

BISMILLAAHIR RAHMAANIR RAHEEM

WA SALLALLAAHO A'LAA WALIYYAL A'SRE (A.T.F.S.) ADRIKNAA

Discussions About Imam Mahdi In Past Nations

Hadeeth-e-Ghadeer: Albaani vs Ibne Taymiyyah

Nasir al-Deen Albaani is counted among the prominent Salafi scholars of the present era. He has authored numerous books. He was deeply concerned with the prevalence of weak and unreliable traditions. To filter the unreliable narrations, he compiled an encyclopedia of traditions called 'Silsilah al-Ahaadeeth al-Saheehah'. According to him, all traditions mentioned therein are reliable.

One comes across another work along with Albaani's research, which illustrates thus:

'Regarding the narration of Ghadeer – this Hadeeth is among the reliable (Saheeh) traditions narrated by several companions (Sahaaba).

(Al- Sunnah of Ibn Abi Aasim baa Tehqeeq al-Albaani, vol. 2, p. 566)

Albaani has recorded in Silsilah al-Ahaadeeth al-Saheehah:

Hadeeth of Ghadeer has been narrated by Zaid Ibn Arqam, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas, Buraydah Ibn Hasib, Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), Abu Ayyub Ansari, Buraa Ibn Aazib, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Anas Ibn Maalik, Abu Saeed Khudri and Abu Hurayrah.

Commentary:

I. Hadeeth-e-Ghadeer has been narrated by five distinct chains of narrators ending in Zaid Ibn Arqam. Each chain is considered reliable by scholars of Rejaal.

1. Abu al-Tufayl (has narrated) from Zaid Ibn

Arqam

2. Maimoon Abu Abdillah from Zaid Ibn Arqam
3. Abu Sulaiman Muazzin from Zaid Ibn Arqam
4. Yahya Ibn Zadah from Zaid Ibn Arqam
5. Atiyyah Aufi from Zaid Ibn Arqam

II. This tradition has been narrated from Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas in three distinct chains; again each chain is considered reliable.

1. Abdul Rahman Ibn Baasit from Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas
2. Abul Waahid Ibn Aiman from Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas
3. Khaithama Ibn Abd al-Rahman from Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas

III. The tradition of Ghadeer has reached us from Buraydah Ibn Hasib in three chains, all reliable.

1. Ibn Abbas from Buraydah Ibn Hasib
2. Ibn Buraydah from Buraydah Ibn Hasib
3. Taoos from Buraydah Ibn Hasib

IV. The Ghadeer tradition has been narrated by Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) vide nine chains of narrators, all of whom are reliable.

1. Amr Ibn Saeed from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).
2. Zaadaan Ibn Umar from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
3. Saeed Ibn Wahb from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
4. Zaid Ibn Yasha from Ameerul Momineen

(a.s.)

5. Shaarik from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
6. Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abi Yalaa from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
7. Abu Maryam from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
8. From one of the companions of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)
9. Talha Ibn Masraf from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

In addition to the above:

1. Riyah Ibn Haaris has narrated from Abu Ayyub Ansari and the entire chain of narrators is trustworthy.
2. Adi Ibn Saabit has narrated from Buraa Ibn Aazib. All the narrators in the chain are reliable.
3. Ibn Abbas has been quoted by Amr Ibn Maimoon and the entire chain of narrators is reliable.
4. Ghumairah Ibn Sa'd has narrated from all three viz. Anas Ibn Malik, Abu Saeed and Abu Hurayrah. The entire chain of narrators is trustworthy.

The comment of Nasir al-Deen Albaani, after noting the various chains of the Hadeeth-e-Ghadeer and accepting it as trustworthy, is both profound and introspective.

He asserts:

'It should be noted that the purpose behind the in-depth discussion of the Ghadeer tradition and providing the proofs of its reliability is my observation of Shaikh al-Islam Ibne Taymiyyah's view regarding the Hadeeth of Ghadeer. He (Ibne

Taymiyyah) states: The first part of the Ghadeer narration is weak (i.e. unreliable) and the remaining part is null and void...and in my opinion the comment of Shaikh al-Islam is superficial. In an inordinate haste to arrive at a conclusion about the weakness of the hadith of Ghadeer, he ignored taking into consideration the reliability of its chains of narrators.

(Silsilah al-Ahaadeeth al-Saheehah, H. No.1750)

Note:

The confession of Sheikh Nasir al-Deen Albaani with regards to the reliable nature of the Hadeeth of Ghadeer underscores the fact that there is no deceit or error in the transmission of the tradition of Ghadeer. His comment on Shaikh al-Islam Ibne Taymiyyah's view on the Hadeeth i.e. 'the first part of the Ghadeer narration is weak (unreliable) and the remaining part is null and void...' is that Shaikh al-Islam has made an inaccurate conclusion and bent on disguising truth as falsehood. Clearly, his intent is to mislead generations of Muslims and ruin their hereafter.

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places enjoy a higher status due to their association with an auspicious event or thing. The same is true for certain eras and times like Lailatul Qadr. If the celebration is organized on the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) birthday or the day of Ghadeer, it is so, since the occasion is blessed and holy.

In conclusion, we pray to Allah – the High – to safeguard us from such doubts and hasten the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.t.f.s.). Aameen!

Exegesis of the Verse of Wilayat from the Ahle Sunnah perspective

There are numerous Quranic verses proclaiming the guardianship and Imamate of our Master – Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Of these, some verses allude to his mastership in a manner that makes his Imamate more evident for the Muslims than the splitting of the moon which Allah effected to establish the Prophethood of His Beloved – Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.). Put simply, the content and context of such verses so clearly establish the mastership and guardianship of our Master (a.s.) that the subject, although a matter of intense dispute between the two Islamic sects, has reached the level of consensus among the reputed scholars of both sects – Shias and Ahle Sunnah. Of course, some bigoted and arrogant individuals continue to reject these verses, but that is only to be expected from individuals steeped in prejudice and haughtiness.

Among the verses that clearly establish the mastership of our Master – Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is the 55th verse of Surah Maaidah:

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

Let us refer to the exegesis of the Ahle Sunnah scholars regarding this Quranic verse to establish our claim regarding the mastership of Imam Ali b. Taalib (a.s.).

First Tradition

The reputed and illustrious interpreter of the Holy Quran Ahmed b. Muhammad al-Saalabi

records in his Tafseer ‘Al-Kashf wa Al-Bayaan’ that Sadi, Utbah b. Abil Hakeem and Ghaalib b. Abdullah relate that the Quranic verse

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

refers to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) when he offered his ring (as zakaat) to the beggar, while bowing in prayers in the Mosque (of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)).

Then al-Saalabi writes: We were informed by Abul Hasan Muhammad b. Qasim al-Faqeeh, who was informed by Abdullah b. Ahmed al-Sharaani and he was informed by Abu Ali Ahmed b. Ali b. Razeen and he was informed by Muzaffar b. Hasan al-Ansaari and he was informed by al-Sari b. Ali al-Warraaq and he was informed by Yahya b. Abdul Hameed al-Hemaani and he was informed by Qais b. Rabee and he was informed by Amash and he was informed by Ibaayah b. al-Rabee and he was informed by Abdullah b. Abbas (r.a.) while he was standing near the Zamzam and addressing an audience thus

‘The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said...’.

Soon a person wearing a turban rose and repeated the words ‘The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said...’ after Abdullah b. Abbas (r.a.) so as to endorse Abdullah b. Abbas’ (r.a.) claim that the words were indeed narrated by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Since the man’s turban concealed his face, his identity was not apparent to the onlookers.

Finally Ibne Abbas (r.a.) exclaimed – I beseech

you in the name of Allah to disclose your identity.

The man unveiled himself and addressed the audience:

O people; those who know me know me. Those who don't know me should know that I am Jundab b. Junaadeh al-Badri – Abu Zarr al-Ghaffaari. I have heard directly from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and if I lie may my ears go deaf and I have seen the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and if I lie may my eyes go blind. I heard him (s.a.w.a.) say – Ali is the leader of the virtuous ones and the killer of the apostates. The one who helps Ali will be helped and the one who abandons him will be abandoned.

Know that once I was praying the afternoon prayers (Salaat-e-Zohr) along with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). A beggar approached the congregation and sought his needs from the praying ones but none entertained him (as they were engaged in congregational prayers). The beggar raised his hands skywards and complained – O Lord, bear witness that I sought from the Mosque of your Prophet (s.a.w.a.) but none fulfilled my need.

At that moment, Ali was bowing in prayers. He pointed the finger of his right hand, which bore a ring, in the direction of the beggar. The beggar advanced towards him and withdrew the ring from his finger. This incident occurred in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) concluded his prayers he raised his blessed head skywards and beseeched Allah:

O Lord, Moosa requested you – O Lord expand my chest for me, ease my affair

for me, untie the knots in my tongue so that my speech is comprehensible for the people and appoint my brother from my family as my vizier. Through him strengthen my back and make him a partner in my affair.

(Surah Taha (20): 25-32)

Then you responded through a revelation on him – We will strengthen your arm with your brother, and We will give you both an authority, so that they shall not reach you; (go) with Our signs; you two and those who follow you shall be uppermost.

(Surah Qasas (28): 35)

O Lord, I am Muhammad, your Prophet and your chosen one. O Lord, expand for me my chest and ease my affair and appoint from my family my brother Ali as a successor and strengthen my back through him.

Abu Zarr (r.a.) narrates – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had not yet completed his supplication when Jibraeel (a.s.) descended and said: **O Muhammad, read!** The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked: *What should I read?* Jibraeel (a.s.) answered: Read the verse

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

Second Tradition

The respected interpreter of the Holy Quran – Razeen in his book – Al-Jamo Bain al-Sihaah al-Sittah has related from Saheeh al-Nesaa'i that Ibne Salaam narrates – I was with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) when I said – Some people oppose us staunchly only because we

acknowledge Allah and His Prophet. They have pledged that they will ex-communicate us. At that moment this verse was revealed:

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

After this, Hazrat Bilaal (r.a.) recited the call for the afternoon prayers (Salaat-e-Zohr). Muslims congregated for the prayers. They were bowing, when a beggar sought alms. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) offered his ring, while he was bowing. The beggar informed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) about this, on which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) recited the two Quranic verses.

(Al-Jamo Bain al-Sihaah al-Sittah, vol. 3 narrated from Saheeh-e-Muslim)

Third Tradition

Muwaffaq b. Ahmad records the correspondence between Muawiyah and Amr-e-Aas regarding Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

Amr-e-Aas responded to Muawiyah (when he invited Amr to join forces with him to rebel against Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)) – O Muawiyah you are fully aware that there are numerous virtues of Ali (a.s.) mentioned in the Holy Quran and no one in the world shares these virtues with him.

For example

‘They fulfill vows...’

(Surah Insaan (76): 7)

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

(Surah Maaidah (5): 55)

‘Is he then who has with him clear proof from his Lord, and a witness from Him

recites it and before it (is) the Book of Musa, a guide and a mercy?...

(Surah Hud (11): 17)

‘Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant which they made with Allah...’

(Surah Ahzaab (33): 23)

‘...Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives...’

(Surah Shura (42): 23)

(Manaqib-e-Khwaarazmi, p 200)

When this verse (Surah Maaidah: 55), proclaiming the virtue of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), was revealed, Hassaan b. Saabit recited an elegy extempore:

O Abul Hasan, may my life and my blood be sacrificed on you.

As also all the things that fly on the earth. Will my praise and writing be squandered? By Allah, never! Praise in the way of Allah is never squandered.

You are the one who paid the poor-rate (Zakaat) while bowing.

May the entire nation be sacrificed on you, O the best of bowing ones!

Thus, Allah has bestowed on you the best guardianship (Wilayat).

And they have the most explicit religious laws in their midst.

In addition to the above, the renowned Ahle Sunnah scholar Al Haafiz al Kabir Ubaydillah b. Abdullah b. Ahmad who is more famous as al-Hakim al-Haskaani has documented close to twenty-five traditions related to this verse in his exegesis ‘Shawaahid al-Tanzeel’. All these traditions reiterate that the aforementioned verse was revealed in favour of Ameerul Momineen – Ali b. Abi Taalib (a.s.).

Despite such irrefutable evidences, some so-called scholars continue to claim that this exegesis is the concoction of the Shias in praise of Ameerul Ali (a.s.). One such person – Ahmad b. Abdil Haleem b. Taimiyyah, known as Ibne Taimiyyah, writes in his book ‘Minhaaj al-Sunnah’:

‘Some liars have fabricated the lie that the Quranic verse –

‘Only Allah is your Guardian and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow.’

refers to Ali when he granted the ring to the beggar as charity while engaged in prayers. The consensus of the Ahle Sunnah scholars is that the Shiite claim is false.’

The pride of the scholars of the Shiite creed, the highly knowledgeable, the great striver (in the way of Allah) – Shaikh Abdul Husain Amini (r.a.) has given a fitting rebuttal to this preposterous allegation in his invaluable book – Al Ghadeer.

(Al Ghadeer, vol. 3, p. 156)

However, the reality is that prejudice and a corrupt disposition blind certain Muslims from the obvious truths. They begin to imagine that traditions that have been related by the immaculate Imams (a.s.) and the memorizers of Quran (Huffaaz) are fabricated. They assume that traditions with chain of narrators terminating at eminent personalities and Salaf-e-Saaleh like Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) – Ali b. Abi Taalib (a.s.), Ibne Abbas (r.a.), Abu Zarr (r.a.), Ammaar (r.a.), Jaabir b. Abdullah Ansaari (r.a.), Abu Raafe, Anas b. Maalik, Musalma b. Kumail and Abdullah b. Salaam, are a pack of lies and totally unreliable

and untenable.

Clearly, Ibne Taimiyyah is way off the mark in his preposterous claims, living up to his reputation as a peddler of the most ludicrous assertions. His tall claims are baseless lacking any merit whatsoever, which should not surprise anyone. Even more laughable is his assertion that all Muslim scholars have a consensus on the interpretation of the 55th verse of Surah Maaidah being a fabrication of the Shias. Only Allah knows which Muslim scholars he is referring to; obviously they don’t exist in this world!

Let us review the scholars who have documented in their books and compilations the fact that the interpretation of the 55th verse of Surah Maaidah refers to none other than Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

Third Century after Hijrah

1. Al Qaazi al-Waqedi (died 207 AH)
2. Haafiz al-Haskaani (died 211 AH)
3. Haafiz Ibne Abi Shabeeh al-Kufi (died 239 AH)
4. Abu Jafar al-Iskaafi al-Motazali (died 240 AH)
5. Haafiz Abu Muhammad al-Kashi (died 249 AH)
6. Abu Saeed al-Asbah al-Kufi (died 257 AH)

Fourth Century after Hijrah

1. Haafiz Nesaai in his Saheeh (died 303 H)
2. The famous historian and interpreter of Quran – Muhammad b. Jarir Tabari (died 310 AH)
3. Ibne Abi Haatim al-Raazi (died 328 AH)

Fifth Century after Hijrah

1. Haafiz Abu Bakr Shiraazi (died 407 AH)

2. Haafiz Ibne Mordowayh al-Isfahaani (died 416 AH)
3. Abu Ishaq al-Saalabi (died 416 AH)
4. Haafiz Abu Noaim al-Isfahaani (died 430 AH)
5. Al-Maawardi al-Faqih al-Shaafei (died 450 AH)
6. Haafiz Abu Bakr al-Baihaqi (died 458 AH)
7. Haafiz Abu Bakr al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadi al-Shaafei (died 463 AH)
8. Haafiz Abu Hasan al-Wahidi al-Nishapoori (died 468 AH)

Sixth Century after Hijrah

1. Al-Faqih Abul Hasan Ali b. Muhammad al-Kiya al-Tabari al-Shaafei (died 504 AH)
2. Haafiz al-Firaa al-Baghawi al-Shaafei (died 516 AH)
3. Abul Hasan Razeen b. al-Abdari al-Aandalusi (died 534 AH) in his book Al-Jamo bain al-Sihaah al-Sittah from Saheeh al-Nesaa'i
4. Abul Qasim Jaarullah Mahmud al-Zamakhshari al-Kharazmi al-Hanafi (exp 538 A.H.)
5. Haafiz Samaani al-Shaafei (died 562 AH)
6. Al-Imam Qurtubbi (died 567 AH)
7. Ibne Asaakir Demeshqi (died 571 AH)
8. Haafiz Ibne Jauzi Hanbali (died 597 AH)

It must be noted that this is an abbreviated list of the most prominent scholars. Those who wish to venture into details can refer to the book of al-Ghadeer.

Evidently, Muslim scholars from the third up to the sixth century after Hijrah across the fields of jurisprudence (Fiqh), theology (Kalaam), traditions (Hadis), exegesis (Tafseer), history (Taariikh), etc have a consensus on the fact that the 55th verse of Surah Maaidah refers to none

other than Ameerul Momineen – Ali b. Abi Taalib (a.s.).

To substantiate an allegation falls squarely on the shoulders of the claimant. This raises the question as to why Ibne Taimiyyah has not taken the trouble of advancing evidence of the so-called fabrication of the interpretation of the 55th verse of Surah Maaidah by the Shias. This discussion must be evaluated in the context of Ibne Taimiyyah's suspect Islamic beliefs to which many of the Ahle Sunnah scholars both old and new have vehemently testified. Many of these scholars have even taken the extreme step of pronouncing him an apostate. Of course, this is an independent topic that will be tackled on a different occasion. Unfortunately, such decrees and charges leveled against Ibne Taimiyyah have not prevented his followers from decorating him with titles like Shaikh al-Islam and adopting his twisted beliefs as a way of life.

It should also not be lost on the readers that those who claim to swear by the righteous companions (Salaf-e-Saaleh) have in fact rejected the traditions narrated by these very personalities to massage their egos and selfish desires. In effect, the Salaf-e-Saaleh is reduced to being a slogan and an eyewash for an unsuspecting populace.

We supplicate to Allah to give us success in following the true Salaf-e-Saaleh viz. the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his successors – the immaculate Imams (a.s.).

The Grave Consequences of Rejecting the Event of Ghadeer

It is an enormous obligation of Allah upon us that He sent us in this world as humans. Then He obliged us by making us the followers of the religion with which He is satisfied i.e. the religion of Islam. Finally, He bestowed upon us the greatest bounty viz. love and wilaayat of Ahle Bait (a.s.). Whoever values the benevolence and grace of Allah is fortunate and honourable in the eyes of Allah, while the one who rejects this bounty is destined for a painful chastisement in this world and the Hereafter.

After bestowing us with these priceless bounties, He has commanded us to obey and follow the Prophets (a.s.) and Messengers (a.s.) so that we may achieve success, salvation and security from dangers and disgrace in this world as the Hereafter. It is noteworthy that our acts of obedience and disobedience are of no consequence to Allah. It is for our own benefit that we have been invited towards Allah's obedience and warned about incurring His wrath in matters of disobedience.

Allah, due to His infinite knowledge and wisdom, was aware of the rebellious, defiant and oppressive nature of man. Thus, He established for Him numerous lamps of guidance. He granted man the bounty of intellect and understanding. At the same time, He also sent forth a series of guides, along with a divine course (Shariah) to dispel the darkness of ignorance and misguidance as He declares in the Holy Quran:

'O ye who believe! Give your response to Allah and His Messenger, when He calls you to that which will give you life; and know that Allah comes in between a man and his heart, and that it is He to Whom ye shall (all) be gathered.

(Surah Anfaal (8): Verse 24)

'It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path.'

(Surah Ahzab (33): Verse 36)

'So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and refrain from what he restrains you. And fear Allah; Surely, Allah is strict in Punishment.'

(Surah Hashr (59): Verse 7)

However, history, biographies, traditions (ahaadeeth) and Quranic exegesis (tafaaseer) are witness to the fact that there has been a group of people, who openly and deliberately opposed the orders of Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and refused to obey their commands.

Among the explicit commands that this group of people refused to submit to after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was the divine endorsement of Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) in Ghadeer-e-Khumm as the successor of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). This group of 'Muslims' either rejected the

endorsement of Ghadeer outright or feigned ignorance about it. But this is an event whose reality is as manifest as the midday sun. If anyone was to deny the midday sun, it will have no effect on the sun but such a person will risk losing his reputation in society. Also, notable is that the sun continues to provide benefits to those who reject its very existence. Same is the case with the event of Ghadeer. People have denied it but this has had no effect on the status and position of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). On the contrary, the world continues to benefit from the grace and favours of his Imam.

By rejecting the event of Ghadeer – wherein the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had appointed an infallible Imam (a.s.) as a guide for the nation and as his own successor – the enemies have inflicted a colossal loss on not just Islam but on the entire humanity. Indeed, this is an irrevocable loss that has no recompense whatsoever. The scholars of Ahle Sunnah, themselves have openly spoken about the horrendous consequences of denying Ghadeer. We enumerate a few dreadful effects of denying Ghadeer, as mentioned by the scholars of Ahle Sunnah.

1. Position of Caliphate changed into Rulership

Dr. Ahmed Mahmood Subhi says, ‘The ideologies of the Ahle Sunnah concerning allegiance, politics and principles have led to evil results. The first three caliphs – based on their whims and fancies – would often issue edicts and rulings that were contradictory to the cardinal principles of Islam and the laws of the Shariah. Then how can one expect to get the real picture of Islam, upon which all Muslims are unanimous?

(Nazariyyat al-Islamiyya laday al-Shia al-Isna Ashariyya, p. 501)

In another book he writes, ‘By appointing his son as the caliph, Muawiyah (Ibn Abi Sufyan) introduced an innovation in religion – that of dynastic rule. This move of Muawiyah disrupted everything that the Shariah preached. The Sunnah of the early companions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was trampled and discarded; a new order was established. The Islamic caliphate clashed with the kings of Persia and Byzantine. Soon, Caliphate was converted to Kingship. In the words of Haafiz, ‘Caliphate was turned into the glamour and adornment of kingship’

(Al-Nazma Al-Islami Nishaaetha wa Tatawurrha, p. 267)

He writes further, ‘The atrocities and oppression that became widespread in the name of caliphate brought a lot of disgrace to the pure religion of Islam, while this divine religion is free from such shameful acts. The sins of all these crimes will be credited to the account of all the rulers responsible for the injustices and tyrannies.’

(Ibid., p. 279)

2. Oppression and Inequity: Part of Caliphate

Haafiz is considered among the eminent scholars of the Ahle Sunnah. He has praised the reign of Usman, the third Caliph, but has been critical of Muawiyah’s style of functioning. He writes, ‘The rule of Muawiyah is characterised by excessive oppression and tyranny. He oppressed not only the Muhaajir and the Ansaar but he also disregarded the laws of the Shariah. Even in the ‘Year of Consensus’, the Muslims were not safe from the oppressive and barbaric acts of their Caliph. In reality, that year was not the ‘Year of Consensus’; rather it was the year of

oppression, tyranny, atrocities, discord and barbarism. The Caliphate of the time resembled the rulership of Caesar and was rooted in the attachment for rulership and palaces.

(Rasaael-e-Jaahiz, pp. 292-297, article 11)

Comment: Who are these guardians of Islam, these writers and authors, who wield the power of the pen and extol the Caliphate of Usman – in which he gave a free hand to Muawiyah, favored Marwan b. Hakam (who was exiled by the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)) and squandered public treasury as if it was his personal property? Yet, Usman finds favor with these writers and intellectuals and his reign extolled! Indeed ‘if the first brick of the wall is crooked, then its effect will be seen in the entire wall’. If only they had not hidden and concealed the event of Ghadeer, the religion of Islam would have been spared condemnation.

3. Ignoring the commands of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) concerning Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

The people chose to overlook the numerous virtues of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) enumerated by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They ignored the exhortations of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) concerning his (s.a.w.a.) Ahle Bait (a.s.). They went to the extent of shedding the blood of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and appointed a corrupt person like Yazid to the noble position of Imam. Ibn Qutaibah writes, ‘The Jahmiyyah and the Mushbiyyah have lowered the personality of Ali (a.s.) and have denied him (a.s.) his lawful position. Thus, they became deviated and misguided. They oppressed and killed the Ahle Bait (a.s.) unjustly. Due to their ignorance, they deprived them (a.s.) of their rightful position of

Imamat and went to the extent of labeling them (a.s.) as the ‘chiefs of rebels and mischief mongers’ (we seek refuge in Allah!). Differences among the people denied the Ahle Bait (a.s.) of their divine position. Rather, a degraded and lowly person like Yazid b. Muawiyah was appointed as the caliph based on the so-called consensus (Ijmaa) of the Muslims.’

(Al-Ikhtelaf fil Lafz wa Radde ala Jahmiyyah wa Mushbiyyah, pp. 47-49)

4. Alterations in Religion and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

There is no denying the fact that after the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) demise, many beliefs / actions were introduced in religion that had nothing to do with Islam. Today, Muslims not only practice these innovations but consider them as an inseparable part of Islam! Here is not the place to enlist all those innovations. Interested readers can refer to the book ‘Al Nass wal Ijtehad’ by the noted scholar, Sayyed Sharafuddin Musawi (r.a.), which has been translated in numerous languages including English and Urdu. We will refer to only one of the objections raised by the famous Sunni scholar, Maqrizi who says, ‘Verily, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was correct when he said that after his demise there will come caliphs who will pass decrees that will have no relation with the Quran and religion and (in this way) they will alter the Sunnah’

(Al-Nizaa wa al-Takhasum, vol. 12, pp. 315-317)

5. Undeserving people rose to the Position of Authority leading to Widespread Bloodshed, especially of the Early Companions

Ibn Hazm al-Zaaheri writes, ‘Yazid b.

Muawiyah left his tainted and detestable influence on the religion of Islam. In the early days of his reign, he killed Imam Husain (a.s.) and his (a.s.) family. Later, he imprisoned Abdullah b. Zubair in the precincts of Ka'bah, bringing disrepute to Islam. In the last days of his rule, he attacked the inhabitants of Madinah and put to sword many old and pious companions as well as other respectable people of the society during the event of Harra.

(Jamhoorato Ansaab al-Arab, p. 112)

In another book, he writes, 'The Bani Umayyah discarded the 'takbeer' from the prayers and initiated the Sermon of Eidul Fitr and Eidul Azha before the prayers. This innovation became so prevalent that it spread across all Islamic nations. Today, because of such rampant innovations and alterations, only the actions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) can be considered to be in consonance with true Islam.'

(Al-Mohalla, vol. 1, p. 55)

6. The Exegesis of the following verse in Tafseer-e-Aaloosi

'We did not make the dream which We showed you, but as a trial for men – as also the Cursed Tree (mentioned) in the Quran: And We scared them; but it only increases their inordinate transgression!'

(Surah Israa (17): Verse 60)

Abu Sina Aaloosi writes in the exegesis of the above verse narrating from Ibn Jurair Ibn Abi Haatim, Ibn Morduwah and Bayhaqi concerning the dream of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). In this dream, he (s.a.w.a.) saw that the Bani Umayyah (in the form of monkeys) had ascended on his (s.a.w.a.) pulpit. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) became distressed and restless after seeing this dream.

Allah revealed this verse at that time.

(Tafseer-e-Aaloosi, under verse 60 of Surah Bani Israel (17))

7. The Desecration and Plundering of the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah

Dr. Taha Husain Misri writes, 'Allah has emphasised the greatness and purity of Makkah in the Holy Quran and He has granted honour to Madinah too. But the Bani Umayyah considered looting and plundering of these cities as permissible. The sanctity of Madinah was trampled on three different occasions. The first occasion was when Yazid Ibn Muawiyah attacked the city of Madinah and slaughtered its inhabitants mercilessly. Later, his son Abdul Malik b. Yazid b. Muawiyah followed the footsteps of his evil father and committed a similar dastardly act. Finally, Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan appointed Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf as the governor of Madinah and gave him blanket permission to plunder and loot the city. What followed was a series of atrocities and oppression that send a chill down the spine of every reader of history. All these crimes were committed only to force the people of these two venerable cities to submit to the unjust rule of the progeny of Abu Sufyan and Marwan.

On the orders of Yazid Ibn Muawiyah, Ibn Ziyad mercilessly killed Imam Husain (a.s.) and his (a.s.) family and made captives the women from the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) progeny. The public treasury became the personal property of the caliphs and they squandered it according to their whims and desires, paying scant regards to the rights of Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.).

(Miraat al-Islam, pp. 268-270)

At another place he writes, 'Intimidation, rebellion and threats had taken firm roots in the reign of Bani Umayyah. Ziyad and his son

(Ubaydullah) unleashed a reign of terror throughout the Muslim empire in order to consolidate the rule of Bani Umayyah. The Bani Umayyah turned a blind eye to their atrocities and gave them complete freedom to perpetrate heinous crimes. After Ziyad and his son, Hajjaj was appointed as the governor of Iraq and he surpassed them all in oppression and tyranny.

(Miraat al-Islam, p. 272)

In another book, 'Fitnah al-Kubra', Dr Taha writes, 'Imam Ali (a.s.) was the closest individual to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He was raised and nurtured in his (s.a.w.a.) lap. Ali (a.s.) was the trustee of all the trusts that had been entrusted to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). On the basis of the 'brotherhood' established by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) between the Muhaajir and the Ansaar, Imam Ali (a.s.) was also the brother of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He (a.s.) was the son-in-law of Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.) as well as the father of all Imams (a.s.). Ali (a.s.) inherited all the knowledge and sciences from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and was his (s.a.w.a.) successor from the Ahle Bait (a.s.). On the basis of a reliable tradition from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the relation of Ali (a.s.) with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the same as that of Prophet Haroon (a.s.) with Prophet Moosa (a.s.).

If the Muslims had accepted these virtues of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and selected him based on all these merits, they would have adhered to the truth and would have been saved from all kinds of deviations and blunders. All these realities were a pointer and benchmark to the rightful claim of Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s.) to the position of Caliphate. Whether it was his proximity to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), or being in the forefront in all battles, or his impeccable and flawless character, or his in-depth knowledge

of the Shariah or his adherence to the Book and the Sunnah or his love for justice; all these attributes made him the most eligible and qualified person for the position of Imam and caliphate. The Haashimites were forcibly kept away from the position of Imam and it was the Quraish who wanted to deprive them of this position because they were afraid that the people would gather around the Bani Haashim.

(Al Fitnah al-Kubra, vol. 1, p. 152)

In another place he writes, 'The world may extol the virtues of Muawiyah but no one can deny the fact that his father is Abu Sufyan – the leader of the polytheists – who fought against Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the battles of Ohad and Khandaq, and his mother is Hind – who plotted to kill Hazrat Hamza (a.s.) and cut his (a.s.) stomach to eat his liver (but couldn't do so due to divine intervention), an act that caused untold grief to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

(Al Fitnah al-Kubra, vol. 2, p. 15)

8. Return of Idol-Worship in Islam

The famous historian from India, Sayed Amir Ali writes, 'The reign and manner of the caliphs of Bani Umayyah not only overturned the principles of caliphate but also rocked the very foundation of Islam.

(Mukhtasar Tareekh-e-Arab wa Tamuddun Islamiyyah, p. 63)

In another place he writes, 'The corrupt and evil reign of Muawiyah in Damascus once again introduced the idol worship of the pre-Islamic era in Islam and the pure teachings of Islam were erased.'

(Ruh al-Islam, p. 296)

9. Differences still persist in matters of caliphate

Dr. Ahmed Amin Misri writes in Yaum al-Islam, 'During the illness that ultimately led to

the demise of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), he (s.a.w.a.) had expressed his desire to name his successor. It has been mentioned in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim that in his last days, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had said, 'Give me a pen and paper so that I may write for you something that shall save you from destruction...' But the people who wanted to select a caliph from among themselves refused to obey his command and installed a leader from their side. Thus, even today you find so many differences and problems in matters of caliphate. Islam was radiant and strong at the time of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) but after his demise it lost its glory and splendor.

(Yaum al-Islam, p. 41)

Comment:

It is highly regrettable that Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) demand for pen and paper to write a will for the Muslims was rebutted by his so-called companions. This turned out to be catastrophic and marked the decline of Islam. Later, the corrupt rulers of Bani Umayyah and Bani Abbas – under the title of 'Zill-e-Ilahi' (Shadow of God) laid an intricate web of deception and treachery that trapped the best of their scholars. Thus, an edifice of deceit confronted the real and true Islam.

10. Denial of Heaven and Hell

Dr. Ali Sami Neshar writes, 'When Usman b. Affan became the caliph, Abu Sufyan advised him, 'After the tribes of Tameem (i.e. Abu Bakr's tribe) and Adi (i.e. Umar's tribe), you have finally received the caliphate. So now play with it like a ball and let its roots remain among the Bani Umayyah because caliphate is nothing but kingship and I doubt if there is anything like heaven and hell.

(Al-Nizaa wa al-Takhaasum, vol. 12, p. 31)

Comment:

Abu Sufyan was speaking to Usman b. Affan, who was the caliph of the Muslim nation. He was the first caliph from the Bani Umayyah. Their conversation reflects their mindset, character and the level to which they had accepted Islam. The deep rooted enmity in their hearts – right from the days of Badr, Hunain, Khandaq and Khaibar – manifested itself and they were hell-bent on destroying Islam. The nature of Abu Sufyan's advice reflects his venomous nature against Islam.

11. Greatest Calamity in the History of Mankind

The rejection of Ghadeer has had a calamitous impact not only on Islam but on the entire mankind. Abbas Mahmood Aqqad writes, 'After the caliphate of the initial caliphs, the reign of Bani Umayyah has had a devastating and harmful effect not only on Islam but on the entire mankind.

(Muawiyah fil Mizaan, vol. 3, p. 543)

The famous historian, Tabari narrates from Saeed b. Suwaid who says that Muawiyah once said to his people, 'I did not fight with you because I was keen to establish the prayers or uphold fasting or Hajj or pay the zakaat. Rather, I fought with you because I wanted to rule over you.'

(Muawiyah fil Mizaan, vol. 3, p. 611 from Tabari)

12. Innovations and un-Islamic rulings were given the name of Ijtihad

The enemies of Islam were not content with denying the Ahle Bait (a.s.), especially Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), of their lawful right to Imamatus. Rather, they did not want to give the Ahle Bait (a.s.) the slightest chance to establish their superiority and went to great lengths to realize

this aim. So, when the Muslim nation was confronted with new religious problems and complexities, they denied the Ahle Bait (a.s.) the right to deliver religious verdicts in the light of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah. Left with no option, people began to indulge in the whimsical interpretation of religion. Thus, the inept caliphs opened the door of whimsical interpretation (which they cleverly named as Ijeteaad) in the religion of Islam.

Professor Mohammad Khalid of Yarmuk University (Jordan) writes, 'After the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the Islamic leadership (Caliphate) manifested itself in a new dimension and colour. Due to this, the door of 'Ijeteaad' was opened. People started talking about the role of a caliph and his mode of governing the masses. Laymen gave their views on matters of caliphate and religion, giving rise to a plethora of views and opinions and leading to the formation of numerous religious and political groups. People started discussing about the role of a Caliph and the norms for his selection. This led to the selection of caliphs based on different criteria'

(Al-Hawl al-Fikriyya lil Saqaafat al-Islamiyya, vol. 3, p. 16)

13. Responsibility of all crimes, past and future, due to differences in the selection of a caliph

The usurping of the right of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) led to painful and shameful consequences. The crimes and atrocities that were perpetrated in the past and are being inflicted till today are a result of the denial of the position of Imamate to Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). Many people were beheaded unjustly and entire generations were wiped out by the enemies of Ahle Bait (a.s.). Pious, virtuous

and God-fearing companions, who were well-versed in the Holy Quran and had memorized it completely, were killed, imprisoned or debarred. But the greatest oppression was the martyrdom of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) after him. The blame and burden of all these atrocities and transgressions will certainly fall on the neck of that person who first refused to accept the divine endorsement concerning the caliphate and Imamate of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). In his lust for power and pelf, he appointed a caliph from his own side.

Mohammed Rasheed Reza, writes in Tafseer al-Munaar, 'The Bani Umayyah ruined the Islamic caliphate and weakened its principles. They laid the foundation of 'personality-based' caliphate. Thus, they will be responsible for their own acts as well as of those who followed them on this path till the Day of Qiyaamah.

(Tafseer al-Munaar, vol. 5, p. 188)

Religion was beset with various problems and issues only because people chose to deny the 'divine order' and the command of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). If the Muslims would have obeyed the order of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), they would have not been embroiled in differences and deviations. The scholars of the Ahle Sunnah have confessed to the adverse consequences of rejecting Ghadeer and lamented the ensuing deviations that cropped up in religion. Of course, the true followers of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) have been saved from all these deviations and it is the blessing of these immaculate personalities (a.s.) that the Shias have remained steadfast on the straight path of guidance.

O Allah! Keep us firm and steadfast on the wilaayah of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and his infallible progeny (a.s.) till our last breath. Aameen!

Celebrations: A Sunnah, not Bidah

Love and mastership (Wilayat) and expression of displeasure (Bara'at) are the cornerstones of Islamic teachings. We understand the meaning of empowering goodness and prohibiting evil from them. These were the aims of Imam Husain's (a.s.) martyrdom. Who is more unfortunate than a Muslim who neither understands the concepts of wilayat and bara'at nor acts upon them?

In pursuit of this aim, a tradition prevalent among the Muslims through the centuries is the organizing of celebrations and gatherings on special occasions. Be it the birth of the infallible Imams (a.s.) or the appointment of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) (Be'sat) or Ascent to the Heavens (Meraaj). Organizing celebrations and gatherings characterizes the religious feelings of the masses. Their remembrance enlivens the events and their discussion refreshes the details. Thus, such celebrations possess great importance, benefit and blessings. This work is undertaken in conformity with its inherent significance, whether it is the birthday of an Imam (a.s.) or the appointment of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) or the Ascent, etc.

Muslims attend these celebrations on special occasions with the intention of gaining success and receiving spiritual benefits from the Infallibles (a.s.) and in this way achieve great blessing and rewards by their (a.s.) providence. But since their inception, the Wahhabis are not only bereft of these blessings and rewards, they also want to keep others away from them. Hence, they use a plethora of guile and insinuations to impede these celebrations and

thus, actualize the desires of enemies of Islam, perhaps wittingly. For, the enemies of Islam would never want the Muslims to keep their sacred beliefs active and renew their divine pact every year keeping the Islamic spirit within them alive and well.

Keeping the importance of this topic in mind, we present a detailed list of Wahhabi objections and their replies.

The Wahhabi Sedition:

1. Ibn Taymiyyah says: The second promise 'of the occasions'. It is that day when certain events occurred. For instance, 18th ZilHijjah, is considered as Eid (feast/ festival) by everyone when it has no base or foundation because the Salaf-e-Saleh (righteous predecessors) and the Ahle Bait (a.s.) have not deemed it so. Eid is defined as that day when the Islamic law, not innovation (bidat), is followed. This is similar to what the Christians practice, celebrating the events of Hazrat Esa's (a.s.) life as festivals.
(Iqteza al-Serat al-Mustaqeem, pp. 392-395)
2. Sheikh Abd al-Aziz b. Baaz remarks: It is prohibited to hold commemorations for the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and others. This act is an innovation in religion because the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), rightly guided caliphs and the second generation companions (Taabe'een) have not performed this act.
(Majmua Qazaayaa wa Maqaalaat Matnuah, vol. 1, p. 183)
3. The congregation of Wahhabi Muftis opines: To remember the Prophets (a.s.) and the righteous on their birthdays and their

demises, enlivening them, raising the standard (Alam), burning candles or lighting up their graves and organizing commemorations near their graves is not permissible because these are among the innovations introduced in religion and certified as polytheism. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Prophets (a.s.), the Righteous and the Salaf-e-Saleh have not acted thus. None of the companions, Muslims and the Imams of Muslims have done so in the first three centuries of the Hijrah or better known as golden centuries.

(Al-Lijnat al-Daimah min al-Futur, p. 174)

4. Ibn Fauzan postulates: There are numerous innovations in this era. For example, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on 12th of Rabi al-Awwal and organizing gatherings for it.
(Al-Bidat, Ibn Fauzan, pp. 25-27)
5. Ibn Usaimin says: Celebrating the birthdays of children was not the practice of Muslims and bears resemblance to the enemies of God and comes into the Islamic fold through inheritance of external traits. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) advises: The one who resembles a community will be counted among them (on the day of Qiyamat).

(Fataavaa Manaar al-Islam, vol. 1, p. 43)

Celebrations are a manifestation of love and enmity

Love and hatred are among the most powerful human emotions. They are a sign of man's inclination (or the lack of it) towards someone/something.

Love is obligatory

It is clear from rational and traditional evidence that it is necessary and compulsory

upon people to love certain individuals:

(1) Allah the High

The foremost duty of man is to love Allah. And that too in the sense that Allah, the High is Unique and Alone in His characteristics and excellence. All creation is dependent on His Lofty Being. Hence, the Almighty announces in the Holy Quran (Sura Tauba(9): verse 24):

Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinfolks and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command And Allah does not guide the transgressing people.

(2) The Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.)

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is among the chosen individuals, who should be loved and befriended for the sake of Allah particularly because he is the channel of divine bestowal in both the material and the existential bounty. This is the reason for his inclusion with the Almighty in the verse and love for him is also made compulsory.

Love Allah because he provides you sustenance and love me for the sake of Allah's love.

(Mustadrakal-Hakim, vol. 3, p. 149)

The qualities and excellences of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) are such that it attracts the fair-minded and love for him germinates in their hearts.

(3) Ahle Bait (a.s.)

Among the people whose love is obligatory is the Ahle Bait of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Barring

the fact that these individuals are the summation of distinctions and excellence and along with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) are the channel of divine bestowal for both the material and existential grace and bounty, the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has commanded love for them as is clear from the tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

Love my Ahle Bait (a.s.) on account of my love.

Reasons for loving the AhleBait (a.s.):

- (a) The relation of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).
- (b) Ahle Bait (a.s.) are loved by Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.).
- (c) Love of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is the recompense of the Prophetic message.
- (d) People will be questioned regarding the love for Ahle Bait (a.s.) on the Day of Judgment.
- (e) The Holy Quran is companion of Ahle Bait (a.s.).
- (f) The love of Ahle Bait (a.s.) is a prerequisite for belief.
- (g) Ahle Bait (a.s.) are the Ark of Salvation.
- (h) The love of Ahle Bait (a.s.) is a condition for the acceptance of worship and service.
- (i) Ahle Bait (a.s.) are the cause of the earth's security.

Clearly, organizing celebrations and feasts is an expression of love for the beloved. We know that love varies in intensity from person to person and is not characterized merely through eagerness and enthusiasm of the heart; rather it manifests itself and is reflected in the action and behavior of the person. But the outward evidence need not be limited to obedience and submission (as people maintain), but is expressed in many other ways as will be clear with proofs

regarding love. The effects of love can be listed as such:

- (a) Obedience and submission
- (b) Visiting the beloved
- (c) Respect of the loved ones
- (d) Fulfilling the needs of the beloved
- (e) Defending the beloved
- (f) Grief and lament in separation from the loved one as in case of separation of Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) from Prophet Yaqub (a.s.)
- (g) Protecting the effects of the beloved
- (h) Respecting the children and lineage of the loved ones
- (i) Kissing the things which are ascribed to the beloved
- (j) To organize celebrations on the birthdays of the loved ones and to mourn them as well.

The concept of festivals and commemoration in the Holy Quran

Reflecting upon the verses, we find commemorations are considered as virtuous actions in Quran. This has been confirmed and recommended by Quran:

(1) The Place of Ibrahim (a.s.)

Allah, the High, instructs:

Take 'Maqaame Ibraahim' as a place of payer.

Allah – the High –commands Muslims to adopt as sacred the spot where Prophet Ibrahim's (a.s.) feet were positioned and establish it as a place for prayer. In this way, the memory of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) and the construction of Kaaba will remain alive in the hearts of the Muslims forever.

Bukhari records in his 'Sahih' that during the construction of Ka'bah, Prophet Ismail (a.s.) brought the stones and Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.)

did the masonry, till such time that the walls had risen to a height. Then Ibrahim (a.s.) stood on a stone to continue his work till the House of Allah was complete.

(Saheeh al-Bukhaari, Kitab al-Anbiya, vol. 6, p. 158)

(2) Safaa and Marwah

Allah the High states:

Surely the Safa and the Marwah are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them both; and whoever does good spontaneously, then surely Allah is Grateful, Knowing.

(Sura Baqarah (2): verse 158)

The Almighty has made the traversing between Safa and Marwah as an essential part of Hajj pilgrimage in memory of the efforts of Janab-e-Haajarah (s.a.).

Bukhari says: Ibrahim (a.s.) had left Haajarah (s.a.) and his son Ismail (a.s.) in the land of Makkah where water was scarce. They were both very thirsty. The son struggled with thirst and the mother ran towards Safaa to see if she could locate water. But she could not find anybody. Disheartened, she moved to the hillock of Marwah, but to no avail. This was repeated seven times. Ibn Abbas narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that for this reason, the pilgrims traverse between the Safaa and Marwah seven times.

(Saheeh al-Bukhaari, Kitab al-Anbiya, vol. 2, p. 158)

(3) Ritual Sacrifice

Allah the High declares:

“So We gave him the good news of a boy, possessing forbearance. And when he attained to working with him, he

said: O my son! Surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider then what you see. He said: O my father! Do what you are commanded If Allah pleases, you will find me of the patient ones. So, when they both submitted and he threw him down upon his forehead. And We called out to him saying: O Ibrahim! You have indeed shown the truth of the vision surely thus do We reward the doers of good. Most surely this is a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice.”

(Sura Saaffaat (37): verse 101-107)

In appreciation of the great self-sacrifice, the Almighty ordered the (Hajj) pilgrims to present ritual sacrifice at Mena in conformity with Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) and his momentous examination and redemption thereof.

The convening of gatherings and commemorations in the light of traditions

On referring to traditions, we discover that it has defined celebrations as permissible and virtuous viz.

- (1) Ibn Qataadah narrates in Saheeh al-Muslim: The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was questioned about the Monday fast. He replied:
It is because I was born on Monday and the Holy Quran was also revealed on that day.

(Saheeh al-Muslim, vol. 2, p. 819)

- (2) Baihaqi relates from Anas:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) performed ‘Aqiqah’ after he was chosen for the position of Prophethood. Whereas, it has come in traditions that the Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) grandfather Hazrat Abdul Muttalib(a.s.) had performed his Aqiqah seven days after his holy birth.

Suyuti comments: Aqiqah is never repeated.

Hence, this action should be based on the premise that it was his way of thanksgiving to the Lord for giving him life and making him a blessing for the universe. Emulating the action of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), we should also get together, organize a feast and perform other acts on the birthday of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which will bring us closer to the Allah's satisfaction and be a token of our thanksgiving to Allah.

(3) Hafiz b. Nasir al-Deen Damishqi adds:

It has been narrated vide correct (reliable) chain of narrators that the chastisement of Abu Lahab is reduced on Mondays for he had freed his slave girl Nuwabiah in gratification of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) birth.

It is abundantly clear from the above the tradition that the punishment of an unbeliever is reduced exclusively due to such a diminutive act of affection for the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). What great reward and blessing then, awaits a believer on organizing feasts and celebrations for the same!

Ahle Sunnah views on 'Meelad' (Birthdays)

The scholars of Ahle Sunnah have praised celebration of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) birthdays. They have counted such acts among good and recommended deeds (as per religious law). Some of their opinions are mentioned below:

(1) Qastalaasni notes in Mawaaheb al-Daniyyah: Throughout history, Muslims have celebrated the month of Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) birthday as a festival. They have organized feasts, made contributions to charity, helped the poor and showed their happiness and joy through gatherings of eulogies and poetry...May Allah's Mercy

encompass those who carry out such great work!

(Mawaaheeb al-Lazimah, vol. 1, p. 128)

(2) Suyuti opines: I have been questioned regarding poetry and eulogies (Qasidah and Na't) in the month of Rabi al- Awwal. Is this act recommended or disapproved in religious law? Will the person doing this act be rewarded? The eulogy recitals and the birth celebrations are held so that people gather, recite some Quranic verses and traditions in praise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). In the end, they are invited to partake of food that is specifically organized for this purpose. This is a virtuous deed; both the organizer and the participants are rewarded and recompensed. This is because this act increases the respect for the status and honour of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and people's expression of their joy and happiness on the birthday of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

(Al-Haawi Li al-Fataavaa, vol. 1, p. 486)

(3) Shiekh Abdullah Haravi better known as Habashi states: To organize a celebration in memory of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is a recommended act and its denial is baseless. We should actually call the act 'Sunnat-e-Hasanat' (an exemplary tradition).

(Al-Ravaij al-Zakiah, p. 33)

Moreover, numerous scholars and elders have presented abundant proofs on the recommendation of the celebration of festivals and commemorations. We have already had a brief purview of this.

We now focus our attention on the doubts and questions raised by the Wahhabis against this practice.

(a) A gathering established in memory of

someone is akin to worshipping someone other than God?

Answer: It is an established fact that the feeling of worship is created when you respect and honour something/someone believing it/him to be God. Hence, if this belief is absent, then it does not amount to 'worship'.

(b) Such types of celebrations and congregation give rise to the prohibited such as mixed gatherings of men and women, music and song.

Answer: Sin is prohibited at all places and times, whether it is a feast and celebrations or any other place. But a recommended act cannot be struck down by issuing a blanket edict (fatwa) of prohibition due to sins which are committed only in specific celebrations. In other words, only specific celebrations that are exposed to the prohibited must be disallowed and not all celebrations.

(Al-Haawi Li al-Fataavaa by Jalaaluddin Suyuti, vol. 1, p. 89)

(c) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.): Do not consider your houses as graves and my grave as Eid. Ibn Qayyim has used this tradition as argument for prohibition of ceremonies and celebrations.

Answer:

- (i) Firstly, the proof is limited to a single place, i.e. particular to the grave of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and not to all places. It is not a blanket edict.
- (ii) Secondly, it is obvious that man should be humble and modest before the grave of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and it is not a place for celebrations. But there appears no objection in organizing such ceremonies at other locations.

Sabki observes: This tradition can also imply

that: Do not consider my grave as Eid day rather recite Ziyarat, salaam and supplications near it.

(d) Salaf-e-Saleh have not performed this action

Answer:

- (i) It is clearly established as rule that non-performance of any action by an infallible is not proof of prohibition nor is performance of an act a surety of its obligatory nature. Conversely, it is a fact that if an act is not performed by the infallibles, then it is not obligatory and if it is performed then it is not prohibited. Non-performance is no argument for its prohibition.
- (ii) The practice and custom of Muslims till the time of Ibn Taymiyyah was that they conducted ceremonies and celebrations. And the Ahle Sunnah scholars have unanimously stated that Ijma (consensus) amounts to irrefutable proof of the validity of organizing such ceremonies.
- (iii) The decree prohibiting ceremonies first appeared in Islam at the time of Ibn Taymiyyah who claimed: Salaf-e-Saleh loved the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) more. If ceremonies were not prohibited, they would definitely have organized them. This is against the clear traditions of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.). The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) addressed his companions in a tradition and prophesized, 'A nation will soon be born who will befriend and love me more than you do'.

(Majma al-Zavaid, vol. 1, p. 66)

- (e) Is it an innovation (bidat) to specify a particular day for celebration and expression of love?

Answer: It is already established that certain

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