



Questions On Titles

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Introduction



A lot of people have the desire to be known by a title for the sake of prestige. The people of the community would then respect them according to the designation. The main driving force behind this is the ego factor. Take a look at this ego-breaking Verse.

[Shakir 28:83] (As for) that future abode, We assign it to those who have no desire to exalt themselves in the earth nor to make mischief and the good end is for those who guard (against evil)

Then there are those who use other's titles for themselves when they do not deserve them. The whole affair becomes extremely serious when the titles being used are the ones that belong exclusively to the Holy Infallibles (a.s.). TAFSEER IMAM HASSAN AL ASKARI (A.S.)

Imam Ali Ibn Husayn (a.s.) narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: 'If any of my male or female servant were to leave our wilayat, oppose our way and call others with the good names of ours which Allah (s.w.t.) has Chosen for establishing the affairs of the religion and the world, and the titles of ours, having full belief,

without dissimulation, fear or religious reason, then Allah (s.w.t.) will raise them on the Day of Judgment and ask them, "O my slave, have you taken a Lord besides me?" And it will be said to them, "Allah is the Guardian", their fate will then be with their shaytans who used to surround them and they used to obey them, "So now ask them for your reward for what you did".

As can be seen quite clearly that it is very dangerous to either adorn oneself or refer to others with the titles which belong exclusively to the Holy Infallibles (a.s.). According to the above Hadeeth,

if we were to refer to some people with a designation which belongs exclusively to the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) then we will be told "So now ask them for your reward for what you did". Incidentally these guys have been referred to as shaytans.

Mawlana (Our Master)

This is one of the most commonly used titles for the priests in the Indian Sub- continent. Maybe the users are not aware of its meaning, but the priests for whom it is being used are certainly aware of its implications. They are quite happy of being referred to as Mawlanas.

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Let us now look at correct usage of this title.

[Shakir 47:11] That is because Allah is the Protector of those who believe, and because the unbelievers shall have no protector for them.

So Allah (s.w.t.) is our Master (Mawlana). Who else?

About 1400 year ago, at the plains of Ghadeer a declaration was made clarifying the Mastership of Imam Ali (a.s.), by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

(Of whomsoever I am the Master, Ali is his Master)

Celebrations broke out after this announcement and the people began congratulating themselves over this and hugging each other, that since the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is definitely our Master, therefore Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is now declared to be the Master in the same sense. Allegiances were paid by the notables and everything seemed hunky dory.

Their sinister hidden desires only came to the fore later on, as soon as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) passed away, at the conspiratorial gathering which took place at the tent of Bani Sa'da where they declared someone else as the ruler.

Since then, until today, there have been numerous governors and rulers with political aspirations as well as having desires to control other people in whichever way they can. This situation has become so ridiculous these days that any one with a turban on his head (or even a hat sometimes) gets referred to as 'Our Master', and is happy with this reference. Now, if the people are doing this due to their ignorance, then surely these Mawlanas should have corrected them. But they seem to like basking in their glory of being masters and have let this situation carry on.

The shameful thing about this is that even the first three Caliphs, who were very eager to adorn themselves with as many exclusive titles of Imam Ali (a.s.) as they possibly could, did not have the courage to use the term Mawlana for themselves.

Neither their historians of old nor the contemporary ones have ever referred to them as such.

From among the Shiites, Sheykh Kulayni, Syed Razi, Sheykh Sadouq etc. none of them ever used the term Mawlana for anyone other than the Holy Infallibles (a.s.). These days however, every other turbanite is being referred to as a Mawlana.

Let us take a look at what happens in the Mosques and Hussaynias during the Holy month of

Ramadhan. The Shiites recite Du'a E Tawassul in great numbers during which they pronounce the fourteen Holy Infallibles (a.s.) as their Masters, after which they duly go back to referring to the priest with the same reference as their fifteenth.

O Abul Hasan, O Commander of the Faithful, O 'Ali, son of Abu Talib, O decisive argument of Allah over mankind, O our chief, O our Master . . .

This reference, which gets repeated for each of the fourteen Holy Infallibles is clearly in line with the pronouncement of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) at Ghadeer Khumm, as this title is to be used exclusively for the Holy Infallibles (a.s.). The fifteenth reference is clearly out of line.

QUESTIONS

Why are these priests not correcting the ignorant one who refer to them as such? Is this because they like equating themselves with the Holy Infallibles (a.s.)? What is their justification of the usage of this term for themselves? Are they now going to stop using this title?

Aalim (Knowledgeable One)

When does one become knowledgeable? When a person realises that what he does not know is far greater than what he knows, he ends up referring to himself as a 'seeker of knowledge'. In fact, what a person knows is immaterial when compared to what he does not know. It is pointless to even compare.

It therefore follows from this that when a person declares himself to be an Aalim, then he is surely an ignorant one as he has yet to even realise that he does not know. He does not even know what it is that he does not know.

AL KAFI - H 56, Ch. 3, h4

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from Muhammad ibn 'Isa from Yunus from Jamil who has said the following: "I heard Imam abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, saying, 'People become of three groups: Scholars, those who learn and garbled ones. We are the scholars. Our followers are the ones who learn. The rest of the people are garbled ones.'" On top of this is the statement of Imam Ali (a.s.):

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Whosoever neglects to say 'I don't know', will fall in the trap of death - Nahj Ul Balagah, Saying 85 (Arabic Version)

So the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) are the Ulama (Knowledgeable Ones). Can anyone in his right mind argue with this? I don't think so. Yet the priests go around referring to themselves as Ulama. In fact, in England, we have an organisation formed by these priests who have named it 'Majlis E Shia Ulama Europe', and most of the resident priests of the Imambargahs of England, as well as the freelancers are members of this organisation.

It looks like all these priests have yet to realise that what they know is infinitesimal compared to what it is that they do know, and that they are nothing but seekers of knowledge. Or is it that they do know and are trying to elevate their status among the people by adopting such titles?

So what kind of a scholar is a scholar?

AL KAFI - H 45, Ch. 2, h2 (EXTRACT)

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa from Muhammad ibn Khalid from abu al-Bakhtari from abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets because the prophets did not leave any Dirham or Dinar (units of money) as their legacy. What they left was certain pieces of their statements. Those who acquired anything of these pieces of their statements have certainly gained a colossal share.

H 52, Ch. 2, h9

Al-Hassan ibn Muhammad has narrated from Ahmad ibn Ishaq from Su'dan ibn Muslim from Mu'awiya ibn 'Ammar who has said the following: "Once, I asked (Imam) abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, 'There is a man who recounts your Hadith and spreads them among people and ties them to their hearts and the hearts of your followers.

Also there is a worshipper among your followers who does not narrate your Hadith. Which of these two people is better?' The Imam replied, 'The one who narrates our Hadith and ties them up to the hearts of our followers is better than seventy thousand worshippers.'"

So, at the end of the day it all points in the same direction. A scholar is one who narrates Hadeeth and not the one who goes around as an expert in jurisprudence. Wasaail Us Shia Vol 11 H 27; Bihar Ul Anwaar Vol. 82 H 2; Rijal Kashi Vol 3.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Understand the status of our Shias according to the good reports from us for we do not recognise the Faqih from among them to be a Faqih unless he becomes a Muhaddith (Narrator of traditions)

This is explained in more detail under the chapter on Fuqaha. Let us now look at a Hadeeth frequently quoted by the priests.

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa from Muhammad ibn Khalid from abu al-Bakhtari from abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "The scholars are the heirs of the prophets because the prophets did not leave any Dirham or Dinar (units of money) as their legacy. What they left was certain pieces of their statements.

Those who acquired anything of these pieces of their statements have certainly gained a colossal share. You must be very careful, when acquiring such knowledge, to know from what kind of people you receive them. After (the death of) every one of us (the Ahl al-Bayt,

family of the Holy Prophet, recipient of divine supreme covenant), there comes a just person who removes (and exposes) from (the texts of Shari'a) the forgeries of the exaggerators, the materials of the fallacious ones that might have been made to infiltrate and the interpretations of the ignorant ones." For some reason the priests usually only quote the words, 'The scholars are the heirs of the prophets' and thereby claim justification for all of their actions. Agha e Khomeini has quoted in his book Islamic Government and the Rule of the Jurist:

"The fuqahâ are the trustees of the prophets ('a) means that all of the tasks entrusted to the prophets ('a) must also be fulfilled by the just fuqahâ as a matter of duty"

He then goes further and uses another Hadeeth in this manner. AL KAFI - VOL 7 (ARABIC VERSION)

The Commander of the Faithful ('a) said to Shurayh: "The seat [of judge] you are occupying is filled by someone who is a prophet ('a), the legatee of a prophet, or else a sinful wretch." He then uses this Hadeeth to prove his claim and says: Considering the fact that the fuqahâ do not have the rank of prophethood, and they are indubitably not "wretched sinners," we conclude that, in the light of the tradition quoted above, they must be the legatees or successors of the Most Noble Messenger (s).

Have you noticed his proof? This involves very strange logic. Even if I were to accept this logic, then why restrict this to only Jurists? By this proof whosoever is not "wretched sinners," would end up being a trustee of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

Incredible! This thinking goes even further when they use this Hadeeth for themselves:

MUSTADRAK AL WASAAIL - VOL 17 H 21468

Allamah Hilli in his writing quotes: 'The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said that the scholars of my Ummah are like the prophets of the Israelites'.

MY! My! My! The Prophets of the Israelites include the Prophets Musa (a.s.) and Isa (a.s.). There is no limit to a person's aspirations now is there? So which scholars is this Hadeeth referring to? The priests or the Holy Infallibles (a.s.)? The following Hadeeth has answered this question.

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn al-Muhtadi from 'Abd Allah ibn Jundab to who Imam al-Rida, recipient of divine supreme covenant, wrote the following:
"Thereafter (after thanking Allah I must say), Muhammad, recipient of divine supreme covenant, was the trustee of Allah in the matters of His creatures. When he was taken away from this world, we, Ahl al-Bayt, inherited him; thus, we are the trustees of Allah over His earth.

QUESTIONS

When will all these priests realise that they are not knowledgeable, but are only seekers of knowledge?

When was the last time you heard from the mouth of a priest the words 'I don't know'?

Why do they concentrate mainly on Fiqh and not on Hadeeth?

Allamah (Knowledgeable In Many Fields Of Knowledge)

Now what can I say about that! These guys are only trying to go one better than the Ulamas. Slightly more knowledge in a few more fields of knowledge, and hey presto! One is an Allamah.

There are unknown number of sciences and branches of knowledge that cannot even be imagined. Why do these guys think that they are knowledgeable in many fields of knowledge,

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when the total sum of their knowledge is not even a drop in the ocean?

From history, this was first displayed from the School of the Holy Imam Ja'far Al Sadiq (a.s.). Numerous subjects were taught including mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy etc. Try questioning the Allamahs of today on any of these and see for yourself what answers you get. The Holy Imam (a.s.) only displayed a drop of the knowledge that he (a.s.) had. These Allamahs only have a drop from this drop, and that is all they have.

AL KAFI - H 44, Ch. 2, h1

Muhammad ibn al-Hassan has narrated from Ali ibn Muhammad from Sahl ibn Ziyad from Muhammad ibn 'Isa from 'Ubayd Allah al-Dihqan from Durust al Wasiti from Ibrahim ibn 'Abd al-Hamid from abu al-Hassan Musa , recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "Once the Holy Prophet, recipient of divine supreme covenant, entered the Mosque and found a group of people gathered around a man. He asked, 'Who is he?' It was said that he was an Allama.

Then he asked, 'What is that?' They replied that he is an expert in genealogy, chronology, and the history of the pre-Islamic days of darkness and poetry of Arabs. The Holy Prophet, recipient of divine supreme covenant, then told them, 'There are only three kinds of Knowledge: A decisive Verse, a justly enjoined obligation or an established tradition. Other than these are only something extra.'"

Historically there have been some good Mullahs who have been caught up in this name game. One such example is the famous Mullah Muhammad Baqir Al Majlisi of the Bihar Ul Anwar fame. The reference of Allamah was allocated to him after his death.

This is a very serious trend that has come up recently that all those Sheykhs and Mullahs of old are now being referred to with these titles in the new publications. Sheykh Kulayni, Sheykh Toosi, Sheykh Sadouq etc are now been referred to as Ayatullahs, whereas historically they have always been known simply as Sheykhs.

QUESTIONS

How many fields of knowledge are there? How many is 'many' out of all the fields of knowledge?

Can having a small amount of knowledge of a small number of them make one an Allamah?

How come these Allamahs do not have the knowledge of the subjects that were taught by the Holy Imam Ja'far Al Sadiq (a.s.)? Are they experts in the genealogy, chronology, pre-Islamic history

and the poetry of the Arabs?

A'alam (The Most Knowledgeable)

Whatever that can possibly be learnt in matters of religion, this guy is supposed to know it. He is regarded as the most knowledgeable among all the Ulamas and is a step ahead of the Allamahs.

So he just sits there basking in the glory of being referred to as the A'alam on the presumption that no one is more knowledgeable than him. Maybe someone should remind him that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is still around and that he (a.s.) has only gone into occultation.

But it is common knowledge among the Shiites that their Holy Imam (a.s.) is still alive and is their Divine Guide whose return from occultation is eagerly awaited. And so I have no choice but to conclude that 'the most knowledgeable one' is surely aware of this. He has therefore deliberately adorned himself with this title despite being aware that there is the person of the Holy Imam (a.s.) who is actually the A'alam.

QUESTIONS

If the Ulamas are not the Ulamas, then what does that make the most knowledgeable of them all?

Why has this 'A'alam' deliberately ignored the fact that in actual fact Imam Mahdi (a.s.) is more knowledgeable than he will ever be? Is he trying to tell us that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) does not actually exist and therefore he is now the A'alam?

ALAM UL HUDA (THE BANNER OF GUIDANCE)

Give me a break! This was one of the titles used by Imam Ali (a.s.). How can anyone else use this title for himself I shall never know.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: O Ali! You are the Banner of Guidance and the Light of Religion and that is the Light of Allah (s.w.t.) - Bihaar Ul Anwaar Vol 22 Incidentally this title is commonly used for Syed Murtadha, the pioneer Mujtahid of over a thousand years ago. He was a student of the Mu'tazilite teacher Asadabadi and started Ijtihad using the principles of Imam Shafei. His brother Syed Razi (compiler of Nahj Ul Balagah) did not agree with him and refused to pray behind him.

QUESTIONS

As the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used this title for Imam Ali (a.s.), then where is the justification of using it for ordinary people?

How can anyone possibly justify using this title for someone other than a Holy Infallible (a.s.).

Hujat UIL Islam (Proof of Islam)

And what is required to prove something? Some people try to prove it with academic arguments, some have even tried it by military force, and the Prophets (a.s.) even used miracles for their proofs.

So, when a person call himself a proof of Islam, then it follows that he is referring to his character, his whole personality, so that when a person looks at him, then Islam is proven. By looking at him, at his blessed face, listening to his speech, his actions, and his character, the truth of Islam would dawn upon the people. There would be no need to provide any intellectual arguments or proofs.

If you were to now use your common sense a little bit you will realise the gravity of the situation when someone uses this title for himself, as the whole of the building of religion would be based on this foundation and would eventually collapse if the claim turns out to be false.

According to Shiite beliefs, Allah (s.w.t.) gave a complete religion with no deficiencies, through a trustworthy angel to an Infallible Prophet and Infallible Imams. The proof of an infallible religion can only be through an infallible. If a normal person were to be regarded as proof of Islam then all his deficiencies will have to be regarded as the deficiencies of Islam, and in this way the whole religion would become unreliable. The person who is accepted as the proof of Islam would therefore be one who is above any mistakes or disagreements.

QUESTIONS

Do any of these Hujjat Ul Islams claim to be infallible? If not, then how can their incomplete persons be the proof of our complete religion?

Ayatollah (Sign Of Allah (S.W.T.))

These have sprung up only recently, in the last hundred years or so. Beforehand, most of them used to be referred to as Sheykhs.

And so I referred to the Book of Allah (s.w.t.) and saw fifty six Divine Verses referring to the Ayatullahs. Well, obviously I cannot use all of them here, for the sake of brevity, but I cannot use only a couple either as that would not do justice to the argument. Therefore I have decided to use as few of them as I could.

Wherever the term Ayatullah has been used, it has been immediately followed by a Fatwa (Verdict) from Allah (s.w.t.) that whoever rejects them, falsifies them, does not place his faith in them, neglects them, denies them, mocks them, turns his face away from them, or fights against them has been referred to as either an unbeliever, person of Hell,

one on whom is Divine Wrath, one whose deeds have been confiscated, the most unjust one, blind, deaf, dumb, one without posterity, an accursed, a loss maker, a transgressor and ungrateful. Phew!

Here they are!

[Shakir 2:39] And (as to) those who disbelieve in and reject My communications, they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide.

[Shakir 2:61] And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits.

[Shakir 3:4] Surely they who disbelieve in the communications of Allah they shall have a severe chastisement; and Allah is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.

ﷻ [Shakir 3:21] Surely (as for) those who disbelieve in the communications of Allah and slay the prophets unjustly and slay those among men who enjoin justice, announce to them a painful chastisement.

[Shakir 3:22] Those are they whose works shall become null in this world as well as the hereafter, and they shall have no helpers

[Shakir 6:39] And they who reject Our communications are deaf and dumb, in utter darkness; whom Allah pleases He causes to err and whom He pleases He puts on the right way.

[Shakir 6:49] And (as for) those who reject Our communications, chastisement shall afflict them because they transgressed.

[Shakir 6:157] Or lest you should say: If the Book had been revealed to us, we would certainly have been better guided than they, so indeed there has come to you clear proof from your Lord, and guidance and mercy. Who then is more unjust than he who rejects Allah's communications and turns away from them? We will reward those who turn away from Our communications with an evil chastisement because they turned away.

[Shakir 7:40] Surely (as for) those who reject Our communications and turn away from them haughtily, the doors of heaven shall not be opened for them, nor shall they enter the garden until the camel pass through the eye of the needle; and thus do We reward the guilty.

ﻭﻭﻭ [Shakir 7:64] But they called him a liar, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who rejected Our communications; surely they were a blind people.

[Shakir 7:72] So We delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the last of those who rejected Our communications and were not believers.

[Shakir 7:203] And when you bring them not a revelation they say: Why do you not forge it? Say: I only follow what is revealed to me from my Lord; these are clear proofs from your Lord and a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.

[Shakir 10:17] Who is then more unjust than who forges a lie against Allah or (who) gives the lie to His communications? Surely the guilty shall not be successful.

[Shakir 11:59] And this was Ad; they denied the communications of their Lord, and disobeyed His messengers and followed the bidding of every insolent opposer (of truth).

[Shakir 11:60] And they were overtaken by curse in this world and on the resurrection day; now surely Ad disbelieved in their Lord; now surely, away with Ad, the people of Hud.

[Shakir 20:125] He shall say: My Lord! why hast Thou raised me blind and I was a seeing one indeed?

[Shakir 20:126] He will say: Even so, Our communications came to you but you neglected them; even thus shall you be forsaken this day.

[Shakir 20:127] And thus do We recompense him who is extravagant and does not believe in the communications of his Lord, and certainly the chastisement of the hereafter is severer and more

lasting.

[Shakir 31:32] And when a wave like mountains covers them they call upon Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience, but when He brings them safe to the land, some of them follow the middle course; and none denies Our signs but every perfidious, ungrateful one.

[Shakir 39:63] His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth; and (as for) those who disbelieve in the communications of Allah, these it is that are the losers.

You have now seen the Verses about the Ayatullahs and the Fatwas (Verdicts) of Allah (s.w.t.) that have been Issued to those that reject them.

Let us look at this from another angle. Say there are two Mujtahids who call themselves Ayatullahs. One of them has declared something permissible whilst the other one has made it forbidden (e.g. Chess). Can you now tell me whether they are verifying each other or falsifying and opposing each other? You will have to admit that they are actually falsifying and opposing each other.

And yet they both claim to be Ayatullahs. You have seen above the result of the one who falsifies or opposes an Ayatullah. Don't both of these two people come under these Divine Verdicts?

The Holy Infallibles (a.s.) have actually referred to themselves as the Ayatullahs. AL KAFI - H 528, Ch. 18, h1

Al-Husayn ibn Muhammad has narrated from Mu'alla ibn Muhammad from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah from Ahmad ibn Hilal from 'Umayya ibn Ali from Dawud al-Riqqi who has said the following: "Once, I asked abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, about the meaning of the words of Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High, 'The signs and warnings are of no avail to the disbelieving people.' (10:101) The Imam said, 'Signs are 'A'immah, and warnings are the prophets, recipient of divine supreme covenant.'" AL KAFI - H 529, Ch. 18, h2

Ahmad ibn Mahran has narrated from 'Abd al-'Azim ibn 'Abd Allah al-Hassani from Musa ibn Muhammad al-'Ijli from Yunus ibn Ya'qub in a marfu' manner from abu Ja'far, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "In the words of Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High, 'However, they rejected all Our signs. . . .' (54:42) 'The signs' are all the successors (of the prophets, recipient of divine supreme covenant).'" HADEETH U TARIQ

The Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said: O Tariq, The Imam is the Kalama-t-Alli?h [Word of God] and Waj'ha-t-Allah [Face of God] and Hijaba-t-Allah [Veil of God] and N?ru-Allah [Light of God] and ?ya-t-Allah [Sign of God]. - Bihar Ul Anwaar Vol. 25 H 4 After all this, do you reckon that anyone

other than the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) has any right to this title? It looks to me as if some people are taking this title very lightly.

[Shakir 45:34] And it shall be said: Today We forsake you as you neglected the meeting of this day of yours and your abode is the fire, and there are not for you any helpers:

[Shakir 45:35] That is because you took the communications of Allah for a jest and the life of this world deceived you. So on that day they shall not be brought forth from it, nor shall they be granted goodwill.

In Tafseer Safi and Tafseer Qummi, this has been explained in this manner: 'The 'Ayaat of Allah' in this Verse is a reference to the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) and those that mocked them will be told that these are the ones they used to falsify and mock'. The reality is that these claims of theirs to the titles of the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) is to try and equate to them. No one from the olden times up until recently has ever used these titles or even plucked up the courage for it. Sheykh Mufeed and Sheykh Tusi that they revere so much, remained as just Sheykhhs, whilst they themselves have gone much further.

QUESTIONS

Why are these Ayatullahs differing from each other in their Fatwas if they are both signs of Allah (s.w.t.), and He (s.w.t.) is only One? If one Ayatullah opposes another Ayatullah, will they both end up in Hell as per the Divine Verses?

Ayatollah Al Uzma (The Great Sign Of Allah)

Does this not remind you of Me'raj?

○ the greatest signs of his Lord.

[Shakir 53:17-18] The eye did not turn aside, nor did it exceed the limit. Certainly he saw of Somehow it does not compute in my brain that when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) arrived at his (s.a.w.) destination in Me'raj, there was one of these people who go around calling themselves

the 'great sign of Allah', sitting there waiting for him. And in Ziyarat, the Holy Imam (a.s.) is referred to as the great sign of Allah (s.w.t.). BIHAR UL ANWAAR VOL. 97 H 5

Peace be upon you o Doyen of the Martyrs, Peace be upon you of Great Sign of Allah (s.w.t.).

BIHAR UL ANWAAR VOL. 54 H 26

Imam Ali (a.s.) said: If I make the intention to see the wonders of the earth and the seven heavens in the twinkling of an eye, then I can do so for I have the Great Name and I am the Great Sign and the magnificent Miracle.

QUESTIONS

What happens when one of these 'great sign of Allah' declares the playing of Chess to be permissible when it has been clearly forbidden? When two of these 'great sign of Allah' oppose each other, does it mean that they are both signs of different Allahs? But there is only one Allah (s.w.t.).

Faqih (Man Of Understanding)

You are probably surprised at the heading where you expected a Faqih to be described as one who is a Jurist. This is the common understanding of most people that a Faqih is a person who is an expert in the principles of jurisprudence (Usool E Fiqh). But the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) have described a Faqih as a person who understands their position.

For example when Imam Husayn (a.s.) wrote a letter to Habib Ibn Mazahir to invite him for help he addressed it as 'From Abu Abdillah Al Husayn to a man of understanding (Rajool Un Faqih) Habib Ibn Mazahir'.

Can someone now tell me as to which Usool E Fiqh did Habib Ibn Mazahir study or whether he used to issue any verdicts (Fatwas)? When you study the whole of Imam Husayn (a.s.)'s letter you will realize the connotation of the epitaph 'Man of Understanding' that he (a.s.) used for Habib Ibn Mazahir (a.r.).

He (a.s.) says in his letter 'O Habib! You are aware of our station and position, therefore come to our help'. It is now established that according to Imam Husayn (a.s.) the 'Faqih' is one who understands the position and the station of the Imam (a.s.). This word has no relationship with the branches (Furoo) of religion.

This is the reason why the Holy Imams (a.s.) never recognized these so called Faqihs as Faqihs.

Wasaail Us Shia Vol 11 H 27; Bihar Ul Anwaar Vol. 82 H 2; Rijal Kashi Vol 3.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Understand the status of our Shias according to the good reports from us for we do not recognise the Faqih from among them to be a Faqih unless he becomes a Muhaddith (Narrator of traditions) What! Our heroes spend their entire lives learning Fiqh, then how come the Holy Imams (a.s.) refuses to recognise them as such? Is it because they base their Ijtihad on the Usool E Fiqh taken from the enemies of the Holy Ahl Ul Bayt (a.s.)? Think again about what I have just said!

Al KAFI - H 206, Ch. 22, h8 (EXTRACT)

It is reported that: A number of our people have narrated from Ahmad ibn uhammad ibn Khalid from 'Isma'il ibn Mihran from abu Sa'id al-Qammat and Salih ibn Sa'id from Aban ibn Taghlib who has said the following: "Once a man asked a question from Imam abu Ja'far, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who replied to it, and then the man said, 'The Fuqaha do not say this.' "The Imam then said, 'It is a pity. Have you ever seen a Faqih? Look at the question here. Have you ever seen a Faqih? So what were those guys who used to walk around with turbans on their head posing as Faqihs? Maybe it is because of this Hadeeth. AL KAFI - H 167, Ch. 19, h11

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from al-Washsha' from Muthanna al-Hannat from abu Basir who has said the following:"Once I asked (Imam) abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, saying, 'We may face an issue about which there is nothing said in the book of Allah or in the Sunnah, tradition of the Holy Prophet, recipient of divine supreme covenant, can we use our own opinion in such matters?' The Imam replied, 'No, you must not do that. If you, in this way, find the truth you will receive no rewards for it, and if you missed the truth you have forged lies against Allah, the Majestic, the Glorious.'"

So it does not matter whether he gets it right, as there is no reward for him for that. And if he gets it wrong? Imagine spending your entire life in a Madrassah in a far away land, publishing your own book of emulation for people to follow, answering thousand of questions posed by them, and then find out there is no reward waiting for you on the Day of Judgment for all your right answers. For all your wrong answers you will be classified as a forger of lies and be deserving of Hell. What a waste of life that would be.

The forger of lies against Allah (s.w.t.) will end up in Hell as he is the most unjust.

[Shakir 6:144] Who, then, is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah that he should lead

astray men without knowledge? Surely Allah does not guide the unjust people. Not only that, they have been regarded as evil people by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). 23

AL KAFI - VOL 8 H 479

Ali Bin Ibrahim heard from his father from Nawfil from Sakuni from Abu Abdillah (a.s.) who said: 'The Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "A time will come upon the people when the Quran will only remain as a custom and Islam will only remain in name and the mosques will be full of people but they will be bereft of guidance and the Fuqaha of that period will be the most evil Fuqaha under the shadow of the sky; evil will emanate from them and return towards them"'.

After this Hadeeth if I were to write any more on this topic then I would probably end up getting killed.

Anyhow, let me tell you about a funny argument which I received from someone about this. He claimed that the Fuqaha referred to here are the ones from the Sunnis, and not from among the Shiites. Honestly, every time I remember this, it brings a smile to my face.

The reason being, that the Sunnis do not have any Fuqaha. In their entire history they only ever had four of them who all died over a thousand years ago. The entire Sunni population are the Muqallideen (emulators) of these four - Imam Shafei, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal.

QUESTIONS

If the Fuqaha are not being recognized by the Holy Imams (a.s.) as Fuqaha then why are we recognising them as such?

If the only Fuqaha being recognised by the Holy Imams (a.s.) are the Muhaddith, the narrators of Hadeeth, then how come we are unaware of any of them these days? If the Fuqaha of the end times are the most evil people then what does that make their followers?

Na'ib E Imam (Representative Of The Imam)

Nice title eh? As soon as Shiites look at this title their hearts simply fall for the guy who uses it. This is due to their love for Imam Mahdi (a.s.). The only problem is that Imam Mahdi (a.s.) never allocated this title to be used by any of these guys. Let me explain.

Historically, this term was used to denote the four representatives of the Twelfth Holy Imam (a.s.) who were the residents of Baghdad, during the minor occultation. All the Holy Imams (a.s.) from the first Holy Imam (a.s.) to the eleventh Holy Imam (a.s.) had their own representatives in different areas but they had never used this title for them. What was the reason for labelling these four as such when they themselves never used this title nor did anyone else ever use it for them during their time and there is no reference for this in history books?

The colossal Al Kafi of Sheykh Kulayni which was written during the minor occultation has no mention of this. In fact, none of the four canonical books of the Shiites has any reference to this. Yes, the only one who claimed to be the representative was Shamalghani, who was immediately reprimanded by way of a Holy letter.

The Shiites then used to go in front of his house and send curses upon him. He is being referred to as the accursed one even today. (Maybe the Shiites of that time comprehended the weight of this title).

There is only one reason that comes to the fore as to why this label was stuck to the four representatives, and that is to profit from it during the time of occultation so that a parallel system of rule can be established. They then classified the four as special representatives and themselves as general representatives. But this is an invalid act as the special representation has yet to be proven and so how can you prove general representation. Even if the special representation is somehow proven, that still does not prove their general representation because:-

None of the four representatives were Mujtahids which these people have now become.

None of them ever used the weapon invented by the Sunnis (Usool E Fiqh) in order to refute the Hadeeth of the Holy Infallibles (a.s.). None of them has ever issued a Fatwa.

None of them had ever considered the people to be ignorant, placed a collar of Taqleed on their necks, published any of their Tawzeehs, or created their own respective group of emulators. None of them ever tried to equate themselves with the Holy Infallibles (a.s.).

None of them ever played the drum that: 'Without their Taqleed none of your deeds are acceptable'.

All of them were just contact points between the people and the Holy Imam (a.s.). Their job was just to take questions to the Holy Imam (a.s.) and bring back the answers from him (a.s.). They never answered any of the questions of their own accord.

The system of representation was ended by the Holy Imam (a.s.) in his last letter to the fourth of them which has been recorded by Sheykh Sadouq. Take a look at the last letter of our Holy Imam Mahdi (a.s.). IKMAL UD DEEN WA TAMAAM UN NE'MAT - VOL.2 H44

It is narrated from Abu Muhammad Al Hassan Bin Ahmad Al Maktab who said: I was in the same city in the year when Sheykh Ali Bin Muhammad Al Samiri May Allah purify his soul I was with him before he died. During that time a letter arrived from Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. O Ali Bin Muhammad Al Samiri may Allah give great reward to your brothers, you are going to die in six days, So, wind up your affairs, but appoint no one in your place, because from the day of your death the period of my second occultation (Gaibat e Kubra) will begin. Hence forth, I will not reappear, unless and until with the permission of Allah (s.w.t.). My reappearance will take place after a very long time when people's hearts will have hardened the world will be full of injustice and sins.

Among my Shiites will be those who will claim to have seen me. Beware! Anyone who makes such a claim before the coming out of Sufyani and the sound from heaven announcing my reappearance, is a liar and imposter. There is no Might nor Strength except in Allah the High the Great. I made a copy of this letter and came back.

On the sixth day I returned and found him in a coma. People who were there asked him (Ali Bin Muhammad Al Samiri) who his successor is after him. He said: 'This matter is in the hands of Allah (s.w.t.) and He will fulfill it'. And then he died. These were the last words heard from him.

In this letter, the Holy Imam (a.s.) has advised him to wrap up his affairs and not to appoint anyone else. The Holy Imam (a.s.) put an end to this chain of contact points once and for all did not differentiate between the special and the general representatives nor did he say that, if, from now on anyone wearing a turban on his head were to come to you then you should accept him.

He also said that from now on if anyone claims to have seen me is a liar and an imposter. Therefore, today, if someone makes the claim that the Holy Imam (a.s.) comes to him and explains the solutions to the problems has surely forged a lie against the Holy Imam (a.s.). How can it be when there is no contact?

The main reason for making the claim of being the Holy Imam (a.s.)'s representative is so that all his (a.s.) affairs should get transferred unto him and no one would be able to challenge him as the

Holy Imam (a.s.) will no longer be reprimanding him by way of a letter. People should consider the orders of the 'representatives' orders to be the orders of the Holy Imam (a.s.).

Since, without being in the Taqleed of the Holy Imams (a.s.) none of our deeds are acceptable, the same would now be the case for them as they now represent him. They would now be handling the affairs of religion and if he (a.s.) were not to make his (a.s.) appearance, then there is no problem as all the affairs are taken care of. The reason for awaiting his (a.s.) appearance has just been negated by these guys.

QUESTIONS

Who appointed these general representatives during the major occultation? Who classified the representation between special and general?

Are any of the acts and claims of these self-appointed general representatives valid? What about those of them who claim to have met Imam Mahdi (a.s.) during their lifetime? Why are we regarding them as saints when the Holy Imam (a.s.) has referred to these claimants as liars and imposters?

Imam (Divine Guide)

Wow! This is the big one.

The first time I heard this title being used by anyone other than the twelve Holy Imams (a.s.) was after the revolution in Iran in 1979. The Iranians declared Agha e Khomeini as their Imam. This led to the people of Iraq to start referring to Agha e Khoie as Imam Al Khoei.

Then the Kuwaitis decided not to be left behind and started referring to Agha e Shirazi as Imam Shirazi. Then Agha e Khamenei was declared as an Imam. In fact they have gone further and declared him as Vali Ul Amr. I wonder where this will end? There is certainly no limit to desires.

It is quite clear from the Book of Allah (s.w.t.) that every one will be called on the Day of Judgment with their respective Imams. I wonder where the followers of these Imams will be on that Day?

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One day Imam Ali (a.s.) was with some people, when eight of them asked to leave as they had something urgent to do. They agreed to meet him (a.s.) again on Friday.

When they walked away they saw a lizard and they jokingly said to each other, 'Let us pay allegiance to this lizard'. So they caught it and placed their hands on it as a symbol of allegiance and then they let it go. When they went to the Mosque on Friday, Imam Ali (a.s.) was delivering a speech in which he (a.s.) was explaining the verse :

رُؤُوسَ [Shakir 17:71] (Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imam; then whoever is given his book in his right hand, these shall read their book; and they shall not be dealt with a whit unjustly.

When he (a.s.) saw them he stopped and said: 'I am currently looking at eight people who will be called on the Day of Judgment with a lizard as that is their Imam'.

Let us think about this for a moment. What will happen to those who listen to and obey every command of a claimant of this title and yet think that they will be raised with the Holy Imam (a.s.)? Quite frankly, I think they are suffering from delusion.

The Holy Imam Mahdi (a.s.) has guided us through numerous written replies of his to the questions posed by the Shiites during the minor occultation. Approximately two hundred of these Holy letters have been preserved in books. I for one, am not aware of anyone among my people who is aware of the contents of these Holy letters and yet I know of many who are experts in recalling the statements of their 'Imams' from their Twazeeh UI Masaail (Book of Emulation).

AL KAFI - H 951, Ch. 85, h 1

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from Muhammad ibn Sinan from abu Salam from Sawra ibn kulayb who has said the following: "Once I asked abu Ja'far, recipient of divine supreme covenant, about the words of Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Gracious: 'On the Day of Judgment you will see the faces of those who had invented falsehood against Allah blackened. . . .' (39:60) The Imam said, 'It refers to those who claim to be the Imam but in fact, are not the Imam.

' "I then asked, 'Even if he is of the descendents of Ali, recipient of divine supreme covenant?' He replied, 'Yes, even if he is of the descendents of Ali, recipient of divine supreme covenant.' I then asked, 'Even if he is of the sons of Ali ibn abu Talib, recipient of divine supreme covenant?' He said, 'Yes, even if he is as such.'"

This is also found in Tafseer Qummi, Tafseer Ayyashi and Tafseer Saafi for these Verses:

[Shakir 28:41] And We made them Imams who call to the fire, and on the day of resurrection they shall not be assisted.

[Shakir 28:42] And We caused a curse to follow them in this world, and on the day of resurrection they shall be of those made to appear hideous. AL KAFI - H 952, Ch. 85, h 2

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from 'Abd Allah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa from Ali ibn al-Hakam from Aban from al-Fudayl from abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "Whoever claims to be the Imam and, in fact, is not the Imam is considered an unbeliever."

He has narrated from Hisham ibn Salim from Habib al-Sajistani from abu Ja'far, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High,

has said, 'I will cause to suffer punishment all those (citizens) who live a religious life in Islam with belief in and acknowledgement of the guardianship of unjust 'A'immah (leaders without Divine Authority) who do not possess authority from Allah, even though such followers are (apparently) virtuous and pious in their deeds. I will forgive all those (citizens) who live a religious life in Islam with belief in and acknowledgement of the guardianship of an Imam who is just in his dealings and possesses authority from Allah, even though such followers in their dealings are unjust sinners.'"

AL KAFI - H 956, Ch. 85, h 6

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Muhammad ibn al-Hassan from Muhammad ibn Sinan from Talha ibn Yazid from abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "Whoever considers someone who has no Divine Authority as a partner in the Leadership of a Leader with Divine Authority, is considered a polytheist." AL KAFI - H 962, Ch. 85, h 12

Al-Husayn ibn Muhammad has narrated from Mu'alla ibn Muhammad from abu Dawud al-Mustariqq from Ali ibn Maymun from ibn abu Ya'fur who has said the following: "Once I heard abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, say, 'There will be three kinds of people to whom Allah will not look on the Day of Judgment.

He will not purify them and they will suffer painful punishments. They are those who claim to be the Imam but without authority from Allah, those who reject the Imam (Leader with Divine Authority), and those who think that for the 'two' there is a share in Islam.'"

The Final Argument

There are only two types of Imams in this world. One who leads to Paradise and one who leads to Hell.

AL KAFI - H 562, Ch. 25, h2

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad and Muhammad ibn al- Husayn from Muhammad ibn Yahya from Talha ibn Zayd from abu 'Abd Allah, recipient of divine supreme covenant, who has said the following: "'A'immah mentioned in the book of Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High, are of two kinds. Allah, the Most Holy, the Most High has said, (1) 'We appointed them as 'A'immah (leaders) to guide the people through Our command . . .' (21:73) They do so but not because of the commands of the people.

They allow Our command to come first and before their own orders, and Our laws before their own laws and judgment. (2) Allah has also said, 'We made them the kinds of Imams (leaders) who invite people to the fire . . .' (28:41) They (this kind of Imam) make their own commands to come before the commands of Allah and their laws before the laws of Allah. They follow their desires against what the book of Allah, the Most Holy, and the Most High, requires."

Well, needless to say that if there are only two types of Imams in the Book of Allah, then there is no third category. It is pointless to argue that such and such is an Imam in one sense whilst he is not an Imam in the other sense.

The first type of Imam is one who leads to Paradise:

[Shakir 21:73] And We made them Imams who guided (people) by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of the alms, and Us (alone) did they serve;

The second type of Imam is one who leads to Hell:

ﷻ [Shakir 28:41] And We made them Imams who call to the fire, and on the day of resurrection they shall not be assisted.

As we have seen that there is no third category of Imams. The Imams who lead to Paradise, their number has been fixed at twelve. And all the slots have been taken.

1. Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) - Al Ameerul Mu'mineen
2. Imam Hasan Ibn Ali (a.s.) - Al Mujtaba
3. Imam Husayn Ibn Ali (a.s.) - Al Seyyid Us Shohada
4. Imam Ali Ibn Husayn (a.s.) - Al Zayn Ul Abideen
5. Imam Muhammad Ibn Ali (a.s.) - Al Baqir
6. Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad (a.s.) - Al Sadiq
7. Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s.) - Al Kadhim
8. Imam Ali Ibn Musa (a.s.) - Al Rida
9. Imam Muhammad Ibn Ali (a.s.) - Al Taqi
10. Imam Ali Ibn Muhammad (a.s.) - Al Naqi
11. Imam Hassan Ibn Ali (a.s.) - Al Askari
12. Imam Muhammad Ibn Hassan (a.s.) - Al Mahdi

Now what? We are stuck. What do we do with the Imams of today? Where do we place them?

The only way to classify them as imams leading to Paradise would be to remove some of the ones from the list above to make room for these new ones of today. Meanwhile, there is plenty of room in the other list.

Bashir Alidina