

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

In the tradition – ‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali’ there is a clear and decisive argument against every point of dispute among the Muslims. We only have to see where Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) stands on the issue and we immediately know the truth. There is no need to engage in endless debates, because the tradition clearly says that Ali (a.s.) is with the truth and the Quran.

So if Muslims want to know the truth about the most burning issues in the Islamic community like caliphate, Fadak and the three civil wars of Jamal, Siffeen and Nahrawan, they should see on whose side was Ali (a.s.) on.

1. Caliphate

Some Muslims argue that Ali (a.s.) did not stake his claim to caliphate either because he was not the right person for the position or for the purpose of unity in the nation (ettihad). They claim that if he was on truth he would or should have made a claim.

This argument does not carry weight because when he was already identified as the Master (Mawla) of all Muslim men and women just a couple of months before the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) martyrdom, in Ghadeer, there was no need to advance an argument / claim to supplement the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) declaration. It is like Adam (a.s.) inviting Iblis to prostrate when Allah has already issued a clear command. Nobody argues that Adam (a.s.) should have independently called Iblis to prostrate.

After the Ghadeer declaration and clear traditions like ‘Ali is with the truth...’ it was not necessary for Ali (a.s.) to invite the Muslims towards his right. Although he did invite them, this was in the nature of reminders and to complete all arguments so that on the Day of Judgment none would have any argument against him.

History is witness that Ali (a.s.) has advanced the tradition of ‘Ali is with the truth...’ to stake his claim on caliphate.

Umar's death manifested one of his more notorious innovations in the form of Shura (committee) compromising of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and pretenders like Talha, Zubair, Saad b. Abi Waqqaas, Abdul Rahman b. Auf and the Bani Umayyah representative - Usman b. Affaan.

In the committee in the presence of all its members, Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) challenged:

‘I implore you for the sake of Allah! Do all of you not know that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said – The truth is with Ali and Ali is with the truth; the truth turns with Ali however he turns?’

All of them acknowledged that they heard the same from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

(Manaqib al-Khwaarazmi pg 217)

2. Fadak

History is witness that there was a raging dispute after the demise of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), on the subject of inheritance, between Fatima Zahra (s.a.) the lone daughter of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Abu Bakr who assumed, rather usurped, the caliphate of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Despite her own position as a paragon of truthfulness and purity and Islam itself, Fatima Zahra (s.a.) was forced to advance witnesses in support of her claim on Fadak as if she was a liar (Allah forbid).

This was unjust in itself, but more unjust than this was the fact that when she advanced Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as witness, his witness was summarily rejected on the pretext that he was her husband and therefore an interested party. When there was a clear tradition of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) that Ali is with the truth..., there is no justification on earth to reject his witness even if the entire world contradicts him. (Refer Kashf al-Yaqeen pg 161 of Allamah Hilli (r.a.) for detailed tradition)

3. Battles with the wives and companions

Among the allegations against Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is that he engaged in three civil wars dividing the nation and killing many Muslims in the process.

This allegation is baseless and reeks of hostility towards Ali (a.s.). It is absurd to suggest this on two counts.

First - those who fought against Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) namely the wives and companions should be censured for taking up arms against Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) – the caliph of the time.

Books of Ahle Tasannun are filled with reports warning the Muslims against disobeying the caliph. Let alone the caliph of the nation, traditions strictly forbid Muslims against even preceding the Imam of the congregational prayers.

Muslims who disobey the caliph are not even Muslims regardless of whether they are wives or companions as these and other traditions point out:

- Ibn Abbas narrated on the authority of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.) - Whomsoever finds something in his ruler that he disapproves of, he should bear it patiently, for one who moves a span's length from the jama'at (Muslim society) and dies, dies the death of paganism.
(Sahih-e-Bukhari)
- In another narration the words used are, "he has removed the nook of Islam from his neck"¹, meaning he has discarded his allegiance of Islam.

So it is out of place to blame Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.), in fact the blame lies with the wives and companions. When Muslims cannot rebel against an unjust Imam, where is the question of revolting against an Imam who was the embodiment of justice!

Second – When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has explicitly mentioned that 'Ali is with the truth...' and there is no similar and unanimous report in favour of the wives and companions, it means the wives and companions have no choice but to align themselves with Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.), instead of rebelling against him. This tradition establishes the certain falsehood of every Muslim who challenges the authority of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.).

1 Musnad-e-Ahmad

Is Ammar greater than Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.)?

In the battle of Siffeen against Muawiyah the Muslims were more concerned about Ammar based on just one report – albeit a reliable one – that Ammar would be killed by a rebellious group. Muawiyah and Amr-e-Aas put all their resources together to deflect blame for killing Ammar and even went to the extent of branding Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as the rebel (Allah forbid) responsible for killing Ammar! Till today Muslims have no way to hide from the fact that Ammar was killed by Muawiyah's group of rebels.

This is highly ironical since Muslims should be more worried about Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) rather than Ammar! Given the clear report of Ali being with the truth, Muawiyah was on falsehood even if he had not killed Ammar or even if there was no report in favour of Ammar. While Muawiyah's falsehood is already established for killing Ammar, fighting Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) is an even bigger crime based on the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) tradition that 'Ali is with the truth...'

Only this much is sufficient for Muawiyah's annihilation and disgrace. But he still finds supporters in this age who defend his crimes at all cost as if he was even above the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) hence traditions like – 'Ali is with the truth...' do not apply to him.

4. False reports maligning Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.)

Obviously when a person is embellished with such virtues he will invite the jealousy and envy of others. When the opponents and adversaries saw Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) described in superlatives by Allah and His Prophet

(s.a.w.a.) they got busy in forging traditions to malign his character. Some of these lies include:

- Ali (a.s.) wanted to marry Abu Jahl's maid upsetting Fatima Zahra (s.a.) in the process
- Consuming alcohol – Salafis claim that the verse - **O you who believe! Do not go near prayer when you are intoxicated**¹ was revealed for Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) – Allah forbid.

These and other reports are circulated by the Nasibis to lower the position of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.).

First and foremost the reports are fabricated and Muslim scholars including those from the Ahle Tasannun in defense of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) have coined detailed replies rubbishing the reports.

Second – even on the impossible assumption that these reports are true they still do not succeed in tarnishing the personality of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.).

In harmony with Allah's desire to perfect His Light even if the polytheists are averse² and the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) foreknowledge about the nation's attempt to malign Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.), the tradition 'Ali is with the truth...' ends with the prayer of infallibility:

*'O Allah turn the truth with him wherever he turns.'*³

This prayer has effectively sealed all doors to malign Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) regardless of

1 Surah Nisa (4): 43

2 Surah Saff (61): 8

3 Tafseer al-Kabir vol 1 pg 205; Manaqib al-Khwaarazmi pg 217; Mo'jam al-Awsat vol 5 pg 455 trad 4,877; Mustadrak alaa al-Sahihain vol 3 pg 134 trad 4,628; Al Jaame al Saheeh of Tirmizi vol 5 pg 592 trad 3,724

Why Ghadeer must be remembered?

A lot of Muslims say – It is useless to debate who is the deserving successor of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) or the differences between the companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because these points and events have been well preserved in the annals of history and reviving them serves no particular objective.

Moreover, they claim that a discussion on such issues might only aggravate the problem of the nation and trigger disharmony which eventually leads to much animosity between the Muslims.

This argument would have had merit if these Muslims did not make attempts to remember certain other events which also create disharmony between the Muslims. Instances that come to mind include the incident of Abu Bakr sharing the Prophet's company (s.a.w.a.) in the cave or when the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) 'permitted' Abu Bakr to lead the prayers during his illness.

It is evident that the Sunnis do not spare any opportunity to elevate Abu Bakr's 'stature' and defending his right to caliphate! Why is it that these Muslims do not refrain from narrating about Abu Bakr's so-called virtues but object to the glorifying of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) - Ali b. Abi Talib and remembering his virtues? The answer is simple – because remembering Ali's (a.s.) virtues invariably leads to the discussion on successorship.

The most obvious answer for discussing

the virtues of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and his immaculate sons (a.s.) and contrasting it against the evil and disrepute of certain personalities serves many benefits for the Muslims.

For one - it serves as guidance towards the right path and creates aspiration in the hearts of those who seek guidance to emulate these infallible personalities. Conversely, it also tells them what not to be, an equally important lesson imparted by the lives of the evil and vile people.

Invitation to discuss and understand:

The All-Merciful orders in the Noble Quran
'...therefore relate the narrative that they may reflect.'

(Surah A'raaf (7): 176)

1. Deriving lessons from examples

With reference to deriving lessons from experience of others, Allah states in the Quran:

'In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding.'

(Surah-e-Yusuf (12): Verse 111)

In another instance, the Lord of the Worlds exhorts in Surah-e-Hashr (58): Verse 2:

'...therefore take lessons, O you who have eyes.'

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) - Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) underlines importance of learning from history in the following manner:

'Gaining more wisdom leads to lesser disappointments.'

(Ghurar al-Hikam vol 5 pg 217)

While addressing his son Imam Hasan b. Ali (a.s.) in his will, Ameerul Momineen – Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) urges:

Though the span of my life is not as that of some other people who have passed away before me yet I took great care to study their lives, assiduously I went through their activities, I contemplated over their deliberations and deeds, I studied their remains, relics and ruins, I pondered over their lives so deeply that I felt as if I have lived and worked with them from early ages of history down to our times and I know what did them good and what brought harm to them. Sifting the good from bad I am concentrating within these pages, and for your good, the knowledge that I so gathered.

(Nahjul Balagha, Letter No. 31)

In another instance, he says – one who takes lessons from life gets vision, one who acquires vision becomes wise, and one who attains wisdom achieves knowledge.

He further adds –

*When man derives lessons from life,
he further escalates towards guidance.*

(Nahjul Balagha, Sayings of Hazrat Ali (a.s.) 196)

2. Strength of heart is achieved

When one analyzes and revives discussions on the lives of the infallibles (a.s.) and delves into their trials and struggles, his heart gains untold strength and he draws tremendous inspiration from their lives.

Allah declares in the Noble Quran:

And we all relate to you of the accounts of the apostles to strengthen your heart therewith..

(Surah Hud (11): Verse 120)

3. The characters of the noble are a mirror

Pondering over the lives of individuals with high morals and spotless characters acts as a mirror for those who wish to reflect and aspire for perfection. To emulate the divine guides who possessed perfect faith and morals serves as a reflection in which these people like to see themselves. One such infallible personality is the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) emulating whom is the key to success. Allah declares in His Noble Book:

Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day..

(Surah-e-Ahzaab (33): Verse 21)

In another place, the Quran exhorts Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) and the men who trusted and believed in him by saying:

Indeed, there is for you a good example in Ibrahim and those with him when they said to their people: Surely we are clear of you and of what you serve besides Allah; we declare ourselves to be clear of you, and enmity and hatred have appeared between us and you forever until you believe in Allah alone...

(Surah Mumtahanah (60): Verse 4)

Undoubtedly, when we discuss the characteristics of the exemplary companions of the Prophets (a.s.) or underscore the righteousness they showed in the way of Islam, it is because we wish to separate them from men who apparently adorned themselves with piety, but deep within their hearts harboured malicious intentions against the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Islam.

Another reason is that we want Muslims to understand the status of various companions in the eyes of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) so that naïve Muslims do not get swayed by the double standards of the so-called close companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

It is therefore imperative to widely discuss the true companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), so that the Muslims know who was submissive to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and ready to sacrifice his life for the safety of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.). In this way Muslims can seek guidance by emulating the characteristics of such great men and imbibe similar traits in order to perfect their faith and morals and thereby acquire the pleasure of Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Allah says in His Book,

Is He then Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go aright unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge?

(Surah Yunus (10): Verse 35)

4. Prohibition from evil

When one discusses and debates on the companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the light of Islamic history, we intend to segregate the good from the bad so that to identify who was more beloved in the eyes of Allah (s.w.t) and His beloved Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and who was detested by them so that people love and cherish the meritorious companions for their sacrifices in the way of Islam and express disgust from the evil mongers who distorted beliefs to suit their motives. There isn't a greater act than to call people towards the truth and make them abstain from evil by

making them befriend and love the true companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and distance themselves from the mischief makers.

5. Creates an environment of alliance and agreement

Our opinion on this matter is that if one were to have a serious, fair, and unprejudiced debate over such topics then we could easily ascend towards joining hands in alliance because the only topic that has plagued our community so far is the matter of caliphate after the demise of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). Other differences related to Tauheed, divine justice (Adl), prophethood (Nabuwwat) and resurrection (Qiyamat) although critical stem from the differences related to caliphate. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us even today notwithstanding the span of fourteen hundred years, to look into the rationale behind these events, analyze them and retrace the dispersed links at their appropriate places to connect them so that the chain thus formed makes it easy for us to understand the Quran and reach the Ahle Bait (a.s.). In this manner, it would become easy for Muslims to gain true guidance and leadership thereby dispelling differences and alleviating disharmony.

6. Analysis of the problems and identifying the solution

A Syrian writer Dr. Abdul Rahman in his book on the issue of successorship titled 'Al-Ghadeer' states that – The Muslim world has always felt the need to analyze the events and incidents pertaining to the issue of caliphate and it is very important to understand how politics played out during and after the life of

the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) leading to disputes on the issue of caliphate. It is essential for the Muslim nation to know the reasons behind division and discord in the issue of leadership. What led to the division of the community after the demise of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and eventually deprived the Ahle Bait (a.s.) of their rights?

The Muslim nation is always very concerned about solving the problems plaguing the community and how to best address them. After all, it is important to identify the ways in establishing a peaceful and harmonious relationship among the Muslims so as to create an alliance that can provide an effective political and religious solution. Perhaps it is obligatory on every individual to initiate an unprejudiced and fact-based discussion on the same to gain deep insight on the reasons and causes behind the fissures in the community and analyze them to reach the truth.

(Al-Ghadeer vol 5 pg 340)

It is critical to understand the events that led to the division of the nation, the atrocities meted out to the Ahle Bait (a.s.) after the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) demise and the cruelty and bias that the true inheritor, Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) endured when his rights were usurped. In this way, it will be easy for the average Muslim to see where the truth lies and identify the devil in sheep's clothing.

7. Obedience to religious leaders leads to the renewal of commands

When the believers attend a gathering commemorating or hailing the meritorious nature of Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and the other infallible leaders (a.s.), it is their way of showing their love for them. They gain

profound knowledge about these personalities which in turn serves to attract divine pleasure. One may ask – Is there any other motive for organizing these assemblies other than to discuss the code of conduct, tribulations and hardships of the infallibles (a.s.)? The answer is No. There is no other motive to establish such gatherings other than to make the Muslims aware of the code of conduct, ethics and tribulations of the divine leaders. To those who protest against the establishment of such assemblies as innovation or unnecessary or pointless we say – should we stop reciting the Quran too? For what is the Quran 'but a reminder to the nations' of what transpired in the past and the narratives of the Prophets (a.s.) and their code of conduct? Our assemblies are but an extension of these narratives and reminders.

8. Muslims who hail and emulate the leaders chosen by Allah develop love for them

Until the time that a particular belief or thought finds place in one's heart, the seeker doesn't derive any benefit. Muslims can establish a strong bond at a religious and spiritual level only when the teachings of the divine leaders are reflected upon and penetrate the depths of their hearts.

9. The innocent is defended

While on the one hand, an ordinary Muslim is expected to perform his duty by acquiring knowledge of these incidents, it is just as necessary for the scholars and teachers of religion to defend the infallibles (a.s.) and highlight their sufferings in the way of Allah and Islam.

When Ali b. Abu Talib (a.s.) received a fatal

blow on his head while praying at the Mosque of Kufa, he summoned his two sons – Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.) and addressed to them in the following manner:

‘Be the enemy of the tyrant and a friend and helper of the oppressed.’

(Taarikh-e-Tabari vol 4 pg 113)

Muslims all around the world acknowledge that there hasn’t been a personality as great, commendable and worthy of emulation as Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) in the entire history of Islam, nor did anyone suffer hypocrisy, tyranny and oppression like him. Therefore, the Muslims must identify the oppressor and analyze the matter of the Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) successorship. It is necessary to separate the truth from falsehood and promote the truth after one has realized it. Those who rejected the true position of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

or attempted to lower his position should be made to realize their folly. One must raise his hands and pray for the success of those who hoisted the flag of truth and veracity in the honor of the infallible leaders – especially Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.). Finally one must beseech Allah constantly to hasten the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s) to fill the world with divine illumination and justice till eternity.

Continued from page 3

whether the reports are true or not. The truth is subject to Ali (a.s.) and is defined by him (a.s.) and whatever Ali (a.s.) does or says becomes the truth even if the people do not consider it to be the truth. Because the truth has been ordered to change with Ali (a.s.) and assume truthfulness based on what Ali (a.s.) does. Ali (a.s.) does not have to change his behaviour or actions to conform to the truth.

So even if these so-called mistakes and errors are attributed to Ali (a.s.), they no longer remain errors once Ali (a.s.) has performed them. The errors transform into truth itself by virtue of the fact that Ali (a.s.) has performed these actions.

Those who dismiss this as an exaggeration (guluv) of the Shias must reflect on the following verse of the Quran:

‘Except him who repents and believes

and does a good deed; so these are they of whom Allah changes the evil deeds to good ones; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.’

(Surah Furqan (25): 70)

When Allah changes evil into good deeds for believers, why is it surprising if He altogether does away with mistakes and errors for the Chief of Believers – Ameerul Momineen – Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.).

In conclusion, Muslims have no way out other than to accept Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as the axis around which truth revolves. All lies and false propaganda about him must be cast aside based on this and anyone who lends his ear to such lies has disobeyed Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) by rejecting haqq and siding with baatil.

Debate Between Hurrah and Hajjaj b. Yusuf on the Superiority of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, a tyrant and blood-sucking butcher, was the representative of Abdul Malik b. Marwan (the fifth caliph of the Umayyid dynasty) and the governor of Iraq. His hands were stained with the blood of respected taabe'een and companions of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) like Kumayl b. Ziyad, Qanbar and Saeed b. Jubair. In addition to this, he slaughtered thousands of family members of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) after imprisoning them in roofless dungeons thereby exposing its inmates to the harsh weather of Iraq. His hypocrisy and fanatical animosity towards Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) is widely documented by scholars of both sects.

Once, a lady named Hurrah, the daughter of Haleemah al-Sa'diyyah and a very brave person and staunch supporter of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), was brought to Hajjaj's assembly. A historical dialogue transpired between the two as follows:

Hajjaj: Are you the daughter of Haleemah al-Sa'diyyah?

Hurrah: Intelligence from a non-believer (is unexpected).

Hajjaj: God brought you here in my authority. I have heard that you deem Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as superior and far more distinguished than Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman?

Hurrah: People have lied to you. (i.e. I have never compared these three to Ali b. Abi

Talib (a.s.)). In fact, I consider Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) superior even to Prophets like Adam, Nuh, Lut, Ibrahim, Moosa, Dawood, Sulaiman and Isa (peace be upon them).

Hajjaj: Woe unto you! You deem Ali as incomparable and superior to all companions and eight great Prophets (which includes the most supreme messengers). If you do not back your claim with strong arguments, I will have your head severed.

Hurrah: It's not me who claims superiority for Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) over all these Prophets. Allah Himself has declared his superiority over these Prophets in the Holy Quran.

Regarding Prophet Adam (a.s.), the Holy Quran informs:

...and Adam disobeyed his Lord...

(Surah Taha (20): Verse 121)

Regarding Ali (and his wife and children) Allah said:

...and your striving shall be recompensed.

(Surah Insan (76): Verse 22)

Hajjaj: That's good, Hurrah! Now tell me how does Ali hold supremacy over Prophets like Nuh (a.s.) and Lut (a.s.)?

Hurrah: Allah has mentioned about the two Prophets (a.s.):

Allah sets forth an example to those who disbelieve the wife of Nuh and the wife of Lut: they were both under two of Our righteous servants, but they acted treacherously towards them so they availed them naught

against Allah, and it was said: Enter both the fire with those who enter.

(Surah Tahreem (66): Verse 10)

Whereas for the wife of Ali (a.s.), it is said that Fatima's (s.a.) pleasure is Allah's pleasure and her wrath is Allah's wrath.

Hajjaj: Excellent, Hurrah! Now I want to know how is Ali (a.s.) superior to the ancestor of our last Prophet (s.a.w.a.) i.e. Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.)?

Hurrah: Allah has narrated the following conversation of Hazrat Ibrahim in the Quran:

And when Ibrahim said: My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead, He said: What! And do you not believe? He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease.

(Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 260)

But Ali's(a.s.) faith in his Lord was at a higher station as he himself claims:

Even if the curtains were to be lifted, it would have no effect on my belief in Him.1 (i.e. a man's worth is based on the level of his faith in Allah and Ali's (a.s.) faith was perfect so he did not need any further convincing like Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.).

Hajjaj: Very good, Hurrah! Can you explain

1 1. Manaaqib-e-Aal-e-Abi Talib vol 1 pg 317, Al-Taraaifpg 512, Siraat al-Mustaqeem vol 1 pg 230, Behaar al-Anwaarvol 4 pg 45, Hilyah al-Abraar vol 2 pg 62, Sharh Nahj al-Balagha by Ibn Abil Hadeedvol 10 pg 142, Ghaayah al-Maraamvol 5 pg 195, Tafzeel al-Nash'atain pg 46 & 62, Ilm al-Kitaab by Khwajah Ameer Muhammadi Hanafipg 266, Mataalib al-So'ool pg 16, Tabaqaat al-Kubra by Abdul Wahhaab Shaafe'eevol 4 pg 54, An Moozaj Jaleel fee Bayaane Aswaleteewa Ajwabatee min Gharaaib al-Tanzeelvol 1 pg 18, Al-Sawaaeq al-Muhreqah pg 77 narrated from Sharh-e-EhqaquHaqqvol 7 pg 605, Yanaabi al-Mawaddah vol 1 pg 203, vol 2 pg 413, Jawaahir al-Matalib vol 2 pg 50

how Ali (a.s.) is superior to Prophet Moosa (a.s.) who is known to have conversed with Allah?

Hurrah: Regarding Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) it is said in the Quran:

So he went forth therefrom, fearing, awaiting...

(Surah Qasas (28): Verse 21)

But Ali (a.s.) willingly slept on the bed of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the night of Hijrah (migration), without any fear or doubt; thus, Allah praised him in His Book:

And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the servants.2

2 2. The renowned interpreter of the Sunnis – Sa'labi in the interpretation of this verse through his chain of narrators says: When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) decided to migrate, he appointed Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) to repay his debts and to return the trusts entrusted to him. On the eve of migration before departing with the polytheists having surrounded his house to attack him, he (s.a.w.a.) ordered Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) to sleep in his bed and cover himself with the green blanket associated with him. At that moment, Allah revealed to Jibraeel and Mikaaeel – I make you two as brothers and grant one of you a longer life than the other. Now which one of you is ready to sacrifice his life and give preference to other's life over his own? Neither of them volunteered. He revealed to them – Now Ali (a.s.) will sleep on the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) bed and is ready to sacrifice his life for him. Go to the earth and be his protectors. When Jibraeel was sitting near the head of Ali (a.s.) and Mikaaeel was sitting near his feet, Jibraeel said – Congratulations to you O son of Abu Talib. Allah prides over you near His Angels. At this juncture the verse - And among men is he who sells himself

(Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 207)

Hajjaj: That's good, Hurrah! What is the reason for Ali's (a.s.) superiority over Prophet Dawood (a.s.)?

Hurrah: Regarding Prophet Dawood (a.s.) Allah said:

O Dawood! Surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice...

(Surah Saad (38): Verse 26)

Hajjaj: What was Prophet Dawood's (a.s.) judgment?

Hurrah: It was regarding the dispute between two persons of which one was a shepherd and the other a farmer. The former's cattle trespassed on the farmer's cultivated land and destroyed the fruits of the crops and they approached Prophet Dawood (a.s.) and the farmer registered his complaint.

Prophet Dawood (a.s.) replied: The shepherd must sell all his cattle to compensate for the farmer's loss.

Prophet Sulaiman (a.s.) said to his father Prophet Dawood (a.s.): It would be more

to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the servants (Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 207. It is due to this that this night is famous as the Night of Selling. (Tafseer-e-Sa'alabi vol 6 pg 479)

In fact, the traditions regarding the Night of Sleeping (Lailah al-Mubeet) have been narrated by numerous Sunni scholars some of which are Kashful Bayaan by Sa'alabi vol 1 pg 409, Tafseer-e-Fakhr-e-Raazivol 3 pg 222, Tafseer-e-Nishapuri vol 2 pg 8, Tafseer-e-A'qam Zaidi vol 1 pg 41, Jaame'o Lataaif al-Tafseer vol 5 pg 111, Jawaahir al-Mataalib vol 1 pg 241, Al-Salaato Khairun min al-Naum vol 5 pg 13, Shawaahed al-Tanzeel vol 1 pg 123, Asad al-Ghaabah fi Marifat al-Sahaabah vol 4 pg 25, Yanaabi al-Mawaddah vol 1 pg 274, Majma al-Zawaaid vol 7 pg 27, Kunooz al-Haqaiq pg 31, Zakhaair al-Uqba pg 86 etc.

appropriate if the shepherd compensates the farmer's loss (of the crop's produce) with the milk and fur of the shepherd's cattle (i.e. produce of the cattle). That would compensate the farmer for the produce of the crops and the shepherd's cattle will remain with him.

Therefore Allah said:

So We made Sulaiman to understand it; and to each one We gave wisdom and knowledge; and We made the mountains, and the birds to celebrate Our praise with Dawood; and We were the doers.

(Surah Anbiya (21): Verse 79)

But Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) declares his superiority thus:

Ask me before you lose me.1

When Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) reached in the presence of his master Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) after the conquest of Khaibar, the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) addressed his companions in the following manner,

Ali is the best among you, the most knowledgeable and the most perfect in passing judgment.2

- 1 Al-Riyaaz al-Nazarah by Muhib al-Tabari, vol. 2, pg 198; Al-Tabaqaat al-Kubra by Ibn Sa'd, vol 2, part 2, pg 101; Al-Isaabah by Ibn Hajare Asqalani, vol 4, pg 568; Tahzib al-Tahzib by Ibn Hajare Asqalani, vol 7, pg 337-338; Fath al-Baari by Ibn Hajare Asqalani, vol 8, pg485; Al-Istiaab by Ibn Abd al-Barr, vol3, pg1,107; Tarikh al-Khulafa by Jalaaluddin Suyuti, pg124; Al-Itqaan by Jalaaluddin Suyuti, vol. 2, pg319
- 2 Traditions under this topic have been narrated by many groups of Sunni scholars. Among them are Shawaahid al-Tanzeel vol. 2 pg 467, Seyr A'lam al-Nobala, vol. 14, pg. 209, Faiz al-Qadeer, vol. 5 pg 668; Tuhfah al-Ahwaazi vol. 10 pg 205, Fath al-Baarivol 10 pg 487, Sharh-e-NahjulBalaaghaahvol 1 pg 18, vol 7 pg 219, Kashf al-Khafaah vol. 1 pg 162, Tafseer-e-Qurtubbi, vol. 15 pg 162, Al- Usool al-Aseelah pg 112, Al-Akhaam vol. 4 pg 237, Tarikh-e-Dimishq vol. 15 pg 300, Al-Jawharato fi Nasbe Imam

Hajjaj: Excellent, Hurrah! Explain us how Ali surpasses Sulaiman (a.s.) in excellence.

Hurrah: Allah depicts the dialogue of Hazrat (a.s.) in His Book in the following manner:-

He said: My Lord! Do You forgive me and grant me a kingdom which is not fit for (being inherited by) anyone after me.

(Surah Saad (38): 35)

But my master Ali (a.s.) describes the world in this manner:

O world, I have divorced you thrice and I have no need for you.

Ali (a.s.) wa Aalehi pg 71, Taareekh of Ibne Khaldoun vol. 1 pg 197, Jawaahir al-Mataalib vol. 1 pg 76, Al-Ghadeer vol. 3 pg 95 narrated from Al Istiaab vol. 3 pg 235, Mataalib al-So'l pg 23, Tameez al-Tayyib min al-Khabees pg 25and it is narrated from Saeed b. Abi Khuzaim one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) – Ibne Abi Laila and I entered Medina and went to the Prophet's Mosque when Imam Sadiq (a.s.) entered. We approached him (a.s.) and Imam (a.s.) asked about me and my family. Then he asked about my fellow traveler Ibne Abi Laila. I said to Imam (a.s.) – He is Ibne Abi Laila, the judge of the Muslims. Imam (a.s.) asked him – Have you taken the property of one person and given it to another or have you made divorce between a husband and a wife and in this were you fearful of anyone? He replied - Yes. Imam (a.s.) asked – Through what do you judge? He replied – Through the traditions which have reached me from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Abu Bakr and Umar. Imam (a.s.) asked him – Has this tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) not reached you that - In judgment Ali is the best amongst you. He replied - Yes. Imam (a.s.) asked him - Then why don't you judge as per the judgments of Ali (a.s.), even after this tradition has reached you? The narrator says that signs of grief appeared on the face of Ibne Abi Laila and he said to me – Find yourself another friend, by Allah I will never talk to you. Kaafi vol. 7 pg 408, Tahzeeb al-Ahkaam vol. 6, pg 221, Wasaail al-Shia vol. 18 pg 8, Al Ehtijaj, vol. 2 pg 102, Behaar al-Anwaar vol. 47 pg 334

And the Lord revealed the verse:

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

(Surah Qasas (28): Verse 83)

Hajjaj: Excellent Hurrah! Lastly, what is your view regarding Ali's excellence over Isa (a.s.)?

Hurrah: The Lord addressed Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) in His Book thus:

And when Allah will say: O Isa son of Maryam! Did you say to men, take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah he will say: Glory be to You, it did not befit me that I should say what I had no right to (say); if I had said it, You would indeed have known it; You know what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Your mind, surely You are the great Knower of the unseen things.

(Surah Maaidah (5): Verse 116)

And in this manner Allah delayed the punishment of those who deemed Prophet Isa (a.s.) as their Lord but as for the Nusairi who raised Ali (a.s.) to the level of godhood, Ali (a.s.) did not postpone their punishment, rather he chastised such people.

Hajjaj: I am very impressed with your eloquent explanations. Had you been inaccurate regarding your claims about Ali, I would have definitely severed your head.

Thereafter, Hajjaj not only released Hurrah with honour, he also rewarded her handsomely.¹

1 Al-Fazail, pg. 136, Behar al-Anwar vol. 46 pg 134, Al-Imam Ali (a.s.) by Al-Rahmani pg 326, Al-

Analysis of the ‘Tradition of Light’ (Hadith-e-Nur)

Hadith-e-Nur i.e. the ‘Tradition of Light’ has been recorded and chronicled extensively and consecutively, with minor variations, by both Sunni and Shia scholars in their reliable books, who have advanced it as evidence of the superiority and excellence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and his infallible progeny (a.s). Notwithstanding the authenticity and extensive narration of this tradition, the skeptics and antagonists of religion have attempted to cast doubts and aspersions on its content and chain of narrators.

One of the important conclusions of this tradition is that Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s) is the Caliph and the Imam of the Muslims immediately after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), a message which the enemies and skeptics have tried to conceal or at the very least cast aspersion on with a view to mask the truth. In order to dispel such baseless doubts and suspicions, we will discuss this tradition in a series of articles and throw light on the following aspects of this tradition:

1. Hadith-e-Nur: An Introduction
2. Its chain of narrators
3. The Sahaabah i.e. companions who narrated the tradition
4. The Taabe’een i.e. second generation companions (who did not see the Prophet s.a.w.a.) who have narrated the tradition
5. The Huffaaz i.e. memorizers of the Quran who narrated the tradition
6. The authenticity of Hadith-e-Nur
7. The reliability of scholars who narrated

Hadith-e-Nur

8. Answers to objections of the skeptics
9. Other merits of Aal-e-Muhammad (a.s)

Hadith-e-Nur – An Introduction

Hadith-e-Nur has been extensively narrated by the scholars of both the sects. We present hereunder its common variants, with a common message underpinning all of them.

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

I and Ali b. Abi Talib both were a light (Nur) in the presence of Allah fourteen thousand years before the creation of Adam. When Allah created Adam, he deposited this light in Adam’s loins. We remained together as one light until we were separated in Abdul Muttalib’s loin. Thereafter, I was endowed with Prophethood and Ali with Caliphate.

Among others, the following Sunni scholars have documented Hadith-e-Nur:

- Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal in his Musnad
 - Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani in Mawaddah al-Qurbah
 - Ibn Maghaazili Shaafe’i in his Manaaqib
 - Muhammad b. Talhah Shaafe’i in Mataalib al-So’l fi Manaaqib-e-Aal-e-Rasool
 - Ibrahim b. Muhammad Hamweeni Shaafe’ei in Faraaid al-Simtain fi Fazaail al-Murtuza wa al-Batool wa al-Sibtain
 - Khaarazmi in his al-Manaaqib
 - Abd al-Hameed Ibn Abil Hadeed in Sharh-o-Nahj al-Balaaghah
-

- Haafiz Sulaimaan Qundoozi in Yanabee al-Mawaddah

The aforementioned as also several other Sunni scholars are unanimous about the authenticity of this tradition, which is a separate topic of discussion.

Shia version of Hadith-e-Nur

While the tradition has been widely reported by both sects, Shia reports are more detailed and hence offer greater insight into the excellence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his immaculate progeny (a.s.).

For the sake of brevity, we have not delved into the Shia sources of the tradition since it is transmitted consecutively through several reliable chains of narrators (tawaaatur) and the authenticity of the tradition is not debatable for the Shias.

Abdullah b. Abbas narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

Allah created me and Ali from a light (Nur) below the Throne (Arsh) 12,000 years before the creation of Adam. When Allah created Adam, He placed this light in his loin and it transferred from one loin to another till it reached Abdul Muttalib after which it was divided in two parts.

Maaz b. Jabal narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

Certainly Allah created me, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain seven thousand years before creating this world.

Maaz b. Jabal asked: O Messenger of Allah, where were you then?

He (s.a.w.a.) replied:

We were under the throne glorifying, extolling and purifying Allah (from defects).

Maaz asked: In what form and shape were you all at that time?

He (s.a.w.a.) replied:

We were in the form of lights. When Allah wished to give us a shape, He placed us in the form of a pillar of light in the loin of Adam (a.s). He then transferred this Nur from the loins to the wombs. He always kept us purified from filth, polytheism and adultery which were widespread in the period of disbelief. In every era, certain groups of people attained felicity on account of believing in us and several others were unfortunate on account of rejecting us. When He brought us in the loin of Abdul Muttalib, He divided it into two parts and placed one half in the loin of Abdullah (a.s) and the other part in that of Abu Talib (a.s). Thereafter, my light was transferred to (my mother) Amina and the other half to (Ali's mother) Fatima binte Asad. I was born from Amina and Ali was born from Fatima binte Asad. Then, the light reverted to me and my daughter Fatima was born. Likewise, the light was reverted to Ali, and Hasan and Husain were born from both parts of the light i.e. light of Ali and Fatima. Thus, my light found its way in the Imams from the progeny of Husain till the Day of Judgment.

From the above tradition, we understand among other points that Ameerul Momeneen's (a.s) light is from the light of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and in matters of guidance and leadership, he (a.s.) shares the same status as that of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) except that he is the Imam and Caliph, and not a Prophet,

which is also the case with the Imams in his progeny. Just like the position and stature of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) cannot be denied and denying it would amount to apostasy, skepticism about the position of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) as the Imam and Caliph of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is apostasy.

Also this tradition redeems all the ancestors of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) of apostasy and hypocrisy. This includes the oft-targeted personalities like Hazrat Abu Talib (a.s.), Hazrat Abdullah (a.s.), Hazrat Amina (s.a.) who are incessantly and unfairly accused of disbelief while the Tradition of Light proclaims them as the perfect believers untainted even by the shadow of apostasy.

Another report states:

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

When Adam (a.s.) was created, this light was placed in his loin. When he was in the heavens, he carried this light with him. When Nuh (a.s.) embarked on the ark this light was in his back. When Ibrahim (a.s.) was thrown in the fire, he carried this light inside him. This light was transferred from pure loins to chaste wombs till it reached Hazrat Abdul Muttalib (a.s.). It was then divided into two parts. I was bestowed with Prophethood and Ali with Imamat.

Thus, this light was the cause of safety for Divine Prophets and Messengers of Allah (peace be on them all) from various examinations.

There are also several verses in the Holy Quran that point out to the sanctity of this light. We quote one of them.

A man asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a)

about the following verse of Holy Quran:

He said: O Iblis what has prevented you from prostrating before the one whom I created with my hands, are you being proud or have you become of the elevated ones?

(Surah Suad (38): Verse 75)

The man asked – Who are these creatures who are more elevated than the angels?

He (s.a.w.a) replied:

They are I, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain. We were extolling and praising Allah. The angels praised and glorified Allah after they heard us praising and glorifying Allah... Then Allah ordered the angels to prostrate before Adam. All of them obeyed His command except Iblis. Then Allah reprimanded him: You have acted with pride with respect to my command of prostration. Have you become one of those elevated people whose names are written on the throne?1

It has been narrated from Imam Hasan (a.s) that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) said:

I have been created from the light of Allah and my Ahle Bait (a.s.) have been created from my light and the lovers of Ahle Bait (a.s) have been created from their light. All people besides them are (created) from the fire of hell.

In summary, the ‘Tradition of Light’ (Hadith-e-Nur) brings to the fore, amongst numerous other excellences, the following virtues of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and his infallible progeny (a.s):

1 Tafseer-e-Burhaan by Sayyid Hashim Bahraani (r.a.), vol. 4, p. 684 from Fadhaael al-Shiah by Shaikh Sadooq (r.a.) who has recorded on the authority of Abu Saeed Khudri from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

- They were the first creation of Allah i.e. they were created when none other than Allah existed before them.
- Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and his progeny belong to a lineage where all ancestors (including Abu Talib (a.s.), Abdullah (a.s.), Hazrat Amina (s.a.)) up to Hazrat Adam (a.s) have been monotheists and have never fallen in the abyss of polytheism and related vices.
- Those who submitted to the leadership of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.) attained felicity both in this world and the hereafter while those who opposed them fell in the abyss of disbelief and degradation in this world and the hereafter
- They were the ones exempted from prostrating before Adam (a.s)
- The angels learnt glorification (Tasbeeh) and praise (Hamd) of Allah from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and his progeny (a.s.)
- Only those created from this light will attain salvation while all others are doomed

Interested readers may refer to the famous book *Abaqaat al-Anwaar*, penned by the great Mir Hamid Husain al-Kinturi al-Hindi (r.a.), which contains a comprehensive list of Sunni scholars who have recorded this tradition. For the information of the readers, the aforementioned book is a rebuttal to *Tohfa-e-Isnaa Ashari* written by Muhaddith Dehlavi.

Continued from page 12

5. Sharh Nahj al-Balagha vol. 18 pg 224, Nazm al-Durar al-Simtain pg 135, Yanaabi al-Mawaddah vol. 1 pg 438 (Sharhe Maqasid vol. 2 pg 220, Matalib al-So'l pg 16, Minhaj al-Sunnah vol. 4 pg 132, Miraat al-Momineen fi Manaaqib-e-Ahle Bait Sayyid al-Mursaleen pg 87, Amaali of Baghdadi vol 2 pg 147 narrated from Sharh-e-Ehqaaq al-Haqq, vol. 8 pg 267 and vol. 15 pg 642

Munazerat fi Al-Imamiyyah pg 125, Mustadrak Ilm Rijaal al-Hadith by Ali Shahroodi Al-Namaazi (r.a.) vol. 8 pg 565, Qaamoos al-Rijaal by Al-Tustari, vol. 12 pg 227, Al-Lum'ah al-Bayzaa pg 218, Bahr al-Manaqib by Ibne Husnawayh from Sharh Ehqaq al-Haqq vol. 5 pg 47

Mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) in the light of Quranic verse about the Saadiqueen

The most important difference between the two leading Muslim schools of thought is regarding the religious and worldly guidance after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). According to the Ahle Tasunnan, the matter of leadership and caliphate is delegated to the elite of the nation - the Ahle Hall-e-Aqd. Their decision favouring a particular Muslim as caliph must be respected by all Muslims who must necessarily pay allegiance to him.

Another Sunni viewpoint favours a Muslim who with his strength and power wrests caliphate from the existing caliph. In such a scenario, the dominant Muslim assumes the role of caliph and to oppose him is forbidden.

Most, if not all, Sunnis are of this opinion in the matter of leadership.

As for the Shias - they believe that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on several occasions in his lifetime had declared Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and his pure progeny (a.s.) as guides for Muslims, thereby emphasizing their divine position.

Therefore, after the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the right to leadership of the Muslims was with the infallible Imams (a.s.) of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) – a fact established through numerous Quranic verses and consecutively narrated authentic traditions (mutawaatir) of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Here, we will discuss the topic of Imamate of Ahle Bait (a.s.) in light of the 119th verse of Surah Taubah (9) where Allah mentions about

the 'Saadiqueen' (truthful ones):

'O you who have believed! Be careful of your duty to Allah and be with the truthful ones.'

In this verse, Allah the High, has ordered the believers to obey and follow the truthful ones. To live a life in a truthful way is one thing and to be with the truthful ones is another thing.

Who are the 'Saadiqueen'?

What are their distinctions?

Interpretations of the word Sidq

Scholars of the Arabic language have mentioned a few meanings of the word.

1. According to Khalil Ibn Ahmed: Every perfect thing is said to be 'Sidq'.
2. Regarding the word 'Sidq', Ibn Manzoor has introduced the following meanings:
 - a. 'Sidq' as opposed to falsehood
 - b. 'Ibn Insaan-e-Sidq' – a good human in opposition to an evil human
 - c. 'Libaas-e-Sidq' means good clothing
 - d. Rajul-e-Sidq means that person who possesses good manners and a polite tongue
3. According to Raaghib al-Isfahaani, good and liked actions in the apparent and the concealed are considered as sidq and the doer of these actions are also considered as sidq.

The word Sidq in the Holy Quran

In the Holy Quran, the word Sidq has been

used in quite a few places:

a. As a quality of position and superiority
Surah Yunus (10):Verse2

“What! Is it a wonder to the people that We revealed to a man from among themselves, saying: Warn the people and give good news to those who believe that theirs is a footing of truthfulness with their Lord. The unbelievers say: This is most surely a manifest enchanter.”

‘Footing’ is a noun and denotes excellence while ‘truthfulness’ is the additive noun (muzaafunilaih).

b. As a level and position:

i) Surah Yunus (10): Verse 93

“And certainly We lodged the children of Israel in a goodly abode...”

ii) Surah Qamar (54): Verse 55

“In the seat of honor with a most Powerful King.”

c. As a quality of entrance and exit:

Surah Israa (17): Verse 80

“And say: My Lord! Make me to enter a goodly entering, and cause me to go forth a goodly going forth, and grant me from near Thee power to assist (me).”

Other than that, if a person is performing good deeds from various aspects, then the Holy Quran has referred to it as ‘sidq’. Action according to promise has also been shown in Quran as ‘sidq’.

With its vast interpretation and application, we can appreciate that the word ‘sidq’ is not limited to speech, discussion or information. Rather, it also includes human temperament, thoughts, behaviour and character.

Meaning of Saadiqeen in the Quranic verse

When we review the verse it first appears that Saadiqeen refers to those people who are true in their speech. But taking into consideration the multi-faceted nature of Quranic verses and the vast interpretation of the word ‘sidq’, the meaning of Saadiqeen is similar to the meaning of infallibility.

1. That which is important and necessary is that a person should keep away from lying and be a truthful person. But to accompany truthful people is not included under an obligatory command of the Shariat. In the laws of the Shariat, there is no obligatory command to be with the truthful ones. Whereas when we consider the verse of Saadiqeen, we realize that there is an explicit command to be with the truthful ones as denoted by the tenor of the verse which is in the nature of a command (Amr).
2. The statement of ‘Be among the Saadiqeen’ has been mentioned in the context of ‘acquire piety’ which is an order to observe piety and this order is given in a manner of obligation. And piety here is interpreted in general.

On the basis that the word Sidq in the Noble Quran has several interpretations, we can say that it embraces thoughts, ethics, behaviour and character. In this verse to be with the truthful ones (Saadiqeen), does not mean to acquire material proximity and companionship. Instead, it means to follow in every such thing in which truthfulness, purity and piety are found.

Who are the Saadiqeen according to this verse?

There can be two possibilities regarding the identity of the Saadiqeen in the verse.

1. It refers to the commonality
2. It refers to a particular group of believers

The first supposition is not reasonable.

Also, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said:

‘Those who attribute lie towards me are too many.’

(Sahih-e-Bukhari, vol. 1, Chapter 3, Kitab al-Ilm)

The second supposition is accurate, intuitive and in conformity with facts and events. It meets the various interpretations of Sidq in the Holy Quran. The only way for individuals to conform to the multi-faceted interpretation of Sidq is by being infallible (masoom).

Saadiqeen refers to the real, original and only interpreters of the Holy Quran - the true successors of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the trustee of Noble Quran and Shariat, the protector and guide of Islam - the holy infallibles of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

This is the very chain of infallible entities from whom Allah has kept away all uncleanness, dirt and impurities, and made them pure and clean in the best possible manner. The first link of this chain is Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) – Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and the last link is Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

Allamah Sayed Muhammad Ali Musawi Behbahani (r.a.) asserts – ‘Saadiqeen’ refers to 12 infallible Imams (a.s.) as has been narrated by the two groups i.e. Sunnis and Shias.

This can be proved in the following way:

If in the verse of ‘Saadiqeen’, the word Saadiqeen refers to the entire Muslim nation,

as some scholars have claimed, then instead of “Be with the truthful”, the verse should have ordered “Be with the truth”, that is, every Muslim should be among the truthful people.

“Be with the truthful” clarifies that Sidq refers to a very special and unique position and status and ‘Saadiqeen’ refers to a few eminent, chosen and distinguished personalities who possess this special and unique trait.

Clearly, the Saadiqeen can only refer to the infallible Imams (a.s.) from the Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) household.

Even if the Muslims reject this interpretation, the tone and tenor of the verse and the interpretation of Sidq suggest that the individuals – whoever they may be – must be infallible and superior to the nation. Else, it will imply that the Holy Quran is ordering the nation to follow individuals who are lower than them in status i.e. infallible are following the fallible.

Such a command is illogical and cannot be expected from Allah, the Wise.

Another proof is that Allah the Almighty, in the beginning of the verse, after inviting all the people to acquire piety and to keep away from sins, has ordered to be with the ‘Saadiqeen’. It means that their companionship is only possible if we obey them and keep away from opposing them. The implication is that the Saadiqeen are infallible or else Allah would not have given such an unconditional command for obedience.

(Misbah al-Hedaayah, p. 92-93)

The Misinterpretation of Fakhre Raazi

Regarding this verse, Fakhre Raazi claims that in the first instance, Allah has ordered

the believers to acquire piety and this order includes all those people for whom there is a possibility that they are not pious. This means the ones who are addressed are those individuals for whom there is a possibility of committing sins and mistakes.

The meaning that is conveyed through this verse is that such impious people should always be accompanying such people who are protected from mistakes so that they can protect the impious ones from mistakes and slips and this is referring to people of all times and not only for the era of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

(Tafseer Mafaateeh al-Ghaib, vol. 16, p. 220)

While this interpretation is correct, when it comes to identifying the 'Saadiqeen', Fakhre Raazi makes plain his bias towards the Ahle Bait (a.s.) exposing himself to ridicule.

Fakhre Raazi deserves to be criticized

This is not the first blunder made by Fakhre Raazi, which can only be described as shocking, even immature for a person of his fame. It only reflects his poor knowledge of traditions and exegesis of the Holy Quran. Regarding the exegesis of this noble verse, Fakhre Raazi walks halfway with the view of other interpreters and accepts the need for the Saadiqeen with the prerequisite that they be infallible and that by following and obeying them alone, we can protect ourselves from sins and mistakes.

But according to him the word Saadiqeen refers to the whole nation. He asserts, "Our view is that the whole nation is infallible!"

We say that the second opinion is void because Allah the High has made obligatory on all believers to be with the truthful people and this is only possible if the person is well

aware and having knowledge about this person i.e. 'Sadiq' – he cannot be unknown to the Muslims. If a person is ordered that he should be with a particular person who is 'Sadiq' then it is necessary that such a person should be known and introduced to the Muslims. Else, such an order to be with the 'Sadiq' will be considered as 'responsibility beyond capacity' meaning the person is being asked to obey Sadiq while he is still not been identified.

He says, "Since we do not know who among us is qualified with infallibility, purity and knowledge, it is clear that we cannot be ordered to obey and be with any one appointed person."

(Ibid vol. 16 p. 240)

Reply: Firstly, we all believe that in every era there should be one infallible person. On the basis of the law of grace, it is clear that Allah the High in every possible way makes the people recognize this infallible person just as in every era He has made people recognize the Messengers and Prophets (a.s.). Otherwise, how would the people know that they are infallible and have come as representatives of Allah? This is how He has introduced the people to Prophet Nuh, Prophet Moosa and Prophet Isa (peace be upon them) through proofs and clear signs.

Similarly, Allah the Almighty has also introduced the Muslims to the successor of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the inheritor of his knowledge, whose distinctions, ethics and character are similar to that of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

The Quranic proofs and traditions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) by consensus of both sects affirm their infallibility. After studying the traditions it's clear that after the Holy Prophet

(s.a.w.a.) the infallible people and the 'Saadiqeen' are these very illustrious personalities, the first being Ameerul Momineen Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and the last being Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.).

Secondly, according to Fakhre Raazi, the whole nation is infallible. Such an opinion is extremely weak, baseless and against the basic principles of intellect. The Islamic nation is not a group that has descended from the heavens or come into existence from special clay. In this very nation, there were many who were idol-worshippers, atheists, adulterers, drunkards, gamblers, thieves, plunderers, etc. until a few years before accepting Islam. Many of them have been criticized by the Holy Quran even after accepting Islam for various actions like fleeing the battlefield and disobeying Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on several occasions. The instances are so obvious that none can deny them.

According to Fakhre Raazi's view, no individual attains infallibility. But he ridiculously maintains that the whole nation is infallible although the nation comprises of these very individuals. It is not clear whether Fakhre Raazi himself understood his ridiculous claim. Therefore, his view is rejected on the basis of being illogical, irrational, unwise and contradictory to the Holy Quran and reliable traditions.

Conclusion

On referring reliable traditions, it is clear that the word 'Saadiqeen' in the verse refers to the infallible and pure household of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). And it is only they who are suitable for this position.

- 1) In the exegesis of this verse –Haakim Haskaani has narrated from Abdullah b.

Umar regarding the words "fear Allah", Allah has ordered all the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to fear Allah. Then, again addressing them, Allah the Almighty has ordered "and be among the truthful ones" i.e. be with Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his progeny (a.s.).

(Shawaahid al-Tanzeel under the exegesis of the verse)

- 2) Burair Ibn Muawiyah al-Ajali says – I asked Imam Baqir(a.s.) regarding the verse "fear Allah...be among the truthful ones", Imam (a.s.) said, "Allah has reserved for our obedience alone."

(Al-Kaafi, vol.1, p.208)

- 3) During a debate, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) demanded, "For the sake of Allah tell me whether you know about this verse of Surah Taubah(9): 119 what the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed the Muslims? At that time someone asked Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) whether the verse had been revealed for common people or special people? The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed: It has been referred to the common people in general that they are ordered to acquire piety and be with the Saadiqeen. But the word Saadiqeen refers to Imam Ali (a.s.) and his progeny after me who will be the successors till the Day of Judgement."

(Faraed al-Simtain, vol. 1 p. 312, Kamaaluddin, p.264, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 33 p.149)

Sibt Ibn Jauzi-e-Hanafi has recorded that the scholars of Quranic exegesis have interpreted that this verse refers to Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and his progeny (a.s.).

(Tazkerah al-Khawaas, p.16)

A Close Look at the Fabricated Traditions on this Verse

According to the Tafaaseer of the Ahle Tasannun, the word 'Saadiqeen' refers to the two rulers.

Ibn Asaakir has narrated from al-Zahhaak that the order to be with the 'Saadiqeen' is actually intended for the 'two companions' of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

(Tarikh-o-Medinah Dimishq, vol. 3, p. 310)

Reply: Two points in particular are worth mentioning in response to such false traditions:

- 1) Among the chain of narrators we find Zubair b. Saeed-e-Azdi regarding whom Ibn Hajar has mentioned in Tehzeeb al-Tehzeeb from experts on Ilm al-Rejaal like Ibn Moin, Abu Dawood, Ibn Adi and Nesaai that this narrator is weak and unreliable. In another chain of narration, we find Is'haaq Ibn Bashshaar-e-Kaahili, who is also considered unreliable by Zahabi on the authority of Ibn Abi Shaibah, Moosa b. Haroon, Abu Zarraah and Daar-Qutni.

(Meezanal-Etedaal, vol.1, p.186)

- 2) Reliable traditions from both the sects clearly establish that 'Saadiqeen' refers to the Imams (a.s.). After the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), they are the pure chain of infallible successors.

As regards the 'two companions', on referring to the books of history, exegesis and biographies, we can only conclude that they were not infallible by any stretch of imagination and Sunni scholars are the first ones to admit this fact. In fact, these scholars affirm that the two were not even at the lowest level of faith, justice, ethics and character. The lady of the

universe, Hazrat Zahra (s.a.) has expressed her anger at them and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had expressed in no uncertain terms that the wrath of Fatema (s.a.) is Allah's wrath. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has stated on numerous occasions that his right was usurped and he was never satisfied with his preceding ones. Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.) have ordered the first two rulers to alight from the seat and pulpit of their father and grandfather. All these facts are amply documented by history and recorded in the sources of the Ahle Tasannun. Allah is Higher than to order the Muslims to follow the example of such people. {For those who want to research further, can refer to the book 'Tash'yeed al-Mataaen wa Kashf al-Zaghaaen' by Allmah Sayed Muhammad Ali Kuli Lucknawi (may Allah increase his grades), the revered father of the unmatched Mir Hamid Husain Lucknawi (r.a.)}.

At the end, we beseech Allah the Almighty to hasten the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a.t.f.s.) the last of the Saadiqeen and to make us among his supporters so that we get the opportunity to be with the Saadiqeen.