

Wilayat and Bara'at

It is interesting that in any topic or situation, opposites and contradictions are not given the same position. For example justice and oppression, good and evil etc. Islam too has considered only one of the two as accepted and not both. Justice is acceptable, oppression is not. Goodness is appreciated, evil is disliked. But Wilayat (love for Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his Ahle Bait (a.s.)) and Bara'at (hatred for their enemies) are two such opposites to which Islamic beliefs and teachings have given equal position and importance. It is an accepted Islamic belief and an important element of the Islamic belief without which no person can become a Muslim and no Muslim can become a believer.

The belief in Monotheism is the first and most important belief of Islam the Islamic beliefs. Its statement of acceptance contains both hatred in the form of "There is no god" and love in the form of "except Allah". Even in the belief of Prophethood, Islam appreciates the rejection of every other person and only believe in the Messenger appointed by Allah, who is the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). And it does not appreciate that we get aligned to a pseudo-prophet or accept anyone other than a divinely appointed prophet.

Similarly, in the matter of repaying the efforts of messengership, the Holy Quran has accepted Mawaddah (unconditional love) only and only for the Family of the Holy Prophet (a.s.) and has rejected such love for anyone else. Both these beliefs, Wilayat and

Bara'at, are mandatory consequences of each other. The expression of love for the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is the essential element of religiousness and this expression of love for Allah, His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and his Progeny (a.s.) is incomplete without disgust for their enemies. Wilayat and Bara'at are two wings in the flight of monotheism which take man closer to Allah.

Wilayat means loving Allah, His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and accepting them as our rulers and absolute masters and acting sincerely on their orders. Bara'at means disassociating from the enemies of Allah, the Messenger and the Ahle Bait (a.s.) by heart, in words and in action and to disassociate from their religion and customs.

The importance and significance of the beliefs of Tawalla and Tabarra is neither hidden from the learned nor can it be neglected. These have been explicitly and abundantly mentioned in Islamic documents and the traditions of the holy infallibles (a.s.). These two are the essence and soul of the belief of a good servant of Allah, a pious person and a true believer. Piety and faith carry no value without Tawalla and Tabarra because their direct relation is with God and His pleasure and His orders. These two are not based on any person's personal satisfaction or hatred for anyone. Just as we perform other acts of worship like prayers, fasting and pilgrimage etc only for the fulfilment of divine order and for the divine satisfaction and proximity, similarly, the basis

of love for the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and hatred for their enemies is also based on divine order and for divine satisfaction and proximity due to which one becomes hopeful for divine reward.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said to one of his followers, 'When love for us and hatred for our enemies is not for any worldly expectations or personal malice or vendetta, but based on divine order and for divine proximity, then on the day of judgement, your eyes will be brightened and your heart will be at peace, angels will welcome you and you will be along with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and Imam Hasan, Imam Husain and Imam Ali b. Husain (a.s.).'

According to Shia doctrine, the love of Ahle Bait (a.s.) without the hatred for their enemies and the hatred for their enemies without love of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is incomplete and in vain. But some manipulative elements due to their ignorance of true Islamic teachings and some inexperienced writers and speakers are trying to create a new environment among the Muslims. These people as per their own taste, interest and method, are trying to portray Islamic teachings in such a way that leads one to believe that there is no place for Tawalla and Tabarra in religion. They do not consider the differences of the Muslims of the initial days of Islam as differences.

They not only present the incidents which occurred post the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in a very diluted manner but also prohibit mentioning these incidents. For example, they portray that the

differences of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and some of the companions were "friendly differences" and in the form of "strong relations". If these were "friendly differences", then it would be interesting to know the bases of these differences. The companions abandoned the funeral of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They neglected the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and deserted his son-in-law and cousin and his beloved daughter, who were reduced to demanding their rights from the government. We have never seen such a friendship in which a friend is tied up in ropes and dragged through the streets. Was the demand for allegiance under the threat of swords a friendly gesture? Was the burning of the door of the house of the Prophet's daughter with his grandsons Hasanain (a.s.) in it, an expression of strong relations? The slamming of the burning door on the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) beloved daughter, her ribs being broken, her unborn infant getting martyred, Hazrat Fatima (s.a.) not speaking to the 'caliphs' her entire life and even not responding to their salutations, leaving this world in a state of anger, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) calling himself as oppressed in Nahjul Balaghah and complaining about the oppressive actions of the so-called companions, his expression of regaining his right in case of having helpers and supports, were all these things based on friendly and cordial relations? If these aforementioned things show friendly and cordial relations, then we would want to know what does unfriendly relations mean, so that people can call the differences between the Holy

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The Rationale behind not having the names of the Imams (a.s.) in the Holy Quran – An Analytical Research

Why are the names of the Holy Imams of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and their Imamah and position not clearly mentioned in the Holy Quran? According to the books of both sects, it is clear that this question was also prevalent at the time of the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) themselves. The reply to this question is extremely important for us because the Holy Quran enjoys the status of the ultimate source and acceptable document near the Muslim nation. Those who believe in the infallibility and Imamah of the Imams (a.s.) consider it their right to put forward their stand on this aspect and also possess the reply to this question in the light of Quran and traditions.

A look at the various views

If we analyze the content present in the books of various scholars and intellectuals concerning the names of Imams not being present in the Holy Quran, we do not find any single or common view. Rather we find 3 different views on this topic.

First View

This group believes that the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and their Imamah was originally found in the Holy Quran. But after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) during the compilation of the Quran, distortion took place and the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) were deleted from the Quran.

Very few people from both sects support this view, as this is purely based on traditions whose chain of narrators and arguments are debatable and their matter is also not reliable. One of the supporters of this view is Ibne Shanbooz al-Baghdadi (Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Maqari, exp 328 AH) who was from the Ahle Sunnah and who recited the verse, "And indeed Allah helped you in Badr while you were being humiliated" [Ale Imran: 123] as "And indeed Allah helped you in Badr through Ali's sword while you were being humiliated"¹

Ibne Shanbooz has simply connected the context of revelation of the verse with the interpretation but has not given any strong justification for the same. Similarly, the great Shia scholar, Muhaddis Nuri (a.r.), (exp 1320 AH) says that the aim of writing the book Faslul Khitaab is to prove that the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) were present in the Holy Quran and have been deleted through distortion and as a new argument, he writes, "The names of all the successors of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), his beloved daughter Fatima (s.a.) and some of their characteristics have been mentioned in all the previous divine books. Therefore it should also be mentioned in the Holy Quran as it is not only the everlasting book but also

¹ [Qurtubi, exp 1387 AH: v 1 p 80, Khateed al-Baghdadi: v 1 pg 280, Abu Shaame Maqdasi, exp 1385 AH: p 187]

supersedes every other divine book.”^r

The argument of Muhaddis Nuri (a.r.) is worth pondering upon and also opens the door for another discussion. He has brought an argument against the reality of Quran although with a disclaimer. If we pay attention that since Quran is superior to the other divine books and it is proven through the verse of the following Holy Quran :

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّئًا عَلَيْهِ.

“And we have revealed to you the book with truth as a testifier and protector to the books which were before you.”^r

therefore, the Holy Quran should be the standard for evaluating the rightness or error of whatever was revealed in the earlier books. Quran will decide what was right in them and what was wrong. Earlier books cannot be used as a standard to evaluate the Quran and this is exactly what Muhaddis Nuri (a.r.) has done. He has tried to evaluate the duties and responsibilities of the Holy Quran based on the standard of the previous books and thereby concluded that there was distortion made in the Holy Quran and the names of the Imams were deleted from it. Great and renowned Shia scholars, jurists and traditionalists do not accept this view.

Second View

The proponents of this view claim that not only the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) are not mentioned in the Holy Quran, but also

their Imamate and leadership is not mentioned in it, neither specifically nor generally and those verses which have been revealed regarding the Ahle Bait (a.s.) in general, or Ali (a.s.) in particular, were only concerning their merits and Allah has not mentioned their Imamate. This is the viewpoint of the Ahle Sunnah in general and is completely false and absolutely unacceptable.

Third View

This view takes the path of knowledge, religion and justice and treads a moderate path between the two extreme views. This is the view of the majority of the Shia traditionalists, interpreters and scholars. These personalities believe that although the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) have not been explicitly mentioned in the Holy Quran, Allah has revealed multiple verses proving the Imamate of the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) especially Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and has also mentioned their merits and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the reciter and the explainer of these divine verses and the teacher of Quran and he (s.a.w.a.) has clearly explained them for the people. And he (s.a.w.a.) has explained these in such a clear manner that if one looks at them without being influenced by ignorance, enmity and prejudice, this matter will be absolutely crystal clear for each and every person of the Muslim nation. Just as it has come in one of the traditions that, “if Quran is recited in the way it was revealed, our name will be found in it.”^r

^r [Muhaddis Nuri: p 183]

^r [Maidah: 48]

^r [Tafseer-e-Ayyashi: v 1 pg 13]

The 3 principles of the third view

1. Distortion in Quran is not acceptable
2. Those traditions which indicate distortion are not very reliable and scholars and traditionalists have explained these traditions in detail.
3. In the light of Quranic verses themselves, we should restrict ourselves to the traditions of the Infallibles (a.s.) for understanding the interpretation of Quran

There are many traditions in the books of both sects which have come regarding verses which refer to the Ahle Bait (a.s.) just like the below mentioned traditions which have been narrated from multiple chain of narrators.

“The Quranic verses have been revealed in four parts. One fourth of it has been revealed regarding us and one fourth of the verses is concerning our enemies.”¹

Apart from this, there are many such traditions found in the books of both sects. For example

1. Ibne Abbas says, “The number of verses which have been revealed regarding Ali (a.s.) have not been revealed for anyone else.”²

2. In another tradition from Ibne Abbas, he says, “Wherever in the Holy Quran Allah has used the words ‘O those who believe’, it first implies Imam Ali (a.s.). Allah has criticized the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on multiple occasions but He has always praised Ali (a.s.) and only mentioned his virtues.”³
3. It is narrated in traditions that the Mastership of Ali (a.s.) is mentioned in all the prophetic scriptures and Allah has appointed every prophet only after his acceptance of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the mastership of his successor Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.).⁴

If we look at the interpretations of the verses which have been revealed regarding the Ahle Bait (a.s.) we will understand that, even the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Imams (a.s.) were of the view that the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) have not been explicitly mentioned in the Holy Quran. But the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was given the responsibility to interpret and explain these verses of the Quran and hence has clearly explained for us, which verse has been revealed about whom.

For example, Shaikh Kulaini (a.r.) narrates the following tradition through correct chain of narrators from Abu Baseer

¹ [Kafi: v 2 p 627; Tafseer-e-Ayyashi: 1941 edition; v 1 p 84; Ibne Maghazili Shaami: 1403 edition; p 328; Ibne Tawoos: 1421 edition: p 201; Qunduzi: p 126; Ibne Hammam: v 2 p 13; Haskani: v 1 p 156; Ibne Mardawaih: 1422 edition, p 218]

² [Ibne Mardawaih: 1422 edition, p 218; Ibne Asaakir: 1417 edition t 428; Ibne Asaakir has narrated this in five different version from Ibne Abbas]

³ [Ibne Mardawaih: 1422 edition, p 219; Ibne Asaakir: 1417 edition v 2 p 1430; Tabarani 1406 edition v 11 t 11687; Kufi: 1410 edition v 1 t 67; Haskani: v 1 p 53; Abu Naeem: 1407 edition v 1 p 64; Khawarizmi: 1411 edition p 189]

⁴ [Kafi: v 1 p 437; Haakim Nishapuri: v 2 p 222; Ibne Asaakir: 1417 edition v 2 p 97; Khawarizmi: 1411 edition p 221; Saalabi: 1422 edition v 8 p 338]

under the verse of "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who have authority among you" from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) who replied when asked about this verse, "This verse has been revealed about Imam Ali (a.s.), Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) and they are the people of authority." I asked, "People say why have the names of Ali and the Ahle Bait (a.s.) not mentioned in the Quran" Imam (a.s.) replied, "Tell them the order of prayers has come in the Quran but nowhere it is mentioned about the number of units being three or four. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has explained it for the people. Similarly, the order of Mastership has been revealed in general in the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has explained it further for us".¹

In another tradition, it is narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.), "Allah ordered the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to explain the Mastership (of Ali (a.s.)) for the people just as he explains prayers, fasting, pilgrimage, charity etc. Upon receiving this order, he (s.a.w.a.) became concerned and feared that people would turn away from the religion and would falsify him and hence he prayed to Allah and sought help from Him. Allah revealed to him thus: "O Messenger, deliver to the people what has been revealed to you." Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) openly announced the matter of Mastership (of Ali (a.s.)) to the people.²

This same tradition is narrated in a more elaborate manner in other books and similar traditions are also found in books of

Ahle Sunnat which point out that the announcement and explanation of Mastership of Ahle Bait (a.s.) was ordered to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).³

Late Sayyad Ibne Tawoos (a.r.) after bringing a similar tradition in the book of interpretation by Abu Abbas b. Uqda writes, "Ibne Uqda through reliable chains has mentioned this same meaning"⁴

The response of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) is based on the best argument which makes the point of the opponent itself as the base for the reply. This is because people accept that the general order of prayers and other religious duties is present in the Holy Quran but it does not have the explanations for the same. This responsibility had been given to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to explain its specifics and details and he (s.a.w.a.) did the same. The matter of the names of Imams (a.s.) not being explicitly present in the Quran is similar and if someone would have asked why was the responsibility of explanation given to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Imam Sadiq (a.s.) would have given him another reply.

Another reason

Anyways even after this clarification, the question remains that if the people did not have any concerns to understand the details of other matters which have a general reference in the Quran, then what reservations did they have in understanding the matter of Mastership in a similar manner? This issue also has a historical

¹ [Kulaini: v 1 p 286; Ayyashi: 1421 edition v 1 p 408]

² [Kulaini: v 1 p 289; Ayyashi: 1421 edition v 2 p 64]

³ [Juwaini: 1415 edition v 1 p 312]

⁴ [Ibne Tawoos: 1421 edition t 144, 145]

background, mentioning the details of which is beyond the purview of this discussion. We would however, definitely like to point out to a fact after which it becomes absolutely clear why did Allah not mention the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) in the Holy Quran.

In this ongoing discussion, it cannot be ignored that among the various reasons for not having the names of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) in the Quran, one of the reasons was to examine and test the Muslim nation which serves as a warranty for the following generations. In order to make this matter clear, we shall look at the following points:

- A. According to the verses of the Holy Quran, Allah definitely tests and examines every person individually and every nation collectively.
- B. The method of examining individuals and nations is different. Some of them were examined through dry earth in which life was blown like the test of the angels and some were examined through prohibition of fishing on Saturdays whereas on this day there were loads of fishes on the river banks. This was the examination of the Jews. ¹

Or people were examined by ordering them to perform pilgrimage of the house of stone, the Holy Kaba, in the barren valleys of Mecca [Nahjul Balagha, sermon 192], or examining people through the fear of life, hunger and shortage of resources [Baqarah: 154]

- C. Among the various tests and examinations which Allah has kept for

this nation is that of testing how much do the people obey and follow the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Allah has ensured that they do not try to escape this examination by putting in place certain conditions:

1. He introduced the lofty personality of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) thus in the Quran

لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

“Do not raise your voices above the voice of the prophet and do not speak as you speak with one another lest your actions are destroyed while you may be unaware. Indeed, those who lower their voices before the Messenger of Allah - they are the ones whose hearts Allah has tested for righteousness. For them is forgiveness and great reward.”

[Hujaraat: 2, 3]

The above verse is enough to explain the lofty position and status of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to the Muslims and there is no confusion or doubt in it. He is such a great position that Allah does not accept anyone raising his voice in his presence. If actions can be destroyed just by raising one's voice in his presence, then what will be the consequence if someone who rejects his orders or argues with him or doubts him He will not be left with any faith or actions.

2. The following verse calls for obeying and submitting to the orders of the Holy

¹ [Baqarah: 25; Nisa: 154; Aaraf: 63]

Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

مَا كَانَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُمْ مِنَ
الْأَعْرَابِ أَنْ يَتَخَلَّفُوا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
يَرْغَبُوا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ

“The people of Madina and those who live in its outskirts do not have the right to oppose the prophet nor can they turn away from him and act according to their own desires”^۱

In another verse, Allah mentions the heartily acceptance and submission to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as the sign of true faith and belief.

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ
بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا
قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

“It is not so. These people will not be true believers until they consider you as a master in their matters and do not have any hesitance in their heart regarding what you say and they submit to you.”^۲

Apart from this, there are many other verses in the Quran in which Allah has ordered the absolute obedience and submission to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) without any conditions.

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ
فَانْتَهُوا

“Whatever the messenger gives you, take it and whatever he prohibits,

refrain from it.”^۳

And in the following verse, it has been made clear that the obedience of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the obedience of Allah.

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

“One who obeys the messenger has indeed obeyed Allah”^۴

This reality has also been stressed upon in traditions. Shaikh Kulaini (a.r.) has brought an entire chapter in his renowned book of al-Kafi by the name “Delegating the affairs of religion to the Holy Prophet (sa.w.a.) and the Imams” in which he has mentioned 10 traditions with correct chain of narrators.^۵

To summarize, Allah has endowed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) with the best of characteristics and taken him to the level of perfection and then handed over the affairs of the people to him so that it can be found out how people obey him. Zurarah narrates from Imam Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Sadiq (a.s.):

“Allah handed over the affairs to His beloved Prophet, so that He can find out how people obey the messenger”. After this Imam recited the verse, “Whatever the messenger give you, take it and whatever he prohibits, refrain from it.”

3. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself has stressed upon following his tradition and has ordered to understand the Quran with the help of the interpretation explained by him in every era and has forewarned against creating differences and disobeying him. We

^۱ [Taubah: 120]

^۵ [Nisa: 65]

^۱ [Hashr: 7]

^۲ [Nisa: 80]

^۳ [Kafi: v 1 p 265]

present a tradition in this context with reliable chain of narrators.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says, "Soon there will be such people who will rest on the throne of kingship and when my tradition will be brought in front of them, they will say, the book of God is enough for us. I permit what is permissible in it and prohibit what is prohibited. Be aware, whatever the Messenger of Allah has prohibited, has been prohibited by Allah." ¹

D. In the matter of obedience of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Allah has not differentiated between obedience in the matter of religious laws, Quranic interpretations or other orders and there are no limits or boundaries mentioned for the same. There is no differentiation between laws pertaining to beliefs, acts of worship, morals etc. With this being clear, no one can come up with an excuse that a particular matter is outside the domain of the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) obedience, including the matter of Imamate and Mastership (which is a matter of principle for the Shias). Thus, one cannot argue that this matter should be explicitly mentioned in the Quran to believe in it. Such doubts do not have any place in Islamic jurisprudence and the order of absolute obedience of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is without any kind of limitations or conditions.

Conclusion

The matter of the names of Imams

(a.s.) not being explicitly mentioned in the Quran is not a new one but was also present during the time of the Imams (a.s.) themselves. There are three views prevalent in response to this matter. According to Quranic verses and reliable traditions, the third view is found to be correct and acceptable which is based on the following points:

The Ahle Bait (a.s.) have been referred to in the Holy Quran with different references like "People of Authority", "People of Remembrance" etc but their names have not been explicitly mentioned in it. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the one who has interpreted and explained it for the nation. And the reason for this is that people be examined through their obedience to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) while he (s.a.w.a.) has left no stone unturned in his duties. Despite all this, majority of the people of the Muslim nation failed in this examination just like the previous nations.

It is strange that the people take the laws of prayers, fasting, charity, pilgrimage etc from the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and diligently act upon them without raising questions but when it comes to the matter of Imamate and Mastership of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) they raise many questions and refuse to accept the traditions of the same prophet while everyone knows that salvation is not possible without the obedience to the Holy Ahle Bait (a.s.).

¹ [Hakim Nishapuri: p 1, 8, 9, 109; Ibne Maaja Qazwini: v 1 p 6; Daarimi: v 1 p 117; Ibne Hayyan: v 1 p 147; Baihaqi: v 9 p 331; Abu Dawood: v 4 p 200]

Istiqsaa-ul-Afhaam

by Allamah Sayyad Hamid Husain Hindi

By the Grace of Allah and the special blessings of Imam Mahdi (a.s.), India has always been home to great scholars from the Imamiyyah school – the true defenders of Prophet Muhammad and his progeny (a.s.). The opponents of Shias have always attacked the faith of Shias and have left no stone unturned in disparaging the Shia faith as void, whether it is done orally or through literature. At times, they have stooped as low as to kill Shias. There are many scholars who have been assassinated and executed for the work that they have done in order to defend the true Islam. Prominent among such scholars is the name of Qazi Noorullah Shurstri, who was martyred in Agra.

Another name that comes high in this list is - Shaheed-e-Raabe (the fourth martyr), Mirza Muhammad Kamil, son of Mirza Enayat Ahmad Kashmiri, whose tomb is at dargah Panja Sharif, near old Delhi railway station. He was poisoned in the year 1810 (1225 A.H.) because of a book he had written in response to Tohfah-e-Isna-Ashariyyah by Muhaddith Dehalwi.

Shaheed-e-Raabe's book was written to defend the faith and religion of Ahle Bait (a.s.). The name of the book was Nuzhat-e-Isna Ashariyyah. He has written 68 books on various topics. We can say that many Shia scholars were killed and executed but the work of the defense of Ahle Bait

(a.s.) continued fearlessly.

It is our privilege to present over here, one such book compiled by one of modern day Shiism's greatest son.

Istaqse Ifhaam: This is the book written by one of the greatest scholars of India, Allamah Sayyad d Mir Hamid Husain Ibn Sayyad Muhammad Qali Musawi Neshapuri-e-Hindi (r.a.).

He is considered to be a great scholar of Kalam (Mutakallim).

He was born in Lucknow on 4th Muharram, 1241 A.H.

He departed for his heavenly abode on 8th Safar 1306 A.H.

Education: He acquired education from his honorable father Allamah Sayyad Muhammad Qali Musawi. Apart from basic education, he also acquired knowledge of Ilm-e-Kalam from his revered father. The knowledge of Jurisprudence and Usool was given by Sayyad Husain Naqvi. Philosophy (Falsafa) and Hikmat was taught by Sayyad Murtuza Ibn Sayyad Muhammad while Mufti Sayyad Muhammad Abbas trained him in ethics.

Allamah Amini (r.a.) in his Al-Ghadeer has introduced him thus:

هَذَا السَّيِّدُ الظَّاهِرُ الْعَظِيمُ —

This great scholar, like his father is like a drawn sword against the enemies of Allah. And he is like the victory flag of religion. And he is one of the signs from the signs of Allah. Surely Allah has completed his proof through him and showed the evident right path. The fragrance of his book Abaqaat spread from one end of the world to the other end. And the fame of his book has spread far and wide. Whoever has read this book, has realized that it is a miracle providing light and guidance, one will never find any false path in it.

‘Isteqsa al-Ifhaam Wa Istifaa-al-Inteqam fi Muntah al-Kalam’ is the complete name of the book. The name itself explain the purpose of writing this book.

An important point:

Before we proceed with the article, it is important to mention that the original book is unavailable. Although considering the significance of this book, the famous Shiite scholar Sayyad Ali Hussaini Milani has written and printed his research work on this book, which is based on three volumes, named as Istekhray al-Maraam min Isteqsa al-Ifham - Aim and meaning of the book Isteqsa al-Ifham.

Hence we take assistance from this book to introduce ‘Isteqsa al-Ifhaam wa Istifaa al-Inteqam fi Muntah al-Kalam’

Now let us see the meaning of the original book.

Isteqsa – To reach till the root of the

problem

Ifham – To make the opponents quiet by providing the proof

F-H-M – To make someone quiet by providing the answer.

F-H-M has many meanings, such as to blacken someone, to become black. That is the reason that coal is also termed as “Fahema” while the seller of coal is called as “Fahhaam”.

Nevertheless, the term ‘Isteqsa’ with ‘Ifhaam’ means to make someone quiet by providing the evident and sufficient arguments is the closest in meaning. This is also evident from the complete name of the book.

Ayatullah Milaani mentions about the title of the book as follows:

و كَانَ الْبُؤْلَفُ قَدْ وَضَعَ عَلَيْهِ هَذَا لِاسْمٍ
لِيُشِيرَ إِلَى أَنَّ لِلْبَحْثِ فِيهِ جِهَتَيْنِ، وَأَنَّ لَهُ
مِنْ تَأْلِيْفِهِ غَرَضَيْنِ:

The author has named the book thus in order to point out the two arguments which are used and two aims of writing the book.

إِحْدَهُمَا: دَفْعُ الشُّبْهِ وَالْإِعْتِرَاضَاتِ عَنْ
جُمْلَةٍ مِنَ الْعُقَائِدِ، وَرَدُّ التُّهْمِ عَنْ بَعْضِ
الْإِعْلَامِ، وَالتَّكَلُّمُ عَلَى بَعْضِ الْكُتُبِ
الْبَعْرُوفَةِ عِنْدَ الْإِمَامِيَّةِ وَ عُنْوَانُ
(اِسْتِقْصَاءِ الْإِفْهَامِ) نَاطِرًا إِلَى هَذِهِ الْجِهَةِ.

First aim – Giving reasons against the doubts raised against beliefs, replying to the

accusations of certain scholars, discussing certain famous books of Shia scholars.

والثاني: التحقيق عن موقع العلوم
الاسلامية من علم العقائد والتفسير
والحديث والفقه و عن حال موسسيها،
عند اهل السنة، و بيان حال علماءهم و
أشهر كتبهم المعتمدة في هذه العلوم. و
عنوان (استيفاء الانتقام) ناظر الى هذه
الجهة.

Second aim – To research Ahle Tasannun's beliefs, traditions and jurisprudence through their books as well as to narrate historical facts of their famous scholars, and scan their books.

و بتعبير آخر، فإنَّ هذا الكتاب قد ألف
نقضاً للكتاب (منتهى الكلام)

And the last part of the title indicates that this book aims to invalidate and counter the book of 'Muntah al-Kalam' written against the Shias.

The writer of 'Muntah al-Kalam'

The writer of 'Muntah al-Kalam' is Haider Ali Ibn Muhammad Faizabadi. He was a Sunni Hanafi scholar. He was a Mutakallim and scholar of jurisprudence. He has penned this book in 1250 A.H. by the name of 'Muntah al-Kalam fi Radd-e-Shia' in two volumes.

It is worth mentioning that Haider Ali was born in Faizabad and initially trained under the guidance of Shia scholars such as

Mirza Fateh Ali, Sayyad Najaf Ali and Hakeem Meer Nawab. After migrating to Delhi, he came under the influence of Sunni scholars such as Shaikh Rasheeduddin, Shaikh Rafeuddin and Shaikh Abdul Azeez Ibn Waliullah Dehlavi.

Later on, he stayed in Lucknow for a prolonged period and was engaged in educational debates and discussions. Afterwards, he proceeded to Bhopal and stayed there for a certain period. After leaving Bhopal, he moved to Hyderabad Deccan and served as Chief Justice in the court of Nawab Mukhtar Malik. He was occupied in writing and compiling in Hyderabad. He expired in the year 1299 Hijri.

He has written many books against the Shias.

ازالة الغين عن بصارة العين جلدون ميين،
نضارة العينين عن شهاة الحسين، كاشف
اللاثام عن تديس المجتهد القمقام،
والداهية الحاطمه على من أخرج من اهل
البيت فاطمة، روية الثعاليب والغرايب
في انشاء المكاتيب، اثبات البيعة
المرتضوية، اثبات ازدواج عمر بن
الخطاب بسيدتنا ام كلثوم بنت علي
المرتضى، تكملة فتح العزيز

Our great scholars

Our scholars are worthy of praise and we must be proud of them. They were not silent observers, rather they gave befitting

replies. It is worth noting that many Shia scholars have written books against just one Sunni book. In today's time, we feel that it is of less use to write the reply again. We feel it is not beneficial. If reply of a particular book is written, we find it pointless to write the reply of that book again.

What an incredible work our scholars have done! Respecting the honor and dignity of other scholars, they continued giving reply to the opponents. Innumerable books have been written against Tohfah-e-Isna-Ashariyyah

Their level of Wilayat

The hearts of these scholars were filled with the love of Ahle Bait (a.s.). They had sacrificed their lives for Wilayat. They were ready to face any problems and underwent difficulties without complaining. It is said about him that when his right hand got affected due to excessive writing and compiling, he used to write with his left hand. When his left hand was likewise affected, he did not stop the work, he continued the work with great vigor by dictating. May we be ransom for such a great scholar! He has blessed us by showing us the magnanimity of the Wilayat of Ali (a.s.).

Topics of "Isteqsa al-Ifham"

This book is written by Allamah Mir Hamid Hussain in Persian in 10 volumes. In the book "Muntah al-Kalam", the author had targeted Shia beliefs and Allamah wrote

'Isteqsa al-Ifham'to rebut the mischievous claims of the author.

Based on the research of Ayatullah Milani, we list a few topics over here.

Ayatullah Milani writes:

Faizabadi has refuted Shiite beliefs in his book. Allamah Meer Hamid Hussain Hindi has refuted his claims and brought it for discussion under the following headings:

1. Distortion in Quran
2. Badaa (Change in destiny)
3. Personification of God
4. Abu Hanifah's cursing
5. Assumptions
6. Covenant
7. Blowing of the trumpet
8. The returning of the sun and the splitting of the moon
9. Error in prayers
10. The book of Sulaim b. Qais
11. The Islam of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) forefathers
12. Amr b. Aas
13. Ruling regarding an illegitimate child
14. Condemnation of the Ashairah
15. Concerning Sihah-e-Sitta and their authors
16. Regarding Maalik and Shafei
17. In defense of the Exegesis of Ali b. Ibrahim Qummi

18. Regarding interpretations and interpreters
19. Regarding famous Sunni interpreters like Abdullah b. Masood, Abu Musa Ashari, Abdullah b. Zubair, Anas b. Malik, Abu Hurairah, Abdullah b. Amr b. Aas, Mujahid, Akramah, Hasan Basri, Ataa Abu Aaliyah, Zahhaq, Qatadah, Marrah b. Atiyyah, Abdul Razzaq etc

Note

Allamah has refuted and replied to all the allegations and accusation separately in the original book. However Ayatullah Milani has chosen to summarize it keeping brevity in mind. We have summarized it further in line with the scope of the article.

Interpretation of Quran

Faizabadi has accused the Shias of promoting belief in Tahreef (distortion of the Quran). In addition to this, he has raised questions over the Tafseer of Ali Ibn Ibrahim Qummi (r.a.). He has also cursed and abused Shias and Shia scholars that they believe that Tafseer-e-Qummi is the exegesis which is originally presented by Ahle Bait (a.s.) and this exegesis belongs to Imam Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Sadiq (a.s.)

Another allegation imposed is that the most reliable narrator of the Tafseer is 'Abul Jarood', while he alleges that Abul Jarood is considered unreliable and is cursed by the holy Imams (a.s.). The infallibles (a.s.) even called him a Satan. Then how do Shias accept

a Tafseer narrated by such an unreliable person?

Reply

Allamah Mir Hamid Husain (r.a.) has narrated the status of Abul Jarood in the light of Ilme Rejal and Ilme Hadith. For brevity we have omitted details of the discussion. Diligent readers are requested to refer to the book 'Istekhraj al-Maarij' for further study.

Now let us move on to Distortion in Quran

Holy Quran is the word of Allah. According to the traditions from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his noble progeny (a.s.), we have been exhorted and encouraged excessively to refer to the Holy Quran, to memorize the Holy Quran and to practice its principles.

It is evident from all aspects that it is obligatory on oneself to respect the holy book and forbidden to demean it. This is also a part of discussion which the great scholar has argued in the book.

All the scholars of the Muslim world have given this fatwa that whatever Quran exists today in the world is free from distortion and there lies no error in it.

Whatever contradictions on distortion of Quran are found in the books of Shias are based on weak reports / narrators. Such traditions are unreliable and cannot be used against the Shias to refute them. Most of the

traditions which have strong and authentic narrators are "Maqtoat al-Sudoor" which means that these traditions emerge either from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) or holy Imams (a.s.).

View of Ahle Tasannun on Sahihain

Majority of the Ahle Tasannun believe that all the traditions which are narrated in the book of Bukhari and Muslim, also called as 'Sahihain', two authentic books, are correct and proper.

And indeed most of the Sunni scholars are of the view regarding these two books that they are correct and perfect and all the traditions of these two books are "Maqtoat al-Sudoor".

For instance, scholars such as Suyuti, Al-Baqilani, Ibne Salah, Ibn-e-Kathir and scholars from Shafe'i sect such as Abu Ishaq, Abu Hamid Asfirayeni, Qazi Abu Tayyeb and even scholars from Hanbali and Ashaerah and Ahle Hadith and even some Sufi scholars claim that these two books are correct.

In short, we may conclude that the standard of any tradition to be true and correct is that it has to be in Sahih al-Bukhari and / or Sahih al-Muslim as these two books are the standard to prove authenticity of traditions.

Tahreef in books of Ahle Tasannun

Is it the Shias who believe in Tahreef or

is it the Ahle Tasannun?

We present here a few verses from Quran along with its interpretation according to Sunni books by way of example. We leave it to the reader to conclude on Tahreef.

Allamah Mir Hamid Hussain (r.a.) has presented many verses as proof for the same viz.

1. Surah Ahzab (33)

وقال السيوطي في (الاتقان)

قال - اي ابو عبيد:- حدثنا اسماعيل بن جعفر عن زر بن جيش قال: قال ابي بن كعب كأي تعد سورة الاحزاب؟ قلت: اثنتين وسبعين آية اور ثلاثاً وسبعين آية—

Zarr narrates that Ubay bin Ka'ab told me: O Zarr, How many verses are there in Surah Ahzab?

I replied: Either 72 or 73. Then he continued: Rather, it is equal to the number of verses in Surah Baqara or may be even more.

2. Verse of Rajm (stoning)

It is narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari:

Ibn Abbas has narrated that Umar has narrated from the pulpit that Allah has sent Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) with truth and revealed a holy book on him. And one of the revelations is on stoning (Ayat-e-Rajm), which we have read and understood.

According to the verse, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to execute the adulterous by stoning to death. After the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), we too followed his footsteps and executed in the same manner. But I fear that there will come a time on this nation that someone would say 'By Allah, I did not find the verse of stoning in Quran and an order which Allah has ordained would not be followed and I would be the one who has disobeyed Allah and it would be the cause of depravity and deviation.'

3. The verses of Salutations upon the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Hameedah b. Abu Yunus narrates, "My father was eighty years old and read this verse for me from Mushaf-e-Ayesha thus"

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا وَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَصْلُونَ الصَّفُوفِ الْأُولِ

"Surely Allah and his angels send salutations on the prophet. O those who believe send salutations on him and submit to him and those who pray in the front row."

This was the time when Usman had not altered the Quran.^r

Apart from these verses, Mir Hamid Husain has mentioned many verses which

according to Sunni traditions, there are mistakes and distortions. For example the verse of Jihad, verse of the middle prayer, verse of divorce etc. He has mentioned around 20 such verses and for each verse he has brought traditions from reliable Sunni sources which talk about distortion in these verses. Thereafter he has given a strong reply that this concept of distortion is present in Sunni books but the Shia scholars are against this idea while Suyuti and Fakhre Razi have also endorsed such traditions.

Conclusion

In the end we would like to mention the following important points:

1. Even if a single letter is added or deleted from the Quran which does not even affect the reality of the Quran, it will still be termed as distortion.
2. Similarly adding or deleting a verse or a chapter from the Quran will also be termed as distortion.
3. Also, if one says that a particular portion of the Quran is not the word of God, this also amounts to distortion.

To summarize, Shias have completely denied distortion in Quran while it is proven from Sunni traditions.

May Allah hasten the reappearance of Imam-e-Zamana (a.s.) and make the reality of Quran evident through him.

ⁱ [Sahih Bukhari: v 8 p 209; Istikhraj-al-Maraam: v 1 p 127]

^r [Al-Itteqan Fi Uloom-il-Quran: v 3 p 82; Istikhraj-al-Maraam: v 1 p 133]

Why didn't Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) wrest back the caliphate

One of the many alterations which occurred in the Islamic society after the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was that the family of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) was completely sidelined. During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the Ahle Bait (a.s.) enjoyed a deserving focal status. But during the period of the first two caliphates, they were ignored. Not only were they kept away from the political affairs, but there was prohibition imposed on narrating the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the praise and merits of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) so that the people remain ignorant regarding their merits and loftiness so as to reduce their influence on the Islamic nation, and in parallel, their rights were usurped and they were made economically weak.

In the return journey from his last Haj, in the land of Ghadeer-e-Khum, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had already announced Ali (a.s.) to be his caliph and successor. All the Muslims accept this fact that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) made the following announcement with respect to Imam Ali (a.s.): "Of whomsoever I am the master, this Ali is his master". The Ahle Tasannun (people who pretend to be following the Sunnah) accept this fact but refuse to accept him as the first caliph. They claim that the silence of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was his support to the caliphate of the others. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "Ali is with the truth and truth is with Ali". Therefore, Ali paying allegiance

to the caliphs and not revolting against them means he was satisfied with their caliphate. The Ahle Tasannun and those who keeps views like them consider the silence of Imam Ali (a.s.) as his support to the two caliphs, whereas the Shias believe that caliphate was his right and it was snatched away from him (a.s.). This caliphate was given to him by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) upon the order of Allah which cannot be usurped. Therefore, Imam Ali (a.s.) was in no need to have anyone accept his caliphate.

Anyways, the silence of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and he not revolting to wrest back his right does not prove that his opponents were right. Truth is always with Ali despite anyone being against him, but he (a.s.) did not use force to regain his right. There are various reasons for this silence and this article, we shall take a cursory view of a few of them.

The hunter, the flower and the
nightingale kept guessing

My silence in the meadows was a
meaningful secret

Covenant with the Holy Prophet
(s.a.w.a.)

قال رسول الله ﷺ: يا علي انت بمنزلة الكعبة
توءني ولا تأني، فان اتاك هوءلاء القوم
فسلبوها اليك -يعني الخلافة- فاقبل
منهم وان لم يأتوك فلا تأتهم حتى يأتوك

There are various reasons mentioned in books on why didn't Ameerul Momineen (s.a.) use force to wrest back his rightful caliphate from its usurpers. One of the reasons is that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself has stopped Ali (a.s.) from doing so. Apart from Bihar-ul-Anwar and other Shia sources, the scholars of the Ahle Tasannun have also mentioned this point in their books. For example:

يَا عَلِيُّ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْكَعْبَةِ تَوْعَى وَلَا تَأْتِي
فَإِنْ أَتَاكَ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمُ فَمَكْنُوا لَكَ
هَذَا الْأَمْرَ فَاقْبَلْهُ مِنْهُمْ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ فَلَا
تَأْتِهِمْ

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "O Ali, your position is like that of the Kaba. It is approached (by people) and it does not go (to anyone). Then if this nation approaches you and submit caliphate to you, then accept it. But if they do not come to you, then do not go to them until they come to you."

Another similar tradition is mentioned in another Sunni books by the name of Ghayat-ul-Maraam.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "O Ali, your position is only like the Kaba. It is approached (by people) and it does not go (to anyone). Then if this nation approaches you and presents you the caliphate, accept it from them. And if they do not come

to you, do not go to them."

It is clear from these above traditions that Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) simply acted upon the advice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and chose to remain silent. But intermittently, he kept clarifying his right for the people and kept reminding them of the incidents and traditions in which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) mentioned about his (a.s.) caliphate, but people did not accept his arguments. Therefore, acting on the advice of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), he observed silence and did not revolt.

Another reason which is mentioned in traditions that Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) feared that the Muslim would turn into apostates. At that time, Islam was in its nascent stages and many people had accepted Islam just five years ago or even less than that. In such a scenario, conflicts between two groups of Muslims would develop hatred towards Islam in the hearts of such newly converted Muslims and they would give up Islam. Not only would these new Muslims return to their old religion but even those non-Muslims who were inclined towards Islam would turn away from it.

عن زرارة قال: قلت لأبي عبد الله "ع" ما
منع أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام أن يدعو
الناس إلى نفسه، قال خوفاً أن يرتدوا

Shaikh Sadooq (a.r.) in his book Elal-us-Shara'e has collected traditions under this topic. According to one tradition, a companion of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) by the name

^r [Aale Muhammad by Allamah Hassam-ud-Deen Hanafi, pg 624]

^r [Ghayat-ul-Maraam Fi Rijal-il-Bukhari Ila Sayyad-il-Anaam by Allamah Shaikh Muhammad b. Dawood al-Hamudi al-Shafi'i pg 73]

of Zurarah b. Ayan asked him the reason why Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) not inviting people towards him. Imam (a.s.) that Ali (a.s.) feared that the people would turn back to apostasy.

This could be the very reason why the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) advised Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) against revolting against the usurpers of caliphate. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself did not prefer that fact that people should think negatively about Islam because of him. Their belief in oneness of God and the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would at least keep them as Muslims. Otherwise, due to the discord arising on the dispute over caliphate, they would turn away even from the folds of Islam. Another implication would be that the enemies of Islam would take advantage of this internal conflict and not let Islam develop into the religion it later became.

The third reason why Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) had to remain silent was the lack of supporters. Any mission required sincere helpers and even Ali (a.s.) needed such supporters and helpers. In order to take back his rightful caliphate from its usurpers, he (a.s.) was in need of such followers who would not only support him but also very well understood his philosophy. It was not impossible for Ali (a.s.) to form an army but he could not find the sincere people as he wanted. He (a.s.) also mentioned this to Abu Sufiyan when he approached Imam (a.s.) offering support. Abu Sufiyan had offered that if Imam (a.s.) wished, he would form an army of the Banu Umayyah and its ally tribes

and support Ali (a.s.) to take back the kingdom of his cousin (the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)) from the two caliphs. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) replied to him thus,

لَوْ وَجَدْتُ أَعْوَانًا أَرْبَعِينَ رَجُلًا مِنَ
الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَ الْأَنْصَارِ مِنَ السَّابِقَةِ
لَنَاهَضْتُ هَذَا الرَّجُلَ.

“Even if I had forty people from the early converts from the Muhajirs and Ansars supported me, I would have fought against that man (the first caliph)”^r

From the above tradition, it becomes clear that Ali (a.s.) did not only wish to take away the rule from the caliphs but also wanted to have such supporters who were sincere Muslims, who gave preference to religion and had the pain for religion in their hearts. It was easy to form an army but the lust for power by these people would eventually harm Islam. Now even despite lack of supporters if Imam Ali (a.s.) would revolt against the caliph, then he would definitely be overpowered and he and his followers would be killed. Then these usurpers would spoil the face of religion to such an extent that nothing from its originality would remain. The silence of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) protected Islam from this great harm. Today the entire world is aware of the fact that there are two faces of Islam: one that of Ali (a.s.) and his family and the other that of his opponents.

...فَتَنَظَّرْتُ فَإِذَا لَيْسَ لِي رَافِدٌ وَلَا ذَابٌ وَلَا

^r [Elal-us-Shara'e: vol 1 pg 149]

ⁱ [Book of Sulaim b. Qais: p 303; Sharh-e-Nahjul Balagha: v 2 p 47]

مُسَاعِدِ إِلَّا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي فَضَنَنْتُ بِهِمُ عَنِ
الْمَنْيَةِ...

Other reason related to the above one was that he (a.s.) did not intend to put the lives of his Ahle Bait (a.s.) and his followers into danger. We find the following words from him (a.s.) in Nahjul Balagha,

“Then I saw that apart from my family members, there is no supported to defend me. Thus I did not intend to put their lives in danger.”¹

History is full of evidences of the ill-treatment meted out to the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) at the hands of the Muslims themselves. It is witness to the killings of the members of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) for the sake for power, sometimes through poison and at other times through murder. If Ali (a.s.) would have revolted, the opponents would not hesitate to eliminate the entire Ahle Bait (a.s.) and the lamp of guidance would be extinguished forever.

¹ [Nahjul Balagha: Sermon 217]

continue from page 1 ---

Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the apostates of Mecca as cordial differences and the refusal of Satan to prostrate on the order of Allah would also be called as expression of cordial relation.

The truth is that until the beliefs of Wilayat and Bara'at are not strengthened, truth and falsehood cannot be differentiated. Therefore, success is to believe in and truly submit to Allah, His Messenger and the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Wilayat and Bara'at not only make

Apart from the aforementioned few reasons, there are other reasons mentioned in the traditions of the Holy Infallibles (a.s.) regarding the silence of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Whatever decision or steps he (a.s.) took in that chaotic atmosphere was only for the sake of safety of Islam and the Muslims. For the bravest of all Ali (a.s.), it was easier to form an army and revolt but he chose the more difficult path and acting upon the will of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) remained patient. This patience from Ali (a.s.) not only protected the lives of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and the Shias of that time, but also paved the path of guidance for the Shias of the future on what stand to take in the face of oppressive opponents. It is also absolutely clear that he (a.s.) was not satisfied with the caliphate of the two caliphs. His silence is no indication that he endorsed the deeds and actions of the caliphs or he had forsaken the claim to his rightful caliphate. He (a.s.) on multiple occasions made it clear that his opponents were oppressors and that he was a victim. A clear proof of the same is his heart rendering sermon in Nahjul Balagha by the name of “Sermon of the Shiqshikiya”.

a man successful but also guide him to the right path and these two beliefs that are the cause of success and salvation of the Muslim nation and are the best differentiator between truth and falsehood.

O Allah, keep us on the love of Ali (a.s.) and his pure family and on the hatred of their enemies until our last breath and on the day of judgement, raise us in the company of the lovers and followers of the Ahle Bait (a.s.). Amen.

The Significance and Selection of Imam and Unity in Selection

An absolute clear characteristic of the most perfect religion of Islam is which makes it distinct from every other divine and man-made religion and no other religion shares this characteristic with Islam. And that characteristic is Divine Monotheism. The concept of Divine Monotheism presented by Islam is not seen anywhere else. This concept of Divine Monotheism is not fictional but factual. All the other fundamentals of religious beliefs have the concept of Divine Monotheism evident in them.

1. Divine Monotheism

This means that there is no god except Allah and He and only He is worthy of worship. None can be associated with Him in His being and His worship.

2. Divine Justice

He is unique in His justice and all His other characteristics and there is none like Him.

3. Prophethood

The divine laws reach the people only through the divinely appointed prophet. Only Allah has the right to appoint a prophet and laws are dependent on the prophet.

4. Divine Leadership

Obedience, mastership and leadership is exclusive to those whom Allah has appointed as the leader. Other than these selected individuals, the obedience and leadership of another person is not acceptable.

5. Day of Resurrection

Everyone will face a common end and the criteria of success is sincerity. '

Now if someone follows the religion of and obeys someone else other than the divinely sent prophet and the divinely appointed Imam then he has associated that person in Allah's exclusive right of selecting and appointing a prophet and an Imam. These other can people can be a few individual of a complete nation. To believe in the prophethood of a person other than the divinely selected prophet and to obey a person other than the divinely appointed Imam is polytheism means to associate that other person with Allah.

Definition of Imamat

The concept of Imamat has always been matter of controversy and conversation. Before we move ahead, let us first define Imamat. We would also like to mention that before applying a

[al-Imamat al-Ilahiyyah by Shaikh Sanad: vol 1]

characteristics or position to some person or thing, the characteristic or position is first defined and then based on this definition, this characteristic or position is applied to person or a thing. In this case, the person or thing on which the characteristic or position is applied are compatible with the definition. Sometimes, a person or a thing is appointed and then it's characteristic or position is defined. In this scenario the criteria keep changing as different persons or things are not of the same criteria and therefore, the definition also changes with the person or thing.

Some people think that Imam is a worldly kingdom and government whose responsibility is to defend the boundaries of the state, to manage the general affairs of the nation and to maintain law and order in the cities, etc. That is, it is a leadership role similar to the other political and governmental leadership roles whose domain is limited to the worldly affairs of the people.

On the other hand, some other people, in addition to worldly matters, have also added religious leadership and guidance as a condition for Imam which also include the propagation of religion along with the above mentioned responsibilities.

But, in reality, Imam is not limited to either of the above two definitions. Both these definitions are just a part of a reality and not the reality. Because in order to implement the worldly above responsibilities neither requires infallibility nor divine knowledge. This basic work is anyways

happening today in whatever good or bad way even if the ruler is successful or not. Whereas Imam is a position for which infallibility and divine knowledge is a condition. Isn't it strange that a position with such high divine criteria is responsible for only for worldly responsibilities. Can intellect accept the fact that a school appoints the most learned teacher in the world in order to teach a groups of kindergarten kids? A simple task which can be done by any common person be given as a responsibility to an emperor. It is possible that the situation in the present time is beyond these definitions, there are conspiracies of the oppressive rulers, but it is clear that Imam if also encompasses worldly, it means that only that person can become an Imam who is a ruler then the prophethood and Imam of majority of the prophets and Imams will be questionable, while the prophethood, messengership and Imam of these personalities was certain and without believing in whom, a person cannot be a Muslim. Hence the question arises that who is an Imam and what is his necessity.

The below mentioned proofs clearly explain the necessity of Imam and will also prove that is an everlasting necessity. It means that Imam is such a necessity which will last until the Day of Judgement.

Necessity of Imam

Hisham b. Hakam narrates that one day an atheist asked Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.), "How did you prove the (necessity of)

prophet and Imam?"

He (a.s.) replied, "When it is proven that we have a Creator who is One, He has created us and is greater than us and every other creation. This Creator is Wise, Great and people neither see Him nor feel Him. He does not sit among them nor can they go to Him so that they can prove each other. Hence it is necessary that He has His representatives from among the creatures who deliver His message and His orders to His creatures and servants and inform them about the things which things are beneficial for them, things which will lead to their survival and abandoning which actions would lead to their destruction. Therefore it is necessary that there are certain individual appointed by Allah, the Wise and the Knowing, who would order and prohibit people and deliver the divine message to them. These individuals are none other than the divinely raised messengers who are the chosen ones of Allah among the people. They are wise and noble and have been raised with wisdom. They are similar to people in the physical form but are different from them. They are supported through divine wisdom and assistance. This proves that it is necessary to have a prophet or a messenger in every era so that the earth is not devoid of a divine proof. It is mandatory to have one such individual in every era who possesses such knowledge which proves his truthfulness and justice."¹

¹ [Kafi: v 1 p 168 t 1]

Another proof

Let us first mention that if a matter is presented in front of an Imam and the Imam verifies the matter, then it is considered as a tradition and similarly if an action is performed in front of Imam and he does not reject it, then that too is considered as a tradition.

Mansoor b. Haazim narrates that I asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.):

"Allah is way too High and Lofty to be recognized through his creatures, rather creatures are recognized through God."

Imam (a.s.) replied, "You are right."

I asked, "Anyone who believes that he has a Lord should also accept that there is pleasure and dissatisfaction for this Lord. This cause of pleasure and dissatisfaction cannot be known except through revelation and a messenger. Anyone who does not receive revelation should look to follow a prophet and when he finds a prophet and confirms that this is the divine proof, then he should his obedience is obligatory."

I said to people, "Do you know that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is the divine proof over His creation?" They said, "Certainly!" I said, "Who is the divine proof in the world after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)?" They said. "The Holy Quran."

When I saw the Quran, I found that all the sects, Murjaiyyah, Qadariyyah and the heretics etc all use the Quran to successfully prove their points. I am certain that the

Quran cannot be a proof without a guardian and truth is only what this guardian says about the Quran.

I asked the people, "Who is the guardian of Quran in this era?" They replied, "Ibne Mas'ood knows about the Quran, Umar does too and so does Huzaifah." I asked, "Do these people have the complete knowledge of the Quran?" They replied, "No, according to us there is none that we know who has the complete knowledge of the Quran except Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.). Whenever an issue arises in the society, and we seek help from someone, they all reply "we do not know" but when it is taken to him (a.s.), he always has the solution. I bear witness that Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) is the guardian of the Quran, his obedience is obligatory and he is the divinely proof over the people after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Whatever he mentions about the Holy Quran is the truth."

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) replied, "May God bless you."¹

The following points become clear from the two traditions mentioned above:

1. The discussion of Imamatus is for those people who believe and submit to God and His Oneness.
2. There is no point in discussing Prophethood and Imamatus with those who do not believe in God.
3. The divine entity of God is such that neither come among the people nor can people see Him in any way.

4. None other than God can explain the beneficial and harmful things for the people, i.e. only Allah has the right to make the laws of life for the people.
5. Since God exists, there are certainly some things which please and displease Him.
6. When we believe in the existence of God and when we obtain benefits from his bounties, then it is our responsibility that we always perform those actions which are a cause of divine pleasure and refrain from those actions which displease Allah.
7. Allah, on account of his infinite greatness, cannot come among the people.
8. It is necessary that there are His representatives who come from His side and deliver His message to the people.
9. These representatives are the divine proofs whose existence in every era is important.
10. According to the second tradition, the Holy Quran cannot be a divine proof by itself as different sets of people prove different points from the same Quran
11. Those who claim to have the knowledge of the Quran do not possess the complete knowledge of it.
12. There is a need for a guardian for the Quran who is completely aware of the Quran and possesses complete knowledge of it so that he can explain

¹ [al-Kafi: v 1 p 168 t 2]

the real concepts of Quran.

13. The only person who qualifies for these traits is Ali b Abi Talib.
14. He alone is the Proof of God
15. His obedience is obligatory upon everyone

In the light of these points, it becomes crystal clear that a divine proof is absolutely necessary in every time and era

- a. Who can inform the people about all those things which benefit or harm them
- b. Who explains those actions which are a cause of divine pleasure and displeasure
- c. Who explains the real meanings of the Quran
- d. So that people can worship God and that to in such a manner which is as per divine orders and can fulfill the aim of their creation.
- e. So that people can have a successful life in this world and the hereafter.

Keeping in mind the aforementioned points, we as each and every logical and intellectual person, that after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), who is the one person who possesses these characteristics and fits perfectly on the above conditions? If we scan through the pages of history, is there anyone other than Ali b. Abi Talib, who possesses all these characteristics to their perfection? One who explains the divine laws for the people, informs people about Allah's pleasure and

displeasure and who possesses the complete knowledge of the Quran. Can all the people of this world or all the intellectuals get together and appoint one such person who possesses these traits? Such a selection is not in the hands of the people because:

All the intellectuals of this world only have visibility to the apparent aspect of a person whereas these characteristics are related to the inner self of the person and such characteristics have every scope error. This selection is only and only possible from God's side. None can interfere in this matter. Therefore, only that person can become the divine proof after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who is appointed by Allah.

When we consider the guarding of the boundaries and general public welfare in the definition of Imam, we shall select such a person who will be able to perform these responsibilities. But if Imam includes explanation of laws and religious responsibilities and eliminating differences in the light of the Holy Quran, then this requires such a person who knows all the laws of religion both in general and in detail and is aware of all the Quranic concepts. He should be aware of each and every minute detail of religion and should have encompassing knowledge every matter in order to solve differences. The selection of such an individual can only be divine.

It is strange that people do not accept this second situation. They do not accept this situation because if they do so, they shall lose their say in this selection of a ruler

because normal people are unable to select such a person. Apart from this, another reason, which could be the real reason, are those people who have been selected who do not possess even one of the required qualifications. As a result, people will have to abandon all these people and this will lead to abandoning all those personalities who were revered and honored for years. This is similar to the situation of accepting Divine Monotheism when who people revered, honored and worshipped idols for years and generations were called towards the One God, did not accept and said,

“We have found our forefathers on this path and we shall continue treading their path”

If man uses a bit of intellect and justice, he shall become aware of the real need of Imamate and thus he shall not accept the Imamate of anyone else other than that of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

The Door of Recognition and Worship

God has created man for His recognition and worship and this recognition and worship is his perfection. A man engulfed in materialism and ignorance cannot attain the recognition of the Pure Allah independently. If he tries to reach to Allah on his own, he will reach somewhere else but not to Allah. This is such a reality with which we all are aware and does not require any special argument or proof.

Keeping this human limitation in mind,

Allah has sent prophets and messengers so they bring people towards the recognition of the real Allah and teach them the methods of worshipping Him. All the prophets and messengers guided the people towards the recognition and worship of God and did this in its true sense.

The question is: did this necessity cease to exist after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)? Or does it continue to exist until the dawn of resurrection?

If this requirement ceased to exist, then why did people abandon the funeral of the people and gathered to immediately appoint a successor to the prophet while religion had already been perfected? This immediate and systematic effort to appoint a successor proves that with the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), messengership ended but the need for guidance in the path of recognition and worship continued.

Who will fulfill this need? Only he can fulfill this need who possesses excessive recognition of Allah and not only knows the lowest and the highest levels of worship but also has himself traversed this journey of worship. It can be said without an iota of doubt that except the Ahle Bait (a.s.), none other can aptly fit this requirement whose first personality is Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and the last is Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan al-Askari (a.t.f.s.) who is alive today and he is the connection, medium and proof between Allah and His creation.