority of Muslims, who represent most of this nation, I find them differing from Ahl al-Bayt, contrary to the obligation of those proofs. Now I find myself to be split in two parts: one part of me yielding to the proofs, while the other seeking refuge with the majority of Muslims. I have submitted the first to you to lead: it is tame in your hands, while the other stubbornly rejects you.

3) Could you please, therefore, overcome the latter's stubbornness with convincing proofs from the Book which could curb it and divert it from yielding to the common beliefs? Peace be with you.

Sincerely,
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LETTER 12

Thul-Qida 1329

Qur'ānic Proofs

You, praise to Allāh, have studied the Book thoroughly, becoming acquainted with both its obvious and implied meanings. Has there been anyone praised therein like the Purified *`itra*? Have its perfect verses described any as “purified from all uncleanness”¹ other than them? Has the verse of Purification been revealed in honour of anyone else?² Has the perfect Revelation commanded love for any others?³ Has Gabriel brought the verse of Mubahala in praise of anyone else?⁴

Has “Hal Ata” been revealed in praise of others? No! I swear

By the Lord Who rightly used it for them, Who is right and fair.⁵

Are they not “Allāh's Rope” concerning whom He has said: “Hold together to Allāh's Rope and do not be divided (Qur'an, 3:103)”⁶? And “the truthful” concerning whom He has said: “Be ye all with the Truthful (Qur'ān, 9:119);”⁷ “Allāh's path” about which He has said: “Do not follow different paths else they should divert you from Allāh's path (Qur'ān, 6:153),”⁸ the ones “entrusted with authority among you (Qur'an, 4:59),”⁹ the “custodians of Revelation” about whom He says: “Ask the custodians of Revelation when you do not know (Qur'ān, 21:7),”¹⁰ the believers about whom He says: “Whoever differs from the Messenger, after guidance has been made clear to him, following paths other than those of the Believers, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen and place him in Hell, what an evil refuge (Qur'ān, 4:115),”¹¹ and the “guides” about whom He says: “You are a warner, and for each nation there is a guide”¹² Are they not among those upon whom Allāh has showered His blessings and to whom He has referred in the Fātiḥa and the Glorious Qur'ān saying “Guide

us unto the Right Path, the Path of those whom You have blessed,"¹³ and He has also said: "These are with those whom Allāh has blessed from among the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous (Qur'ān, 4:69)"¹⁴

Has He not granted them the general authority? Has He not confined it only to them after the Prophet? Read: "Your Master is Allāh and His Messenger and the Believers who uphold prayers and pay *zakat* even while prostrating; whoever takes for Master Allāh and His Messenger and the Believers, then the Party of Allāh are indeed the victorious (Qur'ān, 5:58)."¹⁵ Has He not made salvation for those who repent and do good deeds dependent upon accepting their guided authority, saying: "I am most Forgiving for those who repent, believe, do good deeds, and received guidance (Qur'ān, 20:82)"¹⁶? Isn't their *wilāyat* part of the "trust" about which the Almighty says: "We offered the trust unto the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, but they all refused to bear it out of extreme fear, then man bore it: he is most unjust, most ignorant (Qur'ān, 33:72)"¹⁷

Have they not been the "peace" wherein Allāh has commanded everyone to enter, saying, "O ye who believe! Enter in peace all of you, and do not follow the steps of Satan (Qur'ān, 2:208)"¹⁸. Are they not the "blessing" concerning whom Allāh the Sublime has said, "You will be questioned on that Day about the Blessing (Qur'ān, 102:8)"¹⁹? Has not the Messenger of Allāh (ص) been commanded to convey all of this? Has Allāh not emphasized conveying it in such a language which sounded like threatening, saying, "O Messenger! Convey that which has been revealed unto you, and if you do not do it, then you have not really conveyed His Message at all, and Allāh shall protect you from (mischievous) people (Qur'ān, 5:70)"²⁰ Has not the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, conveyed it on the Ghadīr Day, having reached its plains and delivered the Message, whereupon Allāh revealed this congratulating verse: "Today have I completed your religion

for you, perfected My blessing unto you, and accepted Islam as your religion (Qur`ān, 5:4)”?²¹

Have you noticed what your Lord did with the person who openly denied their authority saying, “O Allāh! If this Message is truly from Thee, then let stones fall upon us²² like rain from the skies, or cause a severe torment to befall upon us”? Allāh hurled a Sijjīl stone at him as He had done with the Fellows of the Elephant. He revealed these verses on that occasion: “A person questioned about a penalty to befall the unbelievers which cannot be warded off: (a penalty) from Allāh, Lord of the Ways of Ascent (Qur`ān, 70:1-2).”

People will certainly be questioned about such authority when they are resurrected as indicated in the explanation of the verse saying: “And follow in their footsteps, for they have the authority (Qur`ān, 37:24).”²³ There is no room to wonder any longer, then, especially when we discern the fact that their authority has been sanctioned by Allāh unto people through His prophets, providing proofs and arguments for it, as indicated by the explanation of His saying: “And ask the Messengers whom We sent before thee (Qur`ān, 43:45).”²⁴ Nay! Allāh has even taken for it a promise on the Day of Alasto from the souls of His creatures even before creating their physical forms, as referred to in this verse: “When thy Lord drew forth from the children of Adam—from their loins—their descendants, making them promise, asking them: ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said: ‘Yes! We testify!’ This is so lest you should say on the Day of Judgment: ‘Of this we were never mindful (Qur`ān, 7:172).’”²⁵ Through their intercession has Allāh granted forgiveness to Adam who learned the words of repentance referred to in Chapter 2, Verse 37, of the Holy Qur`ān.²⁶

“Allāh does not expose them to torture,”²⁷ for they are the security of the inhabitants of earth and mankind’s means towards Him. They are the ones of whom people are jealous and about whom Allāh says: “Should they feel jealous of them because Allāh Has granted them His favours (Qur`ān, 4:54)”?²⁸ They are the ones who are “deeply grounded in

knowledge" about whom He says: "Those who are deeply grounded in knowledge say: 'We believe (Qur'ān, 3:7)!'"²⁹ They are the ones who will be upon the Heights and to whom Allāh refers when he says, "Upon the Heights are men who know all by their marks (Qur'ān, 7:48)."³⁰ They are the men of truth about whom He says: "Among the Believers are men who fulfilled their promise unto Allāh; some of them have passed away, while others are waiting, and they have not changed in the least (Qur'ān, 33:23)."³¹ They are the ones who glorify Allāh continuously. About them He has said: "He is Glorified in the early morning and during the night by men who are not diverged, by either trade or selling, from mentioning Allah, the saying of prayers, or the paying of *zakat*: they fear the Day when hearts and sights are overturned (Qur'ān, 24:36-37)."³²

Their houses are the ones mentioned in Allāh's verses saying: "In houses which Allāh permitted to be elevated and His Name be recited therein."³³ Allāh has made their niche, in Sūrat An-Nūr (Qur'ān, 24:35),³⁴ an example for His own Light:

Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is a niche, within it is a Lamp: the lamp is enclosed in glass; the glass is as (bright as) a brilliant star lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarcely touches it: Light upon Light! Allāh guides whom He will to His Light: Allāh sets forth parables for men, and Allāh knows all things.

They are the foremost in accepting the faith and implementing it, and they are the nearest to Allāh, as He indicates in Chapter 56, verses 10 and 11.³⁵ They are those who testify to the Prophet's truthfulness (Qur'ān, 4:69).³⁶ They are the martyrs and the virtuous. Regarding them and their followers has Allāh said: "Among Our creation is a nation calling unto the right guidance through the truth, and they are most just therein" (Qur'ān, 7:181).³⁷ Also, Allāh has said the following

about their party and about that of their enemies: "Inhabitants of the Fire are not equal to those of Paradise: inhabitants of Paradise are the victorious."³⁸ About both parties He has also said: "Should We treat those who believe and do good deeds as We treat those who cause corruption on earth, or should We equal the virtuous to the corrupt (Qur'ān, 38:28)?"³⁹ He has also said the following verse concerning both parties: "Do those who commit bad deeds surmise that We will treat them like We treat those who believe and do good deeds, in life and in death? Ill is their judgment."⁴⁰ About them and their supporters He has said: "Those who believe and do good deeds are the best of creation (Qur'ān, 98:7)."⁴¹

About them and their adversaries Allāh has said: "These are two opponents who differed regarding their Lord: those who disbelieve will be clothed with clothes of fire: boiling liquid shall be poured on their heads (Qur'ān, 22:19)."⁴² Regarding them and their enemy, Allāh has revealed these verses: "Is this who has been a believer like unto him that who has been an evil-doer? They are not equal. As for those who believe and do good deeds, their abode shall be Perpetual Gardens, a reward for their good deeds. As for those who cause corruption, their abode is Hell-fire; every time they want to get out of it, they are turned back into it and is said to them: 'Taste the torment of the Fire in which you disbelieved (Qur'ān, 32:19- 20).'"⁴³

Concerning them and those who boasted of providing water for the pilgrims and looking after the Ḥaram mosque, Allāh has revealed this verse: "Do you count the providing of the pilgrims with water and the maintenance of the Ḥaram mosque equal to (the value of) those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day and fight in the Way of Allāh? They are not equal in the eyes of Allāh, and Allāh does not lead the wrong-doers (Qur'ān, 9:19)."⁴⁴

About their triumph in many trials and the magnitude of their patience, the Almighty says: "Among people is one who sells his life in return for Allāh's Pleasure; Allāh is Clement towards His servants (Qur'ān, 2:207)."⁴⁵ Regarding

their endeavour in the way of Allāh and their toil, Allāh has said: "Allāh has traded the believers' lives for Paradise: they fight in the Way of Allāh and they kill or get killed. It is His true Promise in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'ān: who fulfills his promise better than Allāh? Rejoice, therefore, for your bargain; that is the great victory. Those who turn (to Allāh) in repentance, worship Him, and praise Him, wander in devotion to the Cause of Allāh, bow down and prostrate in prayer, enjoin goodness and forbid evil, and observe the limits set by Allāh (they do rejoice). So, proclaim the glad tidings to the Believers (Qur'ān, 9:111-112)." "Those who (in charity) spend of their possessions by night and by day, in secrecy and in public, have their reward with their Lord: on them there shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve (Qur'ān, 2:274)."⁴⁶

They truly say only the truth. The Truthful Himself, blessed be His Name, has borne witness to that, saying: "Those who have brought forth the truth, believing therein, are indeed the God-fearing (Qur'ān, 39:33)."⁴⁷ They are the faithful relatives of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), his kinfolk, whom Allāh Has chosen for His beautiful care and great attention, saying: "And warn your near in kin (Qur'ān, 26:214)." They are his relatives, and "Relatives have the priorities according to the Book of Allāh" (Qur'ān, 8:75; see also 33:6). On Doomsday, they will ascend to his rank and join him in the perpetual gardens of felicity as witnessed by Allāh's statement:

Those who believe and whose families follow them in faith—to them shall We join their families: We shall never deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their deeds, (yet) each is in pledge for his deeds. (Qur'ān, 52:21)⁴⁸

They have the right dues as the Qur'ān has stated: "And give the near in kin his dues (Qur'ān, 17:26)," and they have the fifth: nobody's responsibility will be cleared until he defrays it: "Know ye this: whatever ye obtain of spoils, its fifth goes to Allāh, the Messenger, and the (Messenger's) kinfolk (Qur'ān, 8:41)." They are the ones upon whom Allāh's favours

have been bestowed as implied in this verse: "What Allāh has bestowed on His Apostle—(and taken away) from them—for this ye made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry, but Allāh gives power to His apostles over any He pleases, and Allāh Has power over all things (Qur`ān, 59:7)."

They are Ahl al-Bayt addressed by Allāh thus: "Allāh desires to remove all abomination from you, Ahl al-Bayt, and purify you with a perfect purification (Qur`ān, 33:33)." They are the family of Yasīn whom Allāh greets in the Glorious Qur`ān thus: "Peace be unto the family of Yasīn (Qur`ān, 37:130)."⁴⁹ And they are the family of Muhammad upon whom greetings and peace have been enforced by Allāh Who says: "Allāh and His angels send greetings unto the Prophet: O ye who believe! Send greetings unto him and many salutations (Qur`ān, 33:56)."⁵⁰

Some people asked the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O Messenger of Allāh! We know how to greet you with peace, but how can we greet you with prayers?" He, Allāh's peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, answered, "Say: `O Allāh! Send blessings unto Muhammad and the family of Muhammad," according to the ḥadīth. It was then understood then that greeting them was part of the prayers enjoined by this verse. This is why learned men have included the verse quoted above among others in their praise. Ibn Hajar has listed it in part 11 of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa* among verses in their praise,⁵¹ peace be upon them. A good resort for them and a good reward: Gardens of Eden with gates wide open to receive them.⁵²

Who can compete with them? In the sun is meaning and heat,

Parching, exerting the one who dares to compete.

Allāh has chosen them for His favours, and they are the ones who are faster than all others in doing good deeds; they inherit the Book of Allāh; about them He has said the following therein: "Among men is one who wrongs his own self (by ignoring the Imāms), and one who seeks

righteousness (by following the Imāms), and one who is faster than others in doing good deeds by the Will of Allāh (who is the Imām himself): this indeed is Allāh's great favour (Qur'ān, 35:32)."⁵³

These verses which demonstrate the Imāms' virtues and merits must suffice. Ibn 'Abbās has said: "In praise of 'Ali alone, three hundred verses were revealed."⁵⁴ Others say that one fourth of the Holy Qur'ān has been revealed in their praise. This comes as no surprise when we consider the fact that they and the Qur'ān are twin brothers who do not separate from one another.

Be satisfied for now with what we have stated here of the perfect verses of the Holy Qur'ān. Take them easily going and returning, making the advent of morning beams, easily and nicely, forgiving and at ease, from someone very well acquainted therewith, for none can tell you better than one endowed with experience, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

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¹As it ruled in its departure therefrom according to the Almighty's statement: "Allāh wishes to remove all abomination from you, members of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) and purify you with a perfect purification (Qur'ān, 33:33)."

²Nay! Nobody else can claim that at all. They have been selected for it; so, nobody can reach their station nor dream of attaining their achievements.

³Nay! Allāh has selected them for it and preferred them over all others, saying: "Say (O Muḥammad): 'I do not ask you for any reward other than being kind to my kin,' and whoever attains a good deed [being kind to them], We shall certainly increase him in goodness; verily, Allāh is Forgiving [to those who are kind to them], Appreciative [of such kindness] (Qur'ān, 42:23)."

⁴Nay! The verse of Mubāhala was revealed specifically in their praise. Allāh, the Dear One, says therein: "Say (O Muḥammad): `Let us bring our sons and your sons,... (Qur`ān, 3:61)."

⁵This is a reference to the revelation of Ayat al-`Aṣr (Chapter of Time) regarding them and their foes, and whoever wishes to be familiar with this matter as dealt with in the verse of purification, verse of *mubāhila*, the verse enjoining kindness to the Prophet's kin, and the verse of time, he must refer to our own statement in this regard, for it is the remedy for every ailment. It brings the foes back to their senses, and it provides knowledge for those who do not know, and praise be to Allāh.

⁶In his commentary on the meaning of this verse in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Imām al-Tha`labi quotes Aban ibn Taghlib reporting that Imām Ja`fer al-Ṣādiq (ع) has said: "We are Allāh's rope about which He has said: `And uphold Allāh's rope all of you together, and do not be separated (Qur`ān, 3:103).'" Ibn Hajar has included this verse among others revealed in their praise, being the fifth in the series of verses which he enumerates in Chapter 11 of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*. While explaining its meaning, the author quotes al-Tha`labi, as you have heard above, citing Imām Ja`fer al-Ṣādiq (ع). Imām al-Shāfi`i is quoted in *Rashfatul Ṣādi* by Imām Abu Bakr ibn Shihabud-Dīn as having said:

When I saw people being carried away to the seas of
misguidance and ignorance by their sects,
I boarded, in the Name of Allah, the Ark of Salvation, that
is, the Household of the Chosen One, the Seal of Prophets.
And I upheld Allah's Rope, and it is obedience to them, as
He has commanded us to uphold to the Rope.

⁷The "truthful" here are Allāh's Messengers and the Imāms of his purified progeny, according to our consecutive *ṣahīḥs*, and as supported by al-Hāfiẓ Abu Na`īm and Muwaffaq ibn Ahmed, and transmitted by Ibn Hajar in his explanation of Chapter 5, Section 11, of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, page 90, quoting Imam Zaynul `Abidīn (ع) in a statement quoted above (see Letter No. 6).

⁸Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (ع) used to always say: "The RIGHT PATH here is the Imām, and do not follow diverse paths (imāms of misguidance) for they will divert you from His Path (and we are His Path)."

⁹In his authentic *ṣaḥīḥ*, the trusted authority of Muslims, Muḥammad ibn Ya`qub al-Kulayni, has quoted Burayd al-`Ajli saying: "I asked Abu Ja`fer (Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir, as) about the verse saying: `Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger and those charged with authority among you (Qur'ān, 4:59),' and he answered me by saying: `Have you not observed those (Jews) who are given a portion of the (knowledge of the) Book? They are invited to the Book of Allah so that it might decide between them, then a party among them turns back (therefrom), and they withdraw (Qur'ān, 3:23),' how they believe in sorcerers and tyrants instead, and how they say to those who disbelieve that they are closer to the Straight Path than the Believers? They tell the imams of misguidance and the callers unto the Fire that their guidance is more accurate than that of Muḥammad's progeny; `Have you not seen those to whom a portion of the Book has been given? They believe in idols and false deities and say of those who disbelieve: These are better guided in the path than those who believe. Those are they whom Allāh has cursed, and whoever Allāh curses, you shall never find for them any helper. Or have they a share in the kingdom? But then they would not give people even the speck in a date stone (Qur'ān, 4:51-53),' nor will they ever own aught of Allāh's domain, that is, Imāmate and Caliphate, `... or do they envy the people for what Allāh has bestowed upon them of His own favours (Qur'ān, 4:54)?' We are the ones who are envied because of the Imāmate which Allāh has bestowed upon us rather than anyone else among His creation; `We bestowed upon the descendants of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) the Book and the Wisdom, and We provided them with a great kingdom (Qur'ān, 4:54),' meaning He made some of them messengers, prophets, and imāms; so, how can they recognize its existence to the descendants of Ibrāhīm while denying it to the descendants of Muḥammad (ص)?" "Among them are those who believed in it, and among them are those who turned away therefrom, and Hell suffices for a torment (Qur'ān, 4:55)."

¹⁰Explaining this chapter, al-Tha`labi quotes Jabir saying the following in his book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*: "When this Chapter

was revealed, `Ali (ع) said: `We are the people of remembrance,' and this is the case with all the Imāms of guidance." The Bahraini scholar has quoted in Chapter 35 more than twenty authentic aḥādīth bearing this meaning.

¹¹Ibn Mardawayh, in his explanation of this Chapter, has indicated that "... to argue with the Messenger" in this context means to dispute with him regarding `Ali (ع), and the guidance referred to in the verse "... after guidance has been made manifest to him" is the guidance provided by `Ali, peace be upon him." In his *Tafsīr*, al-`Ayyāshi states something almost similar to this, and the *ṣaḥīḥs* are consecutive from the sources of the purified progeny in stating that "the path of the believers" is the path of their own (progeny), peace be upon them.

¹²Explaining this verse in *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, al-Tha`labi quotes Ibn `Abbās saying: "When this verse was revealed, the Messenger of Allāh (ص) put his hand over his chest and said: `I am the warner and `Ali (ع) is the guide, and through you, O `Ali, guidance is achieved.'" Many scholars of exegesis and authors of books of traditions quote Ibn `Abbās and Muḥammad ibn Muslim saying: "I asked Abu `Abdullah (Imām Ja`fer al-Sādiq (ع)) about the implications of this verse and he answered: `Each Imām is the guide of his time.' Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Bāqir has said the following regarding its explanation: `The warner is the Messenger of Allāh, and the guide is `Ali,' then he adds: `By Allāh, imāmate shall remain with us till the Hour approaches.'" "

¹³In his exegesis of Surat al-Fātiḥa, al-Tha`labi, in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, quotes Abu Buraydah saying that "*al-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* (the Straight Path) is the path of Muḥammad (ص) and his progeny (ع)." Interpreting this *ṣūra*, Wakī ibn al-Jarīrah quotes Sufyān al-Thawri through a chain of narrators including al-Sadi, Asht, Mujāhid, all quoting Ibn `Abbās saying: "'Guide us to the Straight Path' means `Guide us to the love for Muḥammad and his progeny.'" "

¹⁴The Imāms from among Ahl al-Bayt (ع) are without any argument the masters of *ṣiddīqs*, martyrs, and the righteous.

¹⁵Scholars of exegesis are unanimous, as al-Qawshaji, imam of the Ash`aris, has admitted in his chapter on "Sharḥ al-Tajrīd," saying that this verse was revealed in honour of `Ali (ع) when he offered charity while engaged in the ceremonial supplication performing the prayers. In his *ṣaḥīḥ*, al-Nisā'i quotes `Abdullah ibn Salām testifying to its revelation in honour of `Ali (ع). This view is supported by the author of *Al-Jāmi` Baynal Siḥāḥ al-Sitta* while explaining Surat al-Mā'ida [Chapter of Table of Viands]. Al-Tha`labi has indicated its revelation in honour of the Commander of the Faithful in his book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, as we will explain when we discuss it.

¹⁶In Chapter 11, Part One, of his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, Ibn Ḥajar states: "The guidance referred to in Chapter 8 which states: 'I am all-Forgiving for those who repent, believe, and do good deeds, then seek guidance,' according to Thābit al-Banni, means the seeking of guidance from the household of the Prophet (ص)." This is narrated from Abu Ja`fer al-Bāqir, too. Ibn Ḥajar has narrated several aḥādīth testifying to the salvation of those who seek and act upon their guidance, peace be upon them. He also refers to what he quotes from al-Bāqir's statement referring to the conversation between Imam al-Bāqir (ع) and al-Hārith ibn Yahya in which the Imām says: "O Hārith! Have you not seen how Allāh has made it clear that repentance, belief, and good deeds are not sufficient without seeking guidance from our authority?" then he, peace be upon him, quotes his grandfather the Commander of the Faithful saying: "By Allāh! If a man repents, believes, and does good deeds, but he does not seek guidance from our authority, nor recognizes our rights, all of these things will be utterly in vain." Abu Na`īm the *ḥāfiẓ* quotes Awn ibn Abu Jaḥufah who in turn quotes his father narrating a similar tradition from `Ali (ع). Al-Hākim has published similar aḥādīth from Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Sādiq (ع), and from Thābit al-Banni and Anas ibn Mālik.

¹⁷Refer to the meaning of this verse in *Al-Ṣāfi*, and in `Ali ibn Ibrahīm's *Tafsīr*, and to the traditions narrated by Sunnis explaining its meaning as compiled by the Bahraini scholar in Chapter 115 of his work *Ghayat al-Marām*.

¹⁸In chapter 224 of *Ghayat al-Marām*, the Bahraini scholar quotes twelve traditions from our *ṣaḥīḥs* testifying to the fact that

this verse was revealed regarding `Ali's government and that of the Imāms among his descendants, barring the leadership of all others. In Chapter 223, he states that al-Aṣfahāni al-Amāwi narrates the same about `Ali (ع) quoting various sources.

¹⁹In Chapter 48 of his *Ghayat al-Marām*, the Bahraini scholar quotes three ahādīth narrated by Sunnis testifying to the fact that the "bliss" here is what Allāh has blessed people through the government of His Messenger (ص), that of the Commander of the Faithful and Ahl al-Bayt (ع). In Chapter 49, he quotes twelve ahādīth from our *ṣahīḥs* reflecting the same; so, refer to it if you wish.

²⁰Only one Sunni *faqīh* among the authors of books of traditions, namely Imām al-Wahidi, while commenting on Surat al-Mā'ida in his book *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, quotes Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri saying: "This verse was revealed on the Day of Ghadīr Khumm in honour of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)." Imām al-Tha`labi has included it in his *Tafsīr* from two sources, and al-Hamawāni al-Shāfi`i includes it in his *Farā'id* from various sources from Abu Hurayrah, and it is transmitted by Abu Na`īm in his book *Nuzūl al-Qur'an* from two sources: Abu Rāfi` and al-A`mash, both quoting `Atiyyah. In *Ghayat al-Marām*, there are nine ahādīth narrated by Sunnis and eight authentic ones by Shī'as conveying the same meaning; so, refer to it in Chapters 37 and 38.

²¹This text is stated by Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Bāqir (ع), succeeded in narrating it by Imam Abu `Abdullah al-Ṣādiq (ع). According to authentic narrations, Sunnis have included six ahādīth in their own books of traditions that in the end quote the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, quite clearly emphasizing this very theme. Its explanation exists in Chapters 39 and 40 of *Ghayat al-Marām*.

²²Imām al-Tha`labi has detailed the explanation of this matter in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, and it is transmitted by the Egyptian scholar al-Shibliji who details `Ali's biography in his book *Nūr al-Aḥsār*, page 171, where he, too, explains it in detail. Al-Halabi mentions it at the conclusion of his chapter "Hijjatul Wadā'" in Vol. 3 of his book *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*. Al-Hākīm

narrates it in "*Tafsīr al-Ma`ārij*" in his *Al-Mustadrak*, page 502, Vol. 2.

²³Al-Daylami, as is the case with the explanation of this verse in *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa* states that Sa`īd al-Khudri quotes the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: "Follow in their footsteps, for they are responsible concerning `Ali's *wilayat*." Al-Wahīdi, as is the case with the author of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*, explains this verse by saying: "It has been narrated regarding Allāh's statement: 'Follow in their footsteps, for they are responsible....,' that the responsibility referred to here is regarding `Ali's government and that of Ahl al-Bayt (ع),"²⁴ adding: "For Allāh commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to make people aware of the fact that he does not ask them for any rewards for conveying His Message other than being kind to his kin..., that is, they will be asked if they properly submitted to their *wilayat* as the Prophet (ﷺ) had instructed them, or if they lost it and discarded it, thus becoming subject to Allāh's demands and the consequences of such discarding." Ibn Hajar includes it in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa* among the verses revealed in their praise, being number 4 in such sequence, and he elaborates on it a great deal.

²⁴Refer to what Abu Na`īm al-Hāfīz has quoted in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā*, and to what is recorded by al-Tha`labi, al-Nisabūri, and al-Barqī regarding its meaning in their own *tafsīr* books, and to what Ibrahīm ibn Muḥammad al-Hamawini and other Sunnis have said. Also refer to what Abu `Ali al-Tibrisi has said while explaining its meaning in his book *Mujma`ul Bayan fī Tafsīr al-Qur`ān*, quoting the Commander of the Faithful (ع). What Chapters 44 and 45 of *Ghayat al-Marām* state in this meaning is something that dispels all doubts.

²⁵Our own discourse about Ahl al-Bayt (ع), while explaining this verse, testifies to this fact.

²⁶Ibn al-Maghāzli al-Shāfi`i quotes Ibn `Abbās saying: "When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was asked about the words which Adam had received from his Lord and whereby his repentance was accepted, he (ﷺ) said: 'He [Adam] asked Him by the prestige He held for Muḥammad, `Ali, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn, and thus did

He accept his repentance and forgive him.” This is what we know for a fact to be the meaning of this verse.

²⁷Refer to *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa* by Ibn Ḥajar who interprets the verse of the Almighty: “Allāh would not torment them...” as verse 7 of those revealed in their honour as recorded in Chapter 11 of the said book where the author endorses our own view stated here.

²⁸This is admitted by Ibn Ḥajar who counts this verse among the ones revealed in their honour, numbering it 6 in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*. Ibn al-Maghazli al-Shafi`i, as indicated in the explanation of this verse in *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*, quotes Imām al-Bāqir (ع) saying: “By Allāh, we are the ones who are envied.” In Chapters 60 and 61 of *Ghayat al-Marām*, as many as thirty authentic ahādīth are recorded in this meaning.

²⁹This is quoted by Thiqaṭul-Islam Muḥammad ibn Ya`qub al-Kulayni who quotes an authentic ḥadīth from Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع) saying: “We are a people the obedience to whom has been mandated by Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime; we are the ones who are deeply rooted in knowledge, and we are the ones who are envied. Allāh Almighty has said: `Or should they envy (certain) people for what Allah has granted them out of His own favour?’” This has also been quoted by al-Shaykh in his *Taḥthīb*, also quoting Imām al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him.

³⁰While explaining this verse in his *Tafsīr*, al-Tha`labi quotes Ibn `Abbās saying: “The `a`raf is an elevated place of the *Ṣirāt* whereupon al-`Abbās, Ḥanzalah, `Ali and Ja`fer of the two wings identify the ones who love them by the sign of the whiteness of their countenance, and the ones who hate them by its blackness.” Al-Hākim, too, has quoted `Ali (ع) saying: “We shall stand, on the Day of Judgment, between Paradise and Hell, and we shall recognize those who support us by their mark and would let them enter Paradise, and we shall recognize those who hate us also by their marks.” Salmān al-Farisi is quoted saying: “I have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: `O `Ali! You and the *wayis* from your descendants are on the A`raf.” This is supported by the ḥadīth quoted by Dār Qutni at the conclusion of Part Two, Chapter 9, of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*.

It indicates that `Ali (ع) delivered a lengthy address to the six persons assigned by `Umer to be in charge of the *shūra* in which he stated: "I ask you in the Name of Allāh if anyone among you has been told similarly to what I was told by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, and that is: `O `Ali! You are the one who will designate the destination of every person on the Day of Judgment either to Paradise or to Hell?" They responded: "No, indeed." Ibn Hajar states the following: "The meaning of this hadīth is what is narrated by Antarah from Imām `Ali al-Riḍa (ع) who quotes the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying the following to `Ali (ع): `O `Ali! You are the one who will assign people to either Paradise or Hell on the Day of Judgment, telling Hell which one is hers and which one is not." Ibn Hajar says: "Ibn al-Sammāk narrates that Abu Bakr has said to `Ali (ع), may Allāh be pleased with both men, "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh saying: `Nobody can pass on the Sirāt except the one permitted by `Ali."

³¹In Section 5, Chapter 9, of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*, Ibn Hajar, while discussing `Ali's assassination, indicates that when `Ali (ع) was on the pulpit in Kufa, he was asked to explain the verse in which this phrase occurs: "Men who proved truthful to their promise to Allāh," and he answered by saying: "O Lord! Forgive them; this verse was revealed in honour of myself, my uncle Hamzah, and my cousin `Ubaydah ibn al-Hārith ibn al-Muttalib. `Ubaydah died a martyr in Badr; Hamzah died a martyr on Uhud; as to myself, I am awaiting a most painful death, when this shall be drenched from the blood of this," pointing with his hand to his beard and head respectively; "It is a true promise made to me by my beloved Father of al-Qāsim, peace be upon him and his progeny." Al-Hākim, while interpreting this verse as quoted in al-Tibrisi's *Mujma`ul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur`ān*, cites `Umer ibn Thābit quoting Abu Ishāq quoting `Ali, peace be upon him, saying: "On our own behalf was this verse revealed: `Men who proved truthful to their promise to Allāh...,' and I by Allāh am waiting, and I have never changed aught."

³²Mujāhid and Ya`qūb ibn Sufyān quote Ibn `Abbās's interpretation of the verse saying "And when they see trade or amusement, they rush to it, leaving you standing (for prayers alone)," thus: "Dahyah al-Kalbi once came from Syria on a Friday

with a merchandise of foodstuff and he came to a place called Ahjar al-Zayt where he announced his presence by beating drums to invite people to him. People, therefore, rushed to him, leaving the Prophet (ﷺ) standing on the pulpit preaching with only `Ali, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, Fāṭima, Salmān, Abu Tharr, and al-Miqdād. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said: `Allāh has cast a look at my mosque on a Friday, and had it not been for the presence of these persons, He would have set the city on fire and hurled stones at its inhabitants as He did with the people of Luṭ.' Allāh has revealed in honour of those who remained with the Messenger of Allāh at the mosque the verse saying: `Praising Him therein, during the night and at early dawn, men whom neither trade nor sale can divert.'"

³³Al-Tha`labi, while discussing the meaning of this verse in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, quotes Anas ibn Mālik and Burayd saying: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) once read the verse saying `... in houses which Allāh has desired that they should be elevated, and His Name shall be mentioned therein,' whereupon Abu Bakr stood up and said: `O Messenger of Allāh! Is this house (then he pointed to the house where `Ali and Fāṭima were living) among them?' The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: `Yes; one of their choicest.'" In Chapter 12 of *Ghayat al-Marām*, there are nine authentic ahādīth through which the light of dawn shines.

³⁴This is a reference to the verse saying: "The similitude of His Light is a Lamp..." Ibn al-Maghāzli al-Shāfi`i has quoted `Ali ibn Ja`fer in his *Manāqib* saying: "I asked the father of al-Ḥasan (Imām al-Kāzim, peace be upon him) about the verse saying `... like a niche wherein a lamp...', and he, peace be upon him, answered: `The niche is Fāṭima, the Lamp symbolizes al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and `the glass is like a shining star,' indicates that Fāṭima shone like a star among all the women of the world, receiving its fuel from a blessed tree, the family-tree of Ibrāhīm (Abraham), neither of the east nor of the west, neither Jewish nor Christian, `its oil almost shines (by itself),' indicates that knowledge almost speaks of itself even when no fire touches it, `light upon light,' wherein there is one Imām after another, `Allāh guides whomsoever He pleases to His Light,' implies that Allāh guides to our *wilāyat* whomsoever He pleases.'" Suffices such an interpretation to be coming from a member of the household upon whom the revelation descended.

³⁵Al-Daylami, as in ḥadīth 29, Part Two, Section 9, of *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa* by Ibn Ḥajar, quotes `Ayesha, al-Ṭabrāni, Ibn Mardawayh, all citing Ibn `Abbās saying that the Prophet (ص) has said: "The foremost in believing in the Prophets are three men: Joshua son of Nun who was the foremost in believing in Moses (ع); the one referred to in Chapter Yasīn who was the foremost in believing in Christ (ع), and the foremost in believing in Muḥammad is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)." This ḥadīth is quoted by al-Muwaffaq ibn Ahmed and the faqih Ibn al-Maghāzli, both quoting Ibn `Abbās.

³⁶Ibn al-Najjār, as in ḥadīth 30 referred to in *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa* quotes Ibn `Abbās saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said: "The *siddīqs* are three: Ezekiel, who was the foremost to believe [in Moses] from among the descendants of Pharaoh; Habīb al-Najjār, who is referred to in Chapter Yasīn, and `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)." Abu Na`īm and Ibn `Asākir, as in ḥadīth 31 referred to in *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa* quotes Ibn Abu Layla saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said: "The *siddīqs* are three: Habīb al-Najjār, the believer referred to in Chapter Āli Yasīn as saying: `O my people, follow the Messengers;' Ezekiel, who was the foremost to believe [in Moses] from among the descendants of Pharaoh, who said: `Do you kill a man just for saying that his Lord is Allāh?' and `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع), who is the best of them.'" *Ṣaḥīḥs* are consecutively reported in stating that he is the supreme *siddīq* and the greatest *fartuq*.

³⁷The most distinguished among Sunni Imāms, namely Muwaffaq ibn Ahmed, has quoted Abu Bakr ibn Mardawayh citing `Ali (ع) saying: "This nation will be divided into seventy-three groups; with the exception of one, all the rest will go to Hell; this (lucky) group is the one in whose honour Allāh, the Exalted and the omni-Scient, has said: `Among those whom We have created is a group that guides towards righteousness, and through righteousness (alone) do they achieve equity,' and they include me and my Shī'as."

³⁸In his *Amāli*, Shaykh al-Ṭusi correctly quotes the Commander of the Faithful saying that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, once recited the following verse: "The companions of the Fire are not equal to those who are

the companions of Paradise," whereupon he explained saying: "The companions of Paradise are those who have followed me and recognized the authority of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) after me." He was asked: "What about the companions of the Fire?" He answered: "These include the ones who are dissatisfied with his (Ali's) government, those who shall violate the covenant and fight him after my demise." This hadīth is quoted by al-Ṣadūq from `Ali, peace be upon him. Abul-Mu'ayyad Muwaffaq ibn Aḥmed has quoted Jābir saying that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "By the One in whose hands my soul is, this (Ali) and his Shī'as are the winners on the Day of Judgment."

³⁹Refer to the meaning of this verse in `Ali ibn Ibrāhīm's *tafsīr* if you wish, or Chapters 81 and 82 of *Ghayat al-Marām*.

⁴⁰This verse descended to honor al-Ḥamzah, `Ali (ع), and `Ubaydah who came out to battle `Utbah, Shaybah, and al-Walīd. The believers are Ḥamzah, `Ali (ع), and `Ubaydah, and the ones who committed wrong deeds are `Utbah, Shaybah, and al-Walīd. There are many authentic aḥādīth supporting this argument.

⁴¹Suffices you for proof the fact that Ibn Hajar has admitted its revelation in their own honor, counting it among the verses in their favour, numbering it 11 among such verses in Part One, Chapter 11, of his *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to it to see the verses we have quoted in reference to this verse in the chapter dealing with Sunnis giving credence to Shī'as in our book *Al-Fustul al-Muhimma*.

⁴²Al-Bukhāri, in his explanation of the Qur'ānic Chapter dealing with *hajj*, on page 107, Vol. 3, of his *ṣaḥīḥ*, quotes `Ali (ع) saying: "I am the first to kneel down to submit a complaint before Allāh on the Day of Judgment." Al-Bukhāri then quotes Qays saying: "On their behalf this verse was revealed: 'These are two opponents who have brought their case before their Lord.' They are the ones who came out on Badr to battle `Ali (ع) and his two companions, Ḥamzah and `Ubaydah, namely Shaybah ibn Rabī'ah and his two fellows `Utbah ibn Rabī'ah and al-Walīd ibn `Utbah." On the same page, he quotes Abu Tharr saying that he used to swear by the verse referring to the two opponents who disputed

about their Lord which was revealed in honour of `Ali (ع) and two of his companions, and about `Utbah and both of his companions when they came out to duel at Badr.

⁴³This verse was revealed on behalf of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) *versus* al-Walīd ibn `Uqbah ibn Abu Ma`īn, without any argument. This is ascertained by traditionists and endorsed by scholars of exegesis. Imām Abul-Hasan `Ali ibn Ahmed al-Wahīdī, while discussing this verse in his book *Asbāb a-Nuzul*, quotes Sa`īd ibn Jubayr citing Ibn `Abbās saying that al-Walīd ibn `Uqbah ibn Abu Ma`īn once said to `Ali ibn Abu Ṭālib (ع): "I am stronger than you; my speech is more eloquent, and I am faster than you in raising an army." `Ali (ع) said: "Say no more, for you are none other than a debauchee," whereupon the verse "Is that who is a believer similar to that who is a debauchee? They certainly are not alike," was revealed, describing `Ali (ع) as the believer and al-Walīd ibn `Uqbah as the debauchee.

⁴⁴This verse was revealed in honour of `Ali (ع), his uncle al-`Abbās, and Ṭalḥah ibn Shaybah who started thus bragging: "I am in charge of the House (Ka`ba); I have its keys, and mine is its covering cloth." Al-`Abbās said: "I am the one in charge of *siqāya* and maintenance." `Ali (ع) said: "I do not know what you both say, for I have said my prayers in the company of the one [Prophet Muhammad, pbuh] who leads the *jihād* six months prior to anyone else among all people," whereupon Allāh revealed the verse cited above. This is stated by Imām al-Wahīdī while explaining the meaning of this verse in his book *Asbab al-Nuzul* citing al-Hasan al-Baṣri, al-Sha`bi, and al-Qurtubī. He also quotes Ibn Sīrīn and Murrah al-Hamadānī saying that `Ali (ع) said the following to al-`Abbās once: "Aren't you going to migrate? Aren't you going to join the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny?" He answered: "Do not I have a responsibility that is superior to the migration? Do not I provide water to the pilgrims of the House of Allāh and maintain its Haram?" whereupon this verse was revealed.

⁴⁵On page 4, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, al-Hakim quotes Ibn `Abbās saying: "Ali has bartered his own life and has, indeed, put on the Prophet's garb." Al-Hakim testifies to the authenticity of this ḥadīth according to the endorsement of both Shaykhs, although

the latter did not narrate it themselves. In his *Talkhis al-Mustadrak*, al-Hākim admits the same on the said page, quoting Imām `Ali ibn al-Husain (ع) saying: "The first to barter his life for the Pleasure of Allāh is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) who slept in the bed of the Messenger of Allāh (ص)," then he quoted a few verses of poetry attributed to `Ali (ع) beginning with these:

I have safeguarded with my own life and strength
That of the best who walked on the surface of earth,
And circled the Ancient House, though alone,
And also around the [Black] Stone.

⁴⁶Traditionists, scholars of exegesis, and authors who have written about the causes of revelation of the Holy Qur`ān have all quoted Ibn `Abbās explaining the verse reading: "Those who spend their wealth in charity at night, during the day, in secrecy, and in the open," by saying: "This verse was revealed in honour of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) who had once in his possession four dirhams; he spent one of them in the Cause of Allāh at night, one during the day, one in secrecy, and in public also one; therefore, this verse was revealed to appreciate what he did." Imām al-Wāhidī, too, has quoted this ḥadīth of Ibn `Abbās in his book *Asbabul-Nuzūl*. He also quotes Mujāhid narrating it, and he transmits it from al-Kalbi in more detail.

⁴⁷The one who has brought forth the truth is the Messenger of Allāh, and the one who has believed therein is the Commander of the Faithful (ع), according to the ḥadīth of al-Bāqir, al-Sādiq, al-Kāzim, al-Rida, peace be upon all of them, as well as by Ibn `Abbās, Ibn al-hanafiyah, `Abdullah ibn al-Ḥasan, the martyred Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn, and `Ali ibn Ja`fer al-Sādiq (ع). The Commander of the Faithful used to use this verse as a testimonial. Ibn al-Maghāzli, in his *Manāqib*, quotes Mujāhid saying: "The one who has brought the truth is Muḥammad (ص), and the one who has believed in him is `Ali (ع)." Both *huffāz*, that is, Ibn Mardawayh and Abu Na`īm, have quoted it, and so have others.

⁴⁸In his exegesis of Surat al-Ṭur on page 468, Vol. 2, of his authentic *Al-Mustadrak*, al-Hākim quotes Ibn `Abbās paraphrasing the verse reading: "And those who believe and whose families follow them in faith, to them shall We join their families: nor shall

We deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their good deeds; yet each individual is pawned to what deeds he has done," by saying: "Allāh shall elevate the status of a believer's descendants so that they would be able to join him in Paradise, even if they may be in a lower station," then he recited the same verse again and said: "Allāh says He will not decrease their rewards aught."

⁴⁹This is the third verse of the ones enumerated by Ibn Hajar in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*. The author goes on to say that a group of scholars of exegesis have quoted Ibn `Abbās saying: "The implication of this verse is to send salutations unto Muḥammad's Progeny (ع).” Ibn Hajar says that al-Kalbi, too, has given it the same meaning, then he adds: "Al-Fakhr al-Rāzi has stated that the Prophet's Progeny constitutes his [Ali's] peer in five instances: Allāh has greeted him by saying: 'Peace be unto you, O Messenger, and unto the Progeny of Yāsīn,' in sending prayers unto him and them in *tashahhud*, *ṣadaqa*, and *ṭahāra*, when the Almighty says: 'Tāha,' that is, *ṭāhir*, purified, and: '... purifies you with a perfect purification;' in loving them, saying: 'Follow me so that Allāh may love you,' and also: 'Say: I do not ask you for any reward other than being kind to my kin.'"

⁵⁰Al-Bukhāri has quoted it in his *tafsīr* of the holy Qur`ān, in Vol. 3 of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in a chapter dealing with the verse "Allāh and His angels send salutations unto Muḥammad," in his exegesis of Surat al-Aḥzāb. It is also quoted by Muslim in a chapter on sending greetings unto the Prophet (ص) in his book on prayers in Vol. 1 of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and it is quoted by all traditionists from Ka`b ibn `Ajjrah.

⁵¹Refer to the second of these verses on page 87.

⁵²Al-Tha`labi, while discussing its meaning in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, quotes ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, says: "Tūba is a tree in Paradise whose root is in my home and whose branch overshadows the residents of Paradise." Some people asked: "O Messenger of Allāh! We have asked you before about it, and you told us that its root is in `Ali's home and its branch is above the residents of Paradise," whereupon he, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Aren't my home and `Ali's the same?"

⁵³Thiqatul-Islam al-Kulayni has quoted in an authentic ḥadīth Sālim saying that he once asked Abu Ja`fer (Imām al-Bāqir) about the meaning of the verse: "Then We let those whom We have selected from among Our servants inherit the Book." The Imam, peace be upon him, explained it as follows: "The one who rushes to do good deeds is the Imām; the one who is moderate is the one who knows the value of the Imām; and the one who does injustice to his own self is the one who is not aware of the significance of the Imām." Something similar to this is cited from Imāms Abu `Abdullah al-Sādiq (ع), Abul-Ḥasan al-Kāzīm, and Abul-Ḥasan al-Riḍa, peace be upon them, who are quoted by al-Ṣadūq and by many others among our narrators. Ibn Mardawayh quotes `Ali (ع) explaining this verse thus: "The ones implied in this verse are we," and the details are available in our book *Tanzīl al-Ayāt*, as well as in *Ghayat al-Marām*.

⁵⁴This is quoted by Ibn `Asākir from Ibn `Abbās, as stated in Section 3, Chapter 9, page 76, of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

LETTER 13
Thul-Qi`da 1329

Argument Regarding These Traditions Is Weak.

May Allāh bless your hand and pen! How elevated their pages above the position of that who challenges and opposes! How defensible their wise writings against the sight of the critic and researcher! Their pages struggle towards one destination, going along an aimed path, in a purposeful way. Their arguments do not come across the hearing of the wise without reverberating in acclamation.

Concerning your latest letter, its torrent has been overflowing, over-brimming, supported by perfect verses and worthy proofs, with your own self coming thereby out of the charge put forth against you without committing any shortcoming in whatever entrusted to you. Whoever challenges you is bad in argument, stubborn, arguing about falsehood and acting like the ignorant.

Your opponents, however, may argue that those who narrated these verses supporting your argument are Shī`a, and these cannot be relied upon by the Sunnis. What would your answer, therefore, be? Please kindly provide it, if you will, and please do accept my thanks. Peace be with you.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 14
Thul-Qi`da 1329

- I **Fallacy of Opponent's Argument,**
- II **Opponents do not Know Shī`as,**
- III **Distinction of Emphasizing Illegality of Falsifying Hadīth.**

1) Our answer is that the argument of such opponents is wrong. It is baseless because of the fallacy of its minor and major arguments.

As for its minor argument, that is, the claim that “Those who narrated the verses concerning your argument are Shī`a” is obviously false as testified by reliable Sunni authorities who recorded their statements in the meaning which we have stated. Their *musnads* testify to the fact that they are even more in number than Shī`as, as we explained in our book *Tanzīlul Ayāt al-Bāhira*, in our chapter titled “Virtues of the Purified `itra.” You may also refer to *Ghayatul Marām* which is widely circulated throughout the Muslim world.

As for the major one, that is, the claim that Shī`as are not regarded by Sunnis as reliable (in narrating ḥadīth), its fallacy is even more obvious than that of the minor one. Sunni Musnads bear testimony to this fact, and the authorities they relied upon are full of Shī`a names. Take, for example, their six *sahīḥ* books and others which use them as their authorities, the latter being charged by those who attribute to them deviation from the Right Path, stamp them with the stamps of “Rāfīdis” and “deviators.” To them have they attributed extremism, fanaticism, and deviation from the Path.

Among Bukhāri’s mentors are Shī`a men who have been charged with being “Rāfīdī” and stamped with hatred; nevertheless, this has never made Bukhāri nor others doubt their fair-mindedness. The latter relied upon them even in the *sahīḥ* books feeling very comfortable with doing so. So; will the opponents who say that “Shī`as are not relied upon by Sunnis” find a listening ear? Of course not!

2) Such opponents, however, are ignorant. Had they known the truth, they would have come to know the fact that Shī`as have followed in the footsteps of and have emulated the Purified `itra. Their manners are the `itra’s; therefore, everyone they relied upon is unmatched in truthfulness and trustworthiness. Unmatched are their reliable heroes in piety

and caution. There are no peers for them among their dependable dignitaries in their forsaking the pleasures of this world, in their piety, worship, good manners, self-discipline, self-denial, and self-criticism. Nobody can equal them in ascertaining facts and looking for them with extreme care and moderation.

Had the opponent assessed their value, just as it is in reality, he would have put his confidence in them, entrusting his affairs to them. But his ignorance of them has made him wander at random about them like one riding a blind animal in a dark night. He would charge the trustees of Islam such as Muhammad ibn Ya`qūb al-Kulayni, and a truthful among Muslims like Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Babawayh al-Qummi, and a mentor of the nation such as Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn `Ali al-Tūsi. He would belittle their sacred books which are the custodians of the knowledge of the family of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and them, doubting their mentors who are the pioneers of knowledge and the ones who equal the Holy Qur`ān and who have dedicated their lives to promote the teachings of Allāh, the Sublime, the Almighty, His book and His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, and the Imāms of Muslims and their commoners.

3) Both righteous and vicious individuals have equally come to know how these virtuous men judge the case of telling lies. Thousands of their books curse lying, labelling falsification of ḥadīth as sins punishable by Hell-fire. They are distinguished by their judgment of intentional falsification of ḥadīth. They have considered it to break the fast, requiring both compensation and penitence from the person who commits it during the month of Ramadan, and they also require the same for whatever causes the breaking of the fast. Their Fiqh and ḥadīth are very clear in this regard; therefore, how can anybody charge their narrators while they are the good, the virtuous, the ones who spend the night praying and the day fasting? Since when have the virtuous among the

followers and supporters of Muḥammad's family been charged, while the Kharijis, Murji'is and Qadris have not? What other than obvious enmity and ugly ignorance? We seek refuge with Allāh against forsaking us, and from Him do we seek help against the bad consequences of injustice and oppression. There is no might nor power except in Allāh, the Sublime, the Almighty, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

Sh

LETTER 15
Thul-Qi`da 1329

- I A Flash of the Truth,**
II Requesting Details on Sunnis Who Rely on Shī`a Authorities.

1) Your latest letter has been perfect in organization, clear in expression, sweet, great in benefit, easily accessible, vast in sphere, far-sighted, well-supported. I have looked into it keenly, and from among its contents indications of your success have flashed, and signs of your victory shone.

2) When you stated that Sunnis rely on Shī`as, however, you were very brief. You did not elaborate on your statement in this regard. It would have been better had you mentioned those men by their names and quoted Sunni texts indicating that those men were Shī`as and that they nevertheless relied on them. Could you please provide it so that the flags of truth may be seen and the lights of certainty shine? Peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 16
Thul-Qi`da 1329

A Hundred Shī`a Authorities Relied upon by Sunnis

Yes. I will provide you in a hurry with what you have requested, confining myself to some of those personalities who were visited by people from far and wide, on the

condition that I will not be required to elaborate on them, since there is no room for that in this brief exposition. Here are their names and the names of their fathers arranged alphabetically:¹

1. Abān ibn Taghlib

He was a Kūfi reciter of the Holy Qur`ān. Al-Thahbi has recorded his biography in his own *Mīzān* saying, "Aban ibn Taghlib, MAW, of Kūfa, is a persistant Shī'a. He, nevertheless, is truthful; so, we will rely on his truthfulness, and let him be punished for his innovation." He has also said that Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn Ma`īn and Abu Ḥatim put their trust in him. Ibn `Adi quotes him and says that he is "extremist in Shī'ism." Al-Sa`di describes him as "an open deviator." Ibn al-Thahbi goes on to describe the man's credentials, counting him as an authority relied upon by Muslim and authors of the four Sunan books, namely Abu Dawūd, al-Tirmithi, al-Nisā'i and Ibn Majah, marking his name with the latter's initials. Refer to his narration of ḥadīth in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in the four Sunan books through al-Ḥakam and al-A`mash, in addition to Fudayl ibn `Umer. Sufyān ibn `Ayīnah, Shu`bah, and Idrīs al-Awdi quote him as recorded in Muslim's book. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 141 A.H.

2. Ibrahīm ibn Yazīd

His name is Ibrahīm ibn Yazīd ibn `Umer ibn al-Aswad al-Nakh`i al-Kūfi, the faqīh. His mother is Malīka daughter of Yazīd ibn Qays al-Nakh`i and sister of al-Aswad, Ibrahīm, and `Abdel-Rahmān, sons of Yazīd ibn Qays. Like their uncles `Alqamah and Ubay, sons of Qays, they were all among the most reliable and authoritative among all Muslims. Authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books, as well as others, have all relied upon their authority while keeping in mind thier being Shī'as.

As regarding our man Ibrahīm ibn Yazīd, he has been included among Shī'a dignitaries by Ibn Qutaybah] on page 206 of his work *Al-Ma`ārif* where he enumerates a few Shī'a dignitaries, taking his reliability for granted. Refer to his hadīth in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books as quoted by the mother of his uncle `Alqamah ibn Qays, and by Humām ibn al-Hārith, Abu `Ubaydah ibn `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd, `Ubaydah, al-Aswad ibn Yazīd, his uncle. Refer also to his hadīth in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* through his uncle from his mother's side, `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Yazīd, and through Sahn ibn Munjab, Abu Mu`ammar, `Ubayd ibn Nadlah, and `Ābis. In the two *ṣaḥīḥs*, he is quoted by Fudayl ibn `Umer, al-Mughīrah, Ziyad ibn Kulayb, Wāsil, al-Hasan ibn `Ubaydullāh, Hammād ibn Abu Sulaymān, and by Samr ĩk. Ibrahīm was born in 50 A.H., and he died at the age of either 95 or 96, four months after al-Hajjāj's death.

3. Aḥmed ibn al-Mufdil

He is Aḥmed ibn al-Mufdil ibn al-Kūfi al-Hafri. Abu Zar`ah and Abu Hātīm quote him and rely upon him while being fully aware of his status among Shī'as. In Aḥmed's biography, as stated in *Al-MĒzān*, Abu Hātīm highlights this fact by saying: "Aḥmed ibn al-Mufdil is one of the Shī'a chiefs, and he is truthful." Al-Thahbi mentions him in his book *Al-MĒzān*, putting on his name Abu Dawūd's and al-Nisā'i's initials, indicating thereby that they consider him an authority. Refer to his hadīth in their *ṣaḥīḥ* through al-Thawri. He narrates through Asbāt ibn Naṣīr and Isrā'īl.

7. Ismā'īl ibn `Abbād

His full name is Ismā'īl ibn `Abbād ibn al-Abbās al-Taleqāni (Abul-Qāsim), better known as al-Sāhib ibn `Abbād. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his book *Al-MĒzān*, putting "DT" on his name to indicate that both Dawūd and al-Tirmithi rely on him in their *ṣaḥīḥ* books.² Then he goes on to

describe him as "a talented Shī'a, a man of letters". His being Shī'a is a matter which cannot be doubted by anyone. For this reason, he and his father earned high marks of prestige and greatness in the Buwayhid state. He is the first person among their government ministers to be called "ṣāhib" (companion, friend), since he was, since his adolescence, a companion of Mu'ayyed al-Dawlah ibn Buwayh. This title followed him as he grew up till he was known thereby. Later on, it was used for anyone who held the same reins of responsibility in the government. First, he was minister to Mu'ayyed al-Dawlah Abu Mansūr ibn Rukn al-Dawlah ibn Buwayh. After the latter's demise in Sha`bān of 373 in Jurjān, Abul-Hasan `Alī, better known as Fakhr al-Dawlah, brother of Mu'ayyed, seized authority and retained Ṣāhib's position. Fakhr al-Dawlah held Ṣāhib in high esteem and fulfilled his wishes in the same way his own father Abu `Abbād ibn al-Abbās did while he was in the service of Fakhr al-Dawlah's father, Rukn al-Dawlah.

When, at the age of 59, as-Ṣāhib died on Thursday night, 24th of Ṣafar, 385, in Rayy, the city of Rayy closed down its shops as a sign of mourning, and people gathered in front of his mansion awaiting his coffin. Fakhr al-Dawlah, accompanied by government ministers and commanders of the army, went there, too, wearing mourning clothes. When his coffin came out of his house, people cried "Allāhu Akbar!" in unison, kissed the ground in glorification, and Fakhr al-Dawlah followed the coffin on foot with the crowd and sat with them during the three days' mourning period. Poets read eulogies, and scholars held commemorative ceremonies in his honour, and he was praised by all those who could not attend his funeral. Abu Bakr al-Khawārizmi said: "Al-Ṣāhib ibn `Abbād grew up in the ministry's lap, learned how to crawl and walk within its precincts, was nursed from the most excellent of its bosoms, and inherited it [ministry] from his own forefathers." Abu Sa`īd al-Rustami composed these verses in his praise:

He inherited ministry: a link in a chain,
 A great man, he was, heir of great men.
 About the ministry of al-Abbās does `Abbād narrate,
 While from `Abbad does Isma`il Narrate.

In his biography of Sāhib, al-Tha`alibi says: "I can find no words to fairly describe Sāhib's lofty status in knowledge and arts, or the prestige he enjoys for being benevolent and generous, or his unique virtues and possession of various merits. The best statement I can make on his behalf falls short of doing justice to the least among his virtues and eminence, and my best description falls short of being fair to his virtues and characteristics." Sāhib has written many precious books including *Al-Muh̄ib* in Language in seven volumes; its chapters are arranged alphabetically. He collected an unmatched library. Nuḥ ibn al-Mansūr, one of the kings of Sam`ān, wrote to him once to invite him to be in charge of running his cabinet of ministers and managing the affairs of his kingdom. He apologized to him, saying that he needed four hundred camels just to transport the contents of his library. This much about him should suffice.

8. Ismā`il ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Abu Karīmah al-Kūfi
 Better known as al-Sadi, he is the renown interpreter of the Holy Qur`ān. Stating his biography, al-Thahbi describes him as "charged with Shī`ism." Ḥusayn ibn Wāqid al-Marūzi discusses him, claiming that he heard him once cursing Abu Bakr and `Umer. In spite of all these charges, he is quoted by al-Thawri and Abu Bakr ibn `Ayyāsh and many in such class of writers. Muslim and authors of the four *sah̄ih* books consider him an authority, while Aḥmed grants him his full confidence. Ibn `Adi says that he is truthful. Yaḥya al-Qattān says there is nothing wrong with the aḥādīth he narrates. Yaḥya ibn Sa`īd says: "I never heard anyone speaking ill of al-Sadi; none has deserted him." Ibrahīm al-Nakh`i once

passed by al-Sadi while the latter was interpreting the Holy Qur'an. Ibrahim said that al-Sadi was interpreting the Holy Qur'an according to the commonly used methods. If you read about al-Sadi in *Mizān al-ʿItidāl*, you will find more details about what we have stated above. Refer to al-Sadi's ḥadīth in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Anas ibn Mālik, Sa'd ibn ʿUbaydah, and Yahya ibn ʿAbbād. Abu ʿAwānah, al-Thawri, al-Ḥasan ibn Salih, Zā'idah, and Isrā'īl have all quoted him, being their mentor, as stated in the four *ṣaḥīḥ* books. He died in 127 A.H.

9. Ismā'il ibn Mūsā al-Fazāri al-Kūfi

Al-Thahbi's *Al-Mizān* quotes Ibn ʿUday saying, "People despised his extremist Shī'a views." *Al-Mizān* also quotes ʿAbdān saying: "Ḥammād and Ibn Abu Shaybah opposed our visiting him." He asked him once how he fared with "that immoral who curses our ancestors." In spite of all of this, both Ibn Khuzaymah and Abu ʿArūbah quote him, being the instructor of their class. He is in the same category with Abu Dawūd and al-Tirmithi who quote him and rely on his authority in their *ṣaḥīḥs*. Abu Ḥātim mentions him and calls him "trustworthy." Al-Nisā'i says "he is alright." All of this is stated in the man's biography in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mizān*.

Refer to his ḥadīth in al-Tirmithi's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and Abu Dawūd's *Sunan* as narrated by Mālik, Sharīk, and ʿUmar ibn Shākir, a friend of Anas. He died in 245. He was a son of al-Sadi's daughter, although he might have denied that, and Allāh knows best.

10. Talīd ibn Sulaymān al-Kūfi, al-A`raj

Ibn Ma'in mentioned him and said: "He used to curse ʿUthmān. Some of ʿUthmān's followers heard that. They threw a rock at him which broke his leg, hence his nickname "al-A`raj," the lame. Abu Dawūd has mentioned him and said he is Rāfiḍi who curses Abu Bakr and ʿUthmān. In spite of all of this, Aḥmed and Ibn Namīr rely on his authority despite

their knowledge of his Shī'a beliefs. Ahmed has said, "Talīd is a Shī'a, yet we could not find anything wrong with what he narrated." Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his book *Al-Mīzān*, quoting statements about him made by learned men as stated above. He puts al-Tirmithi's initials on his name to indicate that the latter considers him an authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in al-Tirmithi's *Ṣaḥīḥ* through `Aṭā ibn al-Ṣā'ib and `Abdel-Malik ibn `Umayr.

11. Thābit ibn Dīnār

Thābit is better known as Abu Hamzah al-Thumālī. His being Shī'a is as clear as the sun. Author of *Al-Mīzān* mentions him, stating that the name of `Uthmān was mentioned once in Abu Hamzah's presence. The latter sarcastically asked: "Who is `Uthmān?!" It also states that al-Sulaymāni includes Abu Hamzah among the Rāfidis. Al-Thahbi puts al-Tirmithi's initials on Abu Hamzah's name as an indication of his being an authority. Wakī and Abu Na`īm quote him and use him as their authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in al-Tirmithi's *ṣaḥīḥ* through Anas and al-Sha`bi and others of the same calibre. He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in 150 A.H.

12. Thuwayr ibn Abu Fākhita

He is better known as Abu Jahm al-Kūfi, a freed slave of Ummu Hāni', daughter of Abu Ṭālib. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mīzān* and quoted Yunus ibn Abu Ishāq's allegation that he was Rāfidi. Nevertheless, both Sufyān and Shu`bah have quoted him, and al-Tirmithi has produced some of his aḥādīth in his own *Ṣaḥīḥ* through the authority of Ibn `Umer and Zayd ibn Arqam. During the time of Imām al-Bāqir (ع), he maintained his loyalty to the Imām, and he came to be known as such. In this regard, he made quite a few interesting dialogues with `Amr ibn Tharr, the judge, his contemporary Ibn Qays, and al-Ṣalt ibn Bahrām testifying to this fact.

13. Jābir ibn Yazīd ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ju`fi al-Kūfi

Al-Thahbi has narrated his biography in his own *Al-Mizān*, describing him as one of the Shī'a `ulema. He has quoted Sufyan saying that he heard Jābir saying that the knowledge with the Prophet (ص) was transferred to `Ali (ع), then to al-Ḥasan (ع), and so on till it reached Imam Ja`fer al-Ṣādiq (ع), who was one of his contemporaries. Muslim has mentioned him in one of the first chapters of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, quoting al-Jarrah who has heard Jābir saying that he knew seventy thousand aḥādīth of the Prophet all narrated through the authority of the father of Imām Ja`fer al-Ṣādiq (ع) (i.e. Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, peace be upon him). He has also quoted Zuhayr saying, "I know fifty thousand aḥādīth none of which I have narrated yet."

One day, he quoted one ḥadīth and said, "This is one of the fifty thousand aḥādīth." According to his biography in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mizān*, whenever Jābir narrated ḥadīth through al-Bāqir (ع), he says: "The successor of the successors of the Prophet related to me that..." In his biography in the *Al-Mizān*, Ibn `Uday says: "Commoners alleged that he [Jābir] used to believe in the return."

Relying on the authority of Zā'idah, al-Thahbi has included his biography in his *Al-Mizān* and said: "Jābir al-Ju`fi is a Rāfiḍi who curses..." In spite of that, both al-Nisā'i and Abu Dawūd rely on his authority. Refer to the ḥadīth which he narrates concerning accidental prostrations in both *ṣaḥīḥs*. Shihāb, Abu `Awānah, and many of their calibre, quote him. Al-Thahbi, who mentions him in his *Al-Mizān*, has put the initials of both Abu Dawūd and al-Tirmithi on his name to indicate their reliance on his authority. He also quotes Sufyan saying that Jābir al-Ju`fi is God-fearing while narrating ḥadīth, and that he has said: "I have never seen anyone more pious than him [Jābir]." He also quotes Shu`bah saying that Jābir is truthful, and "Whenever Jābir narrated ḥadīth, we listened, since he is the most trustworthy of all

men." Wakī used to say, "If doubt entertains your mind, you may doubt anyone other than Jābir al-Ju`fi," and that Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam heard al-Shāfi`i once saying that Sufyān al-Thawri said once to Shu`bah: "If you ever cast doubt about Jābir, that will signal the end of our friendship." Jābir died in either 127 or 128 Hij., may Allāh have mercy on his soul.

14. Jarīr ibn `Abdel-Ḥamīd al-Dabi al-Kūfi

In his work *Al-Ma`ārif*, Ibn Qutaybah includes him among Shī`a dignitaries, while al-Thahbi mentions him in *Al-Mizān*, marking his name to denote the consensus of the *ṣahīhs* in relying on his authority. He has praised him saying: "He is the learned man of the Rayy on whose authority many authors rely," testifying to the consensus of opinion regarding his reliability. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhārī's and Muslim's *Ṣahīhs* narrated through A`mash, Mughīrah, Maṣūr, Ismā`īl ibn Abu Khālid and Abu Ishāq al-Shaybāni. Qutaybah ibn Sa`īd, Yahya ibn Yahya and `Uthmān ibn Abu Shaybah have all quoted his aḥādīth as stated in both *ṣahīhs*. He died, may Allāh rest his soul in peace, in Rayy in 187 Hij. at the age of 77.

15. Ja`fer ibn Ziyād al-Aḥmar al-Kūfi

Abu Dawūd has mentioned him saying: "He is a truthful Shī`a." Al-Jawzjāni has said: "He has deviated from the path," meaning from al-Jawzjāni's path to that of the Prophet's Progeny (ع). Ibn `Adi has described him as a pious Shī`a. His grandson al-Ḥusayn ibn `Ali ibn Ja`fer ibn Ziyād has said: "My grandfather Ja`fer was one of the chiefs of Shī`as in Khurasān." Abu Ja`fer al-Dawānīqi ordered collars³ to be put around his neck and the necks of a group of other Shī`as and be pulled like dogs; then he kept all of them in dungeons for quite a long time. Ibn `Ayīnah, Wakī, Abu Ghassān al-Mahdi, Yahya ibn Bishr al-Ḥarīri and Ibn Mahdi have all quoted his aḥādīth, being their mentor. Ibn Ma`īn and others

have considered him an authority on the Prophet's ḥadīth. Ahmed describes his ḥadīth as “*ṣahīh*,” authentic, accurate. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mūzān* and narrated what is stated above, putting the initials of both al-Tirmithi and al-Nisā'i on his name as an indication of both men's reliance on him. Refer to his ḥadīth as they quote it in their *ṣahīhs* through Bayān ibn Bishr and `Atā' ibn al-Sā'ib. He is quoted through other men of the same calibre. He died, may Allah have mercy on his soul, in 167 Hij.

16. Ja`fer ibn Sulaymān al-Dab`i al-Baṣri (Abu Sulaymān)

On page 206 of his *Ma`ārif*, Ibn Qutaybah includes him among Shī'a dignitaries. Ibn Sa`d has mentioned him and emphasized his being a Shī'a and a trustworthy narrator of ḥadīth. Ahmed ibn al-Miqdām has charged him of being “Rāfiḍi.” Ibn `Adi has mentioned him saying: “He is a Shī'a. There is nothing wrong with his narration; his aḥādīth are by no means refutable, and I consider him as one whose ḥadīth is acceptable.” Abu Tālib has said: “I have heard Ahmed saying that there is nothing wrong with the aḥādīth narrated by Ja`fer ibn Sulaymān al-Dab`i.” It was said to Ahmed, “But Sulaymān ibn Harb says that he did not write down al-Dab`i's aḥādīth.” Ahmed replied by saying that Ibn Harb did not object that anyone should write down al-Dab`i's aḥādīth, and that [ibn Harb's prejudice was simply because] al-Dab`i was a Shī'a who quoted aḥādīth regarding `Ali [ibn Abu Tālib].” Ibn Ma`īn has said: “I have heard certain talk from `Abdul-Razzāq which testified to the man's “sectarian beliefs.” I said to him: “Your mentors, such as Mu`ammar, Ibn Jurayh, al-Awzā'i, Mālik, and Sufyān, are all Sunnis. Where did you learn this [Shī'a] sect from?” He answered: “One day, Ja`fer ibn Sulaymān al-Dab`i visited us, and I saw him to be virtuous, pious, and from him did I learn this sect.” I guess Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Muqaddami saw contratiwise! He openly used to say that Ja`fer learned “Rāfiḍism” from

ʿAbdul-Razzāq; therefore, he used to curse the latter and say: "Nobody corrupted Jaʿfer's beliefs other than he [ʿAbdul-Razzāq]."

Quoting Sahl ibn Abu Khadouthah, al-Aqīlī has said: "I said to Jaʿfer ibn Sulaymān: 'I have heard that you curse Abu Bakr and ʿUmer.' He replied: 'Cursing I do not; but hating, you can say whatever you will.'"

Relying on Jarīr ibn Yazīd ibn Harūn, Ibn Ḥabān has said in his *Thiqāt*, "My father sent me once to Abu Jaʿfer al-Dabʿī. I said to the latter: 'I have heard that you curse Abu Bakr and ʿUmer.' He replied: 'I do not curse them. But if you want to say that I despise them, feel free;' therefore, I concluded that he was Rāfiḍī."

In his biography of Jaʿfer in *Al-Mīzān*, al-Thahbi has included all the above and emphasized as well the fact that the man was a pious ʿālim "in spite of being a Shīʿa." Muslim relies on him in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* and quotes some of his unique aḥādīth which are published nowhere else as al-Thahbi himself testifies when he narrates Jaʿfer's biography. Refer to his ḥadīth in the *ṣaḥīḥ* narrated through Thābit al-Banāni, al-Jaʿd ibn ʿUthmān, Abu ʿUmrān al-Jawnī, Yazīd ibn al-Rashk and Saʿīd al-Jarīri. Qatān ibn Naṣīr, Yahya ibn Yahya, Qutaybah, Muḥammad ibn ʿUbayd ibn Ḥasāb, Ibn Mahdi and Musaddid have all quoted his aḥādīth. For example, he has said: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, dispatched a division of the Muslim army under ʿAli's command, etc." Another ḥadīth he has narrated states: "What do you want of ʿAli? ʿAli is of me, and I am of him. He is the *wali* (master) after me of every believer," as quoted in al-Nisāʿī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and transmitted through Ibn ʿAdī from al-Nisāʿī. Al-Thahbi has stated the above while discussing Jaʿfer in his *Al-Mīzān*. He died in Rajab of 178 A.H.; may Allāh be merciful unto him.

17. Jamī ibn `Umayrah ibn Tha`labah al-Kūfī al-Taymi (alias Taymullāh)

Abu Hātim has mentioned his biography in his own *Al-Mīzān* at the conclusion of which he states: "Al-Kūfī is one of the Shī'a nobility whose ḥadīth is authentically narrated." Ibn Ḥabān has mentioned him and stated, as indicated in *Al-Mīzān*, that he is "Rāfīdī." I say that al-`Alā' ibn Sālih, Ṣadaqah ibn al-Muthannā, and Hākim ibn Jubayr have all derived their knowledge from him, being their mentor.

The Sunan books quote him thrice. Al-Tirmithi has acclaimed his ḥadīth, as al-Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān* testifies. He is one of the *tabi`īn*. He learned ḥadīth from Ibn `Umer and `Āysha. One of the ahādīth which he learned from Ibn `Umer states that the latter heard the Messenger of Allāh addressing `Ali thus: "You are my brother in this life and the life hereafter."

18. Al-Hārith ibn Ḥaṣīrah Abul Nu`mān al-Azdi al-Kūfī

Abu Hātim al-Rāzi describes him as one of the Shī'a nobility. Abu Aḥmed al-Zubayri has attributed to him the belief in the return. Ibn `Adi mentions him saying: "His ḥadīth is written down in spite of the weakness I have seen therein. He is one of the Kūfis who will be burned in the Fire because of their Shī'ism." Thanīj has said: "I once asked Jarīr: 'Have you met al-Hārith ibn Ḥaṣīrah?' He answered, 'Yes, indeed, I have. I met him as an old man who used to stay silent most of the time, and he insisted on something quite magnanimous.'" Yahya ibn Ma`īn has mentioned him and said: "He is trustworthy [though] Khashbi [one of the derogatory names downgrading Shī'as, tr.]." Al-Nisā'i, too, trusts him. Al-Thawri, Mālik ibn Maghūl, `Abdullāh ibn Namīr, and a group of their calibre, have all quoted him, since he was their mentor in whom they put their trust.

Al-Thahbi has narrated his biography in his *Al-Mīzān* stating all the above. Refer to his ḥadīth in the Sunan through

Zayd ibn Wahab, `Ikrimah, and a group of their class. Al-Nisā'i quotes `Abbad ibn Ya`qūb al-Rawājni who quotes a chain of narrators including `Abdullāh ibn `Abdul-Mālik al-Mas`ūdi that al-Hārith ibn Haṣīrah, according to Zayd ibn Wahab, reported that `Ali (ع) was heard once saying: "I am the servant of Allāh and the brother of His Messenger; nobody else can say so except a liar."

Al-Hārith ibn Haṣīrah narrates through Abu Dawūd al-Subai'i, through `Umrān ibn Haṣīn, saying: "I was sitting once in the presence of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, with `Ali sitting beside him. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, recited `Or who else [other than Allāh] that would respond to the one in dire need for help, remove his distress, and make ye vicegerents on earth?' `Ali was shaken and moved a great deal; thereupon, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, patted `Ali's shoulder and said: `Nobody loves you except a true believer [a *mu'min*], and nobody hates you except a hypocrite till the Day of Judgment."

Traditionists such as Muḥammad ibn Kuthayyir and others have quoted the ḥadīth cited above from Al-Hārith ibn Haṣīrah. Al-Thahbi has transmitted it while stating the biography of Nāfi` ibn al-Hārith through the same chain of narrators. When he comes to Al-Hārith ibn Haṣīrah, he comments saying, "He is truthful; but he is also Rāfiḍi."

19. Al-Hārith ibn `Abdullah al-Hamadāni

He was one of the close friends of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) and one of the best *tabi'īn*. His being a Shī'a needs no proof. He is the first of those counted by Ibn Qutaybah in his *Ma`ārif* as Shī'a dignitaries. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mīzān*, admitting that he was one of the most highly recognized *ulema* among the *tabi'īn*; then he quotes Ibn Habān's statement saying that he was "extremist" in his Shī'a beliefs. After that, he states a great deal about

some people's anger with him because of his Shī'a beliefs. In spite of all this, he also records their consensus that the man is the most knowledgeable, pious, and best informed about rituals. He has also admitted that the ahādīth narrated by al-Hārith are in existence in the four books of *sunan*. He declares the fact that Nisā'i, in spite of his prejudice, has strongly relied on the authority of al-Hārith, admitting that the public, in spite of belittling the man, kept quoting his ahādīth in all religious matters, and that al-Sha`bi called him a liar, then he turned around and quoted him!

Al-Thahbi states the following in his *Al-Mīzān*: "Obviously, al-Nisā'i falsifies him when it comes to the latter's tone and tale; but when the man narrates hadīth, he does not disbelieve in him." *Al-Mīzān* quotes Muḥammad ibn Sirīn saying: "There were five well-known companions of Ibn Mas`ūd. I came to know four of them, but I missed al-Hārith whom I never saw. He was the best among them."

A great deal of controversy exists regarding which of the other three, namely Alqamah, Masrūq, or `Ubaydah, is the best. I say that Allāh has enabled trustworthy traditionists to do justice to al-Sha`bi and prove him a liar. This has been pointed out by Ibn `Abd al-Birr in his book *Jāmi` Bayanul `Ilm* which quotes the frank statement made by Ibrahīm al-Nakh'i belying al-Sha`bi, adding verbatim: "I think that al-Sha`bi has received his fair punishment for saying the following about al-Hārith al-Hamadāni: `Al-Hārith, one of the liars, informed me that..., etc.'"⁴ Ibn `Abd al-Birr has said: "Al-Hārith has shown no indication of being a liar; some people have borne grudge against him simply because he loved `Ali so much and preferred him over others. This is the reason why al-Sha`bi has called him a liar, since al-Sha`bi favours Abu Bakr, stating that the latter was the first to embrace Islam, and he favours `Umer, too."

Among those who bore grudge against al-Hārith was Muḥammad Ibn Sa`d who included al-Hārith's biography in

Volume 6 of his *Tabaqāt*, saying that al-Hārith speaks "maliciously." He does not do al-Hārith, nor any other Shī'a notable, any justice even when it comes to knowledge or feats. The "malicious" talk Ibn Sa`d is referring to is nothing other than allegiance to Muhammad's progeny and his taking them for guides in all matters, as Ibn `Abd al-Birr has admitted in his above-quoted statement. Al-Hārith's demise took place in 65 Hij.; may Allāh have mercy on his soul.

20. **Habīb ibn Abu Thābit al-Asadi al-Kāhili al-Kūfi**

He was one of the *tābi`īn*. Qutaybah, in his *Ma`ārif*, and Shahrastāni, in his *Al-Milal wal Nihal*, have both included him among Shī'a dignitaries. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mizān*, marking his name with the indication that authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥs* rely on his authority without any hesitation. Yahya Ibn Ma`īn and a group of other scholars have all trusted him.

Al-Dawalībi, however, has spoken ill of him and classified his traditions as "weak" just because of his being a Shī'a. What truly amazes me is the attitude of Ibn `Awn who was unable to find any pretext to cast doubt about Habīb's traditions, in spite of his ardent desire to do so; therefore, he had to look down at him and call him "a`war," one-eyed. One's real handicap is sinning and speaking ill of others, not in losing an eye.

Refer to Habīb's traditions in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥs* as narrated through Sa`īd ibn Jubayr and Abu Wā'il. His ḥadīth narrated through Zayd ibn Wahab is recorded only in Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his ḥadīth is narrated through Muḥammad ibn `Ali ibn `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās, and through Tawūs, al-Dahhāk al-Mashriqi, Abu `Abbās ibn al-Shā`ir, Abu al-Minhal `Abdul-Rahmān, `Atā' ibn Yasīn, Ibrāhīm ibn Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqās, and through Mujāhid. In both *ṣaḥīḥs*, Miṣār, al-Thawri, and Shu`bah have quoted his traditions. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his aḥādīth are quoted by

Sulaymān al-A`mash, Ḥaṣīn, `Abdul-`Azīz ibn Sayāh and Abu Ishāq al-Shaybāni. He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in 119 Hij.

21. Al-Ḥasan ibn Ḥayy

Ḥayy's full name is Sāliḥ ibn Sāliḥ al-Hamadāni, brother of `Ali ibn Sāliḥ. Both men, who were born twins, are on the top of the list of Shī'a nobility. `Ali was born only one hour earlier. Nobody has ever heard his brother calling him by his first name; instead, he used to always refer to him as "Abu Muḥammad." This has been mentioned in Vol. 6 of Ibn Sa`d's *Ṭabaqāt*, in the chapter dealing with al-Ḥasan. The author states: "Al-Ḥasan was one of the dignitaries, but he is inflicted with Shī'ism. He did not participate in the Jum`a prayers, and he preached denunciation of unjust rulers." He also mentions the fact that the man never invoked Allāh's mercy on `Uthmān.

Ibn Sa`d has mentioned him in Vol. 6 of his *Ṭabaqāt*, saying, "He is trustworthy; he narrates many aḥādīth, and he is a Shī'a." Imām Ibn Qutaybah has included his name among other narrators of ḥadīth in his *Ma`ārif*, highlighting his being a Shī'a. At the conclusion of his book, he lists al-Ḥasan among such narrators. Muslim and authors of the *sunan* books have all relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Muslim's *Saḥīḥ* as narrated by Sammāk ibn Ḥarb, Ismā`īl al-Sadī, `Āṣim al-Aḥwal, and Harūn ibn Sa`d. `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa al-`Abasi, Yahya ibn Ādam, Ḥamīd ibn `Abdul-Rahmān al-Rawāsi, `Ali ibn al-Ja`d, Ahmed ibn Yūnus and all renown men of their intellectual calibre have learned ḥadīth from him.

In his biography in *Al-Mīzān*, al-Thahbi indicates that Ibn Ma`īn and others have trusted his [al-Ḥasan's] ḥadīth. He adds saying that `Abdullāh ibn Ahmed has quoted his father saying that al-Ḥasan is more authentic than Sharīk. Al-Thahbi also states that Abu Hātim has said: "He is a trust; he has a

sound and authentic memory," and that Abu Zar`ah has said: "He has combined in him accomplishment, *fiqh*, piety, and asceticism," and that Nisā'i has trusted him. He also quotes Abu Na`īm saying: "I have quoted eight hundred traditionists; I have found none better than al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ," and that he has also said: "I have come across nobody who did not err other than al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ." He quotes `Ubaydah ibn Sulaymān saying: "Allāh is too shy to harm al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ." He quotes Yahya ibn `Ali Bakīr asking al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ: "Describe to us how to conduct the ceremonial bathing of the deceased;" he could not do so because of being overcome by tears. He quotes `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa saying: "I used to recite the holy Qur`ān in the presence of `Ali ibn Ṣāliḥ. Having finished reciting 'Exercise patience [O Muḥammad]!; We have granted them a respite only for an appointed time,' his brother fell down snorting like a wounded bull; so, `Ali lifted him up, wiped and washed his face then supported him against falling again," and that Wakī has said: "Al-Ḥasan and `Ali sons of Ṣāliḥ and their mother divided night-time among them into three parts: each alternates in his portion thereof in keeping vigil, spending it in prayers and adoration. When their mother died, they split it into equal halves. Then `Ali died; therefore, al-Ḥasan used to stay all night long worshipping."

Abu Sulaymān al-Dārāni has said: "I have never seen anyone more awe-stricken than al-Ḥasan son of Ṣāliḥ who stood up one night to recite Chapter 78 of the Holy Qur`ān and fainted yet continued reciting till dawn." He was born, may Allāh have mercy upon him, in 100 Hij. and he died in 169.

22. Al-Ḥakam ibn `Utaybah al-Kūfi

Ibn Qutaybah has indicated the fact that al-Ḥakam ibn `Utaybah was a Shī'a in his *Ma`ārif* and included him among Shī'a nobility. Both Bukhāri and Muslim rely on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in their *ṣaḥīḥs* as narrated by Abu Jaḥīfah,

Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`i, Mujāhid, and Sa`īd ibn Jubayr. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, it is narrated by `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Abu Layla, al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymarah, Abu Ṣālih, Tharr ibn `Abdullāh, Sa`īd ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn `Abzi, Yahya al-Jazzār, Nāfi` (a slave of Ibn `Umer), `Atā' ibn Abu Rabāh, `Imārah ibn `Umayr, `Arrāk ibn Mālik, al-Sha`bi, Maymūn ibn Mahrān, al-Ḥasan al-`Arni, Muṣ`ab ibn Sa`d and `Ali ibn al-Husayn.

In both *ṣaḥīḥs*, his aḥādīth are quoted by Maṣūr, Miṣār and Shu`bah. Particularly in Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his aḥādīth are narrated by `Abdul-Malik ibn Abu Ghaniya. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his aḥādīth are narrated by al-A`mash, `Amr ibn Qays, Zayd ibn Abu Anīsa, Mālik ibn al-Maghūl; Abān ibn Taghlib, Ḥamzah al-Zayyāt, Muḥammad ibn Jehada, Mutraf and Abu `Awānah. He died in 115 Hij. at the age of 65.

23. Ḥammād ibn `Isa al-Jehni

He drowned at Juhfa. Abu `Ali has mentioned him in his book *Muntahal Maqāl*. Al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali ibn Dawūd abridged the said article in his own concise *Mukhtasar*, in a chapter dealing with biographies of notables, a group of Shī`a *ulemā* and authors of biographies and dictionaries who regard him as most trustworthy, a follower of the rightly-guided Imāms, peace be upon them. He learned from Imām al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him, seventy aḥādīth by the holy Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, but he did not relate more than twenty of them. He has authored a few books with which followers of our faith are familiar.

Once he entered in the presence of Imām Abul-Ḥasan al-Kāzim, peace be upon him, and said: "May my life be sacrificed for you! Please pray Allāh to bless me with a house, a wife, a son, a servant, and a pilgrimage every year." The Imam said: "Lord! I invoke Thee to send blessings unto Muḥammad and the progeny of Muḥammad, and to bless this

man with a house, a wife, a son, a servant, and a pilgrimage for fifty years each." Hammād said: "When he prayed for my performing the pilgrimage fifty times, I became sure I would never live beyond that. I have performed the annual pilgrimage forty-eight times; this is my house with which Allāh has blessed me; yonder there is my wife behind the curtain listening to me; this is my son, and this is my servant; I have been blessed with all of these."

Two years later, and having performed the pilgrimage fifty times, he accompanied Abul `Abbās al-Nawfali al-Qaṣīr on his fifty-first pilgrimage. When he reached the place where pilgrims put on the *ihrām* garb, he entered the Joḥfa river for a bath, but the torrent overwhelmed him, and he drowned before being able to perform his 51st pilgrimage. His death, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, took place in 209 Hij. His birth-place is Kūfa, but he resided in Baṣrah. He lived over seventy years. We have conducted a thorough research of his biography in our book *Mukhtaṣar al-Kalām fi Mu'allifī al-Shī'a min Ṣadr al-Islām* [A Brief Discourse of Shī'a Authors of Early Islam].

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him and put "TQ" on his name as a reference to those among the authors of the Sunan who have quoted him [Tirmithi] and Dār Qutni, and mentioned the fact that he drowned in 208 Hij., and that he narrated ḥadīth through Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع). The author has shown his grudge towards this man, calling his ḥadīth "weak" for no reason other than his beliefs being Shī'a. Strange enough, Dar Qutni calls his ḥadīth "weak" on one hand, while on the other he uses him as an authority in his own Sunan — thus indeed do some people behave!

24. Hamrān ibn `Ayīnah

He is brother of Zurārah. Both men were among the most reliable Shī'as, custodians of the *sharī'a*, oceans of the knowledge about Muḥammad's progeny (ع). They were

lanterns that shone in the dark and pillars of guidance. They frequented Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣḍiq (ع) and enjoyed a lofty status in the eyes of the Imams among the Prophet's descendants. Al-Thahbi mentions Hamran in his *Al-MẒān*, marking his name with Q to indicate who among the compilers of the sunan relies upon his authority [i.e. Dār Qutni. Then al-Thahbi adds: "He has narrated ḥadīth from Abul Tufayl and others. Hamzah has recited the holy Qur'ān to him, and he himself is used to recite it with perfect accuracy." Ibn Ma`īn considers his ḥadīth "negligible," while Abu Ḥātim hails him as a mentor. Yet Abu Dawūd labels him "Rāfidi."

25. Khālid ibn Mukhlid al-Qatwāni

Also known as Abul-Haytham al-Kūfi, he is one of Bukhāri's mentors, as the latter states in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 283, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*, saying, "He was a staunch Shī'a. He died in Kūfa in mid-Muḥarram of 213 A.H. during the reign of al-Ma'mūn. He was extremist in his Shī'a beliefs, and writers have documented this fact."

Abu Dawūd mentions him saying: "He is truthful; but he follows Shī'ism." Al-Jawzjāni says the following about him: "He never ceases denouncing [certain persons], publicly propagating his corrupt sect." Al-Thahbi narrates his biography in his own *Al-MẒān*, quoting the views of both Abu Dawūd and Jawzjāni stated above. Yet both Bukhāri and Muslim have relied upon his authority in several chapters of their respective *ṣaḥīḥs*. Refer to his ḥadīth as in Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* as narrated from al-Mughīrah ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān, and in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* by Muḥammad ibn Ja`fer ibn Abul Kathīr, Mālik ibn Anas, and Muḥammad ibn Mūsa. Both *ṣaḥīḥs* quote his *Al-MẒān* from Sulaymān ibn Bilāl and `Ali ibn Mushīr. Al-Bukhāri quotes his ḥadīth in several places of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, without referring to any chain of narrators, quoting two of his aḥādīth from Muḥammad ibn `Uthmān ibn Karāmah.

Muslim narrates his ḥadīth as transmitted by Abu Karīb, Aḥmed ibn `Uthmān al-`Awḍi, al-Qāsim ibn Zakariyyah, `Abd ibn Ḥamīd, Ibn Abu Shaybah, and Muḥammad ibn `Abdullāh ibn Namīr. Authors of the sunan have all relied on the authority of his ḥadīth, while being aware of his sect.

26. Dawūd ibn Abu `Awf (Abul-Ḥijāb)

Ibn `Adi has mentioned him saying, "I cannot rely upon his authority due to his being a Shī'a. The majority of the aḥādīth he narrates are related to the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt."

Consider with amazement such a statement! No harm, indeed, can reach Dawūd from these Nāṣibis since both Sufyans quote his aḥādīth, in addition to `Alī ibn `Ābis and others belonging to the elite among their peers. Both Abu Dawūd and al-Nisā'i have relied upon his authority, and so have Ahmed and Yahya. Al-Nisā'i has said the following about him: "There is nothing wrong with his aḥādīth." Abu Ḥātim has said: "His ḥadīth is sound." Al-Thahbi has quoted such testimonies in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Refer to his ḥadīth in Abu Dawūd's *Sunan*, in al-Nisā'i's through Abu Ḥāzim al-Ashja'i, `Ikrimah, and others.

27. Zubayd ibn al-Ḥārith ibn `Abdul-Karīm al-Yāmi al-Kūfi

Also known as Abu `Abdul-Rahmān, he is mentioned in al-Thahbi's *Al-MẒān* where the author says: "He is a trustworthy *tabi'i* who inclines towards Shī'ism." Then he quotes statements to prove that Zubayd's ḥadīth has been verified by al-Qattān, and that there are other renown critics and verifiers who regard him trustworthy. Abu Ishāq al-Jawzjāni has included a crude statement about him which is typical of his attitude and that of other Nāṣibis, stating,

"Among the residents of Kufa, there is a faction whose faith is not appreciated [by Nāṣibis], yet they happen to be

masters of ḥadīth. Among them are: Abu Ishāq, Mansūr, Zubayd al-Yāmi, al-A`mash and other peers. People have tolerated them for no reason other than their truth in narrating ḥadīth, and their narrations testify to the authenticity of one another,"

up to the conclusion of his statement which truth has dictated to him to reveal. Often, truth is spoken by the fair-minded just as it is by the stubborn and obstinant. What harm can reach these lofty pillars of knowledge, the masters of ḥadīth in Islam, if such a critic does not appreciate their holding in high esteem the holy Prophet's kin who are the gates of salvation, the protectors of all humans on earth after the Prophet (ص) himself, his nation's ark of salvation? What harm can befall them from the critic who has no choice except to pursue his quest till reaching their door steps, and no option but to beg their own favours?

If dignitaries of my tribe are pleased with me,
Then let its villains chafe and be angry.

These authorities do not pay any attention to al-Jawzjāni or others like him, having been held trustworthy by the authors of the *ṣaḥīḥ* books and by those of all sunan as well. Refer to Zubayd's ḥadīth in both Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥs* as transmitted by Abu Wā'il, al-Sha`bi, Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`i, and Sa`d ibn `Ubaydullāh. Only Bukhāri quotes his ḥadīth through Mujāhid. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his ḥadīth is narrated by Murrah al-Hamādani, Muḥārib ibn Dithār, Ammārah ibn `Umayr, and Ibrāhīm al-Taymi. His ḥadīth is quoted in both *ṣaḥīḥs* as transmitted by Shu`bah, al-Thawri, and Muḥammad ibn Talḥah. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his ḥadīth is narrated by Zuhayr ibn Mu`āwiyah, Faḍīl ibn Ghazwān, and Husayn ibn al-Nakh`i. He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in 124 A.H.

28. Zayd ibn al-Habab, Abul-Hasan al-Kūfi al-Tamīmi

Ibn Qutaybah has included his biography among those whose biographies he has included among Shī'a dignitaries in his work *Al-Ma`ārif*. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mẓān*, describing him as "pious, trustworthy, truthful." He indicates his being vouched as trustworthy by Ibn Ma`īn and Ibn al-Madīni. He has quoted Abu Hātim and Ahmed describing him as truthful, adding that `Adi has said: "He is one of the reliable Kūfi traditionists whose trustworthiness is never doubted." Muslim has relied on his authority. Refer to the latter's *ṣaḥīḥ* containing his ḥadīth as narrated by Mu`āwiyah ibn Sālih, al-Daḥḥāk ibn `Uthmān, Qurrah ibn Khālid, Ibrāhīm ibn Nāfi`, Yahya ibn Ayyūb, Saif ibn Sulaymān, Hasan ibn Wāqid, `Ikrimah ibn `Ammār, `Abdul-`Azīz ibn Abu Salma, and `Aflah ibn Sa`īd. His ḥadīth is quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah, Muḥammad ibn Hātim, Hasan al-Hulwāni, Ahmed ibn al-Munthir, Ibn Namīr, Ibn Karīb, Muḥammad ibn Rāfi`, Zuhair ibn Harb, and Muḥammad ibn al-Faraj.

29. Sālim ibn Abul Ja`d al-Ashja`i al-Kūfi

He is brother of `Ubayd, Ziyad, `Umrān, and Muslim, sons of Abul-Ja`d.

In Volume 6 of *Al-Tabaqāt*, Sa`d mentions all of them on page 2303 and the succeeding pages. When he comes to Muslim, he says, "Abul-Ja`d begot six sons. Two of them followed Shī'ism. These are Sālim and `Ubayd. Two others are Murji'is, while the remaining two agree with the Khārijites. Their father used to say: "What is the matter with you? I wonder why Allāh has made your views vary so much." Ibn Qutaybah has discussed them on page 156 of his *Ma`ārif* in a chapter dealing with Shī'a *tabi`īn* and their successors.

A group of learned scholars has testified to the Shī'a views of Sālim ibn Abul-Ja`d. Qutaybah, on page 206 of his

Ma`ārif, has included him among Shī'a dignitaries, and so has al-Shahristāni in his work *Al-Milal wal Nihal* on page 27, Vol. 2, in the footnote of his chapter on Ibn Ḥazm. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mẓān*, calling him a trustworthy *tābi`i*. He has also stated that his ḥadīth from al-Nu`mān ibn Bashīr and Jābir is included in both *ṣahīhs*. In fact, his ḥadīth, from Anas ibn Mālik and Karīb, is included in both *ṣahīhs* as scholars of ḥadīth already know. Al-Thahbi says that his ḥadīth from `Abdullāh ibn `Umer, and from Ibn `Umer, exists in Bukhāri's *Ṣahīh*. The latter also contains his ḥadīth from Ma`dān ibn Abu Talha and the latter's father. His *ḥadīth* is quoted in both *ṣahīhs* by al-A`mash, Qatādah, `Amr ibn Murrah, Mansūr, and Ḥasīn ibn `Abdul-Rahmān. He also knows ḥadīth quoted by al-Nisā'i and Abu Dawūd in their respective Sunan. He died in either 87 or 97 A.H. during the reign of Sulaymān ibn `Abdul-Malik, or, as some say, during that of `Umer ibn `Abdul-`Azīz, and Allāh knows best.

30. Sālim ibn Abu Ḥafṣah al-`Ijli al-Kūfi

Al-Shahristāni includes him in his book *Al-Milal wal-Nihal* among Shī'a nobility. Al-Fallās says: "He is a weak traditionist who is extremist in his Shī'a beliefs." Ibn `Adi says: "People criticize his extremism; but I hope there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth." Muḥammad ibn Bashir al-`Abdi says: "I have seen Sālim ibn Abu Ḥafṣah as a fool with a long beard—what a beard! He says: 'I wish I had been a partner of `Ali in everything he possessed.'"

Al-Husayn ibn `Ali al-Ju`fi has said: "I have seen Sālim ibn Abu Ḥafṣah as a fool with a long beard who used to often say, 'Here I come, O killer of Na`thal, annihilater of Banu Umayyah!'" `Amr ibn al-Sālim ibn Abu Ḥafṣah asked him once: "Did you kill `Uthman?" He answered: "Did I?!" `Amr said: "Yes, you did. You do not condemn his murder." Abu ibn al-Madīni has said: "I have heard Jarīr saying, 'I broke my friendship with Sālim ibn Abu Ḥafṣah because he

used to always defend the Shī'as." Al-Thahbi has detailed his biography, mentioning all the above. On page 234 of Vol. 6 of his *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd mentions him and says: "He was very staunch in his Shī'a beliefs. He entered Mecca during the reign of the `Abbasides crying, 'Here I come, here I come, O killer of the Omayyads!' His voice was quite loud, so much so that his call was heard by Dawūd ibn `Ali who inquired: 'Who is this man?' People informed him that it was Sālim ibn Abu Hafṣah, and they explained his story and views."

Al-Thahbi has included his biography in his *Al-Mīzān* commenting, "He was chief of those who belittled Abu Bakr and `Umer." In spite of this, however, both Sufyāns quote his hadīth, and so does Muḥammad ibn Fuḍayl, while al-Tirmithi has relied on his authority, and Ibn Ma'in has held him trustworthy. He died in 137 A.H.

31. Sa'd ibn Ṭarīf al-Iskāfi al-Hanzali al-Kūfi

Al-Thahbi mentions him, marking his name with TQ as a reference to the authors of sunan who quote him (i.e. al-Tirmithi and Dār Qutni). Al-Thahbi also quotes al-Fallās saying that Sa'd is "weak, extremist in his Shī'a beliefs." In spite of his being a "Shī'a extremist," al-Tirmithi and others quote him. Refer to his hadīth in al-Tirmithi's *Ṣaḥīḥ* as narrated by `Ikrimah and Abul-Wā'il. He also narrates hadīth as transmitted by al-Asbagh ibn Nabatah, `Umān ibn Ṭalhah and `Umayr ibn Ma'mūn. Isrā'īl, Habān and Abu Mu'āwiyah all quote him.

32. Sa'id ibn Ashwa`

He is mentioned in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān* where the author says: "Sa'id ibn Ashwa` is a famous and truthful Kūfi judge. Al-Nisā'i says that there is nothing wrong with his hadīth, and that he is a friend of al-Sha'bi. Al-Jawzjāni describes him as extremist, heretic, and a Shī'a zealot."

Both al-Bukhāri and Muslim rely on his authority in their respective *ṣaḥīḥs*. His ḥadīth from al-Sha`bi is regarded as authentic by authors of both *ṣaḥīḥ* books. In both Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥs*, his ḥadīth is quoted by Zakariyyah ibn Abu Zā'idah and Khālid al-Ḥaththā'. He died during the reign of Khālid ibn `Abdullāh.

33. Sa`īd ibn Khaytham al-Hilālī

Ibrāhīm ibn `Abdullāh ibn al-Junayd was asked once: "Sa`īd ibn Khaytham is a Shī'a. What do you think of him?" He answered: "Let's say that he is a Shī'a, but he also is trustworthy."

Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mīzān*, quoting Ibn Ma`īn narrating the gist of what has just been stated above. He has also marked his name with the initials of both al-Tirmithi and al-Nisā'i to indicate that both authors quote his ḥadīth in their *ṣaḥīḥs*. He also mentions the fact that Sa`īd narrates ḥadīth from Yazīd ibn Abu Ziyād and Muslim al-Mallā'i. His nephew, Aḥmed ibn Rashīd, too, narrates his ḥadīth.

34. Selāmah ibn al-Fuḍayl al-Abrash

He was a Rayy judge and a reporter of traditions related to the battles in which the holy Prophet (ﷺ) participated as transmitted by Ibn Ishāq. His *kunyat* (surname) is Abu `Abdullāh. In his biography in the *Al-Mīzān*, Ibn Ma`īn says: "Selamah al-Abrash al-Rāzi is a believer in Shī'ism and a man whose ḥadīth is [often] quoted, and there is no fault in the latter." Abu Zar`ah has also said in the *Al-Mīzān* that the natives of Rayy do not like him because of his (religious) views. Actually, their attitude is due to their own views regarding all followers of the household of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mīzān*, marking his name with the initials of Abu Dawūd and al-Tirmithi and saying: "He is well remembered for his prayers

and supplications." He died in 191 A.H. Ibn Ma`īn testifies to the fact that the ḥadīth related to the Prophet's military expeditions as narrated by Selāmah is more reliable than anyone else's. Zanīh is quoted as having said that he had heard Selāmah al-Abrash saying that he had heard ḥadīth related to the expeditions from Ishāq twice, and that he had also written down his aḥādīth as he had done with those of the expeditions.

35. Selāmah ibn Kahīl ibn Ḥaṣīn ibn Kādih ibn Asad al-Hadrami, Abu Yahya

A group of scholars following the faith of the majority of Muslims, such as Ibn Qutaybah in his *Ma`ārif*, who mentions on page 206 his distinction, and al-Shahristāni in his *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*, on page 27, Vol. 2, have included him among Shī'a nobility. Authors of the six *sahīhs* have all relied on his authority, and so have others. He has learned ḥadīth from men like Abu Jaḥīfah, Suwayd ibn Ghafḥah, al-Sha`bi, `Atā' ibn Abu Rabah, all cited in Bukhāri and Muslim. In Muslim, he quotes ḥadīth from Karīb, Tharr ibn `Abdullāh, Bakīr ibn al-Ashaj, Zayd ibn Ka`b, Sa`īd ibn Jubayr, Mujāhid, `Abdullāh ibn `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Yazīd, Abu Selāmah ibn `Abdul-Rahmān, Mu`āwiyah ibn al-Suwayd, Ḥabīb ibn `Abdullāh, and Muslim al-Baṭīn. Al-Thawri and Shu`bah have both cited his ḥadīth in these two works, while in Bukhāri, his ḥadīth is cited by Ismā`īl ibn Abu Khālid. In Muslim, he is quoted by Sa`īd ibn Masrūq, Aqīl ibn Khālid, `Abdul-Malik ibn Abu Sulaymān, `Ali ibn Ṣālih, Zayd ibn `Abu Anīṣah, Ḥammād ibn Selāmah, and al-Walīd ibn Harb.

Selāmah ibn Kāhil died in `Ashūra, 121 A.H.

36. Sulaymān ibn Sa`īd al-Khuzā'i al-Kufi

He used to be the supreme head of the Shī'as of Iraq, the arbitrator among them, their custodian and advisor. They had all met in his house when they swore the oath of allegiance to

Imām Husayn (ع). He is the herald of the *tawwabīn* (the penitents) among the Shī`as, those who rose to avenge the murder of Imām Husayn (ع). They were four thousand strong who camped at Nakhīla early in Rabī` al-Thāni, 65 A.H., then marched towards `Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād and engaged his army at Jazīra. They fought fiercely till each and every one of them died. Sulaymān, too, was martyred at a place called `Ayn al-Warda after Ḥasīn shot him with a deadly arrow. He was 93 years old then. His head and that of al-Musayyab ibn Najba were carried as trophies to Marwān ibn al-Hakam.

His biography is recorded in Vol. 6, Part One, of Ibn Sa`d's *Tabaqāt*, and in the *Isti`āb* of Ibn `Abd al-Birr. All those who wrote the stories of the ancestors have recorded his biography and praised his virtues, faith and piety. He enjoyed a lofty status, a position of honour and dignity among his folks, and his word weighed heavily. He is the one who killed Hawshab, the notorious enemy of the Commander of the Faithful, in a duel at Siffin. Sulaymān was keen to notice that the enemies of Ahl al-Bayt had gone astray. Traditionists have sought his audience. The aḥādīth he narrates about the Prophet (ص), the ones which he directly reported or those transmitted by Jubayr ibn Mu`im relying on his authority, are recorded in both Bukhārī's and Muslim's *Saḥīḥs*. In the latter, he is cited by Abu Ishaq al-Subay`i and `Adi ibn Thābit. Sulaymān has narrated aḥādīth which are not included in either *saḥīḥs*. These include aḥādīth from the Commander of the Faithful, his son Imām al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (ع), and Abi. In works other than these *saḥīḥs*, his ḥadīth is transmitted by Yahya ibn Ya`mur, `Abdullāh ibn Yasār, and by others.

37. Sulaymān ibn Tarkhān al-Taymi al-Baṣri

A slave of Qays, the *imām*, he is one of the most reliable authorities on ḥadīth. Ibn Qutaybah has included him among Shī`a dignitaries in his book *Al-Ma`ārif*. Authors of the six *saḥīḥs*, as well as others, have relied on his authority. Refer to

his ḥadīth in both *sahīhs* through Anas ibn Mālik, Abu Majāz, Bakr ibn `Abdullāh, Qatādah, and Abu `Uthmān al-Nahdi. Muslim's *Sahīh* quotes his ḥadīth through others. In both *sahīhs*, his ḥadīth is cited by his son Mu'tamir, and by Shu`bah and al-Thawri. Another party cites his ḥadīth in Muslim's *Sahīh*. He died in 143 A.H.

38. Sulaymān ibn Qarm ibn Ma`āth

He is also known as Abu Dawūd al-Dabi al-Kūfi. Ibn Haban mentions him within the text of Sulaymān's biography in *Al-Mūzān*. Ibn Habān has said, "He is a Rāfiḍī—very much so." Nevertheless, Ahmed ibn Hanbal has trusted him. At the conclusion of Sulaymān's biography as recorded in *Al-Mūzān*, Ibn `Adi says, "The aḥādīth narrated by Sulaymān ibn Qarm are authentic. Moreover, his are by far more reliable than those related by Sulaymān ibn Arqam."

Muslim, al-Nisā'i, al-Tirmithi, and Abu Dawūd have all cited his aḥādīth. When al-Thahbi mentions him, he puts the initials of these traditionists on his name. Refer to Muslim's *Sahīh* where Abul-Jawāb's ḥadīth is narrated by Sulaymān ibn Qarm from al-A`mash, up to the Prophet (ص). The said ḥadīth states that the Prophet (ص) has said that a man keeps company with those whom he loves. In the *sunan*, his aḥādīth quote Thābit through Anas successively saying that the Prophet (ص) has said: "Seeking knowledge is a religious obligation upon every Muslim." He quotes al-A`mash from `Amr ibn Murrah, from `Abdullāh ibn al-Hārith, from Zuhair ibn al-Aqmar, from `Abdullāh ibn `Umer who says that al-Hakam ibn Abul `Ās used to keep company with the Prophet (ص) and then would go and narrate it [in a twisted manner] to Quraysh; therefore, the Prophet (ص) denounced his behaviour and all his descendants as well till the Day of Judgment.

39. Sulaymān ibn Mahrān al-Kahilī al-Kūfī al-Aṣḥā`

He is one of the Shī`a nobility and a most trusted traditionist. Many a genius among Sunni men of knowledge, such as Ibn Qutaybah in his *Ma`ārif* and al-Shahristāni in his *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*, as well as many others, have all included him among Shī`a dignitaries.

In his biography of Zubayd, al-Jawzjani says the following in his book *Al-MẒān*: "Among the people of Kūfa, there are some folks whose sect is not appreciated, yet they are the masters of ḥadīth among Kūfī traditionists. Among them are: Abu Ishāq, Mansūr, Zubayd al-Yāmi, al-A`mash, and other peers. People tolerate them only because they are truthful in narrating ḥadīth," up to the end of his statement which clearly exposes his stupidity and prejudice. What harm can reach these dignitaries if the Nāṣibīs do not appreciate their commitment to discharge the Divine commandment of seeking the Pleasure of Allāh through remaining faithful to His Prophet's kin and kith? These Nāṣibīs, as a matter of fact, tolerate these men not only because they are truthful in narrating ḥadīth, but rather because they are indispensable. Had they rejected these men's ḥadīth, the majority of the Prophet's aḥādīth would have then been abandoned, as al-Thahbi himself admits in his *Al-MẒān* while discussing the biography of Abān ibn Taghlib. I think that al-Mughīrah's statement: "Abu Ishāq and your A`mash have rendered Kūfa to destruction" is said due only to these men's Shī`a beliefs. Other than that, both Abu Ishāq and al-A`mash are oceans of knowledge and custodians of the prophetic legacy.

Al-A`mash has left us many interesting incidents which vividly portray his greatness. One of them, for example, is included by Ibn Khallikān in al-A`mash's biography in *Wafīyyāt al-A`yān* where the author states:

"Hishām ibn `Abdul-Malik once wrote to al-A`mash saying: 'Recount for me `Uthmān's virtues and `Ali's

vices.' Al-A`mash took the letter and tossed it into his she-camel's mouth. Then he turned to the messenger and said: 'This is my answer.' The messenger, however, pleaded to al-A`mash saying that his master had vowed to kill him if he did not return with an answer. He also pleaded to al-A`mash's brothers to pressure their brother to write something. Finally, he wrote: 'In the Name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Had `Uthmān had all the virtues of the people of the world, they would not have availed you aught, and had `Ali had in him all the vices of the people of the world, they would not have harmed you in the least; therefore, worry about your own soul, and peace be with you.'"

Another anecdote is narrated by Ibn `Abd al-Birr in his chapter on the *ulema's* statements evaluating each other's work in his book *Jāmi` Bayān al-`Ilm wa Fada'ilih*.⁵ The author quotes `Ali ibn Khashram saying, "I have heard Abul-Fadl ibn Mūsa say, 'I entered the house of al-A`mash once accompanied by Abu Ḥanīfah to visit him during his sickness. Abu Ḥanīfah said: 'O Abu Muḥammad! Had I not feared my visits would be a nuisance to you, I would have visited you more often'. Al-A`mash answered, 'You are a nuisance to me even at your own home; so, imagine how I feel when I have to look at your face.'" Abul-Fadl continues to say that having left the house of al-A`mash, Abu Ḥanīfah said, 'Al-A`mash never observed the fast of the month of Ramaḍān.' Ibn al-Khashram then asked al-Fadl what Abu Ḥanīfah meant. Al-Fadl answered, 'Al-A`mash used to observe the *suhūr* during the month of Ramaḍān according to the Prophet's ḥadīth as narrated by Huthayfah al-Yemāni.'" In fact, he used to observe the Holy Qur'ānic verse: "Therefore, eat and drink till you can distinguish the white thread from the black one, from the dawn, and complete the fast till night-time."

Authors of *Al-Wajīza* and *Bihār Al-Anwār* have both quoted Ḥasan ibn Sa`īd al-Nakh`i who quotes Sharīk ibn

`Abdullāh, the judge, saying, "I visited al-A`mash when he was sick prior to his demise. While I was there, Ibn Shabramah, Ibn Layla and Abu Hanīfah entered and inquired about his health. He told them that he was suffering from an acute feebleness, that he feared God for his sins, and he almost broke in tears. Abu Hanīfah then said to him: `O Father of Muḥammad! Fear Allah! Look now after yourself. You used to narrate certain ahādīth about `Ali which, if you denounce, would be better for you.' Al-A`mash answered: `Do you dare to say this to a man like me?' He even denounced him, and there is no need here to go into that. He was, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, as al-Thahbi describes him in his *Al-Mīzān*, a trusted Imām. He was exactly what Ibn Khallikān had described while discussing his biography in his own *Wafīyyāt al-A`yān*, a trustworthy and virtuous man of knowledge. Scholars have all conceded his truthfulness, equity and piety. Authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books, as well as many others besides them, have all relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhārī's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books from Zayd ibn Wahab, Sa`īd ibn Jubayr, Muslim al-Baṭīn, al-Sha`bi, Mujāhid, Abu Wā'il, Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`i and Abu Sālih Thakwān. He is cited in these works by Shu`bah, al-Thawri, Ibn `Aīnah, Abu Mua`āwiyah Muḥammad, Abu `Awānah, Jarīr, and Hafṣ ibn Ghiyāth. Al-A`mash was born in 61 A.H. and he died in 148 A.H., may Allāh be merciful unto him.

40. Sharīk ibn `Abdullāh ibn Sinān al-Nakh`i al-Kūfi, the judge

Imām Abu Qutaybah, in his *Ma`ārif*, has unreservedly included him among Shī'a nobility. At the conclusion of Sharīk's biography as recorded in *Al-Mīzān*, `Abdullāh ibn Idrīs swears that Sharīk is a Shī'a. Abu Dawūd al-Rahāwi is quoted in *Al-Mīzān*, too, to have heard Sharīk saying, "Ali is the best of creation; whoever denies this fact is *kafir* (apostate)."⁶ What he meant, of course, is that `Ali is the best

of all men excluding the Prophet (ﷺ), as all Shī'as believe. For this reason, al-Jawzjāni, as quoted in *Al-Mīzān*, describes him as "biased," meaning biased towards the faith of Ahl al-Bayt and preferring it to Jawzjāni's sect. *Al-Mīzān* also quotes Sharīk's ahādīth regarding the Commander of the Faithful. He cites Abu Rabī'ah from Ibn Buraydah from his father upto the Prophet who said: "For every Prophet there is a vicegerent and heir."

He was very zealous about disseminating the knowledge pertaining to the virtues of the Commander of the Faithful, and to pressure the Omayyads to recognize and publicize his merits, peace be upon him. In his work *Durrat al-Ghawwās*, al-Harīri, as in Sharīk's biography in Ibn Khallikān's *Wafīyyāt al-A'yān*, says, "Sharīk had an Omayyad friend of his. One day, Sharīk recounted the attributes of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع). His Omayyad friend said that `Ali was `a fine man.' This enraged Sharīk who said, `Is this all that can be said about `Ali, that he was a fine man, no more?'"⁷

At the conclusion of Sharīk's biography as stated in *Al-Mīzān*, Ibn Abu Shaybah has quoted `Ali ibn Ḥakim ibn Qādim citing `Ali saying that once a complaint was brought with a man to Sharīk's attention. The man said: "People claim that your mind is doubtful." Sharīk answered: "You fool! How can I ever be doubtful?! I wish I had been present in the company of `Ali to let my sword be drenched with the blood of his enemies."

Anyone who studies Sharīk's life-style will be convinced that the man was a very loyal follower of the path of Ahl al-Bayt (ع). He transmitted a great deal of traditions narrated by the most learned followers of Ahl al-Bayt. His son `Abdul-Rahmān has said, "My father has learned queries from Ja`fer al-Ju`fi, in addition to ten thousand rare traditions." `Abdullāh ibn al-Mubāarak is quoted in *Al-Mīzān* saying, "Sharīk is more knowledgeable about the Kūfians' hadīth than Sufyān. He was an avowed enemy of `Ali's foes, one who

spoke ill of them." `Abdul-Salām ibn Harb once asked him: "Why don't you visit a sick brother of yours?" He inquired: "And who is that?" The man answered: "Mālik ibn Maghūl." Sharīk, as stated in the latter's biography in *Al-Mizān*, then said: "Anyone who speaks ill of `Ali and `Ammar is surely no brother of mine."

Once the name of Mu`āwiyah was mentioned in his presence and was described as "clement." Sharīk, as stated in his biography in *Al-Mizān* as well as in Ibn Khallikān's *Wafiyāt al-A`yān*, said: "Whoever discards equity and fights `Ali can never be clement." He narrated one ḥadīth from Āṣim, Tharr, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ūd successively indicating that the Prophet (ص) had said: "If you see Mu`āwiyah on my pulpit, kill him." This is quoted by al-Tabari, and al-Tabari in turn is quoted by al-Thahbi while the latter discusses the biography of Abbād ibn Ya`qub.

Ibn Khallikān's *Wafiyāt* includes a biography of Sharīk where the author quotes a dialogue between Sharīk and Miṣ`ab ibn `Abdullāh al-Zubairi, in the presence of the `Abbaside ruler al-Mahdi. Miṣ`ab asked Sharīk: "Do you really belittle Abu Bakr and `Umer?" up to the conclusion of the incident.

In spite of all of this, al-Thahbi has described him as a "truthful *imām*." He also quotes Ibn Ma`īn saying that Sharīk is "truthful, trustworthy." At the conclusion of the biography, the author states: "Sharīk was a bastian of knowledge. Ishāq al-Azraq learned from him nine thousand aḥādīth." He also quotes Tawbah al-Halabi saying, "We were at Ramla once, and someone wondered who the nation's man was. Some people said it was Lahī`ah, while others said it was Mālik. We asked `Īsa ibn Yūnus to state his view. He said: 'The nation's man is Sharīk,' who was then still alive."

Muslim and authors of the four books of sunan have all relied on Sharīk's authority. Refer to his ḥadīth as they quote it transmitted by Ziyād ibn Alaqaḥ, `Ammār al-Thihni,

Hishām ibn `Urwah, Ya`li ibn `Atā', `Abdul-Malik ibn `Umayr, `Ammārah ibn al-Qa`qā' and `Abdullah ibn Shabramah. These reporters have cited Sharīk's ḥadīth from Ibn Shaybah, `Ali ibn Hākim, Yunus ibn Muḥammad, al-Faḍl ibn Mūsa, Muḥammad ibn al-Ṣabāh, and `Ali ibn Hajar. He was born in either Khurasān or Bukhāra in 95 A.H., and he died in Kūfa on a Saturday early in Thul-Qi`dah, 177 or 178.

41. **Shu`bah ibn al-Ḥajjāj Abul-Ward al-`Atki al-Wasiṭi (Abu Baṣṭām)**

Born in Wāsiṭ but lived in Baṣra, Abu Baṣṭām is the first to inquire in Iraq about traditionists, and he is credited with helping the weak and the abandoned. He is considered among Shī'a nobility by many highly intellectual Sunni scholars such as Qutaybah in his *Al-Ma`ārif*, and al-Shahristāni in his *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*. Authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books and others have all relied on his authority. His ḥadīth is ascertained in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *ṣaḥīḥ* books as transmitted by Abu Ishāq al-Subai`i, Ismā`il ibn Abu Khālid, Mansūr, al-A`mash and others. In both Bukhāri's and Muslim's books, his ḥadīth is cited by Muḥammad ibn Ja`fer, Yahya ibn Sa`īd al-Qattān, `Uthmān ibn Jabalah and others. He was born in 83 and he died in 160 A.H., may Allāh be merciful on him.

42. **Sa`ṣā`ah ibn Ṣawhān ibn Hajar ibn al-Hārith al-`Abdi** Imām Ibn Qutaybah describes him on page 206 of his *Ma`ārif* as one of the famous Shī'a dignitaries. Ibn Sa`d states on page 154, Vol. 6, of his *Tabaqāt*: "[Sa`ṣā`ah] is very well known all over Kūfa as an orator and a companion of `Ali with whom he has witnessed the Battle of the Camel together with his brothers Zayd and Sīhān sons of Ṣawhān. Sīhān is known as an orator before Sa`ṣā`ah, and he was the standard-bearer during the Battle of the Camel.⁸ Having been killed, Sīhān was succeeded in bearing the standard by Sa`ṣā`ah. Sa`ṣā`ah has narrated ḥadīth from Imām `Ali (ع), and also from

`Abdullāh ibn `Abbās. He is a trusted traditionist although the ahādīth he has narrated are not many." Ibn `Abd al-Birr mentions him in his *Istī`āb* saying: "He accepted Islam during the life-time of Prophet Muḥammad (ص) although he never met him in person due to his being very young then."

He is chief among his tribesmen, descendants of `Abd al-Qays. He is quite an eloquent orator, a man of wisdom who has acquired a total command over the language. He is, indeed, a man of piety, virtues, and wisdom. He is counted among the companions of `Ali, peace be upon him. Yahya ibn Ma`īn is quoted saying that Sa`ṣā`ah, Zayd and Sīhān sons of Ṣawḥān are all orators, and that Zayd and Sīhān were killed during the Battle of the Camel. He also cites a critical problem which `Umer, then caliph, could not solve; therefore, the caliph delivered a sermon in which he asked people for their suggestions. Sa`ṣā`ah, then a youth, stood and clarified its complexity and put forth a suggestion to it which was unanimously accepted. This should not surprise the reader since the descendants of Ṣawḥān were among the most prominent masters of Arabia, pillars in virtue and descent. Ibn Qutaybah mentions them on page 138 of his chapter on renown dignitaries and men of influence in his *Ma`arif*. The author says: "Ṣawḥān's descendants were Zayd ibn Ṣawḥān, Sa`ṣā`ah ibn Ṣawḥān, Sīhān ibn Ṣawḥān, of Banu `Abd al-Qays." He adds: "Zayd was among the best of men. He narrated saying that the Prophet (ص) had said: 'Zayd is indeed a good man, and Jandab—what a man he is!' People inquired: 'Why do you mention these men alone?' The Prophet answered: 'The arm of one of them will precede in thirty years the rest of his body in entering Paradise, while the other will deal heavy blows so that right is distinguished from wrong.' The first, as it came to pass, participated in Jalawlā' Battle where his arm was chopped off. He also participated in the Battle of the Camel on the side of `Ali (ع). He asked the Imām: 'O Commander of the Faithful! It looks like I am going

to meet my fate.' The Imām (ع) asked him, 'How do you know that, O father of Sulaymān?' He answered: 'I have seen in a vision my arm stretching from heaven to pull me away from this world.' He was killed by `Amr ibn Yathribi, while his brother Sīhān was killed during the Battle of the Camel."

It is no secret that the Prophet's prophecy regarding Zayd's arm preceding the rest of his body in entering Paradise is regarded by all Muslims as a testimony for his prophethood, a sign of the truth of the religion of Islam, and a recognition of the men of truth. All biographies of Zayd have mentioned it. Refer to his biography in *Al-Isti'āb*, *Al-Isābah*, and others. Traditionists have recorded the above, each in his own way of wording it, adding that [in "spite" of his being Shī'a] he was promised Paradise; so, praise be to the Lord of the Worlds.

Al-`Asqalāni mentions Sa`ṣā`ah ibn Sawhān in Part Three of his *Isābah*, saying: "He narrates traditions about `Uthmān and `Ali (ع). He has participated in the Battle of Siffīn on `Ali's side. He is an eloquent orator who has encounters with Mu`āwiyah." Al-Sha`bi has said: "I used to learn how to deliver sermons from him."⁹ Abu Ishāq al-Subai'i, al-Minhal ibn `Amr ibn Barīdah, and others have all cited his hadīth. Al-`Alā'i, narrating Ziyād's encounters, says that once al-Mughīrah banished Sa`ṣā`ah, in accordance to an edict which he had received from Mu`āwiyah, from Kufa to Jazīrah, or to Bahrain (some historians say to the island of Ibn Fakkān), where he died in banishment just as Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri had died before him in the Rabatha desert (southern Iraq). Al-Thabbi mentions Sa`ṣā`ah and describes him as "a well-known and trusted traditionist," citing testimonies to his trustworthiness from Ibn Sa`d and Nisā'i, and marking his name to indicate that al-Nisā'i relies on his authority. Whoever does not rely on his authority does not in fact harm anyone but his own self, as the holy Qur'ān says: "We have

not done them any harm; they have only harmed their own selves."

43. Tawūs ibn Kīsān al-Khawlāni al-Hamadāni al-Yamāni

He is `Abdul-Rahmān's father. His mother is Persian, and his father is Ibn Qāsīt, a Namri slave of Bajīr ibn Raysān al-Himyari. Sunni intellectuals regard him a Shī'a without any question. Among their dignitaries, al-Shahristāni mentions him in his *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*, and Ibn Qutaybah in his *Al-Ma`ārif*. Authors of the six *ṣahīh* books, as well as others, have all relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in both *ṣahīh* books where he cites Ibn `Abbās, Ibn `Umer and Abu Hurayrah, and in Muslim's *Ṣahīh* where he cites `Āyesha, Zayd ibn Thābit, and `Abdullāh ibn `Umer. His ḥadīth is recorded in Bukhāri alone as transmitted by al-Zuhri, and in Muslim by many renown traditionists. He died in Mecca while performing the rite of pilgrimage one day before the day of Tarwiya (i.e. on the 7th of Thul-Hijjah), in either 104 or 106 A.H. His funeral was quite eventful. His coffin was carried by `Abdullāh son of al-Hasan son of the Commander of the Faithful (ع). He was vying with others to carry it, so much so that his headwear dropped, and his clothes were torn from the back side by the stampede, as narrated by Ibn Khallikān in his biography of Tawūs in *Wafiyyāt al-A`yān*.

44. Zālim ibn `Amr ibn Sufyān, Abul-Aswad al-Du'ali

His being a Shī'a and a faithful adherent to the faith during the *wilayat* of Imāms `Ali, al-Hasan and al-Ḥusayn, as well as other members of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon all of them, is more visible than the sun, and it requires no reiteration.¹⁰ We have dealt with it in detail in our work *Mukhtasar al-Kalām fī Muallifī al-Shī'a min Ṣadr al-Islam*. His being a Shī'a is a matter which nobody disputes. In spite of this fact, authors of the six *ṣahīh* books have relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth about `Umer ibn al-Khattāb in Bukhāri's

Sahīh. In Muslim's, his hadīth is cited by Abu Mūsa and `Umrān ibn Ḥaṣīn. In both *ṣahīh* books, his hadīth is cited by Yahya ibn Ya`mur. In Bukhārī's, `Abdullāh ibn Buraydah quotes him, and in Muslim's, his hadīth is narrated by his son Abu Harb. He died, may Allāh Almighty have mercy on him, at the age of 85 in Baṣrah in 99 A.H. by the plague which devastated the city. He is the one who laid down the foundations of Arabic grammar according to rules which he learned from the Commander of the Faithful (ع), as we have expounded in our book *Al-Mukhtasar*.

45. `Āmr ibn Wā'ilah ibn `Abdullah ibn `Umer al-Laithi al-Makki

Also known as Abul-Tufayl, he was born in the same year when the Battle of Uhud took place, i.e. 3 A.H. He was for eight years contemporary of the Prophet (ص). Ibn Qutaybah has included him among so-called "extremist Rafidis," stating that he was al-Mukhtār's standard-bearer and the last of the *ṣahābah* to die. Ibn `Abd al-Birr has mentioned him in his chapter on *kunayāt* in his *Istī'āb* saying, "He resided in Kufa, and he accompanied `Ali (ع) in all his battles. When `Ali (ع) was killed, he left for Mecca." He concludes by saying, "He was a virtuous and wise man, swift in providing an accurate answer, eloquent. He was also one of the Shī'as of `Ali, peace be upon him." He also indicates that "Once, Abul-Tufayl approached Mu`āwiyah and the latter asked him: 'For how long have you mourned the death of your friend Father of al-Hasan (ع)?' He answered: 'I have grieved as much as the mother of Moses grieved when she parted with her son, and I complain unto Allāh for my shortcomings.' Mu`āwiyah asked him: 'Were you among those who enforced a siege around `Uthmān's house?' He answered: 'No; but I used to visit him.' Then Mu`āwiyah asked him: 'What stopped you from rescuing him?' He retorted: 'What about you? What stopped you from doing so when sure death surrounded him,

while you were in Syria a master among his subjects?!" Mu`āwiyah replied: "Can't you see that avenging his murder is an indication of my support?" `Āmir then told Mu`āwiyah that he acted exactly like the one implied in the verses composed by the brother of Ju`f the poet in which the latter says: "You mourn my death, yet while I was alive, you did not even sustain me against starvation."

Al-Zuhri, Abul-Zubair, al-Jarīri, Ibn Abul-Ḥaṣīn, `Abdul-Malik ibn Abjar, Qatādah, Ma`rūf, al-Walīd ibn Jāmi`, Mansūr ibn Ḥayyān, al-Qāsim ibn Abu Bardah, `Amr ibn Dīnār, `Ikremah ibn Khālid, Kulthūm ibn Ḥabīb, Furāt al-Qazzāz, and `Abdul-Azīz ibn Rāfi` have all narrated his ḥadīth as it exists in Muslim's and Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books. Bukhāri's work contains traditions of the Prophet (ص) regarding the pilgrimage which are narrated by Abul-Ṭufayl. He describes the Prophet's characteristics, and he narrates about the prayers and signs of prophethood from Ma`āth ibn Jabal, and he narrates about fate from `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd. He narrates from `Ali (ع), Huthayfah ibn al-Yemāni, `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās and `Umer ibn al-Khattāb, as is well-known by all researchers of Muslim's ḥadīth besides that of the authors of his *musnads*. Abul-Ṭufayl, may Allāh Ta`āla encompass his soul with His mercy, died in Mecca in 100 A.H. (some say in 102, while still others say 120), and Allāh knows best.

46. `Abbād ibn Ya`qūb al-Asadi al-Ruwājni al-Kūfi

He is mentioned by Dār Qutni who says, "Abbād ibn Ya`qūb is a truthful Shī'a." Ibn Ḥayyān mentions him and says, "Abbād ibn Ya`qūb used to invite people to Rafidism." Ibn Khuzaymah says, "Abbād ibn Ya`qūb is a man whose traditions are never doubted, though his faith is questioned, etc." `Abbād narrates from al-Fadl ibn al-Qāsim, Sufyān al-Thawri, Zubayd, Murrah, that Ibn Mas`ūd used to interpret the verse "Allāh has spared the Believers from fighting"

(Qur`ān, 25:33) to imply that they were spared from fighting `Ali. He quotes Sharīk, `Āṣim, Tharr, from `Abdullāh who has stated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has said: "When you see Mu`āwiyah on my pulpit, kill him." This ḥadīth is recorded by Tabari and others. `Abbād says that anyone who does not mention in his daily prayers that he dissociates himself from the enemies of the Prophet's progeny (ع) shall be resurrected in their company. He also says, "Allāh Almighty is too fair to let Talḥah and al-Zubayr enter Paradise; they fought `Ali after swearing allegiance to him." Sāliḥ al-Jazrah has said: "Abbād ibn Ya`qūb used to denounce `Uthmān." `Abbad al-Ahwāzi quotes his trusted authorities saying that `Abbād ibn Ya`qūb used to denounce "their" ancestors. In spite of all this, Sunni Imāms like al-Bukhāri, al-Tirmithi, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Khuzaymah, and Ibn Abu Dawūd rely on his authority, their mentor, in whom they all place their trust.

In spite of his intolerance and prejudice, Abu Hātim has mentioned him and said that he is a trusted *shaykh*. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mizān* and says, "He is one of the extremist Shī`as, leaders of innovators; yet he is truthful when narrating ḥadīth." He goes on to mention what has already been stated above regarding `Abbād's views. Al-Bukhāri quotes him directly while discussing *tawhid* in his own *ṣaḥīḥ*. He died, may Allāh be merciful unto him, in Shawwāl of 150 A.H. Al-Qāsim ibn Zakariyyah al-Muṭarrāz has intentionally misquoted `Abbād's statements regarding the digging the sea and the flow of its water, and we seek refuge with Allāh against telling lies about the Believers; He is surely the One Who foils their schemes.

47. `Abdullāh ibn Dawūd

He is father of `Abdul-Raḥmān al-Hamadani al-Kūfī. He resided in Al-Harbiyya, a Baṣrah suburb. Qutaybah has included him among renown Shī`a personalities in his own *Al-Ma`ārif*, and al-Bukhāri has relied on his authority in his

own *Sahīh*. Refer to his ḥadīth from al-A`mash, Hishām ibn `Urwah and Ibn Jurayh. His ḥadīth is narrated in Bukhāri's *Sahīh* by Musaddid, `Amr ibn `Ali, and, in some places, by Naṣr ibn `Ali. He died in 212.

48. `Abdullāh ibn Shaddād ibn al-Hād

Al-Hād's full name is Usāmah ibn `Abdullāh ibn Jābir ibn al-Bashīr ibn `Atwarah ibn `Āmir ibn Mālik ibn Laith al-Laithi al-Kūfi Abul-Walīd, a companion of the Commander of the Faithful (ع). His mother is Salma daughter of `Āmis al-Khayth`ami, sister of Asmā'. He is nephew, from the mother's side, of `Abdullāh ibn Ja`fer and Muḥammad ibn Abu Ja`fer, and brother of `Amāra daughter of Ḥamzah ibn `Abdul-Muṭṭalib from the mother's side. Ibn Sa`d includes him among residents of Kūfa who were distinguished for their *fiqh* and knowledge and who belong to the *tabi`īn*. At the conclusion of his biography, the author states on page 86 of Vol. 6 of his *Tabaqāt*: "During the reign of `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ash`ath, `Abdullāh ibn Shaddād was among those who recite the Holy Qur`ān and know it by heart and who fought al-Hajjāj, and he was killed during the Dujail Battle." He also says, "He was a trustworthy *faqīh* who narrated a great deal of ḥadīth, and he was a Shī`a."

The battle referred to above took place in 81 A.H. All authors of the *sahīh* books have relied on the authority of `Abdullāh ibn Shaddād. His ḥadīth is quoted by Ishāq al-Shaybāni, Ma`bid ibn Khālid and Sa`d ibn Ibrāhīm. Their aḥādīth from `Abdullāh ibn Shaddād exist in both *sahīh* books as well as in others, in addition to all *musnads*. Al-Bukhāri and Muslim quote his ḥadīth as transmitted from `Ali (ع), Maymūna and `Āyesha.

49. `Abdullah ibn `Umer ibn Muḥammad ibn Abān ibn Sāliḥ ibn `Umayr al-Qarashi al-Kūfi

Also known as Mishkadānah, he is mentor of Muslim, Abu Dawūd, al-Baghwi, and many other peers who all learned ḥadīth from him. Abu Hātim has mentioned him testifying to his truthfulness. He quotes his ḥadīth and states that he is a Shī'a. Sāliḥ ibn Muḥammad ibn Jazrah has mentioned him and said that he is a Shī'a "extremist." In spite of this, `Abdullāh ibn Ahmed has narrated ḥadīth from his father. Abu Hātim states that Mishkadānah is trustworthy. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mīzān*, describing him as "a truthful man who has learned a great deal of ḥadīth from Ibn al-Mubārak, al-Dār Wardi, and their group of scholars. Muslim, Abu Dawūd, al-Baghwi and many others have recorded a great deal of his aḥādīth." He has marked his name with the initials of Muslim and Abu Dawūd indicating thereby their reliance on his ḥadīth, and quoting what the learned scholars named above have said about him. He has also stated that he died in 239 A.H. Refer to his ḥadīth in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* as transmitted through `Abdah ibn Sulaymān, `Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak, `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Sulaymān, `Ali ibn Hāshim, Abul-Aḥwas, Husayn ibn `Ali al-Ju'fi and Muhammad ibn Fudayl. In his chapter dealing with causes of dissension, Muslim quotes his ḥadīth directly. Abul-`Abbās al-Sarrāj has said that he died either in 238 or 237 A.H.

50. `Abdullāh ibn Lahī'ah ibn `Uqbah al-Ḥadrami, Egypt's Judge and Scholar

In his *Ma`ārif*, Ibn Qutaybah has included him among famous *shaykhs*. In his biography of `Abdullāh ibn Lahī'ah in his *Al-Mīzān*, Ibn `Adi has described him as an "extremist Shī'a." Quoting Talḥah, Abu Ya'li states: "Abu Lahī'ah has said: `Hay ibn `Abdullāh al-Ghifāri has narrated through the authority of Abu `Abdullāh Raḥmān al-Ḥibli from `Abdullāh ibn `Umer that during his sickness (which preceded his

demise), the Messenger of Allāh (ص) told us to fetch his brother. We brought him Abu Bakr, but he turned away from him and said: 'I had asked for my brother'. We then brought `Uthmān, but again the Messenger of Allāh (ص) turned away from him. `Ali (ع) was then brought in his presence. He covered him with his own mantle and inclined his head on his shoulder for a while (as if he was whispering something in his ear). When `Ali left, people asked him: 'What has the Prophet (ص) said to you?' He answered: 'He has taught me a thousand chapters each of which leads to a thousand sections.'"

Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mīzān*, marking his name with DTQ to denote who among the authors of the *ṣaḥīḥ* books quotes him [i.e. Abu Dawūd, al-Tirmithi, and Dār Qutni. Refer to his ḥadīth in al-Tirmithi's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Abu Dawūd and all *musnads*. Ibn Khallikān has greatly praised him in his *Wafīyyāt al-A'yān*. Refer to his ḥadīth in Muslim's *ṣaḥīḥ* as transmitted by Yazīd ibn Abu Habīb. In his book *Al-Jam` Bayna Kitabay Abu Nasr al-Kalabathi wa Abu Bakr al-Asbahani* [Compilation of Both Books of Abu Naṣr al-Kalabāthi and Abul-Faraj al-Aṣbahāni, al-Qaysarāni includes him among Bukhāri's and Muslim's reliable authorities. Ibn Lahī'ah died on Sunday, mid-Rabī'ul Ākhir, 174 A.H.

51. `Abdullāh ibn Maymūn al-Qaddāh al-Makki

A friend of Imām Ja`fer ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (ع), he is relied upon by al-Tirmithi. Al-Thahbi mentions him and marks his name with al-Tirmithi's initials as an indication that the latter cites his ḥadīth. He adds saying that he narrates ḥadīth through the authority of Imam Ja`fer ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (ع), and of Ṭalhah ibn `Umer.

52. `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Ṣālih al-Azdi

His name is Abu Muḥammad al-Kūfi. His friend and student `Abbās al-Dūri says that he was a Shī'a. Ibn `Adi mentions him and says, "He is burnt in the fire of Shī'ism." Ṣālih

Jazrah says that `Abdul-Rahmān used to oppose `Uthmān. Abu Dawūd says that `Abdul-Rahmān has compiled a book containing the vices of some of the companions of the Prophet (ص), and that he is a bad person. In spite of all this, both `Abbās al-Dūri and Imām al-Baghwi narrate his ḥadīth. Al-Nisā'i has quoted him. Al-Thahbi has referred to him in his *Al-Mīzān* and marked his name with al-Nisā'i's initials as an indication of the latter's reliance on him. He also quotes what the Imams (among the Sunnis) have said about him as stated above. He indicates that Ma`īn trusts him, and that he died in 235. Refer to his ḥadīth in the Sunan books as transmitted through Sharīk and a group of his peers.

53. `Abdul-Razzāq ibn Humām ibn Nāfi` al-Himyari al-San`āni

One of the Shī'a nobility and honourable ancestry, he is included by Ibn Qutaybah among renown Shī'as in his *Ma`ārif*. Ibn al-Athīr, on page 137, Vol. 6, of his book titled *Al-Tarīkh Al-Kāmil*, mentions `Abdul-Razzāq's death in the end of the events of 211 A.H. thus: "In that year, the traditionist `Abdul-Razzāq ibn Humām al-San`āni, one of Ahmed's Shī'a mentors, died." Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi mentions him while discussing ḥadīth number 5994 in his *Kanz al-Ummāl*, on page 391, Vol. 6, stating that he is a Shī'a. Al-Thahbi, in his *Al-Mīzān*, says, "Abdul-Razzāq ibn Humām ibn Nāfi`, Abu Bakr al-Himyari's mentor, is a Shī'a dignitary of San`ā, was one of the most trusted traditionists among all scholars." He narrates his biography and adds: "He has written a great deal, authoring [in particular] *Al-Jāmi` Al-Kabīr*. He is a custodian of knowledge sought by many people such as Ahmed, Ishāq, Yahya, al-Thahbi, al-Ramādi, and `Abd." He discusses his character and quotes al-`Abbās ibn `Abdul-`Azīm, accusing him of being a liar. He states that al-Thahbi has denounced such an accusation. He says, "Not only Muslim, but all those who have memorized ḥadīth have

agreed with al-`Abbās, while the Imāms of knowledge rely on his authority." He goes on to narrate his biography, quoting al-Ṭayālisi saying: "I have heard Ibn Ma`īn say something from which I became convinced that `Abdul-Razzāq was a Shī'a. Ibn Ma`īn asked him: `Your instructors, such as Mu`ammar, Mālik, Ibn Jurayh, Sufyān, al-Awzā'i, are all Sunnis. Where did you learn the sect of Shī'ism from?' He answered: `Ja`fer ibn Sulaymān al-Zab`i once paid us a visit, and I found him to be virtuous and rightly guided, and I learned Shī'ism from him."

`Abdul-Razzāq, as quoted above, statement in which he says that he is a Shī'a indicates that he has learned Shī'ism from Ja`fer al-Zab`i, but Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Muqaddimi thinks that Ja`fer al-Zab`i himself has learned Shī'ism from `Abdul-Razzāq. He even denounces `Abdul-Razzāq for this reason. In *Al-Mīzān*, he is quoted as saying, "I wish I had lost `Abdul-Razzāq for good. Nobody has corrupted Ja`fer's beliefs other than he." The "corruption" to which he refers is Shī'ism!

Ibn Ma`īn has heavily relied on `Abdul-Razzāq's authority, in spite of his "admission" that he is a Shī'a as stated above. Ahmed ibn Abu Khayth`amah, as in `Abdel-Razzāq's biography in *Al-Mīzān*, has said, "It has been said to Ibn Ma`īn that Ahmed says that `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa rejects `Abdul-Razzāq's ḥadīth because of his Shī'a beliefs. Ibn Ma`īn has responded thus: `I swear by Allāh, Who is the only God, that `Abdul-Razzāq is a hundred times superior to `Ubaydullāh, and I have heard `Abdul-Razzāq's ḥadīth and found it to be many times more in volume than `Ubaydullāh's." Also in `Abdel-Razzāq's biography in *Al-Mīzān*, Abu Ṣālih Muhammad ibn Ismā`īl al-Dirāri is quoted saying, "While we were in San`ā guests of `Abdul-Razzāq, we heard that Ahmed and Ibn Ma`īn, joined by others, had rejected `Abdul-Razzāq's ḥadīth, or say disliked it, because of the traditionist being a Shī'a. The news deeply depressed us.

We thought that we had spent our resources and taken the trouble to make the trip there all in vain. Then I joined the pilgrims for Mecca where I met Yahya and asked him about this issue. He, as stated in `Abdel-Razzāq's biography in *Al-Mīzān*, said: `O Abu Sālih! Even if `Abdul-Razzāq abandons Islam altogether, we shall never reject his ḥadīth.”

Ibn `Adi has mentioned him and said: “`Abdul-Razzāq has reported aḥadīth dealing with virtues, but nobody has endorsed them.¹¹ He also counts the vices of certain people, which views are rejected by others;¹² above all, he is believed to be a Shī`a.”

In spite of all this, Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal was asked once, as indicated in `Abdel-Razzāq's biography in *Al-Mīzān*, whether he knew of any ḥadīth better than that reported by `Abdul-Razzāq, and his answer was negative. Ibn al-Qaysarāni states at the conclusion of `Abdul-Razzāq's biography in his own book *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijālul Ṣaḥābah*, quoting Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal saying, `If people dispute Mu`ammar's ḥadīth, then the final arbitrator is `Abdul-Razzāq.' Mukhlid al-Shu`ayri says that he was once in the company of `Abdul-Razzāq when a man mentioned Mu`āwiyah. `Abdul-Razzāq, as stated in his biography in *Al-Mīzān*, then said: `Do not spoil our meeting by mentioning the descendants of Abu Sufyān.” Zayd ibn al-Mubārak has said: “We were in the company of `Abdul-Razzāq once when we recounted ibn al-Ḥadthān's ḥadīth. When `Umer's address to `Ali and al-`Abbās: `You (i.e. `Abbās) have come to demand your inheritance of your nephew (the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny), while this man (i.e. `Ali) has come to demand his wife's inheritance of her father' was read, `Abdul-Razzāq, as stated in his biography in *Al-Mīzān*, said: `Behold this shameless, impertinent man using `nephew' and `father' instead of `the Messenger of Allāh (ص)!”

In spite of all this, all compilers of ḥadīth have recorded his traditions and relied on his authority. It has even

been said, as Ibn Khallikān states in his *Wafiyyāt al-A`yān*, that people did not travel to anyone after the demise of the Prophet (ص) as often as they did to `Abdul-Razzāq's. He is quoted by the Imāms of contemporary Muslims such as Sufyān ibn `Ayīnah, among whose mentors `Abdul-Razzāq himself was one, Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Yahya ibn Ma`īn, and others.

Refer to his hadīth in all the *ṣaḥīḥ* books, as well as all *musnads*, which all contain quite a few of his aḥādīth. He was born, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in 211 A.H. He was contemporary to Abu `Abdullāh Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع) for twenty-two years.¹³ He died during the first days of the Imāmate of Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Jawād (ع), nine years before the Imām's demise;¹⁴ may Allāh resurrect him in the company of these Imams to whose service, seeking of the Pleasure of Allāh, he sincerely dedicated his life.

54. `Abdul-Malik ibn `Ayān

He is brother of Zarārah, Hamrān, Bakīr, `Abdul-Rahmān, Mālik, Mūsa, Darīs, and Umm al-Aswad, all descendants of `Ayan, and all are notable Shī`as. They have won the sublime cup for serving the Islamic Sharī`a, and they have produced a blessed and righteous progeny that adheres to their sect and views.

Al-Thahbi mentions `Abdul-Malik in his book titled *Al-Mīzān*, citing Abu Wā'il and others quoting Abu Hātim saying that he has reported authentic aḥādīth, and that Ma`īn has said that there is nothing wrong with his hadīth, while another authority testifies thus: "He is truthful, yet he is Rafidi, too." Ibn Ayīnah has said: "Abdul-Malik, a Rāfidi, has reported hadīth to us." Abu Hātim says that he is among the earliest to embrace Shī`a Islam, and that his hadīth is authentic. Both Sufyans have transmitted his hadīth and reported it well-documented by others.

In his book *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijālul Ṣaḥīḥain*, Ibn al-Qaysarāni, as quoted in both works by Sufyān ibn A`yīnah, has this to say about him: “Abdul-Malik ibn `Ayān, brother of Hamrān al-Kūfi, was a Shī`a whose ḥadīth about *tawḥid* is recorded by Bukhāri as transmitted by Abu Wā`il, and about *imān* as recorded in Muslim's.”

He died during the life-time of Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع) who earnestly invoked the Almighty's mercy upon him. Abu Ja`fer ibn Bābawayh has reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع), accompanied by his disciples, visited `Abdul-Malik's gravesite in Medīna. May he receive the good rewards and live eternally in peace.

55. `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa al-`Abasi al-Kūfi

He is al-Bukhāri's mentor, as the latter acknowledges on page 177 of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Ibn Qutaybah has included him among traditionists in his work *Al-Ma`ārif*, stating that the man is a Shī`a. When he recounts a roll call of notable Shī`as in his chapter on sects on page 206 of his book *al-Ma`ārif*, he includes `Ubaydullāh among them. On page 279, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*, Ibn Sa`d narrates `Ubaydullāh's biography without forgetting to indicate that he is a Shī`a, and that he narrates ḥadīth supportive of Shī`ism, thus, according to Ibn Sa`d, weakening his ḥadīth in the eyes of many people. He also adds saying that `Ubaydullāh is also very well familiar with the Holy Qur`ān. He records on page 139, Vol. 6, of his *Al-Kāmil* the date of his death at the conclusion of events that took place in 213 A.H., stating: “Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa al-`Abasi, the jurist, was a Shī`a who taught al-Bukhāri as the latter himself acknowledges in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.” Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mīzān* saying, “Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa al-`Abasi al-Kūfi, al-Bukhāri's mentor, is no question trustworthy, but he also is a deviated Shī`a.” Yet the author admits that both Abu Hātim and Ma`īn have trusted his ḥadīth. He says, “Abu Hātim has said that the ḥadīth narrated

by Abu Na`īm is more authentic, yet `Ubaydullāh's is more authentic than all of them when it comes to the ahādīth transmitted by Isrā'īl."

Ahmed ibn `Abdullāh al-Ajli has said, "Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa is very knowledgeable of the Holy Qur'ān, a major authority therein. I have never seen him arrogant or conceited, and he was never seen laughing boisterously." Abu Dawūd says, "Ubaydullāh ibn al-`Abasi was a Shī'a heretic." At the conclusion of the biography of Maṭar ibn Maymūn in *Al-Mīzān*, al-Thahbi states: "Ubaydullāh, a Shī'a, is trustworthy." Ibn Ma`īn used to learn ḥadīth from `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa and `Abdul-Razzāq knowing that they were both Shī'as. In Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān*, while documenting `Abdul-Razzāq's biography, the author quotes Ahmed ibn `Ali Khaythamah saying, "I inquired of Ibn Ma`īn once regarding what I heard about Ahmed's alleged rejection of `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa's ḥadīth because of his being a Shī'a. Ibn Ma`īn answered: 'I swear by Allah Who has no associate that `Abdul-Razzaq is superior to `Ubaydullāh a hundred times, and I have heard from `Abdul-Razzāq many times more ahādīth than I heard from `Ubaydullāh.'"

Sunnis, like all others, rely on `Ubaydullāh's ḥadīth in their respective *ṣaḥīḥ* books. Refer to his ḥadīth in both *ṣaḥīḥ* books transmitted by Shaybān ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān. Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* quotes his ḥadīth as reported by al-A`mash ibn `Urwah and Ismā`īl ibn Abu Khālid. His ḥadīth as recorded in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* is reported from Isrā'īl, al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ, and Usāmah ibn Zayd. Al-Bukhāri quotes him directly. He is also quoted directly by Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm, Abu Bakr ibn Abu Shaybah, Ahmed ibn Ishāq al-Bukhāri, Maḥmūd ibn Ghaylān, Ahmed ibn Abu Sarīj, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ashkāb, Muḥammad ibn Khālid al-Thahbi, and Yūsuf ibn Mūsa al-Qattān. Muslim quotes his ḥadīth as reported by al-Ḥajjāj ibn al-Shā`ir, al-Qāsim ibn Zakariyyah, `Abdullāh al-Darmi, Ishāq ibn al-Mansūr, Ibn Abu Shaybah, `Abd ibn Ḥamīd, Ibrāhīm

ibn Dīnār, and Ibn Namīr. Al-Thahbi states in his *Al-M`āzān* that `Ubaydullāh died in 213 A.H. adding, "He was well known for his asceticism, adoration, and piety." His death took place in early Thul-Qi`da; may Allāh Almighty sanctify his resting place.

56. `Uthmān ibn `Umayr `Abdul-Yaqzān al-Thaqafi al-Kūfi al-Bijli

He is also known as `Uthmān ibn Abu Zar`ah, `Uthmān ibn Qays, and `Uthmān ibn Abu Ḥamīd. Abu Ahmed al-Zubayri says that `Uthmān believes in the return. Ahmed ibn Hanbal says, "Abu Yaqzān was joined in dissenting by Ibrāhīm ibn `Abdullāh ibn Hasan." Ibn `Adi says the following about him: "He has embraced the bad sect, and he believes in the return, although trusted authorities have quoted him knowing that he was weak." The fact of the matter is that whenever some people desire to belittle a Shī`a traditionist and undermine his scholarly ability, they charge him with preaching the concept of the return. Thus have they done to `Uthmān ibn `Umayr, so much so that Ibn Ma`īn has said: "There is really nothing wrong with `Uthmān's ḥadīth."

In spite of all attacks on him, al-A`mash, Sufyan, Shu`bah, Sharīk and other peers have not in the least hesitated to quote him. Abu Dawūd, al-Tirmithi and others have all quoted him in their sunan and relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth as they record it through Anas and others. Al-Thahbi has documented his biography and quoted the statements by notable scholars as cited above, putting DTQ on his name to indicate who among the authors of the sunan quote him.

57. `Adi ibn Thābit al-Kūfi

Ibn Ma`īn has described him as a "Shī`a extremist," while Dār Qutni calls him "Rāfiḍi, extremist, but also reliable." Al-Jawzjāni says that the man has "deviated." Al-Mas`ūdi says,

“We have never seen anyone who is so outspoken in preaching his Shī'a views like `Adi ibn Thābit.” In his *Al-Mīzān*, al-Thahbi describes him as “the learned scholar of Shī'as, the most truthful among them, the judge and Imām of their mosques. Had all the Shī'as been like him, their harm would have been minimized.” Then he goes on to document his biography and quote the views of the scholars cited above. He recounts the scholars who describe him as trustworthy such as Dār Qutni, Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Ahmed al-`Ajli, Ahmed al-Nisā'i, placing on his name the initials of authors of all the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books who quote him.

Refer to his hadīth in both Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books as transmitted by al-Barā' ibn `Āzib, `Abdullāh ibn Yazīd (his maternal grand-father), `Abdullāh ibn Abu Awfah, Sulaymān ibn Sard, and Sa`īd ibn Jubayr. His hadīth reported by Zarr ibn Ḥabīsh and Abu Ḥāzīm al-Ashjā'i is recorded in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. His hadīth is quoted by al-A`mash, Mis'ar, Sa`īd, Yahya ibn Sa`īd al-Anṣārī, Zayd ibn Abu Anīsa, and Fudayl ibn Ghazwān.

58. `Atīyyah ibn Sa`d ibn Janādah al-`Awfi

He is Abul-Hasan al-Kūfi, the renown *tabi`i*. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mīzān*, quoting Sālim al-Murādi saying that `Atīyyah adhered to Shī'ism. Imām Ibn Qutaybah has included him among traditionists in his *Ma`ārif* following his grandson al-`Awfi, al-Husayn ibn `Atīyyah, the judge, adding, “`Atīyyah, a follower of Shī'ism, has been a jurist since the reign of al-Ḥajjāj.” Ibn Qutaybah has mentioned a few renown Shī'as in his chapter on sects in his *Ma`ārif*, listing `Atīyyah al-`Awfi among them. Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 212, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt* indicating his firm belief in Shī'ism. His father, Sa`d ibn Janādah, was a companion of `Ali (ع). Once he visited the Imām in Kūfa and said: “O Commander of the Faithful! I have been blessed with a newly born son; would you mind choosing a name for him?” The

Imām answered: "This is a gift (*`atiyyah*) from Allāh; therefore, do name him *`Atiyyah*."

Ibn Sa`d has said: "Atiyyah ibn al-Ash`ath went out in an army to fight al-Hajjāj. When al-Ash`ath's army fled, `Atiyyah fled to Persia. Al-Hajjāj wrote an edict to Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ordering him to call him to his presence and give him the option to either denounce `Ali or be whipped four hundred lashes, and his beard and head be shaven. So, he called him and read al-Hajjāj's letter to him, but `Atiyyah refused to succumb; therefore, he had him whipped four hundred lashes and his head and beard were shaven. When Qutaybah became governor of Khurasān, `Atiyyah rebelled against him and remained there till `Umer ibn Habīrah became ruler of Iraq. It was then that he wrote to him asking permission to go there. Granted permission, he came to Kūfa where he stayed till he died in 11 A.H." The author adds, "He was, indeed, a trusted authority, and he reported many authentic ahādīth."

All his descendants were sincere followers of Muḥammad's progeny (ع). Among them were noblemen, highly distinguished personalities like al-Husayn ibn al-Hasan ibn `Atiyyah who was appointed governor of the district of Al-Sharqiyya succeeding Hafs ibn Ghiyāth, as stated on page 58 of the same reference, then he was transferred to al-Mahdi's troops. He died in 201 A.H. Another is Sa`d ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Hasan ibn `Atiyyah, also a traditionist, who became governor of Baghdād.¹⁵ He used to quote his father Sa`d from his uncle al-Husayn ibn al-Hasan ibn `Atiyyah.

Back to the story of `Atiyyah al-`Awfi. He is considered a reliable authority by Dawūd and al-Tirmithi. Refer to his ḥadīth in their *sahīh* books from Ibn `Abbās, Abu Sa`īd and Ibn `Umer. He has also learned ḥadīth from `Abdullāh ibn al-Hasan who quotes his father who quotes his grand-mother al-Zahrā', Mistress of the women of Paradise.

His son al-Ḥasan ibn `Atiyyah has learned ḥadīth from him, and so have al-Ḥajjāj ibn Arṭa'ah, Miṣ`ar, al-Ḥasan ibn Adwān and others.

59. Al`alā' ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Taymi al-Kūfi

In his biography of Al`alā' in *Al-Mīzān*, Abu Ḥātim says the following about him: "He is one of the seniors of the Shī`as." In spite of this, Abu Dawūd and al-Tirmithi have relied on his authority. Ma`īn trusts him. Both Abu Ḥātim and Abu Zar`ah say that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth. Refer to his ḥadīth in both al-Tirmithi's and Abu Dawūd's *ṣaḥīḥ* books from Yazīd ibn Abu Maryam and al-Ḥakam ibn `Uṭaybah, in addition to all Sunni *musnads*. Abu Na`īm and Yahya ibn Bakīr quote him, and so do many of their peers. He must be distinguished from Al`alā' ibn Abul-`Abbās, the Meccan poet. The latter is a Sufyāni shaykh.

His ḥadīth is reported by Abul-Ṭufayl. He is in a higher rank than Abul-`alā' ibn Ṣāliḥ; the latter is a Kūfian, while the poet is Meccan. Both are mentioned in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān*, where the author inaccurately quotes a statement pertaining to their being Shī`a seniors. Al`alā' the poet has composed poetry in praise of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) which serves as irrefutable proof of his dedication and also highlights the truth about the Imām. He has also several poetic eulogies appreciated by Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers.

60. `Alqamah ibn Qays ibn `Abdullāh al-Nakh`i, Abu Shibil

He is uncle of al-Aswad and Ibrāhīm, sons of Yazīd. He is also a follower of the Progeny of Muḥammad (ص). Al-Shahristāni, in his *Al-Milal wal-Niḥal*, has included him among Shī`a nobility. He is master among the traditionists mentioned by Abu Ishāq al-Jawzjāni who spitefully says, "There has been a group of people among the residents of

Kūfa whose sect [of Shī`ism is not appreciated; they are the masters among Kūfī traditionists.” `Alqamah and his brother `Ali have been companions of `Ali (ع). They have both participated in Ṣiffīn where `Ali was martyred. The latter used to be called “Abul-Salāt” (man of the prayers) due to his quite frequent prayers. `Alqamah drenched his sword with the blood of the oppressive gang. His foot slid, yet he continued to wage *jihād* in the way of Allāh, remaining an enemy of Mu`āwiyah till his death. Abu Bardah included `Alqamah's name among the emissary to Mu`āwiyah during the latter's reign, but `Alqamah objected and even wrote to Abu Bardah saying: “Please remove my name (from the list); please do remove it.” This is recorded by Ibn Sa`d in his biography of `Alqamah on page 57, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*.

`Alqamah's fair-mindedness and prestige among Sunnis is undisputed in spite of their knowledge of his Shī`a beliefs. Authors of the six *ṣahīh* books, as well as others, have all relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Muslim and Bukhāri from Ibn Mas`ūd, Abul-Dardā'ah and `Āysha. His ḥadīth about `Uthmān and Abu Mas`ūd is recorded in Muslim's *Ṣahīh*. In both *ṣahīh* books, his ḥadīth is narrated by his nephew Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`ī. In Muslim's *Ṣahīh*, his ḥadīth is transmitted by `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Yazīd, Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd, and al-Sha`bi. He died, may Allah have mercy on his soul, in 62 A.H. in Kūfa.

61. `Ali ibn Badīmah

Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mūzān* quoting Ahmed ibn Hanbal saying, “He has reported authentic aḥadīth,” that he is a pioneer of Shī`ism, that Ibn Ma`īn has trusted him, that he narrates ḥadīth from Makrimah and others, and that both Shu`bah and Mu`ammar have learned ḥadīth from him. He marks his name to indicate that the authors of sunan have all quoted his ḥadīth.

62. `Ali ibn al-Ja`d

He is Abul-Ḥasan al-Jawhari al-Baghdādi, a slave of Banu Hāshim. One of al-Bukhāri's mentors, he is included by Qutaybah among notable Shī`as in his book *Al-Ma`ārif*. His biography in *Al-Mẓān* indicates that for sixty years, `Ali used to fast every other day. Al-Qaysarāni mentions him in his book *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijālul Ṣaḥāḥain*, stating that al-Bukhāri alone has narrated twelve thousand ahādīth reported by `Ali ibn al-Ja`d. He died in 203 A.H. at the age of 96.

63. `Ali ibn Zaid

His full name is `Ali ibn Zaid ibn `Abdullāh ibn Zuhayr ibn Abu Malīka ibn Jad`ān Abul-Ḥasan al-Qarashi al-Taymi al-Baṣri. Aḥmed al-`Ajli has mentioned him saying that the man follows the Shī`a School of Muslim Law. Yazīd ibn Zarī` has said that `Ali ibn Yazīd has been a Rāfiḍi. In spite of all this, the learned scholars among the *tabi`īn*, such as Ṣhu`bah, `Abdul-Wāriḥ, and many of their peers, have all quoted his hadīth. He is one of the three jurists for whom Baṣrah has acquired fame, the others are Qatādah and `Ash`ath al-Ḥadāni. They were all blind. When al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri died, they suggested to `Ali to take his place due to his accomplishments. He was so prestigious that only renown dignitaries were his companions, something not too many Shī`as could enjoy during those days.

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Al-Mẓān* stating the above facts about him. In his book *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijālul Ṣaḥāḥain*, al-Qaysarāni states his biography and says that Muslim has quoted his hadīth as reported by Thābit al-Banāni, and that he has learned about *jihad* from Anas ibn Mālik. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 131 A.H.

64. `Ali ibn Ṣāliḥ

He is brother of al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ. We have already said a word about his virtues when we recounted the biography of

his brother al-Hasan. He is one of the early Shī`a scholars, just like his brother. In his chapter on sales, Muslim relies on his authority.

`Ali ibn Sālih has reported ḥadīth from Salameh ibn Kahīl, while Wakīf has quoted him; they, too, are both Shī`as. He was born, may Allāh be merciful unto his soul, and his twin brother al-Hasan, in 100 A.H., and he died in 151 A.H.

65. `Ali ibn Ghurāb Abu Yahya al-Fazāri al-Kofi

Ibn Hayyān has described him as “an extremist Shī`a.” Probably for this reason, al-Jawzjāni drops him completely. Abu Dawūd has said that `Ali's ḥadīth has been rejected, while both Ibn Ma`īn and Dār Qutni trust him. Abu Hātim has said that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth. Abu Zar`ah says he considers him truthful. Aḥmed ibn Hanbal says, “I find him quite truthful.” Ibn Ma`īn describes him as “the poor man, the man of the truth,” while al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mīzān* quoting both pros and cons regarding his ḥadīth as mentioned above, and marking his name with SQ to identify which authors of the sunan rely on his authority. He reports ḥadīth from Hishām ibn `Urwah and `Ubaydullāh ibn `Umer.

On page 273, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*, Ibn Sa`d says the following about him: “Ismā`īl ibn Rajā' quotes his ḥadīth regarding what al-A`mash had said about `Uthmān.” He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in Kūfa in early Rabī`ul-Awwal 184, during Harūn's regime.

66. `Ali ibn Qādim Abul-Ḥasan al-Khuzā`i al-Kūfi

He is mentor of Aḥmed ibn al-Furāt, Ya`qūb al-Faswi and a group of their peers who have all learned ḥadīth from him and relied on his authority. Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 282, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt* and describes him as an “extremist Shī`a.” Probably for this reason alone that Yahya regards his ḥadīth as “weak.” Abu Hātim says that he is truthful. Al-

Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mizān*, quoting the above stated views about him, and marking his name to indicate that Abu Dawūd and al-Tirmithi have both quoted his ḥadīth. His ḥadīth is recorded in their books from Sa'īd ibn Abu 'Urwah and Qatar. He died, may Allāh be merciful unto his soul, in 213 A.H. during al-Ma'mūn's regime.

67. 'Ali ibn al-Munthir al-Ṭarā'ifī

He is professor of al-Tirmithi, al-Nisā'i, Ibn Sa'īd, 'Abdul-Rahmān ibn Abu Hātim, and other peers who have all learned ḥadīth from him and relied on his authority. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mizān*, marking his name with TSQ as an indication of which authors of the sunan quote his ḥadīth. He quotes the following from al-Nisā'i: "Ali ibn al-Munthir is a staunch Shī'a, very trustworthy." He states that Ibn Hātim has said that the man is truthful and trustworthy, and that he reports ḥadīth from Fuḍayl, Ibn 'Ayīnah and al-Walīd ibn Muslim. Al-Nisā'i testifies to the fact that he is "a staunch Shī'a," and that he relies on his ḥadīth which is recorded in both *ṣaḥīḥ* books. This, indeed, provides food for thought for those who cast doubt about his reliability. Al-Munthir, may Allāh be merciful unto his soul, died in 256 A.H.

68. 'Ali ibn al-Hāshim ibn al-Barīd Abul-Hasan al-Kūfī al-Khazzāz al-'Āithī

He is one of Imām Ahmed's mentors. Abu Dawūd mentions him and describes him as a "well-ascertained Shī'a." Ibn Ḥabān says that he is an "Shī'a extremist." Ja'fer ibn Abān says, "I have heard Ibn Namīr say that 'Ali ibn Hāshim is extremist in his Shī'a beliefs." Al-Bukhāri has said that both 'Ali ibn Hāshim and his father are over-zealous in their Shī'a beliefs. Probably for this reason, al-Bukhāri has rejected his ḥadīth, but all other five authors of the *ṣaḥīḥ* books have relied on his authority. Ibn Ma'in and others have trusted him, while Abu Dawūd has included him among the most reliable

traditionists. Abu Zar`ah has said that he is truthful, and al-Nisā'i has stated that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-M'izān*, quoting what we have already cited above.

Al-Khatīb al-Baghdadi, in a chapter dealing with `Ali's character in his own *Tarīkh* (history), Vol. 12, page 116, quotes Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Bāghindi saying that `Ali ibn Hāshim ibn al-Barīd is truthful, a man who used to follow Shī'ism. He also quotes Muḥammad ibn `Ali al-Ājiri saying: "Once I asked Abu Dawūd about `Ali ibn Hāshim ibn al-Barīd. He suggested that I should ask `Īsa ibn Yūnus. The latter has said: 'He belongs to those who call for Shī'ism.'" All of this is true. He also quotes al-Jawzjāni saying that Hishām ibn al-Barīd and his son `Ali ibn Hāshim are extremist in their "corrupt sect."

In spite of all this, authors of five *sahīh* books rely on `Ali ibn Hāshim. Refer to his ḥadīth about marriage in Muslim's *Sahīh* as reported by Hishām ibn `Urwah, and in his chapter dealing with seeking permission as transmitted from Talha ibn Yahya. His ḥadīth in Muslim's *Sahīh* is transmitted by Abu Mu`ammar Isma`īl ibn Ibrāhīm and `Abdullāh ibn Abān. Ahmed ibn Hanbal, too, has reported his ḥadīth, in addition to both sons of Shaybah, and a group of their class of reporters whose mentor was none other than `Ali ibn Hāshim. Al-Thahbi says, "He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in 181 A.H.," adding, "His death is probably the earliest of those of Imām Ahmed's mentors."

69. `Ammār ibn Zurayq al-Kūfi

Al-Sulaymāni calls him "Rāfiḍi," as al-Thahbi states while discussing `Ammār in his *Al-M'izān*. In spite of this allegation, Muslim, Abu Dawūd and al-Nisā'i rely on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Muslim's *Sahīh* as transmitted by al-A'mash, Abu Ishāq al-Suba'i, Mansūr, and `Abdullāh ibn `Īsa. His

ḥadīth is reported in Muslim's *Sahīh* by Abul-Jawāb, Abul-Hawas Salām, Ibn Ahmed al-Zubayri, and Yahya ibn Ādam.

70. `Ammār ibn Mu`āwiyah, or Ibn Abu Mu`āwiyah

He is also called Khabāb, or Ibn Sālih al-Dihni al-Bijli al-Kūfi, Abu Mu`āwiyah. He is one of the Shī'a heroes who suffered a great deal of persecution while defending Muḥammad's Progeny (ع), so much so that Bishr ibn Marwān cut off his hamstrings only because he was a Shī'a. He is mentor of both Sufyāns, in addition to Shu`bah, Sharīk, and al-`Abār, who have all learned ḥadīth from him and relied on his authority. Ahmed, Ibn Ma`īn, Abu Hātim and other people have also relied on his authority. Muslim and four authors of sunan have quoted his ḥadīth. Al-Thahbi has included his biography in his own *Al-Mīzān* and quoted the views stated above regarding his being a Shī'a and a trustworthy traditionist, adding that nobody had spoken ill of him except al-`Aqīli, and that there was no fault in him other than his being a Shī'a. Refer to his ḥadīth about the pilgrimage in Muslim's *Sahīh* from Abul-Zubayr. He died in 133; may Allāh have mercy on his soul.

71. `Amr ibn `Abdullāh Abu Issāq al-Subai`i al-Hamadāni al-Kūfi

He is Shī'a according to Ibn Qutaybah's *Ma`ārif*, and Shahristāni's *Al-Milal wal Niḥal*. He was one of the masters of traditionists whose sect, in its roots and branches, the Nāsibis do not appreciate due to the fact that Shī'as have followed in the footsteps of Ahl al-Bayt, deriving their method of worship from their own leadership in all religious matters. For this reason, al-Jawzjāni has said in his biography of Zubayd in *Al-Mizan*: "Among the residents of Kūfa, there is a group whose sect is not appreciated; they are the chiefs of Kūfi traditionists such as Abu Ishāq, Mansūr, Zubayd al-Yāmi, al-A`mash and other peers. People have tolerated them

because of being truthful in narrating hadīth, without adding aught of their own thereto.”

Among what the Nāsibis have rejected of Abu Ishāq's hadīth is this one:

“As the author of *Al-Mẓān* indicates, Amr ibn Ismā'īl has quoted Abu Issāq saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said, 'Ali is like a tree whose root I am, and whose branches are 'Ali, whose fruit are al-Hasan and al-Husayn, whose leaves are the Shī'as.”

In fact, al-Mughīrah's statement “nobody caused the Kūfis to perish except Abu Ishāq and al-A'mash” is uncalled for except for the fact that these men are Shī'as and are loyal to Muhammad's progeny (ع). They have become custodians of all ahādīth pertaining to the attributes of the latter, peace be upon them. They were oceans of knowledge, and they followed Allāh's commandments. They are relied upon by the authors of all six *ṣahīh* books and by others. Refer to Abu Ishāq's hadīth in both *ṣahīh* books from al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib, Yazīd ibn Arqam, Hārithah ibn Wahab, Sulaymān ibn Sard, al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr, 'Abdullāh ibn Yazīd al-Khadmi, and 'Amr ibn Maymūn.

He is quoted in both *ṣahīh* books by Shu'bah, al-Thawri, Zuhayr, and by his grandson Yūsuf ibn Ishāq ibn Abu Ishāq. Ibn Khallikān says in 'Amr's biography in *Al-Wafīyyāt* that 'Amr was born three years before 'Uthmān took charge of ruling the Muslims, and that he died either in 127 or in 128, or in 129, whereas both Yahya ibn Ma'īn and al-Madā'ini say that he died in 132, and Allāh knows best.

72. 'Awf ibn Abu Jamīla al-Baṣri, Abu Sahl

He is well known as “al-A'rābī” [the bedouin], although his origin is really not from the desert. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mẓān* and says that “He is also called 'Awf the Truthful, while some say that he follows Shī'ism; *despite that*, a group of scholars has trusted him.” He also quotes Ja'fer ibn

Sulaymān describing him as Shī'a and quotes Bandar calling him "Rāfiḍi." Ibn Qutaybah has included him in his own *Al-Ma`ārif* among Shī'a dignitaries. He has taught ḥadīth to Ruḥ, Hawdah, Shu`bah, al-Naḍr ibn Shamīl, `Uthmān ibn al-Haytham and many others of their calibre. Authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books as well as others have all relied on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* from al-Ḥasan and Sa`īd, sons of al-Ḥasan al-Basri, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn and Siyār ibn Salamah. His ḥadīth in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* is transmitted by Al-Naḍr ibn Shamīl. His ḥadīth from Abu Raḥī' al-`Aṭārīdi exists in both *ṣaḥīḥs*. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 146 A.H.

73. Al-Faḍl ibn Dakīn

His real name is `Amr ibn Ḥammād ibn Zuhayr al-Mallā'i al-Kūfi, and he is well known by Abu Na`īm. He is al-Bukhāri's mentor, as the latter admits in his own *Ṣaḥīḥ*. A group of elite scholars, like Ibn Qutaybah in his *Al-Ma`ārif*, has included him among Shī'a dignitaries. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Al-Mīzān* and says: "I have heard ibn Ma`īn saying: 'If a man's name is mentioned in the presence of Abu Na`īm and he calls him a good person and praises him, then rest assured that that person is a Shī'a; whereas if he labels someone as Murji', then rest assured that he is a good Sunni.'" Al-Thahbi says that this statement proves that Yahya ibn Ma`īn inclines towards believing in the Return. It also proves that the man considers al-Faḍl as a very staunch Shī'a.

In his biography of Khālid ibn Mukhlid in his *Al-Mīzān*, al-Thahbi quotes al-Jawzjāni saying that Abu Na`īm follows the Kūfi sect, i.e. Shī'ism. To sum up, the fact that al-Faḍl ibn Dakīn is a Shī'a has never been disputed. Nevertheless, all authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books rely on him. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Humām ibn Yahya, `Abdul-`Azīz ibn Abu Salamah, Zakariyyah ibn Abu Zā'idah, Hishām al-Distwā'i, al-A`mash, Miṣār, al-Thawri,

Mālik, Ibn `Ayīnah, Shaybah, and Zuhayr. His ḥadīth in Muslim is transmitted by Saif ibn Abu Sulaymān, Isma`īl ibn Muslim, Abu `Āsim Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb al-Thaqafi, Abul Āmis, Mūsa ibn `Ali, Abu Shihāb Mūsa ibn Nāfi`, Sufyān, Hishām ibn Sa`d, `Abdul-Wāhid ibn Ayman, and Isrā'īl. Al-Bukhāri quotes him directly, while Muslim quotes his ḥadīth as transmitted by Hajjāj ibn al-Shā`ir, `Abd ibn Hamīd, Ibn Abu Shaybah, Abu Sa`d al-Ashajj, Ibn Namīr, `Abdullāh al-Darmi, Issāq al-Hanzali, and Zuhayr ibn Harb.

He was born in 133, and he died in Kūfa on a Thursday night on the last day of Sha`bān, 210, during al-Mu`taṣim's reign. Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 279, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*, describing him as "trustworthy, reliable, a man who has narrated a great deal of hadth, and an authority therein."

74. Faḍīl ibn Marzūq al-Aghar al-Ruwāsi al-Kūfi, Abu `Abdul-Raḥmān

Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Māzan* and describes him as a well-known Shī'a, quoting Sufyān ibn `Ayīnah and Ibn Ma`īn testifying to this fact. He quotes Ibn `Adi saying that he hopes there is nothing wrong with the ḥadīth he narrates, then he quotes al-Haytham ibn Jamīl saying that the latter once mentioned Faḍīl ibn Marzūq once and described him as "one of the Imāms of guidance."

In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Muslim relies on the authority of Faḍīl's aḥadīth which deals with prayers as transmitted by Shaqīq ibn `Uqbah, and with *zakat* by `Adi ibn Thābit. His ḥadīth dealing with *zakat* as recorded by Muslim is transmitted by Yahya ibn Ādam and Abu Usāmah. In the *sunan*, his ḥadīth is quoted by Wakī, Yazīd, Abu Na`īm, `Ali ibn al-Ja`d and many peers. Zayd ibn al-Habāb has in fact lied regarding what he attributed to him of ḥadīth dealing with the appointment of `Ali (ع) as Amr by the Prophet (ص). He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 158.

75. Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah al-Ḥannāt al-Kūfi

ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmed once asked his father about Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah. He answered, "He is a reporter of authentic ḥadīth. His ḥadīth reflects an attitude of a responsible person, but he also is a follower of Shī`ism." ʿAbbās has quoted Ibn Ma`īn saying that Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah is a trusted Shī`a. Aḥmed has said: "Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah is trusted by Yahya, but he is an extremist Khashbi." Probably for this reason alone, Abu Bakr ibn ʿAyyāsh has said, "I have not abandoned the traditions reported by Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah except because of his bad sect," i.e. for no fault in him other than his being a Shī`a.

Al-Jawzjāni says: "Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah has deviated from the path." During his sickness, he was heard by Ja`fer al-Aḥmar saying: "Nothing pleases me more than knowing that for each hair in my body there is an angel praising Allāh Almighty on my behalf because of my love for Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them." Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah narrates ḥadīth from Abul-Tufayl, Abu Wā'il, and Mujāhid. His ḥadīth is quoted by Usāmah, Yahya ibn Ādam, Qabīṣah and others of the same calibre. Aḥmed and others have trusted him. Murrah has said the following about him, "He is a responsible narrator of ḥadīth who has memorized what he narrates by heart." Ibn Sa`d says, "He is, Insha-Allāh, trustworthy." Al-Thahbi discusses him in his *Mīzān*, stating the learned scholars' views, which have already been stated above, concerning his character. Ibn Sa`d has quoted the same on page 253, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*.

When Qutaybah mentions renown Shī`as in his *Ma`ārif*, he includes Fiṭr ibn Khalīfah among them. Al-Bukhāri has quoted Fiṭr's ḥadīth as narrated by Mujāhid. Al-Thawri has quoted Fiṭr's ḥadīth dealing with etiquette as recorded in al-Bukhāri's work. Authors of the four *sunan* books, as well as others, have all quoted Fiṭr's ḥadīth. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 153 A.H.

76. Mālik ibn Ismā`il ibn Ziyād ibn Dirham Abu Hasan al-Kufi al-Hindi

He is one of Bukhāri's mentors as stated in the latter's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 282, Vol. 6, of his *Ṭabaqāt*. He concludes by saying that "Abu Ghassān is trustworthy, truthful, a very staunch Shī`a." Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Mīzān*, which proves his reliability and prestige, stating that the man has learned the teachings of the sect of Shī`ism from his mentor al-Hasan ibn Sālih, that Ibn Ma`īn has said that nobody in Kūfa is more accurate in reporting ḥadīth than Abu Ghassān, and that Abu ṣātim has said: "Whenever I look at him, he seems as though he has just left his grave, with two marks of prostration stamped on his forehead."

Al-Bukhāri has quoted him directly in many chapters of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim has quoted his ḥadīth on criminal penalties in his own *Ṣaḥīḥ* as transmitted by Harūn ibn `Abdullāh. Those who narrate his ḥadīth in Bukhāri are: Ibn `Ayīnah, `Abdul-Azīz ibn Abu Salamah, and Isrā`il. Both al-Bukhāri and Muslim quote his ḥadīth from Zuhayr ibn Mu`āwiyah. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in Kūfa in 219.

77. Muḥammad ibn Khāzim

He is very well known as Abu Mu`āwiyah al-Darīr al-Tamīmi al-Kūfi. Al-Thahbi mentions him saying, "Muḥammad ibn Khāzim al-Darīr is confirmed, truthful; nowhere at all have I seen his ḥadīth as weak; I shall discuss him in my chapter on *kunayāt*." When the author mentions him in his said chapter, he states: "Abu Mu`āwiyah al-Darīr is one of the most renown and trustworthy Imāms of ḥadīth," and he goes on to say: "Al-Hakim has said that both Shaykhs rely on his authority, and he is famous for being an extremist Shī`a."

All authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥs* have relied on his authority. Al-Thahbi has marked his name with "A" to indicate that all traditionists rely on his authority. Refer to his

hadīth in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥs* from al-A`mash and Hishām ibn `Urwah. Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* contains other ahādīth he has narrated through other trusted reporters. In Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his hadīth is reported by `Ali ibn al-Madīni, Muhammad ibn Salām, Yūsuf ibn `Īsa, Qutaybah, and Musaddad. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, he is quoted by Sa`d al-Wasitī, Sa`d ibn Mansūr, `Amr al-Nāqīd, Ahmed ibn Sinān, Ibn Namīr, Issāq al-Hanzali, Abu Bakr ibn Abu Shaybah, Abu Karīb, Yahya ibn Yahya, and Zuhayr. Mūsa al-Zamān has reported his hadīth in both *ṣaḥīḥs*. Muḥammad ibn Khāzim was born in 113, and he died in 195; may Allāh be merciful unto him.

78. Muḥammad ibn `Abdullāh al-Ḍabi al-Ṭahāni al-Nisabūri, Abu `Abdullāh al-Ḥākim

He is an Imām of *ḥuffāz*, those who memorize the entirety of the holy Qur`ān and hadīth by heart, and author of about one thousand books. He toured the lands seeking knowledge and learning hadīth from about two thousand mentors. He may be compared with the most renown scholars of his time such as al-Sa`lūki. Imām ibn Furk and all other Imāms consider his status to be superior even to their own. They appreciate him and his contributions; they cherish his name and reputation, without doubting his mastership at all. All learned Sunni scholars who could not achieve as much as he did envy him. He is one of the Shī`a heroes, a protector of the Islamic Sharī`a.

The author of *Al-Mizān* narrates his biography and describes him as "a truthful Imam, a very renown Shī`a." He quotes Ibn Tāhir saying: "I once asked Abu Ismā`īl `Abdullāh al-Anṣāri about al-Ḥākim Abu Abdullāh. He said: `He is an Imām in hadīth, a wretched Rāfiḍi.'" Al-Thahbi has recounted a few of his interesting statements such as his saying that the Chosen One (ص) came to the world circumcised, with a smile on his face, and that `Ali (ع) is a wasi. The author adds the

following: "His being truthful and knowledgeable of what he reports is a unanimously accepted fact." He was born in Rabī' al-Awwal of 321, and he died in Šafar of 405, may Allāh have mercy on his soul.

79. Muḥammad ibn `Ubaydullāh ibn Abu Rāfi` al-Madani
 He, Abu `Ubaydullāh, his brothers al-Faḍl and `Abdullāh sons of `Ubaydullah, his grandfather Abu Rafi`, his uncles Rafi`, al-Hasan, al-Mughīrah, `Ali, and their sons as well as grandsons, are all among good Shī'a ancestors. The books they have authored testify to the depth of their Shī'a conviction, as we have mentioned in Section 2, Chapter 12, of our book *Al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*.

Ibn `Uday mentions Muḥammad ibn `Ubaydullah ibn Abu Rafi` al-Madani, adding, at the conclusion of his biography in the *Mīzān*, that the man is among Kūfi Shī'as. When al-Thahbi states his biography in his own *Mīzān*, he marks it with TQ as an indication of which authors of the *sunan* books quote his ḥadīth (i.e. Tirmithi and Dār Qutni). He also mentions that he quotes his father and grandfather, and that Mandil and `Ali ibn Hāshim quote his ḥadīth. His ḥadīth is also quoted by Habān ibn `Ali, Yahya ibn Ya`li and others. Muḥammad ibn `Ubaydullāh ibn Abu Rāfi` al-Madani may have also reported ḥadīth from his brother `Abdullāh ibn `Ubaydullāh who is well known as a traditionist by researchers of ḥadīth. Al-Tabarāni in his *Al-Mu`jam al-Kabīr* has relied on the authority of Muḥammad ibn `Ubaydullāh ibn Abu Rāfi` al-Madani who quotes his father and grandfather saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said to `Ali (ع), "The first to enter Paradise will be I and you, then al-Hasan and al-Husayn, with our progeny behind us, and our Shī'as on our right and left."

80. Muḥammad ibn Fuḍayl ibn Ghazwān Abu `Abdul-Rahmān al-Kūfi

Ibn Qutaybah has included him among Shī'a dignitaries in his work *Al-Ma`ārif*, and Ibn Sa`d has mentioned him on page 271, Vol. 6, of his *Tabaqāt*, saying, "He is a trustworthy and reliable traditionist who as reported a great deal of hadīth; he also is a Shī'a, and some scholars [for this reason] do not rely on his authority." Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his chapter containing those well-known because of their fathers' reputation at the conclusion of his *Mizān*, describing him as a truthful Shī'a. He also mentions him in his chapter containing those whose first name is Muhammad, describing him as "a man of truth and fame," adding that Ahmed has described him as a Shī'a whose hadīth is authentic, and that Abu Dawūd has described him as a "Shī'a by profession" (!), adding that he was a man of hadīth and knowledge, that he learned the Qur'ān from Ḥamzah, that he has written numerous books, and that Ibn Ma`īn has trusted him and Ahmed spoken well of him. Al-Nisā'i has said that there is nothing wrong with his hadīth.

Authors of the six *sahīh* books, as well as many others, have relied on his authority. Refer to his hadīth in Bukhāri as transmitted by Muḥammad ibn Namīr, Ishāq al-Hanzali, Ibn Abu Shaybah, Muḥammad ibn Salām, Qutaybah, `Umrān ibn Maysarah, and `Amr ibn `Ali. His hadīth is transmitted in Bukhāri by `Abdullāh ibn `Āmir, Abu Karīb, Muḥammad ibn Tarf, Wāsil ibn `Abd al-A`la, Zuhayr, Abu Sa`d al-Ashajj, Muḥammad ibn Yazīd, Muḥammad ibn al-Muthanna, Ahmed al-Wak`ī, and `Abdul-`Azīz ibn `Umer ibn Abān. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in Kūfa in 194 or 195 A.H.

81. Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn al-Tā'ifi

He was one of the most distinguished companions of Imam Abu `Abdullāh al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him. Shaykh al-Tā'ifa

Abu Ja`fer al-Tūsi has mentioned him in his book *Rijāl al-Shī'a*, and al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn Dawūd has included him in his chapter on the most trustworthy traditionists in his book *Al-Mukhtasar*. Al-Thahbi includes his biography and quotes Yahya ibn Ma`īn and others who say that the man is truthful. He adds saying that al-Qa`nabi, Yahya ibn Yahya, and Qutaybah have all transmitted his traditions, and that `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Mahdi once mentioned Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn al-Tā'ifi and said: "His books [of traditions] are all authentic," and that Ma`rūf ibn Wāsil said: "I saw Sufyān al-Thawri once accompanied by Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn al-Tā'ifi who was writing down his ḥadīth." Yet those who have labelled his ḥadīth as "weak" have done so only on the grounds of his being a Shī'a, although their prejudice has not at all harmed him. His ḥadīth from `Amr ibn Dīnār about ablution exists in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. According to Ibn Sa`d's *Tabaqāt*, as stated on page 381, Vol. 5, his ḥadīth is quoted by Wakī ibn al-Jarrāh and one hundred others. In that year, his name-sake Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Jummāz died in Medīna. Ibn Sa`d has included both of their biographies in Vol. 5 of his *Tabaqāt*.

82. Muḥammad ibn Mūsa ibn `Abdullāh al-Qatari al-Madani

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his *Mizān* quoting Abu Hātim testifying to his being a Shī'a. He also quotes al-Tirmithi saying that the man is trustworthy, and he even marks his name with the initials of Muslim and the authors of *sunan* as an indication of their reliance on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth about foods in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* transmitted from `Abdullāh ibn `Abdullāh ibn Abu Talha. He is also quoted by al-Maqbari and a group of his peers. Others who have quoted his ḥadīth are: Ibn Abu Fadīk, Ibn Mahdi, Qutaybah, and others of their intellectual calibre.

83. Mu`āwiyah ibn `Ammār al-Dihni al-Bajli al-Kūfi

He is among our highly respected and revered Shī`as, prestigious and trustworthy. His father `Ammār is a good example for perseverance and persistence in adhering to the principles of justice, a model Allāh has brought forth for those who are patient while suffering for His Cause. A few tyrants cut off his hamstrings because of being a Shī`a, as we have indicated above, without succeeding in swaying him, till he left this world to receive his rewards. His son Mu`āwiyah was meted the same treatment, and the father is but a model for the son. He has accompanied Imāms al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāzim, peace be upon them; and learned from them a great deal. He has authored many books—as indicated above—and he is quoted by Shī`a reporters such as Ibn Abu `Umayr and others. Muslim and al-Nisā'i have relied on his authority. His ḥadīth about *hajj* is quoted in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Zubayr. In Muslim, he is quoted by both Yahya ibn Yahya and Qutaybah. He has also narrated ḥadīth from his father `Ammār, and from a group of his peers, and such aḥādīth exist in Sunni *musnads*. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in 175 A.H.

84. Ma`rūf ibn Kharbūth al-Karkhi¹⁶

Al-Thahbi describes him in his *Mīzān* as “a truthful Shī`a,” marking his name with the initials of al-Bukhāri, Muslim, and Abu Dawūd to indicate that they all quote his ḥadīth. He also quotes Abul Tufayl saying that Ma`rūf narrates a few aḥādīth. His ḥadīth is narrated by Abu `Āsim, Abu Dawūd, `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa and others. He also quotes Abu Hātim saying that the latter writes down his ḥadīth.

Ibn Khallikān mentions him in his *Wafīyyāt* and describes him as one of the servants of `Ali ibn Mūsa al-Rīdā, peace be upon him. He goes on to praise him, quoting a statement of his in which he says, “I have come unto the Almighty Allāh, leaving everything behind me, with the exception of serving my master `Ali ibn Mūsa al-Rīdā, peace

be upon him.” When Ibn Qutaybah discusses a few Shī`a notables in his work *Al-Ma`ārif*, he includes Ma`rūf ibn Kharbūth among them. Muslim has relied on the authority of Ma`rūf ibn Kharbūth; refer to his ḥadīth about *hajj* in his *sahīh* from Abul Tufayl. He died in Baghdād in 200 A.H.;¹⁷ his grave-site is now a mausoleum. Sirri al-Saqti was one of his students.

85. Manṣūr ibn al-Mu`tamir ibn `Abdullāh ibn Rabī`ah al-Salami al-Kūfi

He is one of the companions of Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (ع), and he has narrated ḥadīth from them, as the author of *Muntahal Maqāl fī Ahwāl al-Rijāl* states. Ibn Qutaybah includes him among Shī`a nobility in his book *Al-Ma`ārif*. Al-Jawzjāni has included him among the narrators “whose sect is not appreciated by [certain] people” in the roots and branches of religion, due to their adherence to what they have learned from Muhammad's progeny (ع). Says he: “Among the people of Kūfa there is a group whose sect is not appreciated; these are chiefs of Kūfa's traditionists such as Abu Ishāq, Manṣūr, Zubayd al-Yāmi, al-A`mash and other peers. People have tolerated them just because they are truthful in narrating ḥadīth.”¹⁸ Why do they bear so much grudge against these truthful men? Is it because of their upholding the Two Weighty Things? Or their embarking upon the Ark of Salvation? Or their entering into the city of the Prophet's knowledge through its Gate, the Gate of Repentance? Or is it their seeking refuge with the “Refuge of all the world”? Or is it their obedience to the Prophet's will to be kind unto his descendants? Or is it their heart's submission to Allah and their weeping for fear of Him, as is well known about them?

Stating the biography of Manṣūr ibn al-Mu`tamir ibn `Abdullāh ibn Rabī`ah, Ibn Sa`d says the following about Manṣūr on page 235 of Vol. 6 of his *Ṭabaqāt*: “He has lost his eye-sight because of excessive weeping for fear of Allāh. He

used to carry a handkerchief for the purpose of drying his tears. Some allege that he fasted and prayed for sixty years.” Can a man of such qualities be a burden on people? No, indeed, but we have been inflicted by some people who do not know what fairness is; so, we are Allāh's, and unto Him is our return.

In his biography of Mansūr ibn al-Mu`tamir ibn `Abdullāh ibn Rabī`ah, Ibn Sa`d also quotes Hammād ibn Zayd saying, “I have seen Mansūr in Mecca, and I think he belongs to those Khashbis, yet I do not think that he tells a lie when he quotes ḥadīth.” Behold the underestimation, grudge, contempt and manifest enmity this statement bears. How surprised I am when I consider his statement: “I do not think that he tells lies...” As if telling lies is one of the practices of those who are sincere to Muhammad's progeny. As if Mansūr alone is truthful, rather than all other Shī`a traditionists. Name-calling... As if the Nāsibis could not find a name whereby they can call the Shī`as other than misnomers such as Khashbis, Turābis, Rāfidis, etc. As if they have never heard the Almighty's Commandment: “And do not exchange bad names; what an evil it is to use a bad name after having accepted faith (Qur`ān, 49:11).” Ibn Qutaybah has mentioned the “Khashbis” in his book *Al-Ma`ārif* and said: “These are Rāfidis. Ibrāhīm al-Ashtar met `Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād in the battle-field. Most of Ibrāhīm's men had guaiacum wood panels; therefore, they were labelled `khashbis,' men associated with paneling, out of scorn.” In fact, they called them so just to humiliate them and look down upon them and their wooden weapons with which they were able to beat Ibn Marjānah, predecessor of the Nāsibis, thus annihilating those heretics, murderers of Muḥammad's progeny. “Allāh has cut off the tail of those who committed injustice; all praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds (Qur`ān, 6:45).” There is no harm, therefore, in this noble name, nor is there any harm in its

synonyms like Turābis, after Abu Turāb (Imām `Ali, as); we are proud of it.

We have digressed. Let us go back to our main topic and state that it is the consensus of traditionists to rely on Mansūr. For this reason, all authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books, as well as others, rely on his authority, knowing that he is Shī`a. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥs* from Abu Wā'il, Abul Duḥa, Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`i and other peers. He quotes Shu`bah, al-Thawri, Ibn `Ayīnah, Hammād ibn Zayd and others who are the most distinguished of that class of reporters of ḥadīth. Ibn Sa`d has said that Mansūr's death took place at the end of the year 132, adding, "He is a trusted authority who has reported a great deal of ḥadīth; he is a man of sublime prestige; may Allāh have mercy on him."

86. Al-Minhāl ibn `Amr al-Kūfī, the *tābi`i*

He is one of the renown Shī`as of Kufa. For this reason, al-Jawzjāni has categorized his ḥadīth as "weak," describing him as a "follower of the bad sect." Ibn Ḥazm has spoken ill of him in the same manner, and Yahya ibn Sa`d, too, chews his name. Ahmed ibn Ḥanbal states contrariwise. He says: "Abu Bishr is more dear to me than a sweet cool fountain, and he is more reliable than others."

In spite of being a staunch Shī`a, stating so in public even during the time of al-Mukhtār, he is not doubted by scholars regarding the accuracy of his ḥadīth. He is quoted by Shu`bah, al-Mas`ūdi, al-Hajjāj ibn Artā'ah, and many peers of their intellectual calibre. He is trusted by Ibn Ma`īn, Ahmed al-`Ijli and others. In his *Mizān*, al-Thahbi quotes their assessment of the man as we have stated above, marking his name with the initials of Bukhāri and Muslim as an indication that they both consider his ḥadīth reliable. Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhari's *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Sa`id ibn Jubayr. In Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in the author's section on Tafsīr, his ḥadīth is transmitted by

Zayd ibn Abu Anīsa. Al-Manşūr ibn al-Mu`tamir has quoted him in a chapter on prophets.

87. Mūsa ibn Qays al-Ḥaḍrami, Abu Muḥammad

Al-`Aqīli describes him as an “extremist Rāfiḍi.” Once, Sufyān asked him about Abu Bakr. He answered: “Ali is more dear to me.” Mūsa ibn Qays reports ḥadīth from Salamah ibn Kahīl, Iyād ibn Iyād, ending with Mālik ibn Ja`na reporting that “I heard Umm Salamah saying that `Ali is with the truth; whoever follows him is a follower of the truth, and whoever abandons him certainly abandons the truth; this is decreed.” This has been narrated by Abu Na`īm al-Faḍl ibn Dakīn from Mūsa ibn Qays. Mūsa ibn Qays has reported ḥadīth praising Ahl al-Bayt in volumes which angered al-`Aqīli who said to him what he said. Ibn Ma`īn has trusted and relied on him. Abu Dawūd and Sa`d ibn Mansūr have both relied on his authority in their respective *sunan*. Al-Thahbi has included his biography in his own *Mizān*, stating about him what we have already stated above. Refer to his ḥadīth in the *sunan* from Salamah ibn Kahīl and Ḥajar ibn `Anbasah. His ḥadīth is transmitted by Dakīn, `Ubaydullāh ibn Mūsa and other reliable authorities. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, during the reign of al-Manşūr.

88. Naīf ibn al-Hārith Abu Dawūd al-Nakh`i al-Kūfi al-Hamādani al-Subay`i

Al-`Aqīli described him as being an “extremist Rāfiḍi.” Al-Bukhāri says: “People speak ill of him [because of being a Shī`a].” Sufyān, Hamām, Sharīk and a group of the most renown scholars of such calibre have all quoted him. Al-Tirmithi relies on him in his own *sahīh*. Authors of *musnads* have all recorded his ḥadīth. Refer to his ḥadīth in Tirmithi and others from Anas ibn Mālik, Ibn `Abbās, `Umrān ibn Ḥaşīn and Zayd ibn Arqam. Al-Thahbi has included his biography and stated what we have already said above.

89. Nūh ibn Qays ibn Rabāh al-Ḥadāni

He is also known as al-Ṭāhi al-Baṣri. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Mizān*, describing his ḥadīth as authentic, adding that Ahmed and Ibn Ma`īn trust him. He also quotes Abu Dawūd saying that the man is a Shī`a. Al-Nisā'i has said that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth, putting on his name the initials of Muslim and authors of the *sunan* as an indication that they all quote his ḥadīth. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his aḥādīth about beverages are quoted by Ibn `Awn. His aḥādīth on the dress codes exist in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, too, as narrated by his brother Khālid ibn Qays. In Muslim, he is quoted by Naṣr ibn `Ali. In works other than Muslim's, his ḥadīth is quoted by al-Ash`ath and by many others of his calibre. Nūh ibn Qays ibn Rabāh reports from Ayyūb, `Amr ibn Mālik and a group of other men.

90. Hārūn ibn Sa`d al-`Ijli al-Kūfi

Al-Thahbi mentions him and puts Muslim's initial on his name as an indication that the latter quotes him, then he describes him as "truthful in his own right," but he also calls him "a hated Rāfidi" who narrates from `Abbās from Ibn Ma`īn that he is an extremist Shī`a. He has learned ḥadīth from `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Abu Sa`id al-Khudri, who in turn quotes Muḥammad ibn Abu Ḥafṣ al-`Attār, al-Mas`ūdi, and Ḥasan ibn Ḥayy. Abu Ḥātim says that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth. I remember one of his aḥādīth which describes Hell-fire; it is recorded in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* as narrated by al-Ḥasan ibn Sālih from Harūn ibn Sa`d al-`Ijli, from Salmān.

91. Hāshim ibn al-Barīd ibn Zayd Abu `Ali al-Kūfi

Al-Thahbi mentions him and puts the initials of Abu Dawūd and al-Nisā'i on his name to indicate that he is one of their authorities, quoting Ibn Ma`īn and others testifying to his being trustworthy, in addition to his own testimony to being

a "Rāfidi." He quotes Aḥmed saying that there is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth. Hāshim narrates ḥadīth from Zayd ibn `Ali and Muslim al-Baṭīn, and he is quoted by al-Kharībi and his son `Ali ibn Hāshim, to whom we referred above, in addition to a group of other renown scholars. Hāshim adhered to Shī`ism, and this has been made clear when we discussed `Ali ibn Hāshim.

92. Hubayrah ibn Maryam al-Ḥimyari

He is one of the companions of Imām `Ali (ع), equal only to al-Hārith in his sincerity as well as companionship. Al-Thahbi mentions him and puts on his name the initials of the authors of *sunan* books as a reference to his being one of the authorities of their *musnads*, then he quotes Aḥmed saying, "There is nothing wrong with his ḥadīth, and he is more dear to us than al-Hārith." Al-Thahbi quotes Ibn Kharāsh describing Hubayrah as "weak; he used to assault the wounded in Ṣiffīn." Al-Jawzjāni says the following about him: "He is a follower of al-Mukhtār who used to put an end to the life of those wounded in the Khāzir Battle."

Al-Shahristāni, in his book *Al-Milal wal Niḥal*, has included him among Shī`a notables, a fact taken for granted by everyone. His ḥadīth from `Ali (ع) is unquestioned in the *sunan*, and he is quoted by both Abu Ishāq and Au Fākhita."

93. Hishām ibn Ziyad Abul Miqdām al-Baṣri

Al-Shahristāni has included him in his *Al-Milal wal Niḥal* among Shī`a notables. Al-Thahbi mentions him twice: once under his alphabetical index, and once in his chapter on *kunayāt*, placing a Q on his name to indicate that Dār Qutni of the *sunan* relies on his authority. Refer to his ḥadīth in Tirmithi's *Ṣaḥīḥ* and other works as transmitted from al-Ḥasan and al-Qardī. He is quoted by Shaybān ibn Farūkh, al-Qawāriri and others.

94. Hishām ibn `Ammār ibn Naṣr ibn Maysarah, Abu al-Walīd

He is also called al-Zafri al-Dimashqi. He is one of Bukhāri's mentors as the latter states in his *Sahīh*. Ibn Qutaybah includes him among Shī'a notables when he mentions quite a few of them in his chapter on sects in *Al-Ma`ārif*. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his *Mīzān*, describing him as "the Imām, orator, and reciter of the Holy Qur'ān of Damascus, its traditionist and scholar, a man of truth who has narrated a great deal of hadīth, though he has a few [ideological] defects, etc."

Al-Bukhāri quotes him directly in his chapter on "those who voluntarily grant extensions for repayment of debt" in his chapter on sales in his *sahīh* and in other chapters with which researchers are familiar. Some of such chapters, I believe, are his books *Al-Maghāzi*, his book on beverages, and his chapter on the attributes of the companions of the Prophet (ص). Hishām ibn `Ammār narrates hadīth from Yahya ibn Hamzah, Ṣadaqah ibn Khālid, `Abdul-Hamīd ibn Abul `Ishrīn and others. The author of *Al-Mīzān* says: "Many quote his hadīth; they travel to his place to learn from him how to recite the Holy Qur'ān and the narration of hadīth. His hadīth is quoted by al-Walīd ibn Muslim, one of his mentors, while he himself narrates from Abu Lahī'ah. `Abdān has said that there is no traditionist like him in the world, while someone else has said that Hishām is outspoken, wise, easy to comprehend, and he has acquired a great deal of knowledge."

Like other Shī'as, Hishām ibn `Ammār believes that the Qur'ānic diction is created only by Allāh Almighty. When Ahmed [ibn Hanbal] heard about this, as the author of *Al-Mīzān* states in his biography of Hishām ibn `Ammār, he responded by saying, "I have known him to be wreckless; may Allāh annihilate him." Ahmed has also come across a book written by Hishām in which one of the latter's sermons says: "Praise be to Allāh Who has manifested Himself unto his

creatures through what He has created.” This caused Ahmed to be extremely furious, so much so that he required all those who used to pray behind Hishām to repeat their prayers. Ahmed could not see that Hishām's statement is very clear in stating that Allāh is superior to being seen, glorified above those who inquire about Him with “how” or “where,” appreciative of His norm of creation. His statement may be compared with one saying: “He has manifested His miracles in everything He has created,” or it may even be more pertinent and fitting than the latter; but scholars of the same calibre speak of each other in the light of their own likes and dislikes, each according to his own degree of knowledge. Hisham ibn `Ammār was born in 153, and he died at the commencement of Muḥarram of 245 A.H.; may Allāh have mercy on him.

95. Hashīm ibn Bashīr ibn al-Qāsim ibn Dīnār al-Wāsītī, Abu Mu`āwiyah

His birth-place is Balkh. His grandfather al-Qāsim had moved to Wāsīt to engage in trade. Ibn Qutaybah includes him in his *Al-Ma`ārif* among Shī`a nobility. He is mentor of Imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal and all those of his calibre. Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his book *Al-Mizān*, marking his name with an indication that all authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books rely on his authority, and describing him as one who knows the Holy Qur`ān by heart. Says al-Thahbi: “He is one of the most renown scholars. He learned ḥadīth from al-Zuhri and Hasan ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān. His ḥadīth is quoted in turn by al-Qattān, Ahmed, Ya`qūb al-Dawraqi, and by many others.”

Refer to his ḥadīth in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books as transmitted by Ḥamīd al-Tawīl, Ismā`īl ibn Abu Khālid, Abu Iḥāq al-Shaybāni, and by others. He is quoted in both books by `Umer, al-Nāqid, `Amr ibn Zarārah, and Sa`īd ibn Sulaymān. In Bukhāri, his ḥadīth is quoted by `Amr ibn `Awf, Sa`d ibn al-Naḍīr, Muḥammad ibn Nabahān, `Ali ibn

al-Madīni, and Qutaybah. In Muslim, he is quoted by Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Shurayh, Ya`qub al-Dawraqi, `Abdullāh ibn Mu`it`, Yahya ibn Yahya, Sa`id ibn Mansur, Ibn Abu Shaybah, Ismā`il ibn Sālim, Muhammad ibn al-Sabāh, Dawūd ibn Rashīd, Ahmed ibn Manī, Yahya ibn Ayyub, Zuhayr ibn Harb, `Uthmān ibn Abu Shaybah, `Ali ibn Hajar, and Yazid ibn Harun. He died, may Allāh have mercy on him, in Baghdād in 183 A.H. at the age of 79.

96. Wakī ibn al-Jarrāh ibn Malih ibn `Adi

His *kunyat* is "Abu Sufyān," after his son Sufyān al-Ruwāsi al-Kūfi. He belongs to the tribe of Qays Ghilān. In his *Ma`ārif*, Ibn Qutaybah includes him among Shī'a notables. In his book titled *Tahthīb*, Ibn al-Madani has said that Wakī adheres to Shī'ism. Marwān ibn Mu`āwiyah never doubted that Wakī was "Rāfiḍi."

Once, Yahya ibn Ma`in visited Marwān and found him with a tablet containing statements about this person and that. Among its contents was a statement describing Wakī as Rāfiḍi. Ibn Ma`in said to Marwān: "Wakī is better than you." "Better than me?!" exclaimed Marwān. Ibn Ma`in answered: "Yes, better than you." Ibn Ma`in indicates that Wakī came to know about this dialogue and he responded by saying, "Yahya is a friend of ours." Ahmed ibn Hanbal was asked once, "If there is a discrepancy in narrating ḥadīth between Wakī and Abdul-Rahmān ibn Mahdi, whose ḥadīth shall we accept?" Ahmed answered that he personally preferred `Abdul-Rahmān's ḥadīth for reasons which he stated. Among them was this one: "Abdul-Rahmān never speaks in a derogatory manner about our ancestors, unlike Wakī ibn al-Jarrāh." This is supported by a statement recorded by al-Thahbi at the conclusion of his biography of al-Ḥasan ibn Sālih wherein he says that Wakī used to say: "Al-Ḥasan ibn Sālih, in my view, is an Imām of ḥadīth." Some people said to him, "But he does not invoke Allāh's mercy on `Uthmān."

He said, "Do you invoke Allāh's mercy upon al-Hajjāj's soul?" thus equating `Uthmān with al-Hajjāj.

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his book *Al-Mizān* stating the above views about him. All authors of the six *sahīh* books as well as others rely on his authority. Refer to his hadīth in Bukhāri's and Muslim's *Sahīh* books as transmitted by al-A`mash, al-Thawri, Shu`bah, Ismā`īl ibn Abu Khālid, and `Ali ibn al-Mubāarak. He is quoted in both books by Ishāq al-Hanzali and Muḥammad ibn Namīr. Al-Bukhāri quotes his hadīth as transmitted by `Abdullāh al-Hamīdi, Muḥammad ibn Salām, Yahya ibn Ja`fer ibn A`yan, Yahya ibn Mūsa, and Muḥammad ibn Muqātil. In Muslim's book, he is quoted by Zuhayr, Ibn Abu Shaybah, Abu Karīb, Abu Sa`d al-Ashajj, Nasr ibn `Ali, Sa`d ibn Azhar, Ibn Abu `Umer, `Ali ibn Kashram, `Uthmān ibn Abu Shaybah, and Qutaybah ibn Sa`d. He died, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, in Fīd when he was in the company of a caravan returning from the pilgrimage, in Muḥarram of 197 A.H. at the age of 68.

97. Yahya ibn al-Jazzār al-`Arni al-Kufī

He is one of the companions of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his book *Al-Mizān* and marks his name to indicate that Muslim and authors of the *sunan* rely on his authority, describing him as "truthful" and "trustworthy," and quoting al-Hakam ibn Atbah saying that Yahya ibn al-Jazzār is "extremist" in his Shī'a views. Ibn Sa`d has mentioned him on page 206, Vol. 6, of his *Tabaqāt* saying: "Yahya ibn al-Jazzār adheres to Shī'ism, and he goes to extremes in doing so; yet many have said that he is trustworthy, and that he narrates many ahādīth."

I have seen how Muslim's *Sahīh* contains one hadīth about prayers which he narrates from `Ali, and another about faith transmitted from `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Abu Layla. Al-

Hakam ibn `Utayba and al-Hasan al-`Urfi quote his ḥadīth in Muslim and others.

98. Yahya ibn Sa`id al-Qaṭṭān

His *kunyat* is "Abu Sa`id." He is a slave of Banu Tamīm al-Basri, and he is the most renown traditionist of his time. Qutaybah has included him in his *Ma`ārif* among Shī'a notables. Authors of the six *ṣaḥīḥ* books and others have relied on his authority. His ḥadīth from Hishām ibn `Urwah, Hamīd al-Tawīl, Yahya ibn Sa`id al-Ansāri and others stands on solid grounds in Bukhāri, Musaddad, `Ali ibn al-Madīni and Bayān ibn `Amr. In Muslim's book, his ḥadīth is transmitted by Muhammad ibn Hātim, Muḥammad ibn Khalād al-Bāhili, Abu Kāmil Faḍl ibn Husayn al-Jahdari, Muḥammad al-Muqaddimi, `Abdullāh ibn Hāshim, Abu Bakr ibn Abu Shaybah, `Abdullāh ibn Sa`d, Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Ya`qūb al-Dawraqi, Ahmed ibn `Abdah, `Amr ibn `Ali, and `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Bishr. He died, may Allāh Almighty have mercy on him, in 198 A.H. at the age of 78.

99. Yazīd ibn Ziyād al-Kūfi, Abu `Abdullāh

He is a slave of Banu Hāshim. Al-Thahbi mentions him in his book *Al-Mīzān*, placing on his name the initials of Muslim and four authors of *sunan* to indicate that they quote him. He cites Abu Fadl saying: "Yazīd ibn Ziyād is one of the foremost Shī'a Imāms." Al-Thahbi has admitted that he is one of the renown Kūfi scholars. In spite of all this, many have assaulted him, preparing against him all means of belittling and charging due to the fact that, relying on Abu Barzah or maybe Abu Bardah, he has narrated one ḥadīth stating the following: "We were in the company of the Prophet (ﷺ) when some singing was heard. Then `Amr ibn al-`Āas and Mu`āyiah came singing. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: `O Mighty Lord! Involve both of these men in dissension, and hurl them in Hell-fire.'" Refer to his ḥadīth on beverages in Muslim's

Sahīh from `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Abu Layla as reported from him by Sufyān ibn `Ayīnah. He died, may Allāh Almighty have mercy on him, in 136 at the age of about ninety.

100. Abu `Abdullāh al-Jadali

Al-Thahbi has mentioned him in his chapter on *kunayāt*, placing on his name "DT" to indicate that he is among those relied upon by both Dawūd and Tirmithi in their *sahīh* books, then he describes him as an "abhorred Shī'a." He quotes al-Jawzjāni saying that the man is the standard-bearer of al-Mukhtar. He also quotes Ahmed describing him as "trustworthy." Al-Shahristāni has included him among Shī'a dignitaries in his book *Al-Milal wal Nihal*. Ibn Qutaybah has included him among the most zealous of "Rafīdis" in his book *Al-Ma`ārif*. Refer to his hadīth in both Tirmithi's and Abu Dawūd's *sahīh* books as well as all Sunni *musnads*.

Ibn Sa`d mentions him on page 159, Vol. 6, of his *Tabaqāt* where he says that, "Abu `Abdullah al-Jadali is a very zealous Shī'a. Some allege that he headed al-Mukhtār's police force, and that he was sent once to `Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr accompanied by eight hundred men to annihilate them and support Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah against Ibn al-Zubayr's scheme." Ibn al-Zubayr, in fact, had enforced a siege around the houses of Ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah and Banu Hāshim, surrounding them with fire wood in preparation for burning them alive because of refusing to swear the oath of allegiance to him, but Abu `Abdullāh al-Jadali saved them from a certain death; therefore, may Allāh reward him for what he did for His Prophet's household (ع).

This much concludes what we liked to count in a hurry a hundred Shī'a heroes who are authorities relied upon by the Sunnis. They are custodians of the nation's knowledge. Through them, the prophetic legacy is preserved, and they are sought by the authors of the *sahīh* and *musnad* books. We have mentioned them by their names and quoted Sunni texts

testifying to their being Shī`as while still remaining authorities, as you had requested. I think those who raise objections will see their error in claiming that the Sunnis do not rely on the authority of Shī`as. They will come to know that their criterion is truthfulness and accuracy, regardless of the school of thought, Sunni or Shī`a. If the ḥadīth narrated by the Shī`as is all rejected, then the vast majority of the prophetic legacy will be lost, as al-Thahbi himself admits while narrating the biography of Abān ibn Taghlib in his book *Al-Mīzān*. There can be no better testimony than that.

You, may Allāh render the truth victorious through your person, know that there have been quite a few ancestors of the Shī`as, other than the ones we have counted here, whose full count is many times more than this hundred, upon whose authority the Sunnis rely. These "others" are even of a higher calibre; they are narrators of even more authentic ḥadīth, having acquired more knowledge. And they were closer to the Prophet's time, with a seniority in embracing the Shī`a beliefs. They are Shī`a companions [*sahābah*] of the Prophet (ص), may Allāh be pleased with all of them. We have dealt with their blessed names at the conclusion of our work *Al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*. They are also among the trustworthy *tabi`īn* whose authority is relied upon. Each one of them is a trustworthy man who has memorized the entire text of the Holy Qur`ān by heart, and his argument is irrefutable. Among such men are those who were martyred while supporting the lesser and the greater Camel Battles, Siffīn, Al-Nahrawān, in Hijaz as well as in Yemen, when Bisr ibn Arta'ah invaded them, during the dissension of al-Ḥadrami who was sent to Baṣrah by Mu`āwiyah. They include those who were martyred on the Taff Battle with the Master of the Youths of Paradise [Imām Husayn ibn `Alī, as], and those who were martyred with his grandson Zayd, and many others who had to face a great deal of injustice and persecution, avenging the massacre of the Prophet's progeny. Among them were those who were

murdered just because of being very strong in their beliefs. Others were unfairly exiled from their homes, and those who had to resort to *taqiyya*, fearing for their lives or due to their physical weakness, such as al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, al-Asbagh ibn Nabatah, Yahya ibn Ya`mur, the latter being the first to apply dots to the Arabic alphabet, al-Khaḥlī ibn Aḥmed al-Farāhīdi, who founded the rules of Arabic grammar and scansion, Ma`āth ibn Muslim al-Harra, who laid the foundations of the science of conjugation in the Arabic language, and many others whose complete biographies would require huge volumes.

Overlook the hatred of the Nāsibis towards these men through their use of attacking; they call them “weak” traditionists, and they chew their names, thus depriving themselves of their knowledge. There are hundreds of reliable Shī`as who have learned hadīth by heart, who are light-houses of guidance, ignored by Sunnis. For these men, Shī`as have dedicated indices and bibliographies containing their biographies and stories. These works prove the extent of service these men have rendered to the tolerant Sharī`a. Whoever researches them will find them to be models of truthfulness and trustworthiness, piety, asceticism, worship, and sincerity in bringing people closer to Allāh Almighty and to His Messenger (ص), to His Book, and to the Imāms of Muslims as well as to their commoners. We pray Allāh to enable us and your own self to benefit from their blessings; He is the Most Merciful.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This Letter has grown quite lengthy because the topic demands it to be as such. Scholars are not bored by its length due to its contents that include precious benefits sought by every

researcher and critic. Other than these, let whoever is bored read a portion of it, and let him judge the rest of it accordingly, then let him go directly to Letter No. 17 and the ones that succeed it. For fear of boring you by such a lengthy Letter, we have refrained from including it in lists of books containing valuable and very interesting information.

²Upon mentioning Isma`il ibn `Abbād, al-Thahbi departs from his usual approach in his *Al-Mizān*, listing him before Isma`il ibn Abān al-Ghanawī and Isma`il ibn Abān al-Azdi. He has, indeed, greatly wronged his own self, discarding all basic rights.

³A collar put around the dog's neck; the meaning here is that his time to depart has come when a rope is tightened around his neck.

⁴See page 196 of the abridged version of *Al-Jamī` Baynal `Imi wa Fad`ilih* by the contemporary scholar Shaykh Aḥmed ibn `Umer al-Muḥammasāni al-Beiruti.

⁵Refer to page 199 of its summary in the book written by the scholar Shaykh Aḥmed ibn `Umer al-Muḥammasāni al-Beiruti.

⁶Ibn `Adi quotes a chain of narrators including al-Husayn ibn `Ali al-Sukūni al-Kufi, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Sukūni, Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Aswad, al-A`mash, and `Aṭiyyah, stating that Jarīr was asked once: "How was `Ali's status among your folks?" Jarīr answered: "He was the best of mankind." This has been quoted by Muḥammad Aḥmed al-Thahbi in his biography of Ṣāliḥ ibn Abul-Aswad in *Al-Mizān*. In spite of al-Thahbi's extreme fanaticism, all he had to say in his comment about this ḥadīth is his statement: "He probably meant during his [`Ali's] lifetime."

⁷His statement "What a great man `Ali was," though flattering, does not do justice to the status of the Imām, peace be upon him, even coming from one of his adversaries. Sharīk's rejection of such a feeble compliment and his anger thereat are, according to the norms of tradition, justified. There is quite a

difference between the statement of this Omayyad vagabond who infers "What a great man `Ali was," having heard `Ali's outstanding virtues, as well as the verses of the Exalted and Almighty stating: "We have decreed, and the most capable of decreeing are We..." The comparison between the statement of that Omayyad man and those of Allāh is indeed quite manifest; yet Allāh Almighty did not content Himself with just saying "What a great servant of Allah he is," but also added: "He is oft-returning;" so, *Wafiyyāt al-A`yān* does not provide any answer to such a question.

⁸He was also one of those who were put in charge of fighting the renegades as Ibn Hajar indicates as he discusses Sīhān ibn Ṣawhān in Part One of his *Al-Isābah*.

⁹It was said to al-Sha`bi, as mentioned in the biography of Rashīd al-Hijri in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān*, "What is the matter with you? Why do you find fault with `Ali's companions? Haven't you learned what you have learned from any of them?" He asked: "From whom?" They answered: "From al-Hārith and Sa`sā`ah." He said: "As regarding Sa`sā`ah, he was, indeed, an eloquent orator, and I learned from him how to deliver sermons, and truly al-Hārith was an expert in mathematics, and from him did I learn the same."

¹⁰Suffices you for proof testifying to this fact what is mentioned by Ibn Hajar in his biography in Part Three of his *Isābah*, Vol. 2, page 241.

¹¹Yes, he was agreed upon by those who are fair, and they included it in their sahihs with satisfaction. Those who opposed it are the Naṣībīs and Kharijites. It includes what is narrated by Ahmed ibn al-Azhar, who is unanimously considered as an authority, saying: "Abdel-Razzāq has taught me a few exclusive aḥādīth which he knows through a chain of narrators that includes Mu`ammar, al-Zuhri, and `Ubaydullah and ends with Ibn `Abbās who says that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) looked once at `Ali and said: `You are a chief in this life, and a chief in the life to come; whoever loves you loves me, and whoever hates you hates me; the

one you love is loved by Allāh, and the one you dislike is disliked by Allāh; woe unto those who despise you.” This is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 128, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, followed by the author's comment thus: “This is an authentic ḥadīth according to the authority of both Shaykhs.” Among others is what `Abdel-Razzāq has narrated from Mu`ammar, from Ibn Najīh, from Mujāhid, from Ibn `Abbās who says that Fāṭima (ع) once said: “O Messenger of Allāh! You have married me to a provider who has no money.” He said: “Are you not pleased that Allāh cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose from among them two men, and He made one of them your father and the other your husband?” This ḥadīth is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 129, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak* through Sarīh ibn Yunus, Abu Ḥafṣ, al-A`mash, Abu Sālih, up to Abu Hurayrah.

¹²Allāh forbid that they have abominations only Mu`āwiyah and his oppressive gang are more likely to have. Among such abominations is narrated by `Abdel-Razzāq through a chain of narrators that includes: Ibn `Ayīnah, `Ali ibn Zayd ibn Jath`ān, Abu Nadrah, up to Abu Sa`d who quotes the Prophet (ص) saying: “If you see Mu`āwiyah sitting on my pulpit, kill him.”

¹³The reason for this is the fact that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, died in 148 at the age of 65.

¹⁴The demise of Imam al-Jawād, peace be upon him, took place in 220; he was 25 years old. They have committed a mistake those who say that `Abdel-Razzāq narrated ḥadīth from al-Bāqir, for al-Bāqir, peace be upon him, died in 114 at the age of 57, twelve years prior to `Abdel-Razzāq's birth.

¹⁵This can be extracted from the biography of his grandfather Sa`d ibn Janādah in Part One of the *Al-Iṣābah*.

¹⁶Some say “Ibn Fayrūz,” others say “Ibn Fayrūzān,” while still others call him “Ibn `Ali.”

¹⁷Some say in the year 201, while others say it was the year 204.

¹⁸As in Zubayd al-Yāmi's biography in *Al-Mizān*. We have quoted this statement from al-Jawzjāni while discussing the biographies of Zubayd, al-A`mash, and Abu Ishāq, and we included noteworthy comments on them.

LETTER 17

Thul-Hijjah 3, 1329 A.H.

- I** Appreciating the debater's sentiments,
- II** Admitting There is no Objection if Ahl al-Sunnah Rely on Shī'a Authorities,
- III** His belief in the Miracles of Ahl al-Bayt,
- IV** Dilemma of Compromising the Above with what Ahl al-Qibla do.

1) I swear by your eyes that I have never seen anyone more good-hearted, faster in dealing with the topic, more attentive, deeper in vision, stronger in argument, clearer in proof, than you. Your letters have come like a flowing waterfall, and your arguments have taken control over all my senses and sentiments. Your latest letter twists the necks of men, smashes the head of falsehood.

2) The Sunni no longer has any excuse for not relying on his Shī'a brother if the latter is trustworthy. Your view in this regard is the clear truth, and that of your opponents is nothing more than fanaticism and intolerance. Their argument that it is wrong to rely on the Shī'a as contradicts their actual deeds, and their deeds in fact contradict their arguments. Their arguments and deeds do not race with each other in the arena, nor do they pursue the same goal, due to the clash between them which causes them to clash. For this reason, their argument has been proven faulty, while yours remains invincible. During such a short time, you have produced what I would consider a dissertation for which a title like "Shī'a Authorities in Support of Sunni Authorities" may be appropriate. The objective is not to defend this sect or that or win an argument; rather, I hope it will, if Allah so wills, bring a glorious reform to the Islamic world.

3) We believe in all Allāh's miracles, in those of our Master the Commander of the Faithful, and in those of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, more than what you indicate.

4) The question now is why have the people of the *qibla* turned away from following the path of the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (ع)? Why didn't they worship Allāh through their own concepts of *usul* and *furu`*? Why have they not taken their word as the final word in the matter in which they differed? Why have the nation's scholars not been researching their views? Why have they innstead opposed them ideologically? The nation's scholars have always been, from sons to fathers, referring to those besides Ahl al-Bayt without denying doing so. If the Book's verses and the Sunnah's texts are as you indicate, Ahl al-Qibla would not have turned away from the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, nor would they have accepted any alternative to them. But they did not understand of the Book and the Sunnah other than the praise of Ahl al-Bayt, and the necessity of loving and respecting them. The ancestors are closer to the truth and more familiar with the meanings of the Sunnah and the Book ("and follow their own guidance (Qur'ān, 6:90)," Wassalam.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 18
Thul-Hijjah 4, 1329

- I** Sentiments Reciprocated,
- II** Debater's Error in Generalizing Regarding Ahl al-Qibla,
- III** The Nation's Politicians are the Ones Who Turned Away from Ahl al-Bayt,
- IV** The Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (without any argument) are not Inferior to others,

V Which Fair Court Judges Calling Their Followers "Strayers"?

1) Thank you for thinking so highly of me, the unworthy that I am, and I appreciate your compliments as well as the contents of my letters; therefore, I look humbly to such gracefulness, and I bow down before such kindness to honour its greatness and prestige.

2) But I request you to reconsider what you have stated regarding those who turned away from Ahl al-Bayt, generalizing them about all Ahl al-Qibla. I remind you that half of Ahl al-Qibla are the Shī`as of Muḥammad (ص) who have not turned away nor shall ever turn away from the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt in as far as the origins and branches of the faith are concerned. It is their view that following their sect, peace be upon them, is one of the strict commandments of the Book and the Sunnah; therefore, they worship Allāh Almighty thus in every time and place. This is the way of their good ancestors as well as that of their posterity since the Messenger of Allāh (ص) passed away.

3) Those who have turned away from the beliefs of Ahl al-Bayt in as far as the roots and branches of the creed are concerned are the nation's politicians, the ones who control its destiny, due to their turning away from the succession (to the Prophet), affecting such a succession by elections, although they knew for sure that it was assigned for the Commander of the Faithful `Ali ibn Abu Ṭālib (ع). They saw that the Arabs would not tolerate such a succession if restricted to one dynasty; therefore, they started interpreting its texts, assuming power through elections so that every suburb of theirs may enjoy it sooner or later. So, it was here and it was there. They sacrificed their means and might to keep it that way and support that principle, eradicating all contrary views and

trends. Necessity forced them to turn away from the school of thought of Ahl al-Bayt. They started interpreting the texts of the Book or the Sunnah to mean the necessity of following such a concept. Had they yielded to the clear proofs, and referred the elite and the commoners to them in matters relevant to the roots and branches of religion, they would have found no alternative to adhering to their principle. They would have then become among the greatest callers to Ahl al-Bayt. But this did not agree with their ambition, scheme and politics. Whoever looks carefully in these matters will find out that turning away from the imams of Ahl al-Bayt in his sect is but turning away from their leadership, which was next only to that of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), and that interpreting the arguments regarding their special leadership was adopted after interpreting the arguments regarding their general leadership; otherwise, nobody would have turned away from them.

4) Leave their texts and arguments alone, and look at them while overlooking the former; do you then find them, in their knowledge, deeds, or worship, less than Imām al-Ash`ari, or the other four Imāms, or any others at all? And if the answer is No, then why should others be followed then? Leadership should be given to the most qualified.

5) Which just arbitrator decides that those who uphold their rope and follow into their footsteps are strayers? Sunnis are above passing such a judgment, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

Sh

LETTER 19
Thul-Hijjah 5, 1329

- I** **No Fair Arbitrator Would Call Followers of Ahl al-Bayt Strayers,**
- II** **Following Their Sects is Carrying out the Responsibility,**
- III** **It Could be Said that They Have the Priority to Lead,**
- IV** **Requesting Texts Relevant to the *Khilafate* (Caliphate).**

1) No; any fair arbitrator would never label those who have upheld the rope of Ahl al-Bayt, who follow in their footsteps, as "strayers," nor are they, by any means, inferior to other Imāms.

2) Adherence to their sect obligates them and clears their conscience, just like adhering to any of the four sects; there is no doubt about that.

3) It may be said that your Twelve Imams are even more worthy of being followed than the four Imāms or any others, since all of them follow one sect which they have scrutinized and agreed upon by consensus. Contrariwise, the four Imāms' disagreements among themselves exist in all departments of jurisdiction, leaving its sources exclusive, unchecked. It is well known that if one person verifies something, his effort cannot equate that of twelve Imāms. This is clear to any fair-minded person, and it leaves no argument for any unjust person. Yes, the Nāṣibis may dispute referring your sect to the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt, and I may, at a later time, ask you to prove their error.

4) For the time being, I request you to go ahead and indicate what you claim to be statements nominating Imām `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) as the successor to the Prophet (ص). Derive your arguments from Sunni references, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

S

PART TWO

The General Imāmate (Succession to the Holy Prophet [ص])

LETTER 20 Thul-Hijjah 9, 1239

- I A General Reference to the Texts,**
- II A Reference to the House on the Day of Warning,**
- III Sunni Reporters of this Ḥadīth.**

1) Anyone who is acquainted with the biography of the holy Prophet (ص), especially researching his conduct while laying the foundations of the Islamic State and its legislative system, the establishment of its bases, the issuing of its codes and the organizing of its affairs on behalf of the Almighty Allāh..., will find `Ali (ع) the vizier of the Messenger of Allah (ص), his supporter against his foes, the custodian of his knowledge, the heir of his government, his vicegerent, and the one in charge after him. Whoever studies the statements and actions of the Prophet (ص), while at home or on a journey, will find his statements, peace and blessings of Allah Almighty be upon him and his progeny, sequential in this regard from the beginning of his Call till his demise.

2) Refer to such statements at the dawn of the Call, before Islam was preached in Mecca publicly, when the Almighty revealed unto him the verse “And warn thy nearest kinsfolk (Qur`ān, 26:214).” He invited them to the house of his uncle Abu Tālib. They were forty men, more or less. Among them were his uncles Abu Tālib, al-Hamzah, al-`Abbās, and Abu Lahab. The ḥadīth in this regard is sequentially reported by Sunnis. At the conclusion of his statement to them, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said:

“O descendants of `Abdul-Muṭṭlib! I swear by God that I know no youth among the Arabs who has brought his people something better than what I have brought you. I have brought you the best of this life and the life to come, and God has commanded me to call you towards Him. Therefore, who among you shall support me in this matter and be my brother, the executor of my will, and my successor?”

All the listeners, with the exception of `Ali, who was the youngest among them, kept silent. `Ali responded by saying: “I, O Messenger of Allah, am willing to be your vizier in this matter.” The Messenger of Allāh (ص) then took `Ali by the neck and said: “This is my brother, executor of my will and vizier; therefore, listen to him and obey him.” Those present laughed and kept saying to Abu Tālib: “Allāh has commanded you to listen to your son, and to obey him!”

3) Many of those who have learned the prophetic legacy by heart have reported the ḥadīth above verbatim as such. Among them are: Ibn Iṣḥāq, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abu Hātim, Ibn Mardawayh, Abu Na`īm, al-Bayhaqī in his book *Al-Dalā`il*, both al-Tha`labi and al-Tabari in their exegeses of Sūrat al-Shu`arā' in their book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, in Vol. 2 of al-

Ṭabari's *Tarīkh al-Umam wal Mulūk*. Ibn al-Athīr has reported it as an undisputed fact in Vol. 2 of his *Al-Kāmil* when he mentioned how the Almighty commanded His Messenger to declare his call to the public, Abul-Fida in Vol. of his *Tarīkh* while discussing who was the first to embrace Islam, Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Iskāfi al-Mu` tazili in his book *Naqd al-Uthmaniyyah* declaring its accuracy,¹ al-Halabi in his chapter on the Prophet's hideout at the house of Arqam in his well-known *Sīrah*.²

In this same context, with almost identical wording, has this hadīth been reported by many masters of hadīth and most reliable Sunni authorities such as al-Tahawi, Diyā' al-Maqdisi in his *Mukhtāra*, and Sa`id ibn Mansūr in his *Sunan*. Refer to what Ibn Ḥanbal has recorded of `Ali's hadīth on pages 111 and 159 of Vol. 1 of his *Musnad*. He also pointed out at the beginning of page 331 of Vol. 1 of his *Musnad*, to a very significant hadīth from Ibn `Abbās] containing ten characteristics in which `Ali has distinguished himself from everyone else. That hadīth is published in Nisā'i, too, from Ibn `Abbās, on page 6 of his *Khasa'is al`Alawiyyah*, and on page 132, Vol. 3, of Hākim's *Mustadrak*. Al-Thahbi has narrated it in his *Talkhīs*], vouching for its authenticity. Refer to Vol. 6 of *Kanz al-`Ummāl* which contains all the details.³ Refer also to *Muntakhabul Kanz* which is cited in the footnote of Imām Ahmed's *Musnad*; refer to the footnote on pages 41 and 43 of Vol. 5 of the book to find all details. This, we believe, suffices to serve as glorious proof, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹As on page 263, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by Ibn Abul Hadīd, Egyptian edition. As regarding his book *Naqd al-Uthmāniyya*, it is a unique book worthy of the attention of any

seeker of the truth. It is on page 257 and its succeeding pages up to page 281, Vol. 3, of the *Sharh*, at the end the commentary at the conclusion of the “qāsi`a” sermon.

²Refer to the fourth page of that chapter, or to page 381 of the first volume of *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*. Ibn Taymiyyah's wrecklessness is unfair, and his judgment is due to his well-known fanaticism. This ḥadīth is quoted by the Egyptian sociologist Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal; refer to the second column on page five of the supplement to issue 2751 of his newspaper *Al-Siyāsa* dated Thul-Qi`da 12, 1350, and you will find it there explained in detail. If you refer to the fourth column on page six of the supplement to issue 2785 of the same newspaper, you will find the author quoting this ḥadīth from Muslim's, Ahmed's *musnad*, `Abdullah ibn Ahmed's *Ziyadat al-Musnad*, Ibn Hajar al-Haithami's *Jāmi`ul Farā'id*, Ibn Qutaybah's *Uyun al-Akḥbār*, Ahmed ibn `Abd Rabbih's *Al-Iqd al-Farīd*, `Amr ibn Baḥr al-Jāhiz in his dissertation on the descendants of Hāshim, and Imam Abu Ishāq al-Tha`labi's *Tafsīr*. This ḥadīth is also quoted by the British author Georges in his well-known book *A Treatise on Islam*, translated into the Arabic by an atheist from a Protestant descent calling himself Hāshim al-`Arabi. You can also find this ḥadīth on page 79 of the treatise's Arabic version, 6th edition. Due to the fame this ḥadīth enjoys, a few non-Arab writers have included it in their books, especially in French, English and German. In his book *Heroes and Hero Worship*, Thomas Carlyle quotes it briefly.

³Refer to ḥadīth 6008 on page 392, and you will find it quoted from Ibn Jarīr, while ḥadīth 1045 on page 396 is quoted from Ahmed's *Musnad* and from al-Diā al-Maqdisi's *Al-Mukhtāra*, and from al-Ṭahāwi. Ibn Jarīr has verified it. Also refer to ḥadīth 6056 on page 397 and you will find it quoted from Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abu Ḥātim, Ibn Mardawayh, Abu Na`īm, al-Bayḥaqi on the branches of faith, and in the *Dalā'il*, and ḥadīth 6102 on page 401 and you will find it quoted from Ibn Mardawayh, and ḥadīth 6155 on page 408 and you will find it quoted from Ahmed's *Musnad* and from Ibn Jarīr from *Al-Diyā fil Mukhtāra*. Whoever researches *Kanz al-`Ummāl* will find this ḥadīth in various places

throughout the book. If you look into page 255, Vol. 3, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah* by the Mu`tazilite Imam Ibn Abul-Hadīd, or at the end of the explanation of the “*qāsi`a* sermon” in it, you will find this hadīth in its entirety.

LETTER 21

Thul-Hijjah 10, 1329

Raising Doubts about the Authenticity of the *Hadīth*

Your debater strongly doubts the credibility of this *hadīth*. For one thing, both Shaykhs have not included it in their *sahīh* books, nor have the authors of other *sahīh* books. I do not think that this *hadīth* has been narrated by any reliable Sunni traditionist, and I do not think that you yourself consider it authentic, and peace be with you.

Sincerley,

S

LETTER 22

Thul-Hijjah 1329

- I Proving the Text's Authenticity,
- II Why the Shaykhs Have Not Reported it,
- III Whoever Knows These Shaykhs Knows Why.

1) Have I not ascertained its reliability by Sunnis, I would not have mentioned it to you. Yet Ibn Jarīr and Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Iskāfī have taken its authenticity for granted.¹ Several other critics have also considered it authentic. It is sufficient proof for its authenticity the fact that it is reported by the reliable authorities upon whose accuracy the authors of *sahīh* books rely unhesitatingly. Refer to page 111, Vol. 1, of Aḥmed's *Musnad*, where you will read this *hadīth* as narrated by Aswad ibn `Āmir² from Sharīk,³ al-A`mash,⁴ Minhāl,⁵ `Abbād ibn `Abdullāh al-Asadi,⁶ from `Ali (ع) chronologically. Each one of these men in the chain of narrators is an authority in his own right, and they all are reliable traditionists according to

the testimony of the authors of the *ṣaḥīḥ* books without any dispute. Al-Qaysarāni has mentioned them in his book *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijāl al-Ṣaḥīḥain*. There is no doubt that this ḥadīth is authentic, and the narrators report it from various ways each one of which supports the other.

2) The reason why both shaykhs [Bukhāri and Muslim], and their likes, have not quoted this ḥadīth is due to the fact that it did not agree with their own personal views regarding the issue of succession. This is why they have rejected a great deal of authentic texts for fear the Shī`as may use them as pretexts; therefore, they hid the truth knowingly. There are many Sunni shaykhs, may Allāh forgive them, who have likewise hidden such texts, and they have in their method of hiding a well known history written down by al-Hāfiz ibn Hajar in his *Fath Al-Bāri*. Al-Bukhāri has assigned a special chapter for this theme at the conclusion of his chapter on "Al-`ilm," in Vol. 1, page 25, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, subtitled "A Chapter on Those Who Recognized the Knowledge of some People Rather than that of Others."

3) Whoever knows the way al-Bukhāri thought, his own attitudes towards the Commander of the Faithful (ع), and towards all Ahl al-Bayt (ع), will come to know that Bukhāri's pen falls short of narrating texts regarding them, and his ink dries up before recounting their attributes. He will not be surprised to see him rejecting this particular ḥadīth as well as others similar to it; therefore, we seek refuge with Allāh, the Almighty, the Sublime, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Refer to ḥadīth 6045 of the ḥadīth included in *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 396, Vol. 6, where you will find reference made to

Ibn Jarīr's verification of this ḥadīth. If you refer to *Muntakhab al-Kanz*, the beginning of the footnote on page 44, Vol. 5, of Aḥmed's *Musnad*, you will find reference to Ibn Jarīr's verification of this ḥadīth. As regarding Abu Ja'fer al-Iskāfi, he has emphatically judged its accuracy in his book *Naqd al-'Uthmāniyya*; so, refer to the text of page 263, Vol. 3 of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by al-Ḥadīd, Egyptian edition.

²Both al-Bukhāri and Muslim have relied on him in their *sahīhs*. They have both learned ḥadīth from Shu'bah, and Bukhāri has learned it from `Abdul-`Azīz ibn Abu Salāmah, while Muslim has learned ḥadīth from Zuhayr ibn Mu`āwiyah and Hammad ibn Salāmah. His ḥadīth is narrated in Bukhāri by Muḥammad ibn Hātim ibn Bazī. In Muslim's *Sahīh* he is quoted by Harūn ibn `Abdullah the critic, and by Abu Shaybah and Zuhayr.

³Muslim has relied on his authority in his *Sahīh*, as we explained when we discussed him in Letter No. 16.

⁴Both Bukhāri and Muslim rely on his authority in their respective *sahīhs*, as we have stated while discussing him in Letter No. 16.

⁵Al-Bukhāri has relied on him, as we explained when we mentioned him in Letter No. 16.

⁶His full name is `Abbād ibn `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwām al-Qarashi al-Asadi. Al-Bukhāri and Muslim rely on his authority in their respective *sahīhs*. He has heard ḥadīth from Asmā' and `Ayesha daughters of Abu Bakr. He is quoted in both *sahīhs* by Ibn Abu Malka, Muḥammad ibn Ja'fer ibn al-Zubayr, and Hishām ibn `Umer.

LETTER 23
Thul-Hijjah 14, 1329

- I** **Convinced of the Authenticity of this *Hadīth*,**
II **Unreliability Based on Non-Sequential Narration,**
III **Its Reference to Restricted Succession,**
IV **Its Rebuttal.**

1) I have, indeed, read this hadīth on page 111 of Volume One of Ahmed's *Musnad* and ascertained the reliability of his sources and found them to be the most reliable authorities. Then I researched his avenues avenues in narrating this hadīth, and I found them to be sequential: each one of them supports the other; therefore, I have contented myself to believe in its contents.

2) But you do not rely on an authentic hadīth that deals with the issue of succession unless it is sequentially narrated [*mutawatir*], for succession, according to your Shī`a philosophy, is one of the roots of religion, and this hadīth cannot be considered as “*mutawatir*” (consecutively reported) and, therefore, it cannot be relied upon.

3) It may be said that `Ali is the successor of the Prophet (ص) in his own Household alone; so, where is the text that testifies to his succession among the general public?

4) This hadīth may even be revoked, since the Prophet has refrained from publicly supporting the gist thereof. Because of this, the companions found no reason why they should not swear the oath of allegiance to the three righteous caliphs, may Allāh be pleased with them.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 24

Thul-Hijjah 15, 1329

- I** Why Relying on this *Ḥadīth*,
II Restricted Succession is Unanimously Rejected,
III Revocation is Impossible.

1) Sunnis rely on every correct ḥadīth to confirm their concept of succession, be it *mutawatir* or nont. We rely on the authenticity of this ḥadīth in our argument against theirs simply because they themselves testify to its authenticity, thus binding themselves to what they have considered to be binding. Our own proof regarding succession from our viewpoint depends on its *tawatur* from our own sources, as is obvious to everyone.

2) The claim that `Ali is the successor of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) only in his household is rejected due to the fact that whoever believes that `Ali is the successor of the Messenger of Allāh in his household also believes that he is his successor among the public as well, and whoever denies his succession over the public also denies his succession among his family. There is no way to separate one from the other; so, why bring up a philosophy which runs contrary to the consensus of all Muslims?

3) I cannot overlook your statement that this ḥadīth is revoked, which contradicts both reason and Sharī`a, since in order to abrogate, a statement has to be made before the effect of its precedent becomes manifest, as is clear to everyone. The only pretext for abrogation here is the allegation that the Prophet (ص) supposedly refrained from [publicly] expounding on the gist of this ḥadīth. The ḥadīth itself proves that he, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him and his progeny, did not refrain from doing so; rather, texts in this meaning are

consecutive, supporting one another. If we suppose that there is no text in the same meaning after this one, then how can it be proven that the Prophet (ص) had changed his mind or refrained from its enforcement? "They follow nothing other than their own whims and desires, after guidance from their Lord has already come unto them (Qur'ān, 53:23)," and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 25
Thul-Hijjah 16, 1329

- I His Belief in the Text,**
II Requesting More Texts.

1) I have believed in the One Who has caused you to dissipate the darkness [of ignorance], clarify what is ambiguous, and made you one of His signs and a facet of His own manifestations.

2) May Allāh bless your father, provide me with more such texts, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 26

Thul-Hijjah 17, 1329

- I Clear Texts Recounting Ten of `Ali's Exclusive Merits,**
II Why Rely Upon it.

1) Suffices you, besides the hadīth of the Household, what Imām Ahmed has stated in Vol. 1 of his book *Al-Mustadrak*, and al-Thahbi in his Concise, who both admit its authenticity, as well as other authors of the *sunan* from generally accepted avenues. They all quote `Umer ibn Maymūn saying: "I was sitting once in the company of Ibn `Abbās when nine men came to him and said `O Ibn `Abbās! Either come to debate with us, or tell these folks that you prefer a private debate.' He had not lost his eye-sight yet. He said: `I rather debate with you.' So they started talking, but I was not sure exactly what they were talking about. Then he stood up and angrily said: `They are debating about a man who has ten merits nobody else ever had. They are arguing about a man whom the holy Prophet (ص) has said, `I shall dispatch a man whom Allah shall never humiliate, one who loves Allah and His Messenger (ص) and who is loved by both,' so each one of them thought to him such an honour belonged. The holy Prophet (ص) inquired about `Ali. When the latter came unto him, with his eyes swelling in ailment, he (ص) blew in his eyes, shook the standard thrice and gave it to him. `Ali came back victorious with Safiyya bint Huyay [al-Akhtab] among his captives." Ibn `Abbās proceeded to say, "Then the Messenger of Allāh (ص) sent someone with sūrat al-Tawbah, but he had to send `Ali after him to discharge the responsibility, saying: `Nobody can discharge it except a man who is of me, and I am of him.'" Ibn `Abbās also said, "The Messenger of Allāh (ص), with `Ali sitting beside him, asked his cousins once:

`Who among you elects to be my *wali* in this life and the life hereafter?' They all declined, but `Ali said: 'I would like to be your *wali* in this life and the life to come,' whereupon he (ص) responded by saying: 'You are, indeed, my *wali* in this life and the life hereafter.'" Ibn `Abbās continues to say that `Ali was the first person to accept Islam after Khadīja, and that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) took his own robe and put it over `Ali, Fātima, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, then recited the verse saying: "Allāh wishes to remove all abomination from you, O Ahl al-Bayt [people of my household] and purify you with a perfect purification (Qur'ān, 33:33)." He has also said: "Ali bought his own soul. He put on the Prophet's garment and slept in his bed when the infidels sought to murder him," till he says: "The Messenger of Allāh (ص) went on Tabuk expedition accompanied by many people. `Ali asked him: 'May I join you?' The Messenger of Allāh (ص) refused, whereupon `Ali wept. The Prophet (ص) then asked him: 'Does it not please you that your status to me is similar to that of Aaron's to Moses, except there is no Prophet after me? It is not proper for me to leave this place before assigning you as my vicegerent.' The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has also said the following to him: 'You are the *wali* of every believing man and woman.'"

Ibn `Abbās has said: "The Messenger of Allāh closed down all doors leading to his mosque except that of `Ali who used to enter the mosque on his way out even while in the state of *janāba*. The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has also said: 'Whoever accepts me as the *wali*, let him/her take `Ali as the *wali*, too.'" As a matter of fact, al-Ḥākīm, having counted the sources from which he quoted this hadīth, comments by saying, "This is an authentic hadīth according to *isnād*, yet both shaykhs did not narrate it this way." Al-Thahbi has quoted it in his *Talkhīs* and described it as an authentic hadīth.

2) Clear and irrefutable proofs highlight the fact that `Ali was the Prophet's vicegerent. Have you noticed how the Prophet (ﷺ) has named him *wali* in this life and the life to come, thus favouring him over all his kin, and how he regarded his status to himself as similar to that of Aaron to Moses, without any exception other than Prophethood, and exception which reflects generality?

You also know that what distinguished Aaron from Moses was mostly his being the vizier of his brother, his *de facto* participation in his brother's Message, his vicegerency, and the enforcement by Moses of people's obedience to Aaron as his statement, to which references is included in the Holy Qur'an (20:29-32), and which clearly says: "And let my brother Aaron, from among my household, be my vizier, to support me and take part in my affair," and his statement: "Be my own representative among my people; reform them, and do not follow the path of corrupters (Qur'ān 7:142)," and the Almighty's response: "O Moses! Granted is your prayer (Qur'ān 20:36)." According to this text, `Ali is the Prophet's vicegerent among his people, his vizier among his kin, his partner in his undertaking—not in Prophethood—his successor, the best among his people, and the most worthy of their leadership alive or dead. They owed him obedience during the Prophet's lifetime as the Prophet's vizier, just as Aaron's people had to obey Aaron during the lifetime of Moses.

Whoever becomes familiar with the status ḥadīth will immediately consider its deep implications without casting any doubt at the gist of its context. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has made this very clear when he said: "It is not proper for me to leave this place before assigning you as my vicegerent." It is a clear text regarding his succession; nay, it even suggests that had the Prophet (ﷺ) left without doing so, he would have done something he was not supposed to have done. This is so only because he was commanded by the

Almighty to assign him as his own successor according to the meaning of the verse saying "O Messenger! Convey that which has been revealed unto you from your Lord, and if you do not do it, then you have not conveyed His Message at all (Qur'ān 5:67)." Anyone who examines the phrase "then you have not conveyed His Message at all," then examines the Prophet's statement: "It is not proper for me to leave this place before assigning you as my vicegerent," will find them both aiming at the same conclusion, as is quite obvious. We should also not forget the Prophet's ḥadīth saying: "You are the *wali* of every believer after me." It is a clear reference to the fact that he is the Prophet's *wali* and the one who takes his place, as al-Kumait, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, has implied when he said: "A great Vicegerent, a fountain-head of piety, an educator!" And peace be with you.

Sincerley,
Sh

LETTER 27 Thul-Hijjah 18, 1329

Raising Doubts About the Status Ḥadīth

The "status ḥadīth" is authentic and well-known, but al-Āmidī, who verified and ascertained ḥadīth, and who is considered the master of the science of *usūl*, has doubted its sources and suspected its narrators. Your debater may uphold al-Āmidī's view; so, how can you prove him wrong? And peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 28
Thul-Hijjah 19, 1329

- I The Status *Hadīth* Stands on Most Solid Grounds,**
II Binding Proofs,
III Its Sunni Narrators,
IV Why al-Āmidi Suspects It.

1) Al-Āmidi has done nobody injustice except his own self by casting doubt about the authenticity of this ḥadīth which is one of the most accurate *sunan* and a most solid legacy.

2) Nobody else has doubted its accuracy, nor did anyone else dare to argue about its grounds. Even al-Thahbi, who is a most prejudiced narrator, has admitted its accuracy in his *Talkhis Al-Mustadrak*.¹ Ibn Hajar al-Haithami, in spite of his antagonistic views embedded in his *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, has quoted this ḥadīth in his chapter on "Al-Shubuhāt," citing statements by the foremost narrators of ḥadīth testifying to its accuracy; so, refer to that book. Had this ḥadīth not been accurate, al-Bukhāri would not have included it in his book, in spite of his prejudice when it comes to counting `Ali's merits and those of Ahl al-Bayt (ع).

Mu`awiyah was the leader of the oppressive gang. He stood in enmity against the Commander of the Faithful (ع), fought him, cursed him from Muslims' pulpits and ordered people to do likewise. Yet, in spite of his insolent hostility, he never doubted the status ḥadīth. Nor has Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqāṣ exaggerated when he, according to Muslim, was asked by Mu`āwiyah why he hesitated to denounce "Abu Turāb;" he answered him by saying:² "I remember three aḥādīth of the Messenger of Allāh which I have personally heard, because of which I shall never curse him. Had I had

just one of his exclusive merits, it would have been more precious for me than a herd of the choicest red camels. I have heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص), who was then accompanied by a few people participating in some of his campaigns, saying to `Ali: `Are you not pleased that your status to me is similar to that of Aaron to Moses except that there will be no Prophet after me?'"³ Mu`āwiyah was dumbfounded, and he could not utter a word or pressure Sa`d.

In addition to all of this, Mu`āwiyah himself has narrated the same hadīth. Ibn Hajar says in his book *Al-Sawā`iq Al-Muhriqa*:⁴ "Ahmed has said that a man once asked Mu`āwiyah a question and his answer was: `Forward your question to `Ali because he is more knowledgeable.' Yet the man said: `Your own answer to this matter is dearer to me than that of `Ali.' Mu`āwiyah was angry, and he said: `What a bad statement you have uttered! You hate a man whom the Messenger of Allāh used to gorge with knowledge? He even told him that his status to him was like that of Aaron to Moses except that there would be no Prophet after him? Whenever `Umer was confused about a matter, he sought `Ali's advice....'"⁵ In short, the status hadīth is considered, according to the consensus of all Muslims, regardless of their sects and inclinations, to be authentic.

3) Authors of both *Al-Jāmi` Baynal Sihāh Al-Sitta* and *Al-Jāmi` Bayna Rijāl al-Sahāhain* have quoted it, and it is included in Bukhāri's chapter on the Battle of Tabūk in his *Ṣahīh*, in Muslim's chapter on `Ali's merits in his *Ṣahīh*, in a chapter on the attributes of the Prophet's companions in Ibn Majah's *sunan*, and in a chapter on `Ali's merits in Hākim's *Al-Mustadrak*. Imām Ahmed Ibn Hanbal has quoted it in his *Musnad* from several different reporters. Ibn `Abbās, Asmā' bint `Umayy, Abu Sa`d al-Khudri, Mu`āwiyah ibn Abu Sufyān,⁶ and many other companions have all narrated it as recorded in the *musnad*. Al-Tabrāni has quoted it as narrated

by Asmā' bint `Umays, Umm Salamah, Habīs ibn Janadah, Ibn `Umer, `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع),⁷ and many others. Al-Bazzāz has included it in his *Musnad*,⁸ and so has al-Tirmithi in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*⁹ depending on the authority of Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri. In *Al-Istī`āb*, in a chapter dealing with `Ali, the author quotes Ibn `Abdul Birr narrating it, then he comments thus: "This is one of the most reliable and accurate aḥadīth narrated about the Prophet by Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqās." Sa`d's references are numerous and are enumerated by Ibn Abu Khayth`amah and others. Ibn `Abbās, Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri, Umm Salamah, Asmā' bint `Āmīs, Jābir ibn `Abdullāh, and quite a few other traditionists have all narrated it." As a matter of fact, whoever researches the Battle of Tabūk and refers to books of traditions and biographies will find them mentioning this ḥadīth. Those who have written biographies of `Ali, among authors of glossaries of ancient as well as modern times, regardless of their inclinations and sectarian preferences, have all quoted this ḥadīth. It is also quoted by anyone who writes about the merits of Ahl al-Bayt, those of the Imāms among the companions of the Prophet (ص) such as Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal, and by others before or after his time. It is a ḥadīth taken for granted by all past Muslim generations.

4) There is no lesson to learn about the doubt cast by al-Amidi regarding this ḥadīth in his *Musnad*, since the man knows nothing about the science of traditions, and his knowledge about *musnads* and narrators is the knowledge of illiterate commoners who do not know the meaning of ḥadīth. In fact, his own extensive knowledge in the science of *usul* is the reason why he has fallen in such a dilemma. According to the requirements of *usul*, he saw it to be a correct ḥadīth which he could not get rid of except by suspecting its *isnad*, thinking that that would be possible. Indeed, that was only his unattainable desire, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Letter No. 26 contains his admission of its authenticity.

²This occurs in his section wherein he deals with `Ali's virtues at the beginning of page 324, Vol. 2, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

³Al-Hākim, too, quotes it at the beginning of page 109, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, admitting its authenticity due to its being endorsed by Muslim.

⁴This occurs in the fifth *maqṣad* of *Al-Maqāsid* when the author discusses verse 14 in Section 11, page 107, of *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*.

⁵He says that others have quoted it, and that some added to it "Get up; may Allāh never allow you to stand up," and his name is omitted from the *diwān*, to the end of his quotation on page 107 of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*. This proves that a group of late traditionists besides Ahmed has quoted the status ḥadīth from Mu`āwiyah.

⁶As we mentioned in the beginning of this Letter, quoting the fifth *maqṣad* of the *Maqāsid* of verse 14 of the verses discussed in Chapter 11, *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*, page 107.

⁷As Ibn Hajar describes in the first ḥadīth of the forty ones which he discusses in the second section of chapter 9, page 72, of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*. Al-Sayyuti has stated the following while discussing `Ali (ع) in his chapter on the righteous caliphs: "Al-Tabrāni has quoted this ḥadīth from all these men, adding to them Asmā' bint Qays."

⁸Al-Sayyuti indicates so while discussing `Ali (ع) in his chapter on the caliphs on page 65.

⁹As attested to by ḥadīth 2504 of the ḥadīth of *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 152, Volume 6.

LETTER 29
Thul-Hijjah 20, 1329

- I** **Believing in Our Arguments Regarding the
Sanad of this Hadīth**
- II** **Doubting its General Application,**
- III** **Doubting its being Binding.**

1) All what you have mentioned regarding the authenticity of the status hadīth is indeed beyond any doubt. Al-Āmidī has stumbled in a way which has proven his distance from the science of hadīth, and from traditionists. I have bothered you with mentioning his views in clarifying what is already clear. This is my mistake for which I invoke your forgiveness, since you are apt to forgive.

2) I have come to know that there are others besides al-Āmidī from among your arbitrators who claim that there is no proof that the status hadīth has a general application, and that it is restricted to its own context. They support their view by the hadīth's text itself, saying that the Prophet's statement is due only to its time context, that is, when he left him in Medīna during the Battle of Tabūk. The Imām, peace be upon him, asked him: "Why do you leave me with women and children?" His answer, peace be upon him and his progeny, was: "Aren't you pleased that your status to me is similar to that of Aaron to Moses, except there will be no Prophet after me?" as if he (ص) explained that his position to him is like that of Aaron to Moses when the latter left him to represent him among his people when he left for the Tūr Mountain [Mount Sinai]. The gist of the Prophet's statement would be something like: "You are to me, during this Battle of Tabūk, like Aaron to Moses who had to depart to communicate with his Lord."

3) Your arbitrators may even say that this ḥadīth is not a binding proof, even if its implication is general, and a restricted ḥadīth cannot be applied in its general sense, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 30
Thul-Hijjah 22, 1329

- I** **Arabs Regard it General,**
- II** **Disproving Claim of Restriction,**
- III** **Disproving its Non-Binding Application**

1) We refer their argument that the ḥadīth lacks a general application to Arabs who are very well familiar with their language and grammar. You are the Arabs' authority whose view is invincible and undisputed. Do you see your nation doubting the generality of this status ḥadīth? I do not think so. You are above that. Persons of your prestige do not doubt the generality of the additive gender and its inclusion of all implications. If you, for example, say: "I have granted you my judicial power," will your power be restricted to a few matters rather than others? Or will your statement be general and inclusive of all implications? Allāh be Praised! You do not see it other than general, and its meaning as inclusive! If the Muslims' ruler says to one of his subjects: "I have appointed you my own vicegerent over people," or "granted you my own status, or position, over them, or granted you my own wealth," will it come to mind anything other than the general meaning of such a statement? Or will the speaker wish to select some matters rather than others? If he said to one of his ministers: "You may enjoy during my lifetime the same

position `Umer enjoyed during the lifetime of Abu Bakr, but you are not my friend," would this statement be seen, according to common rules, as implying a few situations rather than all? I do not see you saying accepting anything other than its general application, and I do not doubt at all that you interpret the statement of the holy Prophet: "Your status to me is like that of Aaron to Moses" except as indicative of generality of application, following the guidelines of its similar texts in the Arabic language and its norms of speech, especially when he excluded Prophethood, thus making its generality inclusive of everything else quite clear. You are surrounded by Arabs; so, ask them if you wish.

2) As regarding the debater's statement claiming that this ḥadīth is restricted to its context, this claim is rejected on two grounds:

First, the ḥadīth itself is generalizing, as you know. The assumption "If we presume that it is specific" does not exclude it from its general meaning, because whoever makes an assumption does not confine his assumption to only one single possibility. Say, if one person in the state of *najāsa* (impurification) touches Sūrat al-Kursi [verse of the Throne] for example, and you tell him: "Nobody in the state of *najāsa* should touch the holy Qur'ān," will your statement be confined to Sūrat al-Kursi only, or will it be general regarding the entire text of the holy Qur'ān? I cannot imagine that anyone will understand that it is restricted to Sūrat al-Kursi in particular. If a physician sees his patient eating dates and forbids him from eating anything sweet, will the prohibition be taken to imply only dates, or will it be general to include everything sweet? I do not consider the one who claims its meaning to be restricted as one adhering to the common concepts of the basics of language; rather, he will then be distant from its grammar, far from commonsense, a foreigner

to our world. So is the one who claims that the status hadīth is applied specifically to the Battle of Tabūk alone; there is no difference between both cases.

Second, this hadīth was not articulated by the Prophet (ص) upon leaving `Ali (ع) as his representative in Medīna during the Battle of Tabūk; otherwise, the debater will have had the right to claim its restricted application. Our *ṣaḥīḥ* books are sequential through the Imams among the Prophet's purified progeny (ع) proving that it was said on other occasions to which the researcher may refer. Sunni *sunan* bear witness to this fact, as researchers know. We say that the wording of this hadīth testifies to the fact that the claim that it was said only during the Battle of Tabūk is groundless, as is already obvious.

3) Their claim that the specified generalization cannot be binding over the rest is an obvious mistake and a serious error. Nobody would say so except one who approaches matters like someone riding a blind animal in a dark night. We seek refuge with Allāh against ignorance, and we thank Him for our sound health. Specifying the general does not exclude it from being applied as a testimony against the rest as long as the specified matter is not general, especially if it is related to this hadīth. If a master tells his servant: "Be generous to everyone who is visiting me today save Zayd." If the servant surrounds only Zayd with generosity, he will not only be disobeying his master and become liable for his error, according to the judgment of all the wise, he will also deserve to be punished a punishment commensurate with his mistake. No wise man would listen to his excuse if he produces one; nay, even his excuse will seem to them to be even worse than his guilt. This is so only because of its obvious general implication, having been specified, regarding the rest, as is obvious.

You very well know that Muslims have always been accustomed to use as proof the specified generalizations without any exception. The ancestors among the companions and the tabī`in, as well as those who followed the latter, and so on till today, especially the Imāms among the progeny of the Prophet (ص) and all other Imāms among the Muslims, do just that. This is a matter which does not need raising any doubts. Suffices you for proof what the four Imāms and other Mujtahids have said in their chapters on being aware of the branches of legislative rules as proofs of their explanations. The wheel of knowledge has been spinning on acting upon generally accepted facts. There is nothing general that does not have room for a specification. If these generalities are dropped, the door of knowledge will be shaken. We seek refuge with Allāh, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 31
Thul-Hijjah 22, 1329

Requesting Sources of this Hadīth

You have not provided any proof testifying to this hadīth as being said on any occasion besides that of Tabūk. I am very eager to be acquainted with its pristine sources; so, please take me to its foundain-heads, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 32
Thul-Hijjah 24, 1329

- I** Among Its Sources: the Prophet's Visit to Umm Salim,
- II** The Case of Ḥamzah's Daughter,
- III** Leaning on `Ali,
- IV** The First Fraternity,
- V** The Second Fraternity,
- VI** Closing the Doors,
- VII** The Prophet Comparing `Ali and Aaron to the Two Stars

1) One of its sources is the discourse of the Prophet (ص) with Umm Salīm,¹ a woman of lengthy achievements, a woman of wisdom who enjoyed a special prestigious status with the Messenger of Allāh (ص) due to being among the foremost in accepting Islam, and because of her sincerity, contributions, and sacrifices in the cause of Islam. The Prophet (ص) used to visit her and talk to her at her own house. One day, he said to her: "O Umm Salīm (mother of Salīm)! `Ali's flesh is of mine, and his blood is of my own; he is to me like Aaron to Moses."² It is obvious that this ḥadīth is only an excerpt of his lengthy ḥadīth which is stated for the purpose of conveying the truth and providing advice for the sake of Allāh in order to highlight the status of his vicegerent, the one who would take his own place (of responsibility) once he is gone, and it cannot be confined to the Battle of Tabūk.

2) A similar ḥadīth was made in the case of Ḥamzah's daughter in whose regard `Ali, Ja`fer and Zayd disputed. The Messenger of Allāh (ص) said then: "O `Ali! You are to me like Aaron to Moses, etc."

3) Another incident occurred when Abu Bakr, `Umer, and Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh were in the company of the Prophet (ﷺ) who was leaning on `Ali. The Prophet (ﷺ) patted `Ali's shoulder and said: "O `Ali! You are the strongest among the believers in faith, the first (man) to embrace Islam, and your status to me is similar to that of Aaron to Moses."³

4) The ahādīth narrated during the First Fraternity also include this text. These were made in Mecca prior to the migration, when the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) consummated brotherhood among the emigrants in particular.

5) On the occasion of the Second Fraternity, while in Medīna, five months after the migration, the Prophet (ﷺ) made fraternity between the emigrants (Muhajirun) and the supporters (Ansār). In both events, he (ﷺ) chose `Ali as his brother,⁴ thus preferring him over all others, saying to him: "You are to me like Aaron to Moses except there will be no Prophet after me." Narrations in this regard are consecutively reported. Refer to what others state about the First Fraternity such as the hadīth narrated by Zayd ibn Abu `Awfah. Imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal has included it in his book *Manāqib `Ali*, Ibn `Asākir in his *Tarīkh*,⁵ al-Baghwi and al-Ṭabrani in their *Mujma`s*, al-Barūdi in his *Al-Ma`rifah*, by Ibn `Adi⁶ and others.

The hadīth under discussion is quite lengthy, and it contains guidelines about how to establish brotherhood. It ends with: "Ali said: `O Messenger of Allāh! My soul has expired, and my spine has been broken, having seen what you have done for your companions while leaving me alone. If this is a sign of your anger with me, then I complain only to you and beg your pardon.' The Messenger of Allāh said: `I swear by the One Who sent me to convey the truth about Him, I have not spared you except for my own self. You are to me like Aaron to Moses, except there will be no Prophet after me. You are my Brother, heir and companion.' `Ali (ع)

asked him: 'What shall I inherit from you?' He (ص) answered: 'Whatever Prophets before me left for those who inherited them: the Book of their Lord, and the Sunnah of their Prophet. You will be my companion in my house in Paradise together with my daughter Fāṭima. You are my Brother⁶ and Companion.' Then he, peace be upon him and his progeny, recited the verse: 'They are brethren seated conveniently facing each other,'⁷ referring to the brethren whose hearts Allāh has joined in affection who look at each other with sincere compassion.

Refer also to the events of the Second Fraternity. Al-Ṭabrānī, in his *Al-Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, quotes Ibn `Abbās reporting one ḥadīth stating that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) said to `Ali (ع): "Are you angry because I have established brotherhood between the Anṣār and the Muhajirūn and have not selected a brother for you from among them? Are you not pleased that your status to me is like that of Aaron to Moses, except there will be no Prophet after me?"⁷

6) The same ḥadīth was also said when the companions' doors overlooking the Prophet's mosque in Medīna were ordered closed except that of `Ali. Jābir ibn `Abdullāh quotes the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "O `Ali! It is permissible for you to do at this mosque whatever is permissible for me, and you are to me like Aaron to Moses, except there will be no Prophet after me." Ḥuthayfah ibn `Asīd al-Ghifari has said that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, once delivered a *khutba* on the occasion of closing those doors in which he said: "There are some men who have disliked that I got them out of the mosque while keeping `Ali. Allāh, the Dear and Mighty, inspired to Moses and his brother to reside with their people in Egypt and make their homes a *qibla* and say their prayers," till he said: "Ali to me is like Aaron to Moses. He is my

Brother, and none of you is allowed to cohabit therein other than he.”

The sources of this ḥadīth are numerous, and they cannot all be counted in a brief letter like this, yet I hope that what I have stated here suffices to falsify the claim that the status ḥadīth is confined only to the Battle of Tabūk. How much can such a claim weigh in the light of abundance of sources of this ḥadīth?

7) Anyone who is familiar with the biography of the Prophet (ص) will find him, peace be upon him and his progeny, describing `Ali and Aaron as the two bright stars arranged alike, neither one differing from the other. This by itself is a testimony to the generality of status of this ḥadīth, yet the generality of the status is what comes to mind regardless of any pretext, as we have explained above, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
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¹She is daughter of Milhān ibn Khālid al-Anṣārī and sister of Harām ibn Milhān. Her father and brother were martyred in the company of the Prophet (ص). She possessed a great deal of accomplishment and wisdom. She narrated a few aḥādīth of the Prophet (ص), and she is quoted by her son Anas, in addition to Ibn `Abbās, Zayd ibn Thābit, Abu Salāmah ibn `Abdul-Rahmān, and by others. She is considered to be in the first row of those who accepted and supported the Islamic faith, and she herself was a caller to Islam. During the pre-Islamic period of *jahiliyya*, she was in love with Mālik ibn al-Nadar from whom she conceived her son Anas ibn Mālik. At the dawn of Islam, she was among the foremost to embrace it, and she invited her husband Mālik to believe in Allāh and His Messenger, but he refused; so, she deserted him, and he in his rage moved to Syria where he died as a *kāfir*. She advise

her son, who was then ten years old, to serve the Prophet (ﷺ), and the Prophet (ﷺ) accepted his service in order to please her. Many Arab men of prestige sought her hand, but she always used to say: "I shall not get married except when Anas reaches manhood;" so, Anas always used to say: "May Allāh reward my mother, for she took very good care of me." Due to her own influence, Abu Talḥah al-Anṣārī became Muslim. He sought her hand when he was still *kāfir*, but she refused to marry him unless he embraced Islam; so, he accepted her invitation to embrace the new faith, and his dowery to her was his own acceptance of Islam. She conceived a son by him, but the baby fell sick and died; so, she said: "Nobody should mention his death to his father before me." When her husband came home and inquired about his son, she said: "He is in most content;" so he thought that she meant their son was asleep. She served him his dinner, then she put on her best clothes and perfume, and he went to bed with her. The next day she said to him: "Pray for your son's soul." Abu Talḥa narrated this story to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) who said to him: "Allāh blessed you last night." She continues to say that he (ﷺ) invoked Allāh to provide me with what I wanted and even more. In that same night, she conceived `Abdullāh ibn Abu Talḥa upon whom Allāh showered His blessings. He is the father of Ishāq ibn `Abdullāh ibn Abu Talḥa, the *faqīh*, and his brothers were ten; each one of them was a man of knowledge. Umm Salīm used to participate in the Prophet's military campaigns. On the Day of Uhud, she had a dagger to stab any infidel who would come near her. She rendered Islam a great service, and I do not know any woman besides her whom the Prophet (ﷺ) used to visit in her own house and she would offer him a present. She was aware of the status of his progeny, knowledgeable of their rights... May Allāh shower His choicest mercy on her.

²This hadīth, I mean Umm Salīm's, is number 2554 of the ones numbered in *Kanz al-Ummāl* as narrated on page 154 of its sixth volume. It also exists in *Muntakhab al-Kanz*; so, refer to the last line of the footnote on page 31 of Volume 5 of Ahmed's *Musnad*, where you will find it verbatim.

³This is quoted by al-Hasan ibn Badr, al-Hākim in his chapter on *kunyāt*, al-Shirāzi in his chapter on surnames, volume six, and by Ibn al-Najjār. It is ḥadīth 6029 and also 6032 of the ones numbered in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 395.

⁴Discussing the biography of `Ali (ع) in his *Isti`āb*, Ibn `Abd al-Birr describes him thus: "He made brotherhood with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, among the immigrants, then between the immigrants and the supporters. In each of these instances, he (ص) said to `Ali (ع): 'You are my brother in this life and the life hereafter,' then he made brotherhood between himself and `Ali (ع)." The details are in the books of traditions and history. For the details of the first brotherhood, refer to page 26, Vol. 2, of *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*, and in the second brotherhood on page 120, Vol. 2, also of *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*, where you will find how the Prophet (ص) favoured `Ali (ع) in both occasions over everyone else. In *Al-Sīra al-Dahlāniyya*, the details of the circumstances of the first brotherhood and those of the second are similar to what is published in *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*. The author also stated that the second brotherhood took place five months after the migration.

⁵This is quoted from Aḥmed and Ibn `Asakir by a group of trusted authorities such as al-Muttaqi al-Hindi; so, refer to ḥadīth 918 of his *Kanz al-`Ummāl* at the beginning of page 40 of its fifth volume. It is also quoted on page 390, Vol. 6, from Aḥmed's book *Manāqib `Ali*, numbering it ḥadīth 4972.

⁶This is quoted from these Imāms by a group of trusted authorities such as al-Muttaqi al-Hindi at the beginning of page 41, Vol. 5, of his *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, numbering it ḥadīth 919.

⁷This is quoted by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi in his *Kanz al-`Ummāl* and *Al-Muntakhab*; so, refer to the *Muntakhab's* footnote on page 31 of its fifth volume regarding Aḥmed's *Musnad*, and you will find it verbatim just as we have quoted it here. It is not difficult to sift the gist of the phrase "You have angered `Ali (ع)" and comprehend the meanings of companionship, compassion, and

the love of a compassionate and kind father to his son. If you wonder how `Ali had some doubts in the second time he was left behind, although in the first time he had some doubt, too, then he found out that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, had kept him there just for himself, and why he did not consider the second incident in the light of the first. The answer is that the second incident could not be compared with the first one, for the first was regarding the immigrants in particular; so, the comparison did not forbid the prophet (ﷺ) from creating brotherhood with `Ali (ع), contrary to the second which was between the immigrants and the supporters. One immigrant in the second instance may be joined in brotherhood to a supporter, and vice versa. Since the prophet and the wasi were both immigrants, the assumption in the second instance was that they should not be brothers; so, `Ali thought that his brother would be a supporter, just like others by way of comparison. When the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) did not create brotherhood between him and any of the supporters, some doubt entertained his mind, but Allāh and His Messenger insisted on favouring him, and so it was: he and the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) became brothers, contrary to the common norm of practice among all the immigrants and supporters at that time and place.

LETTER 33**Thul-Hijjah 25, 1329****When was `Ali and Aaron Described as the Two Stars?**

It has not been clarified yet what you claim that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, used to describe `Ali and Aaron as the two stars which are alike; when did he do that?

Sincerely,

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LETTER 34**Thul-Hijjah 27, 1329**

- I **The Occasion of Shabar, Shubayr, and Mushbir,**
- II **The Occasion of Fraternity,**
- III **The Occasion of Closing the Doors.**

Research the biography of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, and you will find him describing `Ali and Aaron as two bright stars in the heart of the skies, the eyes positioned in the face, neither of them is distinguished in his nation from the other.

1) Have you noticed how he, peace be upon him and his progeny, had insisted that `Ali should name his sons just like Aaron did, calling them Hasan, Husayn, and Muhsin? He (ﷺ) has said: "I have named them after Aaron's sons, Shabar, Shubayr, and Mushbir,"¹ intending thereby to emphasize the similarity between himself and Aaron, and generalizing such a similarity in all areas and aspects.

2) For the same reason, `Ali has cherished his brother and favoured him over all others, thus achieving the goal of generalizing the similarity of both Aarons to their respective brothers, making sure that there must be no difference between them. He, peace be upon him and his progeny, created brotherhood among his companions, as stated above, making, in the first incident, Abu Bakr brother of `Umer, and `Uthmān brother of `Abdul-Rahmān ibn `Awf. In the Second Fraternity, Abu Bakr became brother of Khārijah ibn Zayd, and `Umer was made brother of `Atbān ibn Mālik. Yet on both occasions, `Ali was made brother of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, as you have come to know.

There is no room here to quote all verified texts citing Ibn `Abbās, Ibn `Umer, Zayd ibn Arqam, Zayd ibn Abu `Awfah, Anas ibn Mālik, Huthayfah ibn al-Yemāni, Makhdūj ibn Yazīd, `Umer ibn al-Khattāb, al-Barā' ibn `Āzib, `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, and others narrating this hadīth as such. The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has also said to `Ali: "You are my Brother in this life and the life hereafter."² In Letter No. 20, we stated how he (ص) took `Ali by the neck, saying: "This is my Brother, vicegerent and successor among you; therefore, listen to him and obey him." He, peace be upon him and his progeny, came out to meet his companions with a broad smile on his face. `Abdul-Rahmān ibn `Awf asked him what pleased him so much. He answered: "It is due to a piece of good news which I have just received from my Lord regarding my brother and cousin, and also regarding my daughter. The Almighty has chosen `Ali a husband for Fātima." When the Mistress of all women of the world was wed to the master of the Prophet's progeny (ع), the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "O Umm Ayman! Bring me my brother." Umm Ayman asked: "He is your brother, and you still marry him to your daughter?!" He said: "Yes, indeed, Umm Ayman." She called `Ali in.³

Quite often, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to point to `Ali and say: "This is my brother, cousin, son-in-law, and father of my descendants."⁴ Once he spoke to him and said: "You are my brother and companion." In another occasion, he said to him: "You are my brother, friend, and companion in Paradise." He once addressed him in a matter that was between him, his brother Ja`fer, and Zayd ibn Hārithah, saying: "O `Ali! You are, indeed, my brother and the father of my descendants. You are of me and for me."⁵ He made a covenant with him once saying: "You are my brother and vizier; you complete my religion, fulfill my promise, pay my debts on my behalf, and clear my conscience."⁶ When death approached him, may both my parents be sacrificed for him, he said: "Fetch me my brother." They called `Ali in. He said to him: "Come close to me." `Ali (ع) did. He kept whispering in his ears till his pure soul departed from his body. `Ali even caught some of the Prophet's saliva.⁷

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said: "It is written on the gate of Paradise: 'There is no god but Allāh, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh, `Ali is the Brother of the Messenger of Allāh.'"⁸ The Almighty, when the Prophet left `Ali sleeping in his bed while the enemies were outside plotting to murder him, addressed Gabriel and Michael thus: "I have created brotherhood between both of you and let the life-span of one of you be longer than that of the other. Which one of you wishes to have the life of the other be longer than his own?" Each held his own life dearer. The Almighty said: "Why can't you be like `Ali ibn Abu Tālib between whom and Muhammad (ص) I have created brotherhood, and he has chosen to sleep in Muhammad's bed, offering to sacrifice his own life for his brother? Go down to earth and protect him from his foes." They both came down. Gabriel stood at `Ali's head while Michael stood at his feet. Gabriel cried: "Congratulations! Congratulations! Who can be like you, O son of Abu Tālib?

Even Allāh brags about you to His angels!" Regarding that incident, the verse "And there are among men those who trade their own lives for the Pleasure of Allāh (Qur'ān, 2:207)" was revealed.⁹

ʿAli himself is quoted saying: "I am the servant of Allāh and the Brother of His Messenger. I am the strongest in believing in the Prophet. Nobody else can say so except a liar."¹⁰ He has also said: "By Allāh! I am his Brother and *wali*, his cousin and the inheritor of his knowledge; who else is more worthy of it than me?"¹¹ On the Day of Shūra, he said to ʿUthmān, ʿAbdul-Rahmān, Saʿd, and al-Zubayr: "Do you know of anyone among the Muslims other than myself with whom the Messenger of Allāh established Brotherhood?" They answered: "We bear witness, no."¹² When ʿAli stood to duel with al-Walīd during the Battle of Badr, the latter asked him: "Who are you?" ʿAli answered: "I am the servant of Allāh and the brother of His Messenger."¹³ When ʿUmer was caliph, ʿAli asked him:¹⁴ "Suppose some Israelites come to you and one of them told you that he was cousin of Moses, would he receive a preferred treatment than the others?" ʿUmer answered: "Yes, indeed." ʿAli said: "I, by Allāh, am the brother of the Messenger of Allāh and his cousin." ʿUmer took off his mantle and spread it for ʿAli to sit on, saying: "By Allāh, you will sit nowhere else other than on my own mantle till each one of us goes his way." ʿAli did so while ʿUmer was pleased by that gesture of respect for the brother and cousin of the Messenger of Allāh as long as he was in his company.

3) Well, I seem to have lost control over my pen. The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered the doors of his companions' houses overlooking the mosque to be closed for good, as a measure to protect the mosque's sanctity against *janāba* or *najāsa*, but he allowed ʿAli's door to remain open, permitting him to cross the mosque's courtyard even while being in the state of *janāba*, just as

Aaron was permitted to do, thus providing another proof for the similarity of positions of both men, peace be upon them, in their respective creeds and nations. Ibn `Abbās has said: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered all the doors of his companions closed except that of `Ali who used to enter even while in the state of *janāba*, having no other way out."¹⁵ `Umer ibn al-Khattāb has narrated an authentic hadīth which has been reproduced in both *sahīh* books wherein he says:¹⁶ "Ali ibn Abu Tālib was granted three tokens of prestige; had I had one of them, it would have been dearer to me than all red camels [of Arabia]: his wife Fātima daughter of the Messenger of Allāh, his residence at the mosque neighbouring the Messenger of Allāh and feeling at home therein, and the standard during the Battle of Khaybar."

Sa`īd ibn Mālik, as quoted in an authentic hadīth, once mentioned a few unique merits of `Ali and said: "The Messenger of Allāh turned out everyone from the mosque, including his uncle al-`Abbās and others. Al-`Abbās asked him: 'Why do you turn us out and keep `Ali?' He, peace be upon him and his progeny, answered: 'It is not I who has turned you out and kept `Ali. It is Allāh who has turned you out while keeping him.'"¹⁷ Zayd ibn Arqam has said: "A few companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) used to have the doors of their houses overlooking the mosque. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, then said: 'Close down all these doors except `Ali's.' Some people did not like it, and they talked about it. So, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, stood one day, praised the Almighty then said: 'I have ordered these doors to be closed save `Ali's, and some of you have disliked that. I have not closed down a door nor opened it, nor gave any order, except after being commanded by my Lord to do so.'"¹⁸

Quoting Ibn `Abbās, Al-Ṭabrānī has said that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny,

stood up once and said: "I have not turned you out acting on my own personal desire, nor have I left a door open out of my own personal preference. I only follow whatever inspiration I receive from my Lord."¹⁹ And the Messenger of Allāh said once to Ali (ع): "O `Ali! It is not permissible for anybody other than your own self to be present [in the mosque] while being in the state of *janāba*."²⁰ Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqās, al-Barā' ibn `Āzib, Ibn `Abbās, Ibn `Umer, and Huthayfah ibn al-Yemāni, have all said: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, came out to the mosque once and said: `Allāh inspired to his Prophet Moses to build Him a pure mosque in which nobody other than Moses and Aaron would live. Allāh has inspired to me to build a sanctified mosque wherein only I and my brother `Ali are permitted to sleep."²¹

There is no room here to state all the ascertained texts narrated by Ibn `Abbās, Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri, Zayd ibn Arqam, a companion from the tribe of Khath`am, Asmā' bint `Āmis, Umm Salamah, Huthayfah ibn Asīd, Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqās, al-Barā' ibn `Āzib, `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, `Umer, `Abdullāh ibn `Umer, Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri, Abul Tufail, Buraydah al-Aslami, Abu Rāfi`, freed slave of the Messenger of Allāh, Jābir ibn `Abdullāh al-Ansāri, and others have all narrated the same ḥadīth. It is also well known that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, invoked the Almighty once saying: "O Lord! The my brother Moses had prayed you saying: `Lord! Remove depression from my chest, untie my tongue's knot so that people may understand my speech, and let my brother Aaron be my vizier from among my household to support me in my undertaking and participate therein,' and you, Lord, responded with: `We shall support you through your brother and bestow upon you a great authority (Qur'ān, 28:35).' Lord! I am your servant Muḥammad; therefore, I invoke you to remove depression from my chest, to make my undertaking easier to carry out, and to let `Ali be my brother from among my household."²²

Al-Bazzāz has likewise indicated that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, took `Ali's hand and said: "Moses had prayed his Lord to purify His mosque through Aaron, and I have prayed my Lord to purify mine through you." He then sent a messenger to Abu Bakr ordering him to close down his door which overlooked the mosque, and Abu Bakr responded expressing his desire to honour the Prophet's command. Then he sent another messenger to `Umer to do likewise, and another to al-`Abbās for the same purpose. Then he, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "It is not I who has closed down your doors, nor have I kept `Ali's door open out of my own accord; rather, it is Allāh Who has opened his door and closed yours."

This much suffices to prove the similarity between `Ali and Aaron in all circumstances and conditions, and peace be with you.

Sincerely,
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¹This is quoted by the traditionists according to their own authentic sources of the traditions of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. Refer to pages 265 and 168, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, and you will find the text of this hadīth described as authentic according to the endorsement of both Shaykhs. Imām Ahmed has also quoted it from `Ali's hadīth on page 98, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*. Ibn `Abdel-Birr, too, quotes the biography of the grandson of the Prophet al-Hasan (ع) from *Isti`āb*, and even al-Thahbi quotes it in his *Talkhīs*, taking its authenticity for granted, in spite of his fanaticism and deviation from this nation's Aaron, and from its Shabar and Shubayr. It is also quoted by al-Baghwi in his *Mu`jam*, and `Abdul-Ghani from his *Idāh*, as is recorded on page 115 of *Al-Sawaiq al-Muhriqa*, from Salman whose text is almost similar, and also from Ibn `Asākir.

²Al-Hākim has quoted it on page 14, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak* as narrated by Ibn `Umer from two authentic sources and endorsed by both Shaykhs. Al-Thahbi has also quoted it in his *Talkhīs*, taking its authenticity for granted. Al-Tirmithi, too, quotes it as cited by Ibn Hajar on page 72 of his *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to the seventh hadīth of the ones included in Section 2 of Chapter 9 of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muhriqa*. All those who have discussed the brotherhood hadīth among writers of traditions and chronicles have accepted it without any argument.

³This is quoted by al-Hākim on page 159, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*. Al-Thahbi, too, has quoted it in his *Talkhīs*, admitting its authenticity. Ibn Hajar copies it in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muhriqa*. All those who wrote about the wedding of al-Zahrā' (ع) have, without any exception, mentioned it.

⁴This is included by al-Shīrāzi in his chapter on surnames, and by Ibn al-Najjār who quotes Ibn `Umer. Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi has transmitted it in his *Kanz al-`Ummāl* and *Al-Muntakhab* which he attaches to the footnote of his *Musnad*; so, refer to the second line of the footnote on page 32 of its fifth volume.

⁵Al-Hakim quotes it on page 217, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*, the authenticity of whose narrators is endorsed by Muslim. Al-Thahbi has admitted the same in his own *Talkhīs*.

⁶Al-Tabrāni has quoted it in his *Al-Kabīr* from Ibn `Umer, and it is transmitted by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi in his *Kanz al-`Ummāl* as well as *Al-Muntakhab*; so, refer to *Al-Muntakhab* to see the inclusion of the footnote on page 32, Vol. 5, of the *Musnad*.

⁷This is quoted by Ibn Sa`d on page 51, Part Two, Vol. 2, of his *Tabaqāt*, and also on page 55, Vol. 4, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

⁸This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Al-Awsat*, by al-Khatīb in his *Al-Muttafaq wal-Muftaraq*, and it is transmitted by the author of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*; so, refer to *Al-Muntakhab* and see the

inclusion of a footnote on page 35, Vol. 5, of Ahmed's *Musnad*. It is also transmitted by Ibn `Asākir in his footnote on page 46.

⁹This is quoted by authors of books of traditions in their respective works, and it is briefly referred to by Imam Fakhrul-Dīn al-Rāzi as he interprets this verse of Sūrat al-Baqara, on page 189, Vol. 2, of his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabir*.

¹⁰This is quoted by al-Nisā'i in *Al-Khasā'is al-'Alawiyya*, and by al-Hākim at the beginning of page 112, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, by Abu Shaybah and Ibn Abu `Āsim in *Al-Sunnah*, and by Abu Na`īm in *Al-Ma`rifā*. It is also transmitted by al-Muttaqī al-Hindī in *Kanz al-'Ummāl* and *Muntakhab al-Kanz*. Refer to *Al-Muntakhab* and read what Ahmed has included in the footnote on page 40, Vol. 5, of his *Musnad*.

¹¹Refer to page 126, Vol. 3, of the *Al-Mustadrak*. It is quoted by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs*, where the author does not dispute its authenticity at all.

¹²This is quoted by Ibn `Abd al-Birr in `Ali's biography in the *Isti`āb*, in addition to many other trusted authorities.

¹³This is quoted by Ibn Sa`d while discussing Badr's military campaign in his *Tabaqāt*, page 15, part One, Vol. 2.

¹⁴As Dar Qutni quotes in the fifth *maqṣad* of the *Maqāsid* of the verse enjoining kindness to the Prophet's kin, and it is verse 14 of the ones counted by Ibn Hajar in Part 11 of his *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to page 107 of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*.

¹⁵This ḥadīth is quite lengthy, and it contains ten exclusive merits of `Ali, and we have quoted it Letter No. 26.

¹⁶It exists on page 125, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*. It is quoted by Abu Ya`li, as stated in Part 3, Chapter 9, of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to page 76 of this book. It is also quoted in this meaning in almost similar wording by Ahmed ibn Hanbal

while quoting ahādīth by `Umer and his son `Abdullah, and by many other trusted traditionists through various avenues.

¹⁷As stated at the beginning of page 17, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*. This hadīth is included in Sunni books of traditions, and it is quoted by many trusted Sunni authorities.

¹⁸As quoted about him by Ahmed on page 369, Vol. 4, of the *Musnad*. It is also quoted by al-Diyā as stated in *Kanz al-Ummāl* and its *Muntakhab*; so, refer to *Al-Muntakhab* to see what is included in the footnote for page 29 of the fifth volume of the *Musnad*.

¹⁹As he is quoted by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi at the end of the footnote on the page referred to above.

²⁰As quoted by al-Tirmithi in his *Sahīh* and quoted from him by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi as we have stated when referring to his *Muntakhab*. It is also quoted by al-Bazzāz from Sa`d, as stated in hadīth 13 of the ahādīth which Ibn Hajar quotes in Section 2, Chapter 9, of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to page 73 of the same.

²¹As they are quoted by `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Khatīb, the Shāfi`i faqīh who is better known as Ibn al-Maghāzli, in his book *Al-Manāqib* from various sources, and transmitted by the trusted researcher al-Balkhi in Chapter 17 of his *Yanābīr al-Mawaddah*.

²²This is quoted by Imām Abu Ishāq al-Tha`labi from Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri in his interpretation of the following verse of Sūrat al-Mā`ida: "Verily, your wali are: Allāh, His Messenger, and the Believers," in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, similar to which is transmitted from Imām Ahmed's *Musnad* by the Balkhi researcher.

LETTER 35
Thul-Hijjah 27, 1329

Requesting Other Texts

May Allāh reward your father! How eloquent your arguments and how convincing! Please oblige and go ahead to state the rest of the clear consecutively reported (*mutawātir*) texts, Wassalamo Alaikom.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 36
Thul-Hijjah 29, 1329

- I *Hadīth* by Ibn `Abbās,
- II `Umrān's *Hadīth*,
- III Buraydah's *Hadīth*,
- IV *Hadīth* Recounting Ten Exclusive Attributes (of `Ali),
- V `Ali's *Hadīth*,
- VI Wahab's *Hadīth*,
- VII Ibn Abu `Asim's *Hadīth*.

1) Refer to what Abu Dawūd al-Tayālisi has reported, as stated in a chapter discussing `Ali in *Isti`āb* through the authority of Ibn `Abbās who is quoted saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said to `Ali ibn Abu Tālib: `You are next to me alone as the *wali* of every believer."¹

2) Another authentic hadīth is narrated by `Umrān ibn Ḥaṣīn who says: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, deployed an army division under the command

of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib who chose, as his share of the *khums*, a slave-girl for himself, and people criticized him. Four men vowed to complain against him to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. When they came to the Prophet, one of them stood up and said: `O Messenger of Allāh! Have you seen how `Ali has done such and such?' The Prophet (ص) turned his face away from him. The second stood up and spoke likewise, and the Prophet (ص) ignored him, too. The third stood up and repeated what his fellows had previously stated, and he, too, was ignored. The fourth one stood up and stated exactly as had been stated by his fellows. It was then that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, turned to them with anger in his eyes and said: `What do you want of `Ali? `Ali is of me and I am of him, and only after me is he the *mawla* of all believers.'"²

3) Also refer to Buraydah's ḥadīth quoted verbatim on page 356 of Vol. 5 of Ahmed's *Musnad*. He says: "The Messenger of Allāh sent two armies to Yemen. One of them was led by `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع), and the other by Khālid ibn al-Walīd. He instructed them thus: `When you combine your forces, let `Ali be the overall leader.³ But if you disperse, then each one of you is the leader over his own troops.' We then battled Banu Zubayda, and `Ali selected one of the captives, a slave-girl, for himself; so, Khālid and I wrote to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, to inform him of the incident. When I came to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, and the letter was read for him, I noticed anger in his eyes; therefore, I pleaded to him by saying: `This is the place for those who seek refuge; you have sent me with a commander and ordered me to obey him, and I have done just that.' The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: `Do not ever plot against `Ali, for he is of me and I am of him, and he is your *wali* after me.'"⁴

Al-Nisā'i has quoted the following words of the Prophet (ص) *verbatim* on page 17 of his *Al-Khaṣā'is al-`Alawiyyah*: "O Buraydah! Do not try to make me dislike `Ali, for `Ali is of me, and I am of him, and he is your *wali* after me." Jarīr, too, quotes Buraydah's statement *verbatim* thus: "The Prophet's face became red with anger, and he said: 'To whomsoever I have been *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*;' therefore, I forgot my own anger against `Ali and said that I would never speak ill of `Ali again."⁵ Al-Ṭabranī, too, has quoted this ḥadīth in detail. Among what he narrates is that when Buraydah came from Yemen and entered the mosque, he found a crowd standing by the room of the Prophet (ص). Upon seeing him, they stood up to greet him and ask him what news he had brought them. He said: "Good news. Allāh has rendered victory upon the Muslims." They asked him: "Then what brought you here?" He answered: "An incident regarding a slave-girl whom `Ali chose as his share of the *khums*, and I have come here to inform the Prophet about it." They said: "Inform him of it, do inform him, so that he may change his heart about `Ali," while the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, was standing overhearing their conversation from within. He, thereupon, came out angrily and said: "What is the matter with those who bear grudge against `Ali? Whoever hates `Ali hates me, too, and whoever abandons `Ali abandons me. `Ali is of me and I am of him; he has been created of my own mould, and my own mould is Ibrāhīm's (Abraham's), and I am even superior to Ibrāhīm,⁶ one progeny descending from another, and Allāh is all-Hearing, all-Knowing. O Buraydah! Have you not come to know that `Ali's share is a lot more than the slave-girl he took, and that he is your *wali* after me?"⁷ — There is no doubt about the authenticity of this ḥadīth, and its narrators are quite numerous, and they are all reliable.

4) Similar to this narration is what al-Hākim has narrated from Ibn `Abbās who cites a particular ḥadīth of weight and significance. In it he counts ten exclusive attributes of `Ali, and he quotes the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, addressing `Ali thus: "You are the *wali* of every believer after me."⁸

5) Likewise, in another ḥadīth, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said, "O `Ali! I have prayed Allāh to grant me five wishes concerning you, and He granted me four and denied the fifth." He continues to say: "He has granted me that you are the *wali* of the believers after me."⁹

6) A similar ḥadīth is transmitted by Ibn al-Sakan from Wahab ibn Ḥamzah and is quoted in Wahab's biography in *Isti`āb* thus: "I travelled once with `Ali and found him to be cold towards me; therefore, I decided to complain about him to the Prophet upon returning. So I mentioned him to the Messenger of Allāh and I spoke ill of him, whereupon he (ص) said: `Do not say so about `Ali, for he is your *wali* after me.'" Al-Tabrāni, in his book *Al-Mujma` al-Kabīr*, cites Wahab's statement with a minor alteration in its wording thus: "Do not say this about `Ali, for he is the most worthy of being your leader after me."¹⁰

7) Ibn Abu `Āṣim has quoted `Ali's ḥadīth from the Prophet through a chain of narrators thus: "Do I not have more authority over the believers than they themselves have?" People answered in the affirmative. The Prophet (ص) then said: "To whomsoever I have been *wali*, `Ali is his *wali*;"¹¹ and our *ṣaḥīḥ* books in this regard are *mutawātir* from the Imāms of the Purified Progeny (ع).

This much should suffice to prove our point, although *ayat al-wilāyat* alone suffices to support our claim, and praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, *Wassalamo Alaikom*.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is quoted by Abu Dawūd and other authors of books of traditions from Abu `Awanah al-Waddāh ibn `Abdullah al-Yashkuri through a chain of narrators: Abu Balj Yahya ibn Salīm al-Fizāri, `Amr ibn Maymūn al-`Awdi, ending with Ibn `Abbās. The men who have quoted this tradition are all authorities in their own right, and they are relied upon by both Shaykhs in their respective *sahīhs* with the exception of Yahya ibn Salīm whom they do not quote, yet even the pioneers of criticism and verification have all declared his trustworthiness, and that he used to mention the name of Allāh most frequently. Al-Thahbi, while stating his biography in his *Al-Mizām*, quotes Ibn Ma`īn, al-Nisā'i, Dar Qutni, Muhammad ibn Sa`īd, Abu Hatim, and many others all testifying to the fact that the man is a trusted authority.

²This is quoted by many authors of books of traditions such as Imām al-Nisā'i in his *Al-Khasā'is al-`Alawiyya*, Ahmed ibn Hanbal (when quoting `Umrān's ḥadīth at the beginning of page 438, Vol. 4, of his *Musnad*), al-Hākim on page 111, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*, admitting its authenticity due to its endorsement by Muslim. It is quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah and Ibn Jarīr, and the ḥadīth both men quote from him has been verified by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi at the beginning of page 400, Vol. 6, of *Kānz al-`Ummāl*. It is also quoted by al-Tirmithi from reliable sources as mentioned by al-`Asqalāni while discussing `Ali's biography in his *Al-Iṣābah*. The Mu`tazilite scholar has quoted it on page 450, Vol. 2, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, commenting: "This is narrated by Abu `Abdullah Ahmed [ibn Hanbal] in his *Musnad* in more than one place." He

also narrates it in his book *Faḍā'il `Ali* [Ali's virtues], and it is narrated by most traditionists.

³The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, as long as he lived, never required anyone to issue orders to `Ali; on the contrary, he vested upon him the responsibility of issuing orders to others. He was his standard-bearer in every campaign, unlike many others. Abu Bakr and `Umer were both ordinary soldiers in Usāmah's troops, serving under the standard tied for him by the Messenger of Allāh (ص) who ordered him to take charge of the Mu'ta expedition. He personally enlisted both men, according to the consensus of chroniclers, and he also made them soldiers of Ibn al-`Ās. These facts are stated by al-Hākim on page 43, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, and they are cited by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*, admitting the authenticity of the ḥadīth. As regarding `Ali himself, he was never to receive orders, nor to be the subject of anyone other than the Prophet himself since the inception of his mission and till his demise, peace be upon him and his progeny.

⁴This is quoted by Ahmed on page 356 from `Abdullah ibn Buraydah who quotes his father. On page 347, Vol. 5, of his *Musnad*, relying on a chain of narrators including Sa`īd ibn Jubayr and Ibn `Abbās, he quotes Buraydah saying: "I participated in `Ali's campaign against Yemen, and I felt that his attitude towards me was cool. When I came to the Messenger of Allāh and mentioned `Ali, I belittled him. Having done so, I saw the face of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) change colour, and he said to me: `O Buraydah! Do I not have more authority over the believers than the believers have over their own selves?' I answered: `Yes, indeed, O Messenger of Allāh.' He said: `To whomsoever I am a *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*.'" This is quoted by al-Hākim on page 110, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, in addition to many traditionists. It is, as you see, quite clear in its gist, for when he starts with the question "Do I not have more authority over the believers than the believers have over their own selves?" he bears testimony to the meaning of "mawla" in this ḥadīth to be "the one who is *awla*, i.e. most worthy of ruling" them, as is quite obvious. Similar to this ḥadīth is what

has been quoted by many traditionists such as Imam Ahmed at the end of page 483, Vol. 3, of his *Musnad*, from `Amr ibn Shās al-Aslamī, one of those who were present at Hudaybiya, who quotes the same adding: "I accompanied `Ali to Yemen, and he was cool to me during the trip, so much so that I concealed some feelings against him. When I came back, I complained about him at the mosque till the news reached the Messenger of Allah (ص). I entered the mosque one afternoon, and the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was present there accompanied by many of his companions. As soon as he saw me, he stared at me till I sat down. He said to me: `O `Amr! By Allāh you have hurt me.' I said: `I seek refuge with Allāh against hurting you, O Messenger of Allāh!' He said: `Yes; whoever hurts `Ali hurts me, too.'"

⁵As he is quoted by al-Muttaqī al-Hindī on page 398, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*. He is also quoted in *Muntakhab al-Kanz*.

⁶When he was told that `Ali was created of his own mould, peace be upon him and his progeny, thus by necessity becoming superior to this man, he said: "And I am created of Ibrahīm's mould," mistakingly thinking that Ibrahīm (Abraham) is superior to him, peace be upon him and his progeny, which contradicts the truth of the matter.

⁷Ibn Jarīr has quoted this ḥadīth from al-Tabrānī who includes it on page 103 of his book *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa* while discussing the second *maqsad* of verse 14 of the ones which he discusses in Chapter 11 of *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*. But when he comes to the statement "Have you not come to know that `Ali's share is more than a slave-girl?" his pen halts, and he cannot finish the ḥadīth in its entirety! This is not strange, coming from him and his likes; and praise be to Allāh for our good health.

⁸This is quoted by al-Hākīm at the beginning of page 134, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, al-Thahbī in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*, admitting its authenticity, al-Nisā`ī on page 6 of his *Al-Khaṣa`is al-*

`Alawiyya, and Imām Aḥmed on page 331, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*. We have quoted it verbatim at the beginning of Letter No. 26.

⁹This ḥadīth is number 6048 among the ones cited in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 396, Vol. 6.

¹⁰This ḥadīth is numbered 2579 among the ones cited in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 155, Vol. 6.

¹¹This is transmitted by al-Muttaqī al-Hindī from Ibn Abu `Āsim on page 397, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

LETTER 37
Thul-Hijjah 29, 1329

“Wali” is a Linguistic Denominator; so, Where is the Text?

The word “wali” is a common denominator between the supporter and the friend, the loved one and the brother-in-law, the follower, the ally, and the neighbour. Whoever takes charge of a matter is its “wali.” The ahādīth you have quoted may simply mean: `Ali is your supporter, or friend, or loved one, after the Prophet; so, where is the text which you claim?

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 38
Thul-Hijjah 29, 1329

- I Explaining the Implications of “Wali”
- II Proving its Connotation

1) You have indicated, while explicating the meanings of “wali,” that whoever takes charge of anyone becomes the latter’s *wali*. This, indeed, is the connotation of “wali” in as far as those ahādīth are concerned. It is the same that comes to mind. Its meaning is similar to saying “The minor has had for his *wali* both his father and his paternal grandfather, then he was put in the custody of either of them, then in the custody of the legal administrator.” This implies that these persons are the ones who are in charge of looking after him and administer his affairs on his own behalf.

2) The proofs testifying to the meaning connoted in the word concealed from the discreet. His statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "And he is your *wali* after me" clearly restricts "wilāyat" to him and only him. This mandates that we should underscore the meaning which we have just attached to this word, a meaning which does not agree with that of any other interpretation. Support, love, friendship, and the like are not confined to one single person, and the believers, men and women, are *walis* of one another. What merit, other than what we have just indicated, could the Prophet (ص) have emphasized in this ḥadīth regarding his brother and *wali* if we say that the meaning of the word *wali* is something else that differs from what we have indicated above? What a hidden matter has the Prophet (ص) decided to unveil through the medium of such ahādīth had the meaning of "wali" been the supporter, the loved one, or the like? The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, is above clarifying what is already clear, or pointing out what is already taken for granted. His wisdom is vast, his infallibility is incumbent, his Message is conclusive and is more than what some people think. Yet these ahādīth are quite clear in stating that *wilāyat* is assigned for `Ali after the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. This, too, requires applying the same meaning which we have suggested. It simply is not conducive to the meanings of supporter, loved one, etc., since there is no doubt that `Ali is known to have been supported, loved, and befriended by Muslims due to his being raised in the lap of prophethood, to his contributions to the promotion of its message, till he, peace be upon him, passed away. Supporting, loving and befriending the Muslims, therefore, are not confined to `Ali alone after the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, as is quite obvious.

Suffices you for a testimony to this meaning what Imām Aḥmed has stated on page 347 of Vol. 5 of his *Musnad*

through the correct path of narrators who cite Sa`īd ibn Jubayr quoting Ibn `Abbās citing Buraydah saying: "I participated in `Ali's invasion of Yemen, and I found him to be cool to me; so, when I came to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, I mentioned `Ali and belittled him; thereupon, I saw the Messenger's face changing colour, and he asked me: `O Buraydah! Do I not have more authority over the believers than the believers have over their own selves?' I answered: `Yes, indeed, O Messenger of Allāh'. He (ص) then said: `To whomsoever I have been *mawla*, `Ali, too, is his *mawla*.'" This hadīth is also quoted by al-Hākim on page 110, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*, where he considers it authentic relying on the authority of Muslim. Al-Thahbi has quoted it in his *Talkhīs*, taking its authenticity for granted for the same reason thatbe Muslim, too, considers it authentic. You yourself know the implication the introductory question "Do I not have more authority over the believers than they themselves have?" carries, a meaning that supports what we have suggested. Anyone who scrutinizes these ahādīth, as well as all matters relevant to them, will have no doubt in what we have stated, and praise be to Allāh.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 39 Thul-Hijjah 30, 1329

Requesting the *Wilāyat* Verse

I testify that you are firm in your beliefs, sincere in your campaign, forceful and unmatched in facing your debater, invincible in the field. I am a believer in the ahādīth according to the way which you have suggested. Had I not been obliged

to believe in the *ṣahābah*, I would have accepted your judgement, but taking the word's meaning in the way those *ṣahābah* have taken it is a must, following in the footsteps of the good ancestors, may Allāh be pleased with all of them.

But you have not acquainted us with the terse verse which you claim, at the conclusion of Letter No. 36, that supports your view regarding the interpretation of these aḥādīth. Recite it for us so that we may comprehend its meaning by the Will of Allāh Almighty, Wassalām.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 40 Muḥarram 2, 1320

- I **The Verse of *Wilāyat* and its Revelation in `Ali's Honour,**
- II **Why it was Revealed,**
- III **Why Using it as a Testimonial.**

1) Yes, indeed, I would like to recite unto you one of the perfect verses of Allāh, the Exalted, the Almighty, in His great Book which distinguishes right from wrong. It is one of the verses of Sūrat al Mā'ida (Table of Viands):¹

Only Allāh is your *wali* and His Messenger and those who believe, those who say their prayers and offer *zakat* (even) while prostrating (in prayers). And whoever takes for *wali* Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers, they, indeed, are the party of Allāh; they are the ones who shall achieve victory. (Qur'ān, 5:55-56)

Nobody doubts the fact that these verses were revealed in honour of `Ali who offered his own ring in the way of Allāh while engaged in performing the prayers.

2) The *sahīh* books consecutively report, through the authority of the Imāms from among the Purified Progeny, stating that it was revealed in honour of `Ali when he, out of charity, offered his ring while prostrating in prayers. Refer to what has been said in this regard by others such as Ibn Salām who quotes hadīth from the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny. Refer to it as published in Nisā'i's *Sahīh*, or in *Al-Jāmi Bayna al-Sihāh al-Sittah*, in a chapter dealing with the interpretation of Sūrat al Mā'ida. Likewise, refer to the hadīth of Ibn `Abbās who explains the meanings of these verses in imām al-Wāhidi's book *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. Al-Khatīb has included it in *Al-Muttafaq*.² Also refer to `Ali's hadīth in the *musnads* of Ibn Mardawayh and Abul-Shaykh. If you wish, refer to it in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

Its revelation to honour `Ali is a matter of consensus among scholars of the exegesis of the Holy Qur'ān. Such consensus is attested to by many Sunni scholars like Imām al-Qawshaji in his chapter on imāmate in *Sharh al Tajrīd*. Chapter 18 of *Ghāyat al-Marām* includes one hadīth narrated through the Sunnis testifying to our claim. Had I not aspired to be brief, in addition to the fact that this issue is as clear as the sun in midday, I would have quoted for you many comments thereupon in authentic chronicles, but, praise to Allāh, it is a matter which does not entertain any doubt. Despite that, we do not like to let this letter be without a few ahādīth narrated by the majority of Muslims.

Suffices us what Imām Abu Ishāq Ahmed ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nisābūri al-Tha`labi³ has stated in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. When the writer comes to this verse, he quotes Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri saying:

"I have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, with these ears—may I be deaf if I tell a lie—and saw him with these eyes—may I be blinded if I lie—saying: `Ali is the leader of the pious, the annihilator of infidels; whoever supports him is supported by Allāh, and whoever abandons him is abandoned by Allāh.' I have, indeed, said my prayers once in the company of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, when a beggar came to the mosque and nobody gave him anything. `Ali was in the state of ceremonial prostration when he beckoned to him to take his ring. The beggar came and took it from `Ali's finger, whereupon the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, invoked Allāh, the Almighty, the Omniscient, and prayed Him on behalf of `Ali saying: `Lord! My Brother Moses had prayed to you saying: Lord! Remove the distress from my bosom, render my mission easy for me, and untie my tongue's knot so that people may understand me, and let me have a vizier from my own kin, my brother Aaron, to support my endeavour and participate in my undertaking, so that we may both praise you a great deal and mention your Name a great deal; You have been most Kind unto us (Qur'ān, 20:25-35);-thereupon, You inspired to him: Verily, your prayer has been granted, O Moses! (Qur'ān, 20:36). Lord! I am Your servant and Prophet; therefore, remove my distress, render my mission easy for me, and grant me a vizier from my kin, `Ali, to support my endeavour'. By Allāh, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, had hardly finished his supplication before Gabriel, the trusted one, brought him this verse: `Only Allāh is your *wali* and His Messenger and those who believe, those who say their prayers and offer *zakat*

(even) while prostrating (in prayers). And whoever takes for *wali* Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers, they, indeed, are the party of Allāh; they are the ones who shall achieve victory (Qur`ān, 5:55-56).”

3) You, may Allāh support righteousness through your own person, know that the meaning of the word “*wali*” in such a context is “one who has the top priority in faring with one's affairs.” We say “Such and such is the minor's *wali*.” Lexicographers have made it clear that whoever takes charge of someone's affairs is the latter's *wali*. The meaning of the verse, therefore, is as though Allāh says that “the ones who take charge of your affairs and have priority even over your own lives in faring with the latter are: Allāh, the Almighty and Omniscient, His Messenger, and `Ali,” for in `Ali alone have all these qualities been combined: faith, saying the prayers, and offering *zakat* even while prostrating in prayers, and for whom these verses were thus revealed. The Almighty has in these verses reserved *wilāyat* for Himself and for both His Messenger and *waṣi* in the same manner. The *wilāyat* of Allāh, the Almighty and Omniscient, is general and inclusive. So is the *wilāyat* of the Prophet as well as his *wali*; it carries the same meaning. It is not possible to apply to it in this context the meanings of “supporter, loved one, etc.,” since such a restriction [of application] is groundless, as is quite obvious. I believe this is a quite clear matter, and praise to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is why people in Syria call a Shī`ah “*mutawāli*,” due to his taking for *mawla* Allāh, His Messenger, and those who have truly believed, that is, those in whose honour the same verse was

revealed. Linguistically, the “mutawāli” is singular, and the “mutāwla” are the Shī`ahs. They are so-called because they accepted the *wilāyat* of `Ali and Ahl al-Bayt (ع).

²It is ḥadīth number 5991 of the ones cited in *Kanz al-Ummāl* on page 391, Vol. 6.

³He died in 337. Ibn Khallikān mentions him in his *Wafīyyāt al-A`yān* saying: “He was the unique authority of his time in the science of exegesis; he wrote *Al-Tafsīr-al-Kabīr*, which surpassed all other books of *tafsīr*,” and he goes on to say: “He is mentioned by `Abdul-Ghāfir ibn Isma`īl al-Fārisi in his book *Siyāq Nisabur*, where the author lauds him and describes him as ‘accurate in transmitting, trustworthy.’”

LETTER 41
Muḥarram 3, 1330

“Mumins” is Plural; Why Apply it to the Singular?

It may be said in rebutting your objection that the phrase “the Mu'mins who say their prayers and offer *zakat* (even) while prostrating (in prayers)” is applied to the plural; so, why should it be applied to the Imām, may Allāh glorify his countenance, who is singular? What is your answer if you are asked thus?

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 42
Muḥarram 4, 1330

- I** **Arabs Address the Singular Using the Plural Form,**
- II** **Testimonials,**
- III** **Quoting Imām al-Ṭibrisi,**
- IV** **Quoting al-Zamakhshari,**
- V** **What I have Stated.**

1) The answer to your question is that Arabs apply the plural expression while addressing an individual due to the nice effect it produces [i.e. respect].

2) A testimony to this fact is what the Almighty says in Sūrat Āl-i-`Imrān:

Those to whom some people said: "A large army has been raised against you; so, fear them," yet it only increased their faith, and they said: "Allāh suffices us, and He is the One upon Whom we depend most." (Qur`ān, 3:173)

The person implied in these verses of Āl-i-`Imrān is none other than Na`īm ibn Mas`ūd al-Ashja`i, according to the consensus of scholars of exegesis, traditionists, and chroniclers. Yet Allāh Almighty has applied to him, the singular person that he is, the plural form just to express respect for those who did not listen to his statements nor heeded his dissuading calls. Abu Sufyān had given him ten camels in order to demoralize and frighten the Muslims regarding the strength of the polytheists, and he did just that. Among his statements then was: "People have gathered a mighty force to attack you; so, fear for your own lives." Many Muslims disliked the idea of fighting that force just because of his statement, but the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, came out accompanied by seventy cavaliers to meet them, and they all returned from the battlefield safely, whereupon this verse was revealed praising the seventy believers who came out with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, heedless to the dissuasion of those who wished to demoralize them.

In applying the word "people" for just one individual, a nice and divine point is made which is complimenting the seventy men who came out with the Prophet. This surely sounds more eloquent when used as such; it is better than saying: "Those to whom a man said that a large army had been raised..., etc.," as is obvious. There are numerous verses in the Holy Qur`ān similar to this one, as well as in the Arabic language as a whole. The Almighty Allāh says: "O you who believe! Remember Allāh's blessing unto you when some

folks intended to lay their (evil) hands upon you, and He protected you against their harm.” In fact, the person who intended to lay his evil hands upon them and hurt them was a man from the tribe of Muhārib named Ghawrath—others say it was `Amr ibn Jahsh of Banu al Naḍīr—who unsheathed his sword and shook it intending to strike the Holy Prophet (ص), but Allāh, the Almighty and the Glorified, foiled his attempt, according to the narration of the incident as recorded by traditionists, authors of chronicles, and scholars of exegesis, and as transmitted by Ibn Hisham in the campaign of Thāt al Riqā' in Vol. 3 of his book titled *Sīrah*. Allāh has applied the collective plural “people” for this lone man just to express His blessings, the Dear One, the Omnipotent, upon the Muslim masses manifested in the safety of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny. In the Mubahala verse, He has applied both the singular and the plural forms to the “sons,” “women,” and “selves” to both the Hasanain, Fātima, and `Ali in particular, just to honour to their lofty status, may Allāh be pleased with them. Examples for the application of the plural form for the individual wherever necessary are innumerable and beyond recounting, and they all prove the license to use the plural form while talking about one individual whenever there is a nice eloquent effect thereto.

3) In his interpretation of this verse, in *Mujma`ul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur`ān*, Imām al-Tibrisi comments on the usage of the plural form to refer to the Commander of the Faithful as a token of respect and veneration, stating that lexicographers describe the singular using the plural form to show respect and veneration. He says: “Such an application is too well known in their language to require proofs.”

4) In his *Kashshāf*, al-Zamakhshari mentions another nice point when he says: “If you wonder how it can be accurate to use the plural with `Ali, may Allāh be pleased with him, I will

tell you that he is addressed in the plural form, although he is only one man, so that people may follow his example and earn rewards like his, and so that Allāh may point out the fact that a believer's attitude should be like `Ali's, that is, being eager to do deeds of righteousness and goodwill by looking after the poor, so much so that even the performance of something which does not permit any delay, such as saying the prayers, should not make them postpone it till they are through."

5) I personally have a nice and more precise point. When the Almighty applied the plural rather than the singular form, as many do, then those who hated `Ali as well as all those who were envious of and in competition with Banu Hāshim would not be able to tolerate hearing it in the singular form, for they would then be unable to hide the truth or water it down. Because of their desperation, they might even do something quite harmful to Islam. It is quite possible that it was for this reason that the verse was revealed in the plural form though applied to the singular: in order to avoid the harm resulting from disgracing those folks. The verses after that particular one vary in form and status, gradually preparing them for *wilāyat*, till Allāh perfected His religion and completed His blessing, as was his usual habit, peace be upon him and his progeny, and that of the wise in attaining what otherwise is quite difficult to attain. Had the verse come in the singular form, those folks would have then put their fingers in their ears, covered themselves with their own clothes and become stubborn, arrogant, and naughty. This is a sublime wisdom manifested in all the verses of the Holy Qur`ān which were revealed to highlight the attributes of the Commander of the Faithful and those among his purified household, as is quite obvious. We have explained these statements and brought irrefutable proofs and obvious testimonies in our books *Sabīl*

al-Muminin and *Tanzīl al-Ayāt*, and praise be to Allāh for His Guidance and Support, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

Sh

LETTER 43
Muḥarram 4, 1330

Context Denotes “the Loved one,” or the Like.

May Allāh bless your father! You have, indeed, dispelled my doubts and thus overcome my suspicion, so much so that truth has become manifest. Nothing remains to say other than the fact that the context of the said verse denotes the prohibition of taking the infidels for *walis*. The verses which precede and succeed it testify to this fact, and this supports the claim that the connotation of the word “wali” in this verse is the supporter, loved one, friend, or the like; so, what would your answer be? Kindly state it, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 44
Muḥarram 5, 1330

- I Context is not Indicative of “Supporter,” or the Like,
- II Context does not Outweigh the Proofs.

1) Here is my answer: This verse, if one were to scrutinize it, overlooking the verses which precede it and which prohibit taking the infidels for *walis*, does not connote praising the Commander of the Faithful or recommending him for leadership and imāmate by threatening dissidents with his might or by warning them against being punished by him. This is so because in the preceding verse, if and when scrutinized independently, Allāh Almighty states: "O ye who believe! If anyone of you relinquishes his religion, then Allāh will raise a people whom He loves and who love Him, soft-hearted with the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, struggling in His Path, not fearing anyone while doing so. This, indeed, is Allāh's favour; He grants it to whomsoever He pleases, and Allāh is vast in knowledge (Qur'ān, 5:54)."¹ This verse is revealed on behalf of the Commander of the Faithful (ع), warning others of his might and that of his followers, as the Commander of the Faithful has himself stated on the Battle of the Camel and is stated by Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Sādiq.

The same meaning is applied by al-Tha`labi in his *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. It is also narrated by the author of *Muj'maul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* from `Ammār, Huthayfah, and Ibn `Abbās. It is interpreted in this way according to the consensus of Shī`as who narrate it consecutively from the Imāms of the Purified Progeny (ع). The verse of the *wilāyat* will thus come after hinting to his *wilāyat* and referring to the necessity of accepting his imāmate. Its context would then be an explanation of that hint, and an elaboration on the hint that preceded it which suggests his government; so, how can it be said that this verse was revealed in the context of prohibiting taking the infidels for *walis*?

2) The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has himself equated the status of the Imāms among

his descendants to that of the Holy Qur`ān, indicating that they both shall never separate from each other, and that they are equal in significance to the Book (Qur`ān) itself; through them can right be distinguished from wrong. To them, taking this verse as a proof is consecutively reported. The meaning they have always applied to the word "wali" in such a context is identical to the one which I have applied above; therefore, context does not bear any weight if you take it to contradict their texts,² for all Muslims are in consensus regarding the application of context as a proper argument. When context and proof collide with one another, they abandon the connotation of the context and yield to the judgement of the proof. This is so due to the fact that the connotation of this verse's context is not relied upon, since the Glorious Book itself is not arranged in the order of its compilation, according to the consensus of all Muslim scholars, but according to the sequence of the revelation of its verses. As such, there are quite a few verses which give a meaning that contradicts their context. Take, for example, the Verse of Purification. The fact that the chapter where it exists deals with women is quite clear in restricting its connotation to the five individuals [men and women] who were covered with the mantle. Generally speaking, to interpret a verse in a way which contradicts its context does not in any way violate its miraculous aspect, it does not harm its eloquence, and it does not hurt to resort to it whenever irrefutable proofs demand it, Wassalamo Alaikom.

Sincerely,
Sh

²This is similar in meaning to the ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "You, folks of Quraysh, shall never cease feuding till Allāh sends you a man

the sincerity of whose faith He has tested to strike your necks with his sword, while you run away in fear like frightened cattle." Abu Bakr asked: "Is it I, O Messenger of Allāh?" He answered: "No." `Umer asked: "Is it I, O Messenger of Allāh?" He answered: "No; but it is he that mends the sandal." The narrator continues to say: "Ali then had in his hand the Prophet's sandal which he was mending for the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny." This ḥadīth has been recorded by many authors of books of traditions, and it is ḥadīth number 610 at the beginning of page 393, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*. Also similar to it is his saying, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Among you is a man who shall fight for the implementation of the Qur`ān just as I have fought for its revelation." Abu Bakr asked: "Am I the one?" He answered: "No." `Umer asked likewise, and the Prophet (ص) answered: "No, but it is the man who is inside mending the sandal," whereupon `Ali came out of the room carrying the Prophet's sandal after having finished mending it. This ḥadīth is quoted by Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal in his *Musnad* as transmitted by Abu Sa`īd, and it is narrated by al-Ḥakim in his *Al-Mustadrak*, Abu Ya`li in his *Musnad*, and by many authors of books of traditions. Al-Muttaqi al-Hindi quotes it from them on page 155 of the sixth volume of his book.

²What weight can a superficial interpretation have if it contradicts the spirit of the entire text?

LETTER 45
Muharram 6, 1330

**Resorting to Interpretation, Following in the Footsteps of
the Predecessors, is Unavoidable.**

Had it not been for the caliphate of the Righteous Caliphs, which is correct beyond any doubt, we would not have had any choice other than accepting your view and interpreting this verse and others according to your own judgement, but to cast doubts about the soundness of their caliphate, may Allāh be pleased with them, is out of the question. Resorting to interpretation, then, is unavoidable, since we have believed in them as well as in those who swore the oath of allegiance to them, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 46
Muharram 6, 1330

- I Believing in the Ancestors does not Require Interpretation**
- II Interpretation is Impossible**

The three righteous caliphs, may Allāh be pleased with them, are, indeed, the subject of the study and debate; to use such caliphate, however, to rebut our arguments is totally rejected.

1) To believe in those caliphs, as well as in those who swore allegiance to them, does not require interpreting the

arguments. In justifying their caliphate, you yourselves resort to interpretation, as we will clarify if necessary.

2) Interpreting the texts which we have stated to you is impossible; so is the case with what we have *not* stated yet, such as the Ghadīr's ḥadīth and that of the Will, particularly when backed by irrefutable traditions which support one another, the latter being sufficient by themselves to require reference to manifest texts. Whoever acquaints himself with the latter will find them irrefutable testimonials and unequivocal verdicts, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 47
Muharram 7, 1320

Requesting Testimonial Traditions

I wish you had stated those traditions supporting such texts and thereby complemented your research, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 48
Muharram 8, 1330

Forty Ahādīth Supporting the Texts

Consider forty such supporting *ahādīth*:

1) Consider the statement of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, while holding `Ali's neck, "This is the Imām of the righteous, the slayer of the debauchees; victorious is whoever supports him, forsaken (by Allāh) is whoever abandons him." He (ص) raised his voice while saying the last phrase. This is included by al-Hākīm as narrated by Jābir on page 129, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*,¹ where the author comments saying: "This is one ḥadīth the authenticity of which is attested to by its own chain of narrators, though both authors (of *sahīh* books) did not record it."

2) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "It has been revealed to me that `Ali has three exclusive merits: that he is the chief of the Muslims, the Imām of the righteous, and the leader of those whose foreheads radiate with the mark of faith." It is included by al-Hākīm at the beginning of page 138, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*² where the author comments: "This is one ḥadīth the accuracy of which is attested to by its own chain of narrators, though both authors (of the *sahīh* books) did not record it."

3) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "It has been revealed to me that `Ali is the chief of the Muslims, the *wali* of the pious, and the leader of those whose foreheads radiate with the mark of faith." It is recorded by Ibn al-Najjār]³ and many other authors of books of traditions.

4) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, to `Ali: "Welcome, chief of the Muslims, Imām of the pious!" It is included by Abu Na`īm in *Hilyat al-Awliyā`*.⁴

5) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "The first to enter through this door is the Imām of the pious, the chief of Muslims, the head of the religion, the seal of the *waṣīs*, and the leader of those whose foreheads radiate with the mark of faith," whereupon `Ali entered and he, peace be upon him and his progeny, stood up happily excited, hugged him and wiped his sweat saying: "You shall fulfill my covenant, convey my message, and after me clarify whatever seems to be ambiguous."⁵

6) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Allāh has promised me that `Ali is the standard of guidance, the Imām of whoever accepts my *wilāyat*, the light for whoever obeys me, and the word which I have mandated unto the pious."⁶ As you see, these six aḥādīth contain obvious texts regarding his imamate and the obligation to obey him, peace be upon him.

7) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, pointing to `Ali, "This is the first to have believed in me, the first to shake hands with me on the Day of Resurrection; he is the foremost friend, and he is the *fāriuq* of this nation who distinguishes between right and wrong; he is the chief of the believers."⁷

8) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O you group of the Anṣārs! Shall I lead you to that which, as long as you adhere to it, you shall never go astray? It is `Ali; love him as you love me, and respect him as you respect me, for Gabriel has commanded me to say so to you on behalf of Allāh, the Almighty, the Omniscient."⁸

9) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "I am the city of knowledge, and `Ali is its gate;

whoever aspires to attain knowledge, let him approach through the gate.”⁹

10) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “I am the house of wisdom and `Ali is its gate.”¹⁰

11) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “`Ali is the gateway of my knowledge, the one who is to explain to my nation after me what I have been sent with; loving him is a mark of genuine faith, and hating him is hypocrisy.”¹¹

12) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, to `Ali: “You shall clarify to my nation all matters wherein they differ.” This is recorded by al-Hākīm on page 122, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*¹² as reported by Anas. The author then comments: “This is an authentic ḥadīth according to the endorsement of both Shaykhs [Bukhāri and Muslim], although they did not quote it themselves.” In fact, whoever scrutinizes this ḥadīth and others similar to it will come to know that `Ali’s status with relevance to the Messenger of Allāh is similar to that of the Messenger of Allāh to the Almighty Himself, for Allāh says to His Messenger: “We have sent you Our revelations only so that you may clarify for them all the matters in which they dispute, and as guidance and mercy unto those who believe;” while in this ḥadīth the Messenger of Allāh (ص) tells `Ali: “You shall clarify to my nation all matters wherein they differ after me.”

13) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, as recorded by Ibn al-Sammāk from Abu Bakr, “`Ali’s status to me is similar unto that of mine to my Lord.”¹³

14) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, as recorded by al-Dār Qutni in *Al-Afrād* where the

author quotes Ibn `Abbās citing the Prophet saying: “Ali ibn Abu Tālib is (like) the gate of salvation to the Israelites; whoever enters through it becomes a true believer [mu'min], and whoever gets out of it becomes infidel.”¹⁴

15) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, on the day of `Arafāt during Hijjatul Wadā` [the farewell pilgrimage]: “Ali is of me, and I am of `Ali, and nobody pays my debts other than I or `Ali.”¹⁵

“It is the statement of a glorious Messenger empowered by the One Who manifests the Throne, Able, Obeyed: how trustworthy He is! Nay! Your fellow is not possessed at all.” (Qur`ān, 81:19-22)

“He does not speak out of his own personal inclination; it is but a revealed inspiration.”

(Qur`ān, 53:3-4)

So, whither are you going? And what shall you say about these clear arguments and explicit texts?

If you carefully scrutinize this much, examine the wisdom behind making such an announcement during the supreme pilgrimage in front of the witnesses, truth will then appear to you most manifestly. And if you examine his words how few, and their meaning how encompassing, you will then have a great reverence for him, for he has learned a great deal and digested and researched what he has learned. None other than `Ali remains to be worthy of discharging any responsibility. No wonder, then, that he, and only he, executes the Prophet's own will, taking his own position of leadership as vicegerent and vizier; praise be to Allāh Who has guided us to all this, for without Allāh's guidance, we would not have been thus guided.

16) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Whoever obeys me obeys Allāh, and whoever disobeys me disobeys Him; and whoever obeys `Ali obeys me, too; and whoever disobeys `Ali also disobeys me." This is recorded by al-Hākīm on page 121, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*, and by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs*. Both authors have relied on the authority of both Shaykhs to endorse this ḥadīth.

17) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O `Ali! Whoever abandons me abandons Allāh; and whoever abandons you abandons me, too." This is recorded by al-Hakim on page 124, Vol. 3, of his *Sahīh*, where he comments saying: "This ḥadīth is authentic through *isnad*, though the Shaykhs did not record it."

18) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, as quoted by Umm Salamah, "Whoever denounces `Ali denounces me, too," which is recorded by al-Hākīm at the beginning of page 121, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak* as ascertained by both Shaykhs, and it is narrated by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs* where the author testifies to its authenticity. It is recorded by Ahmed among the *ahādīth* narrated by Umm Salamah on page 323, Vol. 6, of his *Musnad*, and by al-Nisā'i on page 17 of *Al-Khasā'is al-Alawiyya*, in addition to many other traditionists. So is the statement of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, as included among the *ahādīth* narrated by `Amr ibn Shāsh thus: "Whoever harms `Ali harms me, too."¹⁶

19) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Whoever loves `Ali loves me, too; and whoever despises `Ali despises me, too." This ḥadīth is recorded by al-Hākīm who describes it as authentic on page 130, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, and it is narrated by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs*

where he admits reference to its authenticity for the same reason. Such is the case of `Ali's statement:¹⁷ "I swear by the One Who has cleft the seed [so that a plant may grow therefrom] and created the breeze from nothing, the Ummi Prophet (ﷺ) has promised me that nobody loves me except a true believer (*mu'min*), and nobody hates me except a hypocrite."

20) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O `Ali! You are a leader in this life and the life hereafter; whoever loves you loves me, too, and whoever loves me is loved by Allāh; your foe is my foe, and my foe is Allāh's foe; woe unto whoever despises you after me." This is recorded by al-Hākim at the beginning of page 128, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, and its authenticity is ascertained by both Shaykhs.²⁰

21) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O `Ali! Glad tidings to whoever loves and believes in you, and woe unto whoever hates you and tells lies about you." This is recorded by al-Hākim on page 135, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, where he comments saying: "This hadīth is authentic by way of its being consecutively reported (through *isnād*, consecutive reporting). Neither shaykh records it."

22) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Whoever wishes to live the way that I have lived and die the way that I shall die and reside in the Eternal Garden, which is promised to me by my Lord, let him accept `Ali as his/her *wali*, for surely he never gets you out of guidance, nor will he ever hurl you into misguidance."

23) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "I enjoin whoever believes and trusts in me to be

mindful of the *wilāyat* of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, for whoever accepts him as the *wali* accepts me as such, and whoever accepts me as the *wali* has indeed accepted Allāh as such; and whoever loves him loves me, and whoever loves me loves Allāh; and whoever hates him hates me, too, and whoever hates me hates Allāh, the Almighty, the Omniscient.”

24) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “Whoever is pleased to live my life and die my death, and then reside in the Garden of Eden, planted for me by my Lord, then let him take `Ali as the *wali* after me, and let him accept the authority of whoever `Ali places in charge, and let him follow the examples of my progeny after me, for they are my offspring: they are created out of my own mould and blessed with my understanding and knowledge; therefore, woe unto those who deny their favours from among my nation, who cut their ties with them; may Allāh never grant them my intercession.”

25) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “Whoever loves to live my life and die my death and enter the Garden my Lord has promised me, the Garden of Eternity, then let him take `Ali and his descendants after him as his *walis*, for they shall never take you out of guidance, nor shall they ever drag you into misguidance.”²¹

26) At the beginning of page 156, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, al-Daylami quotes Ammar citing the Messenger of Allāh (ص) telling `Ammār the following: “O `Ammār! If you see `Ali walking on one path while other people walk on another, walk with `Ali and leave the people, for he shall never lead you to destruction, nor shall he ever take you out of right guidance.”

27) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, according to one *hadīth* narrated by Abu Bakr, “My

hand and `Ali's are equal when it comes to justice." This is hadīth 2539 recorded on page 153, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*.

28) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O Fātima! Are you not pleased that Allāh, the Unique, the Sublime, has looked unto the inhabitants of the earth and chose from among them two men: one of them is your father and the other is your husband?"²²

29) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "I am the Warner, and `Ali is the Guide; through you, O `Ali, shall guidance be attained after me." This is recorded by al-Daylami who quotes Ibn `Abbās, and it is hadīth 2631 on page 157, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*.

30) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O `Ali! Nobody is permitted to remain in the state of *janāba* other than I and you."²³ Likewise is the hadīth recorded by al-Ṭabrāni as quoted by Ibn Hajar in his *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa* as narrated by Umm Salamah, al-Bazzār, and Sa'd; so, refer to hadīth 13 of *Al-Arba'īm al-Nawawiyya* which he quotes in Chapter 9. The latter quotes the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "Nobody is permitted to be in the state of *janāba* in this mosque except I and `Ali."

31) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "I and this (meaning `Ali) are the Proofs unto my nation on the Day of Judgement." This is recorded by al-Khaṭīb as narrated by Anas. How could the father of al-Ḥassan (ع) be Proof just like the Prophet (ص) was, had he not been his vicegerent and successor?

32) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "It is written on the gate of Paradise: `There is no god but Allāh, Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, `Ali is the Brother of the Messenger of Allāh.'"²⁴

33) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "It is written on the Throne's leg: `There is no god but Allāh, Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, I (God) have supported him (Muḥammad) through `Ali, and I have aided him through `Ali."

34) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Whoever wishes to discern Noah's determination, Adam's knowledge, Ibrāhīm's clemency, Moses' discretion, Christ's asceticism, then let him look unto `Ali." This is recorded by al-Bayhaqi in his *Sahīh* and by Imām Aḥmed ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*.²⁵

35) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O `Ali! There is a resemblance in you to Jesus (ع) who was hated by the Jews to the extent that the latter even cast doubts about his mother's honour, and loved by the Christians to the extent that they attributed to him a status which is not his."

36) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "The foremost (among believers) are three: Joshua son of Nūn [of the tribe of Ephraim—tr.] who was the foremost to believe in Moses, the believer implied in Sūrat Yāsīn [Chapter 36 of the Holy Qur'ān] who was the foremost to believe in Jesus, and `Ali ibn Abu Tālib who was the foremost in believing in Muḥammad (ص)." ²⁶

37) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "The foremost in testifying (to the Prophets' truth)

are three: Habīb al-Najjār, the believer implied in Sūrat Yasīn, who said: `O my people! Follow the Messengers (of God);' Izekiel [whose name means "Strength of God"—tr.], the believer from the family of Pharaoh, who said: `Do you intend to kill a man just for saying that his Lord is Allāh?,' and `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, who is superior to all of them."²⁷

38) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, to `Ali: "The nation will turn treacherous to you; you shall live adhering to my faith and will be murdered for safeguarding it; whoever loves you loves me, too, and whoever hates you hates me, too, and this (`Ali's beard) will be drenched with blood from this (`Ali's head)."²⁸ `Ali (ع) himself has said: "One of the Prophet's predictions is that the nation will be treacherous to me after his demise." Ibn Abbas has quoted the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, telling `Ali, "You will certainly encounter a great deal of hardship after me;"²⁹ `Ali inquired: "Shall I be able to keep my faith intact?" and the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, answered him in the affirmative.

39) Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Among you is one who will fight for its (Qur'ān's) interpretation just as I fought for its revelation." The audience was very excited. Among them were Abu Bakr and `Umer. Abu Bakr asked: "Am I the one?" and the Prophet's answer was negative. `Umer inquired: "Is it I?" and the Prophet (ص) answered: "No; but it is the one who is mending the shoes," meaning thereby `Ali; therefore, we visited `Ali to convey the good news to him, but he did not even raise his head, as if he had already heard it from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny."³⁰ Similar narrative is the hadīth narrated by Abu Ayyūb al-Ansāri during `Umer's caliphate. According to al-Hakim, who relies on two references which he indicates on page 139 and the page that follows it, Vol. 3,

of his *Mustadrak*, `Umer has said that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered those who reneged from their faith, and who dissented, to be fought. Ibn `Asākir, as indicated in ḥadīth 2588 on page 155, Vol. 6 of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, states that `Ammār ibn Yāsir has said that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said, "O `Ali! The oppressive gang will fight you; but you are on the right track; whoever refrains from supporting you is not of me." Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri, as al-Daylami is quoted at the close of page 155, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, has quoted the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "I swear by the One in whose hands my life is placed that among you is a man who shall fight after me for the interpretation of the Qur`ān just as I fought the polytheists for its revelation." Muhammad ibn `Ubaydullāh ibn Abu Rāfi`, as indicated by al-Ṭabrāni in his *Mujma` al-Kabīr* and indicated on page 155, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, has quoted his father and grandfather Abu Rāfi` saying that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has addressed him thus: "O Abu Rāfi`! A group of people shall fight `Ali after me; Allāh has made mandated that they should be fought. Whoever is unable to fight them with his hands, let him fight them with his tongue; if he still is unable to do so, then by his heart." Al-Akhdar al-Anṣārī³¹ has quoted the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "I fight for the revelation of the Qur`ān, while `Ali fights for its interpretation."

40) He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "O `Ali! I am superior to you due to my being a Prophet, while you are superior to all other people due to seven merits: You are the foremost among them to believe in Allāh, the most just in fulfilling Allāh's Promise, the most obedient to the Commandments of Allāh, the most equitable, the most fair in dealing with the public, the most far-sighted in all issues, and

the one who enjoys the highest status in the sight of Allāh.” Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri quotes the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: “O `Ali! You possess seven qualities about which nobody can dispute with you: You are the first to truly believe in Allāh, the most just in fulfilling Allāh's Promise, the most obedient to Allāh's Commandments, the most compassionate to the public, the most informed of all issues, and the highest among them in status.”³²

There is no room here to quote all such traditions which, as a whole, support one another and are all indicative of one meaning, and that is: `Ali is second only to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, in faring with this nation, and that he is next only to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, in leading it. These traditions convey such a meaning, even if their texts are not consecutively reported, and this much should suffice as an irrefutable proof, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is *hadīth* number 2527 of the ones cited in *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 153, Vol. 6, and it is quoted by al-Tha`labi from Abu Tharr when the author attempts to interpret the verse of *wilāyat* in his book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*.

²It is also quoted by al-Barudi, Ibn Qanī, Abu Na`īm, and al-Bazzār. It is *hadīth* 2628 of the ones cited in *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 157, Vol. 6.

³It is *hadīth* 2630 of the ones cited in *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 157, Vol. 6.

⁴It is news item number 11 of the ones Ibn Abul Hadīd states on page 450, Vol. 2, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, and it is

hadīth number 2627 of the ones cited in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 157, Vol. 6.

⁵This is quoted by Abu Na`īm in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā'* from Anas and transmitted in detail by Ibn Abul Hadīd on page 450, Vol. 2, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*; so, refer to news item 9 on that page.

⁶This is quoted by Abu Na`īm in his *Hilyat al-Awliya'* from one *hadīth* narrated by Abu Barzah al-Aslami and Anas ibn Mālik, and it is transmitted by the Mu`tazilite scholar on page 449, Vol. 2, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*; so, refer to the third news item on that page.

⁷This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Kabīr* from the *ahādīth* narrated by Salmān and Abu Tharr. It is quoted by al-Bayhaqi in his *Sunan*, and by Ibn `Uday in his *Al-Kāmil*; it also is *hadīth* number 2608 of the ones included in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, Vol. 6, page 156.

⁸This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Kabīr*, and it is *hadīth* number 2625 of the ones included in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, Vol. 6, page 157, and the tenth on page 450, Vol. 2, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah* by Ibn Abul Hadīd; so, look and see how he has made their right guidance conditional upon upholding `Ali; thus, those who do not do so would certainly stray. See how he has commanded them to love him just as they love the Prophet (ص), and to respect him in the same way they respect the Prophet (ص). This is so only because of his being his successor, the one to take charge after him. If you consider the verse "Gabriel has commanded me to tell you so," then truth becomes manifest to you.

⁹This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Kabīr* from Ibn `Abbās as stated on page 107 of *Al-Jāmi` al-Saghīr* by Sayyūti. It is also quoted by al-Hākim in *Manāqib `Ali*, page 226, Vol. 3 of his authentic *Mustadrak* from two sources: one of them is Ibn `Abbās from yet two authentic sources, and the other from Jabir ibn `Abdullāh al-Anṣāri. He has brought forth irrefutable proofs for its

authenticity. Imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal ibn al-Siddīq al-Maghāribi, of Cairo, has dedicated an entire book only to prove the authenticity of this hadīth, and he has crammed it with information and titled it *Fath al-Malak al-`Ali Bisihhati Hadīth Bābul `Ilm `Ali*, printed in Egypt at the Islamic Press. It is worthy of the attention of researchers, for it contains invaluable information. Views of the Naṣibis and their likes are worthless *vis-a-vis* this hadīth that is as commonly used as a popular proverb by both the elite and the common residents of the urban districts and the countryside. We have even considered their criticism, and we have found it to be sheer submission to sentiment, lacking in proof, full of extreme fanaticism, as declared by al-Hāfīz Salahud-Dīn al-`Alā'i when he quoted the false allegation of al-Thahbi and others who charge that it is incorrect. He comments saying: "These have not produced any proof for their claim except its being a fabrication so that it may not indict them."

¹⁰This is quoted by al-Tirmithi in his *Sahīh*, in addition to Ibn Jarīr, and from them it is quoted by several authorities such as al-Muttaqi al-Hindī on page 401, Vol. 6, of his *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, where he quotes Ibn Jarīr saying: "This is a tradition of whose authenticity we are quite sure." It is also quoted from al-Tirmithi by Jalalud-Dīn al-Sayyūti while discussing the "hamza" in language in his *Jāmi` al-Jawāmi`* and *Al-Jāmi` al-Saghīr*; so, refer to page 170, Vol. 1, of *Al-Jāmi` al-Saghīr*.

¹¹This is quoted by al-Daylami from Abu Tharr's hadīth as stated on page 156, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*

¹²Ibid.

¹³This is quoted by Ibn Hajar in the fifth *maqṣad* of the *maqāsid* of chapter 14 of the ones discussed in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Sawāiq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to page 106 of the same.

¹⁴This hadīth is number 2528 among the ones cited in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 153, Vol. 6.

¹⁵This is quoted by Ibn Majah in his chapter on the virtues of the Prophet's companions on page 92, Vol. 1, of his *Sunan*, by al-Tirmithi and al-Nisā'i in their respective *sahīhs*, and it is hadīth number 2531 among the ones cited in *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, page 153, Vol. 6. It is also quoted by Imām Ahmed on page 164, Vol. 4, of his *Musnad* from hadīth narrated from various authentic sources by Janādah. Suffices you the fact that it is quoted from a chain of narrators which includes: Yahya ibn Adam, Isra'il ibn Yunus and his grandfather Abu Ishāq al-Subay`i who quotes Habashi. All of these men are authorities relied upon by both Shaykhs in their respective *sahīhs*. Whoever studies this hadīth in Ahmed's *Musnad* will come to know that it was said during the Farewell Pilgrimage which shortly preceded the departure of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, from this vanishing world. Prior to that, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, had sent Abu Bakr to recite ten verses of Sūrat Barā'a to the residents of Mecca, then he, according to Imām Ahmed on page 151, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*, said to him: "Go see Abu Bakr before he discharges his mission, and as soon as you meet him, take the message from him, then carry it yourself to the people of Mecca and read it to them." `Ali met Abu Bakr at the Juhfa and took the tablets from him. Abu Bakr went back to the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, and asked him: "O Messenger of Allāh! Have you received any message from Allāh against me?" He answered: "No, but Gabriel has come to me and told me that nobody conveys Allāh's Message except I or a man of my own family." Another narration, recorded by Ahmed on page 510, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad* from `Ali (ع), says that when the Prophet dispatched him with Sūrat Barā'a, he said to him: "Either I should carry it, or you." `Ali said: "If it cannot be avoided at all, then I will go." He (ص) said: "Then proceed, for Allāh will make your tongue firm, and He will guide your heart."

¹⁶You have come to know by now the hadīth narrated by `Amr ibn Shāsh with our commentary in Letter 36.

¹⁷As quoted by Muslim in his chapter on *imān*, page 46, Vol. 1, of his *Sahīh*. Ibn `Abd al-Birr explains its gist while narrating `Ali's biography in the *Isti`āb* from a group of

companions. Buraydah's ḥadīth has been quoted in Letter No. 36 above. His ḥadīth, peace be upon him and his progeny, "O Allāh! Befriend whoever befriends `Ali, and be the enemy of whoever sets himself as the enemy of `Ali" is consecutively reported (*mutawātir*), as admitted by the author of *Al-Fatāwa al-Ḥamādiyya* in his treatise titled "Al-Salāt al-Fākhira fil Ahādīth al-Mutawātirā]."

¹⁸Narrated, through al-Azhar, by `Abdul-Razzāq, Mu`ammar, al-Zuhri, `Ubaydullah, and Ibn `Abbās, each from the other, and all are reliable authorities. For this reason, al-Ḥākim, having labelled the ḥadīth as "*sahīh*" because of its endorsement by both Shaykhs, says: "Abul-Azhar, according to their consensus view, is trustworthy, and if authorities unanimously agree on the authenticity of one ḥadīth, then it has to be held authentic," then he continues to say: "I have heard Abu `Abdullāh al-Qarashi saying that he heard Ahmed ibn Yahya al-Ḥalwāni saying: `When Abul-Azhar came from San`ā and started narrating this ḥadīth to the people in Baghdād, Yahya ibn Ma`īn rejected it. When he opened his place to the public, as usual, he inquired about the Nisabūri writer who quotes `Abdul-Razzāq stating such ahādīth, Abul-Azhar stood up and said that it was he. Yahya ibn Ma`īn laughed at his statement, stood up, and brought him to sit closer to him and inquired of him about how I personally came to be the only one who heard such ḥadīth from `Abdul-Razzāq. I told him that I had just come from San`ā, and when I bade him farewell, he told me that he owed me a unique ḥadīth which nobody else had ever heard, and by Allāh it was this ḥadīth verbatim. Yahya ibn Ma`īn then believed him and apologized to him."

¹⁹We have quoted this ḥadīth in Letter No. 10 above.

²⁰We have quoted this ḥadīth, too, in Letter No. 10; so, refer to our commentary about it and about the one that precedes it.

²¹Refer to our comment on this ḥadīth and the one that precedes it in our Letter No. 10.

²²This is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 129, Vol. 3, of his authentic *Al-Mustadrak*, and it is narrated by quite a few authors of books and traditions, all testifying to its authenticity.

²³Refer to our comment on this ḥadīth in Letter No. 34, and also scrutinize the books of traditions to which we have referred.

²⁴This is quoted by al-Tabrāni in his *Awsat*, and by al-Khatīb in his *Al-Muttafaq wal-Muftaraq*, as stated at the beginning of page 159, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. We have quoted it in Letter No. 34 and commented on it in a way which hopefully benefits the researcher.

²⁵This is transmitted from both of them by Abul-Hadīd in the fourth news item of his news to which he has referred on page 449, Vol. 2, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*. It is also quoted by Imām al-Rāzi while discussing the meaning of the verse of Mubāhila in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, p. 288, Vol. 2, taking for granted the authenticity of this ḥadīth according to the views of those who act upon it as well as those who do not. This ḥadīth is also quoted by Ibn Baṭṭah from Ibn `Abbās's ḥadīth, as stated on page 34 of *Fath al-Malik al-'Ali Biṣiḥhati Bābil 'Ilm 'Ali* by Imām Aḥmed ibn al-Sādiq al-Ḥasani al-Maghāribi of Cairo. Among those who have admitted that `Ali is the one who is acquainted with the secrets of all prophets combined is the Shaykh of all men of knowledge, namely Muḥiyud-Dīn ibn al-'Arabi, as quoted by the learned al-Sha`rāni in Section 32 of his book *Al-Yawaqīt wal-Jawāhir*, page 172.

²⁶This is quoted by al-Tabrāni and Ibn Mardawayh who rely on the authority of Ibn `Abbās. It is also quoted by al-Daylami from `Āysha, and it is one of the lengthy traditions.

²⁷This is quoted by Abu Na`īm and Ibn `Asākir from Abu Layla, and quoted also by al-Najjār from Ibn `Abbās; so, refer to ahādīth 30 and 31 of the forty ahādīth cited by Ibn Hajar in Part Two, Section 9, of his *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa*, at the conclusion of page 74 and the page following it.

²⁸This is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 122, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak* where the author admits its authenticity. Al-Thahbi quotes it in his own *Talkhīs*, admitting its authenticity.

²⁹This ḥadīth and the one succeeding it, i.e. Ibn `Abbās's ḥadīth, are quoted by al-Hākīm on page 140, Vol. 3, of his *Mustadrak*, and al-Thahbi quotes him in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*. Both authors admit the authenticity of this ḥadīth due to its endorsement by both Shaykhs.

³⁰This is quoted by al-Hākīm on page 122, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, saying that it is an authentic ḥadīth according to its endorsement by both Shaykhs who have not included it in their books. Al-Thahbi has admitted its authenticity for the same reason when he quoted it in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*. Imām Aḥmed has produced it from Abu Sa`īd on pages 82 and 33, Vol. 3, of his *Musnad*, and al-Bayhaqī has quoted it in *Shu`ab al-Imān*. Imām Aḥmed has included Abu Sa`īd's ḥadīth on pages 82 and 33, Vol. 3, of his *Musnad*, and al-Bayhaqī quotes it in his *Shu`ab al-Imān*, Sa`īd ibn Mansūr in his *Sunan*, Abu Na`īm in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā`*, and Abu Ya`li in his *Sunan* numbering it 2585, page 155, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*.

³¹His name is Ibn Abul-Akhdar. Ibn al-Sakan mentions him and quotes this ḥadīth in his regard from al-Hārith ibn Ḥaṣīrah from Jābir al-Ju`fi from Imām al-Bāqir from his father Zaynul-`Abidīn, peace be upon them, from al-Akhdar from the Prophet (ص). Ibn al-Sakan says: "He is not quite famous among the Prophet's companions, and his traditions ought to be verified." This is quoted by al-Asqalāni in his biography of al-Akhdar in *Al-Iṣābah*. Al-Dar Qutni has produced this ḥadīth in his *Ifrād*, saying: "This ḥadīth is narrated only by Jābir al-Ju`fi, who is a Rafizi."

³²Abu Na`īm has quoted it among the traditions reported by Ma`āth, as well as the ḥadīth succeeding it, that is, that of Abu Sa`īd, in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā`*, and they are on page 156, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*.

LETTER 49
Muharram 11, 1330

- I Admitting `Ali's Merits,**
II Such Merits do not Necessitate his Caliphate.

1) Imām Abu `Abdullah Ahmed ibn Hanbal has said: "Nobody among the companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has possessed as many virtues as `Ali ibn Abu Tālib has."¹ Ibn `Abbās has said, "No verses of the Book of Allāh have descended in honour of any man [besides the Prophet] as much as they have in honour of `Ali."² On another occasion, he has said, "As many as three hundred verses of the Glorious Book of Allāh, the Sublime, have been revealed in praise of `Ali;" and yet in another instance he has said,³ "Whenever Allāh reveals 'O ye who believe....,' `Ali is implied as their prince and dignitary; and Allāh even rebuked the followers of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, on several occasions, in His precious Book while always speaking well of `Ali." `Abdullah ibn Ayyāsh ibn Abu Rabī`ah has said, "Ali possessed a very sharp edge in knowledge; he has the seniority in embracing Islam; he is the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, and he is the *faqīh* of his Sunnah, the hope for victory during wartime, and the most generous in giving."⁴ Imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal was asked once about `Ali and Mu`āwiyah; he said:⁵ "Ali used to have quite a few enemies. His enemies looked for something whereby they could find fault with him. Having found none, they came to a man [Mu`āwiyah] who had fought and killed him, and they praised that man only out of their spite of `Ali." Ismā`īl the judge, al-Nisā'i, Abu `Ali al-Nisabūri and many others have said that nobody, among all the companions of the Prophet (ص), was praised as much as `Ali was.

2) There is no argument about your point, yet an argument is raised if you claim that the Prophet (ص), during his lifetime, had promised him the caliphate. All these texts are not bound proofs to support such a claim; they simply enumerate the imām's attributes and virtues, and the number of such texts is indeed high. We believe that he, may Allāh glorify his countenance, was worthy of all of them and of even more, and I am sure you have come across several times as many such texts suggesting his nomination for the caliphate. Yet a nomination is not akin to a binding pledge for caliphate, as you know, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 50 Muḥarram 13, 1330

Why Interpret Texts on His Behalf as Indicative of His Imāmate

Anyone like you, who is deep in thinking, gifted with a far insight, an authority on linguistic sources and derivatives, aware of its meanings and connotations, deriving guidance from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, believing in his wisdom and conclusive prophethood, appreciative of his deeds and statements ("He does not speak of his own inclinations (Qur'ān, 53:3)," certainly cannot miss the gist of such texts, nor do their conclusions, which are derived from logic and common sense, remain secret to him. It is not possible that you, the recognized authority on Arabic (i.e. *athbāt*⁷) that you are, fail to perceive that these texts have all granted `Ali a very sublime status, one which Allāh Almighty and His Prophets do not grant except to the successors of such Prophets, to the

ones they trust most to take charge of their religion, to the custodians of such religion. If they do not explicitly indicate the caliphate for `Ali, they undoubtedly hint to it, leading to such conclusion by necessity. Such an obligation is quite obvious from their precise meaning. The Master of Prophets (ص) is above granting such a lofty status to anyone other than his successor, his vicegerent. Yet whoever deeply scrutinizes the texts concerning `Ali (ع) and very carefully and fairly digests their implications will find their vast majority aiming at endorsing his imāmate, indicative of it either through explicit announcements, such as the previously quoted ones, and such as the Covenant of al-Ghadīr, or by virtue of necessity, such as the ones stated in Letter No. 48. Take, for example, his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “`Ali is with the Qur`ān and the Qur`ān is with `Ali; they both shall never separate from each other till they meet me by the Pool [of Kawthar],”⁸ and his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “`Ali to me is like the head to the body,”⁹ and his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, according to a tradition narrated by `Abdul Raḥmān ibn `Awf,¹⁰ “I swear by the One in Who hold my life, you will have to uphold the prayers, pay the *zakat*, or else I shall send you a man of my own self, or like my own self,” then the Prophet (ص) took `Ali's hand and said: “This is he;” up to the end of countless such texts. This is an obvious benefit to which I attract the attention of all seekers of the truth, one which unveils what is ambiguous, delves deeply in independent research. He (ص) has only followed what he himself comprehends of the moral obligations of such sacred texts, without being overtaken by his own personal emotions or inclinations, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹Al-Hākim has quoted it on page 107 of his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from *Al-Mustadrak*. Al-Thahbi did not comment on it in his book *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*.

²Ibn `Asākir, as well as many other authors of books of traditions, have all quoted it.

³From one ḥadīth quoted by al-Ṭabrāni, Ibn Abu Hātim, and many other authors of books of tradition. It is transmitted by Ibn Hajar who also quotes the three aḥādīth that precede it in Section 3, Chapter 9, page 76, of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

⁴This is quoted from Ibn `Ayyāsh by chroniclers and authors of sunan, and it exists where *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa* has already referred.

⁵As quoted by al-Salafī in his *Tayyūriyyāt*, and it is transmitted by Ibn Hajar where we have indicated a short while ago while referring to *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

⁶This is well-known about them. Ibn Hajar has copied it at the beginning of Section 2, Chapter 9, page 72, of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*.

⁷"Athbāt" is the plural of "thabat," and "asnād" is the plural of "sanad," and the latter means "ḥujjah," i.e. proof or authority.

⁸This is quoted by al-Hākim on page 124, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, as well as by al-Thahbi in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*. Both authors testify to its authenticity. It is one of the few elaborate aḥādīth. Anyone who is ignorant of the fact that `Ali is with the Qur`ān and the Qur`ān is with `Ali, after having studied the authentic traditions dealing with the Two Weighty Things, i.e. the Book and the `Itrat (Progeny), he should be referred to what we have quoted in this regard in our Letter No. 8 above, and let him recognize the rights of the Imam of the Prophet's Progeny, and their undisputed and undoubted chief.

⁹This is quoted by al-Khatīb in the ahādīth narrated by al-Barā', and by al-Daylami in those narrated by Ibn `Abbās. It is transmitted by Ibn Ḥajar on page 75 of his *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to hadīth number 35 of the forty ahādīth which he quotes in Section Two, Chapter 9, of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*.

¹⁰It is hadīth number 6133, page 405, Vol. 6, in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. Suffices you for a proof that `Ali's soul is akin to that of the Prophet (ص) to study the verse of Mubāhila according to the explanations stated by al-Rāzi in his *tafsir* titled *Mafatīh al-Ghayb*, page 488, Vol. 2, and refer also to what we have mentioned while dealing with this verse.

LETTER 51
Muḥarram 14, 1330

Rebutting the Arguments Through Similar Ones

Their debaters may refute your claim by citing texts which enumerate the virtues of the three righteous caliphs, and by citing other texts praising the posterity from the Muhājirūn (Meccan Immigrants) and the Anṣār (Medenite Supporters); so, what would you say to that?

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 52
Muḥarram 15, 1330

Rejecting the Rebuttal's Premises

We believe in the virtues of all posterity since the time of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, may Allāh be pleased with them and they with Him, and these are beyond count or reckoning. Certain verses of the Book (Qur`ān), in addition to a few Sunni *ṣaḥīḥ* books, must suffice you for a testimony in this regard. We have scrutinized these, too. We have not found them at all, and Allāh knows best, to be in contradiction to the texts that praise `Ali (ع), or even in any way eligible to disqualify him [from caliphate]. Yes, our opponents may stand alone in narrating the *aḥādīth* which are not authentic according to our sources. Their use of such *aḥādīth* to disprove our views is rejected and is not expected from any unbiased arbitrator. We by no means can take them into

serious consideration. Do you not see how we do not argue by quoting the texts narrated only by our own sources? On the contrary, we base our arguments on their own narrations regarding events such as the Ghadīr incident or the like. But we have scrutinized the texts pertaining to these virtues recorded by their sources, and we could not find any clues in them opposing such caliphate, nor do they contain anything suggesting it; therefore, they have not been relied upon by anyone to prove the legitimacy of the caliphate of the three righteous caliphs, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 53
Muḥarram 16, 1330

Requesting the Ḥadīth Pertaining to the Ghadīr Incident

You have repeatedly referred to the Ghadīr incident. Please narrate its story from Sunni sources so that we may look into it, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
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LETTER 54
Muḥarram 18, 1330

Glitters of Aḥādīth Relevant to the Ghadīr Incident

Relying on the consensus of narrators of ḥadīth, al-Ṭabrānī and many others¹ have quoted Zayd ibn Arqam saying:

“The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, once delivered a sermon at Ghadīr Khumm under the shade of a few trees saying, ‘O people! It seems to me that soon I will be called upon and will respond to the call.² I have my responsibility³ and you have yours;⁴ so, what do you say?’ They said: ‘We bear witness that you have conveyed the Message, struggled and advised [the nation]; therefore, may Allāh reward you with the best of His rewards.’ He asked them: ‘Do not you also bear witness that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger, that His Paradise is just and that His Fire is just, that death is just, that the life after death is just, that the Hour will undoubtedly approach, and that Allāh shall bring the dead to life from their graves?’ They said: ‘Yes, indeed, we do bear witness to all of that.’ He said: ‘O Mighty Lord! Bear witness that they have.’ Then he said: ‘O people! Allāh is my Master, and I am the *mawla* (master) of the believers. I have more authority over their lives than they themselves have;⁵ therefore, to whomsoever I have been a *mawla*, this (‘Ali) is his *mawla*;⁶ O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be an enemy of whoever sets himself 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 Baṣra to Ṣan‘ā; 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 Allāh, the Omniscient, the Sublime, one end of which is in Allāh’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 are my Ahl al-Bayt, for the most

Gracious and Knowing has informed me that they both shall never part from each other till they join me at the Pool.”⁷

In a section dealing with `Ali's virtues in *Al-Mustadrak*, the author indicates that Zayd ibn Arqam⁸ is quoted through two sources both of which are held reliable by both Shaykhs: al-Hākīm [one of such sources] says that when the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, returned from his Farewell Pilgrimage, he camped at Ghadīr Khumm and ordered the believers to sweep the area under a few huge trees where a pulpit of camel litters was made for him. He stood and said: “It seems as if I have been called upon and responded to the call, and I enjoin you to look after both the Book of Allāh and my Progeny; see how you fare with them after me, for they shall never part from each other till they join me at the Pool.” Then he added: “Allāh, the Dear and Mighty, is my Master, and I am the master of every believer,” then he took `Ali by the hand and said: “To whomsoever I have been a master, this `Ali is [henceforth] his master; O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be the enemy to whoever antagonizes him.” The author quotes this lengthy *ḥadīth* in its entirety. In his *Talkhis*, al-Thahbi quotes it without commenting on it. Al-Hākīm, too, quotes it as narrated by Zayd ibn Arqam in his *Al-Mustadrak*, admitting its authenticity. In spite of his intolerance, al-Thahbi admits the same in his *Talkhīs*, to which you may refer.

Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal has quoted the same *ḥadīth* as narrated by Zayd ibn Arqam thus:

“We were in the company of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, when he camped in a valley called Wadī Khumm, and he ordered everyone to gather for prayers in midday heat. He then

delivered a sermon to us under the shade of a robe over a rush tree [*Juncus spinosus*] to protect him from the heat of the sun. He said: `Do you know—or do you bear witness—that I have more authority over a believer's life than the believer himself has?' They answered: `Yes, indeed, you do.' He said: `Whosoever accepts me as his *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*; O Lord! Befriend whosoever befriends `Ali and be the enemy of whomsoever opposes `Ali.'”

Al-Nisā'i quotes Zayd ibn Arqam saying that when the Prophet (ص) returned from the Farewell Pilgrimage, and having reached Ghadīr Khumm, he ordered the ground under a few huge trees to be swept clean. He announced: “It looks like I have been invited [to my Lord's presence] and I have accepted the invitation, and I am leaving with you the Two Weighty Things, one of them is bigger than the other: the Book of Allāh and my Progeny, my Household; so, see how you succeed me in faring with both of them, for they shall never part from each other till they join me at the Pool.” Then he added: “Allāh is my Master, and I am the master (*mawla*) of every believer.” Taking `Ali's hand, he added saying, “To whomsoever I have been a master, this `Ali is his master; O Lord! Befriend those who befriend him, and be the enemy of all those who antagonize him.” Abul-Tufail says: “I asked Zayd: `Have you heard these words of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, yourself?’”⁹ He answered that all those who were there under the huge trees had seen the Prophet with their own eyes and heard him with their own ears. This ḥadīth is recorded by Muslim in a chapter on the attributes of `Ali in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from several different narrators ending with Zayd ibn Arqam, but he abridged it and cut it short—and so do some people behave.

Imām Aḥmed has recorded this ḥadīth from al-Barā' ibn `Āzib¹⁰ from two avenues saying; it reads: “We were in

the company of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) when we camped at Ghadīr Khumm. The call for congregational prayers was made. The site of two trees was chosen, and it was swept clean. He performed the noon-time prayers then took `Ali by the hand and asked the crowd: `Do you not know that I have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have?' They answered: `Yes, we do.' He asked: `Do you know that I have more authority over every believer than the believer himself has?' They answered in the affirmative; then he took `Ali's hand and said: `Whoever has accepted me as his master, this `Ali is his master; O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him and be the enemy of whoever chooses to be his enemy.' `Umer met him immediately following that and said to him: `Congratulations to you, son of Abu Tālib! You have become, at dawn and at sunset, the master of every believing man and woman.'"

Al-Nisā'i has quoted `Āyesha daughter of Sa`d saying that she heard her father saying: "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, on the Day of Juhfa, when he took `Ali's hand and delivered a sermon, praised and adored Allāh, then said: `O people! I am your *wali*.' They said: `You have said the truth.' Then he raised `Ali's hand and said: `This is my *wali* unto you to discharge the responsibilities of my religion on my own behalf, and I support whoever supports him and am the enemy of whosoever chooses to be his enemy.'"

Sa`d is also quoted saying: "We were in the company of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). When he arrived at Ghadīr Khumm, those who went ahead of him returned to join him, while he waited for those who lagged behind, till all people assembled. Then he said: `O people! Who is your *wali*?' They answered: `Allāh and His Messenger.' Then he took `Ali's hand, made him rise and said: `Whoever has taken Allāh and His Messenger as his *wali*, this (`Ali) is his *wali*; O Lord!

Befriend whoever befriends him and be the enemy of whoever chooses to be his enemy.”

The books of traditions recording this incident are numerous and cannot be all cited here. They all contain explicit texts indicating that Ali is the Prophet's vicegerent and successor, just as al-Faḍl ibn al-Abbās Abu Lahab has said:¹¹

The one to be recognized as the Vicegerent, generation after generation,
After Muḥammad, is `Ali; for he was his companion in every occasion.

Sincerely,
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¹Many renowned authorities have admitted its authenticity, so much so that even Ibn Hajar stated the same, quoting al-Ṭabrānī and others, in the *shubḥa* (allegation) number 11 of the ones which he enumerates on page 25, Section 5, Chapter One, of his book *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muḥriqa*.

²He has eulogized his own pure soul simply to attract their attention to the fact that time had come to bring his mission to perfection, necessitating the appointment of his successor, and that he is unable to postpone doing so for fear he might be called upon [i.e. die] before discharging such mission which he is to bring to perfection, a mission that is indispensable to his nation.

³Since the appointment of his brother weighs heavily against those who compete, envy, create dissension and hypocrisy, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, desired, before making such an announcement, to first apologize to them in the hope that that might touch and unify their hearts and in apprehension of their speeches and deeds; he said: “And I am responsible,” so that they might come to know that he receives orders, and that he is

responsible to discharge them; therefore, he simply has to do so. Imām al-Wahidi, in his book *Asbābul Nuzul*, quotes Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri saying: "The verse 'O Messenger! Convey that which has been revealed unto you from your Lord' was revealed on Ghadīr Khumm day in reference to `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)."

⁴By saying "You, too, are responsible," he, peace be upon him and his progeny, may have implied, as quoted by al-Daylami and others and stated in *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa* and other books from Ibn Sa`īd, that they should follow in their footsteps, since they are responsible regarding `Ali's *wilāyat*. Imām al-Wahidi has said: "They are responsible regarding the *wilāyat* of `Ali and Ahl al-Bayt." Thus, the purpose of his saying "and you, too, are responsible" is to threaten those who would dispute the authority of his *wali* and *wasi*.

⁵Many have contemplated upon this sermon, giving it due attention, and they have come to know that its gist is nothing other than a reference to the fact that `Ali's *wilāyat* is as much a root of the faith as his own responsibility as the Imām, for the Prophet (ص) first put the question: "Do not you bear witness that there is no god but Allāh, and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger?" Then he said: "The Hour is approaching; there is no doubt about it, and Allāh shall certainly bring to life those who are in the graves," following that with a statement in which he mentioned the *wilāyat* so that it would be understood that the latter bears the same significance like the matters about which he has asked them and to which they have agreed. This is obvious to all the discreet who are familiar with the methods and objectives of speech.

⁶His statement: "I am the mawla" is an outspoken testimony to a significant fact. The meaning of "mawla" is: one who is "awla," foremost in status, superior. Thus, the meaning of his statement is: "Allāh is superior to me, and I am superior to the believers, and whoever considers me to be superior to him must also consider `Ali as such."

⁷This wording of the hadīth is quoted by al-Ṭabrāni, Ibn Jarīr, al-Hākim al-Tirmithi, from Zayd ibn Arqam. It is transmitted by Ibn Hajar from al-Ṭabrāni and others in this exact wording, without questioning its authenticity; so, refer to page 25 of *Al-Sawāiq al-Muhriqa*.

⁸Refer to page 21 of *Al-Khasā'is al-'Alawiyya*, where the Prophet (ص) is quoted saying: "To whomsoever I have been the *wali*, this (ʿAli) is his *wali*."

⁹Abul-Tufayl's question is obviously indicative of his amazement at this nation's overlooking this matter regarding ʿAli in spite of the hadīth it narrates from its Prophet (ص) in his honor on the day of the Ghadīr. As if suspicious of the accuracy of the narrated hadīth, he went ahead and inquired of Zayd, having heard him narrate the same, "Did you hear it from the Messenger of Allāh?!" His tone is that of someone amazed, bewildered, and skeptical. Zayd answered him that all individuals present under those trees had, indeed, seen the Prophet with their eyes and heard him with their ears; so, Abul-Tufayl then knew that the matter was just as al-Kumait, may Allāh be merciful unto his soul, says:

On the day of the *dawh*, the *dawh* of the Ghadīr,
 Caliphate was made for him manifest and clear,
 Only if the throngs opted to obey;
 Yet I have never seen such a day,
 Nor have I seen such right
 Trampled upon, discarded outright;
 But the men had sold it, and I never saw
 Such a precious thing to sale would go...

¹⁰This occurs on page 281 of his *Al-Khasā'is al-'Alawiyya*, in a chapter dealing with ʿAli's status in the eyes of Allāh, the Exalted, the omni-Scient, and also on page 25 of another chapter enjoining acceptance of his *wilāyat* and warning against bearing animosity towards him.

¹¹These are among poetic lines composed as the answer of al-Walīd ibn `Uqbah ibn Abu Ma`it, quoted by Muhammad Mahmūd al-Rāfi`i in his Introduction to *Sharh al-Hashimiyyat*, page 8.

LETTER 55
Muḥarram 19, 1330

**Why Use it as a Testimonial if not Transmitted
Consecutively?**

Shī`as apply the principle of consecutive reporting when discussing imāmate, due to the fact that they consider consecutive reporting as one of the principles of faith; so why do you quote the Ghadīr ḥadīth in support of your argument although such ḥadīth is not consecutively reported according to Sunnis, even if its authenticity is attested to by their *sahābs*?

Sincerely,
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LETTER 56
Muḥarram 22, 1330

- I Natural Laws Necessitate the Consecutive Reporting of Ḥadīth al-Ghadīr
- II The Almighty's Benevolence
- III Concern of the Messenger of Allāh (ص)
- IV Concern of the Commander of the Faithful
- V al-Husain's Concern
- VI Concern of the Nine Imāms (ع)
- VII Shī`as' Concern
- VIII Its Consecutive Reporting Through the Masses

Suffices to prove its application as an argument what we have mentioned in Letter No. 24 above.

1) The consecutive reporting of the Ghadīr ḥadīth is necessitated by the natural laws which Allāh has created. Its similitude is like that of any great historical step undertaken by the most important man of a nation who announces, in the presence of thousands of his nationals, the undertaking of a major step, so that they may convey its news to various lands and nations, especially if such an undertaking enjoys the concern of his own family and their supporters in all generations to come, so that such an announcement might receive the widest possible publicity. Can such an announcement, as significant as it is, be transmitted by, say, just one single person? Certainly not. Its news would spread as widely as the early morning sun rays, encompassing the plains as well as the oceans; "And you shall never find any alteration to Allāh's order (Qur'ān, 33:62)."

2) Hadīth al-Ghadīr has won the divine concern of Allāh, the Dear One, the Sublime, Who inspired to His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, including it in His Qur'ān which is recited by Muslims even during the late hours of the night or the early hours of the day, in public and in private, in their supplications and ceremonial prayers, from the top of their pulpits and the heights of their minarets, stating:

"O Messenger! Convey that which has been revealed unto you from your Lord, and if you do not do so, then you have not conveyed His Message at all, and Allāh will protect you from (evil) men." (Qur'ān, 5:67)¹

When he, peace be upon him and his progeny, conveyed the divine Message (implied in this verse), appointing `Ali as the Imām and entrusting him with the caliphate, Allāh Almighty revealed the following verse:

“Today have I perfected your religion (Islam) for you, completed my blessing unto you, and accepted Islam as your religion.” (Qur`ān, 5:3)²

So, congratulations upon congratulations to `Ali; this is Allāh's favour; He grants it to whomsoever He pleases. Anyone who looks into these verses will be profoundly impressed by such divine favours.

3) If divine concern is as such, no wonder, then, that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, expressed such a profound concern when death approached him, may my life be sacrificed for his sake. It was then that, according to the order which he received from Allāh Almighty, he set to announce `Ali's *wilāyat* during his supreme pilgrimage, in the presence of so many witnesses, without being satisfied with similar previous announcements such as his warning in Mecca, or on other occasions with some of which you have by now become familiar. He, therefore, invited the believers to participate in his very last pilgrimage, known as the Farewell Pilgrimage. People from far and wide responded to his invitation, and no less than one hundred thousand pilgrims left Medīna with him.³ On the standing day at `Arafāt, he informed the attendants that: “Ali is of me, and I am of `Ali, and nobody discharges the responsibility [of my religion] on my behalf except I and `Ali.”⁴ And when he came back from the pilgrimage and arrived at the valley of Khumm, trusted Gabriel descended upon him with “ayat al-tablīgh,” verse of conveying the Message, from the Lord of the Worlds. Immediately thereupon, he alighted there till those who lagged behind him, as well as those who went ahead of him, joined him. When they all assembled, he conducted the obligatory prayers then delivered a sermon about Allāh, the Dear and the Omniscient, emphasizing the significance of `Ali's *wilāyat*. You have

already heard a glittering report of its news, and what you have not heard is even more exact and more explicit; yet what you have heard should suffice you. Its news was carried on behalf of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, by all those masses who were present with him there and then and who are estimated to have been over one hundred thousand pilgrims from various lands.

The order of Allāh, the Dear and Sublime, which does not suffer any alteration in His creation, necessitates the consecutive reporting of this ḥadīth in spite of all obstacles in conveying it. Yet the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) follow their own wise methods of disseminating it and publicizing for it.

4) Referring to the latter, I suggest that you may consider the measure taken by the Commander of the Faithful (ع), then Caliph, in gathering people in the spacious meeting place, the Rahba plain. He then said: "I ask in the Name of Allāh each Muslim who heard what the Messenger of Allāh (ص) said on the Ghadīr Day to stand and testify to what he heard. Nobody should stand except those who saw the Prophet with their own eyes and heard him with their own ears." Thirty *ṣaḥābis*, twelve of whom had participated in the Battle of Badr, stood and testified that the Prophet (ص) took `Ali by the hand and asked people: "Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have?" They answered in the affirmative. He, peace be upon him and his progeny, then said: "To whomsoever I have been *mawla*, this (Ali) is his *mawla*; O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be the enemy of whosoever chooses to be his enemy." You know that accusing thirty *ṣaḥābis* of being liars is rejected by reason; therefore, the achievement of consecutive reporting through their testimony is an irrefutable and undeniable proof.

The same ḥadīth was transmitted from those thirty *ṣaḥābis* by all those crowds who were then present at the

Rahba, and who disseminated it after their dispersal throughout the land, thus providing it with extremely wide publicity. Obviously, the Rahba incident took place during the caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) who received the oath of allegiance in the year 35 A.H. The Ghadīr event took place during the Farewell Pilgrimage, 10 A.H. The time period separating the first date from the second is twenty-five years during which many events took place such as a devastating plague, wars, the opening of new countries, and the invasions contemporary to the three righteous caliphs. This time period, one fourth of a century, merely due to its duration, wars and invasions, in addition to a sweeping and devastating plague, had ended the lives of many of those who had witnessed the Ghadīr event, especially the elderly among the *ṣahābah* as well as their youths who were eager to meet their Lord through conducting *jihad* in His way, the Exalted, the Omniscient, and in the way of His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, so much so that their dead outnumbered their survivors. Some of them were scattered throughout the land, and many of those were not present at the Rahba except those who kept company with the Commander of the Faithful (ع) in Iraq, and these were only males. In spite of all this, thirty *ṣahābah*, twelve of whom were participants in the Battle of Badr, had heard ḥadīth al-Ghadīr from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny.

There may have been others who hated to testify, such as Anas ibn Mālik⁵ and others who received their due punishment in lieu of the prayers of the Commander of the Faithful to Allāh to punish those who hid the truth while knowing it. Had he been able to gather all *ṣahābis* who were alive then, males and females, and address them in the same way which he employed at Rahba, several times that many would have testified; so, what if he had asked people in Hījaz before the passage of such a long time after the incident of the Ghadīr? Contemplate upon this fact and you will find it a very

strong proof testifying to the consecutive reporting of ḥadīth al-Ghadīr.

The books of tradition should suffice you in their documentation of ḥadīth al-Ghadīr. Take, for example, what Imām Ahmed has quoted on page 370, Vol 4, of his *Musnad* from Abul Tufayl who has said: "Ali gathered people at the Raḥba, then he said to them: 'I adjure in the name of Allāh every Muslim who heard what the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, had said on the Ghadīr Day to state his testimony.' Thirty persons stood up." Abu Na`īm has said: "Many stood up and testified how the Prophet (ص) took `Ali by the hand and asked people: 'Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have?' They answered: 'We do, O Messenger of Allāh!' Then he said: 'To whomsoever I have been a *mawla*, this `Ali is his *mawla*; O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him and be the enemy of whoever sets himself as his enemy.'" Abul-Tufail continues to say: "I left the place dismayed (disgusted with many people's ignorance of this ḥadīth), and I met Zayd ibn Arqam and said to him: 'I have heard `Ali say such and such.' Zayd said: 'Then do not deny that you have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, say so about him.'"

Zayd's testimony stated above, and `Ali's statement in this regard, may be added to the testimony of the thirty *ṣaḥābis*, thus bringing the number of narrators of this ḥadīth to thirty-two *ṣaḥābis*. Imām Ahmed has recorded `Ali's ḥadīth on page 119, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad* as transmitted by Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Abu Layla. The latter says: "I saw `Ali at the Raḥba abjuring people to testify, emphasizing that only those who had seen and heard the Prophet (ص) should stand and testify. Twelve participants in the Battle of Badr, whom I remember so well as if I am looking at them right now, did so." Abdul-Raḥmān quotes the latter testifying that they had all heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his

progeny, asking people on the Ghadīr Day: "Do not I have more authority over the believers' lives than they themselves do, and my wives are their mothers?" The audience responded: "Yes, indeed, O Messenger of Allāh!" Then he said, as Abdul-Rahmān quotes him, "Then whosoever takes me as his *mawla* must take `Ali as his *mawla*; O Mighty Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him and be the enemy of whoever bears animosity towards him!"

Another narration is recorded by imām Ahmed on the same page. It quotes the Prophet (ص) saying: "O Lord! Befriend whoever takes him as his *wali* and be the enemy of whoever antagonizes him; support whoever supports him, and abandon whoever abandons him." The narrative goes on to state that with the exception of three men, the witnesses stood to testify. `Ali invoked Allāh to curse those who hid the truth, and his invocation was heeded. If you add `Ali and Zayd ibn Arqam to the afore-mentioned twelve participants in the Battle of Badr, then fourteen is obviously the number of witnesses. By tracing the traditions regarding the Rahba incident, `Ali's wisdom becomes manifest in disseminating hadīth al-Ghadīr and publicizing for it.

The Master of Martyrs, Abu Abdullāh al-Husain, peace be upon him, has left us a legacy of a very memorable stand which he took during the reign of Mu`āwiyah. It was then that truth became manifest. It was similar to the stand taken by `Ali at the Rahba. During the pilgrimage season, al-Husain (ع), surrounded by throngs of pilgrims, praised his grandfather, father, mother and brother, and delivered an unprecedented, wise and eloquent speech that captivated his audience and won their hearts and minds. His sermon was inclusive, one wherein he reawakened the masses, traced and researched history, and paid the Ghadīr incident its fair and just dues. His great stand, therefore, produced great results, and it became equivalent to hadīth al-Ghadīr in its fame and wide publicity.

6) His nine descendants, all sinless Imāms, applied their own methods to publicizing and propagating the same ḥadīth. Their methods reflect their wisdom which is comprehended by by all those who possess sound senses. They used the eighteenth of Thul-Hijjah as a special annual feast to congratulate and congratulate one another, merrily and humbly seeking nearness to Allāh, the Exalted, the Mighty, through fasting, prayers and supplications. They go beyond limits in their deeds of goodness and acts of righteousness, thanking Allāh for the blessings which He bestowed upon them on that Day by virtue of the text that nominated the Commander of the Faithful (ع) as Caliph, and His divine promise for him to be the Imām. They used to visit their kin, give more generously to their families, visit their brethren, look after their neighbours, and enjoin their followers to do likewise.

7) For this reason, the eighteenth of Thul-Hijjah of every year is celebrated as a feast by the Shī`as of all times and climes.⁶ It is then that they rush to their mosques to offer obligatory and supererogatory prayers, recite the Glorious Qur`ān, and read the most celebrated supplications as a token of thanking Allāh Almighty for perfecting His religion and completing His blessings upon them by nominating the Commander of the Faithful (ع) as the Imām [in the theological as well as the secular sense]. It is then that they exchange visits and happily wish each other the best, seeking nearness to Allāh through righteousness and goodness, and through pleasing their kin and neighbours. On that day, every year, they visit the mausoleum of the Commander of the Faithful (ع), where no less than a hundred thousand pilgrims come from far and wide. There, they worship Allāh on that day in the same way their purified Imāms used to worship Him: through fasting, prayers, and remembrance of Allāh. They seek nearness to Him through acts of righteousness and the payment of *ṣadaqāt*. They do not

disperse before addressing the sacred shrine with a highly commended address authored by some of their Imāms. It includes testifying to the glorious stand taken by the Commander of the Faithful (ع), honouring his feats and struggle to lay the foundations of the principles of the faith, his service of the Master of Prophets and Messengers (ص), and his virtues and merits, among which was the honour which he had received from the Prophet on the Ghadīr Day. This is the custom of the Shī`as every year. Their orators have always been referring to ḥadīth al-Ghadīr, quoting its traditon or even without reference to them, and their poets are accustomed to compose poems in its commemoration in old as well as modern times;⁷ therefore, there is no way to cast doubts about its being consecutively reported from the sources of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) and their Shī`as. Their motives to memorize it by heart, their efforts to maintain its pristine text, safeguard its authenticity, publicize and disseminate it.., all have indeed resulted in the achievement of their most aspired objectives. Refer to all the four major Shī`a *Musnads*, as well as other Shī`a references, containing well-documented and supported traditions, and you will find each one of them reverberating with the same meaning, and each tradition supporting the other. Whoever acquaints himself with these traditions will find out that this ḥadīth is *mutawātir* through their precious sources.

8) There is no doubt about its being consecutively reported through Sunni sources, according to natural laws, as you have come to know; "Allāh's creation suffers no alteration; this is the Right Guidance, but most people do not know." (Qur'ān, 30:30) The author of *Al-Fatāwa alHamādiyya*, in spite of his stubbornness, admits the consecutive reporting of this ḥadīth in his abridged dissertation titled *Al-Ṣalawāt al-Fākhirā fil Ahādīth al-Mutawātirā*." Al-Sayyūti and other scholars of exegesis all admit the same. Refer to Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-

Tabari, author of the famous works titled "Tafsīr" and "Tarīkh," Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'īd ibn Aqdah, Muhammad ibn Ahmed ibn `Uthmān al-Thahbi, have all written critiques of the sources of this ḥadīth. Each one of them has written an entire book on this subject. Ibn Jarīr includes in his own book as many as one hundred and five sources for this ḥadīth alone.⁸ Al-Thahbi, in spite of his fanaticism, has testified to the truth of many of its sources. In chapter sixteen of *Ghāyat al-Marām*, as many as eighty ahādīth transmitted by Sunnis testify to the authenticity of the Ghadīr ḥadīth. Yet he did not quote al-Tirmithi, al-Nisāi, al-Tabrāni, al-Bazzār, Abu Ya`li, or quite a few other reporters who transmit this ḥadīth. Al-Sayyūti quotes this ḥadīth while discussing `Ali in his book *Tarīkh al-Khulafā* transmitted by al-Tirmithi, adding, "This ḥadīth is also recorded by Ahmed as transmitted by `Ali (ع), and also by Ayyūb al-Anṣāri, Zayd ibn Arqam, `Umer [ibn al-Khattāb], and Thu Murr. Abu Ya`li quotes it from Abu Hurayrah, al-Tabrāni from Ibn `Umer and from Ibn Abbās as transmitted by Mālik ibn al-Huwayrith, Habshi ibn Janādah, and Jarīr, and also by Ammārah and Buraydah."

A proof of the fame of this ḥadīth is evident from the fact that imām Ahmed records it in his *Musnad* from Riyāh ibn al-Hārish as transmitted by two sources. It states that a group of men once came to `Ali (ع) and said: "Assalamu Alaikum, our *mawla*." The Imām asked who they were, and they answered him by saying that they were his subjects. The Imām asked them: "How can I be your *mawla*, while you are [stranger] bedouin Arabs?" They said: "We have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, on the Ghadīr Day saying: `Whoever I have been his *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*.'" Riyāh says that when they left, he followed them and asked them who they were, and that they said to him: "We are a group of the Anṣār (Medenite Supporters) in the company of Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣāri." Another proof of its

fame is what has been recorded by Abu Ishāq al-Tha`labi while explaining Sūrat al-Ma`ārij in his book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, relying on two very highly respected sources, and stating the following:

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, ordered people on the Ghadīr Day to assemble, then he took `Ali's hand and said: "Whoever accepts me as his *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*." The news of this announcement spread throughout the land, and al-Nu`mān al-Fahri came to know about this ḥadīth. Riding his she-camel, he came to meet the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. Having alighted, he said the following to the Prophet: "O Muḥammad! You ordered us to bear witness that there is no deity except Allāh and that you are the Messenger of Allāh, and we obeyed; then you ordered us to offer prayers five times a day, and we agreed; then you ordered us to pay *zakat*, and we agreed; then you ordered us to fast during the month of Ramaḍān and we agreed; then you ordered us to perform the pilgrimage and we agreed; then, as if all of this is not sufficient, you favoured your cousin to all of us and said 'Whoever accepts me as his *mawla*, `Ali is his *mawla*;' is this one of your own orders, or is it Allāh's?" He, peace be upon him and his progeny, answered: "I swear by the One and only God that this is the command of Allāh, the Exalted and omniscient;" whereupon al-Hārith left heading towards his animal murmuring softly to himself: "O Lord! If what Muḥammad (ص) says is true, then let it rain stones, or let a severe torment descend upon us." He hardly reached his animal before Allāh caused a stone to cleave his head, penetrate his body and come out of his anus, leaving him dead on the spot. It is in reference to that incident that Allāh Almighty revealed the following verse:

"A man who brought a question (to the Prophet) asked for a sure penalty—which cannot be warded off by

those who reject the truth—from Allāh, Lord of the Ways of Ascent.”⁹ (Qur'ān, 70:1-3)

This is how the tradition, quoted *verbatim*,¹⁰ concludes. Its authenticity is accepted by many Sunni scholars as a common fact, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹We do not dispute its revelation in reference to `Ali's *wilāyat* on Ghadīr Khumm Day, and our narratives from the sources of the purified progeny are consecutive. Suffices you for reference to its narration by others besides the latter what Imām al-Wāhid has quoted in his exegesis of Sūrat al-Mā'ida on page 150 of his book *Asbābul Nuzul* from two respected sources: `Atiyyah and Abu Sa`īd al-Khudrī. The author says: “This verse [that is, the one reading: “O Messenger! Convey that which has been revealed unto you from your Lord”] was revealed on Ghadīr Khumm Day in reference to `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع).” The same is narrated by al-Hāfiẓ Abu Na`īm who interprets it in his book *Nuzul al-Qur'ān* relying on two sources one of which is Abu Sa`īd and the other is Abu Rāfi`. It is also narrated by Imām Ibrahīm ibn Muḥammad al-Hamawaini al-Shāfi`i in his book *Al-Fawā'id* from various sources ending with Abu Hurayrah. It is quoted by Imām Abu Ishāq al-Tha`labi while explaining the meaning of this verse in his *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* from two respected sources. What testifies to its reference to `Ali (ع) is the fact that prayers had been already established, *zakāt* was enforced, fasting was legislated, the pilgrimage to the House was being conducted, what is permissible was clarified and so was what is forbidden, the Sharī'ah was already regulated and its injunctions enforced; so, what else required Allāh to place so much emphasis other than on the issue of caliphate, one which prompted Him to pressure His Prophet in a way which was almost similar to threatening? And regarding what, if not caliphate, could the Prophet (ص) feel presentiment of dissension if he did not

convey it, something which required God's own immunity against any harm that might result from discharging it?

²*sahīhs* documenting the occasion that necessitated the revelation of this verse are consecutive from the sources of the purified progeny (ع). We do not doubt what the purified progeny of Muhammad (ص) narrates even when al-Bukhāri claims that the verse was revealed on the day of `Arafāt, for the members of the Prophet's house know what is revealed in their house.

³Sayyid Ahmed Zayni Dahlān, in a chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage in his book *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyya* [Biography of the Prophet], writes: "Ninety thousand—some say a hundred and twenty-four thousand, while others say more—accompanied him, peace be upon him and his progeny, from Medīna, and this is just a rough figure of the number of people who accompanied him," to the end of his statement from which you come to know that those who went back with him were more than a hundred thousand, and they all witnessed the Ghadīr ḥadīth.

⁴We have quoted this ḥadīth in our Letter No. 48; so, if you refer to it, you will find it *verbatim* numbered 15 in the said reference; the same Letter refers to and comments on it in a way worthy of the attention of researchers.

⁵He, peace be upon him, said to him then: "Why don't you stand with other companions of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) and testify to what you heard of him then?" He answered: "O Commander of the Faithful! I have grown old, and I have forgotten it." `Ali (ع) said: "If you are telling a lie, then may Allah strike you with a white [disease, i.e. leprosy] which your turban cannot conceal." He hardly left before his face was filled with the marks of leprosy; so, he used to say: "I have become the object of a curse invoked by the Righteous Servant." This incident is quite famous, and a testimony for its authenticity exists when Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal quotes it at the end of page 119, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*, adding: "They all, except three men, rose to testify; and those three fell under the effect of his curse."

⁶Ibn al-Athīr, while narrating the significant events that took place in the year 352 in his *Kāmil*, says the following on page 181, Vol. 8, of his history book: "On the eighteenth of Thul-Ḥijjah of that year, Mu`izz al-Dawla ordered decorations to be installed in Baghdād, fires to be lit at the police quarters, and all merriments be displayed; so, market-places were opened at night just as is customary during `Īd nights; he did all that to celebrate `Īd al-Ghadīr, Ghadīr Khumm. Drums were beaten; and trumpets were sounded, and it was quite a memorable day."

⁷Al-Kumait ibn Zayd has said:

On the day of the *dawh*, the Ghadīr *dawh* day,
Caliphate was made manifest for him: were they to obey...

Abu Tammām, in a poetic masterpiece which he includes in his *diwān*, says:

On the Day of Ghadīr, truth looked clear and bright;
Redolently, with no curtains nor bars to hide;
The Messenger of Allāh stood there to invite
Them to come close to what is just and right,
Gesturing with his hands, introducing your *wali*
And *mawla*; yet see what happened to you and me!
He brings the news to people so eloquently,
While they come with grudge and depart grudgingly,
Yet he made the truth eloquently shine,
While they usurped even your right and mine.
You made its destiny the sharp blades of your sword:
And the grave for whoever wanted the truth to uphold...

⁸The author of *Ghayat al-Marām* says near the conclusion of Chapter 16, page 89, of his book: "Ibn Jarīr has quoted the Ghadīr hadīth from ninety-five sources in a book which he dedicated to this subject, calling it *Al-Wilāyat*, and Ibn `Uqdah has quoted it from one hundred and five sources written down in a book which he also dedicated solely for this subject-matter. Imām Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn al-Siddīq al-Maghāribi has stated that

both al-Thahbi and Ibn `Uqdah have dedicated a special book solely for this ḥadīth;" so, refer to the sermon in his valuable book titled *Fath al-Malik al-`Ali Bisihhati Bābil `Ilm `Ali*.

⁹This is quoted from al-Tha`labi by a group of Sunni dignitaries such as scholar al-Shiblinji of Egypt in a biography of `Ali in his book *Nūru'l Absār*; so, you may refer to its eleventh page if you wish.

¹⁰Refer to what al-Halabi has quoted of the narratives related to the Farewell Pilgrimage in his book of biography known as *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya* and you will find this ḥadīth at the end of page 214 of its third volume.

LETTER 57
Muharram 25, 1330

I Interpreting Ḥadīth al-Ghadīr
II The Link

1) Believing in the truthfulness of the *ṣahābah* requires interpreting ḥadīth al-Ghadīr, whether it is consecutively reported or not. For this reason, Sunnis have claimed that "mawla" bears various meanings all of which have been applied in the Holy Qur`ān. It may mean "the deserving," as the Almighty says when He addresses the infidels: "Your resort is the Fire; it is your *mawla*," meaning "You deserve the punishment of the Fire." Another meaning is "the supporter," as Allāh, praised be His Name, says: "It is so because Allāh is the *mawla* of those who believe, and the infidels have no *mawla*." It also means "the heir," as in the statement of the Almighty: "For each We have assigned *mawali* [*mawlas*] from the inheritance of the parents and the relatives," meaning heirs. It also means "relatives," as is clearly understood from the following verse of the Dear and Mighty One: "I fear the *mawali* after me," meaning relatives. It also means "friend," as the verse suggests: "On that Day, no *mawla* will be able to do any good to his *mawla*." "Wali" also connotes the person who is most qualified to fare with someone else's affairs, as we may say: "Mr. so and so is the *wali* of the minor." It also means "the supporter" and "the loved one." Some have said: "The gist of the ḥadīth could be 'whoever I have supported, befriended, or loved;' for `Ali was as such, and this meaning agrees with the prestige enjoyed by the good ancestors, and with the imāmate of the three righteous caliphs, may Allāh be pleased with them.

2) It is also possible that some people regarded this hadīth to refer to `Ali simply because one of `Ali's companions in Yemen noticed his uncompromising policy in executing the commandments of Allāh; therefore, he spoke ill of him; for this reason, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, did not appreciate their attitude and stood up on the Ghadīr Day,¹ praised the Imām and lauded his contributions, attracting the attention to his prestige and defending his name against those who intended to chew it. The pretext used by such a group of advocates is that in his sermon, the Prophet (ﷺ) praised `Ali in particular, saying: "Whoever I have been his *wali*, `Ali is his *wali*," and his Ahl al-Bayt in general, saying: "I am leaving with you the Two Weighty Things: the Book of Allāh and my progeny, my Ahl al-Bayt;" so, he simply recommended that they should cherish `Ali in particular and his kin in general. They claim that such a statement neither commits Ali to be his successor, nor does it connote imāmate for him, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 58

Muharram 27, 1330

- I Hadīth al-Ghadīr Cannot be Interpreted,**
II Pretext for its Interpretation is Speculative and
Misleading.

1) Somehow I have the feeling that your heart is not satisfied with what you yourself have stated, and your soul is not thereby pleased! You revere the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and cherish his pristine wisdom, infallibility, conclusive Prophethood, believing that he is the master of the wise, and

the seal of the prophets: "He does not speak of his own inclination; it is but a revealed inspiration; he has been taught by one mighty in power (Qur'ān, 53:3-5)."

Suppose a philosopher from another faith asks you about the Ghadīr Day saying:

"Why did he (ص) stop all those thousands of companions from proceeding, confining them in midday heat in such a sun-baked plain? Why did he make sure to call back whoever advanced, and wait for whoever lagged behind? Why did he camp with them in such a desolate place where neither water nor vegetation was available? Then why did he preach to them about Allāh Almighty in that place and enjoined those who were present there to convey, upon dispersing, what they had heard to those who had not, and why did he start with a self-eulogizing sermon, saying: 'It looks like my Lord's Messenger [angel of death, Isrā'īl] is about to come to call me [to return to my Lord] and I will respond to the call; I am responsible, and so are you,' and what message was the Prophet (ص) enjoined to convey and which the nation was enjoined to heed? Why did he ask them: 'Do not you believe that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad (ص) is His Servant and Messenger, that His Paradise is just and His Fire is just, that death is just and the life after death is just, that the Hour is undoubtedly approaching, that Allāh will bring to life all those who are lying in their graves?' and they responded in the affirmative? Why did he immediately take 'Ali's hand, lift it till the white hair in his arm-pit became visible, saying: 'O people! Allāh is my *mawla*, and I am the *mawla* of the believers;' then why did he explain his statement 'I am the *mawla* of the believers' by asking them: 'Do not I have more authority over your lives than you yourselves have?' Then why did he say, having made such an explanation, 'Whoever has accepted me as his *mawla*, this (‘Ali) is his *mawla*; O Lord! Befriend whosoever befriends him and be the enemy of whosoever antagonizes him; support whosoever supports him

and betray whosoever betrays him,' and why did he specifically choose him and pray for him in such a manner which is worthy only of just Imāms and truthful successors? And why did he require them to testify by asking them: 'Do I not have more authority over you than you yourselves have?' and they answered in the affirmative; then he said: 'To whomsoever I have been a *mawla*, 'Ali is his *mawla*,' or 'To whomsoever I have been a *wali*, 'Ali is his *wali*, and why did he link the Qur'ān to his progeny, thus making them the examples for the wise to follow till the day of Judgment? Why so much concern from such a wise Prophet? What was the mission that necessitated all these introductions, and what was the aspired objective from such a memorable stand? What was the message which Allāh Almighty ordered him to convey when He said: 'O Messenger! Convey what has just been revealed unto you from your Lord, and if you do not do so, then you have not conveyed His Message (at all), and Allāh will protect you from (evil) men (Qur'ān, 5:67),' and what mission required so much emphasis from Allāh Who demanded, in a tone so close to threatening, to be conveyed? What was the affair regarding which the Prophet feared dissension if not conveyed by him, one the announcement of which required a profound protection from Allāh against the harm of the hypocrites...?"

I ask you, in the name of your grandfather, if you are asked all these questions, will you answer them by saying that Allāh, the omni-Scient, the all-Powerful, simply wanted to explain to the Muslims how 'Ali had been supporting them, and how friendly he was to them? I do not think that you would give such an answer, and I do not think that you would interpret Allāh's words, or the words of the master of the wise, the seal of messengers and prophets, as such. You are above thinking that he (ﷺ) would exhaust his means and resources in explaining something too clear, according to reason and common sense, to require such an explanation. There is no

doubt that you look at the actions and statements of the Prophet (ص) in a better light, one which is not derided by the discreet, nor criticized by philosophers or sages. There is no doubt that you appreciate the value of his statements and actions and render them to wisdom and infallibility.

Allāh the Almighty has said: "He is a blessed Messenger endowed with strength from the One with the Throne, obeyed, able, and trustworthy; certainly your fellow is not possessed (Qur'ān, 81:19-22)." You are above accusing him of clarifying what is already clear, or expounding upon what is already common knowledge, or bringing unusual introductions for such clarifications, or introductions having no bearing over nor corelation thereto. Allāh and His Messenger are above that. You, may Allāh support the truth through your person, know that what suits such measures, undertaken in the midday heat of that place, ones that are conducive to his actions and statements on the Ghadīr Day, is nothing less than the conveying of the divine Message, and the appointment of his vicegerent. Logical proofs and rational explanations unequivocally prove that what he intended to do on that day was nothing other than the appointment of `Ali as his vicegerent and successor. This hadīth, supported by proofs, is an explicit text regarding `Ali's caliphate, one which does not even require an interpretation, and there is no way to understand it otherwise. This is quite clear for anyone who is "... with a sound mind, attentive, and a witness (Qur'ān, 50:37)."

2) As regarding the pretext they claim, it is nothing but a speculation and an adulteration. It is the sophistry of confusion and embellishment. The Prophet (ص) dispatched `Ali to Yemen twice, the first took place in 8 A.H. It was then that scandal-mongers spread rumours about him, and some people complained about him to the Prophet (ص) upon their return to Medīna. It was then that he resented their

complaints,²³⁹ and they saw the sparkle of anger on his face; yet they did not refrain from trying again. The second time took place in 10 A.H. It was then that the Prophet (ص) tied a knot on `Ali's standard, fixed his head-wear with his own hands, and said: "Proceed, and do not be distracted;" whereupon `Ali (ع) proceeded to his destination as the divinely guided leader of the rest till he discharged the responsibility entrusted to him by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. Then he participated in the Prophet's Farewell Pilgrimage. It was then that the Prophet welcomed him very warmly and even shared with him his own offering. It was then that no scandal-monger dared to open his mouth, nor did any unfair person charge him with anything; so, how can this ḥadīth be necessitated by the objections of those in the opposition party? Or how could it be only an answer to their charges, as some people claim?

Yet mere antagonism to `Ali is not sufficient for the Prophet to pile praises on him in the way which he has done from a pulpit of camel saddles on the Ghadīr Day except, Allāh forbid, that he risks his own deeds and statements, responsibilities and mission, just to please `Ali. His divine wisdom is way above that, for Allāh, praised be His Name, says: "It is the saying of a glorious Messenger; it is not the speech of a poet; little do you believe; nor is it the speech of a monk; little do you remember; it is but revelation from the Lord of the Worlds." (69:40-43)

Had he desired to just show `Ali's contributions, and to rebut those who bore grudge against him, he (ص) would simply have said: "This is my cousin, my son-in-law, the father of my descendants, the master of my household; therefore, do not harm him," or something like this to show mere admission of status and dignity. But the way this ḥadīth is worded gives no impression other than what we have suggested. It points out rational and deductive proofs. Let the reason be whatever it may be, the statements quite obviously

bear explicit meanings which demand no inquiry into their causes.

As regarding his reference to his household in ḥadīth al-Ghadīr, it is only to support the same meaning which we have suggested, since he correlated them to the Glorious Book of Allāh, setting them as examples for all the wise, saying: "I am leaving with you these which, as long as you adhere to, shall never let you stray: the Book of Allāh, and my progeny, my household." He did not do that only so that the nation might realize that it had none to refer to, nor rely upon, after the Prophet, other than both of them. Suffices you for a testimony regarding the Imāms from the Prophet's purified progeny (ع) is that they are correlated to Allāh's Book which no wrong can approach from front nor from back. Just as it is not possible to refer to any book which differs in its judgment from the Book of Allāh, the Praised One, the Sublime, it is not possible likewise to refer to an Imām who opposes in his judgment the Imāms from the purified progeny (ع).

Consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "They shall never separate till they join me at the Pool;" it is a proof that the earth shall never be without an Imām from his loins who is equivalent to the Book. Anyone who scrutinizes this ḥadīth will find it restricting the caliphate to the Imāms from the purified progeny of the Prophet (ص). This is supported by the ḥadīth reported by Zayd ibn Thābit and quoted by Aḥmed in his *Musnad* at the beginning of page 122, Vol. 5. It states that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "I am leaving you with two successors: the Book of Allāh, like a rope extending from heavens to earth, and my household, for they both shall never part from each other till they join me at the Pool." Such a statement is indeed indicative of assigning the caliphate to the Imāms from the purified progeny, peace be upon them. You know that the text which emphasizes following the Prophet's progeny implies following `Ali's leadership, since `Ali, after

the Prophet (ﷺ), is the undisputed master, and the obeyed Imām of his household. On one hand, ḥadīth al-Ghadīr and others like it imply that `Ali is the Imām of the Prophet's household whose status, according to Allāh and His Messenger, is equal to that of the Holy Qur`ān. On the other hand, it gives credit to his own great personality because of which he became the *wali* of all those whose *wali* is none other than the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), Wassalam.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹We have clarified the same in our Letter No. 36; so, refer to it and do not overlook our comment in this regard.

LETTER 59
Muharram 28, 1330

- I Truth Manifests,**
II Evasion.

1) I have never seen, in the past or in the present, anyone more gentle in his tone, more strong in his argument, than your own self. Now truth has manifested itself due to the proofs which you have brought forth, thus uncovering the mask of doubt, revealing the pleasant countenance of conviction. No longer do we claim that the meaning of "wali" and "mawla" in hadīth al-Ghadīr is "foremost," or that it implies the "supporter," or the like, nor anything akin to what that man who asked for a sure torment had suggested; your view regarding the "mawla" stands on firm grounds, and is taken for granted.

2) I wish you agree to our interpretation of the said hadīth which is endorsed by a group of learned `ulema, including imām Ibn Hajar in his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, and al-Halabi in his *Sīrat*. They argue that even if we agree that he (Ali) is the most worthy of imāmate, the [Prophet's] intention here is futuristic; otherwise, he would have become the Imām in spite of the presence of the Prophet (ص) [which is an impossible situation, since the Prophet, as long as he was alive, was the sole Imām-tr.], who did not mind the forthcoming of an Imām after him. It is as though the Prophet (ص) had said: "Ali shall be the Imām as soon as he receives the oath of allegiance;" so, such a situation will not collide with the precedence of the three Imāms; it thus safeguards the honour of the good ancestors, may Allāh Almighty be pleased with them all.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 60

Muharram 30, 1330

Evasion Refuted

You have, may Allāh support the truth through your person, asked us to be convinced that the gist of ḥadīth al-Ghadīr is that `Ali is the most worthy of imāmate when and if the Muslims choose him as such and swear the oath of allegiance to him, hence his priority to which the ḥadīth hints is futuristic, rather than immediate. In other words, such a priority will take place when and if it is forcibly taken, rather than being actual, so that it does not clash with the caliphate of the three Imāms who preceded him [in ruling the Muslims]. We ask you in the light of the truth, the dignity of justice, the honour of fairness, and the logic of fair play, if you yourself are convinced of it so that we may follow suit and follow in your footsteps. Do you agree to give such an explanation yourself, or can it be attributed to you, so that we may follow in your footsteps and do as you do? I do not think that you are convinced or pleased with a view such as this. I am convinced that you yourself wonder about anyone who would accept to derive such a meaning for this ḥadīth when the text does not at all suggest it, nor can anyone conceive it as such; nay, it even challenges the wisdom and discretion of the Prophet (ص)..., *astaghfir-Allāh*. It neither agrees with his great deeds nor very serious statements made on the Ghadīr Day, nor with the irrefutable proofs which we brought forth above, nor with what al-Hārith ibn al-Nu`mān al-Fahri understood, and what is emphasized by Allāh and His Messenger, as well as all the companions.

Yet even the pending priority does not actually agree with the general meaning of this ḥadīth, for it obviously does not necessitate that `Ali (ع) should *not* have been the *mawla*

of the three caliphs, nor the *mawla* of anyone who died while being contemporary to any of them. This is exactly the opposite of the conclusion driven home by the Prophet (ﷺ) who asked: "Do I not have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have?" and people answered him in the affirmative; then he (ﷺ) said: "To whomsoever I have been the *mawla* (i.e. master of each and every Muslim individual, without any exception), `Ali is his *mawla*." So, as you see, nobody is made the exception [other than, of course, the person of the Prophet himself-tr.] implied in this statement; `Ali is indeed the *mawla* without any argument. Both Abu Bakr and `Umer, having heard the words of the Prophet (ﷺ) on the Ghadīr Day, said to `Ali:¹ "You have, O son of Abu Tālib, become the *mawla* of every believing man and woman,"²⁴⁰ thus admitting that he had become the master of every believing man and woman, generalizing the application to all believing men and women since the sun set on the Day of the Ghadīr.

Once `Umer was asked: "Your conduct with `Ali is quite different from that of any other companion of the Prophet (ﷺ)." `Umer responded by saying: "Why, he is my *mawla*," as stated by Dār Qutni on page 36 of *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqa*. He thus admitted that `Ali was his master, and he (Ali) had not been chosen to be a caliph yet, nor had he yet received the oath of allegiance from anyone. Consider how his (`Umer's) statement proved that `Ali was his *mawla* and the *mawla* of every believing man and woman right then, not by virtue of futurity, since the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, on behalf of the Almighty Allāh, conveyed the same on the Ghadīr Day. `Umer once asked `Ali to arbitrate in a case brought forth before him involving two bedouins disputants. One of them asked: "Is this man (`Ali) to judge between us?" `Umer immediately leaped in rage, took the man by the neck and said to him: "Woe unto you! Do you know who this man is? He is your *mawla*, my *mawla*, and

the *mawla* of all believers; whoever rejects him as the *mawla* is certainly not a Muslim," as stated near the conclusion of Chapter 11 of Ibn Hajar's *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa*. Those who have recorded this incident are quite a few.

You, may Allāh support the truth through your person, are aware of the fact that had the philosophy of Ibn Hajar and his supporters regarding the Ghadīr hadīth been accepted, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, would have been proven to be tampering with his own mission and responsibility—we seek refuge with Allāh against thinking in such a manner—hallucinating in his speeches and deeds—Allāh is above letting His Messenger do that—without having, according to such a philosophy, any purpose in that awesome situation other than making an announcement that after `Ali had been elected as caliph, he would be most fit for it, and that, the theory goes on, nobody should monopolize it, for `Ali and all other companions, and Muslims in general, are in that respect equal. What characteristic did the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, intend then and there to attribute to `Ali, and `Ali alone, from among all others who are well-known for their history in serving Islam, if such philosophy, O Muslims, is proven accurate?

As regarding their claim that had `Ali's priority regarding the Imāmate *not* been futuristic, he would have become then *the* Imām in spite of the presence of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, we say that such a claim is indeed quite odd; it is the watering down of the truth, an unmatched misrepresentation which ignores the covenants of all prophets, caliphs, kings and princes to their successors. It overlooks the meaning of the hadīth: "You to me are like Aaron to Moses except there will be no prophet after me." It is an attempt to forget his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, in the hadīth relevant to his kin when he warned them saying, "Therefore, listen to him [to `Ali] and obey him," and to other numerous

texts in this meaning. Even if we suppose that due to the presence of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, `Ali's priority of the imāmate could not be effective immediately, then obviously it had to be effective after his demise, following the unanimously accepted rule of interpreting a statement the absolute truth of which is unattainable by its closest meanings. As regarding the honour of the good ancestors, it is safeguarded without forcing such an interpretation as we will explain if necessary, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is quoted by Dār Qutni, as indicated near the conclusion of Section 5, Chapter One, of *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqa* by Ibn Hajar; so, refer to page 26. It is also narrated by many traditionists, each from his own source, and in their own books of traditions. Ahmed has quoted something similar from `Umer of the ahadīth narrated by al-Barā' ibn `Āzib on page 281, Vol. 4, of his *Musnad*, which we have already quoted in Letter No. 54 above.

LETTER 61
Ṣafar 1, 1330

Requesting Texts Narrated by Shī`a Sources

As long as the honour and dignity of the good ancestors are protected, then there is nothing wrong with considering all the aḥādīth regarding the Imām (ع), the ones to which you have referred, including ḥadīth al-Ghadir or any other one, without the need for an interpretation. You may also know other aḥādīth relevant to this subject with which the Sunnis are not familiar; so, may I request you to narrate them so that we may acquaint ourselves therewith? *Wasslam.*

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 62
Ṣafar 2, 1330

Forty Aḥādīth

Yes, we will narrate to you consecutively reported aḥādīth with which the Sunnis are not familiar. These are narrated by members of the purified progeny of Muḥammad (ص), of which we relate forty:¹

1) Al-Sadūq, Muḥammad ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh al-Qummi, has included in his book *Ikmāl ad-Dīn wa Itmām al-Ni`mah*, as transmitted by `Abdul-Raḥman ibn Samrah, one particular ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, addresses `Abdul-Raḥmān thus: "O Abu Samrah! If views differ and

opinions vary, then refer to `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, for he is my nation's Imām, and my successor over them after me."

2) In the same reference, i.e. the *Ikmāl*, al-Sadūq quotes Ibn `Abbās narrating one ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, says: "Allāh, the Praised One and the Sublime, cast a scrutinizing look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose me from among them to be the Prophet, then he cast another look and chose `Ali as the Imām and commanded me to take him as my brother, and appoint him as the *wali* and vizier."

3) Al-Sadūq, also in the *Ikmāl*, traces one ḥadīth to Imām al-Sādiq (ع) who quotes his father and ancestors citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "Gabriel has told me that the Lord of Power, exalted is His Greatness, has said: `Whoever comes to know that I am the Lord without any partner, and that Muḥammad is my Servant and Messenger, that Ali ibn Abu Tālib is Muhammad's successor, and that the Imāms from his descendants are My Arguments, then I would let him enter Paradise through My Mercy."

4) Al-Sadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, traces another ḥadīth to Imām al-Sādiq (ع) who quotes his father and grandfather citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "The Imāms after me are twelve: The first is `Ali and the last is al-Qa'im [al-Mahdī]; they are my successors and the executors of my will."

5) Al-Sadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, traces yet another ḥadīth to al-Asbagh ibn Nabatah who says that the Commander of the Faithful `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) once approached, his hand in the hand of his son al-Hasan, and said: "The Messenger of Allāh once came to us and his hand was in mine like this,

saying: "The best of creation after me, and their master, is this brother of mine who is the Imām of every Muslim, the prince of every believer after me."

6) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, tracing one ḥadīth to Imām al-Riḍa (ع) who quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "Whoever likes to uphold my religion and embark upon the Ark of Salvation after me, let him follow the example of `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, for he is the executor of my will, and my vicegerent over my nation during my lifetime and after my demise."

7) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, attributes another ḥadīth by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, to Imām al-Riḍa (ع) who quotes his ancestors stating that the Prophet (ص) once said: "I and `Ali are the fathers of this nation; whoever knows us very well also knows Allāh, and whoever denies us also denies Allāh, the Unique, the Mighty. And from `Ali's descendants are my grandsons al-Hasan and al-Husayn, who are the masters of the youths of Paradise, and from al-Husayn's descendants shall be nine: whoever obeys them obeys me, and whoever disobeys them also disobeys me; the ninth among them is their Qā'im and Mahdi."

8) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, traces another ḥadīth through *isnad* to Imām al-Hasan al-`Askari (ع) who quotes his ancestors up to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, addressing Ibn Mas`ūd thus: "O Ibn Mas`ūd! `Ali ibn Abu Tālib is your Imām after me; he is my successor over you."

9) Quoting one ḥadīth related by Salmān, al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, says that once Salmān visited the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, and found al-Husayn ibn

`Ali (ع) sitting on his lap, and the prophet was kissing him and saying: "You are a master, son of a master, an Imām and son of an Imām, brother of an Imām, father of Imāms, and you are Allāh's Argument, the son of His Argument (*Hujjah*), and father of nine Arguments from your loins, the ninth of them is their Qā'im."

10) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, quotes another ḥadīth traced also to Salmān who quotes a lengthy ḥadīth by the Messenger of Allāh in which he (ص) says: "O Fātima! Have you not come to know that we are Ahl al-Bayt? Allāh has made the Hereafter dearer to us than this life, and Allāh the Exalted, Praised is His Name, cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose me from among His creation; then he cast a second look and chose your husband and inspired me to marry you to him and take him as *wali* and vizier, and to make him my successor over my nation. So, your father is the best of prophets, your husband is the best of *wasīs*, and you are the first to join me."

11) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, quotes a lengthy ḥadīth and mentions in it that a meeting of over two hundred men from the Muhajirūn (Meccan Immigrants) and the Anṣār (Medenite Supporters) were seeking knowledge and studying jurisprudence, and that each one of them started bragging about himself, while `Ali (ع) remained silent. They asked him: "O father of al-Ḥasan, what stops you from saying something?" In response to their question, he (ع) only reminded them of a statement made by the Messenger of Allāh (ص) in which he said: "Ali is my brother, vizier, heir, executor of my will, successor over my nation, and the *wali* of every believer after me; so, admit all of this about him."

12) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, quotes a lengthy ḥadīth narrated by `Abdullah ibn Ja`fer, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn,

`Abdullāh ibn `Abbās, `Umer ibn Abu Salamah, Usāmah ibn Ziyād, Salmān, Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, and al-Miqdād who all say that they heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saying: "I have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have; my brother `Ali has after me more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have."

13) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl ad-Dīn wa Itmām al-Ni'mah*, quotes al-Asbagh ibn Nabatah who cites Ibn `Abbās saying that he heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying, "I, `Ali, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and nine from the progeny of Ḥusayn are Purified."

14) Al-Ṣadūq has also quoted in his *Ikmāl* Ibn Abāyah ibn Rab`i citing Ibn `Abbās saying that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "I am the master of the Prophets, while `Ali is the master of the *wasīs*."

15) Al-Ṣadūq has also quoted in his *Ikmāl* one ḥadīth transmitted by Imām al-Sādiq (ع) through *isnad* stating that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has said: "Allāh, the Exalted, the Almighty, favoured me over all other prophets, and favoured `Ali over all other *wasīs*, and favoured from `Ali's descendants al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and chose from al-Ḥusayn's progeny the *wasīs* who safeguard the faith against the distortion of extremists, the adulteration of liars, and the misinterpretations of those who have strayed."

16) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Ikmāl*, has quoted `Ali (ع) citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "The Imāms after me are twelve: the first of them is `Ali, and the last is al-Qā'im through whom Allāh, the Exalted and the Mighty, shall open the east of the earth as well as the west."²

17) Al-Ṣadūq has also quoted in his *Āmāli* a lengthy ḥadīth narrated by `Ali (ع) in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, says, “`Ali is of me, and I am of `Ali who is created of my own mould; he solves people's disputes regarding my Sunnah; he is the Commander of the Faithful, the leader of the foremost among all men, and the best of *wasis*.”

18) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Āmāli*, has quoted another lengthy ḥadīth reported by `Ali (ع) in which the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, says: “`Ali is the Commander of the Faithful according to the Wilayat of Allāh, the Exalted and the Mighty, which He tied in a knot upon His Throne and required the angels to witness; `Ali is Allāh's Vicegerent and Proof [Hujjatullāh]; he is the Imām of the Muslims.”

19) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Āmāli*, has quoted Ibn `Abbās relating that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: “O `Ali! You are the Imām of the Muslims, the Commander of the Faithful, the leader of the foremost renown of all men, Allāh's Proof after me, and the master of all *wasis*.”

20) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Āmāli*, has cited Ibn `Abbās quoting the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: “O `Ali! You are my successor over my nation, and you are to me like Seth to Adam.”

21) Al-Ṣadūq, also in his *Āmāli*, has quoted Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri saying, ““We were once in the company of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) at his mosque when he said: ‘A man will enter through this door who is the Commander of the Faithful and the Imām of the Muslims,’ whereupon `Ali ibn Abu Tālib came in, and the Messenger of Allāh (ص)

welcomed him, turned his glorious face to us and said: `This is your Imām after me.’”

22) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has cited Jābir ibn `Abdullāh al-Anṣāri quoting the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: “`Ali ibn Abu Tālib is the foremost among them in accepting Islam, and he is the most learned... He is the Imām and successor after me.”

23) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted one ḥadīth correct through *isnād* related by Ibn `Abbās who quotes the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: “O people! Whose words are better than Allāh's? Your Lord, Mighty is His Grace, has commanded me to assign `Ali over you as the most outstanding Imām, as my own successor and executor of my will, and that you should regard him as my brother and vizier.”

24) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq also quotes one ḥadīth correct through *isnad* narrated by Abu `Ayyāsh who says: “The Messenger of Allāh (ص) once ascended the pulpit and delivered a sermon in which he said: `My cousin `Ali is also my brother, vizier, successor, and the one who pays my dues on my own behalf.’”³

25) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted one ḥadīth correct through *isnād* reported by the Commander of the Faithful who says: “Once, the Messenger of Allāh (ص) delivered a sermon in which he said: `O people! The month of Allāh has approached,’ and he continued his sermon recounting the attributes of the month of Ramaḍān. I asked: `O Messenger of Allāh! What is the best of deeds in this month?’ He replied: `It is staying away from whatever Allāh has forbidden you,’ then he burst weeping, so I inquired: `What grieves you, O Messenger of Allāh?’ and he answered: `O `Ali! I am grieving

at what horrible forbidden things that will happen to you in the same month,' adding, 'You are my *wasī*, the father of my descendants, and my successor over my nation during my lifetime and after my death; your bidding is as good as mine, and so is your forbidding.'"

26) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has quoted another ḥadīth narrated by `Ali, peace be upon him, thus: "The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said: 'O `Ali! You are my brother and I am yours; I have been chosen to be the Prophet while you have been chosen to be the Imām; I take charge of the revelation [of the Holy Qur'ān] while you take charge of its implementation; you are the father of this nation. O `Ali! You are my *wasī* and vicegerent, my vizier and heir, and the father of my offspring.'"

27) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted one ḥadīth the *isnād* of which is authentic as transmitted by Ibn `Abbās who says: "While the Anṣār were assembling at Qubā' Mosque, the Messenger of Allāh (ص) said: 'O `Ali! You are my brother and I am yours; you are the executor of my will and my own successor, and the Imām of my nation after me: Allāh will assist whoever assists you, and He will be the enemy of whoever antagonizes you.'"

28) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted a lengthy ḥadīth narrated by Ummu Salamah in which the Messenger of Allāh (ص) addresses her thus: "O Ummu Salamah! Listen and bear witness: This `Ali ibn Abu Ṭlib is the executor of my will; he is my successor, the one who tries my enemies, and the one who safeguards my Pool [of al-Kawthar]."

29) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted Salmān al-Fārisi saying, "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: 'O Muhajirūn and Anṣār! Shall I lead you to that which, as long

as you adhere to, shall never let you stray after me?' They said: 'O yes, Messenger of Allāh!' He (ص) said: 'This `Ali is my brother and the executor of my will, my vizier, heir and successor; he is your Imām; therefore, love him as much as I love him, and respect him as much as I respect him, for Gabriel has enjoined me to say so to you.'"

30) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has also quoted through *isnād* one ḥadīth related by Zayd ibn Arqam in which the Messenger of Allāh (ص) is quoted saying: "Shall I lead you to that which, as long as you adhere to, will protect you against annihilation and straying? Your Imām and *wali* is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع); therefore, do support him, listen to his counsel, and believe in him, for Gabriel has ordered me to say so to you."

31) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has quoted Ibn `Abbās relating one ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh (ص) says: "Allāh, the Praised, the Sublime, has inspired to me: 'I have selected from your nation a brother and heir for you, a successor and executor of your will.' I inquired: 'O Lord! Who is he?' He replied: 'It is he who loves me and I love him...,' till He said in His divine statement: 'It is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib.'"

32) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has quoted Ibn `Abbās citing another ḥadīth related by his ancestors in which the Messenger of Allāh (ص) says: "During my *isrā`* (night journey), my Lord, Exalted is His Might, promised me that `Ali is the Imām of the pious, the leader of the foremost among renown men, the religion's chief."

34) In his *Āmāli*, al-Ṣadūq has quoted one ḥadīth through *isnad* to Imām al-Riḍa (ع) who quotes his ancestors citing the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: "'Ali is of me, and I am of `Ali; may Allāh wage war against those who fight `Ali; `Ali, indeed, is the Imām of creation after me."

35) Abu Ja`fer Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsi, the sect's *shaykh*, in his *Āmāl* quotes one ḥadīth narrated by `Ammār ibn Yāsir in which the Messenger of Allāh (ص) is quoted telling `Ali, "Allāh has decorated you in a way that is most dear to Him: through asceticism to the extent that you do not feel deprived of any of this life's pleasures, and none of them feels deprived of you, and He has endowed you with the love for the destitute, making their fellowship welcomed by you, and they welcome you as their Imām; therefore, congratulations to whoever loves you and believes in you, and woe unto whoever hates you and tells lies about you."

36) In his *Āmāli*, Shaykh al-Ṣadūq has also quoted one ḥadīth through *isnād* to `Ali (ع) who has said while preaching from Kūfa's pulpit: "O people! The Messenger of Allāh (ص) granted me ten attributes that are dearer to me than anything upon which the sun shines: He (ص) has said to me: `O `Ali! You are my brother in this life and the life hereafter, and you are the closest to me among all creation on the Day of Resurrection; your residence in Paradise faces mine; you are my heir, the executor of my will after me, faring with both my foes and family; you protect my family on my own behalf during my absence; you are my nation's Imām; you execute justice among my followers; you are my friend, and my friend is the friend of Allāh; your enemy is my enemy, and my enemy is surely the enemy of Allāh."

37) In al-Ṣadūq's book titled *Al-Nuṣūṣ `ala al-A`Imma*, which contains texts relevant to the Imāms, al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali (ع) is quoted saying: "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) say the following to my father: `And you are the inheritor of my knowledge, the substance of my own judgment, and the Imām after me.'"

38) Also in his work containing texts about the Imāms, al-Ṣadūq quotes `Umrān ibn Ḥaṣīn saying: "I have heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) say to `Ali, `You are the Imām and successor after me."

39) Also in his same work, al-Ṣadūq quotes `Ali (ع) citing the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying to him: "O `Ali! You are the *wasi* over those who have died among my household, and the caliph of those who are alive among my nation."

40) Also in the same reference cited above, al-Ṣadūq quotes al-Husayn ibn `Ali (ع) saying: "When Allāh revealed the verse: `And those who are kin of each other are more worthy of each other in the Book of Allāh,' I asked the Messenger of Allāh to interpret it, and he said: `You are the kin; when I die, your father `Ali is the most worthy of me and my station; when your father dies, your brother al-Hasan is most worthy of it; and if al-Hasan dies, then you are most worthy of his station.'"

This is the conclusion of what we wanted to quote in such a hurry. Its ratio to the remainder of the texts is like that of one bouquet to the remainder of all flowers, or the drop of water to the ocean; yet a portion should suffice; praise be to the Lord of the worlds, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹This much suffices due to the fact that we have narrated quite a few ahādīth from sources such as the Commander of the Faithful `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع), `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās, `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd, `Abdullāh ibn `Umer, Abu Sa`īd al-Khudri, Abul-Dardā', Abu Hurayrah, Anas ibn Mālik, Ma`āth ibn Jabal, quoting various sources, all stating that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "Whoever teaches my nation

forty aḥādīth related to its faith, Allāh will resurrect him on the Day of Judgment in the company of the *faqīhs* and the learned." In another wording of the same ḥadīth, "Allāh will resurrect him as a learned *faqīh*." According to Abul-Dardā', the statement reads: "I will include him in my intercession on the Day of Judgment, and he shall be a witness." According to Ibn Mas`ūd, "It will be said to him: 'Enter Paradise from whichever gate you please.'" According to Ibn `Umer's narration, "... he will be included with the men of knowledge, and be resurrected in the company of martyrs." Suffices us in learning these forty aḥādīth and others included in all our Letters his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Allāh will look after whoever listens to my statement, comprehends it and conveys it just as he heard it." And also his ḥadīth: "Let those of you who witness [my Sunnah] convey it to those who are absent."

²This ḥadīth and the ones before it exist in a chapter containing what has been narrated about the Prophet (ص) regarding the Qā'im, and that he is the twelfth in the line of Imams; it is Chapter Twenty-Four of *Ikmal ad-Dīn wa Itmām al-Ni`mah*, pages 149-167.

³This ḥadīth, together with the four preceding it, is quoted from al-Sadūq's *Ghayat al-Marām*. These are quite lengthy, and we have quoted from them whatever testifies to our argument. As regarding the aḥādīth which succeed it, they are to be found in Chapter 13 of *Ghayat al-Marām*.

LETTER 63**Ṣafar 3, 1330**

- I Shī`a Texts Rejected as Testimonials,**
- II Why Have Others Refrained from Quoting Them?**
- III Asking for More Texts.**

1) As long as these texts are not quoted by non-Shī`as, Sunnis are not bound to accept them as testimonials.

2) Had they been verified, why has nobody else quoted them?

3) Let us refer only to the hadīth narrated by Sunnis in this regard, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 64**Ṣafar 4, 1330**

- I Above Texts were Quoted upon Request,**
- II Ṣaḥīḥs are Proofs against the Majority,**
- III Not Quoted Because of Their Existence in Our Own Ṣaḥīḥs.**

1) We have cited those texts in order to acquaint you with them and in response to your own request.

2) Our own testimonial against your argument is what we have already quoted from your own *ṣaḥīḥs*.

3) The reason why those texts were not included is due to the prejudice, with which we are familiar, of those who concealed their grudge, and hid their animosity, from the party of Pharaoh during the early epoch of Islam, worshippers of authority and domination who spent everything they possessed of might and means to hide the contributions of Ahl al-Bayt and put out their light in every land. They forced people to deny their feats and attributes through means and methods of both tempting and terrorizing, through their wealth once, and through their positions and political stature another. They bestowed their favours upon those who denied these merits, dismissing, banishing or even murdering those who believed in them.

You know that the texts related to the imāmate, and the promises of caliphate, are held with apprehension by those who fear that such texts may jeopardize their thrones or undermine the very foundations of their governments. The safety of these texts against the tampering of such people, of that of their followers and flatterers, and their ability to reach us through many sources and methods, is, indeed, a miracle testifying to their own truth. This is so due to the fact that those who denied the status of Ahl al-Bayt, usurped the positions rightly and divinely assigned to them, used to incur the worst punishment upon anyone who showed love for Ahl al-Bayt. They would shave his beard, convey him on the back of a donkey and tour the market-places, humiliating him, beating him and depriving him of even the most simple and basic human right, till he would lose all hope for justice from those rulers and despond of having friends in the community.¹ So, if anyone spoke well of `Ali (ع), he would be disowned, and retribution would fall upon him; therefore, his possessions would be confiscated, and he would be executed. How many tongues praising `Ali were cut off? How many eyes which looked at him with respect were gouged? How many hands which pointed out to him were amputated? How

many feet which walked towards him affectionately were sawed? How many homes of his followers were burnt? And how many of their families were banished...?

Among the narrators of ḥadīth and “protectors of the legacy” were people who worshipped those monarchs and tyrants as well as their rulers other than worshipping Allāh, the Exalted, the Sublime, and they sought nearness to them with all their resources of scholarship, thus distorting, testifying for the authenticity of this or against the authenticity of that, just like many whom we see these days of flatterers among shaykhs, hired scholars, bad judges who race to please the rulers by endorsing their policies, be they just or unjust, calling their edicts correct, be they truly correct or corrupt; so, the ruler does not even have to ask them for a verdict in support of his regime or to indict his opponents, for they do so according to his own wish and according to the requirements of his policy, even if this means opposing the Book and the Sunnah, thus violating the nation's consensus, out of their own eagerness to safeguard their positions, or due to their coveting of a position they aspire to acquire. What a distance separates these from those! The latter did not value their governments, while the others needed their monarchs so badly, since they would use them to fight Allāh and His Messenger. For this reason, they enjoyed with the monarchs and rulers a special lofty status, and their word was heeded; therefore, they commanded authority and prestige, and they were fanatical against the accurate ahādīth if the latter pointed out to an attribute of `Ali (ع) or of other members of the household of Prophethood; so, they would reject it strongly, dropping it violently, attributing to its narrators Rāfidism—and Rāfidism is the worst vice according in their judgment. This is their policy towards the traditions lauding `Ali, especially if they are held in high esteem by the Shī`as.

As regarding the flatterers, these have had friends in the specially high class in every land; they would speak highly

of them, and they have for followers secular scholars who would publicize their views, from among those who make a show of asceticism and piety, among the leaders and tribal chiefs. When the latter hear what they say regarding rejecting those authentic ahādīth, they would hold their statements as gospel-revealed and would publicize them among the commoners and the ignorant, thus making them well-known in every land and using them as principles upheld in every time. There is another group of people who were custodians of ḥadīth in those days, and who were forced by fear to overlook the ahādīth praising `Ali and Ahl al-Bayt (ع). If those poor folks were asked about what those flatterers were saying regarding rejecting the accurate *sunan* containing `Ali's contributions and those of Ahl al-Bayt (ع), they would fear, if they told the general public of what they knew, that a blind, deaf and dumb dissension might occur. They were, therefore, forced out of fear to seek shelter by side-tracking the subject for fear of being rebuked by the flatterers and those who publicize for them, and for fear of those who repeat their words like parrots from among the populace and ignorant commoners.

Kings and rulers ordered people to denounce the Commander of the Faithful. They pressured them to do so once by tempting them with money, and once by threatening them with their armies and dreadful promises of retribution, thus forcing them to belittle him and his lineage, so much so that they painted a disgusting picture of him in their books and narrated ahādīth whereby ears feel offended, making the cursing of his name from the pulpits a tradition followed by the Muslims during both `īds and on Fridays. The Light of Allāh cannot be put out, and the contributions of His *walis* cannot be hidden; otherwise, those traditions would not have reached us through the sources of both groups, accurately and explicitly implying his caliphate. No texts are more consecutively reported than the texts in his praise, and I, by

Allāh, wonder about the favours which He has bestowed upon `Ali ibn Abu Tālib, His servant and the brother of His Messenger, how his light pierced through the clouds, the pitch of darkness, and survived the tumultuous waves, letting its ray shine on the world like midday sun!

4) You may refer, in addition to all the irrefutable proofs you have heard, to the text of inheritance, for it by itself is an irrefutable proof, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Refer to page 15, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by Ibn Abul-Hadīd, and you will find out what atrocities befell Ahl al-Bayt (ع) and their Shī`ahs in those days. Imām al-Bāqir (ع) has made a statement in this regard to which we refer the researchers.

LETTER 65
Safar 5, 1330

Requesting the Aḥādīth Relevant to the Inheritance

Please narrate to us the ḥadīth of inheritance as transmitted by Sunnis, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 66
Safar 5, 1330

Ali is the Prophet's Heir

There is no doubt that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has left `Ali with a legacy of knowledge and wisdom as much as the Almighty permitted His prophets and *wasis* to inherit, so much so that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate; therefore, whoever wishes to attain knowledge, let him approach through the gate."¹

He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: "I am the storehouse of wisdom, and `Ali is its door... `Ali is the gateway of my knowledge, the one who explains after me the Message with which I have been sent; loving him is indicative of genuine faith, and hating him is hypocrisy." According to Zayd ibn Abu `Awfah, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, has addressed `Ali thus: "You are my brother and heir;"² whereupon `Ali inquired: "And what will you bequeath unto me?" He, peace be upon him and his progeny, answered: "Whatever Prophets before me used to bequeath." In another ḥadīth, he, peace be upon him and his progeny,

according to Buraydah, has said: "The heir of my knowledge is `Ali."³ Refer also to the hadīth on the day of warning. During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, `Ali (ع) used to say: "By Allāh, I am his brother, successor and cousin, and the heir of his knowledge; so, who is more worthy of all this other than myself?"⁴

Once `Ali was asked: "How did you come to inherit your cousin rather than your uncle?" He answered: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, gathered the descendants of `Abdul Muttalib, who were quite a few, and each one of them had such an appetite that would consider tree trunks edible and would drink water though not potable, and he prepared for them a mudd of food (a dry measure approximately Tangier 46.6l, about one and three-quarters of a pound); yet they all ate till they were satisfied, while the food looked as if it was not touched. Then he, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: `O descendants of `Abdul-Muttalib! I have been sent to you in particular, and to all people in general; so, who among you pledges to be my brother, friend and heir?' Nobody stood; so, I stood, though the youngest among the attendants, but he (ص) told me to sit. He repeated his statement twice, and each time, I was the only one who stood up, and every time he would tell me to sit. On the third time, he shook hands with me; thus did I come to inherit my cousin instead of my uncle."⁵

According to al-Hakim's *Al-Mustadrak*,⁶ and to al-Thahbi's *Talkhīs*, who both testify to its authenticity, Qatham ibn al-`Abbās was asked once: "How did `Ali come to inherit the Messenger of Allāh (ص) rather than your own selves?" He answered: "It is so due to his being the foremost among us in following him, and in keeping company with him more than anyone of us."

It was well-known that `Ali, rather than his uncle al-`Abbās or any descendant of Hashim, was the heir of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny.

They accepted that as a fact, though they were informed of the reason why such inheritance was confined to `Ali alone, who was the Prophet's cousin, rather than to al-`Abbās, his uncle, or to any other uncle or relative of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny. For this reason, they used to ask `Ali (ع) once and once Qatham, and the latter used to answer them as stated above in a way that is satisfactory to the understanding of those inquirers. Otherwise, the answer would be that Allāh, the Exalted and omni-Scient, looked upon the people of the earth and chose from among them Muḥammad (ص) and elevated him to be the Prophet, then He cast another look and selected `Ali and inspired to His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, to take him as his heir and successor.

On page 125, Vol. 3, of *Al-Mustadrak*, al-Hākim, having quoted Qatham stating the above, says: "The judge of judges [supreme judge, or grand mufti], Abul-Hasan Muḥammad ibn Sāliḥ al-Hāshimi, has told me that he once heard Abu `Umer the judge saying: 'I heard Ismā`il ibn Ishāq the judge, having been informed of what Qatham had said, saying that a man inherits another through either a blood relationship or sincere loyalty, and men of knowledge do not dispute the fact that [under normal circumstances] a cousin does not become the heir while the uncle [his father] is still alive.' According to such consensus, `Ali inherited the Prophet's knowledge rather than they." As a matter of fact, chroniclers are sequential in narrating such a fact, especially through the sources of the purified progeny, and suffices us for proof is the Will and its clear texts, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹We have quoted this ḥadīth and the couple before it in Letter No. 48 above. Refer in that Letter to ahādīth number 9, 10 and 11, and do not overlook our comments.

²We have quoted the said ḥadīth in Letter No. 32.

³Refer to it in Letter No. 68 above.

⁴This statement *verbatim* is confirmed as being `Ali's. It is quoted by al-Ḥakim on page 126, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak* through a narration endorsed by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Al-Thahbi, in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*, has admitted the same.

⁵This ḥadīth stands on firm grounds, and it is a lengthy one. It has been quoted by al-Diyā' al-Maqdisi in his *Al-Mukhtāra*, and by Ibn Jarīr in his *Taḥthīb al-Athar*. It is ḥadīth number 6155 on page 408, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. It is also quoted by al-Nisa'i on page 18 of his *Al-Khasā'is al-'Alawiyya*, and it is transmitted by Ibn Abul-Ḥadīd from al-Ṭabari's *Tarīkh* near the end of the commentary on the "qāsi'a" sermon, page 255, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*. Refer also to page 159, Vol. 1, of Imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal's *Musnad* where you will find the same ḥadīth conveying this meaning.

⁶It occurs on page 125 of its third volume. It is also quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah, and it is ḥadīth number 6084 on page 400, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-'Ummāl*.

LETTER 67
Ṣafar 6, 1330

Where is the Prophet's Will?

Sunnis are not familiar with any will left for `Ali, nor are they acquainted with any of its contents; so, please oblige and tell us its story, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 68
Ṣafar 9, 1330

The Will's Texts

1) The texts regarding the will are consecutively reported through the Imāms of the purified progeny (ع); so, refer to what has been stated in this regard by others as mentioned in Letter No. 20 that quotes the statements of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, who took `Ali (ع) by the neck and said: "This is my brother and successor; he shall succeed me in faring with you; therefore, listen to him and obey him."

Muḥammad ibn Hāmid al-Rāzi quotes Salamah al-Abrash, Ibn Iṣḥāq, Abu Rabī'ah al-Ayādi, Ibn Buraydah, ending with the latter's father Buraydah citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "For every Prophet there is a successor and an heir; my successor and heir is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib."¹ In his *Kabīr*, and through *isnād* to Salmān al-Fārisi, al-Ṭabrāni quotes the latter citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "My successor, my confidant, the best man I leave

behind me to fulfill my promise and implement my religion, is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع).”² This is a clear text proving that he is the successor, and an obvious testimony that he is the best of people after the Prophet (ص). It contains an obligatory instruction that he should succeed him, and that people should obey him, as is clear to the wise.

Abu Na`īm al-Hāfiz, in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā`*,³ quotes Anas saying that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said to him: “O Anas! The first to enter this door is the Imām of the pious, the leader of Muslims, the chief of religion, the seal of successors of prophets, and the leader of the most pious among renown men.” Anas says that `Ali came in, and the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, stood up with excitement, hugged `Ali and said to him: “You will discharge my responsibility, convey my instructions, and explain all that in which they will dispute after me.”

Al-Tabrāni, in his *Al-Kabir*, quotes Abu Ayyūb al-Anṣārī citing the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying that the Prophet (ص) addressed Fatima once thus: “O Fātima! Have you not come to know that Allāh, the Dear One, cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose your father from among them and sent him as His Messenger, then He cast a second look and selected your husband and inspired me to marry him to you and appoint him as my successor?”⁴

Notice how Allāh selected `Ali (ع) from among all other inhabitants of the earth, immediately after selecting from among them the Seal of His Prophets (ص), and see how the selection of the successor is conducted in the same sequence to the selection of the Prophet. Also see how Allāh inspired His Prophet to solemnize his marriage and appoint him as his successor. See if successors of prophets were any other than the latter's own *waṣīs*. Is it fitting to push aside [when it comes to selecting a caliph] one who is the best

among Allāh's servants, the *wasī* of the master of His Prophets, and prefer someone else over him? Is it fitting if someone else, other than he, should rule the Muslims and make him simply one of his own commoners and subjects? Is it possible, by virtue of reason, that one elected by people should be obeyed by that who was selected by Allāh, just as He selected His Prophet? How is it possible that both Allāh Himself and His Messenger choose him while we elect someone else? "No believing man nor woman, after Allāh and His Messenger have decreed an edict, should practice free will regarding their affairs; and whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger surely strays manifestly (33:36)."

Narratives abound that state that as soon as those who were hypocritical, envious, and interest-seeking came to know that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was going to marry his daughter Fātima al-Zahrā', mistress of the women of paradise and equal only to Mary (ع), to `Ali, they envied `Ali and were extremely concerned, especially after many of them had unsuccessfully sought her hand.⁵ They said that that was indicative of `Ali's status; so, nobody had any hope of being his peer, and they even plotted and schemed. They sent their women to the Mistress of the Women of the World trying to turn her against `Ali. Among what they said to her was that `Ali was poor and did not have much of this world's possessions, but she, peace be upon her, was quite aware of their scheming and ill intentions as well as those of their men. In spite of all this, she did not offend them in any way, till the Will of Allāh Almighty and omni-Scient and of His Messenger was carried out. It was then that she desired to show those women the status enjoyed by the Commander of the Faithful (ع) whereby Allāh will shame his enemies, and she said: "O Messenger of Allāh! Why did you marry me to a poor man who has no money?" He, peace be upon him and his progeny, answered her in the way stated above.

When Allāh wishes to publicize
 A virtue hidden from the eyes,
 He facilitates to it one very well-known
 To covet and envy everyone.

Al-Khatīb quotes one author whose *isnād* is unanimously agreed upon, and who is very highly respected, namely Ibn `Abbās, saying: "When the Prophet (ﷺ) solemnized the marriage of Fātima and `Ali, Fātima said: `O Messenger of Allāh! You have married me to a poor man who does not have anything.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said to her: `Are you not pleased that Allāh has chosen from among the inhabitants of the earth two men one of whom is your father and the other is your husband?'"⁶ Recounting the attributes of `Ali, al-Hākim, on page 129, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, quotes Sarīj ibn Yūnus citing Abu Hafṣ al-Abār, al-A`mash, Abu Sālih, and ending with Abu Hurayrah who quotes Fātima (ع) saying: "O Messenger of Allāh! Why have you married me to a poor man with no money?" He (ﷺ) answered: "O Fātima! Are you not pleased that Allāh, the Exalted and Sublime, cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose two men one of whom is your father and the other is your husband?" Ibn `Abbās is also quoted saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) has said the following to Fātima: "Are you not pleased that I have married you to the one who is the foremost among Muslims in accepting Islam and the one endowed with more knowledge? You are the Mistress of the women of my nation, just as Mary was the mistress of the women of her nation; are you not pleased, O Fātima, that Allāh cast a look at the people of the earth and chose two men from among them: one of them is your father and the other is your husband?"⁷

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), whenever the Mistress of the women of the world suffered any hardship, would remind her of Allāh's favour and that of His Messenger unto

her, since he married her to the best of his nation, thus solacing her and removing from her chest whatever pain time had brought her. Suffices you for a testimonial on this subject what Imām AḤmed has stated on page 26, Vol. 5, of his *Musnad* where he quotes one particular ḥadīth narrated by Ma`qil ibn Yasār in which the Prophet (ص) is reported to have visited Fāṭima (ع) when she fell sick and said to her: "How do you feel?" She answered: "By Allāh, my grief has intensified, my want has worsened, and my sickness has lasted for too long." He (ص) said to her: "Yet are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who is the foremost among my nation in accepting Islam, the one endowed with more knowledge, and the greatest in clemency?" Narratives relating this issue are numerous, and there is no room to state all of them in this letter, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹Al-Thahbi has quoted this ḥadīth while discussing the biography of Sharīk in his book *Mizān al-ʿItidāl*, falsifying it and alleging that Sharīk could not have tolerated narrating such a ḥadīth. He said: "Muḥammad ibn Ḥamid al-Rāzi is not trustworthy." Our answer to his allegation is that Imām AḤmed ibn Ḥanbal, Imām Abul Qāsim al-Baghwi, Imām Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari, the Imām of critics and verifiers Ibn Ma`īn, and others of their caliber, have all trusted Muḥammad ibn Hāmid and narrated his ḥadīth, for he is their mentor. A reliable authority such as al-Thahbi admits the same in his biography of Muḥammad ibn Hāmid in his *Al-Mizān*. The man cannot be charged with Rāfiḍism or Shī'ism, but the critic is a predecessor of al-Thahbi; so, there is no reason for initiating such an accusation regarding this ḥadīth.

²This ḥadīth *verbatim* is numbered 2570 at the end of page 155, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*, and the author quotes it again in

his *Muntakhab al-Kanz*; so, refer to *Al-Muntakhab*, footnote on page 32, Vol. 5, of Ahmed's *Musnad*.

³It exists on page 450, Vol. 2, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*, and we have quoted it in Letter No. 48.

⁴This hadīth, *verbatim*, as well as its source are also in hadīth number 2541 on page 143, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, and it is quoted in *Muntakhab al-Kanz* as well; so, refer to the latter and read the footnote on page 31, Vol. 5, of Ahmed's *Musnad*.

⁵Ibn Abu Hātim has quoted Anas saying: "Abu Bakr and `Umer sought Fātima's hand from the Prophet, but he remained silent and did not tell them anything; so, they went to `Ali to inform him." It is also transmitted from Ibn Abu Hātim by many reliable authorities such as Ibn Hajar at the beginning of Chapter 11 of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*. Many other authorities have quoted something similar to it from Ahmed through *isnād* to Anas. Abu Dawūd al-Sajistāni, as stated by Ibn Hajar in Chapter 11 of his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, while discussing the twelfth verse, says that Abu Bakr sought Fātima's hand, and the Prophet (ﷺ) turned him down; then `Umer did the same, and he turned away from him, too; so, they both informed `Ali of it. `Ali himself is quoted saying: "Abu Bakr and `Umer sought Fātima's hand from the Messenger of Allāh, but he (ﷺ) rejected them. `Umer then said: `You, `Ali, are worthy of her.'" This hadīth is quoted by Ibn Jarīr. Al-Dulābi has quoted it, admitting its authenticity while discussing the Prophet's purified progeny, and it is hadīth number 6007 on page 392, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

⁶This hadīth, *verbatim*, with reference to its narrator, is hadīth number 5992 on page 391, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, where the author admits the reliability of its narrator.

⁷This hadīth, *verbatim*, with reference to its narrator, is hadīth number 2543 on page 153, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, where the author quotes it from Ibn `Abbās and Abu Hurayrah. Al-Tabrāni, in his *Al-Muttafaq*, has transmitted it from al-Khatīb who

quotes Ibn `Abbās; so, refer to *Al-Muntakhab* and read the first line of footnote on page 39, Vol. 5, of Ahmed's *Musnad*.

LETTER 69
Şafar 10, 1330

Argument of the Will's Deniers

Those who follow the Sunnah and consensus deny this will simply because of what al-Bukhāri has narrated in his *Şahīh* where he quotes al-Aswad saying, "It was said once to `Āyesha, may Allāh be pleased with her, that the Prophet (ص) had made a will regarding `Ali,¹ and she responded: `Who said so? I have seen the Prophet, while I was reclining him to my chest, when he ordered a washbowl to be brought to him; I hardly noticed how fast he collapsed and died; so, how could he have made a will to `Ali?"² In the same reference, the author quotes other sources citing `Āyesha saying, "The Messenger of Allāh breathed his last while being between my stomach and under my chin," and she is often quoted saying, "He died reclining on my chest," and she may have said: "He died while his head was on my thigh."³ So, had there been any will, she would have come to know about it. In Muslim's *Şahīh*, in a treatise on the subject of wills on page 14, Vol. 2, the author quotes `Ayesha saying, "The Messenger of Allāh (ص) left neither a dinar nor a dirham, nor a male nor a female camel, nor did he leave any will." In both *şahīhs*, in a treatise on wills, Talhah ibn Masrif is quoted saying, "I asked `Abdullāh ibn Abu `Awfah: `Did the Prophet leave any will at all?' He answered: `No.' I asked him: `How did he enjoin people to write their wills while he himself did not do so?' He answered: `His will is the Book of Allāh.'" Since these *ahādīth* are more authentic than the ones cited by you and are included in both *şahīhs*, while the ones you have cited are not, they can be brought forth as irrefutable arguments, *Wassalam*.

Yours,

S

LETTER 70
Safar 11, 1330

- I The Will Cannot be Repudiated,**
- II Why Denied,**
- III Deniers' Arguments are not Binding,**
- IV Reason and Intellect Require it.**

The Prophet's will regarding `Ali cannot be repudiated, for there is no doubt that he entrusted him, having bequeathed to him his knowledge and wisdom, as indicated in Letter 66 above, to wash his corpse, enshroud it and bury it,⁴ and to pay his dues, fulfill his promise on his behalf, defray his outstanding debts,⁵ and explain to people after him whatever matters in which they differed regarding the commandments and injunctions of Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime.⁶ He also entrusted the nation to take `Ali (ع) as his (وصي) successor,⁷ brother,⁸ the father of his descendants,⁹ his vizier,¹⁰ confidant,¹¹ the executor of his will,¹² his vicegerent,¹³ the gateway of his knowledge, according to ḥadīth number 9 cited in Letter 48 above, the gateway of his wisdom, according to ḥadīth number 10 cited in Letter 48, the Gate of Salvation of his nation, according to ḥadīth number 14 cited in Letter 48 above, its security and the ark of its salvation, as testified by the traditions we quoted in Letter 8 above. Obeying Ali is as important as obeying the Prophet himself: disobedience to him is a sin equal to that of disobeying the Prophet according to ḥadīth number 16 cited in Letter 48 and according to others. Following him is equal to following the Prophet; abandoning him is abandoning the Prophet, according to ḥadīth number 17 cited in Letter 48 above and according to others, that he [Prophet] is on peaceful terms with whoever is peaceful with him, and he is an enemy of whoever bears animosity towards him,¹⁴ the friend of whoever befriends him and the enemy of whoever

antagonizes him;¹⁵ whoever loves him is loved by Allāh and His Messenger, and whoever hates him does in turn hate Allāh and His Messenger, according to ahādīth 19, 20 and 21 cited in Letter 48 above and according to others. Whoever befriends him befriends them both, and whoever antagonizes him in fact antagonizes them both, according to ḥadīth 23 cited in the same Letter; whoever harms him harms them too;¹⁶ whoever denounces him does in fact denounce both Allāh and His Messenger (ص), according to ḥadīth 18 cited in Letter 48 above, and according to others. He is the Imām of the righteous and the annihilator of the debauchees; whoever supports is in fact divinely supported, and whoever betrays him is betrayed by the Almighty, according to the first ḥadīth cited in the same Letter and according to others; he is the master of Muslims and the Imām of the righteous, the leader of the pious among the most renown men, according to ahādīth 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Letter 48; he is the banner of guidance, the Imām of Allāh's servants, the lighthouse of whoever obeys Allāh's commandments, the Word which Allāh has enjoined upon the pious, according to ḥadīth 6 in the same Letter and according to others; he is the supreme Ṣiddīq, the nation's Farūq, and the believers' chief, according to ḥadīth 7 in the same Letter and according to others. His status is like that of the Great Furqān (Qur'ān) and the Wise Remembrance.¹⁷ He is to the Prophet in the same position which Aaron held in comparison to Moses, as clarified in Letters No. 26, 28, 30, 32, and 34, and to the Prophet's status with his Lord, according to ḥadīth 13 of Letter 48, and according to others, and like the position of the Prophet's head to his body, according to the ḥadīth quoted in Letter 50 and to others, to which we refer you, suggesting that you may observe our comment. He is like unto his own self according to the verse of Mubāhala and to the ḥadīth quoted by Ibn `Awf which is reproduced in Letter 50. Allāh the Exalted and the Sublime cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and

chose him from among them as is clear from the traditions which we have quoted in our Letter 68. Suffices you his covenant on the standing day at `Arafāt during the Farewell Pilgrimage, and that nobody discharges the Prophet's responsibility other than the Prophet himself or `Ali,¹⁸ up to the end of so many such attributes which nobody else can claim other than a *wasi*, and those who enjoy a special status with the Prophet; so, how can any wise person deny the Prophet's will, or overlook it, other than an interest-seeker? What is a will other than entrusting a person with some such matters?

2) As regarding the followers of the four sects, whoever denies it from among them does so thinking that accepting it will jeopardize the legitimacy of the caliphate of the three Imāms.

3) We cannot accept their argument just because it is based upon what al-Bukhāri and others have said. They quote Talhah ibn Masrif saying: "I asked `Abdullāh ibn Abu `Awfah: `Did the Prophet leave any will at all?' He answered: `No.' I asked: `How did he enjoin people to write their wills while he himself did not do so?' He answered: `His will is the Book of Allāh.'" This ḥadīth is not confirmed through our sources; it is but a fabrication necessitated by certain politicians. Regardless of that, the *ṣaḥīḥs* of the purified progeny are *mutawatir* regarding the issue of the will; so, let all texts which disagree with them be discarded.

4) Yet the issue of the will does not even require any argument due to the dictates of reason and common sense.

If something elongates, it stands by itself—in form and hue;

For surely the sun dissipates all that seems to be untrue.

As regarding al-Bukhāri's narrative from Ibn Abu `Awfah who claims that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, has left the Book of Allāh as his will, it is a statement the tail of which is cut off, for he, peace be upon him and his progeny, had recommended to his nation to uphold both Weighty Things spontaneously, warning it of the danger of straying if it did not do so, informing it that they both would never part from each other till they reached him at the Pool. Our *sahīhs* in this regard are consecutively reported from the sources of the purified progeny; so, you may refer to other *sahīhs* as quoted in our Letters No. 8 and 54, Wassalam.

Yours,
Sh

¹⁵Refer to hadīth 20 in Letter No. 48. His consecutive statement: "O Lord! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be the enemy of whoever sets himself as his enemy" should, by the Grace of Allāh, suffice. You have heard in Letter No. 36 his (ص) statement as quoted by Buraydah: "Whoever hates `Ali hates me, too, and whoever abandons `Ali abandons me, too." Another *mutawatir* hadīth is his (ص) statement: "Nobody loves him [`Ali] except a believer, and nobody hates him except a hypocrite." It is by Allah the covenant of the Ummi Prophet (ص).

¹⁶Consider his statement (ص), which is quoted by `Umer ibn Shāsh, "Anyone who hurts `Ali hurts me, too," which is quoted by Aḥmed on page 483, Vol. 3, of his *Musnad*, and by al-Hākīm on page 123, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Mustadrak*, and by al-Thahbi in *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak* where he admits its authenticity. Al-Bukhāri has quoted it in his *Tarīkh*, Ibn Sa`d in his *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Abu-Shaybah in his *Musnad*, and al-Ṭabrāni in his *Kabīr*. It exists on page 400, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

¹⁷Consider in this regard what you have heard in Letter No. 8 quoting Ṣiḥāḥ al-Thaqalain, for they show the truth to those who have eyes to see, and you have already come to know in Letter No. 50 that “`Ali is with the Qur`ān and the Qur`ān is with `Ali; they shall never separate from each other.”

¹⁸Reason alone rules it impossible that the Prophet (ص) would order something and strongly requires his nation to adhere to it while he himself is in dire need to act upon it. He needed a will in order to appoint his representative, and take into consideration the orphans who most badly need a care-taker. Allāh is above neglecting his precious legacy, which includes Allāh's legislations and commandments, and Allāh is above leaving his orphans and widows, who are residents of the earth far and wide, struggling in the dark, going and coming as they desired, without a *qayyim* through whom Allāh's argument becomes complete against them. Yet even common sense by itself rules that he should have left a will for `Ali (ع), since we have found the prophet (ص) entrusting him to bathe and embalm his corpse, to clothe and bury it, then to pay his outstanding debts and clear his conscience, and clarify to people what they differ regarding their faith after him... etc., as referred to at the beginning of this Letter.

LETTER 71
Ṣafar 10, 1330

Why Reject the Ḥadīth of the Mother of Believers and the best Among the Prophet's Consorts?

Why did you—may Allāh forgive you—turn away from the mother of believers and the best of the Prophet's consorts and discarded her ḥadīth, leaving it to oblivion, while her statement is the final and just judgment? In spite of this, you may give us your own viewpoint to consider, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 72
Ṣafar 12, 1330

- I She Was Not the Best of the Prophet's Consorts,**
- II The Best is Khadīja,**
- III A General Hint to the Reason Why her Ḥadīth was Discarded.**

1) The mother of the believers `Āyesha enjoys a special status, and she has her own contribution standing to her credit, but she is not the best of the Prophet's wives. How can she be the best since one authentic ḥadīth quotes her saying, "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, once mentioned Khadīja, and I objected by saying: `She was an old woman, and such and such, and Allāh has granted you someone better than her [meaning herself].' He said: `Not at all; Allāh has not granted me better than her; she believed in me when people denounced me, and she believed

in me when people called me a liar; she shared her wealth with me when people deprived me, and Allāh blessed me with children by her while depriving me of the children of all others””? `Ayesha is also reported as having said, “The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, never left home before mentioning Khadija and praising her. One day, he mentioned her, and I felt jealous. I said: ‘Was she but an old woman, while Allāh has blessed you with someone better than her?’ He became so offended that his front hair shook in anger, then he said: ‘No, by Allāh! Allāh did not bless me with anyone better than her! She believed in me when people disbelieved; she held me truthful when people called me a liar; she gave me an equal share of her wealth when people deprived me, and Allāh blessed me with children by her while depriving me the children of other women.’”¹

2) The best of the Prophet's (ﷺ) consorts, therefore, is Khadija al-Kubra, the truthful of this nation, the foremost in believing in Allāh and His Book, and in solacing His Prophet. Allāh has inspired His Messenger (ﷺ) to convey the good news to her that she had in Paradise a house built of stalks of gold and silver,² and that she had been a favourite of Allāh. The Almighty said of her: “The best of the women of Paradise are Khadija daughter of Khuaylid, Fātima daughter of Muḥammad, Āsiya daughter of Muzāḥim, and Mary daughter of `Umrān (Amram).” He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said: “Among all the women of the world, commended are Khadija daughter of Khuaylid, Fātima daughter of Muḥammad, Āsiya daughter of Muzāḥim, and Mary daughter of `Umrān.” There are other ahādīth which are among the most authentic and reliable emphasizing the same.³

It cannot also be said that `Āyesha was the best among the mothers of believers save Khadija. Reliable traditions and recorded events refuse to favour her over the others, as is obvious to the wise. She probably thought of herself as being

superior to all others, and the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, did not agree with her self-assessment. The same happened with Safiyya daughter of Huyay when the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, entered her room once and found her weeping. He asked her: "What grieves you?" She answered: "I have come to know that both `Āysha and Hafsa speak ill of me and say that they are better than me." He, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Couldn't you have told them: `How can you be better than me, since my father is Aaron, my uncle is Moses, and my husband is Muḥammad?"⁴ Whoever traces the mother of the believers `Āysha in her deeds and statements will find her as we indicate here.

3) The reason why we have discarded her ḥadīth regarding the will is due to the fact that it does not constitute an argument, and please do not ask me to elaborate on this point, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This *ḥadīth* and the one that follows it are among detailed aḥādīth narrated by Sunnis. Refer to them in the discussion of Khadija al-Kubra (ع) in the *Isti`āb*, and you will find them as we have quoted them here *verbatim*. They are quoted by al-Bukhāri and Muslim in their *ṣaḥīḥs* in almost similar wording.

²As narrated by al-Bukhāri in his chapter on women's jealousy and sentimentality, near the conclusion of his treatise on marriage, page 175, Vol. 3, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

³We have quoted it in the second paragraph of our celebrated statement, and anyone who wishes to research is referred thereto.

⁴This is quoted by al-Tirmithi from Kinānah, slave of the mother of believers Ṣafiyya, and it is transmitted by Ibn `Abd al-Birr in his biography of Ṣafiyya in the *Isti`āb*, Ibn Hajar in her biography in *Al-Isābah*, by Shaykh Rashīd Riḍa at the end of page 589, Vol. 12, of his *Manār*, in addition to many other traditionists.

LETTER 73
Şafar 13, 1330

**Requesting an Explanation to our Rejection of
`Āyeshā's Ḥadīth**

You are not one who deceives, cheats, or pretends, nor are you one who falsely charges someone. You are above being charged or accused as being as such. I, praise be to Allāh, neither criticize nor disprove, nor do I look for someone's faults nor shortcomings; truth is my pursuit. I cannot help asking you why you turn away from her [Āyeshā's] ḥadīth, and your documented answer to this question is unavoidable.

Convey your message, and have no worry,
Let thy eyes be cooled, and be merry.

The argument I press in this regard is embedded in the meaning of this verse of the Holy Qur'an: "Those who have concealed what We have revealed of clear signs and guidance after We had made them clear to mankind in the Book: these have been cursed by Allāh and by those who curse (2:159)" ..., Wassalam.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 74
Şafar 14, 1330

- I **Explaining Why We Reject her Ḥadīth,**
- II **Reason Confirms the Will,**
- III **Her Claim that the Prophet Died on Her Chest is Refuted.**

1) You have, may Allāh assist you, insisted that I should elaborate, and you have left me no option except doing just that. Due to the wealth of your knowledge, you know where we come from. Here lies the fountainhead of the will; here lies the battle-ground of explicit texts; here lies the annihilation of the *khums*, inheritance, and creed; here lies the cause of sedition; here lies the reason of discord; here lies the root of dissension...¹ While fighting the Commander of the Faithful, she toured the lands, leading a huge army in order to usurp his government and put an end to his rule.

What happened has happened; I am no narrator of that;

So have good thoughts, and do not ask who, when or what.

To argue in support of denying the will to `Ali using her own statement, the most bitter of his enemies that she was, is an attempt not expected at all from any fair-minded person. And that was not the only incident that demonstrated her animosity towards `Ali (ع). Denying the will to `Ali is much less significant than the Lesser Camel Battle² and the Greater Camel Battle in which evil intentions surfaced and the curtain removed. Likewise, her attitude was manifest even before going out to fight him, the man who was her own *wali*, and her Prophet's *waṣi*, till the news of his death reached her, whereupon she prostrated to thank God (for his martyrdom) and composed these lines:³

She laid down her rod, happy and pleased,
Her heart joyful, her mind eased;
As a traveller arrives home, of burdens relieved;
Never say `Āysha, by Ali's death, was grieved.

If you desire, I may quote for you of her ḥadīth what proves to you that she was in remote error. She has said: "When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, became seriously sick, he went out dragging his feet, reclining on two persons; one of them was `Abbās ibn `Abdul-Muttalib and another man."⁴ The narrator of this ḥadīth comments adding: "I informed `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās about what `Āyesha had said, and he responded to me saying, 'Do you know the name of the man whom `Āyesha did not name?' I said: 'no.' Ibn `Abbās said: 'He was `Ali ibn Abu Tālib.'" The narrator continues to say that `Āyesha does not wish `Ali any good.⁵

If she did not wish any good to a man with whom the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, walked, how could she then be expected to feel good about mentioning the will which contains a great deal of good for `Ali? On page 113, Vol. 6, of his Musnad, Imām Aḥmed quotes `Atā' ibn Yasar saying: "A man came and spoke ill of both `Ali and `Ammār to `Ayesha who responded by saying, 'As regarding `Ali, I have nothing to say to defend him; but concerning `Ammār, I have heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, say that whenever `Ammār had to opt between two options, he always chose the most reasonable of them.'"

Have you noticed that?! The mother of the believers warns about plotting against `Ammār due to the saying of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Whenever `Ammār had to opt between two options, he always chose the most reasonable of them," while refraining from warning against plotting to harm `Ali who is the brother and successor of the Prophet, his Aaron and confidant, the most just among his nation, the foremost to believe in his message, the one whose merits are the most...! As if she is not aware of his status in the eyes of Allāh, the Exalted and Mighty, or his position in the heart of the Messenger of Allāh,

peace be upon him and his progeny, or his status in Islam, his great efforts for its promotion, and his handsome contributions. As if she never heard anything in the Book of Allāh nor the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) in his praise, so that she would place him at par with `Ammār!

By Allāh, my mind is perplexed when I consider her statement: "I have seen the Prophet (ﷺ), while on my chest, ordering a wash-bowl to be brought to him; I hardly noticed how fast he collapsed and died; so, how could he have made a will to `Ali?" I do not know which aspect of her statement I should criticize, being scrutinized as a whole from various angles. I wonder how anyone can presume that since his death took place the way she described, he could not have left a will. Did she think that a will is valid only at the time of death?! No, but it is the excuse of one who is fighting the irrefutable truth, whoever he or she may be, while Allāh has said in His Glorious Book, addressing His revered Messenger (ﷺ), "It is prescribed unto you when death approaches someone to leave something good, a will (Qur'an, 2:180 and 5:106)." Did the mother of the believers ever see him, peace be upon him and his progeny, going against the instructions of the Book of Allāh or ignoring its injunctions? God forbid. She saw him following its guidance, adhering to its verses, rushing to obey its bidding and forbidding, reaching the ultimate end of adherence to all its injunctions. There is no doubt in my mind that she must have heard him saying: "No believer who knows that he is leaving something behind him should sleep even two nights without having his will written,"⁶ or something in this meaning, for his instructions regarding the writing of wills have undoubtedly come from him. It does not fit him or any other Prophet, blessings of Allāh be upon all of them, to bid something without doing it himself, or forbid something while doing the opposite thereof; Allāh is above selecting such individuals for conveying His message.

As regarding what Muslim and others have quoted `Āyesha saying: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) left neither a dinar nor a dirham, neither a male nor a female camel, nor did he leave any will," it is just like its previous "hadīth." Yet it is not correct to assume that what she meant was that he (ﷺ) did not leave any will at all, but rather that he did not have possessions which required a will, for, indeed, he did not leave much of this world's wares, the most ascetic person that he was. He joined his Lord, the Exalted and the Sublime, leaving a few outstanding debts,⁷ and a few items, in addition to things entrusted to him by other people which required a will [regarding who they belonged to. He also left of his own possessions something that would help defray his debts, and the fulfillment of his promises, with a remnant that required being handed over to his heir. The proof for that is what Fātima al-Zahrā', peace be upon her, rightfully demanded of her father's inheritance.⁸

2) The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, left things which demanded a will, things which no other human being ever left. Suffices you that he left the upright religion of Allāh, while still at the beginning of its growth and early inception, and that by itself demanded an heir more than did gold or silver, a house or a real estate, lands or cattle. The entire nation became his orphans and widows, seeking refuge with his successor to take his place to fare with them and manage their religious and secular affairs. It is impossible that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, should have entrusted Allāh's religion, while still in its cradle, to inclinations and presumptions, or left the protection of its legislation to personal motives and interests, without a successor to look after religious as well as secular affairs, someone upon whom he could rely to represent him before the public. He is above leaving his orphans, who inhabited spacious lands, like frightened cattle

in a rainy winter night, without anyone to look after them. He is above abandoning the will especially after having received instructions in its regard from his Lord and thus strongly commanded his nation to do so. Reason does not listen to the claim that no will was made, even if such a claim comes from a highly respected person.

At the dawn of the Islamic era, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, made a will to `Ali (ع) even before his mission was publicized in Mecca, immediately following the revelation of the verse saying: "And warn your near kin (26:214)," as we explained in Letter 20. He continued repeating his will time and over again, emphasizing it through many covenants to which we had referred. When he finally wished, while in his last hours, may I sacrifice my parents for his own sake, to write his will to `Ali (ع) to emphasize his previous verbal covenants, and to back his previous verbal statements in this regard, he, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Bring me some writing material so that I may write for you something to protect you against straying," but they disputed, while no dispute is permitted in the presence of a Prophet, and said: "The Messenger of Allāh (ص) is delirious."⁹ It was then that he (ص) realized, after they had made such a statement, that no trace would remain of his intended order, if implemented, other than dissension; therefore, he told them to clear his room, feeling satisfied with the verbal covenants which he had made to `Ali (ع).

In spite of all this, however, he made three recommendations at the time of his death: that they should select `Ali as his successor; that they should turn the polytheists out of the Arabian peninsula; and that they should reward the envoys in the same way he (ص) used to reward them. But the dictates of politics at that time did not permit the traditionists to narrate his first will, claiming that they had forgotten it. Al-Bukhāri, at the conclusion of the ḥadīth

containing the charge that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was delirious, said *verbatim*: "And his (ﷺ) will at the time of his death contained three instructions: to turn the polytheists out of the Arabian peninsula, to reward the envoys in the same way which he used to reward them..., and the third one was forgotten."¹⁰ This is how Muslim puts it in his *Sahīh*, and so do all other authors of sunan and musnads.

3) The claim of the mothers of believers that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, joined his Lord while being on her chest is opposed by the authenticated tradition stating that he (ﷺ) joined the Supreme Companion while being on the chest of his brother and friend (*wali*) `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع), according to all consecutively reported *sahīhs* from the Imāms of the purified progeny which are supported by Sunni *sahīhs*, as is well-known to researchers, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This agrees with Sunni books of traditions; so, refer to al-Bukhārī's *Sahīh*, his chapter on the households of the Prophet's wives, his treatise on holy wars and traditions, page 125, Vol. 2, and you will find the details.

²The dissension of the Lesser Camel Battle took place in Baṣra five days before the end of Rabī`ul-Thāni, 36 A.H., before the arrival of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) there, when the city was attacked by the mother of believers [Ayesha] accompanied by Talhah and al-Zubayr. `Ali's governor of Baṣra then was `Uthmān ibn Ḥanīf al-Anṣārī. Forty supporters of `Ali (ع) were killed at its mosque, and seventy others elsewhere. `Uthmān ibn Ḥanīf, who was one of the most respectful *ṣahābah*, was taken captive, and his captors wanted to kill him but feared revenge from his brother Suhayl and the rest of the Anṣār; so, they shaved his

beard, moustache, eyebrows, and head; they beat him, imprisoned him, then they expelled him from Basra. They were fought by Hakīm ibn Jablah, with a group of his tribe `Abd Qays, of whom he was chief. Hakīm was a man of wisdom, discretion, and prestige, and he was followed by a group of Banu Rabī'a who refused to cease fighting till each and every one of them was martyred, including Hakīm, in addition to his most honourable son, his brave brother, and Basra fell in the hands of the invading army. When `Ali (ع) came, he had to face `Āysha's army, and so did the Greater Camel Battle take place. The details of both battles are preserved in books of history written by Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-Athīr, and in many others.

³As quoted by trustworthy chroniclers such as Abul-Faraj al-Isfahānī at the conclusion of his discussion of `Ali in his book *Maqātil al-Tālibiyyīn*.

⁴As quoted by al-Bukhāri about her in his section on the Prophet's (ص) sickness and demise, page 62, Vol. 3, of his *Sahīh*.

⁵This statement in particular, i.e. Ibn `Abbās saying that `Āysha does not wish him any good, is left out by al-Bukhāri who stops his quotation at its preceding statements, following his customary habit in such situations, but many authors of books of tradition have quoted it through their authentic reporters. Consider what Ibn Sa'd records on page 29, Section Two, Vol. 2, of his *Tabaqāt*, where he cites a chain of narrators including Ahmed ibn al-Hajjāj, `Abdullah ibn Mubārak, Yunus, Mu`ammar, al-Zuhri, `Ubaydullah ibn Atbah ibn Mas`ūd, whose sources end with Ibn `Abbās. Reporters of this hadīth are considered trustworthy according to the consensus of scholars.

⁶As quoted by al-Bukhāri at the beginning of his treatise on wills in his *Sahīh*, page 83, Vol. 2. It is also quoted by Muslim in his section on the record of the [Prophet's] will, page 10, Vol. 2, of his *Sahīh*.

⁷Mu`ammar quotes Qatādah saying that `Ali (ع) had taken care, on behalf of the Prophet (ص), of certain matters after his demise, most of which was a debt estimated at five hundred thousand dirhams; so, refer to this ḥadīth on page 60, Vol. 4, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, and it is ḥadīth number 1170 among the ones which he narrates.

⁸As quoted by al-Bukhāri at the end of his chapter on Khaybar's campaign in his *Saḥīḥ*, page 37, Vol. 2.

⁹This is quoted *verbatim* by Muhammad ibn Isma`īl al-Bukhāri in his section on generosity towards envoys in his book *Al-Jihād wal-Siyar*, page 118, Vol. 2, of his *Saḥīḥ*.

¹⁰Refer to it in the chapter dealing with rewarding the emissaries on page 118, Vol. 2, of *Al-Jihād wal-Siyar*.

LETTER 75
Ṣafar 17, 1330

- I Mother of the Believers is not Ruled by Emotions,**
- II The Pleasant and the Ugly are Denied by Reason,**
- III Why Oppose the Claim of the Mother of Believers?**

1) The axis upon which your argument, regarding the mother of the believers in her frank ḥadīth denying a will to `Ali, revolves is two-folded:

One is your allegation that her biased indisposition against the Imām bids her to deny the will. Our rebuttal is that those who are familiar with her life-style deny the allegation that she yields to emotion while narrating ḥadīth about the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, or that she seeks a special interest; so, she cannot be accused while quoting the Prophet's ḥadīth, albeit if the subject-matter of such ḥadīth is someone she likes or someone she does not. God forbid that interests dominate her mind to the extent that she lies while quoting ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, preferring to promote her own interest rather than telling the truth.

2) The other is that reason alone refuses your claim that this ḥadīth is authentic, for it is neither logical nor permissible to conclude that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, would leave the religion of Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime, in its cradle, while Allāh's servants are following a new creed, without having made a will instructing them regarding their affairs. The answer to your claim is that

this matter is based on rational goodness and ugliness, and the Sunnis disclaim it, for reason according to their judgment does not at all determine whether something is pleasant or ugly; rather, they believe that jurisdiction is the one that determines it. They believe that whatever the jurisdiction labels as good, they accept it as good, and whatever the jurisdiction describes as bad, they consider it as such, and reason cannot be relied upon at all in such matters.

3) As regarding what you have mentioned at the conclusion of your Letter 74, concerning your rejection of the claim of the mother of believers that the Prophet died on her chest, we are not familiar with any ḥadīth narrated by Sunnis which disproves it; so, if you are aware of any such ḥadīth, please oblige and state it, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 76
Ṣafar 19, 1330

- I Her Yielding to Sentiment,**
- II Rationale Regarding the Pleasant and the Unpleasant,**
- III Rejecting the Claim of the Mother of Believers,**
- IV Preference of Umm Salamah's Ḥadīth over Hers.**

1) You have stated, while dealing with the first issue, that it is well-known from the lady's life-style that she does not yield to emotion, and that she does not seek any special interest. Please free your own self from the shackles of convention and sentimentality and carefully and studiously research her

method of dealing with those whom she liked, as well as with those whom she did not like, for there you will see sentimentality most manifestly. Do not forget her dealing with `Uthmān ibn `Affān by word and deed,¹ her secret and public schemes against `Ali, Fātima, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (ع), and her behaviour towards other mothers of the believers; nay, even with the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, himself; for in these there is a great deal of manifestations of her sentiments and interest-seeking.

Suffices you for a proof what we, proving how sentimentality tempts some people into misbehaving, have cited regarding the masters of conspiracy and purgery, out of animosity towards Lady Mary [the Copt, consort of the Prophet] and her son Ibrāhīm, peace be upon him, till Allāh, the Almighty and the Exalted One, cleared them of such unjust accusations at the hands of the Commander of the Faithful (ع), in a manner that is tangible and clear:² "And Allāh turned the spiteful disbelievers back empty-handed (Qur`ān, 33:25)." If you desire, I may recount more proofs and state the fact that, following her own sentiments, she once said to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, "It seems as if you reek of the odor of maghāfir [odorous tiny flowers],"³ so that he might not taste some honey at the house of the mother of believers Zainab bint Jahsh, may Allāh be pleased with her. If a trivial reason like this permits her to address the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, in such a manner, how can she be relied upon when she denies that he (ص) left a will for `Ali (ع)? Do not also forget her yielding to sentiment when Asma' bint al-Nu`mān was wedded to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny. She said to her: "When the Prophet (ص) weds a woman, he likes to hear her say: `I seek refuge with Allāh against you,'"⁴ aiming thereby to turn the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, against his wedding altogether and make him hate the poor woman, as if

she allowed herself to attribute statements to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, as long as such statements served her own purpose, even when her purpose was petty or prohibitive. Once he, peace be upon him and his progeny, asked her to see how a particular woman was doing, and she informed him of the opposite of what she had observed, seeking her own self-interest.⁵ Once she complained about him, peace be upon him and his progeny, to her father, succumbing again to her sentiments, saying, “Do not now be biased,”⁶ whereupon her father slapped her so hard that her clothes became soaked with her blood. Once, having felt angry with him (حس), she said: “... and you claim to be Allāh's Messenger...,”⁷ in addition to many such incidents the narrative of which would require a much larger space, and what we have quoted here must suffice.

2) You have said, while commenting on the second point, that Sunnis do not subscribe to what is called rationally pleasant or unpleasant, etc. I think of you as being above making such a statement which is reminiscent of sophists who deny even concrete facts. Among our deeds are those of whose goodness we are quite sure, and they are praiseworthy and rewardable due to their own merits, such as charity and fairness, since we know what they are, while there are others with whose ugliness we also are familiar, and they demand repudiation and punishment because of their own evil, such as injustice and aggression, since they are what they are. The wise know that there is a need that necessitates such judgments, and the wise are as certain regarding these matters as they are certain that the single is half the pair. Simple common sense always determines the distinction between your treatment of someone who is good to you and of someone who is not. Reason determines the goodness of the first person's treatment to you and its being praiseworthy by you, as well as the ugliness of the second and its being worthy of renunciation and

punishment. Whoever doubts this is a rebel against his own reason.

Had the goodness or the evil of what we have mentioned here been matters of the legislative code, then they would not have been adopted and implemented by those who denied all divine codes such as atheists and secular rulers. In spite of their denial of religion, the latter still condone equity and goodness, determining thereupon their praise and rewards, without doubting at all the ugliness of injustice or aggression, nor the necessity to denounce such deeds and to punish their doers. Their criterion in their judgment is nothing other than reason; so, talk no more about those who belittle reason and conscience, nor of those who deny what all wise men know, ruling in the contrary of what the human nature dictates, the nature which Allāh, the Praised One, has created and embedded within His servants. He has enabled them thereby to realize facts that are discernable by their faculty of reason, just as He made them able to recognize matters through their senses and feelings. Their nature, then, demands that they should be able to rationally judge equity and the like as good, and injustice and its peers as ugly, just as being able to distinguish through the sense of taste between the sweetness of honey and the bitterness of colocynth [*citrullus colocynthis*], and through their sense of smell can they distinguish between the fragrance of musk [*chenopodium botrys*] and the stink of cadaver, and through their sense of touch can they distinguish between what is soft and what is rough, and through their faculty of seeing can they tell the difference between a pleasant and an ugly view, and through their faculty of hearing can they tell the difference between the music of the pipe and the braying of a donkey. Such is the nature which Allāh has created: "He created people in such a way; indeed, there is no way anyone can change His creation; this is the straight religion, though most people do not know (30:30)."

The Ash`aris desired to exaggerate the power of faith in the legislative system and the attitude towards a total submission to its judgment; therefore, they denied the judgment of the wise, saying that there is no judgment other than what is legislated. Thus did they become oblivious of the absolute rational theory stating that "Whatever a wise person decides should be the decision of the legislator," and heedless of the fact that they by doing so in fact left no excuse for their own selves, thus discarding any criterion whereby they might ascertain a legislative code or discard it altogether. This is so due to the fact that to arrive at such a conclusion through legislative proofs is like running in a circle, and no pretext can be applied therewith. Had there been no authority for reason, implementing tradition or consecutively reported hadīth would have been rejected. Nay! Had there been no intellect, nobody would have worshipped Allāh nor come to know Him. Expounding in this subject has been recorded in a library containing works of our renown scholars.

3) As regarding the claim of the mother of the believers that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, died on her chest, it is a claim which we reject based upon *sahīhs* sequentially reported by members of the purified progeny (ع). Refer to what others have stated as quoted by Ibn Sa`d. He quotes `Ali (ع) saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, during his ailment [preceding his demise], said: 'Fetch me my brother,' so I came to him and he asked me to come closer, and so did I; thereupon, he reclined on me. He continued reclining on me thus and talking to me, so much so that some of his saliva fell on me, then the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, breathed his last;" as stated on page 51, Part Two, Vol. 2, of the author's *Tabaqāt*, in a section about those who said that the Messenger of Allāh died in `Ali's lap. It is hadīth number 1107 on page 55, Vol. 4, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*. Abu Na`im in

his *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*, Abu Ahmed al-Fardi in his *Naskh*, and many other authors of books of traditions have all quoted `Ali (ع) saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, taught me," meaning during that sickness, "a thousand doors each one of which leads to a thousand others." It is ḥadīth number 6009 quoted at the end of page 392, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*. Whenever `Umer ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was asked about anything regarding these matters, he would say nothing other than: "Ask `Ali, since he is the one who can handle it."

Jābir ibn `Abdullāh al-Ansāri is quoted saying that Ka`b al-Ahbār once asked `Umer: "What were the last words of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny?" `Umer answered: "Ask `Ali." Ka`b did so, and `Ali (ع) said: "I let the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, recline his head on my flanks till he finally uttered: `Prayers! [i.e. uphold prayers] Prayers!'" Ka`b said: "This, indeed, is the call of all prophets, and for this purpose are they sent." Then Ka`b asked `Umer who gave the ceremonial funeral bath to the Prophet's corpse, and his answer was again: "Ask `Ali." When Ka`b asked `Ali (ع), `Ali answered that it was he who did so, as stated by Ibn Sa`d on page 51, Part Two, Vol. 2, of *Tabaqāt*, and it is ḥadīth 1106 in *Kanz al-Ummāl* quoted on page 55, Vol. 4. Ibn `Abbās was asked once: "Have you seen when the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, died, if his head was on anyone's lap?" He answered: "He died reclining on `Ali's chest." It was said to him that `Urwah narrates a tradition from `Āysha saying that he (ص) died reclining on her chest, and Ibn `Abbās denied it, asking the person who put the question forth: "Do you believe it?! By Allāh, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, died reclining his head on `Ali's chest, and Ali is the one who gave him his bath," as quoted by Ibn Sa`d on the same page mentioned above, and it is ḥadīth number 1108 of the ones

enumerated in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, page 55, Vol. 4. Ibn Sa'd cites Imām Abu Muḥammad `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn Zainul-`Ābidīn (ع) saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, breathed his last while his head was in `Ali's lap," as quoted by Ibn Sa'd on page 51.

Traditions documenting this subject are consecutively reported from all Imāms of the purified progeny (ع). Many of those who opted to deviate from their path admit that, too, so much so that Ibn Sa'd has quoted al-Sha`bi saying: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, passed away while his head was in `Ali's lap; and it was `Ali who gave him his [funeral] bath," as mentioned on the page referred to above in *Al-Tabaqāt*. The Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, used to declare the same publicly; therefore, you may refer to his statement in one of his sermons where he says: "Custodians of the ḥadīth among the companions of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, know very well that I never hesitated to implement the commandments of Allāh, nor lagged in discharging the orders of His Messenger, not even for one hour. I, by the Grace of Allāh, on many occasions risked my own life defending his, when even heroes retreated and feet slowed down, and he (ص) breathed his last while his head rested on my chest, and even his saliva fell on my hand, whereupon I rubbed it on my face. I took care of washing his corpse, the angels assisting me, and the house and its courtyards became full of the noise of angels descending and ascending..., and I never ceased hearing their prayers unto him, till we buried him; so, who is more worthy of him alive or dead than I?" as stated at the conclusion of page 196, Vol. 2, of *Nahjul Balāghah*, and on page 590, Vol. 2, of Ibn al-Ḥadīd's *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*.

So is his soliloquy when he, peace be upon him, was burying the Mistress of all Women, peace be upon her. He said:

“Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allāh, from me and from your daughter who has come now to be your neighbour, rushing to reunite with you... My patience, O Messenger of Allāh, about the death of your chosen one has run out, and my consolation has waned and withered. Deep, indeed, is my grief for being separated from you, and great is the calamity, while the extent of your grief is a source for consolation, for I laid you to sleep in the tomb of your grave, after your soul had parted from your body that was resting on my chest; therefore, we are God’s, and unto Him is our return.”

up to the end of his statement which is stated at the end of page 207, Vol. 2, of *Nahjul Balāghah*, and on page 590, Vol. 2, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by Ibn Abul Ḥadīd. Umm Salamah has also narrated an authentic ḥadīth saying: “By the One by Whom alone do I swear, `Ali was the closest to the Messenger of Allāh (ص) upon his death. We [she and Ali] visited him one afternoon, and he happily and repeatedly said: `Ali has come! `Ali has come! Fāṭima (ع) inquired whether `Ali had been sent on an errand. Later on, `Ali came again, and I thought that probably he needed to have some privacy with the Prophet (ص); so, we came out and sat at the door. I was closer to the door. The Messenger of Allāh (ص) bent his head over `Ali and started talking to him confidentially, addressing him affectionately, till he passed away; so, `Ali was the last person to be with him before his death.”⁸

Abdullāh ibn `Umer narrates the following:

“During his sickness, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, asked that his brother be fetched; so, Abu Bakr came in, but he turned away from him and reiterated his request. This time

Uthman was brought in, but he turned away from him, too. Then `Ali was called in his presence. The Prophet (ص) covered him with his own robe and reclined on him. When he came out of his room, people asked him what the Prophet (ص) had said, and he answered: "He taught me a thousand subjects each one of which leads to a thousand others."⁹

You know that this ḥadīth portrays a behaviour typical of prophets, while the other one portrays a man ruled by his lust. If a shepherd dies on his wife's chest, between her chin and navel, or on her thigh..., having laxed in looking after his herd, he would surely be labelled as wreckless and irresponsible. May Allāh forgive the mother of the believers. I wish that she, while denying `Ali such a will, had attributed the denial to her father, whom she thinks is more worthy of such a will, but her father was already in the army raised by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, under his own honourable patronage; he was in Usāmah's army which was then camping at Jurf. Anyhow, the claim that he (ص) died in her lap is attributed to nobody other than `Āysha, whereas the claim of his demise, may I sacrifice my parents for his sake, is narrated through `Ali (ع), Ibn `Abbās, Umm Salamah, `Abdullāh ibn `Umer, al-Sha`bi, `Ali ibn al-Husayn (ع), and all Imāms of the progeny of Muḥammad (ع), thus making it more reliable and more fit of the personality of the Messenger of God (ص).

4) Had `Āysha's ḥadīth been disproved by Umm Salamah alone, the latter's ḥadīth would have been preferred over hers for many reasons besides the ones mentioned above, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Refer to page 77, Vol. 2, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by the Mu'tazilite scholar, and pages 457 and its succeeding pages of the same volume, and you will find her conduct towards 'Uthmān, 'Ali and Fāṭima depicting sentimentality in its most manifest forms.

²Whoever wishes to be familiar with the details of this calamity must research the biography of Lady Mary [or Mariyya, the Copt, wife of the Prophet, pbuh], peace be upon her, on page 39, Vol. 4, of al-Hākim's *Al-Mustadrak*, or to his *Talkhīṣ* by al-Thahbi.

³From what al-Bukhārī has quoted in his explanation of Surat al-Taḥrīm in his *Saḥīḥ*, page 136, Vol. 3; so, refer to it and be amazed. There are several aḥādīth quoted from 'Umer stating that the two women who conspired against the Messenger of Allāh (ص) were 'Āysha and Ḥafṣa. There is a lengthy hadīth dealing with this issue.

⁴As quoted by al-Hākim in his biography of Asmā' in his *Saḥīḥ Al-Mustadrak*, page 37, Vol. 4, and is quoted by Ibn Sa'd who discusses her biography on page 104, Vol. 8, of his *Tabaqāt*, and the incident is very well known. It is narrated in the biography of Asma' by both authors of *Isti'āb* and *Al-Isābah*, and it is quoted by Ibn Jarīr and others.

⁵The details of this incident are preserved in the books of traditions and history; so, refer to page 294, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-Ummāl*, or page 115, Vol. 8, of Ibn Sa'd's *Tabaqāt*, where he also states the biography of Sharāf daughter of Khalīfah.

⁶This issue is quoted by the authors of books of tradition and history; so, refer to hadīth number 1020 of the ones narrated in *Kanz al-Ummāl*, page 116, Vol. 7, and it is quoted by al-Ghazālī in the third section of his treatise on marriage on page 35, Vol. 2, of *Ihyā'ul-'Ulūm*. It is also quoted in section 94 of his book *Mukāshafatul Qulūb*, at the conclusion of page 238.

⁷As quoted by al-Ghazālī in both sections of the books cited above.

⁸This ḥadīth is quoted by al-Hākīm at the beginning of page 139, Vol. 3, of his authentic *Al-Mustadrak*, succeeded by his comment: "This ḥadīth is authentic, but they [Bukhārī and Muslim] did not publish it." Al-Thahbi, too, has admitted its authenticity when he quoted it in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*. It is also quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah in his *Sunan*, and it is ḥadīth number 6096, page 400, Vol. 6, in *Kanz al-'Ummāl*.

⁹This is quoted by Abu Ya'li through a chain of narrators including Kāmil ibn Ṭalḥa, Ibn Lahī'ah, Hay ibn 'Abdul-Maghāfiri, Abu 'Abdul-Rahmān al-Hablī, ending with 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umer. It is quoted by Abu Na'im in his *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*, by Abu Ahmed al-Fardī in his own version as stated on page 392, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. Al-Tabrāni, in his book *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, has stated that when the Ṭā'if campaign was underway, the Prophet (ص) took his time in confiding with 'Ali, so much so that when Abu Bakr passed by them, he said: "O Messenger of Allāh! Your confidential talk with 'Ali has lasted for quite some time." He (ص) said: "It is not I who has confided in him; it is Allāh..." This is ḥadīth number 6075, page 399, Vol. 6, of *Kanz al-'Ummāl*. He often used to sit with 'Ali (ع) and confide in him. Once 'Āysha entered and found them engaged in a confidential conversation. Said she: "O 'Ali! I spend one day out of nine [in the company of my husband]; so, why don't you, son of Abu Tālib, leave me alone on that day?" The Prophet's face immediately showed the redness of anger. Refer to this incident at the beginning of page 78, Vol. 2, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by al-Hamīdi.

LETTER 77
Şafar 20, 1330

Why Prefer Umm Salamah's *Ḥadīth* over `Āyesha's?

As if your preference of Umm Salamah's ḥadīth to that of `Āyesha, may Allāh be pleased with them both, according to what you have stated, is not sufficient, you went a step further to claim that the reasons for such a preference are more than what you have already indicated. What are these reasons? State them, may Allāh have mercy on you, no matter how many, and do not leave any, for our aim is to research and learn, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 78
Şafar 22, 1330

More Reasons for Preferring Umm Salamah's *Ḥadīth*

Not only did Lady Umm Salamah believe wholeheartedly in the great Book of Allāh, which distinguishes between right and wrong and enjoins repentance to Allāh Almighty, as the Holy Qur'ān testifies,¹ she is not rebuked in the Qur'ān for insubordination to the Prophet nor because of her supporting the enemies of his waṣī,² nor did Allāh, Gabriel, the true believers, and the angels, all side by His Prophet against her, nor did Allāh threaten to divorce her and compensate His Prophet with a better wife than her,³ nor did He bring the example of the wives of Nūhh and Lūṭ as being in her own category,⁴ nor did she try to instigate the Prophet to make

unlawful unto himself that which Allāh has made lawful unto him,⁵ nor did the Prophet (ﷺ) preach once and point to her residence saying: "Right there is the dissension, disunity, and discord...; from there will the devil's horn come out,"⁶ nor did her manners permit her to stretch her legs before the Prophet while performing the rite of prayers, thus showing disrespect to him and to the rite of prayers, without removing them from the place of his prostration till he beckoned her to do so, then when he beckoned her, she lifted her leg till he stood up, then she put it down again...!⁷

This is how she was. As if she did not scandalize and arouse people against `Uthmān, calling him "Na`thal," saying, *verbatim*, "*Uqtulu Na`thal faqad kafar!*" ("Kill Na`thal, for he has turned *kafir* [disbeliever]."⁸ As if she did not go out of her house, after having been commanded by Allāh Almighty to settle therein,⁹ ride her camel `Askar and lead an army,¹⁰ descending a hill or ascending a mountain. Yet she did not yield to advice but insisted on leading the army which she had raised to fight the Imām.¹¹ Her statement that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) died on her chest, therefore, is as good as her statement claiming that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) saw a few Sudanese men playing at their mosque with their shields and spears, and he supposedly asked her if she liked to have a look at them, to which invitation she responded in the affirmative. `Āyesha goes on to say: "He let me stand behind him, my cheek on his, and said: `O Sons of Arfada, keep on!'" supposedly encouraging them to play so that the lady might be entertained, till he asked her if she saw enough. Upon saying "Yes," he told her to leave.¹² And it is similar to her other story in which she claims: "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) came in once when I had two concubines singing for me excitingly. He lay down on the bed. Abu Bakr entered and rebuked me saying: `Do I hear Satan's pipe being played in the presence of the Messenger of Allāh?!' The Messenger of

Allāh (ﷻ) approached him, telling him to leave them alone."¹³

Yet similar to it is another story. She says: "The Prophet raced with me once and I outran him. We kept doing so for years during which I gained weight, and when he outran me, he said: 'This [game] cancels that!'" as quoted by Imām Ahmed in `Āyesha's ḥadīth on page 39, Vol. 6, of his Musnad. Or like her statement: "I used to play with girls, and some of my friends would come to play with me, and the Messenger of Allāh used to let them in so that I would play with them," which is quoted by Imām Ahmed who discusses `Āyesha on page 75, Vol. 6, of his Musnad. Or like yet another story of hers quoted by Ibn Abu Shaybah, and it is ḥadīth number 1017 of the aḥādīth narrated by Ibn Abu Shaybah in Vol 7 of *Kanz al-Ummāl*: "I have acquired seven merits no woman, other than Mary daughter of `Umrān, was endowed with: The angel of revelation descended in my own form; the Messenger of Allāh married me as a virgin whom no man ever touched before; the revelation descended upon him while we were having intercourse; he loved me more than any other woman; several verses of the Qur`ān were revealed on my behalf that almost caused the nation to perish; I saw Gabriel while none of the other wives of the Prophet saw him besides me; and he breathed his last in my house while nobody was there except I and the angel of death."¹⁴ Other "aḥādīth" which she has narrated go in more details about her "merits," all falling in the same pattern.

Regarding Umm Salamah, suffices her for a merit her loyalty to her *wali* and Prophet's waṣi. She was well-known for her terse opinion and great intellect, strong faith, suggestion on the Day of Ḥudaybiya which testified to her intellectual prowess, wise judgment and lofty status; may Allāh bestow mercy and blessings on her, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is a reference to the following verse in Sūrat al-Tahrīm: "If you both repent to Allāh, then your hearts have submitted to Allāh."

²Her insubordination to the vicegerent is manifested by her denial of the existence of the Prophet's will to him, and by bearing grudge towards him as long as he lived. As regarding her insubordination to the Prophet (ص), and Allah's readiness to side with His Prophet (ص) against her, this is proven by the verse saying: "If they become insubordinate to him, then (suffices him that) Allāh is his Mawla, and so are Gabriel and the righteous among the believers, and even the angels support him (Qur'ān, 66:4)."

³This ḥadīth and the one that precedes it is a reference to the verse "It could be that if he divorces you, his Lord will bless him with wives better than you, submitting to Allah, truly believing in Him."

⁴This is a reference to the statement of the Almighty: "Allāh has struck for those who disbelieved the example of the wife of Nūh and the wife of Lūt," to the end of the chapter.

⁵This is a reference to the verse: "O Messenger! Why do you make unlawful what Allāh has made lawful unto you, seeking to please your wives (Qur'ān, 66:1)?"

⁶This is quoted by al-Bukhāri in his section dealing with stories about what went on at the homes of the Prophet's wives in his dissertation on the issues of holy wars and the Prophet's biography in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. It also is on page 125, Vol. 2, following his chapter on the injunction of the *khums* and its payment. Its wording in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* is as follows: "The Messenger of Allah came out of `Āysha's house and said: `Satan's horn shall come out of this

place;" so refer to page 503 of its second volume [original Arabic text].

⁷Refer to Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, his section dealing with what deeds are lawful while performing the prayers, page 143, Vol. 1.

⁸Her scandalizing `Uthmān and denouncing many of his actions, her calling him names, and her statement: "Kill Na`thal, for he has turned infidel," are hardly overlooked by any book containing such events and affairs. Suffices you what exists in the books of history by Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-Athīr, and by others. Some individuals denounced her behaviour and composed poetry in this regard such as:

You started something and schemed,
Like winds blown and rain streamed;
You ordered them to slay the Imām,
Claiming he reneged from Islām...

Up to the conclusion of these verses which are quoted on page 80, Vol. 3, of Ibn al-Athīr's *Al-Kāmil*, after reference was made as to how the Battle of the Camel started.

⁹That is, when the Almighty says: "And remain at your homes, and do not decorate your selves as you used to do during the days of *jāhiliyya* (Qur'ān, 33:33)."

¹⁰The camel `Ayesha was riding during the Baṣra incident was called `Askar. It was brought to her by Ya`li ibn Umayyah, and it was huge, masculine. When she saw it, she liked it, but when she came to know that its name was `Askar, she changed her mind and said: "Return it, for I have no need for it." She stated that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) had informed her of such name and forbidden her from riding it; so, they changed its saddle and brought it back to her saying: "We have found another one for you, larger and stronger." Thus, she was pleased with it. This incident is mentioned by a number of writers of history and of biographies;

so, refer to page 80, Vol. 2, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah* by the Mu`tazilite scholar.

¹¹The ḥadīth in this regard is quite famous, and it is one of the signs of true prophethood and miracles of Islam. It has been summarized by Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal while quoting `Āyesha's ḥadīth in his *Musnad*, pages 52 and 97, Vol. 6. Hākim did likewise, quoting it on page 120, Vol. 3, of his authentic *Mustadrak*, and al-Thahbi admitted the same when he quoted it in his *Talkhīs al-Mustadrak*.

¹²This ḥadīth about her is undisputed. It is quoted by both shaykhs in their *sahīhs*; so, you may refer to Bukhāri's *Sahīh*, the beginning of his section on both `Īds, page 116, Vol. 1, and refer to Muslim's *Sahīh*, his section on permissible sports during the days of the eid, page 327, Vol. 1. Also refer to Aḥmed's *Musnad*, page 57, Vol. 6.

¹³This is quoted by al-Bukhāri, Muslim, and Imām Aḥmed from `Āyesha's ḥadīth which we referenced in the footnote above.

¹⁴It is unanimously agreed upon that he (ص) died in the presence of `Ali (ع), and that `Ali (ع) was nursing him and aiding him; so, how can it be accurate to claim that he died while nobody was there except `Āyesha and the angel of death? Where were `Ali (ع) and `Abbās then? And where were Fātima (ع) and Safiyya? Or where were the Prophet's consorts and all the descendants of Hāshim? How did they leave him to `Āyesha alone? It is also quite obvious that Mary, peace be upon her, did not really possess any of the seven virtues the mother of believers attributes to her; so, what is the wisdom of her using her as the only exception?

LETTER 79
Şafar 23, 1330

Consensus Endorses al-Şiddīq's Caliphate

If what you have said about the covenant and the will, as well as the clear texts, is proven accurate, then what can you say about the nation's consensus to nominate [Abu Bakr] al-Şiddīq? Its consensus is an unequivocal proof that testifies to his statement (ص): "My nation's consensus shall never occur regarding anything wrong," and his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "My nation's word shall never be misleading;" so, what do you have to say about that?

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 80
Şafar 24, 1330

No Consensus

We say that the meaning of his (ص) statements: "My nation's consensus shall never occur regarding anything wrong," and "My nation's word shall never be misleading," is that he (ص) negates the error, or the misguidance, of the issue regarding which the nation arbitrates; thus, the nation will be reaching a unanimous endorsement in that issue's regard. This is the meaning of such traditions, and nothing else. As regarding the matter which is considered by a group of individuals of the nation who decided to carry it out, successfully forcing it even on those who had a say, their carrying it out does not prove its validity. The pledge of allegiance taken at the *saqīfa* was not

an issue regarding consultation; rather, it was something which was undertaken by the second caliph and by Abu `Ubaydah and a group of their friends, then they took by surprise those who actually had the authority to do and undo, assisted by contemporary circumstances. Thus did they finally achieve what they had aspired. Abu Bakr himself declared that the oath of allegiance which he had received was conducted neither in accordance with consultation nor wisdom. He did so when he delivered a sermon at the dawn of his caliphate in which he apologized to the public saying: "The allegiance which I have received is a rash slip from the evil of which Allāh has protected us, and there was a presentiment regarding dissension."¹ `Umer testified to the same fact in front of many eye-witnesses when he delivered a sermon from the pulpit of the Prophet's Mosque one Friday shortly before the conclusion of his reign, a sermon the news of which became widely publicized. Al-Bukhāri has included it in his *Sahīh*,² and I would like to quote it for you here *verbatim*:

"It has come to my knowledge that someone³ has said that if `Umer dies, he will swear the oath of allegiance to so-and-so; therefore, let nobody hesitate from saying that the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr was a slip that was driven home, for it was exactly so, yet Allāh protected us from the evil of its consequences... Whoever swears the oath of allegiance to someone prior to consulting others, doing so only out of fear of being killed if he did not, then he should not do it at all [and accept death instead]...⁴ One of the rumours circulated about us when Allāh took His Messenger (ص) away from us is that the Ansār differed from us in their views; they all assembled at the *saqifa* [shed] of Bani Sā`idah; besides them, `Ali (ع) and al-Zubayr, and their followers, differed, too..."

He continued to point out what had happened at the shed, the disputes and differences of opinion, the voices that rose out of concern for the safety of the religion, etc. It was under those circumstances that `Umer swore allegiance to Abu Bakr.

It is a fact well-known by those who research the events that prevented the members of the Prophet's household (ع), the custodians of the Message, from attending the allegiance [inauguration] ceremony. They were detained at `Ali's house together with Salmān, Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri, al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad al-Kindi, `Ammār ibn Yāsir, al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwām, Khuzaymah ibn Thābit, Abu ibn Ka`b, Farwah ibn `Amr ibn Wadqah al-Anṣāri, al-Barā' ibn `Āzib, Khālid ibn Sa`d ibn al-`Ās al-Amawi, and many others. So, how can it be said that there was a consensus in spite of the fact that all these men, including Muḥammad's progeny (ع), who are to the nation like the head to the body, the eyes to the face, the descendants of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) and the custodians of his knowledge, the ones who are peers only to and the companions of the Book of Allāh, the arks of the nation's redemption, and the gates of its salvation, the nation's protection against straying, and the standard-bearers of its guidance, as we have proven above...,⁵ did not attend? But their dealing requires no proof if conscientiously discerned.

Both Bukhāri and Muslim,⁶ in their *sahīhs*, in addition to many other renown traditionists and historians, have all proven the fact that `Ali (ع) did not participate in the allegiance process, and that he did not reconcile and make peace except after the mistress of the ladies of the world (ع) had joined her father (ص) [in Paradise], six months thereafter, compelled by the general Islamic interest during those very critical circumstances. The testimony to these facts comes from `Ayesha herself who says: "Al-Zahrā' (ع) boycotted Abu Bakr and did not speak to him after the demise of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) till she died, and when `Ali (ع) made peace with them, he accused them of depriving him of his

place in the caliphate.” This ḥadīth, as you can see, does not mention anything about his swearing the oath of allegiance to them. How thought-provoking his statement is when he addresses Abu Bakr thus:

If you had argued with them, kinship claiming,
Then others are closer to the Prophet and more
deserving;
And if through consultation you took control,
How so when those with counsel were not there at
all?!⁷

Al-`Abbās ibn `Abdul-Muttalib had used the same argument with Abu Bakr, as Ibn Qutaybah discusses him on page 16 of his book *Al-Imāma wal Siyāsa*, telling him once: “If you demanded what you demanded through kinship to the Messenger of Allāh (ص), then you had confiscated our own. If you had demanded it due to your position among Muslims, then ours is a more prestigious than yours. If this affair is accomplished when the believers are pleased with it, then it cannot be so as long as we are displeased therewith.”

So; tell me where is the consensus you are talking about, having heard what the uncle of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), the one who was his father's peer, stated, in addition to the statement of his cousin, brother and executor of his will, as well as the statements of all his household and kin?

Sincerely,
Sh

⁷This is quoted by Abu Bakr Ahmed ibn `Abdul-`Azīz al-Jawhari in his book *Al-Saqīfa* and by Ibn Abul-Ḥadīd on page 132, Vol. 1, of his *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*.

²Refer to the *sahīh*, his chapter on the stoning of the woman who becomes pregnant out of adultery if she gets married, page 119, Vol. 4. It is also quoted by several authors of books of tradition and history such as Ibn Jarīr and al-Ṭabari who discuss the events of the year 11 in the *tarīkh* [history] book of each, and it is transmitted by Ibn Abul-Hadīd on page 122, Vol. 1, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*.

³The one who is making a statement is Ibn al-Zubayr, and his statement is: "By Allāh! As soon as `Umer dies, I will swear the oath of allegiance to `Ali, for allegiance to Abu Bakr was a slip by the nation that safely passed by." `Umer, therefore, was extremely angry, and he delivered the said sermon. This is stated by many of those who have commented on al-Bukhāri. Refer to the explanation of this hadīth in al-Qastalāni's *Sharh*, page 352, Vol. 11, and you will find the author quoting al-Balathiri with regards to surnames, admitting the authenticity of this hadīth according to its endorsement by both shaykhs.

⁴In his commentary on this hadīth, Ibn al-Athīr has stated that the statement's gist is that they feared being murdered. The meaning of the whole hadīth, therefore, is something like: "The allegiance must come as a result of consultation and consensus; so, if two men split from the group and one of them swears the fealty of allegiance to the other, then they both have departed from the group and consensus. If one receives the oath of allegiance, then he should not be one of them; rather, they both have to be isolated from the group that agrees to distinguish its own Imam from the rest. Otherwise, if one of them receives the oath of allegiance, after having committed a heinous act which caused the group to do without them, then there is no guarantee that both persons will commit murder." It is one of the dictates of the justice described by `Umer who passed such a judgment on himself and his friend just as he passed it on others. Prior to his said sermon, he had stated the following: "Swearing the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr was a slip against whose evil Allāh has protected us; so, you should kill whoever repeats it." This statement became extremely famous, and many narrators of historical events transmitted it, including scholar

Ibn Abul-Hadīd on page 123, Vol. 1, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*.

⁵Refer to Letter No. 6 and its following pages up to the end of Letter No. 12, and you will come to know the prestige meted to Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them.

⁶Refer to al-Bukhāri's *Sahīh*, and read the last lines of his chapter on Khaybar's campaign on page 39, Vol. 3. Also refer to Muslim's *Sahīh*, to his chapter on the Prophet's statement: "We do not leave behind us anything, for whatever we leave is for charity," in his treatise on holy wars and biographies on page 72, Vol. 2, and you will find the matter as we have detailed it.

⁷Both of these poetic verses are included in *Nahjul Balāghah*. Ibn Abul-Hadīd has said so while explaining them in his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*, page 319, Vol. 4, adding, "His statement is addressed to Abu Bakr, for Abu Bakr argued with the Anṣār at the *saqīfa*, saying: 'We are the progeny of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and his nutshell;' so, when he argued about the allegiance, claiming that it was done by those who had a say, `Ali (ع) said: 'As regarding your argument with the Anṣār saying that you belong to the progeny of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and are among his kin, others are closer in kinship to him than you; as regarding your argument of being elected and that the masses are pleased with you, there many *sahaba* who were not present there; so, how can it be called consensus?'" Shaykh Muḥammad `Abdoh has made two comments on these verses summarizing what Ibn Abul-Hadīd has said while explaining them.

LETTER 81
Şafar 28, 1330

Consensus Concluded When Dispute Dissipated.

Sunnis do not deny the fact that the allegiance was not taken after consultation or serious consideration. Rather, they admit that it took place suddenly and unexpectedly. They do not deny going against the wish of the Anşār and their preference of Sa`d, nor in opposing the descendants of Hāshim and their followers from the Muhājirūn and Anşār who joined the Imām (ع) in his boycott. But they say that the caliphate was finally vested upon Abu Bakr who was accepted by everyone as the Imām; dispute dissipated, hostilities halted, and everyone became determined to support al-Şiddīq and provide him with counsel in secrecy and in public; therefore, they fought in his wars, they supported him when he concluded a peace treaty, and they carried out his orders. Nobody at all differed in that regard, thus a total consensus was finally reached, and the consignment of caliphate was accomplished; praise be to Allāh for having united their word after their dissension, and for unifying their hearts after their discord, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 82
Şafar 30, 1330

Consensus Was *Not* Concluded; Dissension Did *Not* Dissipate!

Their consolidation in supporting al-Ṣiddīq, and their providing him with counsel in secrecy and in public, is one thing; the validity of the consignment of the caliphate through consensus is quite another. They are not correlated judged by reason or tradition, for `Ali and all the infallible Imāms from his descendants (ع) have a well-known policy in supporting the Islamic authority; it is the same whereby we worship Allāh. I mention it here in answer to what you have stated. It may be summed up thus: They believe that the Muslim nation can never rise to glory except through a state that unites its populace, mends any crack in its structure, protects its borders, and safeguards its undertakings. Such a state cannot be established except by subjects who support it with their lives and possessions. If it is possible for such a state to be led by a legitimate statesman who represents in the true sense of the word the government of the Messenger of Allāh, then he is the one to be assigned for such a responsibility rather than anyone else. But if this becomes impossible, and the government is usurped by someone else, then the nation has to support him in every issue upon which the dignity and fortitude of Islam hinges, and so do the protection of the borders of the Islamic state, and the safeguarding of its national security.

It is not permissible to divide the Muslims or create discord among them by opposing him; rather, the nation has to treat him, albeit if he is a slave with amputated limbs, the treatment meted to rightful caliphs, entrusting him with the land's *khirāj* tax and his share thereof, the *zakat* of cattle and other items, etc. It has the right to take the same from him through the sale and purchase, as well as all means of property transfers, such as by way of awards, gifts, and the like.

There is no doubt about the clearing of conscience of one who pays him liabilities, as though he is paying them to the Imām of truth, and the rightful caliph. This is the path of

`Ali and the purified Imāms from his descendants (ع). The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has said: "There will be after me favouritism, and unpleasant matters," as stated in one ḥadīth narrated by `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd which is quoted by Muslim on page 118, Vol. 2, of his *Sahīh*, and by many authors of *sahīhs* and *sunan*. People asked him (ص): "O Messenger of Allāh! What do you enjoin one of us who witnesses them to do?" He (ص) answered: "Perform your obligations, and pray Allāh for the attainment of what rightfully belongs to you." Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri, may Allāh be pleased with him, is also quoted by Muslim in Vol. 2 of his *Sahīh* as saying, "My friend the Messenger of Allāh (ص) advised me to listen and to obey even [a ruler who is] a slave whose limbs are amputated." Salamah al-Ju`fi is quoted by Muslim and others asking the Messenger of Allāh (ص): "O Messenger of Allāh! Suppose we are ruled by those who require us to discharge our duties towards them while they themselves decline to grant us our rights, what do you advise us to do then?" He (ص) answered him saying, "Listen and obey, for they will bear the burden of their sins, and you will bear yours." In one particular ḥadīth quoted by Muslim on page 120, Vol. 2, of his *Sahīh*, which is narrated by all authors of books of traditions, Huthayfah al-Yemāni, may Allāh be pleased with him, quotes the Prophet (ص) saying: "There will be rulers after me who will neither guide according to my guidance, nor follow my Sunnah; and there will be among them men whose hearts are like those of the devils' clad in human form." Huthayfah asked him (ص): "What shall I do then, O Messenger of Allāh, if I happen to witness that?" He (ص) answered: "You shall listen to the ruler and obey him; if he whips your back and confiscates your property, you will still have [no choice but] to listen and obey." Similar to this ḥadīth is one narrated by Umm Salamah thus: "There will be [unjust] rulers over you, and you will either acknowledge [their being unjust] or deny it. Those who acknowledge shall be

considered innocent, while those who deny it will be saved from chastisement.”¹ They asked him (ص): “Are we not supposed to fight them?” He answered: “No, as long as they uphold their prayers.”

Sahābs are consecutively reported in narrating the above quoted traditions, especially through the purified progeny (ع). For this reason, the latter remained persevering as they saw eye-sores, and they kept tongue-tied, acting upon these sacred commandments and upon others whereby they were bound. They were enjoined to persevere while suffering as they felt forced to overlook eye-sores, safeguarding the unity of the nation, and keeping it intact. They abided by the gist of these texts while dealing with those who were entrusted with faring with the affairs of the Muslims. While being aware of the fact that they themselves were more worthy of being in their shoes, they tasted the bitterness of colocynth, hoping they might be able one day to lead them to the Right Path. The ascension of those individuals to power was more painful to them than the blows of sharp swords, yet they tolerated it only to fulfill the covenant, discharge the commitment, and carry out their duties as far as the Shari`a is concerned, favouring—while opposing such rulers—to prefer what is most important over what is more important. For this reason, the Commander of the Faithful (ع) tried his best to provide counsel to all three caliphs, exerting himself in providing them with advice.

Whoever acquaints himself with his policy during their epoch will come to know that he, having lost all hope to get his indisputable right to succeed the Messenger of Allāh (ص), willingly took to reclusion, preferring to make asylum with those in authority. He did not fight them while seeing his promised throne in their grip, nor did he oppose them openly. He did so only in order to maintain the solidification of the nation and safeguard the creed, always keeping the religion's interest in mind, preferring the life hereafter to this one. He

suffered from agonies which nobody else suffered. He was agonized by two calamities: the caliphate in its texts and commandments was earnestly pleading to him in a heart-rending voice on one hand, and, on the other hand, oppressive discord was warning him against a possible mutiny in the peninsula. There was a possible danger of bedouin Arabs renouncing their religion, thus annihilating the Islamic creed. The faith was being threatened by the hypocrites of Medīna in whose nature hypocrisy was immersed, and who were aided by the hypocritical bedouins around them, according to the text of the Book (Qur'ān). Nay, the latter party was even worse in disbelief and hypocrisy than the first, so much so that it was better they did not know the limits of what Allāh had revealed to His Messenger (ص).

The loss of the Prophet (ص) emboldened the latter, and Muslims became in the aftermath like frightened cattle in a winter night, surrounded by wolves and ferocious brutes. While their fellows were quite active in their attempts to wipe out the religion of Islam and crush the Muslims, the Romans, the Kisras and others were waiting in anticipation, to the end of the list of such thronging elements that bore grudge against Muḥammad, the progeny of Muḥammad, and the companions of Muḥammad (ص). These parties bore animosity towards and felt jealous of the message of Islam; they desired to demolish its foundations, and undermining its might. In such endeavour, they would be very quick, seeing that they had their golden opportunity in the departure of the Prophet to his Supreme Companion. The chance had ripened then for them to make use of the chaos before Islam had recovered its strength and organization. It was then that the Commander of the Faithful (ع) realized both dangers, and it was only natural that he would sacrifice his own right in order to sustain the religion of Islam, thus preferring the general interest to that of his own.

This is how such confusion ended, and the dispute between him and Abu Bakr was suspended, for he dreaded nothing save the disunity of Muslims and was concerned only that the Muslims should have the upper hand. So, he, all members of his household, their supporters from the Immigrants and Anṣār, remained patiently tongue-tied even as they saw eye-sores. His speech after the Messenger of Allāh (ص) had departed is very frank in reflecting this attitude, and relevant reports are consecutive through the Imāms of the purified progeny.

But the head of the Anṣār, Sa`d ibn `Abādah, never made asylum with the first two caliphs, and he was never seen in public accompanying either of them during an `Īd celebration or on a Friday, and he never subscribed to their views, nor did he ever yield to their orders, till he was assassinated in Hurān during the reign of the second caliph, and his assassins claimed that he was killed by the jinns. He made a memorable statement during the *saqīfah* incident, but we see no need to quote it here.²

As regarding his friends such as Habān ibn al-Munthir³ and other Anṣāris, these succumbed unwillingly, yielding to pressure; so, do you consider the actions dictated by the fear of the sword or the burning by the fire⁴ as a belief in the consignment of the allegiance? Or is it a testimony to such “consensus” implied in the statement of the Prophet (ص) saying “My nation shall never commit an error in its consensus of opinion”? Please state your verdict; may Allāh reward you, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This *hadīth* is quoted by Muslim on page 122, Vol. 2, of his *Sahīh*. The meaning of his phrase (ص) “Whoever knows it is

innocent" is that whoever knew the abomination and identifies it as such will have a path leading to dissociation from its sin and punishment by changing it with his own hand or tongue, but if he cannot, then let him abhor it by his heart.

²Sa`d ibn `Abādah, Thābit's father, was one of those present at the taking of the allegiance at `Aqaba. He is also a participant in Badr and other battles. He was chief of al-Khazraj and their envoy, a generous man and a chief among the Anṣār. His statement, to which we have referred, fills books of biographies and histories. Suffices you what Ibn Qutaybah has said in his treatise on Imāmate and politics, Ibn Jarīr al-Tabari in his *Tarīkh*, Ibn al-Athīr in his *Al-Kāmil*, Abu Bakr Ahmed ibn `Abdul-`Aīz al-Jawhari in his book *Al-Saqīfa*, and others.

³Habāb was one of the chiefs of the Anṣār and a hero of Badr and Uhud, a man of feats and a glorious record. He is the one who said: "I am [as strong and firm as] a wooden post rubbed by camels, and a sweet fruit very much coveted. I am the son of a lion in his own den; by Allāh, if you so desire, we would go back to wage a war that would grind even youngsters." He said other much stronger statements, and we thought it would be wiser to refrain from quoting them here.

⁴Their threat to `Ali to burn his house is proven by absolute *tawātur*. Consider what Imām Ibn Qutaybah has said at the beginning of his chapter on Imāmate and politics, Imām al-Ṭabari in two places where he discusses the events of the year 11 A.H. in his famous *Tarīkh*, Ibn `Abd Rabbih al-Māliki in his hadīth of the *saqīfa* as quoted in Vol. 1, page 134, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*] by al-Hamīdi al-Hadīdi, al-Mas`ūdi in *Murūj al-Thahab* quoting `Urwah ibn al-Zubayr when the latter apologized on behalf of his brother `Abdullāh who almost started setting the houses of the descendants of Hāshim on fire because they boycotted his allegiance, al-Shahristāni who quotes al-Nizām while discussing the Nizāmi group in his book *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*. Abu Mikhnaf has dedicated for the narratives related to the *saqīfa* an entire book in which he details what we have summarized here, not to mention

the fame and *tawātur* of this ḥadīth, in addition to these poetic verses by al-Hāfiz Ibrahīm which are famous as the “Umeri poem”:

A statement `Umer said to `Ali; so think for a while;
 Its listener venerate, respect the speaker and bear:
 “Shall I burn your house and make of its ashes a pile
 Should you choose to be stubborn and not swear
 The oath of allegiance, even if and while
 The Chosen One's daughter is inside there?”
 None other than Abu Hafṣ was the speaker
 Addressing Adnān's Knight and Protector...

Thus did they treat the Imām (ع) without whose agreement, consensus according to our view can never be binding; so, we ask all those who are fair-minded how can their “consensus” be binding upon us, since the case is as such?

LETTER 83
Rabi`ul-Awwal 2, 1330

Can You Compromise the Text's Accuracy With the Companions' Truthfulness?

Those who are endowed with a discreet insight and keen comprehension regard the companions as being above doing anything contrary to the wish of the Prophet (ص) in whatever he bids or forbids, neither do they permit anything other than such a policy. Therefore, they could not have heard the text regarding the Imām once, twice or thrice, then deviated therefrom. And how can you describe such companions to be truthful had they heard the text about him then refrained from following it? I do not think that you are able to compromise both [contradictory] situations, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
 S

LETTER 84
Rabi`ul-Awwal 5, 1330

- I Compromising the Text's Accuracy With Their Truthfulness,**
- II Rationalizing the Imām's Reluctance to Demand his Right.**

1) Our legacy of traditions, which has been left to us by those companions, indicates that the latter adhered to all texts as long as they were relevant to the faith, concerned about the matters related to the Hereafter, such as his (ص) *hadīth*

regarding the obligatory fast during the month of Ramadān rather than any other month, facing only the *qibla* while performing the obligatory prayers, the number of obligatory prayers during the day or the night, the number of rak`at [prostrations] in each, as well as how to perform them, his hadīth that the ceremonial *tawaf* around the House [Ka'ba] is seven times, and such ahādīth aiming at the achievement of divine rewards in the life to come.

As regarding his texts that deal with political matters such as succession, government, administration, legislation, invasions, etc., they did not see that they had to follow or adhere to them in all circumstances; rather, they allowed themselves to practice a measure of research, discretion, and *ijtihad*. If they saw in opposing such texts a promotion of their cause, or an advantage to their power, they would oppose them. They may even seek to please the Prophet by doing just so. They were convinced that the Arabs would neither accept `Ali's rule nor follow a text in such a matter, since he pressured them a great deal while enforcing the Will of Allāh in their regard, spilling their blood with his sword in while promoting the Word of Allāh, dismantling all their masks while defending the truth, till Allāh's Will became dominant in spite of every infidel. So, they would not obey him willingly, nor would they follow such texts except by force, having attributed to him the spilling of all blood in the way of Islam during the life-time of the Prophet (ص), according to their custom of retaliation in such circumstances, for they saw him as the only candidate upon whom they would seek revenge, especially since seeking revenge is usually done to the best among the foe's tribesmen, and the choicest of its clans. They knew that he was the best among the Hashimites, after the Messenger of Allāh (ص), without any doubt or dispute. For this reason, the Arabs waited for a chance to annihilate him; they sought means to deal with him, and they bore a great deal of grudge against him and his

descendants, till they leaped over them in a way that became well-known everywhere, and its shame filled the earth and the skies.

There is another reason: Quraysh in particular and the Arabs in general used to criticize `Ali's might in dealing with the enemies of Allāh, the forcefulness of his method of dealing with those who trespass the limits of Allāh or permit what He prohibited. They feared his enjoining right and forbidding wrong; they dreaded his justice in dealing with the subjects and his equity in every public issue. Nobody hoped for his concession nor dreamed of his compromise. The mighty and powerful are weak till he executes justice on them, and the weak and downtrodden are strong and dignified when he grants them what is rightfully theirs. So, how can the Arabs willingly submit to a man like that while "They are the foremost in disbelief and hypocrisy, so much so that they ought not know the limits of what Allāh has revealed unto His Messenger (Qur'ān, 9:97)," and "Among the people of Medīna are those who are stubborn in hypocrisy; you [O Our Prophet Muhammad] do not know them; We know them (Qur'an, 9:101), and among them are those who do not hesitate to commit anything insane.

There is still another reason. Quraysh in particular and Arabs in general used to envy him for the favours Allāh bestowed upon him. He has been uplifted by Allāh, His Messenger and the wise, to a sublime status due to his knowledge and feats; peers fall short of their attainment; those qualified hesitated to attempt to compete with him. He has, through his feats and attributes, won a status from Allāh and His Messenger coveted by the hopeful, and a prestige unattainable by the most ambitious. For these reasons, jealousy filled the hearts of the hypocrites. The spiteful, ungrateful, and unequitable hypocrites, in addition to opportunists, all agreed not to discharge their responsibility

towards him; therefore, they left these texts behind their backs, entrusting them to oblivion.

It was what it was, I shall never discuss the views;
So, entertain good thoughts; do not ask about the
news.

Also, Quraysh and all other Arabs had by then coveted political dominance for their own respective tribes, and their ambition extended thereto. For this reason, they decided to discard the covenant and were determined to ignore the will. So, they all collaborated to forget the text, pledging not to mention it at all. They all agreed to divert the caliphate, since its inception, from its rightful candidate, who was assigned to it by their Prophet, and make it through election and choice, so that each one of their quarters might have a justification for hoping to attain it, though after a while. Had they followed the text and advanced `Ali to succeed the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, such caliphate would never have left his purified progeny, since he had equated his progeny on the Ghadīr Day, as well as on other occasions, to the perfect Book of Allāh, describing them as models for the wise till the Day of Judgment. The Arabs would not have been able to tolerate the confinement of caliphate to one particular dynasty, especially when all their tribes coveted it, and it was sought by all those who wanted it for their own camps.

It has, indeed, withered, weakened, and waned:
A skeleton unwanted even by one with funds drained.

Also, whoever knows the history of Quraysh and the Arabs at the dawn of Islam would come to know that they did not yield to the Hāshimite Prophethood except after being annihilated, being powerless; so, how could they have agreed

that Hāshim's descendants should monopolize both prophethood and caliphate? `Umer ibn al-Khattāb once said to Ibn `Abbās in a dialogue between them: "Quraysh hated that both prophethood and caliphate should be confined to your household for fear you might oppress other people."¹

2) The good ancestors then could not force those folks to implement the spirit of the text for fear they might rebel if they did, and in apprehension of the dire consequences of disputing regarding such an issue. Hypocrisy surfaced immediately after the demise of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, and the might of the hypocrites increased by such a loss. The dark souls of the infidels grew darker, the foundations of the faith weakened, and the hearts of the Muslims waned, so much so that they became like frightened cattle in a winter night, surrounded by wolves and ferocious beasts. One group among the Arabs reneged, while another contemplated doing so, as we explained in Letter No. 82 above. Under such circumstances, `Ali (ع) feared dire consequences resulting from rushing matters if he took upon himself to take charge, knowing how people's hearts were, as we have described, with the hypocrites being what they were, biting their fingers in rage, and the renegades as we have clarified, while the polytheist nations were just as we have previously indicated. The Anṣārs had differed and deviated from the Muhājirūn, saying, "Let us choose our ruler and you choose yours, etc." His concern about the faith prompted him to refrain from demanding the caliphate for himself and overlooking certain matters, knowing that demanding the caliphate under such circumstances would endanger the nation and jeopardize the safety of the faith; so, he opted to refrain just in preference of the interest of Islam and that of the common welfare, of the good of the future to that of the present.

He, therefore, remained at home, refusing to give his allegiance till he was forced to leave, just to silently enforce his own right, silently defying those who forsook him. Had he rushed to give his allegiance, he would have had neither argument nor pretext, but he, by doing so, safeguarded both religion and his own right to rule the believers, thus proving the originality of his mind, his overwhelming clemency, his patience and preference of the public interest to that of his own. Any soul that gives so much while facing so much affliction is sure to be rewarded by Allāh with divine rewards. His objective was indeed to seek the pleasure of Allāh in that epoch as well as in the epochs to come.

As regarding the three caliphs and their supporters, these have interpreted the text regarding his succession in the manner which we have indicated above. This should not surprise us at all once we come to know how they interpret and personally comprehend other texts of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, regarding issues such as succession, government, administration, legislation, etc. They probably did not consider them to be religious issues; so, it was easy for them to practically oppose them. When they finally took charge, they stuck to a policy of overlooking such texts, promising to punish those who would mention or even allude to them. When they succeeded in enforcing order, the dissemination of the religion of Islam, the invasion of nations, and the acquisition of wealth and power, they did not become corrupt in their own personal desires, and that elevated them and caused them to win people's respect, confidence, and love. People followed suit in forgetting about that text, and when Banu Omayyah succeeded them, the latter's main objective became the extinction and annihilation of the Prophet's household. In spite of all this, a few correct texts have reached us and have been protected in authentic books of traditions; these suffice for proof; praise be to Allāh, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This is quoted by Ibn Abul-Ḥadīd on page 107, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, while discussing an issue worthy of the attention of researchers which is also discussed by Ibn al-Athīr near the conclusion of `Umer's biography on page 24, Vol. 3, of his *Al-Kāmil* before discussing the story of the "consultation."

LETTER 85
Rabi'ul-Awwal 7, 1330

Requesting Narration of Incidents Wherein They Did Not Follow the Texts of *Hadīh*.

I have received your latest letter and found it miraculous in proving possible what we thought to be impossible, amazing in its portrayal of imagery in the most explicit depiction; so, praised be the One Who has simplified for you even the most complex demonstration, bestowing upon you the reins of elucidation, till you achieved what cannot be achieved by all means and won what cannot be won by the hopeful. We thought that the causes are not related to what the authentic texts have implied, and that there is no way to explicitly prove that they deviated therefrom. Yet I wish you had recounted the incidents wherein they did not follow the explicit texts, so that appropriateness becomes obvious, and the path of guidance manifests itself. I request you, therefore, to elaborate on this matter, in the light of their well-known traditions, digesting whatever is written in the books of chronicles regarding their way of thinking. Wassalamo Alaikom.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 86
Rabi'ul-Awwal 8, 1330

- I Thursday's Calamity,**
II The Reason Why the Prophet Repealed His Order Then.

1) The incidents in which they did not follow the texts of hadīth are innumerable. Take, for example, the calamity on Thursday, which is the most famous of such incidents and the most abominable among them. It is narrated by all authors of *sahīhs* and *sunan*, and it was documented by all traditionists and historians. Suffices you what al-Bukhāri, in his section dealing with the statement of the ailing Messenger (ﷺ): "Get away from me," on page 5, Vol. 4, of his *Sahīh*, where the author relies on the authority of `Ubaydullāh ibn Abdullāh ibn `Utbah ibn Mas`ūd who quotes Ibn `Abbās saying that when death approached the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, his house was full of men including `Umer ibn al-Khattāb. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "Let me write you something that will forever protect you against straying after me." `Umer said: "The Prophet is under the influence of pain, and you have with you the Qur`ān; so, the Book of Allāh suffices us." Those who were present there argued among themselves, and their argument developed into a dispute. Some of them said: "Come close to the Prophet so that he may write something for you that will safeguard you against straying after him," while others repeated what `Umer had said. When the argument and dispute intensified in the presence of the Prophet, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said to them: "Get away from me." Ibn `Abbās used to say: "The calamity, the real calamity, is what caused the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to desist from writing what he wished to write, due to their argument and dispute."

There is no dispute regarding the authenticity of this hadīth nor the occasion whereupon it was invoked. Al-Bukhāri quotes it in his treatise on knowledge on page 22, Vol. 1, of his work, and it exists in many other places with which the researchers are familiar. He quotes it in several places of his *Sahīh*. Muslim, too, quotes it at the conclusion of the Prophet's will in his *Sahīh* on page 14, Vol. 2. Ahmed narrates Ibn `Abbās's hadīth in his own Musnad. Refer to page 325 of its first volume. It is narrated by all authors of traditions and books of history, each writer editing it yet

retaining its gist, reiterating the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) was described as “hallucinating,” or “delirious.” But they also mentioned that `Umer had said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) has been overcome by pain” just to sanitize the statement and undermine the sentiments of those who found it abominable. Supporting this fact is what Abu Bakr Ahmed ibn `Abdul-`Azīz al-Jawhari has said in his book titled *Al-Saqīfah*, relying on the authority of Ibn `Abbās and quoting him saying, “When death approached the Messenger of Allāh, there were men present at his house among whom `Umer ibn al-Khattāb was one. The Messenger of Allāh said: ‘Bring me ink and a tablet so that I may write you something that will safeguard you against straying after me.’ Those present at his house differed among themselves and disputed, some saying ‘Come close and watch the Prophet write you something,’ while others repeated what `Umer had said. When the argument and dispute increased, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, became angry and said: ‘Get away from me,’ as stated on page 20, Vol. 2, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah* by the Mu`azilite scholar [Ibn Abul Hadīd].

As you notice from this narrative, it is explicit in indicating that some individuals reported `Umer's opposition in meaning, not *verbatim*. This also proves that the traditionists who did not wish to state the name of the person who opposed had nonetheless quoted his statement *verbatim*. In a chapter on rewarding the envoys, in his book *Al-Jihād wal Siyar*, page 118, Vol. 2, al-Bukhāri states:

“Qabsah narrated a tradition to us from Ibn `Ayīnah, Salmān al-Aḥwal, and Sa`īd ibn Jubayr, all consecutively quoting Ibn `Abbās saying: ‘On a Thursday—what a day that Thursday was...,’ and he burst sobbing till his tears drenched the stones, then he went on to say, ‘...the pain of the Messenger of Allāh intensified on a Thursday; so, he ordered us to bring him some writing material so that he might write us something whereby we would be protected **against straying after him**, but people disputed,

knowing that nobody should dispute in the presence of any Prophet, and they said: 'The Messenger of Allāh is delirious.' He, peace be upon him and his progeny, then said: 'Leave me, for the pain which I am suffering is more tolerable than what you are attributing to me,' and he left in his will prior to his demise three items: to get the polytheists out of the Arab land, to reward the envoys the same way he (ص) used to reward them,' and I forgot the third one.'"¹

The same ḥadīth is narrated also by Muslim at the conclusion of a chapter dealing with the will in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and by Ahmed in Ibn `Abbās's aḥādīth on page 222, Vol. 1, of his work, and by all other traditionists. In his chapter on the will, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Muslim quotes Sa`īd ibn Jubayr in one place, and Ibn `Abbās in another, saying, "That Thursday, O what a day that Thursday was....," and his tears kept pouring down till they looked like pearls arrayed in a formation, then he continued to say: "The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: 'Bring me a tablet and an ink-pot,' or a plate and some ink, 'so that I may write you something whereby you shall never be misguided;' so, some people said: 'The Messenger of Allāh is delirious.'"²

Anyone who researches this abominable incident in the *ṣaḥīḥs* will soon come to find out that the first person who said that the Messenger of Allāh was delirious was indeed `Umer, and some of those who were present there and then followed suit. In the first ḥadīth, you have heard Ibn `Abbās saying:³ "Those present at his house differed among themselves and disputed, some saying 'Come close and watch the Prophet writing you something,' while others repeated what `Umer had said," i.e. "The Messenger of Allāh is delirious." In another tradition narrated by al-Ṭabrānī, in his *Awsat*, and on page 138, Vol. 3, of *Kanz al-`Ummāl*, `Umer is quoted saying: "When the Prophet became sick, he said: 'Bring me a tablet and an ink-pot, so that I may write you something after which you shall never stray;' so, the women behind the curtain said: 'Have you not heard what the

Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, is saying?" `Umer goes on to say: "I said to them: `You are like the women who admired Joseph; when the Messenger of Allāh falls sick, you squeeze your eyes, and when he is healthy, you ride his neck!" He also continues to say: "The Messenger of Allāh then said: `Leave them, for they are better than you."

You can see that they never implemented the spirit of this ḥadīth. Had they done so, they would have been protected against misguidance. We wish they had stopped at just being insubordinate and not answering him by saying: "The Book of Allāh suffices us," as if he did not know the status of Allāh's Book among them, or that they were more knowledgeable than him about its characteristics and merits. We wish they had been satisfied with all of that rather than surprising him with their rude statement: "The Messenger of Allāh is delirious," just when he was suffering the agony of death. What a farewell statement to the Messenger of Allāh (ص)! They did not follow the Prophet's command due to their being satisfied with the Book of Allāh as they claimed, as if they never read the verse: "Whatever the Messenger hands over to you, take it, and whatever he forbids you therefrom, obey him (Qur'ān, 59:7)." They said: "The Messenger of Allāh is delirious," as if they never read the verse: "It is the speech of an eminent Messenger, empowered by the One with the Throne, peaceful to those who obey Him; verily, your fellow is not possessed (Qur'ān, 81:19-22)," and His statement, the Exalted, the omni-Scient, "It is the speech of an eminent Messenger, not of a poet; little do you believe; nor is it the speech of a priest; little do you remember; it is but the Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds (Qur'ān, 69:40-43)," and His statement, the Almighty, the Sublime, "Your fellow has neither strayed, nor has he yielded to temptation; he utters nothing out of his own inclination; it is but what is revealed unto him of the Revelation; he is taught by One mighty in powers (Qur'ān, 53:2-5)," in addition to many such verses laden with divine wisdom, all testifying to his being divinely protected from delirium.

Yet even reason by itself testifies to the same, but they were aware of the fact that he, the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, wished to strengthen the covenant of caliphate, and emphasize its being the monopoly of `Ali in particular, and the Imāms among his purified progeny in general; so, they stood as a stumbling block in his way to do so, as admitted by none other than the second caliph himself in a private conversation which he held with Ibn `Abbās...! It exists in line 27, page 114, Vol. 3, of *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah* by Ibn Abul Hadīd.

If you consider his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, "Bring me a tablet and an ink-pot, so that I may write you something whereby you shall never stray after me," and his statement in the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things: "I am leaving with you that which, as long as you uphold, will never let you stray: the Book of Allāh and my progeny, my Ahl al-Bayt," you will come to know then that the purpose of both traditions is the same, and that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, wished, even while being sick, to write for them the details of the injunctions implied in the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things [*al thaqalain*].

2) He repealed his order to them due to their statement with which they surprised him, forcing him to change his mind, since after uttering it there would be no effect for his writing them anything other than dissension and dispute, leading them to argue he really delirious—God forbid—or not, just as they did even in his own presence and while he could still see things, so much so that he could not tell them more than to get away, as you have heard. Had he insisted on writing it, they would have resorted to their claim that he had written it in delirium, and many of their followers would have gone to extremes in their attempts to prove that he did so while being delirious—God forbid—and fill their books with such allegations, only to reject his writing and use it as a pretext for not implementing it.

For these reasons, his marvellous wisdom decreed that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, should forget about

such writing for fear those opposing his wish and their followers might open a door to casting doubts about Prophethood itself; we seek refuge with Allāh, and we pray for His protection. He, peace be upon him and his progeny, saw how `Ali (ع) and his followers submitted to the spirit of such writing, whether he had written it down or not, while others would not act upon it anyway even if he had written it. Wisdom, therefore, necessitated abandoning it since it would have no effect at all over the opposition that arose other than dissension, as is obvious, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹The third is none other than the matter which the Prophet (ص) desired to write down in order to protect them from misguidance, but politics forced the traditionists to “forget” it, as the Ḥanafī *mufti* of Sur, Ḥajj Dawud al-Dadah, suggested.

²This ḥadīth is quoted *verbatim* by Ahmed on page 355, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*, in addition to many other reliable authors of books of traditions.

³This is what al-Bukhāri has quoted from `Ubaydullāh ibn `Abdullāh ibn `Utbah ibn Mas`ud from Ibn `Abbās, and it is also quoted by Muslim and others.

LETTER 87

Rabī` al-Awwal 9, 1330

Justifying and Discussing the Calamity

When he, peace be upon him, ordered them to bring him a blank sheet of paper and an ink-pot, he did not really intend to write anything in particular; he intended only to test them, that's all. Therefore, Allāh guided al-Fārūq, from among all other companions, to forbid them from bringing them to him. Such an opposition, therefore, must be considered to be in agreement with his Sublime Lord, and be counted among his divinely-endowed spiritual powers, may Allāh be pleased with him. This is the argument of many renown personalities. But his statement, peace be upon him, "... you shall never stray," rejects such an argument if the principle of fairness is to be implemented, for it is a supplementary command which means "If you bring me the blank sheet and the ink-pot, and if I write you something, then you shall never stray after it." It is obvious that interpreting such an order as being indicative of a test is a sort of flagrant lying from which Prophets are immune, especially where bringing the blank sheet and the ink-pot is more fit for the one who receives the order than his seeking such an excuse; therefore, another alibi is needed.

All that can be said is that the issue is not an invitation to a party, so that whoever refuses may simply be blamed, but it is an issue of consultation. They used to consult him [Umer], peace be upon him, in a few matters. And `Umer knew that he deep down in his heart was successful in choosing what is best for the interest of Muslims, and that itself was inspired by Allāh Almighty. He simply desired not to let the Prophet burden himself with the pain resulting from writing something in the state of sickness and agony, and he, peace be upon him, thought that it would be better not to bring the blank sheet and the ink-pot. He may also have feared that the Prophet might write things that would be quite impossible for people to carry out, thus making them liable

for punishment, since such things would be texts for which the principle of *ijtihād* is not possible. Or he may have feared that the hypocrites might cast doubts about the authenticity of such writing due to its being done under the influence of sickness, thus becoming a cause of dissension; therefore, he said: "The Book of Allāh suffices us," supporting the verse of the Almighty: "We have not left aught (without explaining it) in the Book (Qur`ān, 6:38)" and also "Today have I completed your religion for you (Qur`ān, 5:4)," out of his own concern, peace be upon him, for this nation against straying after Allāh had completed His religion for it and complemented His blessing unto it.

Such was their answer. His saying "... you shall never stray" indicates determination and a positive attitude. The endeavour to bring about security against straying, whenever possible and without any doubt, is a must. His disappointment with them and his telling them to leave him since they did not carry out his order is another proof that the matter was simply a response to a consultation.

So, if you say that had it been a must, the Prophet, peace be upon him, would not have repealed it simply because they disobeyed him, just like he did not stop preaching due to the opposition of the unbelievers..., if you say all this, then we would say that the case is so had the order been carried out, for it indicates that the writing of that matter was not obligatory on the Prophet, peace be upon him. This of course does not imply that they should not have brought him the sheet and the ink-pot when he ordered them to, explaining to them that its benefits would include security for them against straying and a source of continuous guidance. The main point is that those receiving his order should have obeyed it, especially when the benefit was for the one receiving the order, and it is the reason for the statement, not for its enforcement.

Yet it is also possible that it was obligatory on him, too, and such an obligation was removed due to their insubordination and their saying that he was speaking in

delirium, for the fate of such writing was then reduced to dissension, as you yourself have wisely stated.

It is also possible that some people may say that `Umer, may Allāh be pleased with him, did not take the meaning of the Prophet's statement to imply that such writing would result in protecting each and every member of the nation from straying, so much so that none of them at all would be misguided. Rather, he understood "... you shall never stray" to mean "... you shall never agree all of you to walk the path of misguidance, nor will misguidance, after such writing, would inflict anyone among you." Rather, he, may Allāh be pleased with him, was convinced that they would never all concede to tread the path of misguidance. This is why he found no reason why the Prophet should write anything else, thinking that the intention of the Prophet was simply an additional precaution in the matter, since he was so well-known to be overflowing with kindness and compassion.

This is all that has been said in the manner of finding an excuse for that initiation. Whoever scrutinizes it will be positive in thinking that it is far from being rational, for the simple fact that his statement, peace be upon him, "... you shall never stray" indicates that the matter required proper attention, as we have said, and his disappointment with them is a proof that they became derelict regarding one of their obligations. It is, therefore, more fitting to say that such an incident took place when they, indeed, behaved contrarily to their custom, just like their previous slip, and it is one mistake that is not at all typical of them, and we do not really know how accurate the whole story is. Allāh is the Guide to the Straight Path, Wassalamo Alaikom.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 88
Rabī`ul-Awwal 11, 1330

Pretexts Refuted

Any fair-minded person ought to yield to the truth and utter what is right. There are other views regarding the rejection of these arguments which I desired to put forth to you, so that the final judgment will be left entirely to you.

Their first pretext states that he, peace be upon him and his progeny, having ordered them to bring the ink-pot, did not really intend to write something but rather desired to test them, that's all. We say, in addition to what you yourself have stated, that this incident took place shortly before his demise, as the tradition itself suggests; there was simply no time for testing, but there was time for a last minute warning and justifying, time for a will containing a very significant matter, a piece of complete advice for the nation. Anyone who is dying is certainly far from testing or jesting; he would be concerned about his affairs and those of his own kin, especially if he is a Prophet.

If he, as long as he lived, did not have enough time to test them, how could he have found time to do so when he was about to die? His statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, telling them to get away from him when they fussed and argued in his presence, is surely indicative of his disappointment with them. Had those who opposed him been right, he would have appreciated their opposition and expressed his pleasure therewith. Anyone who studies this tradition, especially their saying that the Messenger of Allāh was delirious, will be positively sure that they were aware of his intention to do something they hated; so, they surprised him with such a statement, and they persisted fussing, arguing, and disputing, as is quite obvious. Ibn `Abbas's tears, and his labelling the incident a catastrophe disprove this argument.

Those who seek excuses by arguing that `Umer was divinely inspired in assessing the public interest of Muslims, that he was inspired by Allāh, are talking nonsense, and their argument is dismissed in such a discussion since it suggests that he, not the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was on the right track in this incident, and that his so-called "inspiration" was more accurate than the

revelation which he (ص), the truthful and trustworthy that he was, uttered.

They say that it was intended to relieve the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, from the burden of writing while feeling sick. You, may Allāh support the truth through your person, know that writing such matters would only bring the Prophet peace of mind, tranquility, and the pleasure of his eyes. He would feel happy for ensuring a security for his nation, peace be upon him and his progeny, against misguidance. The commands to be obeyed, the divine will, and the physical presence were all his. He, being more precious than my parents, wished to have access to a sheet of paper and an ink-pot; he issued an order and nobody was supposed to oppose his wish; "Neither a believing man nor a believing woman has any right, when Allāh and His Messenger decree a matter, to follow their own views, and whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger is surely in manifest misguidance (Qur'ān, 33:36)."

Yet their insubordination in such an extremely significant matter, and their fussing, arguing, and disputing in his presence, were to him more painful than writing what he wished to write in order to protect his nation against misguidance. How can anyone who feels pity for him because of the pain of writing something oppose him and surprise him by saying that he was speaking in delirium?

They say that `Umer thought that not to bring the sheet and the ink-pot was wiser. This is a most odd statement. How can it be wiser while the Prophet himself had ordered that they should be brought forth? Did `Umer think that the Messenger of Allāh would order something which would be better left out?

Yet even more strange is their argument that `Umer feared that the Prophet might write things which would be impossible to implement and whose abandoning would require chastisement. How can it thus be feared in spite of the Prophet's statement "... you shall never stray"? Do people who thus argue think that `Umer assesses the consequences more

correctly than the Prophet himself, and that he is more cautious about and compassionate to his nation than the Prophet (ﷺ)? Certainly not.

They also say that it is possible that `Umer feared the hypocrites might cast doubts about the authenticity of such writing, since it would be written during the Prophet's sickness, and that it would be a cause for dissension. You, may Allāh support the truth through your person, know that such an insinuation is impossible since the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, has stated: "... you shall never stray," thus clearly stating that such writing would bring them security against straying; so, how can it be a reason for dissension just because the hypocrites might cast doubts about its authenticity? Had he [Umer] feared such hypocrites and their casting doubts about the authenticity of what the Prophet wished to write, why did he then plant the seed of such doubts himself when he opposed and objected and even said that the Prophet was delirious?

As regarding their interpretation of verses cited in support of `Umer's statement: "The Book of Allāh suffices us," such as the verse: "We have left nothing unexplained in the Book (Qur'ān, 6:38)," and "Today have I completed for you your religion (Qur'ān, 5:4)," it is erroneous, for neither verse suggests a security against misguidance, nor do both verses guarantee guidance for people; so, how can relying on these verses justify abandoning the implementation of the texts whose writing the Prophet wished to record? Had the presence of the dear Qur'ān been to bring security against misguidance, then neither misguidance nor dissension, the removal of which is as hopeless as can be, would have ever taken place.¹

In their final argument, they say that `Umer did not understand the tradition to imply that such writing would be a cause for protecting each and every member of his nation from misguidance; and that rather he understood that it would, after its writing, safeguard them against erring in their consensus. They claim that `Umer, may Allāh be pleased with

him, knew that the error in their consensus would never occur, albeit if such writing had taken place or not, and that for this reason he opposed its writing thus.

Besides what you have said, we may add that `Umer did not lack such a degree of understanding, and he was not blind to the implication of the tradition which became obvious to all people. Urban residents as well as bedouins understood the intention of the Prophet (ص) that it would be a complete prescription for the protection of every individual against misguidance... only had it been written. This is the meaning which anyone can comprehend of this tradition. `Umer knew for sure that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, was not worried about his nation making an error in its consensus views, since he, may Allāh be pleased with him, had heard him, peace be upon him and his progeny, saying: "The consensus of my nation shall never be in misguidance nor in error," and his statement: "One group from my nation shall always stand opposing what is just," and he was aware of the verse saying: "Allāh has promised those who believe among you and do good deeds that He will let them inherit the earth just as He let those before them be the successors, and He will firmly set the roots of the faith which He has approved, and He will exchange their fear with security; they shall worship Me, without associating anything with Me (Qur'ān, 24:55)," in addition to many such texts in both the Book and the Sunnah. They all are clear in implying that NOT the entire nation shall err in its consensus views; so, it is not feasible, in spite of all this, that `Umer or anyone else would conceive that when the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, asked for a blank sheet of paper and an ink-pot, was worried about his nation erring in its consensus views. What `Umer is liable to have understood of this hadīth is what anyone else would, not what is contrary to the authentic Sunnah, nor to the perfect verses of the Qur'ān. But the disappointment of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, was obvious when he told them to get away from him, and it proved that what they had shunned was

indeed a sacred obligation. Had `Umer's objection been due to his misunderstanding of this hadīth, as they claim, then the Prophet would have helped him remove his misunderstanding, and he would have clarified his objective to him. Nay, even if the Prophet was convinced that he would be able to convince them to carry out his order, he would not have ordered them out. Again, Ibn `Abbās's tears and genuine agony provide the greatest rebuttal to such claims.

Justice refuses to find an excuse for those who had permitted such a calamity to take place. Had it been, as you described, a simple slip like another one before it, and a rare occurrence, the matter would have been a lot more tolerable, but it was the catastrophe of the century that split the nation's spine; so, we are Allāh's, and to Him is our return.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹You, may Allāh support the truth through your person, know that the Prophet (ص) did not say: "I would like to write down the tenets," so that it may be said to him: "Suffices us the Book of Allāh, the Exalted One." Even if we suppose that he wished to write down those tenets, it could very possibly be that his own writing thereof would be a cause for security against misguidance; therefore, there is no reason to avoid his text and be satisfied with the Qur'ān alone. If the text he wished to write was only to safeguard them against misguidance, it would not be appropriate to leave it, shun it, and rely on the fact that Allāh's Book includes everything. You know very well how the Muslim nation has no option besides referring to the sacred Sunnah in spite of the fact that it holds the Book of Allāh, the Exalted, as indispensable, and although it is inclusive and is divinely protected, for deriving injunctions from it is not within the reach of every ordinary person. Had the Book of Allāh been completely sparing us from referring to its own explanations as put forth by the Prophet (ص), then Allāh Aighty would not have commanded him to explain it to people when He said: "We have revealed unto you the Book so that you may explain to people what has been revealed for them."

LETTER 89
Rabī`ul-Awwal 14, 1330

- I Admitting the Falsehood of Such Pretexts,**
II Requesting Narration of Other Incidents.

1) You have closed the avenues in the way of permitting the falsehood of such pretexts.

2) Go ahead, then, and state all other incidents in which they used their own judgment regarding the Prophet's *Hadīth*, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 90
Rabī`l-Awwal 17, 1330

Usāmah's Regiment

If you have truly submitted to the truth, without fearing any blame, then you are the ultimate goal and the true objective. You are above getting confused about what is right and what is not, and you are above hiding the truth. You are even more than that, more honourable, and more virtuous.

You have, may Allāh raise your status of honour, asked me to narrate for you all other incidents in which they preferred to follow their own views rather than submitting to divine orders; therefore, consider the incident of the regiment of Usamah ibn Zayd ibn Hārithah dispatched to invade the Romans. It was the last regiment contemporary to the Prophet (ص) who paid it a great concern, ordering his companions to

prepare for it, earnestly urging them to do so. He raised the army in his own pure person in order to give those enlisted in it a great deal of moral encouragement and address their conscience. He did not spare any dignitary from among the Muhājirūn nor the Anṣār, such as Abu Bakr, `Umer,¹ Abu `Ubaydah, Sa`d, and their peers, from enlisting.²

It took place on Ṣafar 26, 11 A.H. The next day, he called upon Usāmah and said: "Go to the place where your father had been murdered and let your cavalry roam it, for I have vested upon you the leadership of these troops; therefore, invade Ubna³ in the morning, burn their homes and come back faster than the tidings of your deeds. If Allāh grants you the upper hand over them, do not stay there too long. Take road guides with you; dispatch others to collect information for you, and let the scouts escort you."

On Ṣafar 38, his death fever intensified, and he started suffering from headaches. On Ṣafar 29, he found them reluctant to leave; therefore, he went out to urge them to expedite the campaign. He (ص) tied the flag for Usāmah with his own eminent hands in order to stir their conscience and manipulate their determination. Then he said: "Go in the Name of Allāh, in the Path of Allāh, and fight those who disbelieve in Allāh." Usāmah took the tied flag and handed it to Buraydah, then he camped at Jurf. Even there, they slackened and did not leave, in spite of all the clear statements of the Prophet (ص) urging them to expedite the campaign, such as: "... invade Ubna in the morning," and "... come back faster than the tidings of your deeds," in addition to many such orders which they never followed in reference to that regiment. Moreover, even some of them started questioning the wisdom of selecting Usāmah for its leadership, just as they had questioned that of his father's, making several remarks to that effect, in spite of their witnessing the Prophet (ص) vesting upon him such a responsibility, and their hearing the Prophet (ص) saying to him: "I have vested upon you the

leadership of these troops," and their seeing him tying the flag for him, which is the symbol of authority, with his own eminent hands, and all of that he (ص) did in spite of his fever.

All of the above did not stop them from casting doubts about the wisdom of selecting him as the regiment's commander, so much so that their grumbling angered the Prophet (ص) who went out one day, his head bandaged,⁴ wrapped in a blanket, suffering the pain of fever, on a Saturday, the 10th of Rabī'ul-Awwal, only two days before his demise, and ascended the pulpit. Having seated himself on the pulpit, he (ص) praised Allāh and glorified Him, then, according to the consensus of historians and scholars, he said:

"O people! It has come to my knowledge that some of you have felt uneasy about my appointment of Usāmah [as the commander]. If you cast doubts about his appointment, you had done so before when I appointed his father who, by Allāh, was worthy of such authority, and so is his son after him."

He urged them to start marching, and they in fact did start bidding him farewell and leaving to join the troops stationed at al-Jurf, while he was still urging them to rush. Then his sickness worsened, yet he kept saying: "Usāmah's army! Complete the mission of Usāmah's army! Dispatch Usāmah's troops!" He kept repeating these orders even while they were still reluctant to respond. On the 12th of Rabī'ul-Awwal, Usāmah left his temporary quarters at al-Jurf and visited the Prophet (ص) who ordered him to start his mission immediately, saying: "Tomorrow, by the blessing of Allāh, the Exalted One, leave early in the morning," so he bade him farewell and left for the camp. Accompanied by `Umer and Abu `Ubaydah, he went back again to see the Prophet. The three men reached the Prophet who was breathing his last. He died, may my life and those of the world be sacrificed for his

sake, on the same day, and the army returned to Medīna and considered cancelling the campaign altogether.

They discussed this matter with Abu Bakr, pressuring him a great deal to endorse their idea of cancellation, in spite of witnessing all the emphasis the Prophet (ص) had placed on rushing the mission, having heard his statement stressing that they should expedite sending the troops in a way too fast to allow the enemy to know about it, spending so much effort raising the army personally, appointing Usāmah to take charge of it, and tying its flag with his own hands, saying: "Tomorrow, by the blessing of Allāh, the Exalted One, leave early in the morning," till he died, as you have come to know. Had it not been for the newly appointed successor of the Prophet (ص), they would have all decided to cancel the campaign and untie the flag's knot, but the caliph [Abu Bakr] refused to do so, and when they saw him determined to carry on the mission, `Umer approached him and requested him on behalf of the Ansar to depose Usamah from the post of the army's leader and appoint someone else.

It was not long since they had angered the Prophet and annoyed him by their displeasure with his appointment of Usamah as the commander of the regiment, nor since his going out of his house for the same reason, painfully feverish, bandaged, wrapped in a blanket, unable to walk steadily, his legs hardly carrying him due to the pain from which he was suffering; having ascended the pulpit, breathing heavily, fighting his pain, he said: "O people! It has come to my knowledge that some of you have felt uneasy about my appointment of Usamah [as the commander]. If you cast doubts about his appointment, you had done so before when I appointed his father who, by Allāh, was worthy of such an authority, and so is his son after him." Thus did he, peace be upon him and his progeny, emphasize, by swearing by Allāh, that they should submit to what he had decreed. They did not. The new caliph [Abu Bakr] refused to yield to their pressure

to remove Usāmah from his post. He leaped and took `Umer by the beard saying: "May your mother lose you, and may she be deprived of you as a son! He has been appointed by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) and you still ask me to depose him?!"⁵ They reluctantly dispatched Usāmah's regiment. The total number of his troops was no more than three thousand, including one thousand cavaliers.⁶ It was dodged by many of those who had been drafted by the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) himself. According to Shahrīstānī's fourth Introduction to his book *Al-Milal wal Nihal*, the Prophet (ﷺ) is quoted saying: "Draft in Usāmah's army; may Allāh curse its draft dodgers."

You may also know that initially they were reluctant to go with the regiment; then they finally dodged, just to firmly lay the foundations of their political structure and set its bases, preferring it to the carrying out of the orders of the Prophet. They saw that such a political structure was more worthy of their concern and attention, since their reluctance to draft would not cancel the dispatching of the troops, nor would the draft dodgers either. As regarding the caliphate, they would certainly miss it had they participated in the campaign before the Prophet's demise. He (ﷺ) had desired that they should leave the capital in order to clear the way for the establishment of the caliphate for the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) peacefully and quietly. So, when they would come back, such caliphate would have already been established and settled down for Ali, and there would have been no chance for them to dispute or question it.

The Prophet (ﷺ) had selected Usāmah, who was seventeen years old,⁷ to be their commander simply in order to subdue the stiff necks of some of them, and out of his own desire to contain the ambition of others, and also as a safeguard for protecting the peace in the future against the dispute of those who were obviously ambitious and hopeful, had he chosen one of them instead. But they were intelligent enough to be aware of what he (ﷺ) was planning; so, they

questioned the appointment of Usamah, reluctantly refused to accompany him, and did not leave Jurf till the soul of the Prophet (ص) returned to its Lord. It was then that they decided to cancel the campaign and untie the flag's knot on one hand, and to depose Usamah on the other. Moreover, many of them became draft dodgers, as you have come to know. These are five reasons why they did not act upon the Prophet's ḥadīth, preferring their own political interests, and following their own judgment rather than implementing the spirit of his ḥadīth, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Authors of books of tradition and history have unanimously accepted the fact that Abu Bakr and `Umer, may Allāh be pleased with them, were enlisted in the same army, stating such a fact in their books unreservedly, and this is one of the instances in which they have never disputed. Refer, therefore, to any book which contains information about this particular expedition such as Ibn Sa`d's *Ṭabaqāt*, the books of history by al-Ṭabari and Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Sīra al-Ḥalabiyya*, *Al-Sīra al-Dahlaniyya*, and others, so that you may find out for yourself. When al-Ḥalabi discusses this campaign in Vol. 3 of his *Sīra* [biography book], he mentions an interesting anecdote which we would like to quote here as he words it:

When the caliph al-Mehdi entered Basra, he happened to see Iyās ibn Mu`awiyah, who is proverbial in sharpness of intellect, and who was then a young boy surrounded by as many as four hundred men of knowledge and prestige, al-Mehdi asked him: "What beards! Couldn't they find an older sage to follow rather than this teenager?" Then al-Mehdi turned to him and asked him how old he was. He answered: "I am, may Allāh prolong the presence of the commander of the

faithful among us, the same age Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Hārithah was when the Messenger of Allāh (ص) entrusted him to lead the army in which both Abu Bakr and `Umer served." Al-Mehdi said: "Come close, may Allāh bless you." He was then seventeen years old.

²Umer used to say to Usāmah: "The Messenger of Allāh (ص) has died leaving you in command over me." He is quoted by a group of renown scholars such as al-Halabi while discussing Usāmah's army in his *Al-Sīra al-Halabiyya*, in addition to many other traditionists and historians.

³It is a territory in Balqā' between `Ashkelon (a seaport in southwest Palestine) and Rāmallah (in Jordan's West Bank), near Mu'ta where Zayd ibn Hārithah and Ja`fer ibn Abu Tālib, of the two wings in Paradise, peace be upon him, were martyred.

⁴Every traditionist and author of biography and history books who has mentioned this regiment has also mentioned their resentment of the Prophet's appointment of Usāmah as the commander over them, and that he (ص) became extremely angry when he came to know about such resentment, hence he delivered the *khutba* which we have quoted earlier; so, refer to the chapter on Usāmah's regiment in Ibn Sa`d's *Tabaqāt*, both Sīra books of al-Halabi and al-Dahlāni, and other books dealing with this topic.

⁵This is quoted by al-Halabi and al-Dahlāni in their respective Sīra books, and by Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari while discussing the events of the year 11 in his *Tarīkh*, in addition to other authors of books of history.

⁶He raided Ubna, burnt their homes, cut their palm-trees, his cavalry trampled upon their residential quarters, killing a few and capturing a few others. Among those whom he killed was his father's assassin. Nobody among the Muslims was killed; so, praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds. Usāmah was then riding his father's horse. Their banner then said: "O you who is divinely

supported, take their lives," which was the Prophet's banner during the Battle of Badr. He distributed two shares of the booty to cavalry soldiers and one to the infantry, taking for himself the same.

⁷This is most likely. Some say he was eighteen years old, others say nineteen, and still others say twenty, but nobody said he was older than that.

LETTER 91
Rabī` al-Awwal 19, 1330

- I Justifying Their Behaviour Towards Usāmah's Regiment,**
II No *Hadīth* Curses its Draft Dodgers.

1) Yes, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) had urged them to rush to participate in Usāmah's campaign, ordering them to expedite, as you have mentioned, emphasizing his order till he told Usāmah to invade Ubna in the morning, not allowing him to wait till the evening, telling him to go and emphasizing his order once more by telling him to rush. But he, peace be upon him, according to all narrations, fell sick and started breathing very heavily, so much so that they started worrying about him and feeling too upset to leave him in such condition. They remained at Jurf waiting to know the condition of his health out of their own fear for his life and due to their attachment to him. They, therefore, are excused for having waited, and they should not be blamed.

As regarding their questioning the Prophet's appointment of Usāmah after his death, in spite of what they remembered of his statements and his emphasis by word and by action, with which they were familiar, it was nothing more than their objection to his being too young, to his being a youth among middle-aged and old men. The latter naturally find it very difficult to receive orders from the young, and they by nature feel resentful towards submitting to their judgment. Their hatred of his appointment was not an innovation but simply due to the human nature; so, consider that.

As regarding their demand after the demise of the Messenger to depose Usāmah, this is justified by some scholars among those who expected the *Ṣiddīq* [Abu Bakr] to

agree with them. These persons thought that such deposition would, in their view, serve the public interest. Yet, for the sake of fairness, I personally cannot rationalize their request to depose him after seeing how angry the Prophet (ص) was when they requested the same, and his going out, feverish, bandaged and wrapped in a blanket, to denounce such a notion in his sermon from the pulpit. They knew that such an incident was, indeed, a historical milestone; so, their real motive is not known except by Allāh.

As regarding their determination to cancel the campaign, and their pressuring al-Ṣiddīq to do so, in spite of seeing how much emphasis the Prophet had placed on its dispatch, his concern about expediting its departure, as well as his repeated statements to this effect, is but their own caution about the capital of Islam else it should be assaulted by the polytheists around it once vacated from a protecting force, while the army was far away from it, especially since hypocrisy surfaced as soon as the Prophet (ص) died, and the hopes of the Jews and Christians were revived, and a group among the Arabs renegated, while other groups refused to pay *zakat*. The companions of the Prophet, therefore, spoke to our master al-Ṣiddīq and requested him to forbid Usāmah from leaving, but he refused and said: "It is better for me that birds snatch my flesh away rather than start my rule by overruling the command of the Messenger of Allāh (ص)."

This is what our fellows have said regarding al-Ṣiddīq. As regarding others, they are not to be blamed for trying to stop the campaign since their objective was nothing other than a genuine concern about the safety of the religion of Islam.

As regarding the question why Abu Bakr, `Umer, and others who were drafted in the regiment, lagged behind when Usāmah proceeded, it was only to lay the firm foundations of the Islamic government, support the law of Muḥammad (ص), and protect the caliphate, which was the only protector of both faith and the faithful.

2) Regarding what you have quoted of Shahrīstānī's book *Al-Milal wal Niḥal*, we have found it narrated without the name of its narrator. Both al-Halabī and Sayyid al-Dahlānī, in their respective books of traditions, have said that there was no such *ḥadīth* at all in that meaning. If you, may Allāh protect you, are able to narrate *ḥadīth* from Sunnis supporting it, then lead me to it, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 92

Rabī` al-Awwal 22, 1330

I Their Pretexts do not Contradict our Statement, II Al-Shahrīstānī's Ḥadīth is Documented.

1) You have, may Allāh Almighty protect you, admitted that they lagged behind Usāmah's regiment and were at Jurf reluctant to proceed in spite of being ordered by the Prophet (ص) to rush and expedite. You also admit that they did, indeed, raise questions about the [Prophet's] wisdom in appointing Usāmah in spite of what they had seen and heard of deeds and words regarding his appointment.

You have further admitted that they did, indeed, request Abu Bakr to depose him even after seeing how angry the Prophet (ص) was when he noticed their questioning his appointment, his going out to them, feverish, bandaged, wrapped in a blanket, to deliver a sermon from the pulpit in which he repudiated their grumbling, a sermon you yourself have described as one of the significant historical events, one wherein he described Usāmah as being worthy of such a post.

You have accepted the fact that they requested the caliph to cancel the regiment dispatched by the Messenger of

Allāh (ﷻ), and untie the knot he, with his own eminent hands, had tied, in spite of seeing his concern about dispatching it and his complete care about expediting it, in addition to several statements he made regarding the necessity of doing so.

You have, moreover, admitted that some of those who had been drafted in that army by the Prophet (ﷻ) himself who ordered them to enlist under Usāmah's leadership had lagged behind. You have admitted all these facts which are written down in the books of history and are matters of consensus among the traditionists and historians, saying that they were not to be blamed for all what they had done. The summary of their pretext, as you have put it, is that they had preferred in those matters the interest of Islam according to their own views, not according to the Prophet's statements in their regard. We did not intend in this matter to state anything more than that. In other words, the topic of our discussion is whether they used to follow all the Prophet's statements or not. You have chosen the first, while we have chosen the second, and now your admission that they did not follow such statements proves our own viewpoint. Their being excused or not is obviously besides the point.

Since it has been proved according to your views that they preferred, in the incident of Usāmah's regiment, the interest of Islam, following their own views rather than those of the Prophet as embedded in his statements, then why don't you likewise say that they preferred in the issue of caliphate to follow their own views regarding what is good for Islam to those of the Prophet (ﷻ) as stated in his Ghadīr hadīth and the like? You have found excuses for those who cast doubts about Usāmah's appointment, saying that they did so only because of his young age and their being middle-aged and old, and that old folks are naturally made to resent taking orders from the young; so, why don't you apply the same argument to those who did not follow the Ghadīr texts appointing Ali

(ع), who was a young man, to take charge of middle-aged and elderly companions, who considered him young at the time when the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, died just as they considered Usāmah young when the Prophet (ص) appointed him as their commander in that regiment? What a big difference between caliphate and the leadership of a regiment! If their nature refused to accept the leadership of a youth in commanding one regiment, they were more liable to refuse the lifetime leadership of a youth in all religious and secular matters.

But your argument that middle-aged and elderly folks naturally resent receiving orders from the young is rejected if you apply it to all matters, since those whose faith is strong among elderly believers certainly do not resent being commanded by Allāh and His Messenger to take orders from a youth, or in any other matter. "Nay! By thy Lord, they shall never truly believe till they totally accept your judgment in all their disputes, then they do not feel any hardship in accepting your judgment, submitting thereto wholeheartedly (Qur'ān, 4:65)." "Whatever the Messenger grants you, take it, and abstain from whatever he forbids you (Qur'ān, 59:7)."

2) As regarding al-Shahristāni who discusses those who dodged the draft in Usāmah's army, narrating their story as a generally accepted fact, it has been narrated in one hadīth documented by Abu Bakr Aḥmed ibn `Abdul-Azīz al-Jawhari in his book *Al-Saqifa*, from which I quote here this much for you *verbatim*:

"Aḥmed ibn Ishāq ibn Sālih has narrated a tradition to us from Aḥmed ibn Siyār from Sa`d ibn Kathīr al-Ansāri whose men quote `Abdullāh ibn `Abdul-Rahmān saying that when the Messenger of Allāh (ص) fell sick shortly before his death, he appointed Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Hārithah to take charge in

leading an army most of which were men from the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār. Among them were: Abu Bakr, `Umer, Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh, `Abdul-Rahmān ibn `Awf, Talhah, and al-Zubayr, and ordered him to invade Mu'ta, where his father Zayd had been murdered, and to invade the valley of Palestine. Usāmah slackened, and so did the rest of the army, and the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, though sick, kept emphasizing that the army must rush there, till Usāmah said to him: `O Messenger of Allāh! Would you permit me to stay for a few days till Allāh Almighty heals you?' He answered: `Go and proceed, supported by the blessings of Allāh.' He said: `O Messenger of Allāh! If I proceed while you are sick like that, I will be going with a heart swollen with pain.' He (ص) said: `Proceed towards victory in good health.' Usāmah persisted: `But I hate to keep asking the travellers about your condition.' He said: `Proceed to carry out my orders,' then he, peace be upon him and his progeny, fainted. Usāmah left and prepared to proceed. When the Messenger of Allāh (ص) regained his consciousness, he immediately inquired about Usāmah, and he was told that he and his men were preparing to proceed, whereupon he kept repeating: `Carry out Usāmah's mission; the curse of Allāh be upon whoever dodges its draft.' Usāmah finally left the city, the flag above his head, surrounded by the companions, till he reached Jurf. In his company were Abu Bakr, `Umer, and most of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār such as Asīd ibn Hadr, Bashīr ibn Sa`d, and many other dignitaries. Then he received a messenger sent by Umm Ayman who informed him to go ahead and enter the city because the Prophet (ص) was dying. He immediately left for Medīna with the standard still

in his hand. Having reached the Prophet's residence, he planted it at the door just when the Prophet (ص) had died."

This has been written down by a group of historians such as the Mu`tazilite scholar Ibn Abul-Hadīd at the conclusion of page 20 and the succeeding page in Vol. 2 of his *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 93
Rabi` al-Awwal 23, 1330

Requesting Narration of Other Incidents

We seem to have elaborated on Usāmah's regiment, just as we elaborated on the Thursday calamity, till truth became distinct from falsehood, and the rays of the dawn became visible to those who can see; so, now let us hear about other incidents, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 94
Rabi` al-Awwal 25, 1330

His Order (ص) to Kill the Renegade

Suffices you in response to your request what is recorded by a group of the nation's scholars and the imāms of narrators,

such as imām Ahmed ibn Hanbal who writes on page 15, Vol. 3, of his *musnad*, quoting Abu Sa`d al-Khudri saying that Abu Bakr once came to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny and said: "O Messenger of Allāh! I was passing through a valley when I saw a man, solemn and properly attired, saying his prayers." The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said to him: "Go and kill him." So Abu Bakr went there, and when he saw the man like that, he hated to kill him; therefore, he returned to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, without carrying out his order. The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, said to `Umer: "Go and kill him," and `Umer went there and saw him in the same way Abu Bakr had described, and he, too, came back without killing the man and said: "O Messenger of Allāh! I have seen him saying his prayers very solemnly; so, I hated to kill him." The Prophet (ﷺ) then said to `Ali: "Ali, you go and kill him," whereupon `Ali went to the place and returned only to say: "O Messenger of Allāh! I could not find the man." The Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, then said: "This man and his friends read the Qur'ān only pronouncing its words [just to impress people]; they depart from the faith as swiftly as the arrow departs from the bow, and they do not go back till the arrow goes back to the bow anew. Kill them, for they are the worst among the living."

In his *Musnad*, Abu Ya`li, as stated in the biography of Thul-Thadya by Ibn Hajar in his *Isaba*, quotes Anas ibn Malik saying: "We used to admire the piety and *ijtihad* of a man who was contemporary to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and we mentioned him by name to the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, but he did not know him. We described him to the Prophet (ﷺ), but he still did not recognize him. While we were talking about him, he came into sight and we said that it was he. He (ﷺ) said: `Are you

talking to me about a man on whose face Satan has placed his mark?' The man approached till he stood before them without greeting them. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, asked him: 'I ask you in the Name of Allāh if you have told yourself when you approached that there is nobody among us better than or superior to you?' The man answered: 'Indeed, I have,' and he came in to say his prayers. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, asked who would be willing to kill the man, and Abu Bakr said he would. When Abu Bakr entered, he found the man engaged in saying his prayers; so, he wondered how he could kill a man who was saying his prayers. When the Messenger of Allāh (ص) asked him what he did, he answered: 'I hated to kill him while he was saying his prayers, and you yourself had ordered us not to kill those who pray.' The Prophet (ص) asked for a volunteer, and this time `Umer responded. `Umer entered and found the man prostrating and said to himself that Abu Bakr was better than him; therefore, he went out. When the Prophet (ص) asked him if he did what he had promised to do, he told him that he had found the man placing his forehead on the ground prostrating to God. The Prophet (ص) once more asked: 'Who can kill this man?' `Ali answered in the affirmative, and when he entered looking for him, he found out that he had already left; so, he went back to the Messenger of Allāh (ص) and told him that the man had already left. It was then that the Prophet (ص) said: 'Had this man been killed, no couple among my nation would have disputed with one another.'"

This incident has been recorded by al-Hāfiz Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Shīrāzi in his book wherein he combines the *tafasīr* of Y`aqūb ibn Ḥayyān, `Ali ibn Ḥarb, al-Sadi, Mujāhid, Qatadah, Wakī, and Ibn Jurayh. Its authenticity is considered common knowledge by trustworthy traditionists such as Imām Shihabud-Dīn Ahmed, who is

better known as Ibn `Abd Rabbih al-Andalusi, who quotes it at the conclusion of his chapter on those who follow their own inclinations in the first volume of his book *Al-`Iqd al-Farīd*. At the conclusion of this incident as he narrates it, he says that the Prophet (ص) has said: "This is the first horn [of the devil] coming out in my nation. Had you killed him, no two men would have disputed with each other. The children of Isrā'īl split into seventy-two groups, and this nation shall split into seventy-three groups all of which, except one, will go to Hell."¹

Another almost similar narration of this incident is recorded by authors of books of traditions² who cite `Ali (ع) saying: "Some people from Quraysh came once to the Prophet (ص) and said: `O Muhammad! We are your neighbours and allies, and some of our slaves had come to you without a genuine desire to learn your religion or jurisprudence; they simply escaped from our possession; so, return them to us.' He asked Abu Bakr his opinion, and Abu Bakr said: `They are right in saying that they are your neighbours;' whereupon the Prophet's face changed colour [i.e. became red with anger], and he asked `Umer what he thought. `Umer repeated Abu Bakr's words, and again his face changed colour and said: `O people of Quraysh! By Allāh! Allāh will send you a man the faith of whose heart is tested by Allāh, and he will fight you in order to safeguard the faith.' Abu Bakr inquired if he meant him, and his answer was negative. Then `Umer inquired if it was he about whom the Prophet (ص) was talking, and his answer was: `No, it is the man who is mending the sandal;' the Prophet (ص) had given me his sandal to mend," Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹The words “firqa” and “Shī ah” are, if you count the times each one of them is repeated, synonymous, for the total number of each one of them is 385, making the majority of that group hopeful.

²Such as Imām Ahmed near the conclusion of page 155, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*, Sa`īd ibn Mansūr in his *Sunan*, and Ibn Jarīr in *Tahthīb al-Athar*, all testifying to its authenticity. It is quoted from all of them by al-Muttaqī al-Hindi on page 396, Vol. 6, of his book *Kanz al-`Ummāl*.

LETTER 95
Rabī` al-Awwal 26, 1330

Justifying not Killing the Renegade

They, may Allāh be pleased with them, may have understood the Prophet's order to be a recommendation rather than an obligation, and this is why they did not kill the man. Or maybe they thought that killing him was to be handled by a more qualified companion, since such were present then, and they did not refrain from killing him out of fear that he might flee, having refrained from telling him about anyone's intention to kill him, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 96
Rabī` al-Awwal 29, 1330

Justification Rejected

The order was one that required its execution as such; so, nobody would understand it any other way; therefore, calling it a recommendation is not proved by any argument at all. On the contrary, proofs emphasize its real meaning, i.e. as an order; so, look carefully into those traditions and you will find out that what we say here is the truth. Suffices you his statement (حسن): "This man and his men read the Qur'ān only pronouncing its words [just to impress people]; they depart from the faith as swiftly as the arrow departs from the bow,

and they do not go back till the arrow goes back to the bow anew. Kill them, for they are the worst among the living,” and also his statement, peace be upon him and his progeny, “Had he been killed, no two men of my nation will have ever disputed with one another.” Such statements were not said except when there was a serious command greatly emphasizing that the man be killed.

If you refer to Ahmed's *Musnad*, you will find the order to kill the man was directed to Abu Bakr in particular, then to `Umer in particular; so, how can the obligation be ruled out?

Yet traditions are indeed explicit in indicating that those companions refrained from killing the man only because they hated to do so for no reason other than the fact that he was engaged in prayer and supplication. They did not feel well even though the Prophet (ﷺ) himself felt well about getting rid of him. They did not abide by the order which they had received from the Prophet (ﷺ) to kill the man. This incident, therefore, is just another proof testifying to the fact that they used to prefer to follow their own opinions rather than the instructions of the Prophet (ﷺ), *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 97
Rabi` al-Awwal 30, 1330

Requesting Narration of all Such Incidents

Narrate all the rest of such incidents, without leaving any one of them out, so that we do not have to request you again, even if this means that your letters will be lengthy, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 98
Rabī` al-Thāni 11, 1330

I Glittering Proofs,
II Reference to Other Incidents.

1) Consider the Hudaibiya Treaty, Hunayn's booties, the taking of ransom from the captives of the Battle of Badr, his (ﷺ) order to slaughter a few camels when they had a severe shortage of food rations during the Battle of Tabūk, some of their own affairs on Uhud and its valley, the incident when Abu Hurayrah started conveying glad tidings to all those who believed in the Unity of Allāh, the incident of performing ritual prayers for a hypocrite, the incident of their questioning the *ṣadaqat* and their inquiries about debauchery, their interpretation of the verses dealing with the *khums* and *zakat*, the two verses dealing with the *mut`a* [temporary] marriage, the verse dealing with the divorce thrice, their interpretation of the traditions regarding the extra prayers during the month of Ramadān, the latter's methods and numbers, the method of calling the *athān*, the number of *takbīrs* during funeral prayers..., to the end of the list that is too lengthy to be dealt with in detail here. Add to this their opposition regarding the matter pertaining to Ḥaṭīb ibn Balṭa`ah, their opposition to what the Prophet (ﷺ) did at Ibrāhīm's *maqām*, the addition of the houses of some Muslims to the building of the mosque, the enforcement of the blood money of Abu Khirāsh al-Hathli to be paid by the people of Yemen, the banishment of Naṣr ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Salami, the penalty enforced on Ja`dah ibn Salām,¹ the method to regulate the *jizya*, the covenant to

conduct the *shūra* in the well-known manner, roaming at night and spying during day-time, the compensation in performing the rituals..., to the end of the list of innumerable issues in which they aspired to achieve power and control, as well as special interests. We have dedicated in our book *Sabīl al-Mu'minīn*² a lengthy chapter to deal with them.

2) Yet there are other texts dealing particularly with `Ali and the purified progeny (ع) besides the ones related to the caliphate which they did not honour either; rather, they acted to the contrary of the latter, as researchers know very well. So, no wonder to see how they used their own judgment to interpret the texts related to his caliphate; after all, isn't it just another text which they subjected to their own views and preferred their own thinking rather than acting upon it? Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹Refer to `Umer's biography in Ibn Sa`d's *Ṭabaqāt* and you will see how Ja`dah was executed for no complaint brought against him nor a witness other than a sheet on which there were verses written by an anonymous poet accusing Ja`dah of committing adultery.

²If you did not have a chance to read *Sabīl al-Muminīn*, try not to miss reading *Al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, for it contains precious benefits which no other book contains. We have dedicated a complete chapter to those who interpret it; it is Chapter 8, pages 44 to 130 of the second edition, where these matters are explained in detail.

LETTER 99**Rabī` al-Thāni 5, 1330 A.H.**

- I Their Preference of the Common Interest in
 Those Instances,**
- II Requesting the Rest.**

1) Anyone endowed with wisdom does not suspect their good intentions, and their preference of the common interest to all other considerations in their conduct regarding those instances. They always thought of what would be the best for this nation and the wisest for its faith, the best for its unity; so, they are not to be blamed for whatever they did, albeit if they followed certain texts or used their own judgment regarding them.

2) We had requested you to narrate all the instances, but you have narrated only a few, stating that there are texts regarding the Imām and his progeny (ع) besides the ones pertaining to his caliphate which our ancestors did not honour. We wish you had stated them in detail and spared us requesting you again to do so, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 100**Rabī` al-Thāni 8, 1330**

- I The Debater Digresses from the Subject-Matter,**
- II Responding to His Request.**

1) You have admitted their conduct regarding those well-known instances, and you have believed what we had said first; so, all praise is due to Allāh. As regarding their good intentions and their preference of the common interest, their seeking of what is best for the nation, its faith and unity, this is a departure from our main topic, as you yourself know.

2) In your latest letter, you have requested the details of the authentic ahādīth regarding `Ali (ع) in matters other than the imāmate which they did not follow; nay, they did not even pay them any attention. You are the imām of traditions of our time; you are well acquainted with them; you have spent a great deal of effort in tackling the details of what we have summed up, and who else is more knowledgeable than you of the details of what we have referred to? Is there anyone else who equals you or is able to compete with you regarding the Sunnah? Certainly not; yet, the matter is just what the axiom says: "How often do people ask about things with which they are familiar?"

You know very well that there are quite a few companions who hated `Ali and were his enemies. They deserted him, hurt him, cursed and wronged him, opposed him, fought him, struck his face and the faces of his Ahl al-Bayt as well as those of their followers with their swords, as is well-known by necessity from the history of the ancestors. The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has said:

- "Whoever obeys me obeys Allāh, and whoever disobeyes me disobeyes Allāh; whoever obeys `Ali obeys me, and whoever disobeyes `Ali disobeyes me too."
- "Whoever deserts me deserts Allāh, and whoever deserts you, O `Ali, deserts me, too."

- "O `Ali! You are a leader in this life and a leader in the life hereafter; I love whoever loves you, and the one I love is loved by Allāh; your enemy is my enemy, and my enemy is the enemy of Allāh; woe unto whoever hates you after me."
- "Whoever denounces `Ali denounces me, too, and whoever denounces me denounces Allāh."
- "Whoever hurts `Ali hurts me, too, and whoever hurts me hurts Allāh."
- "Whoever loves `Ali loves me, and whoever hates `Ali hates me."
- "Nobody loves you, O `Ali, except a true believer, and nobody hates you except a hypocrite."
- "O Allāh! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be the enemy of whoever sets himself as his enemy; support whoever supports him, and forsake whoever forsakes him."

One day, he looked at `Ali, Fātima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn (ع) and said: "I fight whoever fights you, and I am peaceful unto whoever is peaceful to you." Having covered them with a blanket, he (ص) said: "I fight whoever fights you, and grant asylum to whoever seeks peace with you; I am an enemy of your enemy." There are many such traditions which quite a few companions did not implement; nay, the latter's actions contradicted their injunctions in preference of their own desires since they sought their own self-interest. Those whose insight is keen know that all the very well-known traditions in honour of `Ali—which are several hundreds, such as the ones enjoining acceptance of his taking charge, forbidding everyone from becoming his enemy—are all proofs testifying to his great status and prestige, and to his lofty position in the eyes of Allāh and His Messenger. We have narrated quite a few of them in these Letters, and what we have not narrated is many times more.

You are, by the Grace of God, among those who are very well familiar with traditions and their meanings. Have you found any tradition which enjoins opposition and enmity towards him, or any particular one indicative of harming him, hating him, or bearing animosity towards him, or anything like hurting him and wronging him, denouncing him from the Muslims' pulpits, or making that a tradition followed by the preachers who preach during Fridays and eids? Certainly not. But those who did all of these things never paid any attention to such traditions in spite of their abundance and sequential narration. They did not hinder them from behaving in any way that would best serve their political interests. They knew that he was the brother and friend of the Prophet (ص), his heir and confidant, the chief of his progeny, his Aaron over his nation, his son-in-law in his own right, the father of his descendants, the foremost to accept Islam, the most sincere in faith, the most knowledgeable, the most diligent in doing good deeds, the most clement, the strongest in conviction, the hardest worker in the cause of God, the most courageous, the most virtuous, the one possessing the most feats, the most cautious about the interest of Islam, the nearest to the Messenger of Allāh, the closest to him (ص) in guidance, manners, and loftiness, the most exemplary in his deed, speech, or silence... But personal interests were to them above any other argument or consideration; so, why then the amazement at their preference to follow their own personal views regarding the imāmate to following the spirit of the Ghadīr ḥadīth, for example? Yet isn't the Ghadīr ḥadīth but just one of several hundred others which they saw only through their own glasses, preferring their own views and considering their own interests?

The Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said: "The similitude of my Ahl al-Bayt among you is like that of Noah's ark; whoever boards it is saved, and whoever lags behind it is drowned," and "The

similitude of my Ahl al-Bayt among you is like the Gate of Salvation to the children of Isra'īl: forgiven are the sins of whoever enters through it." He, peace be upon him and his progeny, has also said: "The stars are the security of the inhabitants of the earth against drowning, and my Ahl al-Bayt are the nation's security against dissension; so, if any Arab tribe opposes them, they will all dispute with each other and become the party of Iblīs (Eblis)," in addition to many such traditions all of which were ignored completely by them..., Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

LETTER 101
Rabī` al-Thāni 10, 1330

Why didn't the Imām Cite the *Ahādīth* of Caliphate and *Wisāyat* on the Saqīfa Day?

Truth has manifested itself; praise to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds. There remains only one last issue the nature of which seems to be disguised, wrapped in obscurity. Please mention it to uncover its veil and make its secret known. It is the fact that the Imām, during the incident of the saqīfa, did not cite any of the texts regarding the caliphate and wisyat, to which you give so much attention, to al-Siddīq and the allegiance to him; so, are you more familiar with such texts than he is? Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 102
Rabi` al-Thāni 11, 1330

- I** **Why the Imām Abstained on the Saqifa Day
from Citing Such Texts,**
- II** **Reference to his and his Followers' Arguments
Despite Obstacles.**

1) Everybody knows that neither the Imām nor any of his supporters among the descendants of Hāshim and others witnessed such an allegiance, nor did they enter that saqifa then. They were distracted from it and whatever went on inside it. They were totally preoccupied by their tremendous calamity: the demise of the Messenger of Allāh, and their conducting of the appropriate funeral preparations for him, peace be upon him and his progeny, paying no attention to anything else. As soon as they finished burying him in his sacred resting place, those at the saqifa had already commenced their act, conducted the allegiance, and tightly tied their knot, being extremely careful in forbidding any speech or deed that would weaken their allegiance, affect their deal, or annoy their commoners; so, where were the Imām during the events of the saqifa, the giving or the taking of allegiance to al-Ṣiddīq so that he might argue with them? How can he or anyone else be expected to argue after the allegiance had already been taken, and those who had a say had taken such measures? Can any one person in our present time face the authorities, uproot their power, and abolish their government? Would they leave such a person alone if he attempted to do so? Impossible. So, compare the past with the present, for neither people nor times have changed much.

Yet `Ali (ع) did not expect his arguments with them then to cause anything other than dissension. He preferred to lose what was his over its attainment under such circumstances. He feared that such dissension might harm

Islam and its *kalima*, as we have previously explained, saying that he was inflicted in those days more than anyone else by two major catastrophes: On one hand, caliphate, in its texts and wills, cried unto him and invoked him in a complaint that would make the heart bleed, and the oppressive dissension on the other warned him of an uprising in the peninsula, a possible rebellion of the Arabs that would sweep Islam away, threatening it with the hypocrites among the residents of Medīna who were accustomed to hypocrisy, supported by the bedouins who, according to the text of the Book of Allāh (9:101), are hypocrites, nay, even worse in disbelief and hypocrisy, so much so, that it would be better for them not to know the limits of what Allāh has revealed unto His Messenger (9:97). These have become stronger by the loss of the Prophet (ص), peace be upon him and his progeny, and Muslims became like frightened cattle in a winter night, surrounded by assaulting jackels and wild beasts. Musaylamah the Liar, conspirator Talhah ibn Khuwaylid, and sorceress Sajāh daughter of al-Hārith, in addition to their rogues and hoodlums, were all trying their best to wipe Islam out and crush the Muslims. Add to this the fact that the Romans, the followers of Kisra and Caesar, besides many others, were plotting against the Muslims. Still add to these other elements full of grudge against Muḥammad, his progeny and companions, and full of hatred towards the message of Islam. All these parties desired to uproot Islam's foundations. These were active in doing so, rushing their steps, seeing that the wind was finally blowing in their direction, and the opportunity because of the departure of the Prophet (ص) to the Sublime Companion had come; so, they wished to make use of that opportunity before Islam regained its strength and resumed order. `Ali (ع) was aware of both dangers, and it was only natural that he would offer his own right on the altar of sacrifice for the sake of the Muslims.¹

But he also wanted to maintain his right for the caliphate and argue with those who departed from it in a way that would neither harm the Muslims, nor cause dissension among them, nor encourage their enemy to take advantage thereof. He, therefore, remained at home till he felt obligated, not forced, to leave it. Had he rushed to them, he would not have had any argument, nor would his followers have had any proof, but he secured, by taking such a stand, both the protection of the faith, and the maintaining of his own right to rule the Muslims. When he saw that preserving Islam and responding to the plots of its enemies depended during those days on calm and peace, he paved in person the way for calmness, preferring to make peace with those who had a say just to protect the nation and out of his concern about the faith, being concerned about religion and in preference of the good to come to the present one, implementing his jurisdic as well as moral obligation to prefer, while still opposing, what was most important to what was more important, since the circumstances then permitted neither the use of the sword, nor the response through one argument against another.

2) In spite of all this, he and his descendants (ع), in addition to the learned among his followers, used to follow wisdom when mentioning the will, publicizing for its clear texts, as is obvious to those who research, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

Sh

¹He, peace be upon him, has declared so in a letter which he sent to the people of Egypt with Mālik al-Ashtar when he vested on him its government. He said in it: "Allāh, praise be to Him, has sent Muḥammad (ص) as a warner to the worlds and as master of all Messengers. When he, peace be upon him, left (this world), Muslims after him disputed among themselves. By Allāh, I never

dreaded nor expected the Arabs to remove such responsibility from his Household, nor would they distance me therefrom after him, but what alarmed me most was their leaning towards that person to swear allegiance to him; so, I controlled myself till I saw that people had deviated from Islam and started inviting everyone to wipe out Muḥammad's faith. I, therefore, feared that if I did not support Islam and Muslims while witnessing the structure of Islam cracked or partially demolished, the catastrophe on me would be greater than missing your government which is nothing but the enjoyment of a few days after which it would vanish like a mirage, or disappear like summer clouds;" so he rose in those events till wrongdoing was removed, and the religion became deeply rooted and settled. Refer to his statement in *Nahjul-Balāghah*.

LETTER 103
Rabī al-Thāni 12, 1330

Looking for His and His Followers' Arguments

When did the Imām do so? And when did his kin and supporters do that? Please acquaint us with a portion of it, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
 S

LETTER 104
Rabī al-Thāni 15, 1330

I A Few Incidents When the Imām Argued,
II The Argument of al-Zahrā' (ع).

1) The Imām used to be quiet in publicizing the texts pertaining to him, without using them for personal gains against his opponents out of his own concern about the safety of Islam and to safeguard the strength of Muslims. He often used to defend his silence and reluctance to demand it, in such circumstance, by saying: "A man is not blamed if he takes his time in obtaining what is his; the blame is on that who takes what does not belong to him."¹ He used to apply certain methods crowned with manifest wisdom in disseminating the texts in his honour.

Have you noticed what he did in the incident of the Raḥba, when he gathered people during his caliphate to celebrate the Ghadīr Day? He said to them: "I ask each Muslim of you who heard the Messenger of Allāh, peace be

upon him and his progeny, say on the Ghadīr Day what he said to stand and testify to what he had heard, and nobody should stand except those who have seen him;" thirty companions, including twelve participants in the battle of Badr, testified to what they had heard of the Ghadīr ḥadīth as we have indicated above in Letter No. 56. This is the maximum that he could do under such critical circumstances due to `Uthmān's murder, and the mutiny in Basra and Syria. It is, indeed, the peak of wisdom in such publicity in those days, and what a praiseworthy effort that revived the Ghadīr tradition from its tomb and brought it to life after it was almost buried for good! The crowds at the Rahba were reminiscent of those who witnessed the Prophet (ص) on Ghadīr Khumm day taking `Ali (ع) in his own eminent hand and addressing a hundred thousand or more of his nation to convey to them the message that he would be his successor. Thus, the Ghadīr tradition is one of the most reliable among consecutive traditions; so, observe the Prophet's wisdom when he exhorted him in front of such thronging crowds, and be mindful of the wisdom of the *waṣī* on that Friday when he asked them to testify, thus highlighting the truth in a quiet manner dictated by circumstances, and by a peaceful method the Imām preferred. Thus was his method in disseminating the covenant and publicizing for the tradition. He was the type of person who would attract the attention of the unaware through means which did not require making a lot of noise or creating bad feelings among people.

Consider what the authors of books of traditions have quoted of his own ḥadīth, peace be upon him, during the incident of the feast arranged by the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, at the house of his uncle, the most dignified man among the people of Mecca, when he warned his near in kin. It is a lengthy and sacred tradition people have always considered as one of the proofs of

Prophethood and the miracles of Islam due to its inclusion of the Prophetic miracle of feeding a large number of people with very little food. We have already quoted it in Letter No. 20. It concludes by stating that the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, took `Ali (ع) by the neck and said: "This is my brother, *the* executor of my will, and my own successor; so, listen to him and obey him." He used quite often to tell how the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, said to him: "You are the *wali* of every believer after me," and he also quite often used to narrate this statement of the Prophet (ص): "Your status to me is like that of Aaron to Moses, except there will be no Prophet after me," and, reminiscing of Ghadīr Khumm, "Do not I have more authority over the believers than the believers themselves have?" They said: "Yes, indeed." He then said: "To whomsoever I have been a *wali*, this (`Ali [ع]) is his *wali*," in the words of Ibn Abu `Āsim, as we explained at the conclusion of Letter No. 23, in addition to many such irrefutable texts. They have been publicized by the most trustworthy and reliable traditionists. This is all that he was able to do during those circumstances. ["Purposeful wisdom; so, how can the *nuthur* be of any use?"]

On the Day of Shūra, he discharged his responsibility and warned others, sparing none of his own attributes or feats without using it as an argument. During the days of his caliphate, he often complained about the gross injustice done to him, painfully announcing his complaint from the pulpit, saying: "By God, that person vested it upon himself, knowing that my place from it was like the axle from the quern: From me does the stream of knowledge flow, and birds do not soar higher; so, I lowered against it my curtain and kept aloof therefrom. I had to opt between either fighting with an amputated arm, or be patient about a blind calamity in which the grown-ups become elderly and the youngsters grow gray

hair, one wherein a *mu'min* sweats till he meets his Lord. I decided that to be patient was wiser; so I became patient while seeing eye sores, tongue-tied, witnessing my inheritance being plundered," to the end of his *shaqshaqi* sermon, which is *khutba* 3 in *Nahjul Balāghah*, page 25, Vol. 1. He often said: "O Lord! I seek Thy assistance against Quraysh and those who support them, for they have cut my flesh, demeaned my status, and disputed with me about what is mine, then they said: 'It is only right that we take it, and that you should abandon it.'" Refer to either *khutba* 167 or page 103, Vol. 2, of *Nahjul Balāghah*. In the same *khutba*, someone said to him: "You seem to be so much concerned about this matter." The Imām (ع) answered: "No; by God you are more concerned about it than I am. I have demanded one of my own rights, while you have stood between it and my attaining thereof." He, peace be upon him, has also said: "By Allāh, since the time when Allāh took the life of his Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, till today, I have always been pushed away from my right, while others are preferred over me," as in *khutba* 5, page 36, Vol. 1, of *Nahjul Balāghah*.

He, peace be upon him, said once: "We have a right; if we do not attain it, we will have to mount old camels even if the journey is lengthy."² He, peace be upon him, said in a letter he wrote to his brother `Aqīl: "May the One who affects justice retaliate on my behalf against Quraysh who have separated me from my own kin and deprived me the support of my own maternal brother," as stated in epistle 36, page 67, Vol. 3, in *Nahjul Balāghah*. He, peace be upon him, quite often used to say: "I looked around and found no supporter other than my Ahl al-Bayt whom I preferred to protect against death, overlook against my wish, and I remained patient, containing my anger though it is more bitter than colocynth

[*Citrullus Colocynthis*],” as in *khutba* 25, page 62, Vol. 1, of *Nahjul Balāghah*.

Some of his friends asked him once: “How did you keep your folk away from that post knowing that you have more right to it than anyone else?” He, as stated on page 79, Vol. 2, of *Nahjul Balāghah*, statement 157, answered: “O fellow of Banu Asad! You are disturbed by such a mysterious matter to the extent that you ask your question awkwardly. Yet we are obligated to you due to our kinship, and you have the right to ask such a question. You have asked, so be informed that as regarding some people oppressing us in this regard, while they know that we are superior in lineage to them, and stronger in blood ties to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), this came due to the selfishness of certain people who were supported by others. The government is only to Allāh, and the return is unto Him on the Day of Judgment; so, do not ask me about the usurpation called for even inside his [Prophet's] own chambers...” He, peace be upon him, has also said: “Where are those who claim that they are more deeply rooted in knowledge than we are? They tell lies about us and flagrantly oppress us though Allāh has raised our status and lowered theirs, granted us and deprived them, and permitted us to enter while ordering them out, and through us has He taken them out of the darkness of blindness into the light of guidance. The seeds of imāmate have been planted in the wombs of the descendants of Hāshim of Quraysh; it suits nobody else, and caliphate is appropriate for nobody other than them...,” to the conclusion of statement 140, on page 36 and the succeeding pages, Vol. 2, of *Nahjul Balāghah*.

Consider his statement in one of his sermons: “When the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, passed away, some people turned back [in their covenant to him], aiming to take various paths [rather than just one Right Path], relying on treachery, favouring those who were not his

kin, abandoning the path they were ordered to take in order to please him, thus moving the foundation stones of Islam from their places, using other sinful substances in the building of its structure. They have entered into Islam through the doors of those who follow their own inclinations, going to extremes in their bewilderment, distracted like drunkards, following the sunnah of the descendants of Pharaoh, worshippers of this life, those who have deliberately abandoned their religion.” Refer to this statement, which is cited at the beginning of page 25; it concludes sermon 2, Vol. 1, of *Nahjul Balāghah*, which he delivered after receiving the oath of allegiance, for it is one of the greatest. In it, he says: “Nobody can be compared with the progeny of Muhammad, peace be upon him, from all the members of this nation, and nobody can be the peer of those who have received His blessing. They are the corner-stones of the faith, the pillars of conviction; through them does the extremist return to moderation, and through them does the one who has left knowledge behind him retract; they possess the characteristics of those who deserve to rule, and in them lie the covenant and the legacy. Now right has returned to its people and transferred back to its appropriate place.” Add to this his statement cited in the context of sermon 84, page 145, Vol. 1, of *Nahjul Balāghah* in which he wonders about those who oppose him: “How amazed I am to see the error of these groups, disputing in their arguments about their religion, neither following in the footsteps of the Prophet (ص), nor the example of his *wasī*...!”

2) Al-Zahrā', peace be upon her, delivered very wise arguments in this regard. Two of her own statements were in wide circulation among Ahl al-Bayt (ع), so much so that they used to require their children to memorize them just as they required them to memorize the entire text of the Holy Qur'ān. They deal with those who “moved the foundation stones of

the faith from their bases” and built them somewhere else. She said:

“How dare they? Where have they moved it [caliphate] to, building it somewhere else other than at the haven of the Message, the foundations of Prophethood, the place where the faithful spirit [Gabriel] descends, the one who is the authority about secular as well as religious matters? This, indeed, is the manifest loss. Why do they hate al-Hasan's father so much? By Allāh, they hate the strength of his sword, his might and astounding deeds, and his extraordinary effort in supporting the religion of Allāh. By Allāh, had they all yielded to his leadership,³ he would have taken them to the easy path, without harming anyone. He would have brought them to an overflowing fountain of goodness, advised them in secrecy and in public, neither filling his belly with their own sustenance, nor satisfying his thirst nor hunger out of their own toil. The gates of mercy of the heavens and the earth would have been widely opened for them. Allāh will punish them for the sins they were committing; so, come and listen to the story, and so long as you live, be amazed, and when you are amazed, the incident bemuses you... Where have they gone, and which niche have they clung to? What an evil guardian they have taken, and what an evil bunch! How evil is the end of the oppressors who traded the tails for the hoofs, and the rumps for the chests! So, dusted are the noses of those who think that they have done well; they are the ones who fill the world with corruption without knowing it. Woe unto them! Isn't that who guides to the truth more worthy of being

followed than the one who does not guide? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?"⁴

up to the conclusion of her sermon which is a specimen of the speech of the purified progeny in this regard, and you may judge the rest by this one, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This statement is a short one dealing with his noble objective, and it is included in *Nahjul Balāghah*. Refer to what the Mu'tazilite scholar has said while explaining it on page 324, Vol. 4, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*.

²This statement is number 21 of his statements in the chapter dealing with "choice gems of his wisdom," page 155, *Nahjul Balāghah*. Sayyid al-Radi has commented on it in a very valuable commentary, and so has Shaykh Muḥammad `Abdoh. Both deserve the attention of any scholar.

³The reins passed on to him by the Messenger of Allāh are those of governing the nation in the matters pertaining to its religion as well as the daily life. The meaning is that had they all been in consensus in submitting to such a government, yielding to such a leader, they would have been protected from harm.

⁴This is quoted by Abu Bakr Aḥmed ibn `Abdul-`Azīz al-Jawhari in his book *Al-Saqīfa and Fadak*, from a chain of narrators including Muḥammad ibn Zakariyya, Muḥammad ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān al-Muhallabi, `Abdullāh ibn Hammād ibn Sulayman who quotes his father, `Abdullāh ibn al-Hasan who quotes his mother Fātima bint Husayn, ending with al-Zahrā', peace be upon her. It is also narrated by Imām Abul-Fadl Aḥmed ibn Abu Tāhir, who died in 280, on page 23 of his book *Balaghāt al-Nisā'* through Harun ibn Muslim ibn Sa'dān, from al-Hasan ibn Alwān from Aṭīyah al-

ʿAwfi who narrated this *khutba* from a chain of narrators including ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Ḥasan from his mother Fāṭima bint al-Ḥusayn, from her grandmother al-Zahrā', peace be upon her. Our own fellows narrate this *khutba* from Suwayd ibn Ghafḥah ibn Awsajah al-Ju`fi from al-Zahrā', peace be upon her. Al-Ṭibrisi has quoted it in his book *Al-Ihtijāj*, and al-Majlisi in his book *Biāar al-Anwār*, and it is narrated by many other trustworthy narrators.

LETTER 105
Rabī` al-Thāni 16, 1330

Requesting Narration of Other Such Incidents

We aspire to complete the benefit if you quote others besides the Imām and al-Zahrā', and you will thus do us a favour, *Wassalam*.

Sincerely,

S

LETTER 106
Rabī` al-Thāni 18, 1330

- I** Ibn `Abbās's Argument,
- II** Arguments of al-Hasan and al-Husayn,
- III** Arguments of Prominent Shī`ah *Ṣaḥābah*,
- IV** Reference to their Applying the Will as an Argument.

1) May I invite your attention to the dialogue between Ibn `Abbās and `Umer in which the latter, in a lengthy conversation between both men, asked: "O Ibn `Abbās! Do you know what stopped your folks [from demanding the caliphate] after Muḥammad (ص)?" Ibn `Abbās narrates saying: "I hated to answer `Umer's question, so I said to him: 'If I do not know, the commander of the faithful [i.e. `Umer] knows.'" `Umer said: "[Some people simply] hated that both prophethood and caliphate be confined to your House; so, they were happy about their scheme. Quraysh sought it for themselves, and were able to obtain it." I said: "O commander of the faithful! Do you permit me to say something and

promise to control your anger?" He answered in the affirmative; therefore, Ibn `Abbās said: "As regarding your statement, O commander of the faithful, that Quraysh sought it for themselves and were successful in obtaining it, I say that had Quraysh sought what Allāh had chosen for them, their choice would have been unobjectionable and unblamed. As regarding your statement that they hated to see both prophethood and caliphate in our House, I say that Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime, has described some people to be malicious, saying, `... that is so because they hated what Allāh has revealed, so He rendered their deeds vain.'" `Umer then said: "Impossible, O Ibn `Abbās, for I heard things about you which I hate to believe else your status in my eyes should be reduced." I asked: `What are they, O commander of the faithful? If they are true, they should not lower my status in your esteem, and if they are not, I am capable of defending myself against false charges.' `Umer then said: `It has come to my knowledge that you say that they have deprived you of it [caliphate] out of envy, oppression and injustice.' I said: `As regarding your statement, O commander of the faithful, that it was oppression, then that has become quite obvious to those who are ignorant as well as to those who are clement. As regarding your statement about envy, then Adam was envied, and we are his descendants who also are envious.' `Umer then said: `Impossible, impossible; your hearts, O descendants of Hāshim, have become filled with envy that can never dissipate.' I therefore said: `Wait, O commander of the faithful, do not attribute this to the hearts of those whom Allāh has purified with a perfect purification.'"¹

He argued with him in another incident, asking: "How did you leave your cousin?" Ibn `Abbās said he thought `Umer meant `Abdullāh ibn Ja`fer; so, he answered: "I left him in the company of his friends." He said: "I did not mean him; I meant the greatest among you, Ahl al-Bayt." Ibn `Abbās said: "I left him exiled, irrigating while reciting the

Qur`ān.” `Umer said: “O `Abdullāh! I implore you not to be shy but tell me if he is still concerned about the issue of caliphate.” He answered in the affirmative. Then `Umer asked: “Does he claim that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) has selected him for it?” Ibn `Abbās answered: “Yes, indeed; moreover, I even asked my father if there was any statement made by the Messenger of Allāh regarding selecting him for the caliphate, and my father informed me that that was the truth.” `Umer then said: “The Messenger of Allāh held him in very high esteem through his speeches and actions in a way that left no argument nor excuse for anyone,² and he kept testing the nation regarding him for some time;³ nay, even when he was sick [prior to his demise], he wished to nominate him for it, but it was I who stopped him.”⁴

In a third dialogue between both men, `Umer said: “O Ibn `Abbās! I can see how wronged your friend [`Ali (ع)] is.” Ibn `Abbās said: “O commander of the faithful, then affect justice on his behalf.” Ibn `Abbās said: “But `Umer pulled his hand from mine and went away whispering to himself for a good while. Then he stopped; so, I rejoined him, and he said to me: `O Ibn `Abbās! I do not think that his people denied him [the caliphate] for any reason other than his being too young for it.’ I said to him: `By Allāh, neither Allāh nor His Messenger regarded him as too young when they both ordered him to take Sūrat Barā`a (Qur`ān, Chapter 9) from him [from Abu Bakr].’ Having heard this, he turned away from me and started walking fast; so, I left him alone.”⁵

How often has `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās, who is the scribe of the Muslim nation, the spokesman of the Hashimites, and cousin of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), encountered such stances? In Letter No. 26, you have come to see how he argues with the oppressive party by citing a tradition that counts ten exclusive merits of `Ali (ع). It is a lengthy and eminent tradition in which he quotes the Prophet (ص) asking his cousins: “Who among you would be my

supporter in [matters related to] this life and the life hereafter?" They declined, but `Ali (ع) said: "I support you in this life as well as the life to come." The Prophet (ص) then said to `Ali (ع): "You are my *wali* in this life and the life to come." In another tradition, Ibn `Abbās narrates that during the Tabuk raid, the Messenger of Allāh (ص) went out, accompanied by many people, and `Ali (ع) asked him: "Shall I accompany you?" The Messenger of Allāh denied his request; so, `Ali (ع) wept; whereupon the Prophet (ص) said to him: "Are you not pleased that your status to me is like that of Aaron to Moses, except there is no Prophet (ص) after me? I ought not leave except after you represent me in my absence." The Messenger of Allāh has also told him: "You are the *wali* of every believer after me," and "Whoever accepts me as his *wali*, `Ali (ع) [henceforth] is his *mawla*."

2) The dignitaries among the descendants of Hashim often argued likewise. Once al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali (ع) came to Abu Bakr who had seated himself on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) and told him to get down from a place his father was more worthy of. Al-Ḥusayn (ع) is reported to have said similarly to `Umer who was also seated on the same pulpit.⁶

3) Books written by imāmites who dealt with this topic cite many incidents wherein the Hāshimites and their followers among the *ṣahābah* and *tabi`īn* argued likewise, and they ought to be reviewed by those who are interested in their contents. Suffices here to cite the book of arguments by imām al-Ṭibrisi in which he quotes statements made by the Omayyad Khālid ibn Sa`īd ibn al-`Ās,⁷ Salmān al-Fārisi, Abu Tharr al-Ghifāri, `Ammār ibn Yāsir, al-Miqdād, Buraydah al-Aslami, Abul-Haytham ibn al-Tihān, Sahl and `Uthmān sons of Ḥanīf, Khuzaymah ibn Thābit of the two Shahādas, Ubayy ibn Ka`b, Abu Ayyūb al-Ansari, and many others among those who researched the history of Ahl al Bayt and of their

followers. Yet they never missed any opportunity to prove their point by citing explicit or implicit references, strongly or smoothly worded, speeches and writings, poetry and prose, according to whatever their circumstances, though critical, permitted.

4) They repeatedly referred to the will, using it as an argument, as is well-known by researchers, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹We have quoted it *verbatim* from *Al-Tarīkh al-Kāmil* by Ibn al-Athīr who includes it at the conclusion of `Umer's biography among the events of the year 23 A.H., page 24, Vol. 3, and it is also quoted by the Mu`tazilite scholar in `Umer's biography, too, page 107, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*

²He means that the speech of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) praising `Ali indicates that `Ali enjoys quite a lofty status, obviously an admission by `Umer.

³He means that the Prophet (ص), due to praising `Ali in such wise words, is testing the nation to see if it would accept him as his successor.

⁴This is quoted by Imām Abul-Faḍl Ahmed ibn Abu Tāhir in his book *Tarīkh Baghdād*, indicating his reliable source to be Ibn `Abbās. It is also quoted by the Mu`tazilite scholar who discusses `Umer in his *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, page 97, Vol. 3.

⁵This dialogue is quoted by authors of books of biographies in their discussions of `Umer, and we have quoted it here from *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah* by the Mu`tazilite scholar; so, refer to page 105 of its third volume.

⁶Ibn Hajar has quoted both cases in his fifth *maqsad* of the verse enjoining kindness to the Prophet's kin, and it is verse 14, of the ones dealt with in Chapter 11 of his book *Al-Ṣawā`iq al-Muhriqa*; so, refer to page 160 of this reference. Al-Dār Qutni has quoted the case of al-Hasan with Abu Bakr, and Ibn Sa`d has quoted the case of al-Husayn with `Umer in his biography of the latter in his *Ṭabaqāt*.

⁷Khālid ibn Sa`id ibn al-`Ās was among those who rejected Abu Bakr's caliphate; he refused for three months to swear allegiance to him, as stated by a group of reliable Sunnis such as Ibn Sa`d in his biography of Khālid in his *Ṭabaqāt*, page 70, Vol. 4, adding that when Abu Bakr dispatched troops to Syria, he prepared the standard for him and came in person to his house, but `Umer said to Abu Bakr: "Do you give charge to Khālid after having heard what he has said?" He continued trying till he sent Abu `Arwah al-Dawsi with the message that "The successor of the Messenger of Allāh (ص) asks you to return our standard." He did so saying: "Your government has never pleased us, nor has your deposition harmed us." Having heard such a statement, Abu Bakr came to him to apologize, and he earnestly requested him not to mention `Umer in public. All writers who mention the incident of this campaign to Syria mention this incident as well, for it is one of such detailed incidents.

LETTER 107**Rabī` al-Thāni 19, 1330****When did they Mention the Will?**

When did they mention the will to the Imām, and when did they use it in their argument? I do not think that they mentioned it other than in the presence of the mother of the believers who denied it, as we explained before, Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 108**Rabī` al-Thāni 22, 1330****The Recommendation as Evidence**

Yes, indeed, they did. The Commander of the Faithful (ع) mentioned it while preaching from the pulpit, and we have in Letter No. 104 quoted its text. Anyone who quotes the tradition of the Household on the day of warning has done so, quoting `Ali (ع). We have also quoted it in Letter No. 20. It contains the explicit text recommending him for the caliphate. Imām Abu Muḥammad al-Hasan (ع), grandson of the Prophet (ص), and master of all the the young of Paradise, delivered a sermon when his father the Commander of the Faithful (ع) was assassinated in which he said: "I am the descendant of the Prophet (ص), and the son of his vicegerent," as quoted by al-Hākīm on page 172, Vol. 3, of his authentic *Mustadrak*. Imām Ja`fer al-Sādiq (ع), as on page 254, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, at the end of the commentary on the *qāsi`a* sermon, has said: "Even before the [Islamic] Message became public, `Ali (ع), while in the company of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), used to see the light and hear the voice [of angels]." He

also quotes him (ص) saying: "Had I not been the seal of Prophets, you [`Ali (ع)] would have been made a partner in my Prophethood; yet since you cannot be a prophet, you certainly are the *waṣī* and the heir of a Prophet," according to Buraydah. Such usage is common among all the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt, and it is a necessity among them and their followers from the time of the *sahābah* till now.

Salmān al-Fārisi is reported saying that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: "The one who is my *waṣī*, confidant, the best I leave behind me to execute my will and cancel my debts, is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)." Abu Ayyūb al-Ansāri has reported a tradition in which he says that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying to Fātima (ع): "Have you not come to know that Allāh, the Exalted and omni-Scient, cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and chose your father for His Messenger, then He cast a second look and chose your husband, then He inspired me to marry you to him and take him as my vicegerent?" Buraydah has narrated a tradition in which he says that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ص) saying: "For every Prophet there is a vicegerent and heir, and my vicegerent and heir is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع)," and both ahādīth of Abu Ayyūb and Salmān have already been quoted above in Letter No. 68. Whenever Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju`fi narrated a tradition from Imām al-Bāqir (ع), he used to say, as stated in Jābir's biography in al-Thahbi's *Al-Mīzān*, "The *waṣī* of *waṣīs* has narrated a tradition to me..., etc." Umm al-Khayr daughter of al-Harīsh al-Barīqi delivered an eloquent speech in Siffīn urging the Kufians to fight Mu`āwiyah in which she said: "Hurry, may Allāh be merciful unto you, to support the just Imām, the faithful *waṣī*, the greatest truthful," as quoted by Imām Abul-Fadl Ahmed ibn Abu Tāhir al-Baghdādi on page 41 of his work *Balaghāt al-Nisā* stating his source to be al-Sha`bi.

This is what some ancestors have quoted while lauding the recommendation in their sermons and speeches,

and whoever researches their biographies will find them applying the title "*wasi*" to the Commander of the Faithful (ع) as freely as they would call anything by its name, so much so that the author of *Tāj al-`Arūs* says on page 392, Vol. 10, while explaining the term "*wasi*": "[Pronounced] like *ghani*, *wasi* is the title of `Ali (ع), may Allāh be pleased with him."

As regarding dealing with this theme in their poetry, this cannot all be cited here due to its abundance, but we quote of it what serves the purpose to make a point. `Abdullah ibn `Abbās ibn `Abdul-Muttalib has described him as:

The Messenger's *wasi*, chosen from his Household;
His valiant knight when a challenge is posed.

Al-Mughīrah ibn al-Hārith ibn `Abdul-Muttalib has said these verses in which he encourages the people of Iraq to fight Mu`āwiyah in Siffīn:

The *wasi* of the Messenger of Allāh is your chief,
His son-in-law, promoted Allāh's Mushaf Sharīf.

`Abdullah ibn Abu Sufyān ibn al-Harth ibn `Abdul-Muttalib has said:

Among us is `Ali (ع), hero of Khaybar, now in ruin,
The hero of Badr, too, when troops retreated;
He is *wasi* of the Chosen Prophet (ص) and his cousin,
So, who can attain his lofty status, only to him meted?

Abul-Haytham ibn al-Tihān, one of the heroes of Badr, composed verses to recite during the Battle of the Camel in which he said:

The *wasi* is our Imām and *wali* in word and deed,
No secret left; what was hidden is now revealed.

Khuzaymah ibn Thābit, of the two *Shahadas*, a hero of Badr, recited verses which he, too, composed during the Battle of the Camel in which he said:

O *wasi* of the Prophet! The battle has shaken the foes,
And caravans have been dispatched to deal blows.

He, may Allāh be pleased with him, has also said:

O `Ayesha! Leave `Ali and the names you call him,
too,
For what you call him is certainly *not* true;
He is but the *wasi* from the Prophet's clan,
The one to testify to that is but you, says everyone.

`Abdullāh ibn Badīl ibn Warqā' al-Khuzā'i, a hero among the *ṣahābah*, who was martyred in Siffīn together with his brother `Abdul-Rahmān, said the following on the incident of the Battle of the Camel:

O my people! What a great calamity Satan brought,
Battle the enemy, for the *wasi* of the Prophet is fought.

Among the verses said by the Commander of the Faithful himself in Siffīn were these:

If Ahmed were told that his *wasi* is indeed
Equalled to a wretch, he would surely be displeased.

Jarīr ibn `Abdullāh al-Bijlī, a *ṣahābi*, sent verses to Shurḥabīl ibn al-Ṣamt in which he mentioned `Ali (ع) saying:

Among all other members of the Prophet's clan,
He is *wasi* of the Messenger of ar-Rahmān,

His Messenger's protecting knight,
A man proverbial in courage and might.

`Umer ibn Hārithah al-Anṣārī, in a poem lauding Muhammad son of the Commander of the Faithful, better known as Ibn al-Hanafīyya, said:

Like the *wasī*, and after the Messenger named,
The colour of his standard is crimson red.

When people swore the oath of allegiance to `Ali (ع) after `Uthmān, `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Jā`il said these verses:

I swear you have allied yourselves to one
Whose concern about the faith is well-known,
Supported by the Almighty: virtuous, with no sin,
`Ali, *wasī* of the Chosen one and his cousin,
The first to offer ritual prayers,
One endowed with piety and honours.

A man of the Azd tribe said the following during the Battle of the Camel:

This is `Ali;
The Prophet's *wasī*
On the Day of Salvation;
The Prophet told the nation:
"This is a brother of mine!
"And successor when my sun ceases to shine."
The wise heeded and kept it in mind,
The wretch forgot and left it behind.

During the Battle of the Camel, a young man from the tribe of Zabbah, who was trained in `Ayesha's camp, came out and said:

We are children of Zabbah, enemies of `Ali,
 The one who is known for long as the *wasī*,
 A brave knight during the time of our Nabi,
 I am not blind about the virtues of `Ali,
 I mourn the murder of `Uthmān's son, the *taqi*.

Sa`īd ibn Qays al-Hamadāni, who fought in `Ali's camp, said the following on the Battle of the Camel:

What a battle that has kindled a fire!
 Breaking the spears of every knight,
 Tell the *wasī*: Qahtān approaches in desire,
 Call upon them to aid Hamadān with their might,
 They are their kin,
 They are their children.

Ziyād ibn Labīd al-Anṣāri, one of `Ali's companions, composed these verses during the Battle of the Camel:

How do you see the Anṣar in a fierce battle faring?
 We are people never afraid to die;
 In supporting the *wasī*, we attack with daring,
 The Anṣār are serious, their spirits high.
 `Ali son of `Abdul-Muttalib do we support
 Against those who, about him, lied in their import.
 Tell the liars, whose conscience is cheap,
 A miserable harvest shall they forever reap.

Hajar ibn `Adi al-Kindi said on the same occasion:

Lord! Protect `Ali whose deeds You bless,
 The pious believer, the caller for Your Oneness.
 This is the view not of a depraved nor a deceiver,
 He is but a divinely inspired and guided leader,

Protect him, Lord, and protect Your Prophet's Call
Through his *wali* and the *wasī* of each and all.

Umer ibn Ahjyah composed a poem lauding the address of al-Ḥasan, delivered after that of Ibn al-Zubayr, during the Battle of the Camel saying:

Hasan of goodness, like your father in virtue and
grace,
Among us you have taken a lofty, exemplary place.
You have delivered a speech whereby Allāh exposed
The lies of the enemies of your father who posed
Prattling, like Ibn al-Zubayr, the man of shame.
Ask even skeptics, and they will tell you his name.
Allāh has insisted to lower in infamy his head,
And raise that of the clement son of *al-wasī* instead.
Thou hast undoubtedly chosen Thy own Nabi,
And Thou also appointed his honourable *wasī*.

Zajr ibn Qays al-Ju`fi composed these verses also during the Battle of the Camel:

The Lord salutes Ahmed, Messenger of the King
Who grants him many a blessing,
After the King's Messenger, our Caliph will succeed,
The authority-worthy, a knight true in word and deed:
Ali I meant, the Prophet's *wasī*, bringing to the Path
All depraved and strayers incurring a divine Wrath.

Al-Ash`ath ibn Qays al-Kindi has said:

The messenger of the Imām has come to us, so be it
That every Muslim in Ali's army speedily enlist,
He is the *wasī's* messenger, the *wasī* of the
Messenger,

Foremost in feats, virtues, piety of every believer.

... and Also:

A message from the Imām we have received
From Ali the virtuous, Ali of Hāshim,
Son-in-law of the Prophet (ص), his vizier indeed,
The best in the nation and in every realm.

Al-Nu`mān ibn al-`Ajlān al-Zarqī al-Ansāri said the following during the Battle of Şiffin:

Since the *wasī* is our leader, how can there be
division?
Nay! No bewilderment, no confusion, do not slacken;
So, leave depraved Mu`awiyah and follow the religion
Of the *wasī*, and praise the Lord of man and jinn.

`Abdul-Rahmān ibn Thu'ayb al-Aslami has said the following in a poem threatening Mu`āwiyah with the Iraqi troops:

They are led by none other than the *wasī*
To rid you of misguidance and uncertainty.¹

`Abdullah ibn Abu Saufyān ibn al-Hārith ibn `Abdul-Muttalib has said:

The one in charge after Muḥammad is `Ali who
On all occasions did defend, support and stand.
He is the *wasī* of the Messenger, nothing is new;
His peer, the first to pray with him and lend him hand.

Khuzaymah ibn Thābit, of the two *shahādas*, has said:

He is *wasī* of the Messenger out of all his clan
 His defending knight since the very beginning,
 The first to pray, preceded by no man
 Save the Lady chosen by One Who Grants blessing.

Zafar ibn Huthayfah al-Asdi has said:

Surround Ali, O men, and support him,
 For he is the *wasī* and the first Muslim.²

Abul-Aswad al-Du'ali has said:

I love Muḥammad passionately, and to me
 Very dear are: `Abbās, Hamzah, and the *wasī*.

Al-Nu`mān ibn `Ajlān, an Anṣār poet and dignitary, said these verses in a poem addressed to Ibn al-`Ās narrated by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār in his *Muwaffaqiyyāt*. It is transmitted by the Mu`tazilite scholar on page 13, Vol. 3, of his *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, but Ibn `Abd al-Birr quotes this poem stating the biography of al-Nu`mān in his *Isti`āb*, omitting the name of the witness from it "... and thus do they behave" (Qur`ān, 27:34):

You underestimated Ali who is the most fit,
 Albeit if you knew, or did not know it;
 For he, assisted by Allāh, guides unto Him and indeed
 Forbids debauchery, oppression and wrongful deed;
 The *wasī* of the Chosen Prophet (ص) and his cousin
 Killer of knights who are misguided, unbelieving.

Al-Faḍl ibn al-`Abbās has said these verses which are quoted by Ibn al-Athīr at the end of the latter's discussion of `Uthmān, on page 43, Vol. 3, of his work *Al-Tarīkh al-Kāmil*,

commenting that `Uthmān is "the best of people besides the three men of the [Prophet's] house."

The best of people and of every believer
 After the one chosen to be Messenger
 Is the *wasī* according to people who remember.
 And he is first to perform the rite of prayer
 And the like of the Messenger;
 The first at Badr to deal a deadly blow
 To those who broke the divine Law.

Hassān ibn Thābit has said these verses in which he praises Ali on behalf of all the Anṣār. They are quoted by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar in his *Muwaffaqiyyāt*, and recorded by Ibn Abul-Ḥadīd on page 15, Vol. 2, of his work *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*:

You are the most faithful to the Prophet among us
 Worthy of his recommendation; for who else surapss
 You in it, who else? Aren't you his brother
 In true guidance, and his *wasī*,
 The best scholar of the Qur'ān and all other
 Ahādīth of the blessed Nabi?

Some poets said these verses addressing al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali (ع), peace be upon both of them, as quoted by Shaykh Muḥammad `Ali Hashshu al-Hanafī al-Saydāwi in the footnote to page 65 of his book *A'thār Thawāt al-Siwār*, when he discussed both Ghānima daughter of `Āmir, and Mu`āwiyah, saying that she recited this verse before Mu`āwiyah in a statement she made responding to his own:

The most dignified of men, son of the *wasī*,
 Grandson of the Prophet, son of Ali.

Umm Sinān daughter of Khayth`amah ibn Kharsha'ah al-Mathhaji has said the following verses addressing and lauding Ali (ع); they are mentioned by Imām Abul-Fadl Aḥmed ibn Abu Tāhir al-Baghdādi when he discusses Umm Sinān on page 67 of *Balaghāt al-Nisā'*. They are also quoted from Umm Sinān by Shaykh Muḥammad `Ali Hashshu al-Hanafī al-Saydawi at the end of page 78 of his *Āthār Thawāt al-Siwār*.

You were among us, after Muḥammad, his trusted successor

He selected you, and of his trust you proved a protector.

This much of the poetry contemporary to the Commander of the Faithful (ع) is what we have been able to quote in such a short letter. If we review the poetry composed after him, then we will be authoring a voluminous book beyond the writing of which we would still apologize for our work being incomplete. Yet to quote all such poetry may become boring, and it may cause us to digress from the main subject-matter. So, let us be satisfied with quoting only the most famous poets, and let us judge the rest according to what is quoted here.

In his celebrated poem, al-Kumait ibn Ziyād has thus lauded the descendants of Hāshim:

He is the *wasi* protecting the throne of the nation
 Against collapse and disintegration,³
 The embodiment of virtue, glory and goodness,
 Solving the problems with order and firmness.
 The *wasi*, the wali,⁴ the knight
 Courageous, brave: his star was bright,
 The *wasi* of the *wasi*, determined and wise
 In battle-fields, you hear his enemy's agony cries.

Kuthayyir ibn `Abdul-Rahmān ibn al-Aswad ibn `Āmir al-Khuzā`i, better known as Kuthayyir `Azza, has said:

The *wasi* of the Chosen Prophet and his cousin; he
Emancipates those in bondage, and judges with equity.

Abu Tammām al-Tā`i has said the following in one of his poems the rhyme of which rhymes with "r's":⁵

You plotted against his *wasi* and deceived before;
You cooked it, unprecedented, unmatched in lore,
Against the Prophet's brother, son-in-law, who bore
Feats of valour, while your plots opened the door
To mischief: peerless in brother, son-in-law...; say no
more;
To the Prophet he was like Aaron to Moses of yore...

Du`bal ibn Ali al-Khuzā`i has said the following in his euology of the Master of Martyrs [Imām Husayn (ص)]:

The head of the son of Muhammad's daughter and his
wasi,
O men, is being raised atop a spear for all to see...!

Abul-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi, when rebuked for stopping his praise of Ahl al-Bayt, as recorded in his diwan (collection of poems) said:

I have no pretext for leaving the praise of the *wasi*
His light dominates and shade expands unto you and
me:
For when something elongates, it stands on its own,
Attributes of the sun's light are never gone.

He also said the following verses in his praise of Abul-Qāsim Tāhir ibn al-Husayn ibn Tāhir al-`Alawi, as also recorded in his *dīwān*:

He is son of the Messenger of Allāh and of his *waṣi*,
Alike unto them when I diligently compare and see.

Verses such as these are innumerable, uncountable,
Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹This verse, and all the poetic verses and martials which precede it, are quoted in the books of biographies and chronicles, especially the ones dealing with the battles of the Camel and Siffīn. They have been quoted in their entirety by the researching scholar Ibn Abul-Hadīd on page 47 and its following pages up to page 50, Vol. 1, of his *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*, Egyptian edition, where he explains the *khutba* of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) referring to Muḥammad's progeny (ع) and to what they have said about him, including the following: "They have the distinction of being divinely granted the right to rule, and in them the Prophet's will is preserved, and they are the ones who inherit his legacy." Having quoted these verses and martials, he says *verbatim*: "The verses containing this word `wasiyya' [will] are numerous, but we have mentioned here some of them where there is reference to the two parties (meaning Abu Mikhnaf's book dealing with the Battle of Camel, and Naṣr ibn Muzāhim's book dealing with the Battle of Siffīn); besides these, the references are uncountable and innumerable. We would have filled many pages of them had we not feared boredom and monotony."

²Zafr's verse, and both couplets composed by Khuzaymah before it, in addition to the couplets composed by Abu Sufyān which preceded them, are all narrated by Imām al-Iskāfi in his book *Naqd al-`Uthmāniyya*, and they are transmitted by Ibn Abul-

Ḥadīd at the end of his commentary on the *qāsi`a* sermon on page 258 and the pages following it, Vol. 3, of *Sharḥ Nahjul Balāghah*, Egyptian edition.

³When scholar Shaykh Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Rāfi`i came to the conclusion of his commentary on this verse in his own commentary on the verses composed by the poet al-Kumait in praise of the descendants of Hāshim, he said: "Meaning `Ali, may Allāh glorify his countenance, who is named *wasi* because the Messenger of Allāh *awsa* [left a will] regarding him." The same is narrated about Ibn Buraydah who quotes his father citing the Prophet (ص) saying: "For every Prophet there is a *wasi*, and `Ali is my *wasi* and the heir of my legacy." Al-Tirmithi states that the Prophet (ص) is quoted saying: "To whomsoever I have been a master, this `Ali is his master." Al-Bukhāri quotes Ibn Sa`d saying that the Messenger of Allāh (ص) headed to Tabūk, leaving `Ali (ع) behind. `Ali (ع) asked him: "Do you thus leave me with children and women?" He said: "Are you not pleased that your status to me is like that of Aaron to Moses, except there will be no prophet after me?" Ibn Qays al-Raqiyyāt has said:

Among us are: Ahmed the Prophet, the truthful, the pious,
the man of wisdom;
And `Ali and Ja`fer with two wings: They are the *wasi*,
and the man of martyrdom.

This is something which poets used to always say about `Ali (ع) with a great elaboration. Then he testifies to the poetry we have first quoted by Kuthayyir `Azzah.

⁴Muhammad Maḥmūd al-Rāfi`i, the commentator,⁴ says *verbatim*: "Meaning vicegerent after the Messenger of Allāh."

⁵The poem starts with: "Gazelles that made the dusty dunes glitter like stars," which is included in his *dīwān* (collection of poems).

LETTER 109
Rabi' al-Thāni 23, 1330

Why do Some Fanatics Question the Derivation of the Shī'a School of Muslim Law from the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (ع)?

We, in our Letter No. 19, had indicated that some fanatics question the derivation of your school of thought, in its roots and branches of religion, from the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt, and we wished to ask you about this matter. Now is the time to ask such a question; so, could you please answer it in a way that would refute their claim? Wassalam.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 110
Rabi' al-Thāni 29, 1330

- I **Shī'ah Faith is Sequentially Derived from the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt,**
- II **Advancement of Shī'ahs in Recording Knowledge During the *Ṣahābah*'s Epoch,**
- III **Their Authors Contemporary to the *Ṭabi'in*, and the Latter's Followers.**

1) All those endowed with wisdom and discretion know by necessity that the derivation of the roots and branches of the Shī'ah imāmite faith is from their forefathers and ancestors ending with the purified progeny. Their views, therefore, are conducive to those of the Imāms of the purified progeny in the roots and branches of the faith, as well as all deductions arrived at from studying the Book and the Sunnah, or in any

matter related to them or to all branches of theological science. They do not rely in their understanding of the latter except upon such progeny, and they refer to none other than them. They worship Allāh, the Exalted, and seek nearness to Him, Praised be He, through the faith of the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt, without seeing any deviation therefrom, nor desiring any substitute. This has been the policy of their good ancestors since the time of the Commander of the Faithful, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and the nine Imāms from the progeny of al-Husayn (ع) till our time. Those who have learned the roots and branches of the faith from Ahl al-Bayt are quite a few reliable Shī`ahs, and the number of those who learned from the latter is much larger. The number of those known for piety, verification and correction is more than sequential. They have narrated all this to those who succeeded them through *tawātur*, and after them it was thus narrated to others, and so on. This has been the case with each and every generation, till it reached us as clear as mid-day sun, without any cloud obstructing it.¹

We now, in understanding the roots and branches, are followers of the Imāms from the progeny of the Messenger (ص). We have quoted our forefathers who all quote them. This has been the case in all generations till the time of the Naqis, `Askaris, Rizas, Jawāds, Kāzims, Sādiqs, `Abidīns, Bāqirs, both grandsons of the Prophet (ص), peace be upon all of them, and finally the Commander of the Faithful (ع), not counting Shī`ah ancestors who kept company with the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (ع), learning the religious injunctions from them, quoting them while discussing Islamic knowledge.

There is no room here to count all of them and read their roll call. Suffices you what the pens of their renown scholars have written of interesting works a list of which does not fit in this narration. They derived all that from the light of the Imāms of guidance, the progeny of Muhammad, peace be upon him and them, quoting it from their own oceans of

knowledge, hearing it directly from them. They are the scribes of their knowledge and wisdom. Their works were authored during the life-time of those purified ones, and such works became references for all Shī`ahs who succeeded them. Through them, the superiority of the sect of Ahl al-Bayt manifested itself over all other Islamic sects.

We do not know any follower of the four Sunni Imāms, for example, who authored a book during the life-time of their Imāms. Rather, people authored works in abundance dealing with their faith after those Imāms had left this world, when it was decided that *taqlid* should be confined to their sects alone. During their life-time, they were just like any other contemporary jurist or traditionist, not enjoying any distinction over others of their class; therefore, nobody among their contemporaries was interested in exerting an effort to record their speeches like that exerted by Shī`ahs in recording the statements of the Infallible Imāms (ع). Ever since the inception of the Shī`ah sect, nobody was permitted to refer in the religious matters to anyone other than their Imāms. For this reason, such an effort was unavoidable, and they became the sole source of religious scholarship. A great deal of effort and resources were spent in recording their verbal statements, and many exhausted their resources in doing so in a manner that is unmatched so that they might preserve the knowledge which, according to such sect, is the only one accepted by Allāh. The books authored during the life-time of Imām al-Sādiq (ع) alone numbered four hundred dealing with four hundred different topics containing the religious verdicts [*fatawa*] issued by al-Sādiq (ع) during his life-time. The disciples of al-Sādiq (ع) have written many, many times this number, as you will hear in detail shortly, Insha-Allāh.

As regarding the four Sunni imāms, nobody looks at them in the eyes Shī`ahs look at the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt. Nay; they did not even have followers during their own life-time! They did not live to enjoy the status given to them after

they had died, as stated by Ibn Khaldūn al-`Arabi in a chapter he dedicated to the science of *fiqh* in his famous Introduction, and it is a fact admitted by many of their renown scholars. In spite of all this, we do not doubt that their followers followed anyone other than them, for theirs are, indeed, the views of the followers of those Imāms, the ones held reliable in dealing with their affairs by every generation. They recorded them in their books because their followers knew their sects best, just as Shī`ahs best know the sect of their Imāms, those who worship Allāh accordingly, believing that it is the only way to seek nearness to Him.

2) Researchers unhesitatingly accept the fact that Shī`ahs were *the* pioneers in recording the branches of knowledge, more so than anyone else. As a matter of fact, nobody in the first century of Islam besides `Ali (ع) and those endowed with the gift of knowledge among his Shī`ahs did so. The reason for this could be attributed to the differences of opinion among the companions in permitting or forbidding the writing of knowledge. According to al-`Asqalāni in his Introduction to *Fath al-Malik al-`Ali Biṣiḥḥati Bābil `Ilm `Ali*, and according to others, `Umer ibn al-Khattāb and a few others disliked the idea for fear ḥadīth might be mixed with the Book, versus the permission granted by `Ali (ع), and after him al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (ع), grandson of the Prophet (ص), and a group of other companions, to such writing. During that time, Ibn Jurayḥ authored in Mecca the first book dealing with the legacies in which he quotes Mujāhid and `Atā'. Al-Ghazālī says that it is the first book authored in Islam. The truth of the matter is that it is the first book authored by a non-Shī`ah in Islam. After it, Mu`ammar ibn Rashid, of San`ā, Yemen, wrote his, then Mālik authored his *Medīnati*'. The Introduction of *Fath al-Malik al-`Ali Biṣiḥḥati Bābil `Ilm `Ali* states that al-Rabī` ibn Ṣabīḥ was the first to compile information, and that he lived at the sunset of the time of the

tabi`īn. **Anyhow, the consensus of opinion is that Sunnis did not author a single book during the first Islamic century.**

As regarding `Ali and his Shī`ahs, these spent a great deal of effort and time to attain that end during the first century of Islam. The first writing of the Commander of the Faithful was the Book of Allāh, the Exalted, the Praiseworthy. Having finished the rituals pertaining to the preparation for the departure of the Prophet (ص) from this world, `Ali (ع) decided not to dress except to either say the prayers or compile the Qur`ān. He, therefore, compiled it arranged in the order of its revelation. He pointed out its general and specific meanings, absolute and restrictive, perfect and those that seem to be alike, revocation and what revokes it, emphasis and relaxation, injunctions and instructions; pointing out the occasions which necessitated the revelation of its perfect verses, explaining what might be confusing to other people. Ibn Sīrīn used to always say: "If you are lucky enough to obtain that book, then you will find in it abundant knowledge." This is cited by Ibn Hajar in his *Al-Sawā`iq al-Muhriqa*, and by many other renown writers. Several companions who could read took pains to compile the Holy Qur`ān, but they could not compile it in the order of its revelation, nor could they mark it the way explained above, leaving `Ali's compilation more than just a compilation—rather an exegesis.

Having finished working on the Book of the Dear One, he authored a book which he dedicated to the Mistress of the Women of Mankind. It came to be known to her purified sons as "Mushaf Fātima," Fatima's book, which contained axioms, pieces of wisdom and counsel, morals, historical events and unique occurrences, written as a solace for her after being bereaved by the loss of her father the Prophet (ص). After that, he authored a book dealing with blood monies which he titled *Al-Sahīfa*. It is referred to by Ibn

Sa`d at the end of his work titled *Al-Jāmi`* giving the credit of authorship to the Commander of the Faithful. Both al-Bukhari and Muslim mention this work and quote it in several places of their *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Among their narrative is what they have quoted from al-A`mash from Ibrāhīm al-Taymi who quotes his father saying: “`Ali (ع), may Allāh be pleased with him, told me once: `We have no book for you to read, besides Allāh's Book, other than this *Ṣaḥīfa*.' Then he brought it to me. It contained matters related to wounds and camel teeth. Also among its contents is a statement reading: `Medīna is a sanctuary from cIr to Thawr; anyone who desecrates it, or shelters a desecrator, will incur the curse of Allāh, the angels, and man.’” This is the wording of al-Bukhari in his section dealing with the sins of those who disown their mawālī, in his chapter on ordinances, page 111, Vol. 4, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and it is referred to in the chapter on Medīna's sanctity, when the pilgrimage is discussed on page 523, Vol. 1, of Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Imām Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal repeatedly refers to the narrative regarding this *Ṣaḥīfa* in his *musnad*. He quotes `Ali (ع) on page 100, Vol. 1, of his *Musnad*, transmitted by Tāriq ibn Shihāb who says: “I have witnessed `Ali, peace be upon him, telling people from the pulpit: `By Allāh! We have nothing to recite for you other than the Book of Allāh the Exalted, and this *Ṣaḥīfa*,’ which he was attaching to his sword, `I have learned its contents from the Messenger of Allāh.’”

Quoting `Abdul-Malik, al-Ṣaffār narrates: “Abu Ja`fer asked to have `Ali's book brought to him, and his son Ja`fer brought something bulky shaped like a thigh. Among its contents was a sentence reading: `If a man dies, his women will not inherit any of his estates.’ Abu Ja`fer said: `This, by Allāh, is the hand writing of `Ali (ع) and the dictation of the Messenger of Allāh (ص)!” A group of Shī`ahs who were contemporary to the Imām (ع) followed in the footsteps of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) and authored a number of books. Among those authors were: Salmān al-Fārisi and Abu

Tharr al-Ghifāri, as stated by Ibn Shahr Āshūb who says: "The first to author in Islam is `Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع), then Salmān al-Fārisi, then Abu Tharr."

Among the latter is Abu Rāfi`, freed slave of the Messenger of Allāh (ص), and treasurer of *baytul-māl* [state treasury] during the rule of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him. He was among the elite of his followers who sought his guidance. He wrote a book dealing with traditions, ordinances and other matters which he compiled mostly from `Ali's ḥadīth. It enjoyed a prestigious status among our ancestors who used it as a source of quotations and narrations. Among them is `Ali ibn Abu Rāfi` who, according to his biography in *Isāba*, was born during the life-time of the Prophet (ص) who named him `Ali. He authored a book on the science of *fiqh* according to the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt who, peace be upon them, used to cherish that book and refer their Shī`ahs to it. Musa ibn `Abdullah ibn al-Hasan has said: "A man inquired about *tashahhud* from my father. My father told me to fetch the book written by Abu Rāfi`. He took it and dictated to us from it."

The author of *Rawdat al-Jannāt* concludes his discussion by stating that the latter was the first book dealing with *fiqh* written by Shī`ahs, but he, may Allāh have mercy on him, has certainly erred. Among them is `Ubaydullah ibn Abu Rāfi`, a scribe and a follower of `Ali (ع), who learned from the Prophet (ص) and narrated to Ja`fer his (ص) saying: "Your form and manners are similar to mine." This is quoted by a group of scholars including Ahmed ibn Ḥanbal in his *Musnad*. Ibn Hajar has mentioned it in Part I of his *Isāba* under the heading "Ubaydullah ibn Aslam." The name of the father of Rabī' is Aslam. This `Ubaydullah authored a book dealing with the ṣahāba who fought the Battle of Ṣiffīn on `Ali's side, from which Ibn Hajar quotes extensively in his own *Isāba*;² so, you may refer to it. Also among them is Rabī'ah ibn Sam` who wrote a book dealing with *zakat* on

cattle herds derived from the ḥadīth of the Prophet (ص) which is narrated by `Ali (ع). They include `Abdullah ibn al-Ḥurr al-Fārisi who narrates a glitter of ahādīth all reported by `Ali (ع) from the Messenger of Allāh (ص). And among them is al-Asbagh ibn Nabatah, a friend and disciple of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) who quotes the Imām's instructive epistle to Mālik al-Ashtar and his will to his son Muhammad. Both are recorded by our fellows in their authentic books of traditions directly from him. Among them is Salīm ibn Qays al-Hilali, a companion of `Ali (ع), who quotes his ḥadīth and that of Salmān. He wrote a book dealing with imāmate which is mentioned by Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu`māni in his book *Al-Ghayba*, saying: "Nobody among all Shī`ah scholars and narrators of the ḥadīth of the Imāms disputes the fact that the book written by Salīm ibn Qays al-Hilālī is a major bibliography of works dealing with *uṣul* [basics of jurisprudence] narrated by scholars and traditionists from Ahl al-Bayt, and one of the pioneers in its subject-matter. It is one of the major sources to which Shī`ahs refer and upon which they rely." Our fellows have also recorded the names and works of those of the same caliber among their good ancestors who authored books, in addition to the indices and biographies to whose authors everyone is referred.

3) As regarding the authors among our ancestors who belong to the second generation, i.e. that of the tabi`īn, this Letter falls short of elaborating on them, and the best to do in getting to know them, their works and sources in detail, is to refer to the bibliographies and biographies compiled by our scholars.³

Upon that class did the light of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) brightly shine, whereas it was earlier obstructed by the clouds of the oppression of oppressors. The calamity of the Ṭaff disclosed the enemies of the progeny of Muḥammad (ص), and made them lose face before the wise. It also drew attention to the atrocities meted to Ahl al-Bayt (ع) since losing the

Messenger of Allāh (ص). Their horrible implications forced people to look for the reasons and obligated them to research the causes. Thus did they come to know the seeds and roots of the calamity. Those among them who were blessed with a conscience rose to protect the status of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) and support them [both Imāms], for the human nature is made to assist the wronged and dislike wrong-doing. Muslims, in the aftermath of that catastrophic incident, entered a new era in which they rushed to support Imām `Alī ibn al-Husayn Zaynul-`Ābidīn (ع), refer to him in their quest for answers regarding the roots and branches of the faith, and to all Islamic sciences derived from the Book and the Sunnah. After his death, they started referring to his son Imām Abu Ja`fer al-Bāqir (ع). Followers of both Imāms, i.e. Zaynul-`Ābidīn and al-Bāqir (ع), among ancient Imāmis, wrote innumerable books, but those scholars whose names and biographies were recorded in biography books were about four thousand heroes, and their works numbered approximately ten thousand⁴ or more which are narrated by our friends in every generation quoting them from reliable sources. A group among the elite of those heroes won the honour of serving them, while the rest served Imām al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon all of them, and luck had it that a large number of them reached their ultimate objective of attaining authentic knowledge.

Among the latter is Abu Sa`īd Abān ibn Taghlib ibn Rabāḥ al-Jarīri, the famous reciter of the Qur`ān, the traditionist, lexicographer, and linguist who was one of the most reliable among scholars. He was contemporary to three Imāms from whom he transmitted a great deal of knowledge and a large number of traditions. Suffices you the fact that he narrates from al-Ṣādiq (ع) alone thirty thousand ahādīth, as stated by al-Mirza Muḥammad in his biography of Abān in his work *Manhaj al-Maqāl* wherein he quotes Abān ibn `Uthmān citing al-Ṣādiq, peace be upon him. He enjoyed their respect and high esteem. Al-Bāqir, peace be upon him, said to

him, while they were both at the sacred city of Medīna, "Take your place at the mosque, and issue your verdicts to people, for I love people to observe a man of my own Shī'ahs like you." Al-S̄diq (ع), peace be upon him, said to him once: "Debate with the people of Medīna, for I love to see men like you among my narrators and friends." Whenever he came to Medīna, people came to him in large numbers and arranged for him to sit where the Prophet (ص) used to sit. Al-S̄diq (ع) said to Salīm ibn Abu Ḥabbah: "Visit Abān ibn Taghlib, for he has learned a large number of aḥādīth from me, and whatever he narrates to you, you should narrate, too." He, peace be upon him, has said to Aban ibn `Uthmān: "Abān ibn Taghlib has narrated thirty thousand aḥādīth from me; so, quote the same from him." Whenever Aban ibn Taghlib visited al-S̄diq (ع), the Imām would hug him, shake his hand, and order a couch to be given to him to lean on, and he would lend him his full attention. When the news of his death was brought to him, he, peace be upon him, said: "By Allāh! My heart is aching because of the death of Abān." He died in 141 A.H. Abān has narrated traditions from Anas ibn Mālik, al-A`mash, Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, Sammāk ibn Ḥarb, Ibrāhīm al-Nakh`i, Fudayl ibn `Umer, and al-Ḥakam. He is relied upon by Muslim and all authors of the four books of traditions, as we explained while discussing him in Letter No. 16.

Abān is not harmed by al-Bukhari's reluctance to rely on his authority, for his solace is that the man does not rely on the authority of the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) such as al-S̄diq, al-Kāzim, al-Riḍa, al-Jawād, al-Taqi, and al-Ḥasan al-`Askari al-Zaki, peace be upon all of them, either. Bukhari does not consider these men reliable; nay, he even does not rely on the authority of the elder grandson of the Prophet (ص) and the master of the the young of paradise! On the other hand, he relies on men like Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, `Umrān

ibn Ḥattān, `Ikremah al-Barbari and their likes; so, we are Allāh's, and to Him is our return.

Abān has written very interesting books. One of them is *Tafsīr Gharīb al-Qur'ān* [exegesis of what is unusual in the Qur'ān], whose contents are mostly Arabic verses of poetry cited to testify to the truth contained in the Perfect Revelation. Later, `Abdul-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad al-Azdi al-Kūfi combined the contents of Aban's book with those of Muḥammad ibn al-Sā'ib al-Kalbi and Ibn Rawāq `Atiyyah ibn al-Hārith and published them in one volume, highlighting the views in which they differed among themselves as well as those they agreed upon. He once quotes Abān independently, and once he quotes what agrees with `Abdul-Rahmān's views. Our friends have quoted both books through various reliable sources. Abān has authored a book dealing with moral excellences, and one dealing with the Battle of Ṣiffīn, and he has authored one of the major reference books on which the Imāmites rely in their derivation of jurisdic injunctions. All his books have been reported with reference to his authorship thereof. Their details are in bibliography books.

Among them is Abu Ḥamzah al-Thumālī ibn Dinār, a trustworthy authority and a dignitary among our ancestors. He derived his knowledge from three Imāms: al-Ṣādiq (ع), al-Bāqir, and Zaynul-`Abidīn, peace be upon them. He remained in close contact with them, and won their respect. Al-Ṣādiq (ع), peace be upon him, lauded him saying: "In his age, Abu Ḥamzah is like Luqmān in his own time." He has written a book on the exegesis of the Qur'ān, and I noticed imām al-Tibrisi quoting him in his *tafsir* titled *Mujma`ul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*.⁵ He has also written a book on rare ahādīth, another on asceticism, and a dissertation on rights⁶ narrated from Imām Zaynul-`Abidīn `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn from whom he narrates his own invocation recited at early dawn which shines brighter than the sun and the moon. He also narrates from Anas and al-Sha`bi. He in turn is quoted by Wakī, Abu

Na`īm, and a group of their class who are our own friends, and from others, as we stated in his biography in Letter No. 16.

There are other valiant men who did not live to meet Imām Zaynul-`Ābidīn, but they won the honour of serving both al-Bāqirs, peace be upon them.

Among these are: Abul-Qāsim Bard ibn Mu`āwiyah al-`Ajli, Abu Baṣīr al-Asghar Layth ibn Murād al-Bakhtari al-Murādi, Abul Hassan Zarārah ibn `Ayān, Abu Ja`fer Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Rabāḥ al-Kūfi al-Tā`ifi al-Thaqafi, and many other standards of guidance and lighthouses that shone in the dark. To elaborate on them is not possible here.

As regarding these four men, they have, indeed, achieved a special status and won the coveted prize and a lofty station. When Imām al-Ṣādiq (ع), peace be upon him, mentioned them once, he said: "I find nobody who kept our name alive like Zarārah, Abu Baṣīr Layth, Muḥammad ibn Muslim, and Burayd; without them, nobody would have learned as much." Then he added: "These are the custodians of the faith who were trusted by my father to safeguard what Allāh has decreed as permissible or forbidden. They are the ones who are foremost in seeking our company in this life, and they will be the foremost in joining us in the Hereafter." Once, he, peace be upon him, recited: "Convey the glad tidings to those who pray for attaining Our Paradise (Qur`ān, 22:34)," and he followed his recitation by naming these four persons, adding, in a lengthy statement lauding them, "My father is said to have trusted them to safeguard Allāh's permissible and forbidden matters, and they were the custodians of his knowledge; today, they are my faithful confidants and the true friends of my father; they are the stars of my Shī`ahs alive or dead; through them does Allāh dispel every innovat. They protect this religion from the lies of the innovators, and the interpretations of the extremists," in

addition to other eminent statements he made in which he credited them for their contributions, honour, dignity, and true service in a way which we cannot describe. In spite of all this, they were charged by the enemies of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) with every possible false charge, as we have explained in our work *Mukhtasar al-Kalām fī Mu'allifī al-Shī'ah min Ṣadr al-Islām*. This does not undermine their lofty status and great significance in the eyes of Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers. Those who envied the Prophet (ص) only increased the loftiness of those Prophets' status, without affecting their canons other than their promotion thereof among those who recognize and follow the truth, making them acceptable to those endowed with wisdom.

During the lifetime of al-Ṣādiq (ع), peace be upon him, knowledge was disseminated like never before, and the Shī'ahs of his forefathers (ع) rushed to him from far and wide. He approached them with a pleasant countenance, making them feel at home, sparing no effort to educate them and acquaint them with the secrets of knowledge, the particulars of wisdom, and the nature of matters, as admitted by Abul-Faḥ al-Shahristāni in his book *Al-Milal wal Niḥal*. When he mentions al-Ṣādiq (ع), he comments: "He was a man very much informed of the religion, endowed with perfect manners in wisdom, extreme renunciation of this world, and a complete abstinence from temptations."⁷ He has also said of him: "He stayed in Medīna for some time instructing the Shī'ahs belonging to his faith, lavishing the secrets of knowledge upon those who were loyal to him. Then he went to Iraq and stayed there for a period of time during which he did not publicly criticize nor covet authority... Whoever drowns in the oceans of knowledge never desires to see the shore, and whoever ascends to the peak of reality never fears descending," up to the end of his statement; "And truth makes itself manifest to the fair-minded, and to the obstinant."

A large number of the companions of al-Sādiq (ع) achieved ultimate wisdom, and they became leaders to righteousness, lanterns in the dark, oceans of knowledge, stars of guidance. Among those whose names and biographies are stated in biography books are four thousand men from Iraq, Hijāz, Iran, and Syria. They are authors of works very well known by Imāmite scholars. Among them are the four hundred books of basics of jurisprudence mentioned above which deal with four hundred subjects, all written during the time and derived from the verdicts of al-Sādiq (ع). They were rendered indispensable for both theoretical and practical knowledge, so much so that a group of the nation's scholars and emissaries of the Imāms summarized their contents in special books to facilitate their comprehension by students and make them more accessible. The best among such compilations are the four books which are the major sources for the Imāmites in referring to the roots and branches of their faith. They have been referring to them since the first century of Islam, and these are: *Al-Kāfi*, *Al-Taḥthīb*, *Al-Istibṣār*, and *Man la Yahdaruhul Faqīh*. All are sequentially narrated, and the authenticity of their contents is never doubted. *Al-Kāfi* is the oldest among them, the greatest, the best, and the most authentic. It contains sixteen thousand one hundred and ninety-nine ahādīth which include all what now exists in the six *sahīh* books [al-Sihāh al-sitta of the Sunnis], as admitted by al-Shahīd in his *Al-Thikra*, and by many other renown scholars.

Hushām ibn al-Hakam, one of the companions of al-Sādiq (ع) and al-Kāzim (ع), authored several books ninety-nine of which became quite famous. They are narrated by our friends who quote him, and their details exist in our book *Mukhtasar al-Kalām fī Muallifī al-Shī'ah min Ṣadr al-Islam*. They all are very interesting books, dazzling in the clarity of their contents and the glitter of their arguments. They deal with both roots and branches of the faith, and with *tawhīd* and

rational philosophy; they rebut the atheists, heretics, pantheists, predestinarians, determinists, and those who are extremist in their beliefs regarding Ali (ع) and Ahl al-Bayt (ع). They also rebut the Kharijites and Nāsibis, those who denied that a will [by the Prophet] was made regarding Ali (ع), those who obstructed his way to attain the caliphate, and those who preached that someone else should be elected as caliph before Ali (ع), in addition to other topics.

In the second century, Hushām was the most knowledgeable person in the science of speech, divine wisdom, and all rational and deductive sciences. He was distinguished in *fiqh* and *hadīth*, surpassing everyone else in *tafsr* and all other sciences and arts. He is the one who discussed the concept of imāmate and cultivated the sect through observation. He quotes al-Sādiq (ع) and al-Kāzim, and he enjoys a special status in their eyes which cannot be described. He won such praise from them that elevated his status to high heaven. He was first a Jehmi, then he met al-Sādiq (ع) and came to see the light of guidance through him, so, he joined his party, then he followed al-Kāzim and surpassed all the disciples of both Imāms. Those who desire to put out Allāh's light, out of envy of Ahl al-Bayt (ع), and out of malice, accused him of saying that the Almighty has a physical form, and of other serious charges. We are most knowledgeable of his sect. We have within our reach reports of his life-style and norm of speech. He has written works defending our sect as referred to above; so, nothing of his speech can be known to others and not to us, since he is among our ancestors and descendants, while his critics are far from his sect and taste. What al-Shahristāni has quoted in his *Al-Milal wal-Nihal* of Hushām's speech does not imply his belief in a physical form for Allāh. Let me quote for you what he has quoted him:

“Hushām ibn al-Hakam has studied *uṣūl* in depth. We must not forget his arguments with the Mu`tazilites, for the

man is above what his opponent charges, and beneath what similitude he strikes, for he argued with al-`Allāf saying: `You claim that the Creator is the One Who knows, and His knowledge is His own essence; so, He then becomes a knowledgeable person who is different from the world [His creation]; why then don't you say that He has a form unlike all other forms?'"

It is no secret that this statement, if true, proves only that he opposes al-`Allāf's views. Not everyone who argues about something is a believer therein, since it is possible that his purpose is to test al-`Allāf's beliefs and sift his knowledge, as al-Shahristāni suggests, saying: "The man is above what his opponent accuses him and beneath what similitude he strikes." If we suppose that it is proved that Hushām believes as such, this could be before his going back to the true guidance [through Imām al-Sādiq (ع)]. You have come to know that he used to believe like the Jehmis, then he saw the light of guidance through Muḥammad's progeny (ع), and became an Imām of those who followed their Imāms. Nobody among our ancestors has found any proof of what the opponent attributes to him, yet we find some traces of what they have attributed to Zarārah ibn `Ayān, Muḥammad ibn Muslim, Mu'min al-Tāq, and their peers. This comes in spite of the fact that we spared no effort to research the accusation and found its bases nothing more than injustice and animosity, intrigue and false allegation; "Do not think that Allāh is unmindful of what the oppressors do."

As regarding what al-Shahristāni has alleged of Hushām's belief in Ali (ع) as Allāh, this is a joke that causes even a bereaved woman whose child has just died to burst in laughter. Hushām is above such nonsense and superstition. Hushām's statements dealing with *tawhīd* call for the glorification of Allāh above being reduced to a physical form of any nature, and His sublimity above what the ignorant allege. His statements dealing with imāmate and *wisāyat*

reflect his preference of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be upon him and his progeny, over Ali (ع). He declares that Ali (ع) is just a member of the Prophet's nation and a subject, his vicegerent and successor, and that he is a servant of Allāh who has been wronged and overcome and was unable to secure what is rightfully his, being forced to succumb to the power of his opponents, continuously afraid about his safety, having neither supporter nor helper; so, how can al-Shahristāni say: "Hushām ibn al-Hakam has studied *uṣūl* in depth. We must not forget his arguments with the Mu`tazilites, for the man is above what his opponent charges, and beneath what similitude he strikes, for he argued with al-`Allāf saying: "You claim that the Creator is the One Who knows, and His knowledge is His own essence; so, He then becomes a knowledgeable person Who is different from the world [His creation]; why then don't you say that He has a form unlike all other forms?" He then attributes to Ali (ع) the allegation that he is Allāh Almighty! Isn't this a clear self-contradiction? Is it proper for Hushām, in spite of his abundant knowledge and contributions, that such nonsense is attributed to him? Certainly not. But these people have insisted on piling charges out of their own envy and animosity towards Ahl al-Bayt (ع) and those who follow their views; so, we are Allāh's, and unto Him is our return.

Authorship flourished during the lifetime of Imāms al-Kāzim, al-Rida, al-Jawād, al-Hādī, al-Hasan al-Zakī al-`Askari, peace be upon them, in a way that was never preceded, and traditionists quoting them and other Imāms spread far and wide throughout the land, trying their best reasoning to attain knowledge, in pursuit of it and of its secrets, enumerating its issues, verifying its facts, saving no effort to record the arts and collect particles of knowledge.

Al-Muhaqqiq, in his *Al-Mu`tabar*, says: "Among the students of al-Jawād, peace be upon him, were virtuous men like al-Husayn ibn Sa`īd and his brother al-Hasan, and also

Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Naṣr al-Bazanti, Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Khālid al-Barqī, Shathān, Abul-Fadl al-`Amī, Ayyūb ibn Nūh, Ahmed ibn Muḥammad ibn `Īsa and others whose list is quite lengthy... Their books till today are in current circulation among the companions reflecting their abundant knowledge."

Suffices you the fact that al-Barqī's books outnumber a hundred, and al-Bazanti has authored his renown work titled *Jamī` al Bazanti*, while al-Husayn ibn Sa`īd has written thirty books. It is not possible in such a Letter to count what has been written by the students of the six Imāms who descended from Imām al-Sādiq (ع), peace be upon them, but I refer you to the available biographies and bibliographies; so, read about the biography of Muḥammad ibn Sinān, `Alī ibn Mahziyār, al-Hasan ibn Maḥbūb, al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Sam`ah, Safwān ibn Yahya, `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn, `Alī ibn Fadal, `Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Najrān, al-Fadl ibn Shathān (who authored two hundred books), Muḥammad ibn Mas`ūd al-`Ayyāshi (who wrote more than two hundred titles), Muḥammad ibn `Umayr, Ahmed ibn Muḥammad ibn `Īsa (who quoted one hundred companions of al-Sādiq (ع), peace be upon him), Muḥammad ibn `Alī ibn Maḥbūb, Talḥah ibn Talḥah ibn Zayd, `Ammār ibn Mūsa al-Sabāti, `Alī ibn al-Nu`mān, al-Husayn ibn `Abdullah, Ahmed ibn `Abdullah ibn Mahrān who is better known as Ibn Khānība, Sāfah ibn al-Munthir al-Qummi, `Ubaydullāh ibn `Alī al-Ḥalabi who brought his book to al-Sādiq (ع), peace be upon him, to edit and verify, which he appreciated and said: "Do you see these folks having a book like this one?!" Add to them Abu `Amr the physician, `Abdullāh ibn Sa`īd who brought his book to Abul-Hasan al-Rida, peace be upon him, for the same purpose, and `Unus ibn `Abdul-Raḥmān who brought his book to Imām Abu Muḥammad al-Hasan al-Zaki al-`Askari, peace be upon him.

Anyone who researches the biographies of the followers of the progeny of Muḥammad, peace be upon him

and them, and researches those who kept company with the nine Imāms from the descendants of al-Husayn, counting their works contemporary to their respective Imāms and reviewed by those they quoted, disseminating the ḥadīth of Muḥammad's progeny in every branch and root of religion..., will come across thousands of such men. Then if he gets acquainted with these sciences in every class as handed down from the time of the nine Infallible Imāms (ع) till our time, he will certainly be convinced then that the sect of these Imāms is *mutawātir* (consecutively reported), dispelling any doubt he might have about the fact that our worship of the Almighty Allāh in the roots and branches of the faith is derived from the Messenger's Household. Nobody doubts this fact except one who is arrogant and prejudiced or dumb ignorant; so, praise be to Allāh Who has guided us to this, for without His guidance, we would not have been thus guided; Wassalam.

Sincerely,
Sh

¹*Al-Huda*, the Iraqi magazine, quoted this Letter and published it in series in its first and second volumes in a column signed by the humble author.

²Refer to the biography of Jubayr ibn al-Ḥabāb ibn al-Munthir in Part One of *Al-Isābah*.

³Such as al-Najāshi's Index, Shaykh Abu `Ali's *Muntahal Maqāl fī Ahwālir Rijāl*, Mirza Muḥammad's *Minhājul Maqāl fī Tahqīqi Ahwālir Rijāl*, and many other books dealing with this branch of knowledge, and they are quite few.

⁴Indicated so by many masters of the art such as Shaykh al-Bahā'i in his *Wajīza*, and many other renown personalities.

⁵Refer to al-Tibrisi's *Mujma` Bayān fī Tafsiṛil Qur'ān* in the section dealing with the exegesis of the verse reading: "Say: `I do

not ask you for any reward for it other than being kind to my kin” in Surat al-Shūra, and you will find him quoting Abu Ḥamzah's own *tafsīr*.

⁶Our fellows have reported all of Abu Ḥamzah's books, giving him credit for the narration, and the details are in their books. Our dignitary-authority Sayyid Ṣadr ad-Dīn al-Mūsawī has abridged *Risālat al-Ḥuqūq* and published it in order to be memorized by heart by Muslim youths, and he has done a very good job; may Allāh enable the Muslims to enjoy the fruits of his concern and the magnitude of his effort.

⁷He does so when he mentions the Bāqiriyya and Ja`fariyya among Shī`ah sects in his book *Al-Milal wal-Nihal*.

LETTER 111
Jamādi al-Ūla 1, 1330

Conviction

I bear witness that you, in the roots and branches of the faith, are followers of the Imāms from the Messenger's progeny. You have clarified this matter and rendered it obvious, unveiled whatever was obscure thereof; so, to doubt you is madness, and to mistrust you is misguidance. I have scrutinized your letter and found it very pleasing. I verified it and was able to inhale its divine fragrance which nourished me with its sweet scent. Before knowing you, I used to be confused about your beliefs due to what I hear of allegations from scandal-mongers; now I have found it to be a lantern that dispels the darkness, and I am leaving you victorious, successful; so, how great is the blessing which Allāh has bestowed upon me, and how great your benefit unto me! Praise to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, Wassalamo Alaikom.

Sincerely,
S

LETTER 112
Jamādi al-Ūla 2, 1330

Appreciation

I bear witness that now you are acquainted with the matter, capable of handling it. You have surpassed all others in comprehending it and researching it minutely, scrutinizing it carefully, turning it to all sides, discerning its inner

implications, seeking its essence and nature, without being swayed by nationalistic biases, nor motivated by personal interests. So, the attributes of your clemency cannot be harmed, nor can your mind be dominated. You have dealt in depth researching it with a clemency that is more than pleasing, and with a mind more spacious than this world, minutely verifying, without minding the view of kith or kin, till what is hidden has surfaced; truth has manifested itself, and morning rays have appeared to all those who can see; so, all praise is due to Allāh for guiding us to His religion, and for being successful to attain what He has enjoined us to attain of His Path: THE RIGHT PATH, and may He send blessings unto Muḥammad and the progeny of Muḥammad, and many salutations.

Sincerely,
Sh

GLOSSARY

- Athān*: the call for prayers; *muaththin* is one who performs *athān*.
- Athbāt*: plural of *thabat*, one who is widely recognized as an authority in his own field.
- ʿAtiyya*: gift, present, grant, boon
- ʿAwl*: one sought during the time of need, a reliable helper
- Badāʾ*: starting point, the very beginning of something, the onset
- Barāʾah*: dissociation or renunciation
- Baytul-Māl*: Islamic government's state treasury
- Dīwān*: a collection of poems
- Faqīh*: jurist, one who is knowledgeable in Islamic jurisprudence
- Fatāwa*: plural of *fatwā*, a religious edict or decision
- Fiqh*: the science of Islamic jurisprudence
- Firqa*: group, party, sect
- Furuʿ*: branches of the faith

- Hadīth*: (singular:) tradition, a statement made by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ); its plural is: *ahādīth*
- Hajj*: Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca during the prescribed period
- Ihrām*: pilgrimage garb, white unwoven cotton shroud worn by pilgrims
- Ijtihād*: the degree one reaches in order to be qualified as a *mujtahid*, one who is capable of deriving religious decisions on his own
- Imām*: leader of an *umma*, a group of people (small or big); he may be the one who leads others in congregational prayers, or a supreme religious authority, or one of the Twelve Infallible Imāms (ع)
- Isnād*: the method whereby one *hadīth* is traced and in the end attributed to a *muhaddith*, traditionist, one who transmitted it the first time
- Jāhiliyya*: pre-Islamic period of ignorance
- Janāba*: uncleanness caused by seminal discharge
- Jihād*: a struggle, an effort exerted, or a war waged in defense of Islam
- Jizya*: a protection tax paid by non-Muslims living under Muslims' control in exchange for their exemption from the military service

<i>Kāfir:</i>	infidel, apostate, atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of the Creator
<i>Kalām:</i>	the science of logic
<i>Kalima:</i>	synonymous to “shahāda,” it is a Muslim's declaration of faith (that is, to testify that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah), and it is always pronounced in Arabic
<i>Khirāj:</i>	the combination of all religious taxes collected at the end of the Islamic lunar year
<i>Khums:</i>	one-fifth of one's savings (usually paid by Shi'a Muslims) set aside from annual income
<i>Khutba:</i>	lecture, sermon; a speech delivered on a specific occasion
<i>Kufr:</i>	apostacy, infidelity, disbelief
<i>Kunyat:</i>	usually applied for a parent, it is the way of calling him or her by the name of his or her oldest son (such as saying “father of so-and-so” or “mother of so-and-so”), or it may be applied out of respect, a tradition usually followed in Arab countries, and it is applied as a prefix to one's name.
<i>Maqām:</i>	standing place, a place where one usually stands to preach or address the public
<i>Mawla:</i>	depending on its usage, it may mean either “master” or “slave,” or it may mean one who

is most fit for a specific position of honor and prestige. Derived from the adjective *awla* (one who is best qualified), it means: the person who is best suited to be the religious and temporal leader of all Muslims.

- Mu'minī:* believer, one who has *iman*, conviction, true belief
- Mujtahid:* one who acquires the degree of *ijtihad* and thus becomes capable of deriving religious decisions on his own
- Musnad:* a compilation of traditions (*ahādīth*) which are consecutively and chronologically traced to their transmitters
- Mut`a:* temporary marriage
- Mutawātir:* consecutively reported, traced by a perfect chronological chain of ascertained narrators of *hadith*
- Najāsa:* uncleanness, impurity
- Najwā:* a silent supplication
- Nuthur:* plural of *nathr*, one's pledge to do something very good to show appreciation for the Almighty's favorable response to his supplication and the attainment of his worldly wish
- Qayyim:* person in charge of something, one charged with authority

<i>Qibla:</i>	direction towards the Ka`ba, Mecca
<i>Sadaqa:</i>	(singular:) charity offered voluntarily; its plural is: <i>sadaqāt</i>
<i>Sahabah:</i>	(singular:) companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ص); its plural is: <i>sahābi</i>
<i>Sharī'a:</i>	Islam's legislative system
<i>Shubha:</i>	(singular) doubt, suspicion; its plural is: <i>shubuhāt</i>
<i>Shūra:</i>	the principle of mutual consultation, Islam's form of democracy
<i>Siqāya:</i>	the act of providing water to the thirsty free of charge
<i>Sunan:</i>	plural of <i>sunnah</i> : a highly commended act of worship or way whereby a Muslim seeks nearness to Allah
<i>Tābi`i:</i>	(singular:) one who accompanied for a good period of time and learned from a <i>sahabi</i> , a companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ص); its plural is: <i>tabi`īn</i>
<i>Tafsīr:</i>	(singular:) exegesis or explanation of Qur'anic verses; its plural is: <i>tafasīr</i>
<i>Tahāra:</i>	purification, the act of removing <i>najasa</i> , uncleanness or impurity

- Takbīr:* the act of glorifying Allāh by declaring in an audible voice: "Allaho Akbar!" Allāh is Great!
- Taqiyya:* one's way of exerting precaution in order to save his life when it is in jeopardy, Shi`as' way of trying to survive against the presence of sure perils
- Taqīd:* the concept of following a *mujtahid* or an authority recognized as the *a`alam*, the most knowledgeable in Islamics
- Tashahhud:* the testimony regarding Allah being the Lord and Muhammad (ص) being His Servant and Messenger; it is the uttering of "Ashhadu an la ilaha illa-Allah, wa anna Muhammad abdoho wa rasooloh"
- Tawātur:* consecutive reporting, the tracing of one particular *hadith* to its respective chronological chain of narrators
- Tawhīd:* the concept of the absolute Unity of God, the belief that God is One and indivisible, One—and Only One—God
- Tawwabīn:* the penitent ones, those who repented their reluctance to go to the rescue of Imam Husain (ع) when he was confronted with Yazīd's armies and who enlisted under the military command of al-Mukhtār and pursued those who massacred Imam Hussain ibn Ali ibn Abu Tālib (ع) and killed them

- Thiqāt*: plural of *thiqah*, a trustworthy authority
- ʿUlemā*: plural of *ʿālim*, scholar-theologian
- Uṣūl*: the basics of jurisprudence
- Waqf*: a piece of property dedicated for the promotion of any particular good cause
- Wilāyat*: supreme authority that combines both temporal and religious authority
- Zakāt*: Literally, it means “purification;” it is a compulsory 2.5% tax on one of three categories of wealth: 1) metal coins (gold, silver, etc.), 2) grain crops (barley, wheat, grain, rice, etc.), and 3) animals raised for food consumption. *Zakāt* is somehow a complicated issue, and for details, readers are advised to consult books dealing with *fiqh*. Among its types are: *zakat al-mal* (taxable wealth accumulated during one full year), and *zakat al-fitr* (a tax to be paid by the head of a household at the commencement of the fast of the month of Ramadān).

And surely Allāh knows best...

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Insinyer Publik No. 15

المراجعيات

أبحاث جديدة في أصول الفقه والامامة العامة

والمؤلفون: محمد باقر عبيد الله، في مقدمته هو
المؤلف: السيد محمد باقر عبيد الله
مركز الدراسات والبحوث الإسلامية العالمية



Ansaryan Publications

P.O. Box 187

22 Shohada Str. Qum

Islamic Republic Of Iran

Tel: 98 251 7741744 Fax: 7742647

Email: ansaryan@noornet.net

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