

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ

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Fruit of the Mastership of Ali (a.s.)

“Did I not charge you, O children of Adam, that you should not serve the Satan? Surely he is your open enemy. And that you should serve Me; this is the right way.”

[Surah Yaaseen: Verses 60,61]

Renewal of the Covenant

On the day of Ghadeer, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) before the announcement of mastership took an acknowledgement from the people that he (s.a.w.a.) holds the position of absolute authority over them. All of them, without exception, exclaimed, “Yes! O Messenger of Allah!” But what followed thereafter in the annals of history was nothing was unprecedented.

Chaos

All the precaution, arrangement, preventive measures, guarding and with existing secrecy, under the open sky with the heat of the scorching midday sun, surrounded by the desert sand, huge gathering of the pilgrims whose eyes were filled with the sight of the Ehraam clad pilgrims chanting “Labbaik Labbaik”, the circumbulation of the Kaba, Safaa and Marwah, the sounds arising from the lands of Mina and Arafah were still audible when in the scorching field of Ghadeer, this caravan halted, there were 1,30,000 pilgrims feeling the heat of the sun. Their lips and tongue had dried up. On the other hand their heartbeats were up and each one was asking unto himself, “What is the matter?” Is it time for a revelation or is it Hazrat Jibraeel who is traversing the atmosphere and arriving in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to convey a divine message.

It is important to note here that perhaps in this space, the Holy Quran which is the word of Allah announced, “On the day of judgment, Allah of the place of gathering will ask from the sons of Adam (a.s.) regarding the promise and covenant, the evil forces were also trying to see that the sermon of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which would enable man to tread the right path and would prove to be a guidance for the future and was seeking the covenant of belief in the Wilaayat of Ali (a.s.) is covered. However, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) gave a very eloquent sermon and then the Wilaayat of Ali (a.s.) was announced. “Ali Maula! Ali Maula”, their intentions were destroyed and were left murmuring, “Oh no! What happened?” Those coming on the following years on the basis of the propagation of the divine Messengership were dreaming of a new kingdom saw their dreams shattering just like the bursting of the war drum. Stunned about what had just happened, they had no choice but to enter the tent of Ali (a.s.) to congratulate him.

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A Brief Analysis of the Incident of the Paper

10th Hijri is the year in which the Last Messenger of Allah, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) started to assemble his works with the permission of Allah and towards the end of the 10th Hijri announced his return towards the celestial world after pointing out his successor till the Day of Judgment. Thus, at the event of Ghadeer, he (s.a.w.a.) nominated his executor and his successor and again in the 11th Hijri when he (s.a.w.a.) was on his deathbed, a tragic incident of gigantic proportions took place.

The Incident of the paper

In simple terms we call it as the incident of the pen and ink. This incident took place in the 11th Hijri in the final days of Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) when he (s.a.w.a.) wished to pen down a document for the eternal guidance of the nation and said:

“Bring me pen and skin (of a goat) so that I may write for you thus you may never be deviated after me” (Historians have termed this incident as the incident of paper. Qirtas means paper and in those days animal skin was used for writing hence the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) asked for it. Today, in our terminology we call it as paper hence because paper is used for writing. Hence in this article we will replace skin with paper)

Were they also Muslims?

A few from those who were present wanted to obey the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) and brought paper and pen but Umar said: Stop!

He is speaking in delirium. (Allah Forbid) The book of Allah is sufficient for us.

(Hayaat al-Qulub vol. 2 pg 998)

Chaos erupted and when it increased the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) disliked it and said: “Go away from me because this kind of a dispute is not worthy in front of the Messenger of Allah”

(Hayaat al-Qulub vol. 2 pg 998)

People left and only the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) relatives and close companions were left. The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) hugged Imam Ali (a.s.) and took out his ring and said “Take this and wear it”. Then he gave his armor, sword and his war clothes and a special cloth, which he tied around his waist during wars to Imam Ali (a.s.) and said “Now take the name of Lord and return home.”

Next day, the condition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) worsened and he became unconscious. When he gained consciousness, he said “Call my beloved one” and became unconscious again. Ayesha said, “Bring Abu Bakr.” Abu Bakr was brought but when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) gained consciousness and saw Abu Bakr he turned away his face and repeated his request. Hafsa said, “Bring Umar to him.” The Messenger (s.a.w.a.) turned away his face from him as well and for the third time he (s.a.w.a.) said, “Call my beloved one” Umm Salmah stood up and said, “Bring Imam Ali (a.s.) to him. Imam Ali (a.s.) was brought. Eliminating the all the other part of the incident it was written that according to the wish of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) Imam Ali (a.s.) kept his (s.a.w.a.) holy head on his (a.s.)

lap and the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) left this world in this very condition. This is incident of paper in brief.

Why did Umar not allow the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) to write the document?

What was the reason that Umar did not allow the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) to write his will? Umar, Abu Bakr and the entire group were aware that the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) had appointed Imam Ali (a.s.) as his successor on numerous occasions and, if again through his will he appoints Imam Ali (a.s.) as his successor then the companions would pay their allegiance to Imam Ali (a.s.) and they will lose the caliphate hence they tried their best that Messenger (s.a.w.a.) does not perform this action.

Excuse of tender age for caliphate and Prophet's intelligent practice

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) was aware that after his demise Ali (a.s.) will be kept away from caliphate through many excuses, one of which will be his young age. Hence, to explain to the people that Imamate and Caliphate is based on capability and not age. He (s.a.w.a.) knew that people would call Imam Ali (a.s.) young and usurp his right. Hence, he made an army and appointed 'Osama' a youth as commander of the army. Many people tried to refrain the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) to appoint Osama as the commander but he (s.a.w.a.) did not listen to anyone and made him as the chief of the army. But people did not allow this to happen.

(Tabaqat Ibn Saad Vol. 4 Pg 66, Taarikh Ibn Asaakir Vol. 2 Pg 291, Kanz al-Ummal Vol. 5 Pg 313, Taarikh Ibn Khaldoon Vol. 2 Pg 484)

Companions rejected the command of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.)

It is amazing that Allah has not commanded the obedience of the Noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) but with extreme emphasis. Please look at this verse carefully:

"And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back"

(Surah Hashr: Verse 7)

The Obedience of Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.) is obligatory

"But no! By your Lord! They do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that, which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straightness in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission."

(Surah Nisa: Verse 65)

This verse has a condition that unless people do consider the Noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) as a judge in their disputes and differences and do not listen to his decisions they will not be called as believers. Then how is it possible that the one who refused to give the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) ink and pen on his request and does not participate in the army formed by him (s.a.w.a.) be a Muslim?

Need of a Will

Lastly, when the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) witnessed that the proposal of sending people out of Madinah with the army did not actualize, he (s.a.w.a.) decided with the permission of Allah to compile his recommendations for Imam Ali (a.s.) in a will,

which he had passed on to the people in the span of twenty-three years. Hence, a few days before his death on Thursday when he was on his bed and his house was filled with people he said, "Bring me pen and paper so that I may write a thing, which if you act upon will never be deviated after me"¹

The Argument of Bani Hashim and Bani Umayyah

Bani Hashim and the wives of the Noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) were insisting on writing the will; however, those who obstructed the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) to talk about his successor at the plains of Arafat intervened at his (s.a.w.a.) house as well. We have mentioned earlier that Umar had understood that if the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) writes the will, the plan of usurping the caliphate will be ruined and hence he screamed, "There is no need to bring a pen and paper as this man (!) is speaking in delirium: the book of Allah is sufficient for us." The supporters of Umar and Bani Umayyah heard this and supported him. But the Bani Hashim were extremely angry and opposed this blasphemous statement. What would the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) do when such an allegation was attributed to him? He (s.a.w.a.) was very disappointed and asked everyone to leave, "Go away from me! It is inappropriate that a conflict should arise in the presence of Allah's Messenger."

¹ (Hayat al-Qulub Vol.: 2 Pg: 998, Late Allamah Majlisi says that this tradition of pen and paper is mentioned in different ways in Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim and many reliable books of Ahle Tasannun and they have narrated from Ibn Abbas that he (s.a.w.a.) cried a lot and in such a way that the stones of the mosque became moist).

Supporters of Umar and distortions of school of thought of Caliphs

The allies of Umar, especially the supporters of school of thought of caliphs, tried to cover the intolerant behavior of Umar b. Khattab. They attributed the words 'delirium' which Umar used to others who were present there and wrote, "They said: the Prophet of Allah is speaking in delirium" and relate this sentence to Umar, "He said: the pain of illness has taken over the Messenger. But the statement of Abu Bakr Johari in the book 'Saqifah' explains this point. The allegation of delirium started from the side of Umar and his supporters attributed this statement to the Messenger (s.a.w.a.). Johari has written this allegation from Umar: "Umar uttered a statement which meant that the pain of illness has taken over the Messenger". Thus, it is concluded that Umar meant something else that cannot be mentioned and hence this implication was made. Unfortunately, Bukhari and Muslim and others have not narrated the exact words but have mentioned the meaning and the subject. However, it is very clear from 'An-Nihaya' of Ibn Aseer and Sharh Nahj al-Balaaghah of Ibn Abi al-Hadeed that the allegation of delirium was clearly made by Umar

Outcome

Whatever may be the case but one thing is clear that after sending the opposing group out of the house, the Noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) mentioned his will to his sincere companions. As per the tradition of Sulaim b. Qais al-Hilaali, he (s.a.w.a.) mentioned about each member of Ahle Bait (a.s.) and appointed

them as this successor and caliph after him.

(Book of Sulaim Bin Qais al-Hilaali, vol. 4, p. 658)

The Ahle Tasannun has also recorded this incident in their books copiously but have kept the original topic as ambiguous.

The Role of Ibn Abbas

Ibn Abbas says towards the end of the tradition, "The Messenger (s.a.w.a.) recommended three things: First: to remove the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula. Second: Give permission to the caravans just like I have permitted them. But he remained silent about the third will and as per other traditions: I have forsaken the third will."

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Maghaazi, Chapter 78; Sahih Muslim vol. 5)

It is worth noting that it is not found in any report or narration whatever has been ascribed to Ibn Abbas: I have forgotten this part or have not narrated it. It is not the case but the fear of Ibn Abbas from Umar because the third will was certainly about the caliphate and leadership of Imam Ali (a.s.) and household of the Messenger (s.a.w.a.). sBut Ibn Abbas was afraid of Umar and hence avoided to mention it. He also had contradictory views against the oppression and prejudice during the lifetime of Umar but never expressed it till the death of Umar. When people asked him the reason for delay in announcing the truth he said: I was afraid of him

Why did Umar stop the writing of document?

The question that troubled everyone was why Umar and his supporters did not allow the actualization of the intention of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.)? Did not the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) guarantee the

safety of the nation from deviation till the Day of Judgment if the will was written? Can any news be better than that? Then why did they oppose this action? Why did they deprive the nation of this great immeasurable bounty? What can one say when the love for power, pelf and position, and jealousy, hatred and malice prevent the intellect from accepting the truth?! We know that Umar was conspiring behind the scenes; he knew why the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) was demanding a paper and pen. He knew very well that the Messenger (s.a.w.a.) wanted to give the people all the recommendations that he (s.a.w.a.) had made regarding the caliphate of Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and Ahle Bait (a.s.) in form of a document and hence obstructed the same. Our words are not mere claims but have many witnesses. We will present two incidents here:

1. Umar bin Khattab had listened to the tradition of two weighty things (Hadis-e-Saqalain) many times over during the last days of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.), "I am leaving amongst you two weighty things, the Book of Allah and my progeny the Ahle Bait (a.s.); if you fasten unto both of them, you will never be deviated after me; for, they will not separate from each other till they meet me at the pond of Kauthar (in paradise)." Umar had heard about Allah's Book and Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) progeny as the exegesis of 'will not be deviated'. When the noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) demanded paper and ink, Umar heard the same exegesis that he (s.a.w.a.) said: I am giving a document after which you will never be deviated. Umar was

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Towards Ghadeer

It is an undeniable fact that in the entire history of humanity, right from the early days of Islam till date, no sect has faced and endured as many sufferings, sorrows, pains and afflictions as the adherents (Shias) of the progeny of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). All these problems are solely due to their obsessive love for them and belief in their great position and status, which Allah – the High – has endowed upon them. As this love and adoration increased, their troubles increased. But history is witness to the fact that the moths of the flame of mastership have not backed off in facing sacrifices for worldly luxuries in the defense of the sanctum of mastership. Rather, in order to complete the proof, in a very calm and composed manner, being mindful of the feelings of the opponents, they have presented excellent arguments. This resulted in groups of Sunni scholars accepting the path of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and proclaiming so without any fear. In this article, we shall try to analyze factors which play an important role in this guidance.

Note: With this article, we do not intend to increase the differences between the Muslims because we know that in today's society, the most important need of the hour is conformity of hearts but we truly believe that if there is an unprejudiced discussion between the various sects of Islam and there is exchange of views and ideas, then it will definitely help the cause of conformity of hearts. If we witness the fact that there are factors and reasons for differences among the nation, which is the

responsibility of all of us to pay attention to, and to clarify the matter in a correct and nice manner so that truth becomes evident as daylight, correct Islam is presented to the people and by tearing off the thick veils of prejudice and traditional thoughts and beliefs, we realize the truth. This article also makes an effort to present the thoughts of those people, who after discussions and investigations on the traditional beliefs, accepted the path of truth and by clinching to Allah's strong rope, acted upon the will of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

These experiences are of those people who have penned their journey and told the world why they accepted the path of the Ahle Bait (a.s.). It is important to mention here that this article is the fruit of the efforts of the indefatigable scholar Hujjatul Islam Ali Asghar Rizwani of Qum, the Islamic Republic of Iran. Let us now start the analysis of the below mentioned reasons.

A. Recognizing the greatness of the Ahle Bait (a.s.)

History is witness to the fact that whenever the scholars of the Ahle Tasannun and their youths have tried to enquire about the rights and the recognition of the Ahle Bait (a.s.), then a majority of them have accepted their superiority and accepted the Shia faith. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) praising and describing the Ahle Bait (a.s.) says, "O people, where are you going? Why are you turning away from the truth? The flag of truth is

established and its signs are clear and evident. The lamps of guidance are shining. Then why are you going towards deviated people, while the progeny of your prophet is present among you. The Ahle Bait hold the reins of truth, are the signs of religion and the tongue of the truth.”

[Nahjul Balagha: Sermon 87]

(For more details refer to sermons 97, 187, 144 and 239)

Witnesses:

1. Muhammad b. Ali Mutawakkil is among those people who have accepted the true religion. He writes, “Our courses are without the mention of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) while they are full of books on men and women from the east and west against whom there can be questions raised.”

[Dakhalna al-Tash’ee Sujjadan by Muhammad b. Ali Mutawakkil, pg 40]

2. Abdul Mun’im Hasan too was one of the enlightened and guided ones. He writes, “The cultural and the moral inheritance of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) is great which the nation can seek benefit from but has deprived itself from it. From the miracles of the Ahle Bait (a.s.), that thing which impacted me was their supplications and prayers, the mannerisms of nearness to Allah and the best etiquette of talking to Allah. If someone refers to the meanings of the supplications of Sahifa-e-Sajjaadiyyah, he will certainly be surprised that why the Sunni scholars have not sought benefit from such a book. Is there any reason other than prejudice for disregarding it?”

[Be Noore Faatima Ehtadaito by Abdul Mun’im Hasan, pg. 210]

It is interesting to know that the cause of the guidance of the author was the sermon of J. Fatimah Zahra (s.a.) regarding Fadak, reading which he broke into tears. Hence he named his book “Be Noore Faatima Ehtadaito” which means, “I was guided by the light of Faatima”

B. The oppressions on the Ahle Bait (a.s.)

One of the reasons for people of other religions and sects to accept the religion of Ahle Bait (a.s.) are the oppressions on Ahle Bait (a.s.) in the protection and defense of the religion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

A famous French researcher Dr. Joseph writes in his book Shia and Mindboggling Developments, “among the various natural factors that have helped this religion and left a deep impact on the people of other religions was the expression of being oppressed, which is the sacrifices which their leaders have given in the path of religion. The reason for this is that every man’s pure nature is inclined to help the oppressed.”

It would not be out of the way here to state that it is for this reason than the mourning of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the incidents of the amazing sacrifices of his children and companions and the captivity of the infallible and pure family (a.s.) have played a very important role in the in the propagation of Shia’ism. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every lover of Ahle Bait (a.s.) to spread the mourning of Imam Husain (a.s.) and not to find faults with its customs and rituals.

Witnesses:

Ustad Saai’b Abdul Hameed writes, “The cause of my guidance was the pure personality

of the lamp of guidance and the ark of salvation, Imam Husain (a.s.). It so happened that I was listening to the events of Karbala recited by Shaikh Abdul Zahraa Kaabi (a.r.) on the day of Ashura. It was the Muharram of 1402 AH. My body started shivering listening to the oppressions on Imam (a.s.). My eyes were full of tears. My existence started to call, "I am here O my Master, the son of the Messenger of Allah". There were waves of questions in my mind..."

[Manhaj Fi al-Intimaa-e-Mazhabi by Saaib Abdul Hameed, pg. 31, 32]

Famous Sunni scholars who were affected by the sacrifice of Imam Husain (a.s.) and accepted Shia'ism and then wrote books on their change of religion are as follows:

1. Ustad Idrees Husaini Maghribi – "Indeed Husain Made Me A Shia"
2. Dr. Mohammad Tejani Tunis – "Then I Was Guided"
3. Ahmad Husain Yaqub Ordoni – "Karbala: Ath Thuraru Wal Maasaahu"
4. Allama Dr. Muhammad Hasan Shahaha, ex-professor at Al Azhar University

C. Distortion of Facts

Another reason which was a cause of many people accepting Shia'ism was that those who were fond of reading, when they met the Shias and analyzed their teachings, they realized that those things which they were told about the Shias were far from the truth. Ustad Hasan b. Farhan Maliki, one of the famous personalities of Islamic culture, has written an article "A Discussion on the conversion from

Sunnism to Shiaism"

[Al Majallah: Edition 1082, dated 11/11/2000]

Therefore, we see that the enemies have raised various accusation like worshipping Ali (a.s.), Jibrail made a mistake in the revelation (delivered to The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) instead of Ali (a.s.)), the aim of Shias is the destruction of Islam etc. When the Sunni reading youth see that these are just accusation and nothing else, they become restless to find the truth and accept the Shia faith.

D. The Strong Arguments of the Shias

Muhammad Mar'i Intaaqi writes, "The best reason for the spread of Shia'ism which attracted the people towards this faith was the strong proofs which they have in order to prove their points. In order to prove their point, the Shias use intellect from the beginning till the end."

[Why Did I Accept Shia Faith: pg 51]

These were some of the reasons why numerous great Sunni scholars accepted Shia'ism. Although there are many reasons but we limit ourselves to these. In the end, it is extremely important to note one thing. Guidance is only in Allah's hands and He guides whoever He wishes. Therefore, every person should pray from the depth of his heart that Allah keeps us on the right path. May Allah hasten the reappearance of our master Hazrat Imam-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.) so that the religion of truth spreads all across the globe! ● www.seratonline.com

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

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

The Holy Quran and Prophecies

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

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures-- none knows them but He; and He knows what is in the land and the sea, and there falls not a

leaf but He knows it, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green nor dry but (it is all) in a clear book.”

(Surah An'aam: Verse 59)

At another place it says:

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

(Surah Nahl: Verse 77)

It also mentions in Surah Naml: Verse 65

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

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

“(He is) the Knower of the unseen! So, He does not reveal His secrets to any, except to him whom He chooses as a messenger; for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him”

Traditions and Prophecies

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

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

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

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

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

Several scholars of the Ahle Tasannun have considered the above tradition as correct or widely transmitted. For instance, al-Nawawi in Faiz al-Qadeer, Haakim Nishapuri in al-Mustadrak and Dhahabi in Talkhees al-Mustadrak, Mashabati in Etesmaam, Safaareeni in Lawami' al-Anwaar and Naasiruddin Albaani in Silsilah al-Ahadees al-Sahiha.

The number seventy-three can be taken in its literal or metaphorical sense as to mean numerous sects. We are aware that Imamat is

the fundamental reason for this discord and dissension.

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

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

(Sahih Bukhari vol. 4p. 174)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We know that innovation in religion is different from polytheism.

Abu Alqamah narrates:

It has been narrated in Mawaahib by Tabari Shafei that he told Ibn Ibaad:

“Why did you not, like other people, pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr when others inclined to him?” He took me closer to himself and said, “By Allah I heard Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saying,

“After I shall depart from this world the carnal desires of people shall overcome them and cause them to return to paganism. Then the truth will be with Ali and the book of Allah shall be in his hands. Do not pledge allegiance at the hands of anyone except that of his.”

(Ihqaq al Haqq vol 2 p. 296)

Khaarazmi narrates from Abu Ya'ala in Hanafi Manaqib that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

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

(Manaqib of al-Khaarazmi, p. 105)

Ibn Asaakir, vide correct chain of narrators,

narrates from Ibn Abbas:

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

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

(Taariikh Ibn Asaakir, 834)

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

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

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

He then sought forgiveness for the people of Baqeeh and returned to his bed and left this world in a few days.

(Al Kaamil Ibn Aseer vol 2 p. 318)

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

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

“You feared dissension but were trapped into it. This is the same

dissension but rather the root of all conflicts.”

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

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

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

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

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

The Proponents of First School of Thought

The first person to spread the rumor that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) left this world without making a will is Ayesha. She narrates that the head of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was in my lap

when he breathed his last and did not make a will.

(Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 p. 16)

Abu Bakr too in his last moments said:

“I wanted to ask the messenger of Allah about the caliphate in his last moments so that none disputes in it.”

(Tabari vol. 5 p. 53)

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

(Tabari vol. 5 p. 53)

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

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

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

Objections against the First Opinion

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

1. This would mean that Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) ignored the needs of Islam and the Muslims. We believe that Islam is a comprehensive religion that takes into consideration all human needs. How was it possible to ignore such an important duty?
2. This is against the conduct of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because he always, in his absence, even for a short duration, appointed a successor.
3. This thought is against the instructions of

the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because he himself said:

“One who spends a morning and is not concerned for the affairs of the Muslims is not from us”

(Usool-e-Kaafi)

4. This thought is against the conduct of the caliphs because all of them were concerned and appointed a successor for future.
5. This conduct is against that of the past Prophets (a.s.) because all of them appointed a successor and Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) certainly was no exception to this.

Objections against the Second Thought

1. If Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had adopted this way then it was necessary to lay down the conditions and the procedure to make such a selection, when in reality he did not do so.
2. Also people did not have the willingness and ability to carry out such a task. The people had at several times proved their disunity as in the case of Hajar-e- Aswad and the battle with Bani Mustaliq. Last but not the least, the events of Saqifah is clearer than broad daylight.
3. It is very evident from the Holy Quran and traditions that the role of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was not limited to receiving and conveying revelation. Muslims are in need of such a person who would fill the vacuum after the departure of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

When Ali (a.s) was asked the reason, he narrates the maximum traditions from Holy

Prophet (s.a.w.a.) than anyone else, he replied:

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

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

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

“I am the house of wisdom and Ali is its door.”

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

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

Therefore, the first two alternatives are pre-empted and we are left with no choice but to accept the third one i.e. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on divine command appointed a successor after him, the fact which is also proven from Hadees-e-Saqalain, Hadees-e-Tayr, Hadees-e-Manzilat which are acknowledged by both the sects and also several verses of the Holy Quran like the Verse of Conveyance (5: 67), the Verse of Guardianship (5: 3), the Verse wherein a person sought divine punishment (70: 1-3) and numerous other verses that he (s.a.w.a.) appointed Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s) as his immediate successor. In some of the books of the Ahle Tasannun, the names of the twelve Imams (a.s.) have been mentioned with their titles by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) leaving no room for any doubt whatsoever. However their hearts, eyes and eaars have been sealed by Allah.

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

A Quick Glance at the “Tradition of the Bird”

Ghadeer-e-Khum is such a page in history, which even if the malicious conspire to erase, will not be able to. 18th Zilhajj, 10 A.H., the day when the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) declared openly and for the last time about his departure for the heavenly abode and introduced his 12 successors to the entire Muslim nation. On that day everyone was reciting poems in praise of the immediate Caliphate and Coronation of Ali (a.s.) and his appointment to the position of Imam. While some stepped forward to say “Congratulations” in no uncertain terms, others like the famous poet of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) Hassaan b. Saabit recited impromptu couplets in praise of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). The declaration “Of whomsoever I am the Master, this Ali is his Master” had just disrupted the evil plans of the hypocrites.

Ghadeer is a reality recorded by prominent and distinguished Muslim scholars in their books. It was the day when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) answered the questions raised about the sequence of guidance and Imam after him on divine orders and appointed Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as the Imam, Guide and the Leader of the people. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had appointed Ali (a.s.) as the Imam after him on many previous occasions. The proof of the Imam and mastership of Ali (a.s.) are available in numerous Quranic verses and

Prophetic traditions. More than 500 verses of the Holy Quran have been revealed in the praise of Ali (a.s.). No other topic is found in the books of traditions for which traditions have been written and narrated in such excessive numbers.

Some people opine that if the verses and traditions which the Shias cite pertaining to the mastership and Imam of Ali (a.s.) are true, then why did Ali (a.s.) not present the proofs of his succession to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) after his demise and in turn prove his rightfulness to the position of caliphate. Hence, this proves that either these traditions were of no importance to Ali (a.s.) or he was satisfied with the selection of Abu Bakr to the position of caliphate. In reply to this, it is only appropriate that this topic is thoroughly researched and we refer to those traditions, which Ali (a.s.) presented as evidences to prove his Imam after the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and these traditions are mentioned in the books of Ahle Sunnat as well.

The Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) will to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

In his last days, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was bedridden due to his illness, he narrated the virtues of his daughter J. Fatima Zahra (s.a.) and the Ahle Bait (a.s.) to her and then addressed Ali (a.s.) thus:

"My dear brother, indeed after me, you will be subjected to continuous tortures at the hand of the Quraish such that they shall oppress you. If you find helpers then fight those who oppose you with the help of those who support you. If you do not find helpers and supporters, then be patient and refrain your hands (from fighting) and do not allow yourself to be destroyed, because your position near me is like the position of Haroon (a.s.) near Moosa (a.s.) and you have an excellent example in Haroon (a.s.) when he said to his brother Moosa (a.s.), "Surely the people reckoned me weak and had very nearly slain me." [Surah A'raaf: Verse 150]

[Book of Sulaim b. Qais: tradition 1, Bihar-ul-Anwar: vol.. 28 p. 54]

Acting upon this will, Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s.) put forth his right in front of the people in various ways after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He supported his arguments with all those verses and arguments, which Allah had revealed in his praise and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had narrated. These arguments of Ali (a.s.) are a proof of the fact that he tried his level best to prove his rightfulness to the position of Imam and Caliphate because as per Allah and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), it was only Ali (a.s.) who deserved to be the guide and leader for mankind. But apart from a few trusted companions, everyone ignored his arguments. In one such argument, Ameerul Momineen

(a.s.) quoted "The tradition of the bird"

Tradition of the Bird

It is narrated from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) that he put forth the following argument in front of the people:

"I swear by Allah! Is there anyone among you who is more beloved to Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) than me? ...on the day of the bird, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, "O Allah! Send your most beloved creature near me who can eat this bird along with me" and then I entered." Then Ali (a.s.) said, "O Allah, near Your Messenger (s.a.w.a.), is there anyone apart from me?" Then everyone replied, "Certainly not!"

[Taareekh-e-Damishq, vol. 42, p. 432, Manaagib by Khwarazmi, p. 314, This tradition can be found in other books of Ahle Tasannun like Faraaid al-Simtain, vol.. 1 p. 209-215]

In another tradition regarding this incident Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) says,

"A bird called Habaari was gifted to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and was placed in his hands. At that time Anas b. Maalik was his doorkeeper. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) raised his hands in front of Allah and prayed, "O Allah! Send Your most beloved creature who can share this bird's meat with me." At this juncture, Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) came and sought permission to enter. But Anas b. Maalik said, "Surely the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) is busy right now." Hearing this Ali (a.s.) left.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) prayed for the second time and Ali (a.s.) came and sought permission. Anas b. Maalik again said, "Surely the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) is busy right now" and Ali (a.s.) returned. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) prayed for the third time and Ali (a.s.) came and sought permission. This time Anas allowed him to enter. When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saw Ali (a.s.), he (s.a.w.a.) said, "By Allah, come near me." Then Ali (a.s.) ate from it along with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) finished eating the bird, Ali (a.s.) left. Anas says, "I followed Ali (a.s.) and said to him, "O Abal Hasan, please forgive me for I have sinned against you but I have a glad tidings for you." Then Anas narrated whatever Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) repeated thrice. Ali (a.s.) praised Allah, sought forgiveness for him and was satisfied with him for I had gone to him with the glad tidings."

[Taareekh-e-Demeshq: vol. 42 p. 245]

This tradition not only proves the fact that Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is the dearest and most beloved near Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.), rather Ali (a.s.) seeking forgiveness from Allah for Anas b. Maalik indicates that if anyone doubts the proximity of Ali (a.s.) to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) or even unintentionally tries to separate them from each other has invited the wrath of Allah. Had it not been so, Ali (a.s.) would not have sought forgiveness

for Anas.

There are numerous such traditions based on which it is an established fact that none was closer to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) than Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). After the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), he (a.s.) invited the people to his Imamate and Caliphate on the authority of this proximity and attachment to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). But people did not accept the truth and refused to pay allegiance to Ali (a.s.). People even ignored the command of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in which he (s.a.w.a.) had ordered that after him, Ali (a.s.) would be the Imam, leader and guide for the people. Ibne Abi Laila al-Ghaffari has narrated that he heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) say,

"Certainly, soon after me there will be chaos. When this happens, then cling on to Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) because he was the first to believe in me and will be the first to shake hands with me on the Day of Judgment. He is Siddeeq-ul-Akbar (the Greatest Truthful person) and the Faarooq-e-A'zam (distinguisher of truth from falsehood) of this nation. He is the leader of the believers and wealth is the leader of the hypocrites."

[Al-Isaabah, vol. 1 part 1 p. 167]

Praise be to the One who included us among those who hold fast unto the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.) after him! ●
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Ali: The Pinnacle of Virtues

At first, chronicling Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) excellence and merits seems like an achievable task. In reality, this is an ocean so vast and deep that it is impossible to define its depths. Indeed, to describe Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) amazing merits is beyond any mortal. The more one tries to enumerate them, the more one struggles in this mountainous endeavour.

When Khalil bin Ahmad was asked about Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib's (a.s.) virtues, he responded, "How can I describe the merits of the one whose merits were concealed by his enemies out of envy and by his friends for fear of their lives. Despite this, the east and the west bear testimony to his virtues."

[Rawzatul Muttaqeen, vol. 13, p. 265]

What is conveyed in this article provides a very brief insight into Imam Ali's (a.s.) character. We have sourced all traditions from the books of the Ahle Sunnah because that praise is most sincere which emanates from the rivals.

Only Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) know Ali (a.s.)

How can one not be perplexed about the personality whose very mortality is debated? Some considered him to be God and worthy of worship, while at another extreme, some wondered whether he was as pious and God-fearing as projected. The latter were shocked to learn that Imam Ali (a.s.) was martyred in Masjid-e-Kufa while engaged in prayers. They exclaimed, "Did Ali ever offer prayers at all?"

Indeed only Allah and His Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) can claim to truly know Imam Ali (a.s.).

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed Imam Ali (a.s.):

"O Ali, none other than me and you have truly recognized Allah and none has truly recognized you other than Allah and me."

[Manaqeb Shahr Ibn Aashob, vol. 3, p. 268]

In another instance, he (s.a.w.a.) says:

"O Ali, none has recognized Allah, the Almighty except me and you, and none has recognized me except Allah and you, and none has recognized you except Allah and I."

[Rawzah al-Muttaqeen, Muhammad Taqi Majlisi, vol. 13, p. 273]

Countless Virtues

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) with his true recognition of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said:

"Ali's merits cannot be counted."

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

"If all the trees and gardens turn into pens and the oceans into ink and the jinn into accountants and men into scribes, they will be unable to enumerate the merits of Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)."

In yet another instance, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) revealed:

"Allah has granted innumerable merits to my brother Ali. If someone confesses

to even one of these merits and narrates it (accordingly), Allah will forgive all his sins of the past and the future.”

“If someone writes even one of Imam Ali’s (a.s.) merits, the angels will seek forgiveness on his behalf till the time his writing remains. And if someone listens to even one of his merits, Allah will erase all the sins that he has committed with his ears. And if someone glances at even one of his merits, Allah will erase all the sins that he has committed with his eyes.”

[Behaarul Anwaar, vol. 28, p. 197; vol. 35, p. 8-9]

Ali (a.s.) – Confluence of excellence

Not only does Imam Ali’s (a.s.) persona embody every virtue associated with the people of the world, he also possesses the merits of prophets, especially the select band of the Ulul Azm Apostles (a.s.). It is not surprising therefore that none except the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) have surpassed him in virtue. The illustrious Sunni scholar, Baihaaqi, in his compilation has recorded the prophetic tradition:

“One who wants to see Adam’s knowledge, Nuh’s piety, Ibrahim’s forbearance, and Moosa’s worship, then let him look at Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).”

[Amaali-e-Shaikh Toosi (r.a.), p. 416, Majlis 14]

This tradition appears twice in Manaaqib as follows:

“One who wants to see Adam’s knowledge, Nuh’s intelligence, Yahya bin Zakariyya’s abstinence, and Moosa bin Imran’s power, then let him look at

Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.).”

[Al-Manaaqeb, p. 83, Trad. 70; p. 311, Trad. 309 2]

Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

To admire perfection and the one who embodies it is part of human nature. That is why the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the beloved of Allah, is loved by all. On the same lines, Imam Ali (a.s.) is also the beloved of Allah because in the Verse of Malediction (Ayate Mubaahila) he is declared as the ‘self’ of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). As we know, man loves his ‘self’.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in several traditions has underlined the relation between Imam Ali (a.s.) and himself:

“One who loves Ali, then certainly he has loved me.”

“One who loves you (Imam Ali (a.s.)) loves me and one who hates you hates me.”

A person asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.): “O Prophet of Allah, do you love Ali?” He (s.a.w.a.) replied,

“Don’t you know that Ali is from me and I am from him.”

The Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) love for Imam Ali (a.s.) is obvious; doesn’t everyone love his own self?

There is a tradition recorded in Manaaqib along with a chain of narrators:

“Allah, the Almighty, has ordered me to love four of my companions and has informed me that He loves them.” The companions said, “O Prophet of Allah! Who are they? Even we would like to be included amongst them.” The Prophet of Allah said, “Ali is one of

them." Then he fell silent. He repeated, "Ali is one of them." Then he fell silent.

Ayesha narrates: When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the final moments of his life he requested from his companions, "Bring me my beloved."

I (Ayesha) set out to look for Abu Bakr in response to the Prophet's request. Seeing Abu Bakr, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) turned his face away from him. For the second time, he said, "Bring me by beloved." Then Hafsa brought Omar and the Prophet turned his face away from him the same way he turned his face from Abu Bakr. I said that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is referring only to Ali and nobody else. The people summoned Imam Ali (a.s.). When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saw Imam Ali (a.s.) he embraced him and whispered a thousand traditions in his ear. From each tradition, another thousand traditions were elaborated for Imam Ali (a.s.).

Ibne Abbas narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

"Ali is to me as my head is to my body."

It is clear that the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) love for Imam Ali (a.s.) had nothing to do with family relations; rather it was based on the latter's excellence and merits. Mentioned below are some of these virtues:

Imam Ali's (a.s.) knowledge

Imam Ali (a.s.) did not acquire his knowledge from any mortal; rather his knowledge was a divine bestowal. Hence his knowledge is deemed superior to his peers. Not surprisingly, in the books of the Ahle Sunnah, he is remembered as the 'most learned of men'. Some traditions have been quoted in this regard:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:
"The most knowledgeable one in my nation after me is Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)."

Abdullah ibn Masood narrates from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

"Wisdom has been distributed (among the people) in ten parts. Of this, Ali has been granted nine parts and the rest of the people have been granted only one part."

All the progress in this world can be attributed to the part of wisdom granted to the people. Imam Ali's (a.s.) wisdom is nine times the wisdom of the people. This is because the source of his wisdom is the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), who informed the people:

"I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate. Then one who wants to acquire knowledge must enter through its gate."

Ayesha narrates regarding Imam Ali (a.s.):
"He is the most knowledgeable of the people with regards to the Sunnah."

How we wish that Ayesha herself had acted on this tradition. If she had done so, the Battle of Jamal could have been averted, sparing the lives of many innocent Muslims.

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) married his beloved daughter Janabe Fatemah Zahra (s.a.) to Imam Ali (a.s.), he declared:

"(O Fatemah), I have married you to the best one from my family. He is the most knowledgeable of them in knowledge and the most superior among them in virtue and the foremost among them in Islam."

Imam Ali's (a.s.) worship

Imam Ali's (a.s.) legendary worship ranks in the same league as his knowledge, which as we have seen, was without parallel (excluding the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)). His prayers, his whispered supplications and wailings in the middle of the night out of Allah's fear, and his prolonged glorifications were such that Allah, Himself, boasted to His angels about his worship.

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

One morning, Jibraeel-e-Ameen brought some glad tidings. I asked him, "O my friend, what makes you so happy?" He replied, "O Muhammad why shouldn't I be happy. Today, Allah, the Almighty has granted your brother and your vicegerent with an honour that has pleased me." I asked him, "What has Allah granted my brother and the Imam of my nation?"

He said, "Last night Allah boasted about Ali's worship to the angels. He told the angels, 'O my angels, My Proof on the nation after the Prophet is subjecting himself humbly to My Greatness. I bear witness to you that he is the Imam of My Creation and the Guardian of My Creatures.'"

Incidents of Imam Ali's (a.s.) amazing acts of worship are worthy of a detailed account that can fill a voluminous compilation. By way of illustration, we relate one tradition:

Ziraar b. Zamrah recounts Imam Ali's (a.s.) virtues to Muawiyah: "I take Allah as a witness that I have seen Ali several times in the darkness of the night, standing in the niche (of the mosque), clutching his beard, trembling

violently as if bitten by a snake, and wailing uncontrollably like a bereaved person. His cries are ringing in my ears even now:

'Alas, the journey is lengthy, but the provisions are few. The paths are terrifying and the destination is lofty.'

Hearing this, Muawiyah was moved to tears. He wiped his tears with his sleeves. Even the audience wept on hearing the account. Muawiyah confessed, "Truly Abul Hasan was as you say."

Imam Ali's (a.s.) Imamate

Imam Ali's (a.s.) unparalleled knowledge and worship are adequate proof that Imamate and Caliphate were his by right. Apart from this, there are several traditions in the books of the Ahle Sunnah that categorically state this fact. Among these, the most noteworthy are Hadis-e-Saqalain, Hadis-e-Manzelat, Hadis-e-Yaumud Daar (Zul Asheerah) and Hadis-e-Ghadeer, which are transmitted successively (Mutawatir). Several books have established Imam Ali's (a.s.) Imamate based on such traditions. In addition to these traditions, there are several other traditions that unambiguously establish Imam Ali's (a.s.) Imamate. Some of them have been mentioned below:

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) ordered Imam Ali (a.s.): *"Wear the ring in the right hand so that you are included among the proximate ones."*

Imam Ali (a.s.): *"O Prophet of Allah! Which ring should I wear?"*

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.): *"Red agate (Aqeeq), which is the mountain that confessed to Allah's Oneness, my Prophethood, and your Mastership."*

Even the mountains are aware of the fact that Mastership belongs to Imam Ali (a.s.) and nobody else.

Ibne Buraidah narrates that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Every Prophet has a successor and heir and Ali is my successor and heir.”

In the tradition narrated earlier with regards to Imam Ali’s (a.s.) worship, Allah says:

“(O My Angels) I hold you as witness that he (Imam Ali (a.s.)) is the Imam of My Creation and the Guardian of My Creatures.”

Amr b. Maimoon narrates from Ibne Abbas that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed Imam Ali(a.s.):

“You are the guardian of all believers after me.”

The word Ba’dēe categorically points out to the immediate succession of Imam Ali (a.s.) after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). To misinterpret Wali as beloved is unwarranted. Being the beloved of the believers has no meaning. Wasn’t Imam Ali (a.s.) the beloved of the believers in the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) lifetime?

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) left no stone unturned in announcing the succession of Imam Ali (a.s.). On several occasions, he established Imam Ali (a.s.) as the Caliph and Imam of the Muslims. Once we find him raising Imam Ali (a.s.) in front of the Muslims to proclaim, “Ali is the leader and Imam of the Muslims.”

On another occasion he asserted:

“Ali is with the Quran and the Quran is with Ali. The two shall never separate.”

At times he (s.a.w.a.) established Imam Ali

(a.s.) as the standard and the axle of truth:

“Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali. The two shall not separate until they meet me at the Pool (Howz) on the Day of Resurrection.”

In another tradition he forecasts:

“Soon there shall arise sedition and when that happens hold on to Ali ibn Abi Talib, for surely he is the distinguisher between the truth and falsehood.”

He (s.a.w.a.) also said:

“One who distances himself from Ali has distanced himself from me, and one who distances himself from me has distanced himself from Allah.”

Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Quran

Many scholars of the Ahle Sunnah and their exegetes (interpreters of Quran) have adjudged several Quranic verses as being associated with Imam Ali (a.s.). They have advanced these verses in support of many traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Some of these renowned scholars include – Ibne Hajar-e-Makki, Khateeb Baghdadi, Ganji Shafei, Ibne Asakir, Shaikh Sulaiman Qundozi Hanafi.

Ibne Abbas declared: “Three hundred verses have been declared regarding Ali (a.s.)”

Ibne Abbas narrated the following tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

“All verses of the Quran that proclaim yaa ayyohal lazeena amanu, ‘O you who believe’ have Ali (a.s.) as their foundation and exemplar.”

In other words, whenever the believers have been addressed (‘O you who believe’), Imam Ali (a.s.) is the foremost addressee.

Submitting to Ali (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) is the leader and guide of the people, the beloved of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the possessor of divine knowledge, the foremost in the worship and obedience of Allah, the perfect distinguisher between truth and falsehood, a peer of the Quran and an exemplar for the friends of Allah.

In the post-Prophet era, it is the responsibility of the people to submit only to him (to the exclusion of all others) and observe his proclamations and announcements. Obeying him is not optional; rather it is a compulsory obligation on all people in general and on the Muslims in particular. The traditions that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has narrated in this regard are extraordinary. We have narrated a few over here.

Janab Salman (r.a.) narrates this tradition on the authority of Janab Fatima Zahra (s.a.):

"It is obligatory upon you to obey Ali ibn Abi Talib for surely he is your Master. So love him. He is your superior, so adhere to him. He is the scholar amongst you, so consider him noble. He is your leader towards Paradise, so respect him. When he invites you, accept his invitation. When he commands you, obey him. Love him like you love me. Consider him noble like you consider me noble. Whatever I have told you concerning Ali is what My Lord has ordered me, magnified is His Honour."

This tradition is too manifest to require an explanation. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in no uncertain terms has asserted that whatever he has conveyed regarding Imam Ali (a.s.) is

not his personal recommendation; rather it was a divine recommendation. If the Muslims had paid heed to just this one tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), they would have been secure from the present state of affairs that is rife with sedition, deviation and confusion.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed his reliable companion – Ammar-e-Yaasir (r.a.):

"O Ammar, if you see Ali treading on one path and the people treading on another path, then follow Ali and abandon the people because Ali will never misguide you as he is always on the right path."

Unfortunately, the Muslims ignored the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) recommendation. They abandoned Imam Ali (a.s.) and instead followed others and in this way became a source of degradation for Islam. However, every era witnessed Muslims, albeit few in number, who adhered to the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) recommendation and submitted to Imam Ali (a.s.) and his infallible children (a.s.).

Love for Imam Ali (a.s.)

Love is an important factor to evoke obedience and submission. In fact, unyielding adherence is not possible without love. Love makes easy the rigours of obedience and adherence. Imam Ali (a.s.) is an individual who has carved a niche for himself in the heart of every believer and in fact is the most beloved person in their eyes. Traditions abound with the merits of loving Imam Ali (a.s.) so much that many books running into several volumes would be needed to enumerate all these traditions. We take this opportunity to list a few of them:

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

“The theme of the believer’s Book of Deeds is his love for Ali. The one who wants to lead a life like mine and wants to die like me and wants to reside in that Paradise whose trees have been planted by My Lord then he should love Ali and his lovers. After me (and Ali) obey his children who are the Imams. They are from my progeny. They are my sons and have been created from my clay. Allah has granted them sustenance and knowledge. Hell is the abode of the one who denies their greatness and excellence. I have no affiliation with such people, and on the Day of Judgment Allah will deprive them of my intercession.”

Janab Jabir ibn Abdullah Ansari (r.a.) narrated from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

“Once Jibraeel brought me a green paper with white text on it:

‘I have made the love of Ali ibn Abi Talib an obligation to all My Creatures, so convey this to everyone from Me.’”

Abu Barza relates: We were seated with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) when he informed us:

“On the Day of Judgment, no one will be able to proceed even a step until he replies to four questions – a) How he spent his life. b) How he used his body. c) How he earned his wealth and how he expended it. c) Whether he loved us, the Ahle Bayt.”

At that stage Umar asked: “How can a person love you after you have gone?”

In response, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) placed his hand on Imam Ali’s (a.s.) head and

drawing him closer to himself declared:

“Surely to love Ali is to love me after I have gone.”

Manaqib relates this tradition with its own chain of narrators that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) warned:

“O Ali, if a person worships Allah for as long as Nuh remained in his nation (i.e. 950 years) and spends gold equal to the mountain of Uhud in the way of Allah and his life is extended so much that he performs a thousand Hajj by foot and is killed unjustly between Safa and Marwa but does not have your love and authority in his heart, then even the fragrance of Paradise will elude him. He will never enter Paradise.”

After the multitude of traditions on love for Imam Ali (a.s.), of which we have narrated just a few, how is it possible for someone to bear enmity and hostility towards him? Only those can bear enmity towards Imam Ali (a.s.) about whom the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said:

“O Ali, verily, no one from the Arabs will have enmity towards you except those who are born illegitimately. No one from the Ansaar (Helpers) will have enmity towards you except those who are Jews. No one from the rest of mankind will have enmity towards you except those who are forsaken.” ● seratonline.com

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cunning enough to understand that Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.) has intended to write about the Book and the Progeny and hence, he sternly refused it, even using un-parliamentary language for the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the process.

2. Ibn Abbas narrates: 'In the initial days of the caliphate of Umar, I went to him. He looked towards me and said "May the camel's blood be on you" (Probably this is a proverb in Arabs that if you hide a thing then chastisement befalls on you) if I question you and you hide the issue. Do you consider Ali (a.s.) righteous in caliphate? And do you believe that the Prophet of Allah has appointed him? I said: Yes – I asked my father regarding this affair; and he said that Umar confirmed: "I am telling you: the noble

Messenger (s.a.w.a.) wanted to appoint Ali (a.s.) during his illness but I stopped it"

(Sharh Nahj al-Balaaghah by Ibn Abi al-Hadeed, vol. 12, p. 21)

Conclusion

Lastly, we consider it appropriate to mention here that there have been many attempts to distort this incident in order to reduce its gravity. For example, some people suggest that this tradition is reported from Ibn Abbas who was very young at that time and hence, it is not acceptable. Obviously, such a baseless argument has to be refuted outright but we will discuss it sometime later, Insha Allah.

May Allah grant us the grace to be on the right path and give us success in this world and the hereafter through the recommendation of Ahle Bait (a.s.)! ● www.seratonline.com

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(a.s.). The shining universe of mastership in the lamp of guidance lit by Allah will sing the praises of the essence of life of the heavens and the earth and those believing in mastership are the travelers of this very path who will keep walking with each step moving strongly towards the destination of the reappearance of the last Imam (a.t.f.s.) the upholder of the divine mastership.

The Holy Quran announces, **"We will make those who have been weakened in this world as the inheritors and the leaders."** If only the nation of the last Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had not forgotten the leadership and mastership of Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and the eleven Imams (a.s.) after him and had the covenant of Allah

been observed, they would have been successful in every era.

The believers in divine mastership are well aware of its fruits. It is that divine bounty which, through knowledge and action, gives amazing celestial powers to the human mind. We seek divine help to become the true and sincere adherents of the mastership of Ali (a.s.) and the Ahle Bait (a.s.)!

Note: The writer has only mentioned some incidents that were during the life of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Insha Allah, in the following articles we shall see those after the martyrdom of Ali (a.s.) and also see how Allah has endowed the followers of mastership and how this fruit still exists in this world. ● www.seratonline.com

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Chain of Conspiracies

When their hearts settled, their fear calmed down and the wounds of uneasiness were treated with the ointments of conspiracies, the group of conspirators decided to organize a high level meeting which would include Abdullah b. Jarrah, Mualla Saalim and Abdur Rahman b. Auf and it was decided that the caliphate should not go to the Bani Hashim and in order to ensure this whatever needs to be done in the nigh or the future should be strictly implemented.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) passed away and two great events took place. One was the incident of the pen and paper that took place before his (s.a.w.a.) demise and the other was the commotion at Saqeefah after his passing away i.e. the leader of the Ansaar, Saad b. Ubadah on one side and the Muhaajir on the other side.

The Pulpit of the Prophet and the Garden of Fadak

In order to weaken the Bani Hashim, keep the general public away from the message of Ghadeer and to pass a usurping judgment on the garden of Fadak, a fabricated tradition was recited from the pulpit of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) for the first time. When Hazrat Faatimah al-Zahraa (s.a.) ripped off the mask of falsehood, the first caliph in acceptance returned the agreement but the second caliph snatched it away from her (s.a.) hands and tore it off. Now, the veils of ignorance began to fall on people's minds and became thicker by the day as the following chants began to be heard, "What is Ghadeer and where is the announcement of

the Wilaayat of Ali (a.s.)? A handful of companions of Ali (a.s.), trustworthy and honored, full of teachings of Ahle Bait (a.s.), steadfast on their faith and submissive to the authority of mastership like Rushaid Hajari, Habeeb b. Mazaahir, Ammaar Yaasir, Miqdad, Abuzar etc. having certainty on the mastership of Imam Ali (a.s.) remained with their master.

The Conspiracies against the mastership and their unmasked faces

The time had come when these conspiracies were increasing and had prepared the grounds for the majority to meaninglessly follow it in the name of Islam where every new day, new politics and false propaganda would sprout. The voice of mastership had become almost mute. The door of the house of Hazrat Faatimah (s.a.) where the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would come and send salutation morning and evening was razed to ashes! Ali (a.s.) was dragged with his neck tied while the people of Madina remained silent spectators! From the above mentioned committee of so called influential personalities Abdullah Jarrah had died during the reign of the second caliph, else the third caliphate would have gone in his favor. A hapless Abdur Rahman b. Auf put the crown of caliphate on Usman despite the presence of Ali (a.s.). The time of putting the teachings of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) aside and fabricating new religious laws had arrived. This was a very painful and patience-demanding era for the master, Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.). It is worth noting that Ali (a.s.) possessed Zulfiquaar, the miraculous sword. His valor was such that

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Continued from page 25 none could stand against him. But the successor of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was also aware of the tradition and the characteristics of the previous Prophets and along with the greatness and loftiness of his mastership displayed such patience that was the conclusion of the will of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). (O Ali, when people go towards the world, you protect the religion) During this era, when half the income from Fadak went into the hands of enemies of Islam like Marwan Ibn Hakam, there was uproar amongst the masses. Now corruption had acquired such massive proportions that it gave birth to a huge commotion amongst the masses. People gathered near Ali (a.s.) and even threatened to kill him if he refused to accept the caliphate. As per the wish of Allah and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ali (a.s.) took the reins of caliphate in his hands. In the five years of caliphate while Ali (a.s.) fought battles like Siffeen, Naharwan and Jamal, he also performed the important duty of renewing the announcement of Ghadeer in the field of Rohbah. The curse which befell upon Zaid b. Arqam on account of refusing and rejecting became live promotion and the renewal of Ghadeer continued.

After the battle of Siffeen, the mention of Ghadeer was getting popular among the Muslim nation. As a result, Saqifah, the previous caliphate and kingdom were criticized in a covert manner. The religious people and the men of understanding, who had achieved the essence of Islam, took the mastership of Ali (a.s.) and the incident of Ghadeer as the criterion of religion. But those who had risen from a third grade life and reached the surface of commandership, kingship, leadership and a lavish life had become their second nature were not to remain quiet. How could they digest the absolute authority of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)? Consequently, Naharwan was a turning point from where the enmity of Ali (a.s.) became rampant once again. The enmity of Ali (a.s.), rejecting his mastership and turning away from his leadership were the slogan of the opponents. Therefore, a barbaric nation was born that did not even refrain from killing the wife and child of Khabbaab, a nice hearted companion of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and send their dead bodies to Ali (a.s.). These people of Naharwaan are found in large numbers even in today's times from the aspect of their behavior, character and habits. It was the caravan of mastership whose members bore its light in the heart and were the protectors of Islamic values who fought with the Kharijites of Naharwaan and continued their journey. What can be said of the foolish nation who considered even Muaviyah as a friend of Islam and also considered the fourth and last link of the guided caliphate as guidance? They also considered the orders, rules and morals as the pillars of Islam. If we conduct an in-depth study, we shall see that they are constructing a bridge which links divine caliphate and kingship. But the strong structure of kingship which was formed based on self gain and name sake Islam which can be called as structure of Saqifah and the shameless campaign which Muaviyah started to fulfill the dream of Abu Sufyan gained momentum. The result was that Ali (a.s.) attained martyrdom while he was in prostration in front of his Lord in Masjid-e-Kufa.

Divine System

Islam is that religion which Allah had protected right from the time of creation to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and then His friend Ali (a.s.) and then up to the seal of Imams

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**O Messenger! Deliver what has
been revealed to you from
your Lord; and if you do it not,
then you have not delivered
His Message, and Allah will
protect you from the people;
surely Allah will not guide the
unbelieving people.**

(Surah-e-Maaedah (5): Verse 3)