



Imamate

(The Vicegerency of the Prophet ﷺ)

by

Sayyid Sa'eed Akhtar Redhewi

Annotated by

Sayyid Muhammad Redhewi



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of God
the Merciful
the Compassionate*



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By the Name of Allah, The
Compassionful, The
Compassionate



*Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being;
the Compassionful, the Compassionate;
the Master of the Day of Judgement;
Thee only we serve, and to Thee alone we pray
for succour.*

*Guide us in the straight path;
the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,
not of those against whom Thou art wrathful,
nor of those who are astray.*

*

*O Allah! Send Your blessings to the head of
Your Messengers and the last of
Your Prophets,
Muhammad and his pure and cleansed progeny.
Also send Your blessings to all Your
Prophets and Envoys.*

Part One

General Meaning

The Meaning of Imamah & Khilafah

A*l-Imameh* (الإمامة): Literally means 'The Leadership'; *Al-Imam* (الإمام): Means 'The Leader'. In Islamic terminology *Al-Imameh* (Imamate) means 'Universal authority in all religious and secular affairs, in succession to the Prophet⁽¹⁾'. *Al-Imam* means 'The man who, in succession to the Prophet, has the right to the absolute command of the Muslims in all religious and secular affairs'.

The word 'man' signifies that a female cannot be an Imam. 'Absolute command' excludes those who lead in the prayers: they are also called 'Imam of the prayers', but they do not have absolute authority. 'In succession to the Prophet' denotes the difference between a Prophet and an Imam. The Imam enjoys this authority not directly, but as the successor of the Prophet.

The word '*Al-Khilafeh* (الخِلاَفَة)' means 'Succession' and '*Al-Kheleefeh* (الخَلِيفَة)' means 'The Successor'. In Islamic terminology '*Al-Khilafeh*' and '*Al-Kheleefeh*' practically signify the same meanings as '*Al-Imameh*' and '*Al-Imam*' respectively.

Al-Wisayah (الْوِصَايَة) means 'The Executorship of the will', and '*Al-Wasi*' (الْوَصِي) means 'The Executor of the will'. Their significance in Muslims' writings is the same as that of '*Al-Khilafeh*' (caliphate) and '*Al-Kheleefeh*' (caliph).

Is it interesting to note that many previous prophets were also the caliphs of their predecessor prophets, thus they were '*Nabi*' and '*Kheleefeh*' both; while other prophets (who brought new '*Shari'ah*'⁽²⁾) were not caliphs of any previous prophets. Also there were those who were caliphs of the prophets but not prophets themselves.

The question of Imamate and caliphate has torn the Muslim community apart and has affected the thinking and philosophy of the different groups so tremendously that even the belief in Allah (*Al-Tawheed*) and the Prophets (*Al-Nubuwwah*)

1 *Al-'Allamah Al-Hilli: al-babul Hadi 'Ashar, English translation W.M. Miller, p.62; Mughniyyah: Falsafat Islamiyyah, p.392.*

2 *Sacred Law of Islam.*

could not be safe from this divergence of views.

This is the most debated subject of Islamic theology. Muslims have written thousands upon thousands of books on caliphate. The problem before me is not what to write; it is what not to write. In a small work such as this, one cannot touch on all the various aspects of this subject, let alone go into details on even those topics which are described therein. This provides only a brief outline of the differences regarding the caliphate.

It may be of help to mention here that regarding this question, the Muslims are divided into two sects:

1. The Sunnis who believe that Abu Bakr was the first caliph of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) of Islam.

2. The Shi'as who believe that Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.) was the first Imam and caliph.

This fundamental difference has led to other differences which shall be described in the following chapters.

Summary of Differences

The Holy Prophet has said in a *Hadith* which has been accepted by all sects of Islam:

«My *Ummah*⁽¹⁾ will shortly break up into seventy-three sects, all of which shall be condemned except one».⁽²⁾

The seekers of salvation have always made untiring efforts to inquire into the matter to discover the right course - the path to salvation, and indeed it is necessary for every man to take reason as his guide, try his best in this matter and never despair of attaining the truth. But this can only be possible when he has a clear view of the radical differences before him, and discarding all bias and prejudices, examines the points at issue with thoughtful mind,

1 People, community...etc.

2 *Al-Khateeb At-Tabreezi: Mishkatul Masabeeh, English translation James Robson, vol.I, p.45; Al-Majlesi has collected, in a complete chapter, traditions to this effect in Biharul Anwar, vol.LXXVIII, pp.2-36; Al-Qommi, Sheikh Abbas: Safinatul Bihar, vol.II, pp.359-60.*

always praying to Allah to lead him in the right path.

For this reason, I propose to briefly mention here the important differences and conflicts together with the arguments and reasonings of each sect, in order to facilitate the path of inquiry. The main questions are:

1. Does it lie with Allah to appoint a Prophet's successor or is it the duty of the *Ummah* to appoint whomsoever they please as successor to the Prophet?

2. In the latter case, did Allah or the Prophet place in the hands of the *Ummah* any systematic code containing the rules and procedures for the appointment of a caliph, or did the *Ummah* by their unanimous consent before appointing a caliph, prepare a set of rules to which they adhered (subsequently), or did the *Ummah* act according to what they thought expedient at the time and according to the opportunity

at their disposal? Had they the right to act as they did?

3. Does reason and Divine Law demand the existence of any qualifications and conditions in an Imam and a caliph? If so, what are they?

4. Did the Prophet of Islam appoint anyone as His caliph and successor or not? If he did so, who was it? If not, why?

5. After the Prophet's death, who was recognized to be His caliph and did he possess the qualifications necessary for a caliph?

Basic Difference

It will save time if we explain at the outset the basic cause of the differences concerning the nature and character of the Imamate and caliphate. What is the primary characteristic of the Imamate? Is an Imam, first and foremost, the ruler of a kingdom? Or is he the representative of Allah and vicegerent of the Prophet?

As the Imamate and caliphate is generally accepted as the successorship of the Prophet, the above questions cannot be answered until a decision is made on the basic characteristics of a prophet. We must decide whether a prophet is the ruler of a

kingdom or the representative of Allah.

In the history of Islam, we find a group which viewed the mission of the Holy Prophet as an attempt to establish a kingdom. Their outlook was material; their ideas were wealth, beauty and power. They, naturally, ascribed the same motives to the Holy Prophet.

'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, the father-in-Law of Abu Sufyan, was sent to the Holy Prophet to convey the message of the Quraish:

«Mohammad! If you desire power and prestige, we will make you the overlord of Mecca. Do you desire marriage into a noble family? You may have the hand of the fairest maiden in the land. Do you desire hoards of silver and gold? We can provide you with all these and even more. But you must forsake these offensive preachings which discredit our forefathers who worshipped these deities»

The Quraish were almost certain that Muhammad(s.a.) would respond favourably to this offer. But the Holy Prophet recited surah 41 in reply which, inter alia, contained the following warning:

﴿فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ ضَاعِقَةً مِثْلَ ضَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ﴾

"But if they turn away, then say, 'I warn you of a thunderbolt like to the thunderbolt of 'Ad and Thamud'".⁽¹⁾

'Utbah was overwhelmed by this clear warning. He did not accept Islam, but advised the Quraish to leave Muhammad(s.a.) alone to see how he will fare with other tribes. The Quraish claimed that 'Utbah was also bewitched by Muhammad (s.a.)⁽²⁾

Thus he wanted to leave Muhammad(s.a.) to other tribes. On the other hand when the Holy Prophet(s.a.) emigrated to Medina and the Quraish waged war after another, the rest tribes thought it advisable to leave Muhammad(s.a.) to his own tribe. 'Amr ibn Salamah, a companion of the Holy Prophet(s.a.),

states, "The Arabs were waiting for the Quraish to accept Islam. They used to say that Muhammad(s.a.) should be left to his own

people. If he would emerge victorious over them, he was undoubtedly a true prophet. When Mecca was conquered, all the tribes hastened to accept Islam".⁽¹⁾

Therefore, and according to them, victory was the criterion of truth! If Muhammad(s.a.) would have been defeated, he would have been considered a liar!!

The view that this sacred mission was nothing but a worldly affair was repeated announced by Abu Sufyan and his clan.

At the time of the fall of Mecca, Abu Sufyan left Mecca to discern the strength of the Muslim army. He was seen by the uncle of the Prophet(s.a.), Al-Abbas, who took him to the Holy Prophet(s.a.) and advised the Prophet(s.a.) that he be given protection and shown respect, aiming that he may accept Islam.

To summarize the event, Al-Abbas took Abu Sufyan for a review of the Islamic army. He pointed out to Abu Sufyan eminent personalities from every clan who were present in the army. In the meantime, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) passed with his group which was in green uniform. Abu Sufyan cried out, "O Abbas! Verily your nephew has acquired quite a kingdom!". Al-Abbas said, "Woe unto thee! This is not kingship; this is Prophethood".⁽²⁾

Here, we see two opposing views in clear contrast. Abu Sufyan never changed his views. When Othman became caliph, Abu Sufyan came to him and advised, "O children of Umayyah! Now that this kingdom has come to you, play with it as the children play with a ball, and pass it from one to another in your clan. This is a reality; we do not know whether there is a paradise or hell or not".⁽³⁾

Then he went to Uhud and kicked at the grave of Hamzah (the Holy Prophet's uncle), and said: "O Abu Ya'la! See that the kingdom

1 Al-Bukhari: *As-Sahih*, vol.V, p.191; Ibn Kuthayyir: *Al-Bidayah wal Nihayah*, vol.V, p.40.

2 Abul Fidaa: *Al-Mukhtasar*, vol.I, pp.143-4; Al-Ya'qoobi: *At-Tarikh*, vol.II, p.59.

3 Ibn 'Abdil Barr: *Al-Isti'ab*, vol.IV, p.1679; Ibn Abil Hadeed quotes the last sentence as follows: "By Him in whose name Abu Sufyan swears, there is neither punishment nor reckoning, neither Garden nor Fire, neither Resurrection nor Day of Judgment". (Vide his *Sharh Nahjil Balagha*, vol.IX, p.53.

which you fought against has at last come to us*,⁽¹⁾

The same views were inherited by his grandson, Yazeed, who said:

لَعِبْتُ هَاشِمٌ بِالْمَلِكِ فَلَا خَبْرَ جَاءَ وَلَا وَحْيَ نَزَلَ

*Banu Hashim basked in the kingdom; but after all
there was neither news nor revelation at all*⁽²⁾

If that is the view held by any Muslim, then he is bound to equate the Imamate with rulership. According to such thinking, the primary function of the Prophet was kingship, and, therefore, anyone holding the reins of power was the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

But the problem arises in that more than ninety percent of the prophets did not have political power; and most of them were persecuted and apparently helpless victims of the political powers of their times. Their glory was not of crown and throne; it was of martyrdom and suffering. If the primary characteristic of prophethood is political power and rulership, then perhaps not even 50 (out of 124000) prophets would retain their divine title as *nabi* (prophet).

Thus, it is crystalclear that the main characteristic of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was not that he had any political power, but that he was the Representative of Allah, and that representation was not bestowed upon him by his people; it was given to him by Allah Himself.

Likewise, his successor's chief characteristic cannot be political power; but the fact that he was the Representative of Allah, and that representation can never be bestowed upon anyone by his people; it must come from Allah Himself. In short, if an Imam is to represent Allah, he must be appointed by Allah.

1 Ibn Abil Hadeed: *op.cit.*, vol.XVI, p.136.

2 Sibti Ibnul Jawzi: *Tathkirah*, ed. S.M.S. Bahrul 'Uloom, p.261; *At-Tabari, At-Tareekh*, vol.XIII, p.2174.

The System of Islamic Leadership

There was a time when monarchy was the only system of government known to the people. At that time the Muslim scholars used to glorify monarchs and monarchy by saying, "السلطان ظل الله" (The king is the shadow of Allah), as though Allah has a shadow! Now in modern times, democracy is in vogue and the Sunni scholars are never tired of asserting in hundreds and thousands of articles, books and treatises, that the Islamic system of government is based upon democracy. They even go so far as to claim that democracy was established by Islam, forgetting the city-republics of Greece. In the second half of this century, socialism and communism had gained hold of the undeveloped and developing countries; and I am not surprised to hear from many well-meaning Muslim scholars tirelessly asserting that Islam teaches and creates socialism. Some people in Pakistan and elsewhere have invented the slogan of "Islamic socialism". What this "Islamic socialism" means, I do not know. But I would not be surprised if within ten or twenty years these very people would start claiming that Islam teaches communism!

All this "changing with the wind" is making a mockery of the Islamic system of leadership. Some time ago in a gathering of Muslims in an African country, in which the president of the country was the guest of honour, a Muslim leader stated that Islam taught to "Obey Allah, obey the Apostle and your rulers". In his reply, the president (who incidentally, was a staunch Roman Catholic) said that he appreciated very much the wisdom of the commandment to obey Allah and the Apostle of Allah; but he could not understand the logic behind the order

to obey "your rulers". What if a ruler is unjust and a tyrant?! Does Islam enjoin Muslims to obey him passively without resistance?

This intelligent question demands an intelligent reply. It cannot be regarded lightly. The fact is that the person who invited that criticism, did so because of his misinterpretation of the Holy Qur'an.

Let us examine the system of Islamic leadership. Is it democratic? The best definition of democracy was given by Abraham Lincoln (the 16th U.S. president «1861-65») when he said that democracy was "The government of the People, by the people and

for the people".

But in Islam it is not the government "of the people"; it the "government of Allah". How do people govern themselves? They govern themselves by making their own laws; in Islam laws are made not by the people, but by Allah; these laws are promulgated not by the consent and decree of the people, but by the Prophet (s.a.), by the command of Allah. The people have no say in legislation; they are required to follow, not to make any comment or suggestion about those laws and legislations:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ﴾

"And it is not for a believer, man or woman when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter to have the choice in the affair"⁽¹⁾

Coming to the phrase 'by the people', let us now consider how people govern themselves. They do so by electing their own rulers. The Holy Prophet (s.a.), who was the supreme

executive, judicial and overall authority of the Islamic government, was not elected by the people. In fact, had the people of Mecca been allowed to exercise their choice, they would have elected either 'Urwah ibn Mas'ood (of Ta-if), or Al-Mwaleed ibn Al-Mughirah (of Mecca) as the prophet of Allah! According to the Holy Qur'an,

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ﴾

"And they say, 'Why was this Qur'an not sent down upon some man of moment in the two cities'"⁽²⁾

So, the the Holy Prophet (s.a.) was not only the Supreme Head of the Islamic State appointed without the consultation of the people, but in fact it was done against their expressed wishes. The Holy Prophet (s.a.) is the highest authority of Islam: He combines in

1 Holy Qur'an: 33/36.

2 Holy Qur'an: 43/31. <For the explanation of "man of moment", see, As-Soyooti: Lubabunnagool fi Ashabinnozool, printed with Tafseerul Jalalayn, pp.298,649>.

his person all the functions of legislative, executive and judicial branches of the government; and He was not elected by the people.

Therefore, Islam is neither the government of the people nor by the people. There is no legislation by the people; and the executive and judiciary is not responsible to the people, nor is it, for that matter, a government 'for the people'.

The Islamic system, from the beginning to the end, is 'for Allah'. Everything must be done 'for Allah'; if it is done 'for the people', it is termed 'hidden polytheism'. Whatever you do - whether it is prayer or charity, social service or family function, obedience to parents or love of neighbour, leading in prayer or deciding a case, entering into war or concluding a peace - must be done "*qurbatan ilallah*" (as an approach to God), to gain the pleasure of Allah. In Islam, everything is for Allah.

Briefly, the Islamic form of government is the government of Allah, by the representative of Allah, to gain the pleasure of Allah.

* وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ *

"And I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve Me"⁽¹⁾

It is theocracy, and it is the nature and characteristic of Islamic leadership, and how it affects the meaning of the above verse concerning 'obedience' shall be seen in later chapters.

* * * * *

¹ Holy Qur'an: 51/56.

Part Two

**The Shi'ite Point
of View**

The Necessity of Imamate & The Qualifications of An Imam

Necessity of Imamate:

From the Shi'ite point of view, the institution of Imamate is necessary, according to reason. It is lutf (grace) of Allah which brings the creature towards obedience and keeps him away from disobedience, without compelling, in any way. It has been proved in the Shi'ite theology that lutf is incumbent on Allah. When Allah that man to do something yet is aware that man cannot do it or that it is very difficult without His assistance. Then, if Allah does not provide this assistance, He would be contradicting His own aim. Obviously, such negligence is evil according to reason. Therefore, lutf is incumbent on Allah.

Imamate is a lutf because as we know when men have a chief (ra-ees) and guide (murshid) whom they obey, who avenges the oppressed of their oppressor and restrains the oppressor, then they draw nearer to righteousness and depart from corruption, and because it is a lutf, it is incumbent on Allah to appoint an Imam to guide and lead the *Ummah* after the Prophet.⁽¹⁾

Superiority (Afdhaliyyah):

The Shi'a believe that, like the Prophet (s.a.), an Imam should excel the *Ummah* in all virtues, such as knowledge, bravery, piety and charity, and should possess complete knowledge of the Divine

1 Al-'Allamah Al-Hilli: *Al-Babul Hadi 'Ashar*, English Translation W.M. Miller, pp. 50, 60-4.

Law. If he does not, and this high post is entrusted to a less perfect person when a more perfect one is available, the inferior will have been given preference over the superior which is wrong in reason and against Divine Justice. Therefore, no inferior person may receive Imamate from Allah when there exists a person superior to him.⁽¹⁾

Infallibility ('Ismah):

The second qualification is 'Ismah (Infallibility). If the Imam is not infallible (*Ma'soom*) he would be liable to err and also deceive others.⁽²⁾

Firstly, in such a case, no implicit confidence may be placed in what he says and dictates to us.

Secondly, an Imam is the ruler and head of the *Ummah* and the *Ummah* should follow him unreservedly in every matter. Now, if he commits a sin the people would be bound to follow him in that sin as well. The untenability of such a position is self-evident; for obedience in sin is evil, unlawful and forbidden. Moreover, it would mean that he should be obeyed and disobeyed at one and the same time; that is, obedience to him would be obligatory yet forbidden, which is

manifestly absurd.

Thirdly, if it would be possible for an Imam to commit sin it would be the duty of other people to prevent him from doing so (because it is obligatory on every Muslim to forbid other people from unlawful acts). In such a case, the Imam will be held in contempt; his prestige will come to an end instead of being the leader of the *Ummah* he will become their follower, and his Imamate will be of no use.

Fourthly, the Imam is the defender of the Divine Law and this work cannot be entrusted to fallible hands nor can any such person maintain it properly. For this very reason, infallibility has been admitted to be an indispensable condition to Prophethood; and the considerations which make it essential in the case of a prophet make it so in the case of an Imam and caliph as well.

1 Ibid. p.69.

2 Ibid. pp.64-8.

More will be said on this subject in chapter XIII (*Ulul Amr* must be *Ma'soom*).

Appointment by Allah:

As in the case of the prophets, the above mentioned qualifications alone are not enough to automatically make one an Imam. Imamate is not an acquired job; it is a 'designation' bestowed by Allah.⁽¹⁾

It is for this reason that the Shi'a Ithna 'Ashariyyah (The Twelvers) believe that only Allah can appoint a successor to the Prophet; that the *Ummah* has no choice in this matter - its only duty is to follow such a divinely-appointed Imam or caliph.

The Sunnis, on the other hand, believe that it is the duty of the *Ummah* to appoint a caliph.

Verses of The Holy Qur'an:

The following verses of the Holy Qur'an confirm the views held by the Shi'as:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"And thy Lord creates what soever He will and He chooses; they have not the choice; Glory be to Allah! High be He Exalted above that they associate!"⁽²⁾

This clearly shows that man has no right to make any selection; it lies entirely in the hands of Allah.

Before creating Adam(*a.s.*), Allah informed the angels:

...إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً...

1 Ibid., p.68.

2 Holy Qur'an: 28/68.

"...Verily, I am setting in the earth a viceroy..."⁽¹⁾

and when the angels demurred politely at the scheme, their protest was brushed aside by a curt reply:

إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"Assuredly I know that you know not".⁽²⁾

If the *Ma'soom* (infallible) angels were given no say in the appointment of a caliph, how can fallible humans expect to take the whole authority of such an appointment in their own hands?

Allah Himself appointed Prophet Dawood (a.s.) as caliph on the earth:

يَا دَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ

"David, behold We have appointed thee a viceroy in the earth..."⁽³⁾

In every case Allah attributes the appointment of the caliph or the Imam exclusively to Himself.

Likewise, the call went to Prophet Ibraheem (a.s.):

...قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنْتَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

"(Allah) said: 'Surely I am going to make you an Imam for men.' (Ibraheem) said: 'And of my offspring?' He said: 'My covenant will not include the unjust.'"⁽⁴⁾

This verse leads us to the correct answers of many important questions concerning Imamate.

(f) Allah said: *"Surely I am going to make you an Imam for men."* This shows that Imamate is a divinely-appointed status; it is beyond

1 Holy Qur'an: 2/30.

2 Ibid.

3 Holy Qur'an: 38/26.

4 Holy Qur'an: 2/124.

the jurisdiction of the *Ummah*.

(II) "My covenant will not include the unjust." This clearly says that a non-*Ma'soom* cannot be an Imam. Logically, we may divide mankind into four groups:

1. Those who remain unjust throughout their lives;
2. those who are never unjust;
3. those who are unjust early in their lives but later become just; and
4. those who are just early in their lives but later become unjust.

Ibraheem(a.s.) had too high a position to request Imamate for the first or the fourth group. This leaves two groups (the second and the third) which could be included in the prayer. However, Allah rejects one of them; i.e. those who are unjust early in their lives but later become just. Now there remains only one group which can qualify for Imamate - those who are never unjust throughout their lives, i.e. the *Ma'sooms*.

(III) The literal translation of the last sentence is as follows: My covenant will not reach the unjust. Note that Allah did not say, the unjust will not reach my covenant, because it would have implied that it was within the power of man - albeit a just one - to attain the status of Imamate. The present sentence does not leave room for any such misunderstanding; it clearly shows that receiving Imamate is not within human jurisdiction; it is exclusively in the hands of Allah and He gives it to whom He pleases.

Then as a general rule, it is stated:

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا...

"And We made them Imams who were to guide by Our command..."⁽¹⁾

When Prophet Moses(a.s.) wanted a vizier to help him with his responsibilities, he did not appoint someone by his own authority. He prayed to Allah: "And make for me a vizier from my family,

Haroon(Aaron) my brother"⁽¹⁾ And Allah said:

﴿قَدْ أُوتِيَ سُورَك يَا مُوسَى﴾

"You are indeed granted your petition, O Moses!"⁽²⁾

That Divine selection is made known to the *Ummah* through the prophet or the preceding Imam. This declaration is called Nass(النَّص = specification; determination; designation of the succeeding Imam by the prophet or preceding Imam). An Imam, according to Shi'ite belief, must be Mansoos min Allah(الْمَنْصُوصُ مِنَ اللَّهِ), i.e., designated by Allah for that status.

Miracles:

If one has not heard Nass about a claimant of Imamate, then the only way of ascertaining the truth is through a miracle(Mu'jizah).⁽³⁾

Generally speaking any man may claim that he is an Imam or a prophet's caliph and infallible, but a miracle is the only unfailing test of truth in such cases. If the claimant proves a miracle also in support of his claim, it would be admissible without hesitation. If he fails to do so, it is evident that he does not possess the qualifications required for Imamate and caliphate, and his claim would therefore be false.

Precedent:

The Universal practice of prophets had been to nominate their successors (on the command of Allah) without any interference from the *Ummah*.

The history of these prophets does not offer a single instance of a prophet's successor being elected by a voting of his followers. There is no reason why in the case of the successor of the last

1 Holy Qur'an: 20/29-30.

2 Ibid.,36.

3 Al-'Allamah Al-Hilli: *Al-Babul Hadi 'Ashar*, English translation W.M.Miller, p.69.

Prophet(s.a.) this established Divine Law

should be changed. Allah says: "*And you shall never find a change in divine practice.*"⁽¹⁾

Logical Reasons:

1. The same reason which prove that the appointment of a prophet is a divine prerogative, prove with equal force that the successor of that prophet should also be appointed by Allah. An Imam or Caliph, like the prophet, is appointed to carry on the work of Allah; he must be responsible to Allah. If he is appointed by the people, his first loyalty will be not for Allah, but for the people who would be 'the basis of his authority'. He will always try to please people, because if they were to withdraw their confidence in him he would lose his position. So he will not discharge the duties of religion without fear or favour; his eyes will always be on political considerations. Thus, the work of Allah will suffer.

Besides, the history of Islam provides ample evidence of glaring disregard for the tenets of religion shown by

man-appointed caliphs right from the beginning. So this argument is not just academic; there is solid historical evidence behind it.

2. Also, only Allah knows the inner feelings and thoughts of man; no one else can ever know the true nature of another person. Perhaps someone may pose as a pious and godfearing man merely to impress his colleagues and gain some worldly benefit. Such examples are not rare in history. Take, for example, the case of "Abdul Melik ibn Marwan" who used to spend all his time in the mosque in prayer and recitation of the Holy Qur'an. He was reciting the Holy Qur'an when news reached him of the death of his father and that people were waiting to pledge their allegiance to him. He closed the Qur'an and said: "*This is the parting between me and thee*"⁽²⁾

Therefore, as the existence of qualifications which are necessary for an Imam or Caliph can only truly be known to Allah, it is only

1 Holy Qur'an: 33/62.

2 As-Soyooti: Tareekhul Khulafaa, p.217.

Allah Who can appoint an Imam or Caliph.

Infallibility of the Imams

Now, let us note what the Holy Qur'an says about the Ahlul Bait (The Family Members) of the Holy Prophet (s.a.).

According to the Holy Qur'an, the following persons were sinless and infallible at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet (s.a.): Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, Hussein. The verse of Tatheer (purity) reads as follows:

...إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا*

"...Allah only desires to keep away abomination from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying".⁽¹⁾

It is universally agreed that the above-named four persons are "People of the House" and are sinless and free from all kinds of abomination.

The sentences before and after this verse are addressed to the wives of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) and the pronouns therein are of feminine gender; but the pronouns in this verse are of masculine gender. The reason why this verse has been placed in its present position is not difficult to guess. The late renowned scholar "Allamah Pooya" writes in footnote no.1857 of the translation of the Holy Qur'an by S.V.Mir Ahmed Ali:

"The portion of this verse relating to the divinely effected purity of the Holy Ahlul Bait needs a proper explanation commenting with reference to its correct context. This portion of this verse is a separate Ayah (verse) by itself revealed separately on particular occasions but placed here as it deals with the wives of the Holy Prophet (s.a.). The location of this verse here if studied properly makes it obvious that it has its own significant and important purpose behind it. While the address in the beginning of the verse is in the feminine gender - there is the transition here in the address from the feminine to the masculine

gender. While referring to the consorts of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), the pronouns also are consistently feminine. For a mixed assembly of men and women, generally the masculine gender is used. This transition in the grammatical use of the language, makes it quite obvious that this clause is quite a different matter used for a different group other than the previous one, and has been suitably placed here to

show a comparative position of the Ahlul Bait in contrast to the wives of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).¹

Amr ibn Abi Selemeh, who was brought up by the Holy Prophet(s.a.), relates:

"When this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was in the house of Ummu Selemeh. At the revelation of the verse: "Verily willeth God to keep away impurity from you O People of the House! and He purifieth you with the perfect purification", the Holy Prophet(s.a.) assembled his daughter Fatimah, Her sons Hasan and Hussein and Her husband, His cousin, Ali, and covered the group, including Himself, with his own mantle and addressing God, He said: "O God! These constitute my progeny! Keep them away from every kind of impurity, purified with perfect purification".

Ummu Selemeh, the righteous wife of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), witnessing this wonderful occasion, humbly submitted to the Holy Prophet(s.a.), "O Apostle of God! May I also join the group?" to which the Holy Prophet(s.a.) replied, "No, remain thou in thine own place, thou art in goodness"¹.

This is not the place to name the countless references concerning this verse; still, I would like to quote Mawlana Waheeduz Zaman, the famous Sunni scholar, whose translation and commentary of the Holy Qur'an as well as his book *Anwarullughah* (a dictionary of the Holy Qur'an and a *Hadith*) are among the recognized references. He writes in his commentary of the Holy Qur'an about this verse: "Some people think that it is especially for those family members who had

blood relation with the Holy Prophet(s.a.), i.e., Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Hussein. The present translator says that the traditions which are *Saheeh* (correct) and well-connected up to the Holy Prophet(s.a.), support the same view, because when the Holy Prophet(s.a.) himself

¹ Holy Qur'an, English translation S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, fn.1857, p.1261.

has declared that this family members are only these, then to accept it and believe in it becomes obligatory. One more sign of correctness of this view is that the pronouns used before and after this verse are those for females, while in this verse are those for males..."⁽¹⁾

Again he says in his *Anwarullughah*: "The correct view is that in this verse of purity only these five persons are included (i.e the Holy Prophet s.a., Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Hussein), although in Arabic usage, the word *Ahlul Bait* is used for wives also. Some people prove by his verse that these five persons were sinless and *Ma'soom* (infallible). But if not *Ma'soom*, then of course they were surely *Mahfooz* (protected from committing any sin or error)".⁽²⁾

I have quoted these two references to show that not only the *Ithna 'Asharis* but the learned *Sunni* scholars also confirm that, according to the rules of Arabic grammar and the correct unbroken traditions of the Holy Prophet, only Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Hussein are included in this verse, besides the Holy Prophet (s.a.) himself. Also, it is clear that the view that these persons were sinless is shared by *Sunni* scholars too. It is apparent that in the least they say that if they were not infallible (theoretically) they were surely protected from sin and error (partially).

There are many other verses and traditions testifying to the purity (*Isme*) of the *Ahlul Bait*, but the limitation of space does not allow me to enumerate them even briefly.

Superiority of Ali(a.s.)

Afdhaliyyah (superiority) in Islam means "to deserve more *Thawab* (reward) before Allah because of good deeds".

All Muslims agree that this 'superiority' cannot be decided by our own views or outlook and that there is no way to know it except through the *Qur'an* or *Hadith*. Al-Ghazali, the famous *Sunni* scholar, has written:

"The reality of superiority is what is before Allah; and hat is

1 *Waheeduz Zaman: Tafseer Waheedi* (on the margin of the *Qur'an's* translation by the same author), para.22, fn.7, p.549.

2 *Waheeduz Zaman: Anwarullughah*, para.22, p.51.

something which cannot be known except to the Holy Prophet(s.a.)"⁽¹⁾

Most of our Sunni brethren believe that superiority was according to the sequence of the caliphate; i.e Abu Bakr was more superior, then 'Umar, then Othman, then Ali(a.s.).

But this belief is not based on any proof, nor was it the belief of all the Sunnis of early days. During the time of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), we find that such respected Companions as Salman Al-Farsi, Abu Thar Al-Ghefari, Miqdad Al-Kindi, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Khabbab ibn al-Arti, Jabir ibn 'Abdillah Al-Ansari, Huthaifah ibn al-Yaman, Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, Zayd ibn Arqam and many others believed that Ali(a.s.) was the most superior amongst all the Ahlul Bait and the Companions.⁽²⁾

Ahmad ibn Hanbal was once asked by his son about his views on the subject of superiority. He said: "*Abu Bakr and 'Umar and Othman*". His son asked: "*And what about Ali ibn Abi Talib?*". He replied: "*He is from the Ahlul Bait. Others cannot be compared with him*".⁽³⁾

'Ubaydullah Amristari writes in his famous book *Arjahul Matalib*: "*As superiority means 'having more thawab', its proof can only be known from the Ahadith (traditions) of the Holy Prophet(s.a.)...and if there are conflicting traditions, then the authentic traditions should be accepted and strong traditions should be differentiated from the weak ones*".

"Al-'Allamah Ibn 'Abdil Barr writes in his book *Al-Istee'ab*⁽⁴⁾ concerning the *Ahadith* which have been narrated about the superiority of Amirul Momeneen, Ali(a.s.), that: 'Imam Ahmad

1 *Al-Ghazali: Ihyaa 'Ulloomiddin, VolI, pt.2, p.10.*

2 *Ibn 'Abdil Barr: Al-Istee'ab, volII, p.470.*

3 *Al-Qundoozi: Yanabee'ul Mawaddah, p.253.*

4 *Vol.III, p.1115.*

ibn Hanbal, Al-Qadhi Isma'eel ibn Is'haq, Imam Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Shu'ayb An-Nasa-ee and Al-Hafidh Abu Ali An-Naysaboori⁽¹⁾ have said: "*There have not come as many Ahadith with good chains of narrators (Asaneed) about virtues of any of the Companions as have been narrated on the virtues of Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.)*".

Furthermore, if we look at the exclusive virtues of Amirul Momeneen, Ali(a.s.) and think about those things which caused him to reap great rewards before Allah, we will have to admit that only he was the most superior after the Holy

Prophet(s.a.).⁽²⁾

The author himself was a Sunni; and he has discussed this matter in detail in chapter III, pages 103-516, of the above mentioned book.

Obviously, I cannot provide here even a short list of the verses and traditions concerning the *Afdhaliyyah* of Ali(a.s.). It will suffice to say that there are at least 86 verses in the Holy Qur'an extolling the virtues of Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.) and the traditions on this subject cannot be counted.

Thus, it should be obvious even to the casual observer that Ali(a.s.) was the most superior of all the Muslims after the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

Appointment of Ali(a.s.)

After giving a short account of *Isme'h* and *Afdhaliyyah* of Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.), now comes the most important question of

1 [Ibn Hajar Al-Haytami: *As-Sawa'iqul Muhriqah*, p.72; Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani: *Fat-hul Baree*, vol.VIII, p.71.]

2 Amritsari, *Arjahul Matalib*, p.112.

his appointment by Allah.

On several occasions the Holy Prophet(s.a.) had declared that Ali(a.s.) was to be his successor and caliph.

It is a fact that the first open declaration of the prophethood was the very occasion when the first open declaration of Ali's caliphate was made. It was at the time of the "*Feast of the Clan*".

When the verse: *وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ* (And warn thy nearest kinfolds)⁽¹⁾ was revealed, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) ordered Ali(a.s.) to prepare food and invite the sons of Abdul Muttalib so that he could convey to them the words of Allah. After the

feast, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) intended to talk to them, but Abu Lahab interfered by saying: "*Verily, your comrade has entranced you!*".

Upon hearing this statement all of them dispersed.

The next day, the Messenger of Allah(s.a.) again called them for a feast. After they had finished with their food, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) addressed them: "*O sons of Abdul Muttalib! I have brought for you the good of this world and the next, and I have appointed by the Lord to call you unto Him. Therefore, who amongst you will administer this cause for me and be my brother, my successor and my caliph?*". No one responded to the Prophet(s.a.)'s call except Ali who was the youngest of the congregation. The Holy Prophet(s.a.) then patted Ali's neck and said: "*O my people! This Ali is my brother, my successor and my caliph amongst you. Listen to him and obey him*".⁽²⁾

1 Holy Qur'an: 26/214.

2 Ibnul Atheer: *Al-Kamil fil Tareekh*, [vol.V, pp.62 - 3]; *Al-Baghawi: At-Tafseer*, [vol.IV, p.127]; *Al-Khazin: At-Tafseer*, [vol.IV, p.127]; *Al-Bayhaqi: Dala-ilun Nubuwwah*, [vol.I, pp.428-30]; *As-Soyoori: Ad-Durrul Manthoor*, [vol.V, p.97]; *Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi: Kanzul 'Ummal*, [vol.XV, pp.100,113,115-7]; *Abul Fidaa: Al-Mukhtasar*, [vol.I, pp.116-7]; *At-Tabari: At-Tareekh*, [vol.I, pp.171-3]; *Carlyle, T.: On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, [p.54]; *Gibbon, E.: The Decline and Fall of the Roman*

The Verse of Mastership (Al-Wilayah)

After that, on many occasions, many verses and traditions reminded the Muslims that Ali(a.s.) was their master after the Holy Prophet(s.a.). One of the most important verse is the following:

* إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَهُمْ زَاكِعُونَ *

"Verily your Master is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believed, those who establish prayers, and pay the Zakat while bowed(in worship)"⁽¹⁾

The Muslim scholars, Sunni and Shi'a alike, agree that this verse was revealed in honour of Imam Ali(a.s.). It clearly shows that there are only three masters of the believers. Firstly, Allah secondly, His Holy Prophet(s.a.) and thirdly, Ali(with the eleven succeeding Imams).

Abu Thar Al-Ghefari says that one day he was praying with the Holy Prophet(s.a.) when a beggar came to the Prophet's mosque. No

Empire, [vol.III, p.94]; Davenport,J.: An Apology for Muhammad and the Koran, [p.21]; Irving, W.: Mahommet and His Successors, [p.45]. (For further details, see Al-Amini: Al-Ghadeer, [vol.II, pp.278-89].)

1 Holy Qur'an: 5/55.

one responded to his pleas. The beggar raised his hands towards heavens and said, "*Allah! Be a witness that I came to Thy Prophet's mosque and no one gave me anything*". Ali(a.s.) was bowing in Rukoo' at that time.

He pointed his little finger, on which was a ring, towards the beggar who came forward and took away the ring. This

incident occurred in the Prophet's presence who raised his face towards Heaven and prayed: "*O Lord! My brother Moses had begged of Thee to open his breast and to make his work easy for him, to loose the knot of his tongue so that people might understand him, and to appoint from among his relations his brother, as his vizier, and to strengthen his back with Haroon and to make Haroon his partner in his work. O Allah! Thou said to Moses, 'We will strengthen thy arm with thy brother. No one will now have an access to either of you!' O Allah! I am Muhammad and Thou hast given me distinction. Open my breast for me, make my work easy for me, and from my family appoint my brother Ali as my vizier. Strengthen my back with him*". The Holy Prophet(s.a.) had not yet finished his prayers when Jibreel(The Angel Gabriel) brought the above quoted verse.⁽¹⁾

Here is not the place to give all the references of this *Hadith*. (They run in the hundreds). This verse and the prayer of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) jointly and separately show that Ali(a.s.) was designated to be the Master of the Muslims after the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

1 See [At-Tabari: *At-Tafseer*, vol.VI, p.186; As-Soyooti: *Ad-Durrul Manthoor*, vol.II, pp.293-4; Ar-Raazi: *At-Tafseerul Kabeer*, vol.XII, p.26; Az-Zamakhshari: *At-Tafseer(Al-Kashshaf)*, vol.I, p.649; Al-Jassas: *Ahkamul Qur'an*, vol.II, pp.542-3; Al-Khazin: *At-Tafseer*, vol.II, p.68].

The Formal Declaration of Ghadeer Khummm

All the previous declarations may be classified as a prelude to the formal declaration of Ghadeer Khumm.

This event has been unanimously described by the learned historians and scholars of both sects. Here we give a brief account to show what great arrangements were made to declare Ali as the successor to the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

Ghadeer Khumm (Pool of Khumm) lies in a place called Juhfah between Mecca and Medina. When the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was on his way home, after performing his last pilgrimage, angel Gabriel brought him this urgent command of Allah:

* يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ... *

"O Messenger! Deliver what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message; and Allah will protect you from the people..."⁽¹⁾

The Holy Prophet(s.a.) stopped at once and ordered that all

¹ Holy Qur'an: 5/67.

people who had gone ahead should be called back, and he waited for those who were following. When all the caravan had gathered, a pulpit was set up by piling up camel saddles; the acacia thorns were swept away. The Holy Prophet(s.a.) ascended the pulpit and delivered a long sermon.

The day was very hot; people had to stretch their cloaks under their feet and over their heads.

The Holy Prophet(s.a.) addressed them as follows:

« O you people! Know it well that Gabriel came down to me several times bringing me orders from the Lord, the Merciful, that I should halt at this place and inform every man, white and black, that Ali, the son of Abi Talib, is my brother and my wasi(successor) and my caliph, and the Imam after me. His position to me is like that of Haroon to Moses, except that there is to be no prophet after me, and he is your master next to Allah and His Prophet(s.a.).

O you people! Verily, Allah has appointed him to be your Imam and ruler. Obedience to him is obligatory alike on all the Muhajereen and Ansar, and those who follow them in virtue, and on the dwellers in cities and the nomads, the Arabs and the non-Arabs, the freeman and the slave, the young and the old, the great and the small, the white and the black. His command is to be obeyed, his word is binding and his orders obligatory on everyone believing in the One God. Cursed is the man who disobeys him and blessed is he who follows him, and he who believes in him is a true believer.

O you people! This is the last time I shall stand in this assembly. Therefore, listen and obey and surrender to the command of your Lord.

Verily, Allah, He is your Lord and God; then after Him, His Prophet, Muhammad, who is addressing you, is your Master; then after me Ali is your Master and your Imam, according to Allah's command. Then after him the Imamate will continue through my descendants begotten by him till the day you meet Allah and His Prophet.

O you people! Meditate on the Holy Qur'an and understand its

verses; reflect over its clear verses and do not go to the ambiguous ones, for, by Allah, none will properly explain to you its warnings and expound to you its meanings except this man (i.e. Ali) whose hand I am lifting up in front of myself. And I say unto you that whoever whose Master I am, Ali is his Master; and he is Ali, the son of Abu Talib, my brother and wasi; and his Wilayah (Mastership) has been made obligatory by Allah, the Powerful, the Exalted».

The other Imams have also been briefly referred to in this address; and they are mentioned in precise detail in many other traditions.

For example, on one occasion addressing Imam Hussein, the Holy Prophet (s.a.) said: *"You are an Imam, the son of an Imam, the brother of an Imam, nine of your lineal descendants will be pious Imams; the ninth of them being their Qa-im (The Riser)".*⁽¹⁾

Even a casual observer would not fail to realize that, it was a matter of vital importance to Islam and that is why the Prophet, under the Divine Command, made all the possible preparations to accomplish it. Exposed to the scorching rays of the midday sun, he mounted the pulpit to make the importance pronouncement.

First of all, he informed the audience of his approaching end and then called them to witness that he had faithfully discharged his duties. Then he asked them: *"Do I not have more*

authority upon you than you yourselves have?". All of them cried out that he certainly had more right on them than they themselves had. The Prophet then said: *"Whoever whose Master I am, Ali is his Master"*. In the end he invoked blessings on Ali, saying: *"O Allah! Love him who loves Ali, and be the enemy of the enemy of Ali; help him who helps Ali, and forsake him who forsakes Ali"*.

When the ceremony was over, the following verse of the Holy

1 Al-Qundoozi: *Yanabee'ul Mawaddeh*, p.168; *Amristari: Arjahul Matalib*, p.448.

Qur'an was revealed:

...الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...*

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My bounty upon you and I have approved Islam as your religion"⁽¹⁾

This Divine Communication clearly shows that because of Ali's appointment to the Imamate the religion was perfected, the bounty and favour of Allah completed, and Islam approved by Allah. On the arrival of this glad tidings from heaven the believers congratulated Ali in the Prophet's presence and many poets composed poems on this event. All these facts stand recorded in books of tradition as will be seen in the following pages.

Hadith of Ghadeer: *Mutawatir*

The following extracts (taken from authentic Sunni books) from the said lecture (*Khutbah*) of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) are very important:

"I am leaving behind, among you, two most precious things...(1) The Book of Allah, and (2) My descendants, who are my family members. They will not separate from each other until they come to me near Kawthar⁽²⁾. Verily Allah is my Master and I am the Master of every believer".

Then he took the hand of Ali and said:

"Whoever whose Master I am, Ali is his Master".

1 Holy Qur'an: 5/3.

2 A pool in Paradise.

These two traditions are referred to as the traditions of *Thaqalayn* (Two Precious Things) and *Wilayah* (Mastership). They are singly and jointly narrated by hundreds of traditionalists.

Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan of Bhopal, says: "*Al-Hakim Abu Sa'eed says that the tradition of Thaqalayn and of 'Whoever whose Master I am, Ali is his Master' are Mutawatir (i.e, narrated unbrokenly by so many people that no doubt Can be entertained about their authenticity), because a great number of the Companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) have narrated them.*

So much so that Muhammad ibn Jareer has written these two traditions through seventy-five different Sanad (Chain); and he has written a separate book which he named Kitabul Wilayah (The Book of Mastership); and Al-Hafidh Al-Ththehebi also has written a complete book on its Asnad(pl. of Sanad) and has passed the verdict that it is Mutawatir; and Abul Abbas ibn 'Uqdeh has narrated the Hadith of Ghadeer Khumm through one hundred and fifty chains and has written a complete book on it".⁽¹⁾

Some writers have tried to cast doubt on the authenticity of the events of Ghadeer Khumm.

It is necessary to mention that this *Hadith* is *Mutawatir*, and the late renowned scholar Al-'Allamah Al-Amini in the first volume of his celebrated book *Al-Ghadeer* has given (with full references) the names of 110 famous companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) who have narrated this *Hadith*. As an example, 'I am enumerating the names given under letter Alif(namely -A- in Arabic alphabet). (The years of death indicated in parantheses are in A.H.):

- 1- Abu Layla Al-Ansari (37);
- 2- Abu Zaynab ibn 'Aowf Al-Ansari
- 3- Abu Fadhalah Al-Ansari (38)

- 4- Abu Qudamah Al-Ansari
- 5- Abu 'Amrah ibn 'Amr ibn Muhassin Al-Ansari
- 6- Abul Haytham ibn At-Tayhan (37)
- 7- Abu Rafi' Al-Qibti (A slave of the Holy Prophet)
- 8- Abu Thuwayb Khuwailid (or Khalid) ibn Khalid Al-Huthali
- 9- Usamah ibn Zayd ibn Harithah (54)
- 10-Ubay ibn Ka'b Al-Ansari (30 or 32)
- 11-As'ad ibn Zurarah Al-Ansari
- 12-Asmaa bint 'Umays
- 13-Ummu Selemeh (a wife of the Holy Prophet)
- 14-Ummu Hani-e bint Abi Talib
- 15-Abu Hamzah Anas ibn Malik Al-Ansari
- 16-Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafah
- 17-Abu Hurayrah⁽¹⁾

and there are not less than 84 Tabi'in (disciples of the Companions) who narrated this *Hadith* from the above mentioned Companions.

Again, the list under letter (A) is given here as an example:

- 1- Abu Rasheed Al-Hubrani Al-Shshami
- 2- Abu Selemeh ibn 'Abdil Rahman ibn 'Aowf
- 3- Abu Sulaiman Al-Mu-aththin
- 4- Abu Salih As-Samman, Thakwan Al-Madani
- 5- Abu 'Unfowanch Al-Mazeni
- 6- Abu 'Abdil Raheem Al-Kindi
- 7- Abul Qasim, Asbagh ibn Nubatah At-Tamimi
- 8- Abu Layla Al-Kindi
- 9- Iyas ibn Nudhayr⁽²⁾

Traditionalists have recorded this *Hadith* in their books in every

1 *Al-Amini: Al-Ghadeer*, vol.I, pp.14-18.

2 *Ibid.*, pp.62-63.

century and every era. For example, the names of those writers and scholars who have narrated this *Hadith* in the second century of Hijrah are:

- 1- Abu Mohammad, 'Amr ibn Dinar Al-Jumahi Al-Mekki (115 or 116)
- 2- Abu Bakr Mohammad ibn Muslim ibn 'Ubaydillah Al-Quraishi Az-Zuhri (124)
- 3- Abdul Rahman ibn Qasim ibn Mohammad ibn Abi Bakr At-Taymi Al-Medeni (126)
- 4- Bakr ibn Sawadeh ibn Thumameh, Abu Thumameh Al-Basri (128)
- 5- Abdullah ibn Abi Najih, Yesar Ath-Thaqafi, Abu Yesar Al-Mekki (131)
- 6- Al-Hafidh Mugheereh ibn Mukasim, Abu Hisham Ad-Dabbi Al-Kufi (133)
- 7- Abu Abdul Raheem Khalid ibn Zayd Al-Jumahi Al-Mesri (139)
- 8- Hasan ibn al-Hakam An-nakha'ee Al-Kufi (circa 140)
- 9- Idrees ibn Yazeed, Abu Abdillah Al-'Aowdi Al-Kufi
- 10- Yahya ibn Sa'eed ibn Hayyan At-Taymi Al-Kufi
- 11- Al-Hafidh Abdul Melik ibn Abi Sulaiman Al-Arzami Al-Kufi (145)
- 12- 'Aowf ibn Abi Jameeleh Al-'Abdi Al-Hajeri Al-Basri (146)
- 13- 'Ubaydillah ibn 'Umar ibn Hafs ibn 'Asim ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattab Al-'Adawi Al-Medeni (187)
- 14- Nu'aim ibn al-Hakim Al-Madayeni (148)
- 15- Talha ibn Yahya ibn Talha ibn 'Ubaydillah At-Taymi Al-Kufi (148)
- 16- Abu Muhammad Katheer Ibn Zayd Al-Aslemi (circa 150)
- 17- Al-Hafidh Muhammad ibn Ishaq Al-Medeni (151 or 152)
- 18- Al-Hafidh Mu'ammam ibn Rasheed, Abu 'Urwa Al-Azdi Al-Basri (153 or 154)

19-Al-Hafidh Mis'ar ibn Kidam ibn Zahir Al-Hilali Ar-Rawasi Al-Kufi (153 or 154)

20-Abu 'Isa Hakam ibn Aban Al-'Adani (154 or 155)

21-Abdillah ibn Shawthab Al-Balkhi Al-Basri (157)

22-Al-Hafidh Shu'bah ibn Al-Hajjaj, Abu Bistam Al-Wasiti (160)

23-Al-Hafidh Abul Alaa, Kamil ibn Al-'Alaa At-Tamimi Al-Kufi (circa 160)

24-Al-Hafidh Sufyan ibn Sa'eed Ath-Thawri, Abu Abdillah Al-Kufi (161)

25-Al-Hafidh Israel ibn Yonus ibn Abi Is-haq As-Sabi'i Abu Yousof Al-Kufi (162)

26-Ja'far ibn Ziyad Al-Kufi Al-Ahmar (165 or 167)

27-Muslim ibn Salim An-Nahdi, Abu Farwah Al-Kufi

28-Al-Hafidh Qays ibn Ar-Rebee', Abu Muhammad Al-Asadi Al-Kufi (165)

29-Al-Hafidh Hammad ibn Selemeh, Abu Selemeh Al-Basri (167)

30-Al-Hafidh Abdillah ibn Lahi'ah, Abu Abdir Rahman Al-Misri (174)

31-Al-Hafidh Abu 'Uwanah Al-Wadhdhah ibn Abdillah Al-Yeshkuri Al-Wasiti Al-Bazzaz (175 or 176)

32-Al-Qadhi Shereek ibn Abdillah, Abu Abdillah An-Nakh'ee Al-Kufi (177)

33-Al-Hafidh Abdillah (or 'Ubaydillah) ibn 'Ubaydurrahman (or 'Abdul Rahman) Al-Kufi, Abu Abdil Rahman Al-Ashja'ee (182)

34-Nooh ibn Qays, Abu Rawh Al-Huddani Al-Basri (183)

35-Al-Muttalib ibn Ziyad ibn Abi Zuhair Al-Kufi, Abu Talib (185)

36-Al-Qadhi Hassan ibn Ibraheem Al-'Anazi, Abu Hashim (186)

37-Al-Hafidh Jereer ibn Abdil Hameed, Abu Abdillah Adh-Dhabbi Al-Kufi Al-Razi (188)

- 38-**Al-Fadhl ibn Moosa, Abu Abdillah Al-Merwezi As-Sinani (192)
- 39-**Al-Hafidh Muhammad ibn Ja'far Al-Medeni Al-Basri (193)
- 40-**Al-Hafidh Isma'eel ibn 'Uliyyah, Abu Bishr ibn Ibraheem Al-Asadi (193)
- 41-**Al-Hafidh Muhammad ibn Ibraheem, Abu 'Amr ibn Abi 'Adiyy As-Sulami Al-Basri (194)
- 42-**Al-Hafidh Muhammad ibn Khazim, Abu Mu'awiyah At-Tamimi Adh-Dhareer (195)
- 43-**Al-Hafidh Muhammad ibn Fudhayl, Abu 'Abdil Rahman Al-Kufi (195)
- 44-**Al-Hafidh Al-Wakee' ibn Al-Jarrah Ar-Ru'asi Al-Kufi (196)
- 45-**Al-Hafidh Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, Abu Muhammad Al-Hilali Al-Kufi (198)
- 46-**Al-Hafidh Abdillah ibn Numayr, Abu Hisham Al-Hamadani Al-Kherifi (199)
- 47-**Al-Hafidh Hanash ibn Al-Harith ibn Laqeet An-Nakh'ee Al-Kufi
- 48-**Abu Muhammad Moosa ibn Ya'qoob Az-Zama'ee Al-Medeni
- 49-**Al-'Alaa ibn Salim Al-'Attar Al-Kufi
- 50-**Al-Azraq ibn Ali ibn Muslim Al-Hanafi, Abul Jahm Al-Kufi
- 51-**Hani ibn Ayyoob Al-Hanafi Al-Kufi
- 52-**Fudhayl ibn Marzooq Al-Agharr Al-Ru'asi Al-Kufi (circa 160)
- 53-**Abu Hamzah Sa'd ibn 'Ubaydah As-Sulami Al-Kufi
- 54-**Moosa ibn Muslim Al-Hizami Ash-Shaybani, Abu 'Isa Al-Kufi Al-Tahhan (Moosa As-Sagheer)
- 55-**Ya'qoob ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Katheer Al-Ansari Al-Medeni
- 56-**Othman ibn Sa'd ibn Murrah Al-Quraishi, Abu Abdillah

(Abu Ali) Al-Kufia.⁽¹⁾

Thus, this *Hadith* continues to be narrated by so many narrators (Ruwat) in every era as to make it *Mutawatir*.

Coming to the scholars and writers who have narrated this *Hadith* in their books of traditions, it is enough to mention that Al-'Allamah Al-Amini has listed the names of 360 scholars according to 14th century.⁽²⁾

Some people have tried to cast doubts about the Asnad of this *Hadith*. As every student of Islamic tradition knows, if a *Hadith* is *Mutawatir*, there is no need to look at the individual's Asnad at all.

Still to show the hollowness of this charge, I would like to give here the opinions of some of the famous traditionalists (Muhaddithoon).

Asnad of Hadith of Ghadeer:

a) Al-Hafidh Abu 'Isa Al-Termethi (d. 279 A.H.) has said in his Saheeh (one of the Al-Sihah Al-Sittah) that:

هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ

i.e. This is a good (حَسَن) and correct (صَحِيح) *Hadith*.⁽³⁾

b) Al-Hafidh Abu Ja'far Al-Tahawi (d. 321 A.H.) has said in his Mushkilul Athar that:

فَهَذَا الْحَدِيثُ صَحِيحُ الْإِسْنَادِ وَلَا طَعْنَ لِأَحَدٍ فِي رَوَاتِهِ

1 Ibid., pp.73-81.

2 Ibid., pp.73-151.

3 Al-Termethi: Al-Saheeh, vol.II, p.298.

i.e: This *Hadith* is Saheeh according to the chains of narrators (Asnad) and no one has said anything contrary to its narrators.⁽¹⁾

C) Abu Abdillah Al-Hakim Al-Nisaboori (d. 405 A.H.) has narrated this *Hadith* from several chains in his *Al-Mustadrak* and has said that this *Hadith* is Saheeh.⁽²⁾

d) Abu Muhammad Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-'Asemi has said:

وهذا حديث تَلَقَّتهُ الأُمَّةُ بالقبول وهو مُوَافِقٌ بالأصول

i.e: This *Hadith* is accepted by *Ummah* and it is inconformity with the principles.⁽³⁾

Likewise, the following traditionalists (among hundreds of others) have quoted that this *Hadith* is Saheeh:-

1/ Abu Abdillah Al-Mahameli Al-Baghdadi in his *Amali*;

2/ Ibn 'Abdil Barr Al-Qurtubi in *Al-Istee'ab*;

3/ Ibnul Maghazeli Al-Shafe'ee in *Al-Manaqib*;

4/ Abu Hamid Al-Ghazzali in *Sirrul 'Alamayn*;

5/ Abul Faraj ibn Al-Jawzi in *Al-Manaqib*;

6/ Sibte ibn Al-Jawzi in *Tathkiratu Khawassil Ummah*;

7/ Ibn Abil Hadeed Al-Mu'tazeli in his *Sharhu Nahjil Balagha*;

8/ Abu Abdillah Al-Genji Al-Shafe'ee in *Kifayetul Talib*;

9/ Abul Makarim 'Alaul Din Al-Simnani in *Al-'Urwatul*

Wuthqaa;

10/ Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani in *Tahtheebul Tahtheeb*;

11/ Ibn Kahir Al-Demeshqi in *Tareekh*;

12/ Jalalul Din As-Soyooti;

1 *Al-Tahawi: Mushkilul Athar, vol.II, p.308.*

2 *Al-Hakim: Al-Mustadrak, vol.III, pp.109-10.*

3 [*Al-Amiri: Al-Ghadeer, vol.I, p.295.*]

- 13/Al-Qestelani in Al-Mawahibul Ladunniyyah;
 14/Ibn Hajar Al-Mekki in Al-Sawa'iqul Al-Muhriqah;
 15/Abdul Haqq Al-Dehlawi in Sharhul Mishkat;
 and many others.⁽¹⁾

It should be noted that all the names mentioned above are of Sunni scholars; and in Sunni usage, a *Hadith* is called "*Saheeh*" when it is uninterruptedly narrated by persons of approved probity ('Aadil) who have perfect memory, does not have any defect, and is not unusual (*Shathth*).⁽²⁾

If the above virtues are found in the Asnad of a *Hadith* but the memory of one or more of its narrators is a degree less than that required for *Saheeh*, then it is called "*Hasan*" that is to say (good).⁽³⁾

So, when the Sunni scholars say that the narrators of Ghadeer is *Saheeh*, they mean that its narrators are of a approved probity (i.e, they do not have any defect in belief and deeds) and Have perfect memory, and that this *Hadith* has no defect and is not unusual.

General Meanings of *Mawla*:

As the Sunnis cannot deny the authenticity of the *Hadith* of Ghadeer, they try to downplay its significance by saying that the word "*Mawla*" in this *Hadith* means "*Friend*", and that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) wanted to announce that: "*Whoever whose friend I am, Ali is his friend!*".

The trouble is that not a single person who was present in

1 Ibid., pp.294-313.

2 Subhi Al-Salih: 'Uloomul Hadith wa Mustalahatuh, p.145.

3 Ibid., p.156.

Ghadeer grasped this alleged meaning. Hassan ibn Thabit, the famous poet of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), composed a poem and recited it before the audience, in which he said:

فَقَالَ لَهُ قُمْ يَا عَلِيُّ فَإِنِّي رَضِيْتُكَ مِنْ بَعْدِي إِمَاماً وَهَادِيّاً

"So he(the Prophet) said to him(Ali): 'Stand up O Ali! As I am pleased to make you Imam and Guide after me'.

'Umar ibn al Khattab congratulated Ali in these words:

هَنِيئاً لَكَ يَا ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، أَصْبَحْتَ وَأَمْسَيْتَ مُؤَلًّى كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ وَمُؤْمِنَةٍ.

"Congratulation, O son of Abi Talib, within a day you became Mawla of every believing man and woman",⁽¹⁾

If *Mawla* means 'friend' then why the congratulations? Was Ali 'enemy' of all believing men and women before that time, so that 'Umar said that 'within a day' you became friend of them all?

Imam Ali(a.s.) himself wrote to Mu'awiyeh, saying, "...and the Messenger of Allah granted to me his authority over you on the Day of Ghadeer Khumm"⁽²⁾

Also, there are many companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) who used in their poems the word "*Mawla*" in connection with Ghadeer Khumm in the sense of "Master".

Countless scholars of the Holy Qur'an, Arabic grammar and

1 Al-Khateeb Al-Tebreezi: *Mishkatul Masabeeh* [p.557]; Mir Khwand: *Habibul Siyer*, [vol.I, ft.3, p.144]; Al-Tabari: *Al-Wilayah*; Al-Razi: *Al-Tafseerul Kabeer*, [vol. XII, pp.49-50]; Ahmad: *Al-Musnad*, [vol.IV, p.281]; Ibn Abi Sheybeh: *Al-Musannaf*; Abu Ya'la: *Al-Musnad*; Ahmad ibn 'Uqdeh: *Al-Wilayah*, and many others. {See also Al-Amini: *Al-Ghadeer*, [vol.I, pp.270-83] for further references.

2 Al-Amini: *Al-Ghadeer*, vol.I, p.340.

literature have interpreted the word "Mawla" (مَوْلَى) as "Awla" (أَوْلَى) which means "worthier, more deserving, more appropriate, more proper,...etc".

The names of the following scholars may be quoted here as examples:-

1. Ibn Abbas (in his Tafseer, on the Margin of Al-Durrul Manthoor, vol.V, p.355);

2. Al-Kelbi (as quoted in Al-Tafseerul Kabeer of Al-Razi, vol.XXIX, p.227, Al-Aaloosi, Ruhul Ma'ani, vol.XXVII, p.178);

3. Al-Farraa, (Al-Razi, ibid.; Al-Aaloosi, ibid.);

4. Abu 'Ubaydeh Mu'ammār ibn Muthanna Al-Basri (Al-Razi, ibid.; & Al-Sherif Al-Jurjani, Sharhul Mawaqif, vol.III, p.271);

5. Al-Akhfash Al-Aowsat (in Nihayetul 'Uqool);

6. Al-Bukhari (in Al-Saheeh, vol.VII, p.240);

7. Ibn Qutaybeh (in Al-Qurtayn, vol.II, p.164);

8. Abul Abbas Tha'lab (in Sharhul Sab'ah Al-Mu'allegah of Al-Zuzani);

9. Al-Tabari (in his Tafseer, vol.IX, p.117);

10. Al-Wahccdi (in Al-Weseet);

11. Al-Tha'lebi (in Al-Kashf wal Beyan);

12. Al-Zamakhshari (in Al-Kashshaf, vol.II, p.435);

13. Al-Baydhawi (in his Tafseer, vol.II, p.497);

14. Al-Nasafi (in his Tafseer, vol.IV, p.229);

15. Al-Khazin Al-Baghdadi (in his Tafseer, vol.IV, p.229);

16. Muhibbul Din AfaNdi (in his Tanzilul Aayat).⁽¹⁾

1 See Al-Amini: Al-Ghadeer, pp.344-50, for detail references.

Meaning of "Mawla" in the Context:

Now let's examine what meaning can be inferred from the context of this *Hadith*. If a word has more than one meaning, the best way to ascertain its true connotation is to look at the "*Qereeneh* - قَرِينَة (association) and the context.

There are scores of "associations" in this *Hadith* which clearly show that the only meaning fitting the occasion can be "Master". Some of those associations and contexts are as follows:

First: The question which the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) asked just before this declaration; he asked the audience: *أَلَسْتُ أَوْلَىٰ بِكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ؟* - "Do I not have more authority upon you than you have yourselves?"

When they said: "Yes, surely" then the Prophet proceeded to declare that:

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

"Whoever whose Mawla I am, Ali is his Mawla".

Without doubt, the word "Mawla" in this declaration has the same meaning as: (أَوْلَىٰ بِكُمْ) (having more authority upon you) has in the preceding question. At least 64 Sunni traditionalists have quoted that preceding question; among them are Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ibn Majeh, Al-Nassa'ee and Al-Tirmithi.⁽¹⁾

Second: The following prayer which the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) uttered just after this declaration:

¹ Ibid., pp.370-71.

اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَعَادَ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَأَنْصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ وَأَخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُ

"O Allah! Love him who loves Ali, and be he enemy of the enemy of Ali, help him who helps Ali, and forsake him who forsakes Ali".

This prayer shows that Ali(a.s.), on that day, was entrusted with a responsibility which, by its very nature, would make some people his enemy (and that responsibility could not be that except of a ruler); and in carrying out that responsibility he would need helpers and supporters.

Are helpers ever needed to carry on a "friendship"?

Third: The declaration of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) that: *"It seems imminent that I will be called away (by Allah) and I will answer that call"*.

This clearly shows that he was making arrangements for the leadership of the Muslims after his death.

Fourth: The congratulations of the companions and their expressions of joy do not leave room for doubt concerning the meaning of this declaration.

Fifth: The occasion, place and time.

Imagine the Holy Prophet(s.a.) breaking his journey in midday, and detaining nearly one hundred thousand travellers under the burning sun of the Arabian desert, making them sit in a thorny place on the burning sand, and making a pulpit of camel-saddles.

Then imagine him delivering a long lecture and at the end of all those preparations coming out with an announcement that: *"Whoever loves me should love Ali", or "Whoever whose friend I am, Ali is his friend!"*.

Is such a thing excusable before common sense? No, but

some people are ready to accuse the Holy Prophet(s.a.) of such childish behaviour!

Ali(a.s.). "Self" of The Holy Prophet(s.a.)

There are many verses which point to the caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.). It is not possible to enumerate them all here. But the event of Mubaheleh (imprecation, mutual cursing) which took place in the ninth year of the Hijrah should be noted.

In this year a delegation consisting of fourteen Christians came from Najran to meet the Prophet. When they met the Holy Prophet(s.a.) they asked him: "What is your opinion about Jesus?" The Apostle(s.a.) said: "You may take Rest today and you will receive the reply afterwards".

The next day, three verses of the third Surah of the Holy Qur'an⁽¹⁾ about Jesus(a.s.) were revealed. When the Christians didn't accept the words of Allah and insisted on their own beliefs, the Apostle(s.a.) recited the following verse:

﴿فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ آبَاءَنَا وَإِبْنَاءَ كُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾

"And whoso disputes with thee concerning him, after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: 'Come now, let us call our sons and your sons, our wives and your wives, our selves and your

1 Holy Qur'an: 3/59-61.

selves, then let us humbly pray and so lay God's curse upon the ones who lie".⁽¹⁾

The next day, the Christians came out on one side; and on the other side, the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) came out of his house carrying Hussein in his arms with Hasan walking by his side, and holding his hand. Behind him was Fatima (the Prophet's daughter), and behind her, Ali.

When the Christians saw the five pure souls, they abstained from the proposed imprecation and submitted to a treaty with the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*).

In this verse, according to Jabir ibn Abdillah Al-Ansari, the word "*sons*" refers to Imam Hasan and Imam Hussein, the word "*women*" refers to Fatimah, and the words "*our selves*" refer to the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) and Ali. Thus, Ali ibn Abi Talib(*a.s.*) has been referred to in the verse of Mubahelah as "*the self*" of the Holy Prophet.⁽²⁾

It also follows that just as it is unlawful to seek to be superior to the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*), similarly it is unlawful to supercede Ali - he being the "*self*" of the Holy Prophet according to the words of Allah. Anyone who presumed to supercede him was in essence presuming to supercede the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*).

Traditions

After the declaration of Ghadeer, there is Really no need to provide more proofs of the caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*a.s.*).

1 3/61.

2 Al-Waheedi: *Asbabul Nozool*, p.40; Al-Soyooti: *Al-Durrul Manthoor*, vol.II, p.38.

Yet, it may be pertinent to quote some *Hadiths* in this regard.

In the *Hadith* of Thaqaalayn, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) said:

"I am leaving two weighty things among you - the Book of Allah and my Ahlul Bait (Family). If you adhere to them and continue to follow and obey both of them and forsake neither, you will never be misled. They will not separate from each other till they reach me at Kawthar".

Now, it is admitted on all hands that Ali(a.s.) is not only one of the Ahlul Bait but is the head of Ahlul Bait. Therefore, the obligation of his obedience is proved from this universal accepted tradition.⁽¹⁾

Then, there is the *Hadith* known as *Hadithul Manzileh* (Tradition of Rank, Position). In the expedition of Tabook (in the month of Rajab⁽²⁾ of the ninth year A.H.) the Holy Prophet(s.a.) left Ali(a.s.) as his deputy in Medina. Ali

exclaimed with dismay: "Are you leaving me behind?". The Holy Prophet(s.a.) asked him: "O Ali! Are you not satisfied that you have the same position in relation to me as Haroon (Aaron) had to Moosu (Moses), except that there is no prophet after me?".

The Holy Prophet(s.a.) thereby meant that as Moses had left behind Aaron to look after his people when he went to receive the Commandments, in the same way he was leaving Ali behind as his deputy to look after the affairs of Islam during his absence.⁽³⁾

1 This *Hadith* can be seen in most books of traditions. See for instance, *Al-Termithi: Al-Saheeh*, vol.II, p.308; *Ibnul Atheer: Usdul Ghabeh*, vol.II, p.12; *Al-Soyooti: Al-Durrul Manthoor*, vol.VI, p.7; *Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi: Kanzul 'Ummal*, (Hyderabad, 1312 A.H.), p.48.

2 The seventh lunar month.

3 *Ibn Majeh: Al-Sunen*, p.12; *Ahmad: Al-Musnad*, vol.II, p.174; *Al-Nasa-ee: Al-Khasa-is*, pp.15-16; *Al-Tahawi: Mushkilul Aathar*, vol.II, p.309; *Al-Muhibb*

Then there is the occasion of communicating the verses of Surah Al-Bara'aa (Chapter 9) to the people of Mecca. First, Abu Bakr was sent to proclaim it before the pagans. Later the Holy Prophet (s.a.) sent Ali (a.s.) to take the Surah from Abu Bakr and announce it himself at Mecca. Abu Bakr returned to

Medina from his journey midway en route to Mecca and asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.) whether any verse or order was received from Allah against him announcing the Surah. The Holy Prophet (s.a.) said: "*Gabriel came to me and said that no one shall deliver the message except myself or the person who is from me*".⁽¹⁾

The moral principle evident in these declarations of the

Holy Prophet (s.a.) is also expressed in the following of the following tradition which has been accepted by all sects.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.): "*Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali; whithersoever Ali turns, the truth (also) turns with him*".⁽²⁾

Another is the Hadith of "Hadithun Noor" (Divine Light).

Sayyid Ali Hamadani writes in Mawaddatul Qurbaa, on the authority of Salman Al-Farsi, that the Holy Prophet said: "*I and Ali were both created from one and the same Noor (Divine Light) four thousand years before Adam was created, and when Adam was created, that Noor was given a place in his backbone. So we continued to occupy the same place till we were separated in the back of Abdul Muttalib. Therefore in me is the Prophethood and in Ali is the caliphate*".

In Riyadhul Fadha-il, the last words of the above Hadith are

Al-Tabari: *Thakha-irul 'Uqbah*, p.63.

1 Al-Soyooti: *Al-Durril Manthoor*, vol.VI, p.209; Al-Tabari: *Al-Tafseer*, vol.X, p.47; Al-Nasa-ee: *Al-Khasa-is*, p.20.

2 Al-Khateeb Al-Khawarizmi: *Al-Manaqib*, p.56; Al-Hamawi: *Fara-idul Simtayn*, vol.I, p.176; Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi: *Tareekh Baghdad*, vol.XIV, p.321.

written as follows: "*Then He made me a Prophet and made Ali a wasi (vicegerent)*".⁽¹⁾

1 As quoted in *Mafateehul Matalib*, p.396; *Al-Ghanji: Kifayetutalib*, p.176.

Ulul Amr Must be Ma'soom

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

* يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا.*

"O ye who believed! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority from among you; then if you disputed about a thing, so return it to Allah and the Apostle, if you were believing in Allah and the Last Day; that is better and very good in the end".⁽¹⁾

This verse obliges the Muslims to two obediences: First, the obedience of Allah; second, the obedience of the Apostle and 'those vested with authority from among you'. The arrangement of the words shows that the obedience of "Ulul Amr" is as much obligatory as is the obedience of the Apostle.

Naturally, it means that *Ulul Amr* should be of the same capability as the Apostle(s.a.); otherwise Allah would not have joined them together in this verse.

Before deciding who the *Ulul Amr* are, it will be of help to have a look at the commandment of obeying the Apostle, to see how all-encompassing and all-pervading this commandment

is and how great the authority of the Apostle of Allah is.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: And We did not send any Apostle, but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission.⁽²⁾

The Prophets and the Apostles were to be obeyed and followed;

1 Holy Qur'an: 4/59.

2 IV/64.

the followers were not expected to check every action of the Prophet to decide what was to be obeyed and what not. Clearly, it shows that the Prophets and Apostles were

free from error and sin; otherwise Allah would not have ordered the people to obey the Apostles unconditionally.

There are many verse in which Allah commands us to obey the Prophet: "*O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle*".⁽¹⁾

Again, He says: "*And whoever obeys Allah and His Apostle...*"⁽²⁾. In the same Surah it is asserted: "*Whoever obeys the Apostle, he indeed obeys Allah*".⁽³⁾ In these, as well as numerous other verses of the Holy Qur'an, obedience of Allah is synonymous with the obedience of the prophets. Such assertion would have been impossible if the prophets were not *Ma'soom* (infallible).

Now, note the following verse: "...and obey not from among them a sinner or an ungrateful one..."⁽⁴⁾ The picture is complete.

The prophets are to be obeyed; the sinners are not to be obeyed. The only conclusion is that the prophets were not sinners or wrong-doers. In other words, they were *Ma'soom* (infallible, sinless).

Just imagine what impossible situation would have been created if any prophet began exhorting his followers to commit a mistake or sin. The wretched followers would have been condemned to the displeasure of Allah in any case. If they obeyed the Prophet and committed that sin they disobeyed the command given by Allah and thus were disgraced. If, on the other hand, they disobeyed the Prophet, they again disobeyed the command of Allah about obeying the Prophet. So, it appears that a non-*Ma'soom* prophet could bring nothing but disgrace and condemnation to his people.

1 Holy Qur'an: 47/33; see also: 3/32, 132; 5/92; 8/1, 20, 46; 24/54; 58/13; 64/12.
2 4/13; see also: 4/69; 24/52; 33/71; 48/18.

3 4/80.

4 76/26.

Looking especially at the Holy Prophet(s.a.) of Islam, Allah tells us: "...and whatever the Apostle gives you, take it; and from whatever he forbids you, keep back.".(1) This means that the permission or prohibition of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was always in accordance with the will of Allah and always favoured by Him. It proves that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was *Ma'soom*. No one can be so sure about the commands of a man who is not infallible.

There is another verse: "Say: 'If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins'".(2)

Here, the love of Allah is made contingent on following the Prophet of Islam. Both sides of love are included in it.

If you love Allah follow the Holy Prophet(s.a.); if you love the Holy Prophet(s.a.), Allah will love you. Does it not show that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was absolutely free from any type of blemish?

Not only his actions, even his words were the Commands of Allah. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "Nor does he speak out of (his own) desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed".(3)

Here we find the highest degree of infallibility which can be imagined.

In addition to what has been quoted uptill now, there are several verses in which the following words have been used for the Holy Prophet(s.a.): "...and Apostle from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom".(4) How could a prophet purify others of sins and blemishes if he himself were not pure (god forbid)? How could a man teach others wisdom if he had no wisdom to distinguish right from wrong; or worst still, if he had no will-power to resist from doing wrong?

1 59/7.

2 3/31.

3 53/3-4.

4 62/2; see also: 2/129; 3/164.

The Prophet was to teach people the Book of Allah; this means that he knew the Commandments of Allah. He was to purify them and teach them wisdom. So this means he had wisdom and purity himself.

Witness to the perfection of his character is found in the Holy Qur'an where it says: "*And most surely you are on sublime morality*",⁽¹⁾ A man committing mistakes does not deserve such compliments.

All these verses clearly show two things:

First: The authority of the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) upon the believers was unlimited and all-comprehensive. Any order given by him, under any condition, in any place, at any time, was to be obeyed unconditionally.

Second: That supreme authority was given to him because he was *Ma'soom*(sinless, infallible) and free from all types of error and sin. Otherwise, Allah would not have ordered us to obey him unconditionally.

In this verse, *Ulul Amr*, have been given exactly the same authority over the Muslims, because both the "Apostle" and the "*Ulul Amr*" have been jointly mentioned under one word: (أَطِيعُوا = obey); which shows that the obedience of *Ulul Amr* has the same standing as the obedience of the Apostle(*s.a.*).

It naturally follows that *Ulul Amr* must also be *Ma'soom* and free from any type of error and sin. Otherwise, their obedience would not have been joined with the obedience of the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*).

Amirul Momeneen, Ali(*a.s.*), said: "*The one who disobeys Allah is not to be obeyed; and verily obedience is to of Allah and of His Apostle and those vested with authority. Verily, Allah ordered (the people) to obey the Apostle because he was sinless and clean (pure), who would not tell the people to disobey Allah; and verily He ordered (the people)*

to obey those vested with authority because they are sinless and clean, and would not tell the people to disobey Allah".⁽¹⁾

Uhlul Amr. Does it mean Muslim Rulers...?

Uhlul Amr. Many of our Sunni brethren tend to interpret *Uhlul Amr* as 'the rulers from among yourselves', i.e. Muslims rulers. This interpretation is not based on any logical reasoning; it is solely based on twists of history.

The majority of the Muslims have remained as a vassal of the monarchs and rulers, interpreting and reinterpreting Islam and the Holy Qur'an to please powers-to-be.

The history of the Muslims (like any other nation) is replete with the names of rulers whose injustice, debauchery and tyranny have tarnished the name of Islam, as well be mentioned briefly in the latter part of this text.

Such rulers have always been and will always be, and we are told that they are *Uhlul Amr* mentioned in this verse.

If Allah were to order us to obey such kings and rulers, an impossible situation would be created for the Muslims. The wretched followers would be condemned to the displeasure of Allah, no matter what they did. If they obeyed these rulers, they disobeyed the Command of Allah: "*Do not obey a sinner*", and if they disobeyed such rulers, they again disobeyed the Command of Allah to "*obey the Muslim rulers*".

So, if we accept this interpretation, the Muslims are condemned to eternal disgrace whether they obey or disobey their non-*Ma'soom* Muslim rulers.

1 Al-Sedooq: 'Ita'ul Shera-i', vol.I, p.123.

Also, there are Muslim rulers of different beliefs and persuasions. There are Shafe'ees, Wahhabis, Malekis, Hanafis, as well as Shi'as and Ibadis. Now, according to this interpretation the Sunnis residing under an Ibadi Sultan (like in Oman) should follow Ibadi tenents; and those residing under a Shi'a ruler (like in Iran) should follow Shi'a ruler.

Do these people have the conviction of courage to follow their professed interpretation to its logical end?

The famous Sunni commentator, Fakhruddin Al-Razi, concluded in his *Tafseerul Kabeer*⁽¹⁾ that this verse proves that *Ulul Amr* must be *Ma'soom*. He argues that Allah has commanded the people to obey *Ulul Amr* unconditionally; therefore, it is essential for the *Ulul Amr* to be *Ma'soom*. Because if there is any possibility of their committing sin (and sin is forbidden), it will mean that one has to obey them and also disobey them in that very action, and this is impossible! Then to dissuade his readers from the Ahlul Bait, he invented the theory that the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole is *Ma'soom*.

This interpretation is unique, as no Muslim scholar ever

subscribed to this theory and it is not based on any tradition. It is quite surprising that Al-Razi accepts that each individual of the Muslim nation is non-*Ma'soom*, yet still claims that their sum-total is *Ma'soom*. Even a primary school student knows that 200 cows plus 200 cows makes 400 cows and not one horse.

But Al-Razi says that 70 million non-*Ma'soom* plus 70 million non-*Ma'soom* will make one *Ma'soom*!

Does he want us to believe that if all the patients of a mental hospital joined together they would be equal to one sane person?*

¹ vol.X, p.144.

* Though we hold special respect for others' opinions, and particularly for the beliefs of our Sunni brothers, at the same time, the author had no other alternative but to criticize the opinion of Al-Razi with these examples. Of course, we do not regard this opinion of Al-Razi to be the manifesto of all

The poet of the Orient, Iqbal Lahori, has said:

که از مغز دوصد خر فکر یک انسان نمی آید

"The minds of two hundred donkeys cannot produce the thoughts of one man".

Obviously, with his great knowledge he was able to conclude that *Ulul Amr* must be *Ma'soom*; but it was his prejudice which compelled him to say that the Islamic *Ummah* as a whole is *Ma'soom*.

Also, he did not pause to see that the verse contains the word "*Minkum*" (from among you) which shows that the said *Ulul Amr* shall be part of the Muslim *Ummah*, not the whole Muslim nation, and if the whole Muslim nation is to be obeyed, then who is there left to obey?

Real Meaning of Ulul Amr

Now we return to the correct interpretation of the above verse.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq(a.s.) said that this verse was revealed about Ali ibn Abi Talib, Hasan and Hussein(a.s.).

Upon hearing this, someone asked the Imam: "People say, 'Why did Allah not mention the names of Ali and his family in His Book?'".

Imam answered: "Tell them that there came the command of *Salat*(prayer), but Allah did not mention whether three or four *Rak'at*(units) (to be performed); it was the Apostle of Allah who

explained all the details, and (the command of) Zakat was revealed, but Allah did not say that it is one in every forty dirham; it was the Apostle of Allah who explained it; and hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) was ordered but Allah did not say to perform Tawaf (circumabulation of the Ka'ba) seven times - the Apostle of Allah explained it. Likewise, the verse was revealed: 'Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority from among you', and it was revealed about Ali and Hasan and Hussein' (a.s.).

In Kifayetul Aathar, there is a tradition from Jabir ibn Abdillah Al-Ansari, in explanation of this verse.

When it was revealed, Jabir said to the Holy Prophet (s.a.): "We know Allah and the Prophet, but who are those vested with authority whose obedience has been conjoined to that of Allah and the Prophet?". The Holy Prophet (s.a.) said: "They

are my caliphs and the Imams of the Muslims after me. The first of them is Ali, then Hasan, then Hussein, then Ali, son of Hussein, then Muhammad son of Ali, who has been mentioned as Al-Baqir in the Torah (Old Testament). O Jabir! You will meet him. When you see him, convey my greetings to him. He will be succeeded by his son Ja'far Al-Sadiq (the Truthful), then Moosa son of Ja'far, then Ali son of Moosa, then Muhammad son of Ali, then Ali son of Muhammad, then Hasan son of Ali. He will be followed by his son whose name and patronym will be the same as mine. He will be Hujjat (Proof) of Allah on the earth, and Baqiyyatullah (the one spared by Allah to maintain the cause of faith) among mankind. He will conquer the whole world from east to west. So long will he remain hidden from the eyes of his followers that the belief in his Imamate will remain only in those hearts which have been tested by Allah for faith".

Jabir said: "O Messenger of Allah! Will his followers benefit from his seclusion?".

The Holy Prophet(s.a.) said: "*Yes. By Him Who sent me with prophethood, they will be guided by his light, and benefit from his Wilayah during his seclusion, just as people benefit from the sun even when it is hidden behind the clouds. O Jabir! This is from the hidden secrets of Allah and the treasured knowledge of Him.*

So guard it except from the people who deserve to know".⁽¹⁾

This *Hadith* has been quoted from Shi'a sources. Sunni traditions do not provide as much details; still there are many Sunni traditions which refer to the Twelve Imams, as explained in the next chapter.

Now that we know who "*those vested with authority*" are, it is evident that the question of obeying tyrant and unjust rulers does not arise at all. Muslims are not required by this verse to obey rulers who may be unjust, tyrannical, ignorant, selfish and sunk in debauchery. They are in fact ordered to obey the specified Twelve Imams, all of whom were sinless and free from evil thoughts and deeds.

Obeying them has no risks whatsoever. Nay, it protects from all risks; because they will never give an order against the Will of Allah and will treat human beings with love, justice and equity.

¹ *Al-Khazzaz: Kifayatul Aathar*, p.53.

Twelve Caliphs or Imams

Now, it is advisable to refer to several parts of the 77th chapter of *Yenabee'ul Mawaddeh* of Al-Hafidh Solaiman ibn Ibraheem Al-Qundoozi Al-Hanafi.

A well-known *Hadith* has been quoted that: "*There will be twelve caliphs, all from Quraish*", in many books including those of Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood and Al-Termithi.

The author quotes many traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) said: "*I, Ali, Hasan, Hussein and nine of the descendants of Hussein are pure and sinless*".

He also quotes that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) told Imam Hussein: "*You are a chief, brother of a chief. You are an Imam, son of an Imam, brother of an Imam. You are Proof(of Allah) son of a Proof, brother of a Proof, and father of nine Proofs. The ninth of whom will be Al-Mahdi*".

After quoting many such traditions, he writes: "*Some scholars have said that the traditions (which show that the caliphs after the Holy Prophet would be twelve) are well-known, from many Asnad. Now, with the passage of time and through historical events, we know that in this Hadith the Holy Prophet has referred to the Twelve Imams from his Ahlul Bait and descendants, because:*

- *This Hadith cannot apply to the four caliphs from among his Companions, as they were less than twelve.*

- *It cannot apply to the caliphs from the tribe of Umayyad, because (a) they were more than twelve; (b) all of them were tyrants and unjust (except 'Umar ibn Abdil Aziz); and (c) they were not from*

Bani Hashim and the Holy Prophet(s.a.) had said in a Hadith that: 'all of them will be from Bani Hashim...'

- It cannot apply to the caliphs from the Abbasid dynasty, because: (a) they were more than twelve; and (b) they did not comply with (the demands of) the verse: 'Say: I do not ask of you any recompense for it except the love for (my) near relatives'⁽¹⁾, nor with the tradition of the Mantle (Hadithul Kisaa); i.e they persecuted the descendants of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

Therefore, the only way to interpret this Hadith is to accept that it refers to the Twelve Imams from the Holy Prophet(s.a.)'s Family and descendants, because they were, in their times, the most knowledgeable, the most illustrious, the most godfearing, the most pious, the highest in their family lineage, the best in personal virtues, and the most honoured before Allah; and their knowledge was derived from their ancestor (the Holy Prophet(s.a.) through their fathers, and by inheritance and by direct teachings from Allah".⁽²⁾

1 42/23.

2 Al-Qundoozi: Yenabee'ul Mawaddeh, pp.444-7.

New Facts About The Twelve Imams(a.s.)

First Imam

Amirul Momeneen Abul Hasan Ali Al-Murtadha, son of Abu Talib.

Born on 13th Rajab, 10 years before Prophethood(600 A.D.), inside the Ka'ba. He became Imam, on the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) on 28th Safar⁽¹⁾, 11A.H./632A.D.

Imam Ali(a.s.) was fatally wounded by the poisoned sword of Abdul Rahman Ibn Muljim while engaged in prayers at the Mosque of Kufa(Iraq), and expired two days later on 21st Ramadhan, 40A.H./661A.D. and was buried at Al-Najaf Al-Ashraf(Iraq).

Second Imam

Abu Muhammad Al-Hasan Al-Mujtabaa, son of Ali(a.s.).

Born on 15th Ramadhan, 3A.H./625A.D. at Medina, and died of poison on 7th or 28th Safar, 50A.H./670A.D. at Medina.

Third Imam

Sayyidush Shuhadaa(The Master of Martyrs), Abu Abdillah Al-Hussein, son of Ali(a.s.).

Born on 3rd Sha'ban⁽²⁾, 4A.H./626A.D. at Medina.

1 The second lunar month.

2 The eighth lunar month.

He was martyred with his sons, relatives and companions, on 10th Muharram, 61A.H./680A.D. at Kerbelaa(Iraq).

He and his elder brother, Al-Hasan, were sons of Fatimah Zahraa(a.s.) daughter of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

Fourth Imam

Abu Muhammad Ali Zaynul 'Abedeem, son of Al-Hussein(a.s.).

Born on 5th Sha'ban, 38A.H./659A.D., and died of poison on 25th Muharram, 94A.H./712A.D., or 95A.H./713A.D. at Medina.

Fifth Imam

Abu Ja'far Muhammad Al-Baqir, son of Ali Zaynul 'Abedeem(a.s.).

Born on 1st Rajab, 57A.H./677A.D. at Medina and died of poison on 7th Thul Hijjah⁽¹⁾, 114A.H./733A.D. at Medina.

Sixth Imam

Abu Abdillah Ja'far Al-Sadiq, son of Muhammad Al-Baqir(a.s.).

Born on 17th Rabi'ul Awwal⁽²⁾, 83A.H./702A.D. at Medina, and died there of poison on 25th Shawwal⁽³⁾, 148A.H./765A.D.

Seventh Imam

Abul Hasan Al-Awwal, Moosa Al-Kadhim, son of Ja'far

1 The twelfth lunar month.

2 The third lunar month.

3 The tenth lunar month.

Al-Sadiq(*a.s.*).

Born at Al-Abwaa⁽¹⁾ on 7th Safar, 129A.H./746A.D., and died of poison on 25th Rajab, 183A.H./799A.D. in the prison of Haroon Al-Rasheed⁽²⁾ at Baghdad and was buried at Al-Kadhimiyeh⁽³⁾ (about 10 kilometers north of Baghdad).

Eighth Imam

Abul Hasan Al-Thani, Ali Al-Redha, son of Moosa Al-Kadhim(*a.s.*).

Born at Medina on 11th Thil Qi'deh⁽⁴⁾, 148A.H./765A.D., and died of poison on 17th Safar, 203A.H./818A.D. at Mashhad(Khurasan, Iran).

Ninth Imam

Abu Ja'far Al-Thani, Muhammad Al-Taqi Al-Jawad, son of Ali Al-Redha(*a.s.*).

Born on 10th Rajab, 195A.H./811A.D. at Medina, and died of poison at Baghdad on 30th Thil Qi'deh, 220A.H./835A.D., and was buried near his grandfather at Al-Kadhimiyeh.

Tenth Imam

Abul Hasan Al-Thalith, Ali Al-Naqi Al-Hadi, son of Muhammad Al-Taqi(*a.s.*).

Born on 5th Rajab, 212A.H./827A.D. at Medina, and died of

1 A place seven miles from Medina.

2 The fifth Abbasid caliph.

3 Formerly "Meqabir Quraish"(The cemetery of Quraish).

4 The eleventh lunar month.

poison at Samarrah(Iraq) on 3rd Rajab, 254A.H./868A.D.

Eleventh Imam

Abu Muhammad, Al-Hasan Al-'Askeri, son of Ali Al-Naqi(a.s.).

Born on 8th Rabi'ul Thani⁽¹⁾, 232A.H./846A.D. at Medina, and died of poison at Samarrah on 8th Rabi'ul Awwal, 260A.H./874A.D.

Twelfth Imam

Abul Qasim Muhammad Al-Hadi, son of Al-Hasan Al-Askari(a.s.).

Born on 15th Sha'ban, 255A.H./869A.D. at Samarrah.

He is our present Imam; he went into Lesser Occultation in 260A.H./874A.D. which continued until 329A.H./844A.D., then the Greater Occultation began, which still continues.

He will reappear when Allah allows him, to establish the Kingdom of Allah on earth, to fill the world with justice and equity, as it would be full of injustice and tyranny.

The twelfth Imam is Al-Qa-im(The Riser); Al-Hujjah(The Proof); Sahibbiz Zaman(The Master of our time); and Sahibil Amr(The Owner of Divine Authority).

* * * * *

¹ The fourth lunar month.

Part Three

**The Sunni Point of
View**

Sunni Views on The Caliphate

The majority of Sunnis today are the Ash'arites. They, as well as the Mu'tazilites, believe that the institution of Imamate/Caliphate is necessary, and it is incumbent (Wajib) on men to appoint a caliph.

The Mu'tazilites hold that it is incumbent according to reason; the Ash'arites believe it is incumbent according to tradition.

Al-Nasafi writes in his Al-'Aqa-id:

"The Muslims cannot do without an Imam who shall occupy himself with the enforcing of their decisions, and in implementing their Hodood (penal code) and guarding their frontiers, and equipping their armies, and receiving their alms, and putting down robberies and thieving and highwayman, and maintaining the Friday and Eed (Feast) Prayers, and removing quarrels that fall between people, and receiving evidence bearing on legal claims, and marrying minors who have no guardians and dividing booty".⁽¹⁾

The Sunnites want an earthy ruler..., while the Shi'ites look for one can establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and bring an end to all the evils of the world.⁽²⁾

Accordingly, the Sunnis recognize four principles for appointing a caliph:

a) Ijma': that is 'consensus' of men of power and position on a certain point.

The agreement of all the followers of the Holy Prophet (s.a.) is not necessary, nor is it essential to secure the consent of all the persons of power and position in the Ummah.

b) Nomination by the previous caliph.

c) Shoora: that is selection by a committee.

d) Military Power: that is if anyone acquires power by military

1 Al-Taftezani: Sharhul 'Aqa-idil Nefeeseh, p.185.

2 Miller, W.M.: translation of Al-Babul Itadi 'Ashar, notes, p.98.

force he will become a caliph.

The author of *Sharhul Maqasid* has explained that when an Imam dies and a person possessing the requisite qualifications claims that office (without the oath of allegiance - *Bay'ah* - having been taken for him and without his caliphate will be recognized provided his power subdues the people; and apparently the same will be the case when the new caliph happens to be ignorant or immoral.

Similarly, when a caliph has thus established himself by superior force but is afterwards subdued by another person, he will be deposed and the conqueror will be recognized as Imam or caliph.⁽¹⁾

The Qualifications of A Caliph

The Sunnis consider ten conditions necessary for a caliph:-

- 1\ that he be a Muslim;
- 2\ that he be of age, (i.e of puberty);
- 3\ that he be male;
- 4\ that he be of sound mind;
- 5\ that he be courageous;
- 6\ that he be free, not a slave;
- 7\ that he be accessible and not be concealed or hidden;
- 8\ that he be able to conduct battles and beware of warlike tactics;
- 9\ that he be 'Adil (Just);
- 10\ that he be able to judge and pass verdicts on points of laws and religion, that is, he be a Mujtahid (Religious Jurist).⁽²⁾

But the last two conditions are in theory only.

As quoted in the previous chapter, even an ignorant and immoral person can become a caliph. Therefore, the conditions for 'Justice' and 'Religious Knowledge' are without base.

They hold that 'Ismeh' (Infallibility) is not necessary for caliphate. The words of Abu Bakr which he spoke from the pulpit

1 *Al-Teftezani: Sharhul Maqasidul Talebeen*, vol.II, p.272. See also *Al-Hafidh Ali Muhammad and Amiruddin: Fulkam Nejat fil Imamah wal Salat*, vol.I, p.203.

2 *Al-Teftezani, op. cit.*

before the Companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), are cited in support of that view: "O people!", he said, "I have been made ruler over you although I am no better than you; so, if I perform my duties well, help me; and if I go wrong, you should set me right. You should know that Satan comes to me now and then. So if I am angry, keep aloof from me".⁽¹⁾

Al-Teftezani says in Sharhul 'Aqa-idin Nefeeseh, "An Imam is not to be deposed from Imamate on account of immorality or tyranny".⁽²⁾

Abu Bakr's Rise to Power

All the above mentioned principles are derived, not from a verse or *Hadith*, but from the events and happenings after the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

According to the Sunnis, the first four Caliphs are called "*Al-Khulefaa Al-Rashedeen*" (The rightly-guided Caliphs).

Now let us examine how *Al-Khulefaa Al-Rashedeen* came into being.

Immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), the Muslims of Medina known as Ansar (Helpers), gathered in the Saeefeh (covered porch) of Bani Sa'idh.

According to the author of *Ghiyathullughat*, it was a secret location where the Arabs used to gather for their evil activities⁽³⁾. Here Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah, who was then ailing, was led to a stately chair and made to sit upon it, wrapped in a blanket, so that he might be elected as the Caliph. Sa'd then delivered a speech in which he recounted the virtues of the Ansar and told them to take over the caliphate before anyone else could do so. The Ansar agreed and said that they wanted him to be the Caliph. But then among themselves, they began to ask: "What reply should we give to the *Muhajereen* (Emigrants from Mecca) of the *Quraish* if they oppose this move and put forth their own claim?".

A group said: "We shall tell them, let us have one leader from

1 *Al-Soyooti: Tareekhul Khulefaa*, p.71.

2 *op. cit.*

3 *Ghiyathul Din: Ghiyathullughat*, p.228.

among you and one from us".

Sa'd said: *"This is the first weakness you have shown".*

Someone informed 'Umar ibn al-Khattab of this gathering saying: *"If at all you desire to acquire the dignity of rulership you should reach the Saqeefeh before it is too late and difficult for you to change what is being decided there".*

On receiving this news, 'Umar, along with Abu Bakr, rushed to the Saqeefeh. Abu 'Ubaydeh ibn al-Jerrah also accompanied them.

Al-Teberi, Ibn al-Atheer, Ibn Qutaybeh⁽¹⁾ and others proceed with their narrations stating that having reached the Saqeefeh, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydeh had hardly taken their seats when Thabit ibn Qays stood up and began enumerating the virtues of the Ansar and suggested that the office of the caliphate should be offered to someone from the Ansar. 'Umar is reported to have said later on: *"When the speaker of Ansar finished his speech, I made an attempt to speak as already I had thought over some important points, but Abu Bakr beckoned me to keep quiet. Therefore, I remained silent. Abu Bakr had more competence and knowledge than myself. He then said the same things I had thought of and expressed them even better".*

According to Rawdhetul Sefa, Abu Bakr addressed the assembly at the Saqeefeh thus:

"Assembly of the Ansar! We acknowledge your good qualities and virtues. We have also not forgotten your struggles and endeavours for promoting the cause of Islam. But the honour and respect Quraish have among the Arabs is not enjoyed by any other tribe, and the Arabs will not submit to anyone other than the Quraish".⁽²⁾

In Al-Sireh Al-Halebiyyeh, it is added:

"However, it is a fact that we the Muhajereen were the first to accept the Islamic creed. The Prophet of Islam was from our tribe. We are the relatives of the Apostle...and therefore, we are the people who are entitled to the caliphate...It will be advisable to have the leadership among us and for you to take the ministry. We will not act unless we

1 Al-Teberi: *Al-Tareekh*, vol.IV, p.1820, Ibn al-Atheer: *Al-Kamil*, ed. C.J. Tornberg, Leiden, 1897, vol.II, pp.325ff; Ibn Qutaybeh: *Al-Imaneh wal Siyaseh*, Cairo, 1387A.H./1967A.D., vol.I, pp.18ff.

2 Mir Khwand: *Rawdhetul Safaa*, vol.II, p.221.

consult with you".⁽¹⁾

Heated arguments started, during which 'Umar cried: "*By Allah, I will kill him who opposes us now*".

Al-Hubab ibn al-Munthir ibn Zayd, an Ansari from the Khazraj tribe, challenged 'Umar saying: "*By Allah, we will not allow anyone to rule over us as a caliph. One leader must come from you and one from us*". Abu Bakr said: "*No, this cannot be; it is our right to be the rulers and yours to be our ministers*".

Al-Hubab said: "*O Ansar! Do not submit yourselves to what these people say. Be firm...By Allah, if anyone dares to oppose me now, I will cut his nose with my sword*".

'Umar remarked: "*By Allah, duality is not advisable in caliphate. There cannot be two kings in one regime, and the Arabs will not agree to your leadership, because the Apostle was not from your tribe*".

Al-Teberi and ibn al-Atheer both state that there was fairly prolonged exchange of words between Al-Hubab and 'Umar on this matter. 'Umar cursed Al-Hubab: "*May Allah kill you*". Al-Hubab retorted: "*May Allah kill you*". 'Umar then crossed over and stood the head of Sa'd ibn 'Ubadeh and said to him: "*We want to break every limb of yours*". Infuriated by this threat, Sa'd got up and caught 'Umar beard. 'Umar said: "*If you pull out even one hair, you will see that all will not be well with you*". Then Abu Bakr pleaded with 'Umar to be calm and civil. 'Umar turned his face from Sa'd who was saying: "*By Allah, had I strength enough just to stand, you would have heard the lion's roar in every corner of Medina and hidden yourselves in holes. By Allah, we would have made you join again with those people among whom you were only a follower and not a leader*".

Ibn Qutaybeh says that when Besheer ibn Sa'd the chief of the tribe of Aos, saw that the Ansar were uniting behind Sa'd ibn 'Ubadeh the chief of the Khazraj, he was overcome with envy and stood up supporting the claim of the Quraishite Muhajereen.

In the midst of this mêlée, 'Umar said to Abu Bakr: "*Hold out your hand so that I may give my Bay'ah (allegiance)*". Abu Bakr said: "*No, you give me your hand so that I may give my Bay'ah, because you are stronger than me and more suitable to the caliphate*".

'Umar took the hand of Abu Bakr and pledged allegiance to him, saying: "*My strength is not of any value when compared to your merits and seniority, and if it is of any value then my strength added to*

1 Al-Halebi: Al-Seereh, vol.III, p.357.

yours will successfully manage the caliphate".

Besheer ibn Sa'd followed suit. Khazrajites cried to him that he was doing it out of envy for Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah. Then the tribe of Aos talked amongst themselves that if Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah was made caliph that day, the tribe of Khazraj would always feel themselves superior to the Aos, and no one from the Aos would ever achieve that dignity. Therefore, they all pledged their allegiance to Abu Bakr.

Someone from the Khazraj tribe took out his sword but was overcome by the others.

Amidst all this unseemly wrangling, Ali and his friends attended to the washing of the sacred body of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) and the proper observances regarding burial. By the time these were over, Abu Bakr had achieved a fait accompli.

Ibn Qutaybeh writes: "*When Abu Bakr had taken the caliphate, Ali was dragged to Abu Bakr as he repeatedly declared, 'I am the slave of Allah and the brother of the Messenger of Allah'.*"

Then Ali was commanded to take the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr. Ali said: *'I have more rights to the caliphate than anyone of you. I will not pledge obedience to you. As a matter of fact, you should give the pledge of obedience to me. You called the Ansar to give their Bay'ah on the ground that you had blood relations with the Messenger of Allah. You are uprising the caliphate from us, the members of his house. Did you not reason with the Ansar that you have better rights to the caliphate than they because the Apostle was of your kinship, and they handed over the government to you and accepted your leadership? Therefore, the very reason put forth by you before the Ansar is now forwarded by me. Our relations with the Apostle in life as well as in death are much closer than those of anyone of you. If you are faithful to your argument, you have justice; otherwise you know that you have knowingly moved towards tyranny'.*

'Umar said: "*Unless you give Bay'ah, you will not be released'.* Ali cried, *'Milk out as much as you can for the udders are in your hand. Make it as strong as possible today, for he is going to hand it over to you tomorrow. 'Umar! I will not yield to your commands, I shall not pledge loyalty to him'.* Ultimately Abu Bakr said, *'O Ali! If you do not desire to give your Bay'ah, I am not going to force you for the same'.*"

Short Review

Several aspects of the above mentioned events deserve more attention:

1: It was the tradition of the Arabs that once a person was declared, even by a small group, to be the chief of the tribe, others did not like to oppose him, and willy-nilly followed suit. This tradition was in the mind of Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, when he told Ali: "*Give me your hand so that I may pledge allegiance to you...because once this thing is taken over no one will ask him to relinquish it*". This very tradition was the one which prompted Sa'd to exhort the Ansar 'to take over the caliphate before anyone else could do so', and it was because of this tradition that 'Umar was told to reach Sequefeh 'before it was too late and difficult for him to change what was being decided there'. It was because of this custom that once some people accepted Abu Bakr as caliph, the majority of the Muslims in Medina followed suit.

2: Ali was well-aware of this custom. Then why did he refuse to extend his hand to accept the *Bay'ah* of his uncle Al-Abbas, telling him, "*Who else, other than I, can call for such pledge of allegiance?*"⁽¹⁾

It was because Ali knew that the caliphate of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was not the chieftainship of the tribe. It was not based on the declaration of allegiance by the public. It was a responsibility given by Allah, not by the people, and as he had already been publicly appointed by Allah through the Holy Prophet(s.a.) to the Imamate, there was no need for him to rush to the public to seek their allegiance. He did not want the people to think that his Imamate was based on the *Bay'ah* of men; if the people came to him on the basis of the declaration of Ghadeer Khumm, well and good; if they did not, it was their loss, not his.

3: Now we turn to the events of Sequefeh:

During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), the Mosque of the Prophet was the center of all Islamic activities.

It was here that decisions of war and peace were made, deputations were received, sermons were delivered and cases were

¹ Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Imaneh wal Siyaseh*, vol.I, p.4; Al-Mawardi: *Al-Ahkamal Sultaniyah*, p.7.

decided, and when the news spread of the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), the Muslims assembled in that very mosque.

Then why did the partisans of Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah decide to go three miles outside Medina to meet in Sequeefeh which was not a place of good repute? Was it not because they wanted to usurp the Caliphate without the knowledge of other people and then present Sa'd as the accepted Caliph?

Keeping in view the declaration of Ghadeer Khumm and the tribal custom of Arabia there can be no other explanation.

4: When 'Umar and Abu Bakr came to know of that gathering, they were in the mosque. A majority of the Muslims were at the mosque.

Why did they not inform any other person about that gathering?

Why did they, together with Abu 'Ubaydeh, slip out secretly?

Was it because Ali and Bani Hashim were present in the mosque and in the house of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), and 'Umar and Abu Bakr did not want them to know of the plot?

Was it because they were afraid that if Ali came to know of that meeting of Sequeefeh, and if by a remote chance he decided to go there himself, no one else would have had a chance to succeed?

5: When Abu Bakr was extolling the virtues of Muhajereen as being from the tribe of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), did he not know that there were other people with much more stronger right to that claim because they were members and his own flesh and blood?

It was this aspect of the pretence that prompted Ali ibn Abi Talib(a.s.) to comment:

اِخْتَبَأُوا بِالسَّجَرَةِ وَأَضَاعُوا الثَّمَرَةَ.

"They argued by the strength of the tree (tribe) and then they destroyed the fruit (i.e. the family of the Holy Prophet(s.a.))."⁽¹⁾

Looking dispassionately at this event, we are unable to call it an 'Election', because the voters (all the Muslims scattered throughout Arabia, or, at least, all the Muslims of Medina) did not even know that there was to be an election, let alone when or where

1 Al-Redhi (ed.): *Nahjul Belagheh*, (Subhi Al-Salih's edition), Beirut, p.98.

it was to be held.

Aside from the voters, even prospective candidates were unaware of what was happening at Sequefeh. Again we are reminded of the words of Imam Ali in connection with the two points mentioned above:

فَإِنْ كُنْتَ بِالشُّرَى مَلَكَتْ أُمُورَهُمْ
وَإِنْ كُنْتَ بِالنَّزْبِ حَاجَجْتَ خَصِيصَهُمْ
فَكَيْفَ بِهَذَا وَالْمُشِيرُونَ غَائِبٌ
فَقِيرُكَ أَوْلَى بِالنَّزْبِ وَأَقْرَبُ

"If you claim to have secured authority over the Muslims' affairs by consultation, How did it happen when those to be consulted were absent?!"

And if you have scored over your opponents by (the Prophet's) kinship, Then someone else has greater right on the Prophet and is nearer to him"⁽¹⁾

Also, we cannot call it 'selection' because a majority of the prominent Companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) had no knowledge of these events.

Ali, Abbas, Othman, Talheh, Al-Zubair, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Salman Farsi, Abu Tharr Al-Ghefari, Ammar ibn Yasir, Miqdad, 'Abul Rahman ibn Aof - none of them were consulted or even informed. The only argument which can be offered for this caliphate is this: "Whatever the legal position of the events of Sequefeh, as Abu Bakr succeeded (because of tribal custom) in taking the reins of power in his hands, he was a 'constitutional' Caliph".

¹ Ibid., Saying no.190, [pp.502-3].

The words of Ali(a.s.) have been quoted by Al-Sherif Al-Redhi under Saying no.190 which runs as follows: "How strange? Could the caliphate be through the (Prophet's) companionship but not through (his) companionship plus (his) kinship?". It is surprising to note that Subhi Al-Salih's edition and Muhammad 'Abdeh's edition (Beirut, 1973) have omitted the wordings 'but not through (his) companionship!'. For a complete version of this saying, see Ibn Abil Hadeed's Sharh (Cairo, 1959), vol.XVIII, p.416.

In simple language, Abu Bakr became a constitutional Caliph because he succeeded in his bid for power. Thus, the Muslims who have been taught to glorify this event, are inadvertently taught that the only thing which counts is 'Power'. Once you are secure in the seat of power, everything is well. You will become the 'constitutional' head of a state.

In the end, I should quote a comment of 'Umar himself, who was the author of this caliphate.

He said in a lecture during his caliphate:

"I have been informed that someone said: 'When 'Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to so-and-so'. Well, no one should be misled like this, thinking that although the allegiance of Abu Bakr was by surprise, it became all right. Of course, it was by surprise, but Allah saved us from its evils.

Now, if anyone wishes to copy it, I will cut his throat".⁽¹⁾

Nomination of 'Umar

The majority of Sunnis believe that what happened at Sequefeh was a manifestation of the 'Democratic' spirit of Islam..!

In view of that belief it was reasonable to expect the 'Democratic election' (whatever its meaning in the context of Sequefeh) to continue as the basis of Islamic caliphate. But this was not to be.

Abu Bakr was indebted to 'Umar for establishing his caliphate and he knew that if the masses were given freedom of choice, 'Umar had no choice. (He was known as *فَطَّ غَلِيظُ الْقَلْبِ* = rude and of harsh nature).

Therefore, he decided to nominate his own successor - 'Umar.

Al-Teberi writes:

"Abu Bakr called Othman - when the former was dying - and told him to write an appointment order, and dictated to him: 'By the Name of Allah, the Compassionful, the Compassionate: This is the order of Abdillah ibn Abi Quhafah (i.e. Abu Bakr's full name) to the Muslims.

¹ Al-Bukhari: Al-Saheeh, (Kitabul Muharibeen), Cairo, (n.d.), vol.VIII, p.210;

Al-Teberi: Al-Tareekh, vol.IV, p.1821.

Whereas... then he fell unconscious. Othman added the words: 'I appoint 'Umar ibn al-Khattab as my successor among you'.

Then Abu Bakr regained his consciousness and told Othman to read the order to him. Othman read it; Abu Bakr said, 'Allah Akbar' (Allah is Greater) and was pleased and commented, 'I think you were afraid that people would disagree amongst themselves if I died in that state'. Othman replied, 'Yes'. Abu Bakr said: 'May Allah reward you on behalf of Islam and the Muslims'.⁽¹⁾

Thus, the appointment later was completed and Abu Bakr ordered it to be read before the Muslims.

Ibn Abil Hadeed Al-Mu'tezili writes that when Abu Bakr regained his consciousness and the scribe read what he had written and Abu Bakr heard the name of 'Umar, he asked him, "How did you write this?". The scribe said, "You could not pass him over". Abu Bakr replied, "You are right".⁽²⁾

Shortly afterwards Abu Bakr died.

'Umar gained the caliphate by this appointment. Here one is reminded of a tragedy which occurred three or five days before the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

In the Saheeh of Muslim there is a tradition by Ibn Abbas, that: "Three days before the Holy Prophet(s.a.)'s death 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and other companions were present at his side. The Apostle(s.a.) said, 'Now let me write something for you by way of a will so that you are not mislead after me'. 'Umar said, 'The Apostle is talking in delirium!!! The Book of Allah is sufficient for us...!'. 'Umar's statement caused a furor among those present there.

Some were saying that the Apostle's command should be obeyed so that he might write whatever he desired for their betterment. Others sided with 'Umar. When the tension and uproar increased, the Apostle(s.a.) said: 'Go away from me'.⁽³⁾

1 Al-Teheri: *Al-Tareekh*, pp.2138-9.

2 Ibn Abil Hadeed: *Sharh*, vol.I, pp.163-5.

3 Muslim: *Al-Saheeh*, (Kitabul Wasiyyeh), Babu Tarkil Wasiyyeh, vol.V, pp.75-6; *Al-Bukhari: Al-Saheeh*, (Cairo, 1958), vol.I, (Kitabul 'Ibm), pp.38-9; vol.IV, p.85; vol.VI, pp.11-12; vol.VII, (Kitabul Tibb), pp.155-6; vol.IX, (Kitabul I'tisam bil Kitab wal Sunnah), p.137.

It is interesting to note that where Bukhari gives remark of the Prophet

A few Qur'anic injunctions should be mentioned here:

<Muslims should not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet...lest your deeds become null while you perceive not>⁽¹⁾

The Holy Prophet(s.a.)'s words were "revelation" from Allah: *<Nor does he speak out of (his) desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed>⁽²⁾*

And Muslims were expected to follow his command without any 'ifs' and 'but': *<Whatever the Apostle gives you, take it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back>⁽³⁾*

And when such an Apostle, five days before his death wished to write a directive to save Muslims from going astray, he was accused of "talking in delirium"...

When Abu Bakr who had no such Divine protection from error, began dictation of the appointment letter in such critical condition that he fell unconscious before naming his successor, 'Umar did not say that he was (*talking in delirium*)!

No one can be sure of what was the Holy Prophet(s.a.) wanted to write. But the phrase he used gives us an idea:

«O People! Verily, I am leaving behind among you Two Precious Things, the Book of Allah and My Descendants who are my family members. So long as you keep hold of them sincerely, you will never go astray after me».

When he used the same phrase five days before his death("...let me write something for you by way of a will so that you are not misled after me"), it was easy enough to understand that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was going to write what he had been

telling them all along about the Qur'an and his Ahlul Bait(a.s.).

speaking in delirium, he omits the name of the speaker; and where he paraphrases that remark in more polite language, he mentions the name of the speaker - 'Umar - clearly.

Ibn Sa'd: Al-Tabaqat, vol.II, pp.242, 324f, 336, 368; Ahmad: Al-Musnad, vol.I, pp.232, 239, 324f, 336, 355.

1 49/2.

2 53/3.

3 59/7.

Perhaps 'Umar guessed as much as is apparent from his claim: "*The Book of Allah is sufficient for us!!!*". He wanted to make it known to the Prophet that he would not follow 'The Two Precious Things'. One was enough for him...!

'Umar himself admitted it in a talk with 'Abdillah ibn Abbas, in which he, inter alia, said: "...and surely he (*The Holy Prophet(s.a.)*) intended during his illness to declare his (*Ali's*) name; so I prevented it".⁽¹⁾

Perhaps, the word 'delirium' would have served his purpose even if the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) had written the directive. 'Umar and his partisans would have claimed that as it was written 'in delirium' it had no validity.

Al-Shooraa: The Counsel

After ruling for about ten years, 'Umar was fatally wounded by Zoroastrian slave, Feerooz.

'Umar was very much indebted to Othman (because of the appointment letter) but did not wish to openly nominate him as his successor; nor did he allow the Muslims to exercise their free will after him. He ingeniously invented a third system.

He said, "*Verily the Apostle of Allah died and he was pleased with these six people from the Quraish: Ali, Othman, Talheh, Al-Zubair, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Abdul Rahman ibn Aof, and I have decided to make it (the selection of caliph) a matter of consultation among them, so that they may select one from among themselves*".

They were called when he was nearing death.

When he looked at them, he asked, "*So, every one of you wants to become caliph after me?*". No one answered. He repeated the question..!

Then Al-Zubair said, "*And what is there to disqualify us? You got it (the caliphate) and managed it; and we are not inferior to you in the Quraish either in precedence or in relation (to the Holy Prophet)*".

'Umar asked, "*Should not I tell you about yourselves?*".

Al-Zubair said, "*Tell us, because even if we ask you not to tell, you will not listen*".

Then 'Umar began enumerating the bad character points of

I Ibn Abil Hadeed: Sharh, vol.XII, p.21, (quoting from Tareekh Baghdad of Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi).

Al-Zubair, Talheh, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Abdul Rahman ibn Aof.

Then he faced Ali (a.s.) and said, "*By Allah you deserve it had it not been that you are of humorous nature. However, by Allah, if you people, made him your ruler, he would surely lead you towards clear truth and on the enlightened path*".

Then he looked towards Othman and said: "*Take it from me. It is as though I am seeing that the Quraish have put this necklace (caliphate) around your neck because of your love; then you have put the Bani Umayyeh and Bani Abi Mu'ayt (Othman's tribe) on the shoulders of the people (as rulers) and have given them exclusively the booty (of the Muslims); thereupon a group from the wolves of Arab have come to you and have slaughtered you in your bed. By Allah if the Quarish give the caliphate to you, you will surely give exclusive rights to the Bani Umayyeh; and if you do so, the Muslims will surely kill you*".

Then he caught the forehead of Othman and said: "*So if it happens, remember my words; because it is bound to happen*".

Then 'Umar called Abu Talheh Al-Ansari and told him that after his ('Umar's) burial, he was to collect fifty people from the Ansar, armed with swords, and gather the six above mentioned candidate voters in a house to select one from among themselves as the caliph. If five agree and one disagrees, he should be beheaded; if four agree and two disagree, those two should be beheaded; if there is a division of three and three, the choice of the group of Abdul Rahman ibn Aof should prevail and if the other three do not agree to it they should be beheaded...! If three days pass ('Umar added) and they are unable to reach a decision, all of them should be beheaded and the Muslims should be left free to select their own caliph.⁽¹⁾

The Shi'ite author Qutbuddin Al-Rawendi narrates that when 'Umar decreed that the group of Abdul Rahman ibn Aof would prevail, Abdullah ibn Abbas told Ali, "*Again this is lost to us. This man wants Othman to be the caliph*". Ali replied: "*I also know this; still I will sit with them in the Shoora, because 'Umar, by this agreement, has at least publicly, accepted that I deserve the caliphate, while before he was asserting that Prophethood and Imamate could*

I Ibid., vol.I, pp.185-8; see also Ibn Qutaybeh: Al-Imameh wal Siyaseh, vol.I, pp.23-7; and Al-Teber: Al-Tareekh, (Egypt, n.d.), vol.V, pp.33-41.

not be joined in one family.

Therefore, I will participate in the Shooraa to show the people the contradiction of his actions and his words".⁽¹⁾

Why were Ibn Abbas and Ali sure that 'Umar wanted Othman to be the caliph?

It was because of the constitution of the Shooraa and its terms of reference.

Abdul Rahman was married to Othman's sister; and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Abdul Rahman were cousins.

Seeing the hold which family ties had in Arabia, it was unthinkable that Sa'd would oppose Abdul Rahman or that Abdul Rahman would ignore Othman. So three votes were safely in the custody of Othman, including the deciding vote of Abdul Rahman.

Talheh (ibn 'Ubaydillah) was from the clan of Abu Bakr, and since the day of Sequefeh, the Bani Hashim and Bani Taym felt nothing but enmity towards each other.

On a personal level, Ali had killed his uncle; 'Umayr ibn Othman, his brother Malik ibn 'Ubaydillah and his nephew Othman ibn Malik in the battle of Badr⁽²⁾. Thus, it was impossible for him to support Ali(a.s.).

Al-Zubair was the son of Sefiyyeh, Ali's aunt, and after Sequefeh, he had taken out his sword to fight those who had entered the house of Ali to take him to Abu Bakr, and it was reasonable to expect him to favour Ali. But on the other hand, he could be tempted to stand for the caliphate himself.

Thus, the most Ali could hope for was that Al-Zubair was in his favour. Still four would have gone against him and he would have lost.

Even if Talheh had favoured Ali, he could not be caliph because in case of equal division, the opinion of Abdul Rahman would have been upheld.⁽³⁾

1 *Ibn Abil Hadeed; Sharh, p.189.*

2 *Al-Sheikh Al-Mufeed: Al-Irshad, (with Persian translation of Sheikh Muhammad Baqir Sa'eedi Khurasani), p.65.*

[See also English translation of I.K.A. Howard, p.47.

3 This analysis is attributed to Ali(a.s.) himself by Al-Teberi in *Al-Tweekh*, p.35. In that report, the dialogue is said to be between Ali(a.s.) and his uncle

After this study of the terms of reference, what happened in the Shooraa is of academic interest only.

Telheh withdrew in favour of Othman; prompting Al-Zubair to withdraw in favour of Ali(a.s.), and Sa'd in favour of Abdul Rahman ibn Aof.

On the third day, Abdul Rahman ibn Aof withdrew his name and told Ali that he would make him caliph if Ali pledged to follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) and the system of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

Abdul Rahman knew very well what his reply would be.

Ali(a.s.) said: *"I follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) and my own beliefs"*.

Then Abdul Rahman put the same conditions to Othman, who readily accepted. Thus, Abdul Rahman declared Othman to be the caliph..!

Ali(a.s.) told Abdul Rahman: *"By Allah, you didn't do it but with the same hope which he ('Umar) had from his friend"*. (He meant that Abdul Rahman had made Othman caliph hoping that Othman would nominate him as his successor).

Then Ali said: *"May Allah create enmity between you two.."*

After a few years, Abdul Rahman and Othman grew to hate each others; they did not talk to each other till Abdul Rahman died.

Military Power

Othman, the third caliph, was killed by the Muslims who were not happy with his nepotism.

The circumstances did not provide him the opportunity to choose his own successor.

Muslims were, for the first time, really free to select or elect a caliph of their choice; they flocked to the door of Ali(a.s.).

But during the twenty-five years which had passed since the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), the nature and outlook of the Muslims had changed to such an extent that many prominent people found Ali's administration (which was based on absolute justice and equality, just like the government of the Holy Prophet s.a.) unbearable; they could not think of themselves as being treated equal to non-Arab Muslims.

So, first Talheh, Al-Zubair and 'Aysheh revolted; then Mu'awiyeh stood against Ali(a.s.).

After the martyrdom of Imam Ali(a.s.), Imam Hasan(a.s.)

wanted to continue the war with Mu'awiyeh, but most of his officers were, meanwhile, bribed by Mu'awiyeh; and many were the commanders who, when sent ahead to intercept Mu'awiyeh, changed sides and went over the enemy. In this situation, Imam Hasan(a.s.) had to accept the offer of Mu'awiyeh to conclude a treaty.

After this treaty, the Sunnis claimed that military power is a valid way of acquiring constitutional caliphate.

Thus, the four "constitutional" ways of caliphate came into being.

General Review

In the realm of politics, usually the constitution of a country is prepared beforehand, and when time comes to elect a government or enact legislation, every function is carried out according to the provisions of the constitution. Whatever conforms with it, is held valid and legal; whatever is contrary to it, is rejected as invalid and illegal.

Since, according to the Sunni point of view, it was the duty of the *Ummah* to appoint a caliph, it was necessary for Allah and His Prophet(s.a.) to provide them with a constitution (with details of the procedure for election of such a caliph), and if that was not done, then the Muslims themselves should have approved the constitutional measures in advance before proceeding to elect a caliph.

But strangely enough this was not done.

Now, we find a unique "unsettled constitution" in which actions do not follow a constitution because there is none; rather the constitution follows the circumstances.

The best argument put forward by the Sunnis to support their claim is that the Muslims of the first era considered it their duty to appoint a caliph, and that they regarded it so important that they neglected to attend the funeral of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) and went to Sequefeh of Bani Sa'ideh to settle the question of the caliphate. From that event they concluded that the appointment of a caliph was the duty of the *Ummah*. But they fail to understand that it is the validity of that very so-called "election" which is challenged by the Shi'as.

The Shi'as claim that that event was illegal; the Sunnis claim that it was legal and correct.

How can the Sunnis put their claim as their argument and proof?

To put their claim as proof is like saying: "*This action of mine is legal because I have done it..!*"

Which court of justice would uphold such an argument??

The Practical Side

Leaving aside the academic issue of these methods, let us see what effects they had on the Muslims leadership and Muslim mentality?

Within thirty years after the death of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) every conceivable way of acquiring power was used and canonized: election, selection, nomination and military power.

The result is that today every Muslim ruler aspires to occupy the seat of the caliphate and "spiritual leadership" of the Muslims; and it is this basic defect of the Muslims' outlook which has always been, and is today the undelying cause of political instability in the Muslim world.

Every Muslim ruler who, as a Muslim, has been taught that "Military Supremacy" is a constitutional way to caliphate, tries to weaken other Muslim rulers so that he himself may emerge as the most supreme among the Muslim rulers.

In this way, this "constitution" has directly contributed to the weakness of the Muslims in the world.

Apart from that, let us see once again how "all-encompassing" these methods proved immediately after they were invented?

This four-sided boundary of caliphate is so unsafe that anyone may enter into it, irrespective of his knowledge or character.

The first caliph after Mu'awiyeh was his son, Yezeed, who was "nominated" by Mu'awiyeh and had undisputed "military power". Muslims had given their *Bay'ah* during the lifetime of Mu'awiyeh; thus, there was *Ijma'* also. So he was a "constitutional caliph...!!!". But, what were his beliefs and character?

Yezeed was a man who bluntly refused to believe in the Holy Prophet(s.a.). He frankly stated his beliefs in his poem quoted previously that:

"Bani Hashim had staged a play to obtain thee kingdom; actually

there was neither any news (from God) nor any revelation....!"

Neither did he believe in the Day of Resurrection: "O my beloved! Do not believe in meeting me after death, because what they have told you about our being raised after death for judgement is only a myth which makes the heart forget the pleasure of this real world".⁽¹⁾

After assuming the caliphate, he openly made fun of Islamic prayers; and showed his disrespect for religion by putting the robes of religions scholars on dogs and monkeys.

Gambling and playing with bears were his favourite pastime. He spent all his time drinking (wine), regardless of place or time and without any hesitation. He had no respect for any woman, even those of the prohibited degrees such as step-mother, sister, aunt and daughter. They were just like any other woman in his eyes.

He sent his army to Medina. That holy city of the Prophet(s.a.) was freely looted. Three hundred girls, apart from other women, were criminally assaulted by his soldiers. Three hundred Qarees (reciters of Qur'an) and seven hundred companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) were brutally murdered.

The Holy Mosque of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) remained closed for many days; the army of Yezced used it as their stable. Dogs made it their shelter and the pulpit of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) was defiled.

Finally, the commander of the army compelled the people of Medina to submit before Yezced by giving their Bay'ah in these words:

"We are the slaves of Yezced; it is up to him whether he gives us back our freedom or sells us in the slaves' market..!"

Those who wanted to swear allegiance on the condition that Yezced should follow the instruction of the Holy Qur'an and traditions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) were put to death.⁽²⁾

It may not be out of place to mention that the Holy Prophet(s.a.) once said:

"May Allah curse him who frightens the people of Medina!"

1 Sibti ibn Al-Jawzi: *Tethkireh*, p.291.

2 Al-Soyooti: *Tareekhul Khulefaa*, p.209, [see also English translation Major, H.S.Jarret, p.213]; Abul Fidaa: *Al-Tareekh*, vol.I, p.192; Sibti ibn al Jawzi: *Tethkiretul Khawas*, p.288; Mir Khwand: *Rawdhetul Safaa*, vol.III, p.66; Ibn Hajar Al-Haytemi: *Al-Sewa'qul Muhriqeh*, p.79.

Then the army, on the order of Yezced, proceeded to Mecca. That holiest city of Allah was besieged. They could not enter the city, so they used catapult.

With this, they threw stones and flaming torches towards the Ka'ba...!

The canopy of the Ka'ba was burnt and a portion of that holiest of buildings was damaged.⁽¹⁾

Al-Waleed & Haroon Al-Resheed

But this was not an exception; it sadly proved to be the general rule.

Al-Waleed ibn Yezced ibn Abdil Melik was another Umayyad caliph. He was a drunkard.

One night he was drinking with one of his concubines, till they heard the Athan(call for prayer) of the dawn prayer. He swore that the concubine would lead in the prayer. She wore the robe of the caliph and led in the prayer in the same condition of drunkenness.⁽²⁾

One day he molested his teenage daughter in the presence of her servant woman. She said that (it was not Islam) it was the religion of the Magi. Al-Waleed recited a couplet:

"A man who cares for the (tongues of) people, dies in sorrow; the daring man gets all the pleasures".⁽³⁾

Haroon Al-Resheed, the famous Abbasside caliph and the star of *"One Thousand & One Nights"* who is thought as one of the greatest caliphs, wanted to sleep with one of his late father's concubines...!

The woman rightly pointed out that this would be incest since she was in a position like his mother. Haroon called Al-Qadhi Abu Yousif and asked him to help him find a way to satisfy his lust...The Qadhi said: *"She is just a slave woman. Should you accept whatever she says??? No. Do not accept her words as true.."*.

So the caliph satisfied his desire...

1 Ibid.

2 Al-Diyar Bekri: *Tareekhul Khimees*, vol.II, p.320, as quoted by Nawwab Ahmad Hussein Khan of Payawan in his *Tarikhe Alimadi*, p.328. [Ibn Shakir: *Fawatul Wefeyat*, vol.IV, pp.256-9].

3 Al-Soyooti: *Tareekhul Khulefaa*, p.291.

Ibn Mubarek comments: "I do not know who among these three was more surprising: the Caliph who put his hand into the blood and property of the Muslims and did not respect his step-mother; or the slave woman who refused to grant the desire of the Caliph; or the Qadhi who allowed the Caliph to dishonour his father and sleep with that concubine who was his step-mother..?"⁽¹⁾

Effects on the Beliefs of the Justice of God and 'Ismeh of the Prophets

It has been explained that the Sunni beliefs regarding "constitutional caliphate" weakened the Muslims politically and compelled them to obey anyone who succeeded in his bid for power irrespective of his qualifications or character.

As though it was not enough, it compelled them to change their total religious outlook and beliefs.

First of all, an overwhelming majority of the caliphs were devoid of any sense of religious propriety or piety.

To justify the caliphate of such people, they claimed that even the prophets used to commit sins. Thus, the belief in the 'Ismeh (sinlessness) of the prophets was changed.⁽²⁾

As there were perhaps hundreds of people more knowledgeable, more pious and more qualified for the caliphate than the caliph on the throne, they were compelled to say that there was nothing wrong with giving preference to an inferior person over a superior and more qualified one.

When it was pointed out by the Shi'as that it was 'evil' according to reason to give preference to an inferior person when a superior person was available, the Sunni declared that nothing was good or evil in itself; whatever Allah orders becomes good; whatever He forbids, becomes evil.⁽³⁾

As for "reason", they denied that it exists anywhere in the religion. It is not possible to go into further detail to show how the belief in the Sunnis' "constitutional caliphate" affect the whole fabric of Islam theology, but the following short explanation may suffice

1 Ibid.

2 See the author's *Prophethood*, pp.9-18.

3 See the author's *Justice of God*, pp.1-2.

for the time being:

"It is clear that to protect the caliphs, not only the prophets were deprived of their 'Ismeh, but even Allah was deprived of His 'Justice'..!"

From this vantage point, we may easily understand the full significance of the verse revealed at Ghadeer Khumm:

"O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord;(i.e the caliphate of Imam Ali a.s.) and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message (at all); and Allah will protect you from the people..."

The purity of Islamic beliefs and deeds depended upon the Caliphate of Ali(a.s.); if that one message was not delivered, then it would be as though no message were delivered at all. The safety of the whole religion depended upon the Caliphate of Ali after the Holy Prophet(s.a.).

Is Shi'ism Undemocratic?

Our opponents look at the succession of the early caliphs and Imams and then claim that Shi'ism is undemocratic.

All the Twelve Imams were of one family while the first four Caliphs were of different clans. They conclude that the Sunni school of thought is democratic in principle, which is supposed to be the best system of governance. Shi'ism, in their opinion, is based on hereditary rule and herefore not a good system.

Firstly, no system of government is good or bad of itself; it is as good or bad as the person who holds the reins of the government in his hands. Accordingly, the Shi'ite belief that an Imam is *Ma'loom*, free from every shortcoming and defect and superior in virtue, means that his rule would be the most perfect and just.

On one side is the uncompromising justice of Imam Ali(a.s.), the first Imam, during his short term of Imamate; on the other, the accepted *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) about the last Imam, Al-Mehdi(may Allah hasten his glad advent), that *"He will fill the earth with justice and equity as it will be full of oppression and injustice"*⁽¹⁾. Our premise is not merely an abstraction.

¹ Abu Dawood: *Al-Sunan*, vol.IV, pp.106-9; Ahmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol.I,

Secondly, we should bear in mind that all the Sunni caliphs from Abu Bakr to the last Abbasside caliph Al-Musta'sim Billah (killed by Holakoo Khan - the Mongol king who ruled over Iran and overthrew the Abbasside dynasty in 656A.H./1258A.D.) were from the Quraish.

Does it not mean that one family had ruled over all Muslims from eastern China to Spain for six and a half centuries?

Thirdly, the Sunni system of the caliphate, as already mentioned, was never based on democracy. The First Caliph was thrust upon the Muslims of Medina by a handful of the companions; the second was nominated by the first; the third was selected nominally by five people, but actually by one. Mu'awiyeh took the caliphate by military overthrow. Before him it was, at best, oligarchy; after him it became monarchy...!

So much for the democracy of the constitutional principles utilized. What of the performance of those early governments from the point of view of the equality which democracy implies?

'Umar made a decision that a non-Arab cannot inherit from an Arab unless that heir was born in Arabia.⁽¹⁾

Again, the Sunni law going back to early times, for the most part, does not allow a non-Arab man to marry an Arab woman, nor is non-Quraishite or non-Hashimate man allowed to marry a Quraishite or Hashimate woman, respectively.

According to the Shi'ite law, a slave, even a freed one, may not marry a free woman.⁽²⁾

This is in spite of the well-known declaration of the Holy Prophet(s.a.) that:

There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for a white man over a black, nor for a black over a white, except by piety. People are from Adam and Adam was from dust.⁽³⁾

Also, it is in spite of the precedents the Holy Prophet(s.a.) established when he married his cousin to Zayd ibn Haritheh, a freed slave, and gave the sister of Abdul Rahman ibn Aof (a

pp.377,430; vol.III, p.28; *Al-Hakim: Al-Mustedrek*, vol.IV, pp.557,865.

1 Malik: *Al-Muwattaa*, vol.II, p.60.

2 Al-Jaziri: *Al-Faqih 'alal Mathahibil Arba'a*, vol.IV, p.60.

3 Al-Soyooti: *Al-Durrul Manthoor*, vol.VI, p.98.

Quraishite) in marriage to Bilal, a freed Ethiopian slave.⁽¹⁾

The Shi'ite Sheri'ah clearly states:

"It is allowed to marry a free woman to a slave, an Arab woman to a non-Arab, a Hashimite woman to a non-Hashimite and vice-versa. Likewise, it is allowed to marry women of learned or wealthy families to men of little learning or wealth or of undignified professions".⁽²⁾

In the matter of distribution of war-booty, the Holy Prophet(s.a.) had established a system of equality; it was to be distributed equally to all who had participated in a particular battle.

Abu Bakr continued that system, but 'Umar in 15A.H., just four years after the Holy Prophet(s.a.)'s death, changed the system. He fixed annual stipends for various people, clans and tribes: Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, was allotted 12,000 or 25,000 dinars per year; 'Ayshah, 12,000; other wives of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), 10,000 each; the participants in the battle of Badr, 5,000 each; those who joined between Badr and Hudaibiyyeh, 4,000 each; those who joined after Hudaibiyyeh and before Qadisiyyeh, 3,000 each. The amount gradually decreased to two dinars per year.⁽³⁾

This system corrupted the Muslim community to such an extent that wealth became their sole aim in life and the only benefit of their religion. Their outlook became materialistic and, as mentioned earlier, they could not tolerate the system of equal distribution which Ali(a.s.) reinstated in the first speech he gave after taking over the caliphate.

Imam Ali(a.s.) quoted to have said:

<Well, any man from the Muhajereen and the Ansar, from the Companions of the Holy Prophet(s.a.), who thinks that he is superior to others because of his companionship (let him remember that) the shining superiority is tomorrow before Allah. (He should not expect its reward in this world). Any man who answered the call of Allah and

1 Ibnul Qayyim: *Zadul Ma'ad*, vol.IV, p.22.

2 *Al-Muhaqqiq Al-Hilli: Shera-i'ul Islam, (Kitabun Nikah), vol.V, p.300; Al-Hakim: Minhajul Saleheen, (Kitabun Nikah), vol.II, p.279.*

3 *Al-Teberi: Al-Tareekh, (Annales I), vol.V, pp.2411-4; Nicholson, R.A.: A Literary History of the Arabs, p.187.*

His Prophet, and accepted the truth of our religion and entered into it, and faced towards our Qibleh, is entitled to all the rights of Islam and bound by its limits. You are the servants of Allah; and all property is the property of Allah; it will be divided among you equally; there is no preference in it for one against the other...>⁽¹⁾

Those who during the twenty years preceding Ali's caliphate had grown used to the unfair distribution, advised and requested Ali to compromise; and when he proved unrelenting on matters of Islamic principle, they conspired against him.

After the victory of the Umayyads this inequality between Muslims was carried further. Even if someone accepted Islam, he or she was not accorded the rights of the Muslims. In some way their condition was worse than that of their compatriot non-Muslims. The latter were obliged to pay only Jizyeh (poll-tax or tithes), but the Muslims had to pay that and the Zakat (the tax paid by the Muslims). During the Umayyad period (except for two and a half years during 'Umar ibn Abdil Aziz's reign), Jizyeh was levied on all non-Arabs including the Muslims.⁽²⁾

It is not difficult to imagine how little this policy helped the cause of Islam. For centuries entire countries whose cities and capitals were "Islamic", refused to convert. Even the Berbers (who responded after initial resistance to the Arab invasion and served so brilliantly in Spain and on into France), as a whole were not converted until the establishment of the first Shi'ite kingdom in Morocco.

When Idrees ibn Abdillah, a great-grandson of Imam Hasan(a.s.) and the founder of the Idreesid dynasty(789-985 A.D.), marched against them, most were non-Muslims. This was the result of the ill-treatment in earlier times.

We hear that when Yezced ibn Abdil Malik occupied the Umayyad throne and assigned Yezced ibn Abi Muslim Dinar as Governor of Morocco, the latter re-levied Jizyeh on those who had become Muslims and ordered them back to the villages where they had lived before their conversion.⁽³⁾

1 Ibn Abil Hadeed: *Sharh*, vol.VII, pp.35-7; see also *Al-Imam Ali's Sermon no.126 in Nahjul Belagheh*.

2 *Al-Teberi: Al-Tareekh, (Annales II)*, vol.III, pp.1354,1367.

3 *Al-Amin: Islamic Shi'ite Encyclopaedia*, vol.I, pp.38-41.

The Idreesid change of policy and the extension of full Islamic rights to all the Muslims, brought the conversion of the Berbers.

This exaltation of Arabism is seen to be even more deeply interwoven in the decision of those early rulers that if a subject in a conquered country accepted Islam, he could not be accepted as a Muslim or accorded his Islamic rights unless he attached himself as a client to some Arab tribe. Such clients were called *Mawali*. Even then they were objects of ridicule and unequal treatment by their aristocratic patrons and at the same time continued to be exploited by the growing bureaucracy.

By restricting the right of rule to the twelve infallible Imams, Allah cut at the roots of strife, dissension, chaos and false electioneering, as well as social and racial inequality.

A Dynastic Rule?

Some say that the Shi'ite school holds that the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) wanted to establish a dynastic monarchy for his family (in which he obviously failed).

They imply that as the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) was far above such selfish motives, the Shi'ite school must be wrong. But

these very people say that the Holy Prophet said: *لَا نَمَّةُ مِنِّي قُرَيْشٌ* *The Imams will be from the Quraish*. Will they say that this *Hadith* means that the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) wanted to establish a kingdom for his tribe?

Will they say that the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) said these words because of "selfish motives"(God forbid)?

It was explained before that Abu Bakr silenced the Ansar of Medina by saying that as the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) was from the Quraish, the Arabs would not accept any non-Quraishite as caliph. This argument silenced the Ansar.

By the same argument, if a member of the family of the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*)(like Ali) were made caliph, all would have obeyed him and there would have been no strife or difficulty.

This aspect of the appointment of Ali(*a.s.*), has been recognized also by some non-Muslim writers.

Mr. Sédillot has written:

"Had the principle of hereditary succession (in favour of Ali a.s.) been recognized at the outset, it would have prevented the rise of those disastrous pretentions which engulfed Islam in the blood of

Muslims... The Husband of Fatima united in his person the right of succession as the lawful heir of the Prophet, as well as the right of election".⁽¹⁾

The fact is that such objectors have completely missed the point. The Shi'as have never claimed that "inheritance" has anything to do with the Imamate. As explained earlier, an Imam must be *Ma'soom*, superior to all the *Ummah* in virtue and appointed by Allah.

But it was one of the bounties of Allah bestowed on Prophet Ibraheem and the Holy Prophet(*s.a.*) that, in reality and practice, all the Imams who followed them came from their own family; that all those who had necessary qualifications for the Imamate were of their progeny.

1 [Sédillot, L.P.E.A., *Histoire des Arabes*, (Arabic translation), pp.126-7.]

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