

Imamat, Nature and Morals Values

Islam is the only religion acceptable to Allah. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declared Islam to be the religion of nature. Every person is born on the religion of Islam but after birth he gets moulded as per the family and surroundings. If these effects have come from sources incompatible with human nature, they sit like dust on his nature but cannot destroy it and this nature expresses itself at a given opportunity. Hence, we see that the magicians of Pharaoh who considered the Pharaoh as their god, on receiving reminders from Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) immediately accepted the Lord of Moosa (a.s.) and fell in prostration to Him.

This natural recognition through which a person recognizes his God has been given to him before his birth in a prior world (known as Aalam-e-Zar or the world of particles). The Compassionate God knew that this person will get engrossed in the world's distractions, forget this recognition and be eligible for everlasting chastisement. Hence, due to his beneficence, He sent Prophets and Imams (a.s.) so that they draw the peoples' attention towards this and invite them to ponder on this point.

We also see that every person naturally feels the need for a guide in his existence. Some people take undue advantage of this natural need. We see that those who seek wealth present themselves as leaders for the people and the common man falls in the trap of treachery of such people. Hence, we see that even in the history of Islam, there were many who fooled the people by claiming to be Mahdi and destroyed their hereafter. Since this issue is related to human nature, it is not only found in Islam, but in every religion. We find such self proclaimed guides, who for the love of wealth, claim to be peoples' guides and the masses, due to the dust of worldly desires on their innate nature, follow these imposters.

How is it possible that Allah, who has arranged for every natural need of man, would not arrange for the natural need of a guide for the people who would help in cleaning the dust on his nature? Hence Allah, in Aalam-e-Zar itself, introduced the Imams (a.s.) along with Himself and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Unfortunately, just as man forgot his real God and started worshipping gods other than Him, similarly, he forgot the real divine guides and started to follow pseudo-guides.

Allah the Almighty has informed in Surat al-Mulk that this world is a place for examination and man will be evaluated as per his actions. It is clear that evil will gain power over goodness. Evil has two methods through which it attacks human nature, usurpation and seeking status. There are two aspects of usurping someone's rights. One aspect is of the usurper represented by those who seek wealth. The other aspect is the breach of trust

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The Future of Muslim Nation in the Traditions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Looking at the ups and the downs encountered by the history of Islam, one is compelled to ask whether the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was aware that after him the nation would fall in a perpetual abyss of disagreement and conflict; a conflict, which will not be limited to the caliphate but would cast its evil shadow on the entire religion of Islam. Everyone will act as per his whims and fancies deeming himself to be the savior of Islam. Was he (s.a.w.a.) totally unaware of the events that will unfold after him? If he (s.a.w.a.) was not uninformed – surely he (s.a.w.a.) was not – what steps did he (s.a.w.a.) take to prevent his ignorant nation from such evil plans? How did he (s.a.w.a.) ensure that the lamp of guidance, which he (s.a.w.a.) lit with his hands, does not lose its shine and people continue to be steadfast on the right path under its light? This article shall address such questions and it is for the readers to decide whether it has satiated their quest for answers.

The Holy Quran and Prophecies

The Holy Quran has clearly mentioned that the knowledge of the unseen exclusively belongs to Allah, for example it says:

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures– none knows them but He; and He

knows what is in the land and the sea, and there falls not a leaf but He knows it, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green nor dry but (it is all) in a clear book.”

(Surah An’aam: Verse 59)

At another place it says:

“And Allah’s is the unseen of the heavens and the earth; and the matter of the hour is but as the twinkling of an eye or it is higher still; surely Allah has power over all things.”

(Surah Nahl: Verse 77)

It also mentions in Surah Naml: Verse 65

“Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen but Allah; and they do not know when they shall be raised.”

However, the 26th and 27th verse of Surah Jinn mentions that where Allah is the Knower of the unseen with all its variants, He has granted it to whomsoever He pleased. Also, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was well aware of the discord that would erupt after him.

“(He is) the Knower of the unseen! So, He does not reveal His secrets to any, except to

him whom He chooses as a messenger; for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him”

Traditions and Prophecies

By reading the traditions of both major sects of Muslims, one can easily deduce that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was well aware of the discord that shall raise its evil head after him. He was also aware that this discord would not be limited to his successorship but would also extend to every law of Islam. We shall present some of these traditions for the insight of the readers.

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“My nation shall soon divide into seventy three sects one of which will enter paradise while the rest shall be the inhabitants of fire.”

(Sunan Ibn Maajah, vol. 3 p. 1332 tradition 3992; Sunan Tirmidhi vol. 4 p. 134 tradition 2778)

This tradition has been narrated by several companions like Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s), Anas Ibn Maalik, Saad Ibn Abi Waqqaas, Saadi Ibn Ajlaan, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Abdullah Ibn Umar, Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Aas, Amr Ibn Auf Mazaani, Auf Ibn Maalik al-Ashja’ee, Uwaymir Ibn Maalik and Muawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan amongst others.

Several scholars of the AhleTasannun have considered the above tradition as correct or widely transmitted. For instance, al-Nawawi in Faiz al-Qadeer, HaakimNishapuri in al-Mustadrak and Dhahabi in

Talkhees al-Mustadrak, Mashabati in Etesmaam, Safaareeni in Lawami’ al-Anwaar and NaasiruddinAlbaani in Silsilah al-Ahadees al-Sahiha.

The number seventy-three can be taken in its literal or metaphorical sense as to mean numerous sects. We are aware that Imamat is the fundamental reason for this discord and dissension.

Aafiyah Ibn Aamir narrates from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

“Surely on the Day of Judgment I shall be ahead of and a witness over you. By Allah I can see the pond of Kausar. I have been given the keys of the earth. I do not fear that you shall return to idolatry after me, but concerning the dispute regarding caliphate.”

(Sahih Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 174)

Ibn Abbas narrates from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

“On the day of Judgment my companions shall be driven towards hell. I will cry out! My Lord! (They are) My companions! My companions! I will be answered that they are those who returned to paganism after you and became apostates.”

(Sahih Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 110, Faizul Qadeer vol. 2, p. 21; Mustadrak vol.1, p. 128; Lawaami’ al-Anwaar, vol. 1 p. 93; Silsila al-Ahaadees al-Sahihah, vol. 1 p. 32)

One can find similar traditions in the Sihah of Ahle Tasannun that have been narrated by companions like Anas ibn Malik, Abu Hurairah, Abu Bakr, Abu Saeed Khudri, Asma bint Abi Bakr, Ayesha and Umm Salamah.

Shaikh Mahmood narrates from Abu Rayya Muqbili in Ilm Shafe that this tradition is widely narrated with respect to its meaning. However, we cannot apply it to those companions from the Muslims that turned to polytheism and idolatry after Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because Aafiyah Ibn Aamir narrates from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.),

“By Allah, I do not fear of you becoming polytheists after me. Rather I fear that after me you shall create difference and disputes”

Therefore the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would say in his traditions,

“Fire be for the one, fire be for the one who changes (the religion) after me.”

(Sahih Bukhari, vol. 7, p. 207; Sahih Muslim, vol. 7, p. 66)

We know that innovation in religion is different from polytheism.

Abu Alqamah narrates: It has been narrated in Mawaahib by Tabari Shafei that he told Ibn Ibaad: “Why did you not, like other people, pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr when others inclined to him?” He took me closer to himself and said, “By Allah I heard Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saying, “After I shall depart from this world the carnal desires of people shall overcome them and cause them to return to paganism. Then the truth will be with Ali and the book of Allah shall be in his hands. Do not pledge allegiance at the hands of anyone except that of his.”

(Ihqaq al-Haqq, vol. 2, p. 296)

Khaarazmi narrates from Abu

Ya’ala in Hanafi Manaqib that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Soon a discord shall arise after me. Then hold fast unto Ali, because he is the criterion between truth and falsehood.”

(Manaaqib of al-Khaarazmi, p. 105)

Ibn Asaakir, vide correct chain of narrators, narrates from Ibn Abbas:

“We were passing with Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Ali (a.s.) through the streets of Madinah when we came across a beautiful garden. Ali (a.s.) remarked as to how beautiful the garden is. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed that your garden in paradise is more beautiful than this. After this he glanced at the head and face of Ali (a.s.) and wept profusely. Ali (a.s.) asked, “What is making you weep so profusely?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied:

“This nation is harboring a jealousy in their hearts (against you) which they shall make evident after me.”

(Taariikh Ibn Asaakir, p. 834)

Abu Muayyah, the servant of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says:

“One night, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) woke me from sleep and asked me to accompany him to the graveyard of Baaqee’ so that he (s.a.w.a.) asks forgiveness for those resting therein. On reaching Baaqee’, he (s.a.w.a.) saluted its people and said:

“Corruption is heading towards you like the dark nights.”

He then sought forgiveness for the people of Baaqee’ and returned to his

bed and left this world in a few days.

(Al Kaamil Ibn Aseervol 2 p. 318)

Muhammad Baaqir as Sadr, while explaining the above points, says:

This is the same dissension that Janabe Zahra (s.a.) has hinted at in her sermon wherein she said:

“You feared dissension but were trapped into it. This is the same dissension but rather the root of all conflicts.”

O beloved daughter of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)! What has aggrieved your heart that you are unmasking the reality and informing about the dark future of your father’s nation?

Surely the government at the peak of its power then, is the root of all conflicts. Umar also remarked that the caliphate of Abu Bakr was an accident, from the evil of which Allah protected the Muslims.

(Tareekh al-Tabari, vol. 2, p. 235; Fadak in History by Sayed Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (r.a.))

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had three alternatives before him. It is well established that he (s.a.w.a.) was aware before hand of the impending conflict. The question is whether Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) took any precautionary steps to preempt this dissension. Any one of the following three possibilities can take place.

1. The negative way: That is the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was careless about his duties.
2. The constructive way: That is he (s.a.w.a.) consulted the people and acted accordingly.
3. The positive way with appointment:

That is he (s.a.w.a.) appointed someone to prevent and subdue this conflict.

The Proponents of First School of Thought

The first person to spread the rumor that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) left this world without making a will is Ayesha. She narrates that the head of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was in my lap when he breathed his last and did not make a will.

(Sahih Bukhari, vol. 2, p. 16)

Abu Bakr too in his last moments said: “I wanted to ask the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) about the caliphate in his last moments so that none disputes in it.”

(Tabari, vol. 5, p. 53)

At another place he says that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) left the people on themselves so that they choose the one they think is good for them.

(Tabari vol. 5 p. 53)

When Umar Ibn Khattab was told by his son not to leave his cattle unattended he replied:

“If I do so (leave my flock unattended) I shall tread the path of the Messenger of Allah, otherwise that of Abu Bakr.”

(Hilyah al-Awliyaa, vol. 1, p. 44)

Objections against the First Opinion

The thought that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) did not shoulder his responsibility properly leads to following objections:

1. This would mean that Holy

Prophet (s.a.w.a.) ignored the needs of Islam and the Muslims. We believe that Islam is a comprehensive religion that takes into consideration all human needs. How was it possible to ignore such an important duty?

2. This is against the conduct of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because he always, in his absence, even for a short duration, appointed a successor.
3. This thought is against the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because he himself said: *“One who spends a morning and is not concerned about the affairs of the Muslims is not from us”*
(Al-Kaafi, vol. 2, p. 163, H. 1)
4. This thought is against the conduct of the caliphs because all of them were concerned and appointed a successor for future.
5. This conduct is against that of the past Prophets (a.s.) because all of them appointed a successor and Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) certainly was no exception to this.

Objections against the Second Thought

1. If Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had adopted this way then it was necessary to lay down the conditions and the procedure to make such a selection, when in reality he did not do so.
2. Also people did not have the willingness and ability to carry out such a task. The people had at several times proved their disunity

as in the case of Hajar-e- Aswad and the battle with Bani Mustaliq. Last but not the least, the events of Saqifah is clearer than daylight.

3. It is very evident from the Holy Quran and traditions that the role of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was not limited to receiving and conveying revelation. Muslims are in need of such a person who would fill the vacuum after the departure of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).
4. Never was it a divine practice to allow the people to select their own Prophet, Messenger, Imam, etc. In other words, the people have absolutely no choice in this regard.

When Ali (a.s) was asked the reason he narrates the maximum traditions from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) than anyone else, he replied:

“Whenever I asked him a question he replied and when I remained silent, he narrated traditions for me.”

(Sahih Bukhari, vol. 8, p. 44; Tabaqaat Ibn Saad, vol. 2, p. 101)

At many occasions Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“I am the house of wisdom and you (O Ali) are its door.”

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 39, p. 341, H. 12, Chapter 90 narrating from al-Amaali of Shaikh Saduq (r.a.), p. 27, 7th Majlis)

At another place he (s.a.w.a.) said:

“I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate. Whoever wishes to acquire knowledge should approach its door.”

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 28, p.198, H. 6, Chapter 4 narrating from al-Amaali of

Shaikh Saduq (r.a.))

Therefore, the first two alternatives are pre-empted and we are left with no choice but to accept the third one i.e. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on divine command appointed a successor after him, the fact which is also proven from Hadees-e-Saqalain, Hadees-e-Tayr, Hadees-e-Manzilat, etc. which are acknowledged by both the sects and also several verses of the Holy Quran like the Verse of Conveyance (5:67), the Verse of Guardianship (5:3), the Verse of Surah Ma'arij wherein a person sought divine punishment (70:1-3) and numerous other verses that he (s.a.w.a.) appointed Ameerul

Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as his immediate successor. In some of the books of the Ahle Tasannun, the names of the twelve Imams (a.s.) have been mentioned with their titles by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) leaving no room for any doubt whatsoever.¹ However their hearts, eyes and ears have been sealed by Allah.

We plead to Allah to keep us firm on the right path, hasten the reappearance of Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) and include us among the slaves of Ahle Bait (a.s.).

¹ Readers can refer to the book Mesbaah al-Hedaayah Fi Isbaat al-Imamahwa al-Welaayah by Sayed Muhammad Ali Musawi al-Bahbahaani (r.a.).

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an observation regarding one of the narrators thus – The chain has one Sa'd Ibn Shoaib whom I cannot identify, while the rest are correct.

Allamah Amini (r.a.) has answered Haithami's objection thus: The person in question- Saad Ibn Shoaib who Haithami could not identify is none other than Saad Ibn Shoaib al-Hazrami. Due to the slight change in name, Haithami seems to have got confused about his identity. The Ahle Tasannun consider Saad Ibn Shoaib as reliable and trustworthy. For example, Shamsuddeen Ibrahim

Jawzaani records, "He was a well-known, virtuous and honest person".

The tradition clearly establishes a direct link between the truth and Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). Between the two, Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is the axis around which the truth has been commanded to revolve. There is no way out for the Muslims other than to acknowledge this fact and place Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) at a higher pedestal than wives and companions, who have also acknowledged this fact in favour of Ali (a.s.).

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Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) Ahle Bait (a.s.) – a fact accepted even by the Christians of Najraan. It is therefore shocking how the companions dared to challenge them in the matter of Fadak by

summarily refusing to entertain their case or even their witnesses. This exposes their own falsehood and questionable status because the Ahle Bait (a.s.) are on truth (haqq) and 'and what is there after the truth but deviation!'

Ali (a.s.) is with the truth and the truth is with Ali (a.s.) – Lessons for Muslims

The Shiite view on infallibility is challenged by the Muslim majority under the pretext of exaggeration (ghuluv). Shias consider the Imams (a.s.) as infallible i.e. individuals who do not err in any religious or worldly aspect from their birth till they depart from this world. Some Muslims claim that the belief of infallibility has no place in Islam. The Imams (a.s.) including Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) were prone to making errors (Allah forbid).

Reply

To say that infallibility has no place in Islam betrays a very poor understanding of the Holy Quran which has openly mooted it in several places for Allah the Almighty and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as also **‘those vested with authority’** (Ulil Amr).

Also the concept of infallibility does not amount to exaggeration in religion. As evident in Allah’s warning to the Christians ‘guluv’ is taking someone as God. (Surah Nisa (4): Verse 171). Everyone agrees that the Shias do not take the Imams (a.s.) as gods; rather, they consider them as divine representatives on the earth. Imams (a.s.) are the successors of divine Prophets (a.s.).

Relation between Ali (a.s.) and truth

The most important tradition that defines the relationship between Ali

Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and the truth is:

‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali.’

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 10, p. 432 narrating from al-Amaali of Shaikh Saduq (r.a.))

This is one among the many narrations which underlines the leadership, superiority and infallibility of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).

There is another narration from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) quoted by both the Shia as well as the Ahle Tasannun – *Ali (a.s.) is with the Quran and the Quran is with Ali (a.s.)*.

(Al-Amaali of Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), p. 460, 16th Majlis)

Due to the fact that the report – ‘Ali is with the truth....’ – is more widely documented by the scholars of both sects and Shia scholars in particular quote it extensively in discussions with the Ahle Tasannun, we have analyzed this tradition in detail.

Text of the tradition as documented by Ahle Tasannun scholars

1. Khateeb Baghdadi – in addition to his own chain – narrates on the authority of Abu Saabit – Abu Zarr’s slave: I was in the presence of Umm Salamah (r.a.) while she was remembering Ali (a.s.) and saying – I heard from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) –

‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali, the two will not

separate until they meet me at the Pond (of Kausar).'

(Tarikh-e-Baghdad vol. 14 p. 321)

2. Haithami has also quoted this report with his own chain as well as from Saad Ibn Abi Waqqas and he from Umm Salmah (r.a.).

(Majma' al-Zawaid, vol. 7 p. 236)

3. Ibn Qutaibah al-Dainoori (or al-Diyanoori) has quoted from Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr (r.a.) that he was with his sister Ayesha and demanded from her whether she had not heard from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.): Ali is with the truth....then why did she still rebel against him?

(Al-Imamah wa al-Siyasah vol. 1 p. 73)

4. Jaarullah Zamakhshari has quoted that Abu Saabit sought permission and came in the presence of Umm Salamah (r.a.). She said: Welcome O Aba Saabit! When the hearts of the people have turned in various directions, towards who have you turned?

Abu Saabit replied: Towards Ali (a.s.).

Umm Salmah (r.a.) replied: You have become successful. I swear by the one in whose hand is my life, I have heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) say –

'Ali is with the truth and the Quran and the Quran is with Ali and the two will not separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond.'

(Rabi al-Abraar, vol. 1 p. 828)

5. Tabaraani and other scholars have narrated from correct chains

on the authority of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who declared on the occasion of Ghadeer –

'O Allah! Befriend the one who takes him (Ali (a.s.)) as a Master and take him as an enemy who takes him (Ali (a.s.)) as an enemy...and turn the truth with him wherever he turns.'

(Al-Mo'jam al-Awsat, vol. 5 p. 455 tradition 4,877)

6. Hakim Neshapuri, Tirmidhi and other scholars have narrated with correct chains from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who said:

'May Allah have mercy on Ali! O Allah! Turn the truth with him (Ali) wherever he turns.'

(Al-Mustradrak alaa al-Sahihain, vol. 3, p. 134, tradition 4,628; Al-Jaame' al-Saheeh of Tirmidhi, vol. 5, p. 592, tradition 3,724)

7. Muhammad Ibn Umar al-Raazi (some call him Fakhruddin) records in his Tafseer Mafaateeh al-Ghaib: Ali (a.s.) always recited "Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem" loudly and this has been proved with a consecutive chain of narrators (tawaatur) that one who follows Ali (a.s.) in his religion, he is guided and successful. As the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has mentioned with regards to this: *O Allah! Turn the truth with him wherever he turns' which is a clear and brilliant proof for this fact.*

(Tafseer Mafaateeh al-Ghaib (also famous as Tafseer-e-Kabir), vol. 1, p. 205)

8. Hafiz Ganji Shaafae and Khaarazmi have both quoted from

Zaid's chain that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) praised Ali (a.s.) thus: Certainly truth is with you, truth is on your tongue, in your heart and between your eyes. Faith has been mixed with your flesh and blood as it has been mixed with my flesh and blood.

(Kifaayah al-Talib, p. 265, Chapter 62; Mana'iq al-Khaarazmi)

9. Abu Ya'la among others has narrated from Abu Saeed Khudri's chain that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declared while pointing towards Ali (a.s.): Truth is with him (Ali), truth is with him.

(Musnad-e-Abi Ya'ala, vol. 2, p. 318, tradition 1,052)

10. Haithami quotes from Umm Salmah (r.a.) with his own chain saying: Ali is with the truth. One who follows Ali and obeys him has indeed followed and obeyed the truth. One who has abandoned Ali has indeed abandoned the truth. This is the promise taken much earlier than today.

(Majma al-Zawaid, vol. 7, p. 35)

11. A tradition espousing the same concept has been quoted by Umm Salmah (r.a.) through a correct chain wherein the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declared: Ali is with the Quran and the Quran is with him. The two will not separate until they meet me at the Pond.

(Al-Mustadrak alaa al-Sahihain, vol. 3, p. 134, tradition 4,628; Al-Jaame al-Sagheer, vol. 2, p. 177, tradition 5,594; Al-Sawaaq al-Muhriqah, pp. 71, 124; Al-Mo'jam al-Awsat, vol. 5, p. 455, tradition 4,877)

Consensus of scholars about the correctness of the tradition (a.s.)

Many scholars of the Ahle Tasannun have narrated this blessed tradition after deeming it correct on the count of chain. We have listed some of them over here:

1. Al-Haakim al-Neshaburi in his book 'Al-Mustadrak Alaa al-Sahihain' has mentioned about it being Sahih.
2. Zahabi – a contemporary of Ibn Taymiyyah – in his book 'Talkhis al-Mustadrak' mentions it as Sahih.
3. Hafiz Tabaraani has accepted this tradition as reliable (Hasan).
4. Abu Ya'laa Mosuli says that its narrators are all reliable and trustworthy without exception.

Objections of some scholars and replies thereto

1. Tirmidhi who has documented the tradition in his book 'Jaame al-Saheeh' considers its chain as irregular and strange (ghareeb).

Nevertheless scholars of the Ahle Tasannun maintain that even the strange traditions of Tirmidhi are a definite proof in a debate.

Also we must consider that Tirmidhi probably considers it strange because it clashes with his own belief on the matter of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) vis-à-vis other companions and wives.

2. Haithami has recorded the tradition in Majma' al-Zawaid with

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Do Shias exaggerate the position of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)

Some so-called Muslims accuse the Shias, baselessly and absurdly, of exaggerating the position of the infallible Imams (a.s.), particularly Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). Among other allegations, they claim that the Shias elevate Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) to a position higher than that of the companions, even the Prophets (a.s.) and some extremists also falsely accuse the Shias of attributing Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) with divinity and godhood (we seek refuge in Allah!).

Based on such allegations they accuse the Shias of disbelief –infidelity and polytheism.

Reply

It appears that these accusations were invented with the sole purpose of branding Shias as infidels and giving a license to the ignoble terrorists to shed their blood.

In the very least, these accusations show these accusers in poor light as it is established that they are not familiar with their own books and comments of scholars regarding Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).

Shias do not advance references from their own books to prove Ali Ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) excellence. Like the brilliance of the sun, his virtues cannot be concealed and even the most prejudiced of Muslims have

made a mention of his virtues in their books.

If these Muslims had only referred to these books they would have saved themselves and the society a lot of trouble. Since they have brought up the subject of Shias being infidels, the problem confronting these Muslims is not regarding the Shias; it is about their own scholars who have documented the amazing virtues of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).

So the question that demands an answer is – Can scholars of AhleTasannun like Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, Imam Shafi'ee, Ahmed Ibn Shoaib al-Nesaa'i, be considered infidels for recording the virtues of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)?

If they cannot be considered infidels, how can Shias be considered as infidels for merely reiterating these virtues from Ahle Tasannun sources? Shias are NOT inventing these virtues as they allege.

For illustration, we have mentioned some virtues of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) each of which we will explore in depth from Ahle Tasannun sources in forthcoming articles.

1. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and his Shias are superior to mankind – one who rejects it is an infidel
2. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is superior to companions
3. Prophet Adam (a.s.) was forgiven

through the mediation (waseelah) of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and other infallible Imams (a.s.)

4. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) are created from the same tree; the remaining creatures are created from other trees
5. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) are created from the same light
6. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) was the first to accept Islam – and like the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) never worshipped idols
7. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) was in relation to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) like Haroon was to Moosa – none could claim brotherhood with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) save Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)
8. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) was appointed as Heir (waarith), Legatee (wasi), Minister (wazir), Master (wali) and Leader (Imam) by the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on numerous occasions
9. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is the al-Siddeeq al-Akbar and al-Farooq of the Muslim nation; he is Ameerul Momineen and none can claim these and his other titles except a liar
10. Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is with the Truth and the Truth is with Ali (a.s.)

And there are many more virtues than can be enumerated by all the jinn and mankind and that which pen and paper can write down.

These virtues are documented categorically in the most highly regarded Ahle Tasannun books like Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Nesaai and acknowledged by the highest Ahle Tasannun authorities like Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, Shafi'ee and even contemporary Salafi authorities like Nasir Albaani (the self-proclaimed Shaikh al-Hadis of the Salafis).

After this, there is no question of these virtues being invented by Shias. Rather, this is a claim invented by some so-called Muslims who have no reply to the fact that their own elders and teachers have recorded the extraordinary merits of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) in their books.

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They will undoubtedly come across the attack on the house of the third ruler Usman Ibn Affaan by the Muslims. They must object – why did Usman fail to defend his wife when the Muslims laid siege to his house and attacked him and his wife, cutting of her fingers and striking her teeth? He was after all their chief with an army. Moreover, he had a cousin like Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, who had an army of his own and could have come in no time to defend Usman in Medina! So the more important question is – Why Muawiya did not defend Usman?

Did Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) defend Fatima Zahra (s.a.) when she was attacked?

Some Muslims claim that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) did not defend the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) daughter, Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.) when she was attacked. Being a brave and chivalrous person demanded that he should have defended her honour.

Reply

Truth is with Ali and turns with Ali

It is apparent from the tone and tenor that such a question can only be raised out of hostility to Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and his Shias. The question is explicitly framed in a bid to trap the Shias. If they say that Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) defended Hazrat Fatima (s.a.) – these Muslims reply – but he was advised patience by the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.). If he did not defend her, then it means he was not brave enough and all the stories about his bravery are nothing but fables. Or, in order to prove the innocence of their leaders, they suggest that the attack did not take place at all (which is the real motive behind such a question).

Our primary response to such objections against our master Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is that he (a.s.) can do no wrong. He is right under both conditions – whether he defends Hazrat Fatimah (s.a.) or not. For, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declared in no uncertain words that,

'Ali is with the truth (haqq) and the truth is with Ali. O Allah! Turn the truth wherever Ali turns.'

The authenticity and reliability of this tradition is accepted by all Muslims. So, none can question any action of Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) even if apparently it seems strange and unacceptable to them. Just as no Muslim can question Allah the Almighty about his order to the angels to prostrate to Prophet Adam (a.s.), although it is apparently in violation of the basic tenets of monotheism. Can anyone teach divine monotheism to Allah? Likewise, can anyone teach the truth to Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)?

Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) protest

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) did defend Fatima Zahra (s.a.) from the attackers to show them that he can retaliate and has the power to do so. He warded off Umar Ibn Khattaab and overpowered him. Had he not retaliated, there was the strong likelihood that they might have gone further and killed Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.). Umar had already threatened that he did not care if the house is razed with all its inmates! Hence, premeditated murder could not be ruled out.

But since Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was bound by the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) will to observe patience, come what may, if he did not get the required number of helpers and supporters – he (a.s.) never drew his sword out. He (a.s.) once said,

“If I just had men sincere to Allah – Mighty and Majestic be He – and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) equal to the number of these sheep (which were thirty), I would have deposed the son of the eater of flies (referring to Abu Bakr as the profession of both of his parents was to ward off the flies from the dining cloth of Abdullah Ibn Jud’aan al-Taimi. The remuneration for their efforts was not in cash but to either eat the remnants or the flies that they killed. Hence, he (a.s.) called him by this agnomen).”

(Al-Kafi, vol. 8, p. 31, H. 5 The Sermon of Taalootiyyah)

He (a.s.) did what was necessary to complete the argument; else, the later generations would have said – why didn't Ali (a.s.) at least put up a token resistance so we would know that he (a.s.) was upset with the state of affairs.

He (a.s.) stopped short of killing Umar when he knew that he would be violating the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) will.

Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) cannot be blamed for his intention like Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) as the Holy Quran says,

“And certainly she made for

him, and he would have made for her; was it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord...”

- Kitab-o-Sulaim Ibn Qais al-Hilali (exp. 80 A.H.), p. 568
- Ruh al-Ma’ani fee Tafsir al-Quran al-Azeem vol. 3, p. 124 of Sayyid Mahmud Aalusi al-Baghdadi (exp. 1270 A.H.)
- Khasais al-Aimmah p.73, Abul Hasan Muhammad Ibn Husain Ibn Moosa al-Moosawi al-Baghdadi, Sharif Razi (exp. 406 A.H.), edited and compiled by Dr. Muhammad Hadi Amini

Controlled Retaliation

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) did not retaliate against the attackers like he did against the infidels of Badr and Ohod because he feared that such retaliation would lead to division among the Muslims and he would be held responsible. This is like the silence of Prophet Haroon (a.s.) when the Bani Israel worshipped the calf, thereby indulging in polytheism and idol-worship.

- Al-Isteeaab fee Marifah al-As’haab, vol. 2, p. 497, Yusuf Ibn Abdillah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Birr (exp. 463)
- Sharh-o-Nahj al-Balaaghah, vol. 1, p. 184, Abu Hamid Izzuddin Ibn Hibatillah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abil Hadid al-Madaaeni al-Motazeli (exp. 655 A.H.)

Choice between two options

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) faced two options when his house was attacked crushing the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Fatima Zahra (s.a.)– either to retaliate, leading to divisions among Muslims or bear the oppression and save Islam from destruction. He (a.s.) chose the latter, which was in the best interests of Islam.

He narrates in the third sermon (al-Shiqshiqiyyah) of Nahj al-Balaaghah:

“Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are made feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience, although there was pricking in my eye and suffocation (of mortification) in my throat.”

Similarity with Past Divine Prophets (a.s.)

Patience under extreme tribulation was not new to Islam or the creeds of the previous divine Prophets (a.s.), who exhibited incredible patience and tolerance under great difficulties and oppressions, leading to questions like the ones raised by these Muslims – why didn't those Prophets (a.s.) retaliate against the oppressors?

Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) was asked – Why didn't you fight the first three rulers while you fought Talha, Zubair and Muawiyah?

He (a.s.) replied:

Certainly there is for me an example in six Prophets and from among them is Nuh when he said:

...Indeed, I am overpowered, so grant victory.

(Surah Qamar (54): Verse 10)

- Tafseer Noor al-Saqalain under Surah Qamar: Verse 10 narrating from al-Ehtejaaj, vol. 1, p. 189 of Shaikh Abu Mansoor Ahmad Ibn Ali al-Tabarsi (r.a.)

Prophet Lut's (a.s.) house was also attacked and the assailants threatened to abduct the handsome youths (angels) if he did not hand them over. Hazrat Lut (a.s.) pleaded with them telling them to marry the daughters of his nation instead.

Why didn't Prophet Lut (a.s.) defend his household members from the assailants with retaliation instead of showing patience? Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) dealt with the assailants likewise with patience rather than open retaliation.

Usman Ibn Affaan does not defend his wife

These Muslims, who raise many objections against Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), must read more about Islamic history to learn how others have reacted under similar circumstances.

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Mubaahelah is Ameerul Momineen's (a.s.) greatest virtue

Muslims go all out to prove how so and so companion was superior or how that wife was the best. These 'virtues' were fabricated only to counter the undisputed excellences of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) in general, and Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) in particular. For the sake of argument, even if we were to allow for such virtues, yet they would be no match for the Ahle Bait (a.s.), since they are peerless in all their virtues.

One such virtue is manifested in the event of Mubaahelah (malediction) on 24th Zilhajj, 10 A.H. Muslims are unanimous that this incident was the result of the Noble Quran's instruction to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to challenge the Christians of Najraan to a bout of malediction or invoking the divine curse on the liars.

The matter came to such a pass when the Christians refused to accept the arguments establishing the status of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) as a mortal and not the son of God as they claimed.

Allah the Almighty finally revealed the Verse of Mubaahelah:

'So, whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the

curse of Allah on the liars.'

(Surah Aale Imran (3): Verse 61)

How Mubaahelah proves superiority of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)?!

There is an interesting discussion between our master Imam Ali Ibn Moosa al-Reza (a.s.) and the tyrant of the time Mamoon al-Abbasi.

Mamoon questioned Imam Reza (a.s.) about the greatest superiority of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) as proved by the Majestic Quran.

Imam Reza (a.s.) says:

His superiority (over others) in the incident of Mubaahelah. Allah said:

'But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars.'

(Surah Aale Imran (3): Verse 61)

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) invited Imams Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.), the two referred to as his sons. He (s.a.w.a.) invited Fatima (s.a.). She implied 'his women'. Finally, he (s.a.w.a.) invited Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) referring to his self, according to Allah's order."

Then Mamoon said – Is it not that Allah has referred to sons in the plural (al-Abnaa) and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) invited his two sons specifically. And He referred to the women in the plural (al-Nisaa) and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) invited his daughter – only one woman.

Then it is not permitted that invitation to one's self (Nafsohu) i.e. Prophet (s.a.w.a.) should be construed as an invitation to other than one's self (Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)). Therefore, there is no excellence for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) as you claim. (Mamoon meant that self refers to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and therefore superiority was for him (s.a.w.a.) and not Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) since he was not the addressee in the verse.)

Imam Reza (a.s.) retorted,

“What you have said, O Ameerul Momineen, is not correct – surely the inviter invites other than himself just like the commander commands other than himself. It is not correct that the inviter invites himself, just like it is not rational for the commander commands himself. Since the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) did not invite any man for the Mubaahelah except Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), it is established that he is the self of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) – Nafsohu – as indicated by Allah in His Book and He has commanded as much in the revelation of the verse.”

Mamoon replied – When the reply is given, the question is silenced.

(Al-Fusool al-Mukhtarah, Part 1, p. 38 by Shaikh Mufeed (r.a.))

Conclusion

1. By virtue of his selection as the ‘self’ of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has achieved superiority over all creation except the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Since the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is superior to all creation, his self also achieves a similar status. By creation we mean the entire world of creation including but not limited to the Divine Prophets and Messengers, angels, etc. with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) being the sole exception.
2. With this and many other achievements in which he has no rival, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) is the obvious choice as the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) successor. He (a.s.) was already the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) successor on account of the Ghadeer declaration. But even if the Muslims were to ignore that and choose a successor by consensus, Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) would be the obvious choice. Therefore, they stand guilty for first ignoring the choice of Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and then for ignoring Ameerul Momineen's (a.s.) undisputable virtues.
3. Mubaahelah underscores the unquestionable truthfulness of all participants from the Holy

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Debate on Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) rightfulness in Jamal and Siffeen

Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari narrates – Once I had gone on a journey to Syria. There I met both sons of Muawiyah – Khalid and Yazid as also Amr Aas. While I was there, I saw an old man coming from Iraq. He was very weak and feeble, wearing a belt made of date palm leaves around his waist and his slippers too were from the same material. His clothes were worn out and his eyes were sunk in.

Muawiyah: Call this old man and let's talk to him.

Muawiyah: O Sheikh! Where are you coming from and where are you headed?

The old man remained silent.

Amr Aas: O Sheikh! Why do you do not answer Ameerul Momineen (Muawiyah)?

Old man: After purifying us from ignorance and deviation, Allah the Almighty has made it mandatory to send greetings and salutations on us, which Muawiyah has not done.

Muawiyah: O Sheikh, you are right and I am wrong. Assalaamoalaika, O Sheikh!

Old man: Alaikumussalam

Muawiyah: Where are you coming from and where are you headed?

Old man: I have come from Iraq and I intend going to Bait al-Maqdas

Muawiyah: What is the news of

Iraq?

Old man: It is in good and blessed condition.

Muawiyah: You said you are coming from Kufa, the land of Gharavi (Valley)?

Old man: Where is Gharavi?

Muawiyah: The land of Abu Turab

Old man: Who is Abu Turab?

Muawiyah: Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).

Old man: O Muawiyah, may Allah rub your nose in the ground, may your mouth break, Allah's curse on your parents! Why don't you instead refer to him (a.s.) as the just Imam, shelter of the people, chief of religion, killer of apostates, sword of Allah, cousin of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), husband of Batool, crown of the jurists, treasure of the impoverished, the fifth to enter the cloak of Tattheer, the dominant lion of Allah, father of Hasanain (a.s.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)?

Muawiyah: O Sheikh! I am seeing that your flesh and blood has got mixed with the flesh and blood of Ali but if he dies, you cannot do anything about it.

Old man: May Allah not show me that day when I am alive and he is not! His separation will increase my grief and suffering manifold. But Allah will not call him to His Abode, unless He has appointed a successor for him

among his (a.s.) sons.

Muawiyah: O Sheikh, have you left anything for yourself?

Old man: I have been given the guidance of the right path (which is sufficient for me).

Amr Aas: O Muawiyah! Maybe the Sheikh does not know us – that is why he is arguing with us in this manner?

Muawiyah: O Sheikh, do you recognize me?

Old man: No

Muawiyah: I am son of Abu Sufyan, Shajar-e-Tayyibah (Pure Tree), and I am the leader and chief of Bani Umayyah

Old man: O Muawiyah! On the contrary you are the one cursed by Allah and his Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The Holy Quran labels you as Shajar-e-Maloonah (Accursed Tree). You are the degraded person who has oppressed himself and denied Allah. You are the one about whom the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed: Caliphate is prohibited on the sons of Abu Sufyan (Maqatal al-Husain of Khaarazmi p. 74). You are a sinner and the son of a sinner and Hind, the liver eater, was your mother. You are the rebel whose oppression has engulfed Allah's servants.

On hearing this, it was as if Muawiyah's body was on fire; due to anger, his face became red, the veins in his neck got swollen and he drew his hand over the sheath of his sword and moved forward but controlled his anger at the last moment and said: if forgiveness was not praiseworthy and

recommended, I would have chopped off your neck. O Sheikh! If I chop off your neck, what will you do?

Old man (replying calmly): Then I will attain good fortune (of martyrdom) and you will attain misfortune (of killing an innocent man).

Muawiyah noticed that the old man was so aged and feeble that it was only a matter of time before he dropped dead. That's why he refrained from killing him. Suddenly, he changed the direction of his conversation and demanded:

Muawiyah: O Sheikh! Where were you the day Ali killed Usman?

Old man: I swear by Allah that Ali has not killed Usman because if Ali wanted to kill Usman, he wouldn't have done it through deception but instead would have killed him with the strength of his sword. It was only due to the will of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that Ali (a.s.) remained silent.

Muawiyah: O Sheikh, were you present at the battle of Siffeen and did you see the bloodshed caused by Ali?

Old man: Not only was I present at the battle of Siffeen but I have made many of the children of your army as orphans and many of the women as widows. Like an angry lion I was fighting with the sword and the spears, I shot 73 arrows towards your army, among them I shot 2 arrows at your shield, 2 arrows at your prayer carpet, and 2 arrows at your arm – if you fold up your sleeves the scars may still be there.

Muawiyah: Did you participate in

the battle of Jamal when Ali fought with the wife of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) Ayesha – so tell me who was on truth?

Old man: Truth was with Ali.

Muawiyah: Has Allah not said?

“And his wives are their mothers.”

(Surah Ahzaab (33): Verse 6)

Ayesha is the mother of the believers, then why did Ali (a.s.) fight her?

Old man: But did Allah not order Ayesha and other wives of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

“And stay in your houses and do not display your finery like the displaying of the ignorance of yore...”

(Surah Ahzaab (33): Verse 33)

Among the wives of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ayesha was the only woman who had violated Allah’s order and ventured out of the house, just like in the period of ignorance and paganism, in the company of Muslim men prohibited for her and fought Ali (a.s.).

Didn’t the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) inform?

“O Ali after me you are my caliph and you are the caretaker of my wives and the authority to divorce them is also in your hands.”

Ayesha is the person who tried to create chaos on numerous occasions, resulting in bloodshed of Muslims, destruction of their wealth and property. Curse be upon the unjust!

And certainly Ayesha has committed injustice and like the wife

of Nuh (a.s.) is the fuel of hellfire.

Muawiyah: I have nothing left to say. Will you be satisfied with rewards and favours – 20 red-eyed camels carrying a lot of honey, oil and wheat?

Old man: No, because the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had said that one permissible (halal) dirham is better than thousands of prohibited (haram) dirham.

Muawiyah: O Sheikh, when was the last time the nation got engulfed in darkness and mercy was severed?

Old man: When you became the chief of the nation and Amr Aas became your minister and advisor.

Muawiyah (furiously): Get away from my sight as soon as possible, if I ever see you again in Damascus I will have your neck severed.

Old man: It is impossible for me to stay in the same place as you. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

“And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touches you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped.”

(Surah Hud (11): Verse 113)

The old man, whose heart was full of faith and love of Ali (a.s.), glanced briefly at Muawiyah and the foolish faces of those surrounding him and departed for Bait al-Maqdas.

- Al-Fazaail, p. 76 by Ibn Shaazaaan
- Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 33 p. 247
- Mawaaqif al-Shiah, vol. 2 p. 57
- Naasikh al-Tawaareekh, vol. 1 p. 323 by Mirza Muhammad Taqi Lisan al-Mulk

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(a.s.) asked his companions not to pick anything from the ground but when they saw three golden bricks lying on the ground, the world overpowered the three of them and they stopped to pick up those bricks. But then when the world asked each one of them that they alone become the owners of all three bricks, they killed one another and all of them went to hell.

Obedience of the divinely appointed guide benefits a person provided we actually accept them as our masters and consider ourselves as their lowly slaves. After recognizing the rightful guide, our natural instinct prepares us for this. If we make them as our role model and act based on it, we will traverse towards the aim of our lives and fulfill the aim for which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was raised. He (s.a.w.a.) says mentioning one of the aims of his appointment, "I have been raised for the perfection of morals."

Allah, through the words of Hazrat Hud (a.s.) says in the Quran,

"I am a trustworthy messenger for you. Then fear Allah and obey me."

The more a person traverses the stages of morals; he will find the obedience of Imam (a.s.) easy in difficult situations. The best example for this is Hazrat Abul Fazl Abbas (a.s.) who was known for his bravery. He was desired by Ali (a.s.) before his birth. Right from childhood, he was reminded that he has to showcase his bravery in the battle of Karbala. But

in order to display this bravery, he was dependent on the orders of his Imam (a.s.). The son of Imam Ali (a.s.) showed the character of Imam Ali (a.s.) and just as Imam Ali (a.s.) obeyed the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) after his martyrdom, and displayed patience, Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) also showed patience in Karbala. Ghadeer fulfils man's natural need for a guide and strengthens man for obedience of the Imam and prevents him from breaching this trust.

Allah is Merciful and Forgiving. But if someone sins against a human, then Allah will not forgive him as the sin is against a human being. Hence, if Allah will not forgive the breach of right of a normal human being, then how is it possible that He forgive the trampling of the right of His appointed proof?

Our observation of the society demands us to think that have we been successful in honouring the right of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) whose name is most lofty. If we are fifty-fifty in this aspect then we should be conscious that we do not become the subject of Allama Iqbal's couplets:

"Prostration for the Creator and friendship with the Satan, Whom will you ask for reward in the hereafter?"

All Praise be to Allah who made us attached to the Mastership of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) from his progeny.

represented by those who accept and follow the fraudsters and give away the right of the real divine guide to the impostors. Just as the usurpers of Imamat are sinners themselves, those who follow these usurpers are equal party to the sin. The other aspect is of seeking position and status. Such a guide only has one aim and that is to attain some status or position. Allama Iqbal explaining this aspect says,

These possessions, wealth, relations and bonding
Are idols of imaginations – there is no god except Allah

God is limitless in His Beneficence. He sent Prophets (a.s.) to complete his proof on those who worshipped pseudo-gods and they (a.s.) invited the masses towards Allah and drew their attention to the real God whose worship they have neglected due to the dust of factors like relations, bonding, idols and imaginations.

With the mercy through which Allah drew man's attention towards natural worship and the real God, He, with this same infinite mercy, through the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) drew man's attention to right of natural obedience of the rightful Imam. Hence, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), on divine orders, in Ghadeer-e-Khum, completed the proof over all the people and introduced that person who will fulfil man's natural need for guidance just as pure water quenches the thirst of the thirsty.

Just as despite receiving reminders of the prophets (a.s.), if a person does not leave false gods, he will be eligible for everlasting chastisement, in the same way, if after the announcement of Ghadeer, if someone does not accept Imam Ali (a.s.) as Ameerul Momineen, he shall remain in hell forever.

To consider Imam Ali (a.s.) as Ameerul Momineen should not just be a verbal utterance because Vilayat is related to the entire existence and behaviour of man. This point was made clear by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the day of Ghadeer itself when before the announcement of Vilayat, he (s.a.w.a.) asked the people whether he did not have more authority on them than they themselves? And when people accepted, then he (s.a.w.a.) announced

Of whomsoever I am the master, this Ali is his master.

Hence Imam Ali (a.s.) holds more authority upon us than we ourselves. Under this very authority, we should mould our character in such a manner that he (a.s.) wishes and not as we wish or our society wishes. Therefore, in the battle of Siffin, when Abbas Ibn Rabiyyah whom Ali (a.s.) had stationed at a particular spot, came into the battle field at the challenge of an enemy soldier and killed him, Ali (a.s.) first corrected him that fighting the enemy was not as important as obeying the Imam's order. And after this correction, he also forgave him like a compassionate father.

The divinely appointed guide possesses lofty morals and with the help of divinely endowed vision, calls the people to such actions which lead to their everlasting good fortune. Just as when Hazrat Eesaa

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