

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH,
THE ALL-BENEFICENT, THE ALL-MERCIFUL

قَال الله تَعَالَى:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُرِيد اللَّه لِيُذْهِب عَنْكُم الرِّجْس أَهْل الْبَيْت وَيُطَهِّرَكُم تَطْهِيراً ﴾

"Indeed, Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification."

(Sūrat al-Ah zāb 33:33)

Prophetic traditions, mentioned in most reliable Sunnī and Shī'ite reference books of *h adīth* and *tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis), confirm that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively involve the five People of the Cloak; namely, Muh ammad, 'Alī, Fāt imah, al-H asan, and al-H usayn, peace be upon them, to whom the term 'Ahl al-Bayt (People of the House)' is solely dedicated.

For instance, refer to the following references:

A. Sunnī Reference Books:

(1) Ah mad ibn H anbal (d. 241 AH), *Al-Musnad*, 1:331; 4:107; 6:292, 304. (2) *S ah īh Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130. (3) Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al. (4) Al-Dūlābī (d. 310 AH), *Al-Dhurriyyah al-T āhirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 108. (5) Al-Nassā'ī (d. 303 AH), *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā'*, 5: p. 108, 113. (6) Al-H ākim al-Naysābūrī (d. 405 AH), *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146, 147. (7) Al-Zarkāshī (d. 794 AH), *Al-Burhān*, p. 197. (8) Ibn Hājar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852), *Fath al-Barī Sharh S ah īh al-Bukhārī*, 7:104.

B. Shī'ite Reference Books:

(1) Al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH), *Us ūl al-Kāfī*, 1:287. (2) Ibn Bābawayh (d. 329 AH), *Al-Imāmah wa al-Tabs irah*, p. 47, H . 29. (3) Al-Maghribī (d. 363 AH), *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, pp. 35, 37. (4) Al-S adūq (d. 381 AH), *Al-Khis āl*, pp. 403, 550. (5) Al-T ūsī (d. 460 AH), *Al-Amālī*, H . 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse involved in the following reference books of *tafsīr*: (1) Al-T abarī (d. 310 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (2) Al-Jassāss (d. 370 AH), *Ah kām al-Qur'ān*. (3) Al-Wah īdī (d. 468 AH), *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. (4) Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH), *Zād al-Mas īr*. (5) Al-Qurt ubī (d. 671 AH), *Al-Jāmi' li-Ah kām al-Qur'ān*. (6) Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (7) Al-Tha'ālibī (d. 825 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (8) Al-Suyūt ī (d. 911 AH), *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*. (9) Al-Shawkanī (d. 1250 AH), *Fath al-Qadīr*. (10) Al-'Ayyāshī (d. 320 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (11) Al-Qummī (d. 329 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*. (12) Furt al-Kūfī (d. 352 AH), *Book of Tafsīr*; in the margin of the exegesis of verse 4:59. (13) Al-T abrisī (d. 560 AH), *Majma' al-Bayān*, as well as many other reference books of *h adīth* and *tafsīr*.

THE UPRISING OF ʻĀSHŪRĀ
AND
RESPONSES TO DOUBTS

قَال رَسُول الله 3:

إنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُم الثَّقَلَيْن: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، مَا إنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أبَداً، وَإنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

The Messenger of Allah (*ṣ*) said:

"Verily, I am leaving among you two weighty things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*'itrat*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*ḥawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*)."

Some references:

- Al-Ḥākim al-Nayshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533
- Muslim, *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, *h adīth*s 5920-3
- Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *h adīth*s 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219
- Al-Nassā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, *h adīth* 79
- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190
- Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277
- Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209
- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* , vol. 6, p. 199
- Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Al-Dār al-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358

THE UPRISING OF ʻĀSHŪRĀ AND RESPONSES TO DOUBTS

By

ʻAlī As ghar Rid wānī

Translated By

Kelvin Lembani (Muh ammad ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz)

Cultural Affairs Department
The Ahl al-Bayt (ʻa) World Assembly

نام کتاب: واقعه عاشورا و پاسخ به شبهات
نویسنده: علی اصغر رضوانی
مترجم: کلوین لمبانی (محمد عبدالعزیز)
تهیه کننده: اداره ترجمه‌ی مجمع جهانی اهل‌البیت (ع)
زبان ترجمه: انگلیسی





The Uprising of ʻĀshūrā and Responses to Doubts

Author: ʻAlī As ghar Rid wānī
Translator: Kelvin Lembani (Muh ammad ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz)
Prepared by: Translation Unit, Cultural Affairs Department; The Ahl al-Bayt (ʻa) World Assembly
Editor: Ashraf Carol Eastman
Proofreader: Majid Karimi
Publisher: ABWA Publishing and Printing Center
First Printing: 2010
Printed by: Layla Press
Copies: 5,000
© The Ahl al-Bayt (*ʻa*) World Assembly (ABWA)
www.ahl-ul-bayt.org
info@ahl-ul-bayt.org
ISBN:
All rights reserved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD—1

AUTHOR'S PREFACE—3

IMĀM AL-H USAYN'S ('A) PERSONALITY—3

Imām al-Ḥusayn ('a) in Sunnī Books—5
Imām al-H usayn ('a), the Leader of the Youths of Paradise—15

YAZĪD AND HIS HOUSEHOLD—39

Abū Sufiyān, Yazīd's Grandfather—41
Mu'āwiyah, Yazīd's Father—49
The Illegitimacy of Yazīd's Caliphate—71
Yazīd, Instigator of Imām al-H usayn's ('a) Death—83
Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah and the Massacre of the People of Medina—105

MOURNING AND LAMENTATION—119

Mourning and Paying Homage to Allah's Awliyā'—121
Mourning from the Viewpoint of Reason—137
Mourning as a Manifestation of Love and Hatred—141
The Psychology of Mourning—153
The Religious Verdict Concerning Attending Mourning Ceremonies for the Awliyā' of Allāh—159
Holding Mourning Ceremonies in the Interest of Unity—161
Beating the Chest to Mourn Imām al-H usayn ('a)—163
Wearing Black Clothes—173

RECITING ELEGIES—175

Reciting Elegies in the Form of Prose—177
Reciting elegies in the form of poetry—187

CRYING—199

Crying from the Viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an and Traditions—201
The Effects of Crying—205
The Reasoning behind Crying about the Sufferings of the awliyā' of Allah—209
A Historical View of Crying for the Sufferings of Allah's Awliyā'—213
Crying while Mourning for Imām al-H usayn ('a)—225
Examining Opposing Claims—231

Pretending to Cry while Mourning for the Awliyā' of Allah—235

THE EFFECTS OF 'ĀSHŪRĀ—237

'Āshūrā from the Viewpoint of Great Thinkers of the World—239
'Āshūrā and Religious Transformation—247

PROSTRATION ON THE SOIL OF KARBALĀ (THE LAND OF IMĀM AL-H USAYN'S MARTYRDOM)—257

The Philosophy behind Prostrating on the Soil of Karbalā—259

RESPONSES TO DOUBTS—267

Who Killed Imām al-H usayn ('a)?—269
Did Imām al-H usayn ('a) have Prior Information about his Martyrdom?—289
Did Allah Leave Imām al-H usayn ('a) Unaided?—297
Why Did Imām al-H usayn ('a) Bring his Family to Karbalā?—303
Why did Imām al-H usayn ('a) give his Companions Permission to Leave?—307
Why did Muslim ibn 'Aqīl not kill 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in Hānī's House?—313
Why Didn't Abū al-Fad l Drink Water?—317
Is Obeying a Tyranical Ruler Incumbent upon Muslims?—321
Why did Imām al-H asan ('a) Make Peace while Imām al-H usayn ('a) Rose up in Arms?—335
What is the Ruling Regarding the Fast of 'Āshūrā?—345

TRANSLITERATION SYMBOLS

Symbol	Transliteration	Symbol	Transliteration
ء	’	أ	**a**
ب	**B**	ت	**t**
ث	**Th**	ج	**j**
ح	**ḥ**	خ	**kh**
د	**D**	ذ	**dh**
ر	**R**	ز	**z**
س	**S**	ش	**sh**
ص	**ṣ**	ض	**ḍ**
ط	**ṭ**	ظ	**ẓ**
ع	‘	غ	**gh**
ف	**F**	ق	**q**
ك	**K**	ل	**l**
م	**M**	ن	**n**
ه	**H**	و	**w**
ى	**Y**	ة	**ah**
Long Vowels		**Short Vowels**	
آ	**Ā**	ـَـ	**a**
اى	**Ī**	ـِـ	**i**
او	**Ū**	ـُـ	**u**
Persian Letters			
Symbol	**Transliteration**	**Symbol**	**Transliteration**
پ	**P**	چ	**ch**
ژ	**Zh**	گ	**g**

Foreword

HA

O

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The invaluable legacy of the Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*] of the Prophet (may peace be upon them all), as preserved by their followers, is a comprehensive school of thought that embraces all branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has produced many brilliant scholars who have drawn inspiration from this rich and pure resource. It has given many scholars to the Muslim *ummah* who, following in the footsteps of Imāms of the Prophet's Household (*ʿa*), have done their best to clear up the doubts raised by various creeds and currents within and without Muslim society and to answer their questions. Throughout the past centuries, they have given well-reasoned answers and clarifications concerning these questions and doubts.

To meet the responsibilities assigned to it, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) has embarked on a defence of the sanctity of the Islamic message and its verities, often obscured by the partisans of various sects and creeds as well as by currents hostile to Islam. The Assembly follows in the footsteps of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) and the disciples of their school of thought in its readiness to confront these challenges and tries to be on the frontline in consonance with the demands of every age.

The arguments contained in the works of the scholars belonging to the School of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) are of unique significance. That is because they are based on genuine scholarship and appeal to reason, and avoid prejudice and bias. These arguments address scholars and thinkers in a manner that appeals to healthy minds and wholesome human nature.

To assist the seekers of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly has endeavored to present a new phase of these arguments contained in the studies and translations of the works of contemporary Shīʻah writers and those who have embraced this sublime school of thought through divine blessing.

The Assembly is also engaged in edition and publication of the valuable works of leading Shīʻah scholars of earlier ages to assist the seekers of the truth in discovering the truths which the School of the Prophet's Household (*ʻa*) has offered to the entire world.

The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly looks forward to benefit from the opinions of the readers and their suggestions and constructive criticism in this area.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the genuine Islamic teachings as preached by the Prophet Muh ammad (*s*).

We beseech God, the Most High, to accept our humble efforts and to enable us to enhance them under the auspices of Imām al-Mahdī, His vicegerent on the earth (may Allah expedite his advent).

We express our gratitude to Mr. ʻAlī As ghar Rid wānī, the author of the present book, and Mr. Kelvin Lembani (Muh ammad ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz), its translator. We also thank our colleagues who have participated in producing this work, especially the staff of the Translation Office. **?**

Cultural Affairs Department

The Ahl al-Bayt (*ʻa*) World Assembly

Author's Preface

IMĀM AL-HUSAYN'S ('A) PERSONALITY

IMĀM AL-ḤUSAYN (‘A) IN SUNNĪ BOOKS

With recourse to Sunnī books of tradition [*h adīth*] and biography, it can be seen that most Sunnī scholars hold Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) in great esteem and high respect.

We will now refer to certain parts of Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) history according to narratives which have been recorded in Sunnī books of *h adīth*.

Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) birth

1. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr writes, “Al-H usayn (*‘a*) is the son of ‘Alī ibn Abū Ṭālib (*‘a*) and Fātimah (*‘a*), the Prophet’s (*ṣ*) daughter. His nickname is Abā ‘Abd Allāh. He was born on the 5th of Sha‘bān in either the third or fourth year of the Islamic calendar [*hijrah*]. This is the popular opinion which is held by a majority of his companions.”[1]

2. It is thus recounted in the book entitled, “*Akhbār al-Duwal*”**,** “When al-H usayn was born, the Prophet (*ṣ*) was informed about this happy occasion. He came to al-Zahrā’s (*‘a*) house, requested to see al-H usayn (*‘a*) and held him in his arms. The Prophet (*ṣ*) recited first the *adhān* (the call to prayer) in the newborn’s right ear and next the *iqāmah* (the prelude to prayer) in his left ear. The Archangel Gabriel [*Jibrā’īl*] appeared to the Noble Prophet (*ṣ*) and brought Allāh’s orders that the newborn child should be named al-H usayn (*‘a*). This was an exact repetition of what had earlier taken place when al-H asan (*‘a*) was born.”[2]

---

[1] *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1, p. 143.

[2] *Akhbār al-Duwal wa Āthār al-Awwal*, p. 107.

3. Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī says, "His nickname is Abā ʻAbd Allāh. He was also endowed with the titles Sayyid Wafiyy, Waliyy, Sibṭ, and the Martyr [*shahīd*] of Karbalā."[1]

Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) acts of worship

1. Ibn ʻAbd Rabbih recounts that it was asked of ʻAlī ibn al-H usayn (*ʻa*), "Why are your father's progeny few?" The Imām (*ʻa*) answered, "I am surprised at how he managed to sire children at all because he was constantly engaged in prayer every day and night. He used to perform a thousand units [*rakʻah*s] of prayer per day. How could he find free time for women?"[2]

2. Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī narrates, "Whenever al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) was in a state of prayer, his color would turn pale." They asked him, "What is this state which arises in you whenever you stand in prayer?" The Imām (*ʻa*) replied, "You do not comprehend He whom I stand before."[3]

3. Zamakhsharī recounts that some people saw al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) performing the circumambulation of the Kaʻbah [*t awāf*]. When he came to the station of Ishmael [*Ismāʻīl*], he said his prayers. After praying, he put his face on the station of Ishmael and began weeping and said, "Your humble slave is at the doorstep of your house! Your humble servant is at your doorstep! A destitute is at your doorstep!" For a long time, he kept repeating these statements. After a while, as he was leaving that place, his sight fell upon some poor people eating crumbs and pieces of bread. Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) went over to them and greeted them with the ceremonial Islamic greeting of '*salām*'. They answered his greeting and invited him to their meal. He sat with them but did not partake of their food. He said, "If your food had not been from charity [*s adaqah*], I would have partaken of it." He said to them, "Arise and come with me to my house." When they arrived at his house, Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) provided them with food and clothes.[4]

4. It has been narrated that ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻUbayd ibn ʻUmayr said, "Al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) performed the *h ajj* twenty five times on foot, despite

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 232.

[2] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 220.

[3] *Al-Fus ūl al-Muhimmah*, p. 183.

[4] *Rabīʻ al-Abrār*, p. 210.

being accompanied by his fine and noble horses."[1]

5. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr says, "Al-H usayn (*'a*) was a highly scholarly and religious man. He performed prayer, fasting and *h ajj* a lot."[2]

6. On his own chain of transmission [*sanad*], T abarī narrates that Ḍaḥḥāk ibn 'Abd Allāh Mashriqī said, "When darkness fell at Karbalā, al-H usayn (*'a*) and his companions spent the whole night praying, seeking forgiveness, supplicating and entreating Allah…"[3]

Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) forbearance

1. It has been recounted that Imām 'Alī ibn al-H usayn (*'a*) said, "Al-H usayn used to say, 'If someone vilifies me in my right ear and then apologizes for it in my left ear, I will surely accept his apology because I heard Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*'a*) narrate a *h adīth* from my grandfather the Prophet of Allāh (*ṣ*) that,[4]

«لا يرد الحوض من لم يقبل العذر من محق او مبطل.»

> The one who does not accept apologies, whether the apology is true or not, will not pass the pond [*h awd*] of *al-Kawthar*'."

2. It has been recounted that one of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) slaves had committed an offence that required discipline. The Imām (*'a*) ordered that the slave should be punished for the offence. The slave implored Imām al-H usayn's forgiveness. He appealed to the Imām (*'a*) by quoting verses of the Holy Qur'an. He said, "O my master! God, the Exalted, has revealed: *'And those who restrain their anger'*."[5] Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) replied, "Let him go. I have restrained my anger." The slave continued, *"And pardon men."* The Imām *('a)* said, "I have pardoned you." The slave further implored, *"And Allah loves the doers of good."* The Imām (*'a*) said, "You are freed in the way of Allah." After this, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) gave orders that a gracious and handsome gift should be given to the freed slave.[6]

---

[1] *S ifat al-S afwah*, vol. 1, p. 321; *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 3, p. 20, Egyptian print.

[2] *Al-Istī'āb*, vol. 1, p. 393.

[3] *Tārīkh Ṭabarī*, vol. 5, p. 421.

[4] Zarandī, *Naẓm Durar al-Samṭayn*, p. 209.

[5] *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān* 3:134.

[6] Haḍramī, *Wasīlah al-Ma'āl*, p. 183.

Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) virtues in the words of the Prophet (*ṣ*)

1. On his own chain of transmission [*sanad*], Bukhārī quotes Na‘īm saying, “Ibn Umar was asked, ‘What is the verdict of a *muḥrim* (a person visiting the holy and inviolable House of Allah) who kills a fly?’ Ibn ‘Umar answered, ‘The people of Iraq are more concerned to ask about killing flies ignoring the fact that they killed the son of the Prophet’s daughter (*‘a*).’ Then he added, ‘The Noble Prophet (*ṣ*) has said, ‘Al-H asan and al-H usayn are my sweet smelling flowers in this world’.’”[1]

2. On his own chain of transmission, al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī recounts that, “Salmān Fārsī said, ‘Allah’s Prophet (*s*) used to say,

«الحسن والحسين إبناي، من أحبّهما احبّني، ومن أحبّني أحبّه الله، ومن أحبّه الله أدخله الجنة، ومن أبغضهما أبغضني، ومن أبغضني أبغضه الله، ومن أبغضه الله أدخله النار.»

> ‘Al-H asan and al-H usayn are my two children. Whoever loves them has in fact loved me. Whoever loves me is loved by Allah and whoever is loved by Allah will enter Paradise. Anyone who hates these two has in fact hated me. Anyone who hates me is hated by Allah, and whoever is hated by Allah will be cast into the hell fire.’’’[2]

3. Also on his own chain of transmission, al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī has narrated that, “Ibn ‘Umar said, ‘The Prophet of Allah (*s*) said,

«الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب أهل الجنة وأبوهما خير منهما.»

‘Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the chiefs of the youths of Paradise, and their father is better than these two.’’’[3]

4. On his own chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī quotes from Yūsuf ibn Ibrāhīm from Anas ibn Mālik, “The Prophet (*s*) was asked about whom

---

[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, vol. 5, p. 33, the Book [*kitāb*] on *Fad ā’il al-S ah ābah* (Virtues of the Companions, the Section [*bāb*] on *Manāqib al-H asan wa al-H usayn* (The Virtues of al-Ḥasan and al-H usayn).

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 166.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 167.

among the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*) was more beloved to him. He answered, ‘Al-H asan and al-H usayn.’ The Prophet (*s*) always used to tell Fāt imah (*‘a*), ‘Bring my two children to me.’ He would then press them against his chest and smell their sweet scent.”[1]

5. Ya‘lā ibn Marrah says, “The Holy Prophet (*s*) and I left the house to attend a social gathering we had been invited to. Along the way, the Prophet (*s*) caught sight of al-H usayn (*‘a*). He was busy playing. Allah's Prophet (*s*) quickly went to al-H usayn (*‘a*) and spread his arms wide open in order to embrace him, but al-H usayn (*‘a*) teasingly kept running from side to side in a playful manner. Both of them started laughing. Finally, the Prophet (*s*) managed to catch al-H usayn (*‘a*). He put one of his hands under al-H usayn's (*‘a*) chin and the other one on his head. Finally, they embraced and kissed each other. The Prophet (*s*) then said,

حسين مني وأنا منه، أحب الله من أحبّه، الحسن والحسين سبطان من الأسباط.

> ‘Al-H usayn is from me and I am from al-H usayn. Allah loves whoever loves al-H usayn. Al-H asan and al-H usayn are two of my grandchildren'.”[2]

We interpret the sentence ‘Al-H usayn is from me and I am from al-H usayn,’ as follows:

a) The first part of the *h adīth* which says, ‘Al-H usayn is from me,’ means that al-H usayn (*‘a*) descends from and is a product of the Prophet of Allah (*s*). Although his biological father is ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*), the explicit wording of the Qur'anic Verse of *Mubāhilah* clearly states that Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) is a part of the soul of Allah's Prophet. For this reason, Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is rightly considered as the Prophet's (*s*) child.

b) Commenting on the second part of the *h adīth* which says, ‘And I am from al-H usayn,’ it can be said,

After proclaiming his prophetic mission, the Noble Prophet (*s*) cannot be regarded as an ordinary person anymore. On the contrary, he is looked upon as a man with a divine mission. Allah's Prophet (*s*) is the epitome of the prophetic mission. His life is his prophetic mission and his prophetic mission is his life.

---

[1] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 323, no. 3861.

[2] Al-T abarānī, *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 22, p. 274; Al-Hindī, *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 13, p. 662; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 14, p. 150.

Also, we all know that every father makes an effort to have a child who will succeed him, defend his father’s character, and protect and revive his mission. The child is the one who is charged with the duty of continuing his father’s way. Regarding Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), the reason why the Holy Prophet (*s*) says, ‘I am from al-H usayn,’ is that al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) uprising and martyrdom kept alive the mission of the Holy Prophet (*s*). For this reason, the Holy Prophet (*s*) conferred the dignity of ‘I am from al-H usayn,’ on him. This implies that the continuity of the prophetic mission depends on al-H usayn (*‘a*). It is for this reason that it has been said, “Islam transpired through Muh ammad (*s*) and survived through al-H usayn (*‘a*).”

6. Yazīd ibn Abī Yazīd says, “Fāt imah’s (*‘a*) house was located along the Prophet’s way from ‘Ā’ishah’s house. One day, as the Prophet (*s*) was leaving ‘Ā’ishah’s house, he heard al-H usayn (*‘a*) crying. The Noble Prophet (*s*) said, ‘O Fāt imah! Do you not know that I am bothered and pained when I hear him crying?’”[1]

7. Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī recounts that he personally heard Abū Huraīrah saying, “I saw Allah’s Prophet embracing al-H usayn. He kept saying, ‘O my Allah! I love him. Love him too!’”[2]

Al-H usayn (*‘a*) as described by the Prophet’s (*s*) companions

1. Anas ibn Mālik recounts, “After the martyrdom of al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī (*‘a*), they brought his severed head to ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. Ibn Ziyād started hitting Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) teeth with a piece of wood. I was thinking to myself, ‘What an ugly and distasteful act he is doing! I saw with my own eyes Allah’s Prophet (*s*) kissing that same place which he is now hitting’.”[3]

2. Zayd ibn Arqam says, “I was sitting in the presence of ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād when they brought Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) head for him. Ibn Ziyād lifted his staff and hit between the lips of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). I said to him, ‘You are hitting your staff at a place that was constantly kissed by

[1] *Majma‘ al-Zawā’id*, vol. 9, p. 201.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 177.

[3] *Dhakhā’ir al-‘Uqbā*, p. 126.

Allah's Prophet (*s*).' Ibn Ziyād said to me, 'Arise and leave! You are just an old man who has lost his mind'."[1]

3. Ismā'īl ibn Rajā' narrates that his father said, "I was sitting in the Prophet's (*s*) Mosque together with a number of people. Among them were Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī and 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar. Al-H usayn ibn 'Alī (*'a*) passed and greeted all of us gathered there. Everyone responded to his greeting except 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar. He remained quiet for some time waiting for everyone to finish responding and become silent. After everyone became quiet, and there was no longer any noise to interrupt him, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar raised his voice very high and said, 'May God's peace and blessings be upon you!' [*wa 'alayka salām wa rah matullāh wa barakātuh*!] After that, he turned towards the people and asked, 'Do you want me to inform you about a man from among the inhabitants of the earth who is the most beloved of the inhabitants of the heavens?' The people answered, 'Yes!' 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar said, 'In the heavens, the most beloved man is that Hāshimite man who just passed by us. He has not talked to me since the Battle of S iffīn. If he forgives me, it is far better for me than a host of fine red camels'."[2]

4. Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh Ans ārī says, "Whoever wants to catch a glimpse of the dwellers of paradise should look at al-H usayn (*'a*), because I heard that the Holy Prophet (*s*) used to inform people to do this."[3]

In his book entitled "*Majma' al-Zawā'id*", Haythamī has also narrated this same *h adīth*. At the end he adds, "The narrators of this *h adīth* are all classified and categorized among the truthful reporters of *h adīth*, except Rabī' ibn Sa'd, who is classified among the very trustworthy and reliable."[4]

5. 'Umar ibn Khat t āb addressed Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) in this way, "That which has sprung up and grown over our heads (i.e. Islam) was done through you the people of the Prophet's (*s*) Household (i.e. the *Ahl al-Bayt*)."[5]

6. It has been recounted that, "'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās held the straps of Imām al-H asan's and Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) horse. Some people

---

[1] *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 7, p. 110; *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 2, p. 21.

[2] *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 3, p. 5.

[3] Zarandī, *Naẓm Durar al-Samṭayn*, p. 208; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 225.

[4] *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 187.

[5] *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 333.

rebuked him for doing so. They said, ʻYou are older than these two. It is not befitting of you to hold the straps of their horse.ʼ Ibn ʻAbbās answered, ʻThese two are the Holy Prophetʼs (*s*) children. Is it not equal to prosperity for me to hold the straps of their horse?ʼʼʼ[1]

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) in the words of the *tābiʻīn*[2]

1. Muʻāwiyah said to ʻAbd Allāh ibn Jaʻfar, "You are the chief of Banī Hāshim!" ʻAbd Allāh replied, "The chiefs of Banī Hāshim are al-H asan and al-H usayn (*ʻa*)."[3]

2. When Marwān ibn H akam suggested killing Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) to the general governor of Medina, Walīd ibn ʻUtbah ibn Abī Sufyān, he answered, "I swear to Allah, O Marwān! I would not desire to own the world and all its possessions as long as my conscience knows that I bear the responsibility of killing al-H usayn (*ʻa*). Praise Allah! Should I kill al-H usayn (*ʻa*) just because he has refused to swear the oath of allegiance to Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah? I am certain that on the Day of Judgement, the bad works of the person that kills al-H usayn (*ʻa*) will outweigh his good works."[4]

3. Ibrāhīm Nakhaʻī says, "If I were one of al-H usaynʼs (*ʻa*) killers and still managed to enter Paradise in one way or another, I would be ashamed and embarrassed to look upon the face of Allahʼs Prophet (*s*)."[5]

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) from the viewpoint of Sunnī scholars

Upon referral to Sunnī books of history and biography, we can see that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is held in high esteem and praise by a number of Sunnī scholars including:

1. Ibn H ajar al-ʻAsqalānī

"Al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʻa*) is a Hāshimite, popularly known as Abū ʻAbd Allāh, a native of Medina, and the grandson of Allahʼs Prophet

---

[1] *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1, p. 333.

[2] After the death of the Holy Prophet (*s*), there came a generation called the *tābiʻīn*. This generation did not personally meet or see the Holy Prophet (*s*), but they met his companions.

[3] Al-H asan ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*), *Kāmil Sulaymān*, p. 173.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[5] *Al-Is ābah*, vol. 1, p. 335.

(*s*). He was the Holy Prophet's flower in this world and one of the two chiefs of the youths of Paradise."[1]

2. Zarandī H anafī

"Al-H usayn (*'a*) prayed, fasted, went on pilgrimage to Mecca and performed other acts of worship a great deal. He was a very generous and noble man. He went to the *h ajj* twenty five times on foot."[2]

3. Yāfi'ī

"Abū 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Alī (*'a*) was the Holy Prophet's (*s*) flower and grandchild. He was the epitome of the prophetic mission, the summation of high moral values and the venue of noble virtues…"[3]

4. Ibn Sīrīn

"The sky has never wept again since the martyrdom of Yah yā ibn Zakariyyā (John the Baptist), save when it wept for al-H usayn (*'a*). When al-H usayn (*'a*) was killed, the sky turned black and the stars came out. The stars could be seen shining during the day to such an extent that the Gemini Star (the Twins) appeared in the sky at noontime! Red soil fell from the sky and the sky looked like congealed red blood for seven days."[4]

5. 'Abbās Mah mūd 'Aqqād

"Courage is a characteristic that is not alien to al-H usayn (*'a*). It is a quality that arises from the source of all virtues (the Noble Prophet). Al-H usayn (*'a*) inherited this perfect attribute from his ancestors and later passed it on to his progeny. In the entire history of humankind, no one has been found to be braver than al-H usayn (*'a*). Among all the children of Adam, no one has undertaken a braver action than the measure al-H usayn (*'a*) undertook at Karbalā. I will not go into all the details but suffice it to say that the honor of being a martyr, the son of a martyr and the father of martyrs is reserved only for him in the entire history of mankind, and will remain so for hundreds of years to come…"[5]

---

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 299.

[2] *Naz m Durar al-Samt ayn*, p. 208.

[3] *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol 1, p. 131.

[4] Ibn 'Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 4, p. 339.

[5] *Abū al-Shuhadā'*, p. 195.

6. Doctor Muh ammad ‘Abduh Yamānī

“Al-H usayn (*‘a*) was a devoted and humble man. People always witnessed him fasting. He used to stay awake at night worshiping and always took precedence in helping and granting favors to others…”[1]

7. ‘Umar Rid ā Kah ālah

“Al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī (*‘a*) was the greatest among the people of Iraq in Islamic law, spiritual states, generosity and munificence.”[2]

The martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

Suyūt ī recounts, “His martyrdom and death occurred on the day of ‘Āshūrā. On that day, the sun was obscured and the horizons remained red for the next six months. This redness, which had never been seen before his martyrdom, was then seen on a daily basis. It has been narrated that on the day of ‘Āshūrā every stone that was upturned in Bayt al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem) contained red blood under it.”[3] **?**

---

[1] *‘Allimū Awlādakum Mah abbata Āl-i Bayt-i al-Nabī (‘a),* p. 133.

[2] *A‘lām al-Nisā’*, vol. 1, p. 28.

[3] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p. 160.

IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A), THE LEADER OF THE YOUTHS OF PARADISE

One of Imām al-H asan and Imām al-H usayn’s (‘*a*) exclusive virtues, according to authentic *h adīth*s, which have been transmitted by both Sunnīs and Shī‘ahs from the Holy Prophet (*s*), is that these two are the leaders and masters of the youths of Paradise. This honor has not been granted to anyone except these two people.

Let us now examine and deliberate upon these *h adīth*s.

H adīth

It has been recorded that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, “Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two masters and leaders of the youths of paradise.” This tradition has reached high fame and reputation and is classified among the firmly established *h adīth* related in successive chains. Now, let us refer to and discuss the various versions of the *h adīth* that have been recounted:

1. On his own chain of transmission [*sanad*], Khat īb Baghdādī recounts that Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī (‘*a*) quoted the Holy Prophet (*s*) saying,

الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب أهل الجنة، وأبوهما خير منهما.

> “Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the masters of the youths of Paradise and their father is better than these two.”[1]

2. On his own chain of transmission, Muttaqī al-Hindī recounts that Imām ‘Alī (‘*a*) narrated that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said to Fāt imah (‘*a*),

---

[1] *Tārīkh-e Baghdād*, vol. 1, p. 140; *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 167.

ألا ترضين أن تكوني سيدة نساء أهل الجنة، وأبناك سيدي شباب اهل الجنة.

> "Will you not be pleased that you will be the chief of the women of Paradise and your two children will be the chiefs of the youths of Paradise?"[1]

3. On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ʻAsākir recounts that Ibn ʻAbbās quoted the Holy Prophet (*s*) saying,

الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب اهل الجنة، من أحبهما فقد أحبّني ومن أبغضهما فقد أبغضني.

> "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are both chiefs of the youths of Paradise. Anyone who loves them, surely loves me, and anyone who hates them, surely hates me."[2]

Others who have narrated and recorded this *h adīth* are listed in the following two groups:

A. The Prophet's companions:

This *h adīth* has been recounted by many of the Prophet's (*s*) companions including:

1. Amīr al-Muʼminīn ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻ*a*).
2. Imām al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻ*a*)
3. ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās
4. Abū Bakr ibn Abī Qah āfah
5. ʻUmar ibn Khat t āb
6. ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻUmar
7. Jābir ibn ʻAbd Allāh Ans ārī
8. ʻAbd Allāh ibn Masʻūd
9. H udhayfah ibn Yamān
10. Jah m
11. Mālik ibn H uwayrith Laythī

---

[1] *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 16, p. 281.

[2] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, p. 45.

12. Qurrah ibn Ayās
13. Usāmah ibn Zayd
14. Anas ibn Mālik
15. Abū Hurayrah Dūsī
16. Abū Sa'īd Khudrī
17. Barā' ibn 'Āzib
18. 'Alī Hilālī
19. Abū Ramathah
20. Buraydah

B. The Sunnī *'Ulamā'*:

Many Sunnī scholars have also recorded and narrated this noble *h adīth*. Among them are the following:

1. Khat īb Baghdādī[1]
2. Ibn 'Asākir[2]
3. T abarānī[3]
4. Muttaqī al-Hindī[4]
5. Muh ibb al-Dīn T abarī[5]
6. Haythamī[6]
7. Abū Na'īm Is fahānī[7]
8. Ibn H ammād H anbalī[8]
9. Wakī'[1]

---

[1] *Tārīkh-e Baghdād*, vol. 1, p. 140.

[2] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, p. 41.

[3] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, pp. 35-36.

[4] *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 13, p. 97.

[5] *Dhakhā'ir al-'Uqbā*, p. 129.

[6] *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 182.

[7] *H ilīat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 4, p. 139.

[8] *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 85.

10. Ibn Mājah[2]
11. Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī [3]
12. Ganjī Shāfi‘ī[4]
13. Al-Tirmidhī[5]
14. Ah mad ibn H anbal[6]
15. Dhahabī[7]
16. Ibn H ajar al-‘Asqalānī[8]
17. Baghawī[9]
18. Abu al-Qāsim Sahmī[10]
19. Nahbānī[11]
20. Ibn H ajar Haythamī[12]
21. Suyūt ī [13]
22. Daylamī[14]
23. Ibn Abī Shaybah[15]
24. Nassā’ī[1]

---

[1] *Akhbār al-Qud āt*, vol. 2, p. 200.
[2] *Sunan ibn Mājah*, vol. 1, p. 44.
[3] *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 167.
[4] *Al-Kifāyat al-T ālib*, p. 341.
[5] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 660.
[6] *Al-Musnad*, vol. 5, pp. 391-392.
[7] *Tārīkh al-Islam* (The History of Islam), vol. 2, p. 90; *Siyr A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 3, p. 168.
[8] *Al-Is ābah*, vol. 1, p. 256.
[9] *Mu‘jam al-S ah ābah*, p. 22.
[10] *Tārīkh Jurjān*, p. 395.
[11] *Al-Fath al-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 80.
[12] *Al-S awā‘iq al-Muh riqah*, p. 114.
[13] *Al-Jāmi‘ al-S aghīr*, vol. 1, p. 379.
[14] *Firdaws al-Akhbār*, vol. 5, p. 76.
[15] *Al-Mus annaf*, vol. 12, p. 96.

25. Ibn H ibbān[2]

26. Sam'ānī[3]

27. Suyūt ī[4]

28. Al-Mannāwī[5]

29. Al-Albānī[6]

Stipulation of the correctness and authenticity of this *h adīth*

A number of Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* have stipulated and confirmed the correctness of this *h adīth*:

1. H āfiz al-Ganjī al-Shāfi'ī says, "This *h adīth* is healthy [*h asan*] and founded [*thābit*]…"[7]

2. Abū al-Qāsim T abarānī, the leader of Sunnī scholars of *h adīth*, has related the chain of transmission of this *h adīth* in his "*Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*". At the same time, he comments on the spiritual state and position of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). He attributes this *h adīth* to a number of the Prophet's companions [*s ah ābah*] and names all of them… After that, he adds, "The close and strong connection of these chains of transmission to one another is enough to prove the correctness and authenticity of this *h adīth.*"[8]

3. Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī says, "This *h adīth*, including the part which says 'and their father is better than these two', is correct according to the conditions of the two *shaykh*s (i.e. Bukhārī and Muslim), but they did not collect it."[9] Following this *h adīth*, al-Neyshābūrī states, "This is a *h adīth* which can be authenticated in many ways, and I am surprised why these two did not narrate it."[10]

---

[1] *Al-Khas ā'is* , p. 36.

[2] Ibn H ibbān, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 15, p. 413.

[3] *Al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, p. 477.

[4] *Al-Jāmi' al-S aghīr*.

[5] *Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 3, p. 550.

[6] *Silsilah al-Ah ādīth al-S ah īh ah*, vol. 2, p. 424.

[7] *Kifāyat al-T ālib*, p. 341.

[8] *Kifāyat al-T ālib*, as narrated by T abarānī.

[9] *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 167.

[10] *Ibid.*

4. Dhahabī says, "This *h adīth* is authentic [*s ah īh*]."[1]

5. Al-Tirmidhī says, "This *h adīth* is noble and sound [*h asan*] but has been isolated and abandoned [*gharīb*]."[2] Al-Tirmidhī also narrated this *h adīth* on a different chain of transmission and adds a footnote at the end saying, "This *h adīth* is sound and correct."[3]

6. Al-Albānī has approved the authentication done by al-Tirmidhī. He says, "The truth of the matter is what has been reported by al-Tirmidhī."[4]

Al-Tirmidhī says, "The chains of transmission of this *h adīth* are authentic and the people mentioned in the line of transmission are all truthful according to the distinguished and upheld standards of narrating; in addition, Maysarah ibn H abīb (one of the narrators of this *h adīth*) is well known for his trustworthiness."

Al-Albānī has also assented to the authentication done by H ākim and Dhahabī.[5]

7. Haythamī, in his book entitled, "*Majmaʻ al-Zawā'id*", assents to the authenticity of the above mentioned *h adīth* through the line of transmission of Abū Saʻīd al-Khudrī.[6]

8. Mus t afā ibn ʻAduwwī.[7]

9. H uwaynī Atharī in his book entitled, "*Khas ā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ʻa)*" has approved and assented to the authenticity of this *h adīth*.[8]

10. Al-Dānī ibn Munīr Āl Zahawī.[9]

11. H amzah Ah mad al-Zayn, the renowned and celebrated researcher of the book entitled, "*Musnad Ah mad*" has categorized this *h adīth* as authentic.[1]

---

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 660.

[3] *Tuh fat al-Ah wadhī*, according to the commentary of al-Tirmidhī, vol. 10, p. 272.

[4] *Silsilah al-Ah ādīth al-S ah īh ah*, vol. 2, pp. 423- 426.

[5] *Silsilah al-Ah ādīth al-S ah īh ah*, vol. 2, p. 424.

[6] *Majmaʻ al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 201.

[7] *Al-S ah īh al-Musnad min Fad ā'il al-S ah ābah*, p. 257.

[8] *Tahdhīb-u Khas ā'is al-Imām ʻAlī (ʻa)*, p. 99, *h adīth* 124.

[9] *Khas ā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ʻa)*, as researched by Āl Zahawī, p. 107, *h adīth* 140.

12. Ibn H ibbān has reported this *h adīth* in his "*Al-S ah ī h* ".[2]

This *h adīth* has been recounted through so many chains of transmission that Suyūt ī and Sam'ānī consider it to be consecutive [*mutawātir*].[3]

Alterations and distortions

This *h adīth* is strong evidence to prove the rightful rank of Imām al-H asan (*'a*) and Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). It proves beyond doubt that they belong to Paradise. This fact puts them in an enviable and exceptional position above the rest of the Holy Prophet's (*s*) companions. It is for this reason that some have sought to remedy this situation in order to preserve the positions of their leaders and not fall behind these two. Because of this, they have engaged in activities to change, alter and even distort the nature of this *h adīth*. They have done so by way of removing certain parts from the *h adīth*, adding extra parts to it, and even going so far as to forge and create a new *h adīth* similar to the original, just for the sake of challenging this renowned *h adīth* and raising the status of their leaders.

We will now examine and refute each of these alterations and distortions.

The first alteration

The exception of Jesus Christ (*'a*) and John the Baptist (*'a*)

The *h adīth* recounted by T abarānī mentions the prophets Jesus Christ (*'a*) and John the Baptist (*'a*) to be exceptions. He narrates that Allah's Prophet (*s*) addressed Fāt imah (*'a*) in the following way:

> **والله ما من نبي الا وولد الأنبياء غيري، وإن ابنيک سيدا شباب اهل الجنة الا ابني الخالة يحيى وعيسى.**
>
> "I swear upon Allah! There was never a man who was raised to the prophethood unless he was the son of a former prophet, other than me. And these two, al-H asan and al-H usayn, are certainly the chiefs of the youths of Paradise, other than Jesus and John."[4]

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, as reseached by H amzah Ah mad al-Zayn, vol 1, pp. 101, 195, 204, 259.

[2] *S ah ī h ibn Hibbān*, vol. 15, p. 413, printed by Mu'assisah al-Risālah.

[3] *Tuh fah al-Ah wadhī*, vol. 10, p. 186; *Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 3, p. 550; *Al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, p. 477.

[4] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, pp. 35-36.

Response

Firstly, we have to mention that T abarānī has narrated this *h adīth* five times through five different chains of transmission. On the first four chains of transmission, he has repeated the *h adīth* word by word, without any changes in the text at all, "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the chiefs of the youths of Paradise."

On the fifth chain, however, the part, 'other than Jesus and John' has been added. Since only the fifth chain of transmission has this added part, it is probable that this *h adīth* has been altered and distorted through supplementation.

This *h adīth*, as recounted by Abū Saʻīd Khudrī, also comprises the part 'other than Jesus and John' on some of his chains of transmission. He has however omitted it from other channels.[1]

It is possible for one to object and say, "These kinds of additions and omissions are found in a lot of *h adīth*s. How can one prove that the part 'other than Jesus and John' is an alteration and distortion?"

We respond by saying that those *h adīth*s that have either additions or omissions can be identified and corrected because they have been recounted by so many witnesses and on so many chains of transmission which are independent of each other that the sheer popularity of their reportage is sufficient for them to be regarded as correct and adopted as authentic *h adīth*s.

Secondly, the *h adīth* comprising the part 'other than Jesus and John' has been attributed to either Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) or Abū Saʻīd Khudrī and the chains of transmission of both of these *h adīth*s are disputable.

Let us now examine them carefully:

a. One of the transmitters mentioned on the chain of transmission attributed to Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) is Asbāt ibn Nas r. He is a reporter who has been reproached and severely scolded by many of the Sunnī scholars of *h adīth*.

[1] *Ibid*., p. 38.

Abū H ātam says, "I heard Abū Na'īm saying that he used to consider Asbāt ibn Nas r as a weak [*d a'īf*] and unreliable transmitter of *h adīth*."

Nassā'ī says, "He is not a strong [*qawī*] reporter."

Sājī categorises Asbāt ibn Nas r among the weak transmitters of *h adīth* and says, "He has narrated *h adīth*s which are not reliable at all."

Ibn Ma'īn does not even include or mention him among the reporters of *h adīth*.[1] Ibn H ajar has called him "the one who makes many mistakes." [*kathīr al-khat ā'*][2] When Ah mad ibn H anbal was asked about Asbāt ibn Nas r, he answered, "I do not narrate what he says regarding anyone."[3] Dhahabī has classified him among the weak transmitters of *h adīth*.[4]

b. One of the transmitters mentioned in Abū Sa'īd Khudrī's chain of transmission of this particular *h adīth* is H akam ibn 'Abd al-Rah mān. He, too, is considered weak by some Sunnī scholars of *h adīth*.

Ibn Ma'īn categorises him among the weak transmitters of tradition.[5]

Ibn H ajar says, "He is a man afflicted with a bad and weak memory."[6]

The second alteration: distortion of the *h adīth*s in favor of the Shaykhayn [Abū Bakr and 'Umar]

Some have turned this noble *h adīth* upside down by endeavoring to prove that it was said in favor of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. The reporters were careful not to overlook the fact that Abū Bakr and 'Umar were old men at the advent of Islam; therefore, they changed the wording of the *h adīth* by removing the word "*shabāb*", which means "youths", and inserting in its place the word "*kuhūl*", which means "old men".

We will now analyze and refute such *h adīth*s:

---

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, p. 212.

[2] *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, p. 53.

[3] *Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, p. 248.

[4] *Al-Mughnī fī al-D u'afā'*, vol. 1, p. 66; *Dīwān al-D u'afā' wa al-Matrūkīn*, p. 16.

[5] Ibn Abī H ātam, *Al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 1, p. 123; *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 431.

[6] *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, p. 191.

1. The *h adīth*s recounted by al-Tirmidhī

Al-Tirmidhī has narrated this *h adīth* through three chains of transmission [*sanad*].

The first chain of transmission

حدّثنا علي بن حُجر، اخبرنا وليد بن محمد الموقري عن الزهري، عن علي بن الحسين، عن علي بن ابي طالب، قال: كنت مع رسول الله صَلَّي الله عَليهِ وآله اذ طلع ابوبكر، وعمر فقال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ○ عَليه وآله: هذان سيدا كهول اهل الجنة من الاوّلين والآخرين الا النبيين والمرسلين، يا علي لا تخبرهما.

"This *h adīth* was related by ʻAlī ibn H ujr who quoted Walīd ibn Muh ammad al-Mawqirī. He quoted al-Zuhrī who quoted ʻAlī ibn al-H usayn who in turn quoted ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʻa*) who said, ʻI was in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (*s*) when he saw Abū Bakr and ʻUmar. The Prophet (*s*) said, ʻThese two are the chiefs of the old people of Paradise, from the first to the last save the prophets and messengers. O ʻAlī, do not inform them of this.'"

This *h adīth* has a number of weaknesses:

Firstly, al-Tirmidhī himself considered this *h adīth* to be estranged and scarce [*gharīb*].

Secondly, al-Tirmidhī himself says that Walīd ibn Muh ammad Mawwqirī, one of the transmitters on the chain of transmission of the *h adīth*, is considered to be a weak and unreliable reporter of *h adīth*.[1]

Some other Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* also consider Walīd ibn Muh ammad Mawqirī to be among the weak transmitters of traditions, including:

1. Bukhārī says, "His *h adīth*s contain refutable parts."[2]

2. Abū H ātam says, "He is a weak transmitter of *h adīth* [*d a'īf al-h adīth*]."

3. Ibn H ibbān says, "He has forged *h adīth*s and attributed them to Zuhrī, and yet Zuhrī never said those things at all… Therefore, relying on his *h adīth*s and using them to deduce legal judgment is not permissible at all."

---

[1] *Tuh fah al-Ah wadhī*, vol. 10, pp. 149-150.

[2] *Al-D u'afā' al-Kabīr*, p. 166.

4. Ibn al-Madīnī says, "His *h adīth*s should not be recorded and recounted."

5. Dhahabī has categorized him among weak narrators. He says, "Yah yā discredited him and al-Dāraqut nī classified him among the weak narrators of *h adīth*."[1]

6. Ibn Khuzaymah says, "I do not rely on his *h adīths*."

7. Nassā'ī considers him to be "a rejected and abandoned narrator" [*matrūk al-h adīth*] and adds that "Yah yā ibn Ma'īn considered him to be an unreliable person."

It is clear that it is not possible to use such weak traditions in logical argument.

Thirdly, one of the transmitters of this *h adīth* is Zuhrī who was one of the nobles and dignitaries of Banī Marwān's government. He could always be seen in the company of Banī Marwān's exclusive group. It is for this reason that his own sister considered him to be an immoral and corrupt man.[2] In such a case, how can one trust him as a transmitter of *h adīth*?

Shāfi'ī and Dāraqut nī have also characterized him as a person that misrepresents the truth through concealing facts (subreption) [*mudallis*]. Ibn H ajar has explicitly ranked him in 'the third level of subreption [*tadlīs*]'.[3] It should be borne in mind that subreption, which necessitates the distortion of truth, is a type of lying.

Fourthly, from the Sunnī point of view, this *h adīth* has the problem of discontinuity and cessation [*inqit ā'*] in transmission. During the lifetime of Imām 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*'a*), Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn (*'a*), from whom this *h adīth* has been quoted, was not old enough to be able to directly recount a *h adīth* from Imām 'Alī (*'a*). This dilemma, of course, is not faced by the Shī'ahs who can easily solve the problem of discontinuity and cessation, because their Imāms (*'a*) have superseded each other in an unbroken chain of succession. Therefore, there is no such thing as 'a broken chain of transmission' in *h adīth* transmitted through the Imāms, because every Imām quotes his father, who in turn quotes his father, until the quotation reaches their ancestor the Holy Prophet (*s*).

---

[1] *Dīwān al-D u'afā' wa al-Matrūkīn*, p. 332.

[2] Ibn 'Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 2, p. 65.

[3] *T abaqāt al-Mudallisīn*, p. 27.

Fifthly, all people in heaven are youths. There are no old men in heaven at all. (This issue is discussed in more detail in a later section entitled ‘The Problem with the Text of This *H adīth*’.)

Sixthly, why would the Holy Prophet (*s*) be disinclined to let Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) expose this *h adīth*?

The second chain of transmission

On his second chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī has quoted this same *h adīth* from H asan ibn S abāh Bazār. H asan Bazār quoted it from Muh ammad ibn Kathīr, from al-Awzā‘ī, from Qutādah, from Anas ibn Mālik, and Anas ibn Mālik quoted it from the Holy Prophet (*s*). It will be shown that this chain of transmission has weaknesses also, and its falsity can therefore be proven.

Firstly, al-Tirmidhī considers this *h adīth*, like the previous one, to be estranged and scarce [*gharīb*].

Secondly, one of the transmitters on the chain of transmission is Muh ammad ibn Kathīr Mas īs ī. He is considered a weak narrator of *h adīth* by a number of Sunnī scholars of *h adīth*. Some of the scholars who consider and categorize him to be a weak narrator are as follows:

1. Ah mad ibn H anbal says, “The name of Muh ammad ibn Kathīr was mentioned in my father’s presence. My father seriously rebuked him as a weak narrator of *h adīth* and called him as one whose *h adīth*s should be denied [*munkir al-h adīth*].”

2. S ālih ibn Ah mad quotes his father as saying, “In my opinion, he is not trustworthy [thaqah].”

3. Some people said to Ibn al-Madīnī, “This *h adīth* has been narrated by Muh ammad ibn Kathīr. He quotes it from al-Awzā‘ī, who quotes from Qutādah, and Qutādah quotes from Anas.” Ibn al-Madīnī answered, “In the past I had the desire to meet this *shaykh*, but now I do not wish to do so anymore.”

4. Abū Dāwūd says, “He did not understand or comprehend *h adīth* at

all."[1]

5. Abū Ah mad H ākim does not consider Muh ammad ibn Kathīr to be a strong Sunnī narrator of *h adīth*.

6. Nassā'ī presents him as one who is "full of mistakes" [*kathīr al-khat ā'*].

Thirdly, another narrator on this chain of transmission is Qutādah who has been introduced as a frontrunner in the misrepresentation of facts [*tadlīs*].[2]

The third chain of transmission

On his third chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī has quoted this *h adīth* from Y'aqūb ibn Ibrāhīm Dawraqī. Y'aqūb ibn Ibrāhīm Dawraqī quotes it from Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah. Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah quotes from Dāwūd. Dāwūd quotes from Shi'bī and Shi'bī from H ārith. H ārith quotes from 'Alī (*'a*), and Imām 'Alī (*'a*) quotes it from the Holy Prophet (*s*).

This chain of transmission, like the others before, has various weaknesses.

Firstly, Nassā'ī and other Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* have stipulated in a clear and firm way that Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah is a misrepresenter of facts [*mudallis*].

Ibn H ajar has also classified him as belonging to the third level of subreption and distortion of facts [*tadlīs*]. Nevertheless, he has spared him harsh words and instead has apologetically said, "He has only engaged in subreption regarding trustworthy people."

However, if it were true that all the reporters were trustworthy people, why was it necessary to engage in subreption at all? Subreption which is intentional misrepresentation through the concealment of pertinent facts is considered by the majority of Sunnī scholars as one of many types of lying [*kidhb*].[3]

Secondly, one of the narrators on the chain of transmission of this *h adīth* is Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind. Ah mad ibn H anbal has described him as 'a man

---

[1] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, and *Lisān al-Mīzān* translated by Muh ammad ibn Kathīr.

[2] *Nas b al-Rāyah*, vol. 3, p. 155; *Tah qīq al-Ghāyah*, p. 309; Ibn H ajar, *T abaqāt al-Mudallisīn*, p. 16.

[3] Al-Khat īb al-Baghdādī, *Al-Kifāyah*, p. 355, as narrated by Shu'bah ibn al-H ajjāj.

full of anxiety and unease when confronted by the scholars of *h adīth*, and a person about whom there are many differing opinions among the scholars [*ʻulama'*]'.[1]

Thirdly, it is surprising that Shaʻbī has quoted a *h adīth* from H ārith, because he himself considers H ārith to be a liar [*kādhib*]. We will discuss this matter in the next discussion.

2. The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn Mājah

Ibn Mājah has narrated this *h adīth* through two chains of transmission [*sanad*].

The first chain of transmission

On his first chain of transmission, Ibn Mājah quotes this *h adīth* from Hishām ibn ʻAmmār, from Sufyān, from H asan ibn ʻAmārah, from Farās, from Shiʻbī. Shaʻbī quotes the *h adīth* from ʻAlī (*ʻa*), and ʻAlī (*ʻa*) quotes it from the Holy Prophet (*s*).[2]

Problems concerning this chain of transmission:

Firstly, one of the transmitters on this chain of transmission is Sufyān ibn ʻUyaynah. He is widely believed to be a liar and a distorter of *h adīth*. Lying and distortion of facts [*tadlīs*] occurs when a transmitter attributes statements to someone when in actual fact he did not hear them from that person.

Secondly, another person named as one of the transmitters of this *h adīth* is H asan ibn ʻAmārah. He is believed to be worse at distorting facts than Sufyān ibn ʻUyaynah. All the Sunnī leaders and scholars have classified him among the weak transmitters of *h adīth*. Among those who consider him to be a weak reporter are:

1. Al-Bayhaqī says, "He was abandoned [*matrūk*] as a narrator. No reliable verdict can be deduced on the basis of his *h adīth*s."[3]

2. Al-Dāraqut nī has classified him among the weak narrators of *h adīth*.[1]

---

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3, p. 205.

[2] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, vol. 1, pp. 36-38.

[3] Al-Albānī, *Silsilah al-Ah ādīth al-D a'īfah*, vol. 3, p. 66.

3. In his book called "*Majrūh īn*", Ibn H ibbān has mentioned him as a weak narrator of *h adīth*.[2]

4. Yah yā ibn Mu'īn has classified him among the unworthy transmitters of *h adīth*.

5. Ibn H ibbān quotes Shu'bah as saying, "We do not have any problem with *h adīth*s that he narrated, just as we would not have any problem if he were to commit fornication or adultery." Shu'bah said this to mean that the weight of these two sins, recounting distorted or false *h adīth* and committing adultery or fornication, are equal.

Thirdly, Shi'bī, one of the transmitters on this chain of transmission, is a person who cunningly found his way into the government of Banī Umayyah. He was the private tutor of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān's children. He was also the high judge and jurist during the reign of H ajjāj in Kūfah.[3]

It is narrated that Ah naf said to him, "You should judge between people according to Allah's decrees." He replied, "I do not judge according to my Lord's decrees. I judge according to my own decrees."[4]

Ibn Abī al-H adīd recounts, "Jamīlah, the daughter of 'Īsā ibn Jarād, was a very beautiful woman. One day she lodged a complaint with the high court against one of her enemies. Shi'bī judged in favor of the beautiful woman. Because of this judgment, Hudhayl Ashja'ī composed a poem that alluded to the unfair judgment."[5]

Fourthly, Shi'bī quotes this *h adīth* from H ārith, while he himself always accused H ārith of lying.

In the introduction of his book entitled "*Al-S ah īh* ", Muslim says that he heard Shi'bī saying, "H ārith A'war Hamadānī used to be one of our transmitters of *h adīth*, and he is certainly a habitual liar."[6]

Ibn H ibbān quotes from Shi'bī saying, "H ārith narrated for us and I bear witness that he is surely one of the depraved liars."[1]

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 1, p. 224.

[3] Wakī', *Akhbār al-Qud āt*, vol. 2, pp. 421-426.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 427.

[5] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 17, p. 66.

[6] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , with Commentary by Nūwī, vol. 1, p. 97.

Ibn H ajar, while narrating an account of H ārith, says, "Shiʻbī considers him to be a liar. He has also been considered to be a heretic, and weaknesses can be found in the *h adīth* he recounts."[2]

Nūwī in his book entitled, "*Khulās ah*" says, "There is unanimity among Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* that H ārith is a weak transmitter of *h adīth* because he is a liar."[3]

Fatanī says, "H ārith ibn ʻAbd Allāh Hamadānī Aʻwar was one of the scholars in the period of the *tābiʻīn*[4], but Shiʻbī and Ibn al-Madīnī consider him to be a liar."[5]

The second chain of transmission

On this chain of transmission, Ibn Mājah quotes this *h adīth* from Abū Shuʻayb S ālih ibn Haytham T ā'ī who quotes from ʻAbd al-Qudūs ibn Bakr ibn Khunays. ʻAbd al-Qudūs ibn Bakr ibn Khanays quotes from Mālik ibn Mughul who quotes from ʻAwn ibn Abī Juh ayfah. ʻAwn ibn Abī Juh ayfah quotes from his father who finally quotes from the Holy Prophet (*s*).

To substantiate the falsity of this *h adīth*, suffice it to say that one of the narrators on the chain of transmission is ʻAbd al-Qudūs. He is a person about whom Ibn H ajar says, "Mah mūd ibn Ghaylān relates that Ah mad, Ibn Muʻīn and Khaythamah said that they deleted and cancelled all the *h adīth* which he had recounted for them."[6]

3. The *h adīth* narrated by Haythamī

Haythamī has narrated this same *h adīth*. On his chain of transmission, he quotes from ibn Juh ayfah who quotes from Allah's Prophet (*s*).[7]

The problem with this transmission is that one of the other narrators included on his chain of transmission is Khunays ibn Bakr ibn Khunays who has been classified among the weak narrators of *h adīth* by S ālih ibn Jazrah.[1]

---

[1] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 1, p. 216.

[2] *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, p. 141.

[3] *Tah qīq al-Ghāyah bi Tartib al-Ruwāt al-Mutarjim lahum fī Nas b al-Rāyah*, p. 120.

[4] Those who did not see or meet the Prophet in person but met or saw his companions.

[5] *Tadhkirah al-Mawd ūʻāt*, p. 248.

[6] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 369.

[7] *Mawārid al-D imān ilā Zawā'id ibn H ibbān*, p. 538.

4. The *h adīth* recounted by Dūlābī

Dūlābī has recounted this *h adīth* on a different chain of transmission through ibn Juh ayfah from the Prophet of Allah (*s*). One of the narrators on this chain of transmission is Khunays ibn Bakr ibn Khunays who has already been classified among the weak transmitters of *h adīth*.

5. The *h adīth* recounted by 'Abd Allāh ibn Ah mad ibn H anbal

'Abd Allāh ibn Ah mad ibn H anbal has also recounted this *h adīth* from the Holy Prophet (*s*).[2] However, one of the narrators on his chain of transmission is 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar Yamānī whom Dhahabī has described to be obscure, vague and ambiguous.[3] Another narrator on his chain of transmission is H asan ibn Zayd, who was Mans ūr's caretaker in Medina and was one of the companions of Mahdī 'Abbāsī after that. Ibn 'Uday says, "His *h adīth* are controversial and difficult to accept."[4] In addition, Fatanī says, "He is a weak transmitter of *h adīth*."[5]

6. The *h adīth*s recounted by Khat īb Baghdādī

Baghdādī has narrated this *h adīth* on four chains of transmission:

The first chain of transmission

Baghdādī has narrated this *h adīth* on a chain of transmission through Anas ibn Mālik.[6] However, one of the narrators on his chain of transmission is Yah yā ibn 'Anbasah. We are compelled to consider this chain of transmission weak for the following reasons:

Ibn H ibbān has mentioned Yahyā ibn 'Anbasah in his book, "*Al-Majrūh īn*". Ibn H ibbān writes, "He is the leader of all imposters [*shaykh al-dajjāl*]. He has forged *h adīth* and attributed them to Ibn 'Uyaynah, Dāwūd ibn Abī Hind, Abī H anīfah and other trusted narrators of *h adīth*. Quoting *h adīth* from him is not acceptable at all."[7]

---

[1] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 1, p. 669; *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 2, p. 411; Dhahabī, *Al-Mughnī*, p. 215.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 80.

[3] *Al-Mughnī*, p. 35; *Dīwān al-D u'afā'*, p. 175.

[4] *Mīzān al-'Itidāl*, vol. 1, p. 492.

[5] *Qānūn al-Mawd ū'āt*, p. 249.

[6] *Tārīkh-e Baghdād*, vol. 5, p. 307.

[7] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 3, p. 124.

Dāraqut nī has described him as an impostor [*dajjāl*].

Ibn ʻUday says, "He rejects authentic *h adīth* [*munkir al-h adīth*]. Therefore, his position (as a relater of *h adīth*) is clear."[1]

Dhahabī has included him in his "*Dīwān al-D u'afa' wa al-Matrūkīn*" (the Collection of the Weak and Rejected Transmitters of *H adīth*).[2]

In addition, one of the narrators on this chain of transmission is H amīd T awīl, about whom Dhahabī says, "We do not know who he is."[3]

The second chain of transmission

Baghdādī has quoted this *h adīth* from Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*), and Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) is said to have quoted it from the Holy Prophet (*s*). One of the narrators included on this chain of transmission is Bashshār ibn Mūsā al-Khaffāf. Bukhārī has described Bashshār ibn Mūsā al-Khaffāf to be a man who rejects authentic *h adīth* [*munkir al-h adīth*], preferring distorted and/or altered ones instead. Ibn Muʻīn has described him as an impostor [*dajjāl*] and Abū Zarʻah considers him to be a weak narrator of *h adīth* [*d a'īf*].[4]

Other narrators on this chain of transmission are Shiʻbī and H ārith, whom have already been discussed and classified among distorters and weak narrators of *h adīth*.

The third chain of transmission

On his third chain of transmission, Baghdādī has quoted this *h adīth* from Ibn ʻAbbās on two different channels.[5]

One of the narrators on the first chain of transmission is ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Mūsā, whom the Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* have described as a hot and firebrand Shīʻah. It is therefore extremely unlikely that he could really have

[1] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 4, p. 400.

[2] *Dīwān al-D u'afa' wa al-Matrūkīn*, p. 339.

[3] *Al-Mughnī*, p. 196.

[4] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, p. 441.

[5] *Tārīkh-e Baghdād*, vol. 10, p. 192.

recounted such a *h adīth*.[1] Additionally, Ah mad ibn H anbal has explicitly ordered transmitters of *h adīth* not to quote his *h adīth*.[2]

Furthermore, one of the narrators on the first chain of transmission is Yūnus ibn Abī Ish āq, whom some Sunnī scholars of *h adīth* have classified among the weak [*d a'īf*] narrators. Ah mad ibn H anbal considers Yūnus to be a weak transmitter and *mud t arib al-h adīth*; (i.e. *h adīth*s related by him are shaky and unfounded).[3]

One of the narrators on this second chain of transmission is T alh ah ibn 'Amru, whom most of the transmitters and scholars of *h adīth* consider to be a weak reporter. Ah mad ibn H anbal considers him to be worthless altogether [*lā shay'*] and believes that *h adīth* related by him are rejected. Ibn Ma'īn has classified him among the weak transmitters and Jawzajānī says his traditions are not satisfactory. Abū H ātam has classified him among the weak narrators. Bukhārī says he is worthless and Nassā'ī considers him to be a rejected, abandoned [*matrūk al-h adīth*] and untrustworthy [*ghayr-u thaqah*] reporter. Ibn al-Madīnī says he is a weak and worthless transmitter while Ibn H azm considers him to be the greatest of liars and believes that *h adīth*s related by him must be rejected.

Ibn H ibbān says, "He attributes *h adīth*s to trustworthy people, but these *h adīth*s cannot be traced back to or found in the actual statements of these people."[4]

The fourth chain of transmission

This *h adīth* has also been narrated on a chain of transmission which goes back to Ibn 'Abbās. One of the transmitters on that chain of transmission is T alh ah ibn 'Amru, whose position has already been analyzed.

Baghdādī has recounted this *h adīth* in his book called "*Mawd ih Awhām al-Jam' wa al-Tafrīq*".[5] However, one of the narrators on this chain of transmission is 'Akramah ibn Ibrāhīm, about whom H ibbān says, "He

---

[1] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 3, p. 16.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11, p. 434.

[4] *Ibid*., vol. 5, p. 8; *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 2, p. 8; Ibn H azm, *Al-Ah kām*, vol. 7, p. 101; *Al-Mah allī*, vol. 11, p. 276; *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 2, p. 340; *Tārīkh al-Bukhārī (al-Kabīr)*, vol. 4, p. 350.

[5] *Mawd ih Awhām al-Jam' wa al-Tafrīq*, vol. 2, p. 178, printed in Haidar Abad.

distorts *h adīth* and uses them in instances where they do not apply. It is for this reason that deducing evidence for the purpose of passing legal judgment is not permissible, if the basis for such a verdict is a *h adīth* related by him." Ibn Muʻīn and Abū Dāwūd have described him as a worthless person and Nassā'ī has categorized him to be among the weak narrators of *h adīth*.[1]

The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn H ajar

Ibn H ajar has quoted this *h adīth* from ibn ʻUmar in his book "*Lisān al-Mīzān*".[2] One of the narrators on this chain of transmission is ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻUmar. Ibn H ajar quotes Ah mad ibn H anbal saying, "For some time, we used to burn *h adīth*s reported by him." Jawzajānī considers him to be a weak spirited man [*d a'īf al-amr*]. Ah mad ibn H anbal has listed a number of people who have classified and recorded his other weaknesses [*tad 'īfāt*].[3]

The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn al-Najjār

In the book called, "*Tārīkh-e Baghdād*" (The History of Baghdād), Ibn al-Najjār has narrated this *h adīth* on his own chain of transmission from Anas. One of the transmitters on this chain of transmission is Muh ammad ibn Kathīr whom we have already categorized among the weak transmitters.

The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn ʻAsākir

Ibn ʻAsākir has recounted this *h adīth* on his own chain of transmission. He quotes it from al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*). One of the transmitters on his chain of transmission is Muh ammad ibn Yūnus Qarashī Kadīmī. Dāraqut nī has accused him of forging and creating new *h adīth*s. Ibn H ibbān says, "He used to forge *h adīth*. He has falsely attributed more than a thousand invented *h adīth*s to trustworthy people." Ibn ʻUday says, "He is accused of forging *h adīth*. It is for this reason that most of our scholars abandoned and rejected *h adīth*s reported by him."

The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn Abī Shaybah

Ibn Abī Shaybah has quoted this *h adīth* from Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*). One of the narrators on his chain of transmission is Mūsā ibn ʻUbaydah Rabadhī, about

---

[1] Ibn H ibbān, *Al-Majrūh īn*; Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*.

[2] *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 3, p. 427.

[3] *Ibid*.

whom Ah mad ibn H anbal says, "The *h adīth*s he recounts are not worthy of being recorded." Nassā'ī and others have classified him among weak transmitters of *h adīth*.

Ibn 'Uday says, "There is apparent weakness in the *h adīth*s he reports." Ibn Mu'īn has described him as a worthless narrator. Yah yā ibn Sa'īd says, "We abstain from *h adīth*s recounted by him."

Likewise, one of the transmitters mentioned on this chain of narration is Abī Ma'ādh. Ah mad ibn H anbal has prohibited narrating *h adīth*s related by him. Ibn Mu'īn has described him as a worthless reporter. Jawzajānī has nullified him altogether. Abū Dāwūd and Dāraqut nī have described him as an abandoned and obsolete reporter.[1]

In addition, 'Yā Abī al-Khat t āb', the person from whom Abī Ma'ādh quotes this *h adīth*, is unknown.

The *h adīth* recounted by T ah āwī

T ah āwī has narrated this *h adīth* on four chains of transmission in the book called, "*Mushkil al-Āthār*".

The first chain of transmission

This *h adīth* has been quoted from Anas ibn Mālik. One of the people on this chain of transmission is Muh ammad ibn Kathīr S an'ā'ī, whose weaknesses and shortcomings we have already mentioned.

The second chain of transmission

On this chain of transmission, the *h adīth* has been quoted from Imām 'Alī (*'a*). The person that quoted this *h adīth* from Imām 'Alī (*'a*) is Abī Janāb Yah yā ibn Abī H ayyah Kalbī. Yah yā ibn Qat t ān did not consider quoting traditions narrated by him to be lawful [*h alāl*]. Falās has described him as an abandoned and obsolete reporter of *h adīth*. Nassā'ī and Dāraqut nī and 'Uthmān ibn Abī Shaybah have called him a weak narrator.[2]

Ibn H ibbān says, "He used to attribute what he heard from weak reporters to trustworthy people… That is why Yah yā ibn Qat t ān has considered

[1] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 2, p. 196.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 371.

*h adīth*s related by him to be baseless and groundless. Ah mad ibn H anbal has viciously attacked him.”[1]

Furthermore, one of the narrators on this chain of transmission is Shi‘bī, whom we have already shown to be a weak reporter.

The third chain of transmission

On the third chain of transmission, T ah āwī has also quoted this *h adīth* from Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*). One of the narrators on this chain of transmission is Shi‘bī who quotes this *h adīth* from H ārith. We have already shown both Shi‘bī and H ārith to be weak reporters of *h adīth*.

The fourth chain of transmission

On the fourth chain of transmission, this *h adīth* has been quoted from Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī. Suffice it to say that one of the narrators on this chain of transmission is As bagh ibn Faraj who was one of the chiefs of Banī Umayyah.[2]

Another person on this chain of transmission is ‘Alī ibn ‘Abbās. H ibbān has mentioned him in his book “*Al-Majrūh īn*”. H ibbān considers legal judgment deduced by relying on *h adīth*s related by ‘Alī ibn ‘Abbās to be null and void.[3]

Another problem with this chain of transmission is that one of the narrators is Kathīr al-Nidā’, whom Dhahabī has included in his “*Dīwān al-D u‘afa’ wa al-Matrūkīn*” (the Collection of the Weak and Rejected Transmitters of *H adīth*).[4]

The *h adīth* recounted by Ibn Abī H ātam

Ibn Abī H ātam has narrated this *h adīth* on three chains of transmission, but he himself has nullified all the three chains.[5]

The *h adīth* narrated by T abarānī

T abarānī has narrated this *h adīth* on two chains of transmission:

---

[1] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 3, p. 111.

[2] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, trans. As bagh ibn Faraj.

[3] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 2, p. 104.

[4] *Dīvān al-D u‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkīn*, p. 256.

[5] *‘Ilal al-H adīth*, vol. 2, p. 382, Salafiyyah Publications, Egypt.

The first chain of transmission

On this chain of transmission, Juh ayfah has quoted this *h adīth* from the Holy Prophet (*s*).[1] One of the narrators on this chain of transmission is Khunays ibn Bakr, who has been considered a weak reporter by S ālih Jazrah. Būys arī has also criticized him.[2]

The second chain of transmission

On this chain of transmission, Anas ibn Mālik has quoted this *h adīth* from the Holy Prophet (*s*). One of the narrators on this chain of transmission is Muh ammad ibn Kathīr, whom we have already shown to be a weak reporter.

The *h adīth* narrated by Ibn Qutaybah

This *h adīth* has been recorded in the first chapter of his book. Suffice it to say that one of the narrators on his chain of transmission is Nūh ibn Abī Maryam, about whom Ibn H ibbān has said, "He used to forge and counterfeit chains of transmission. He has narrated *h adīth*s from trustworthy people which cannot be found or traced to their actual narrations. Therefore, deducing legal proof and judgment [*ih tijāj*] by relying on *h adīth*s reported by him is not permissible at all."[3]

Muslim and other scholars of *h adīth* have referred to him as a disparaged narrator [*matrūk al-h adīth*] and Bukhārī has called him a rejecter of *h adīth* [*munkir al-h adīth*]. H ākim and Ibn al-Jawzī have called him a forger of *h adīth*.[4] Ibn al-Jawzī has mentioned the *h adīth*s he forged in several places. H ākim says this about him, "He has been blessed with everything except truthfulness."[5]

---

[1] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 22, p. 85-86.

[2] *Al-Zawā'id*, vol. 8, p. 1.

[3] *Kitāb al-Majrūh īn*, vol. 3, p. 48.

[4] *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 4, p. 279; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Al-Mawd ū'āt al-Kubrā* (A Great Collection of Fabricated Traditions), vol. 1, p. 41.

[5] *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10, p. 488.

Conclusion

The previous traditions were documented *h adīth*s which some have narrated as regards the issue of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar being the leaders of the elderly of heaven. However, it has been clearly shown that none of the chains of transmission for this *h adīth* is authentic or correct.

Others, too, have narrated this *h adīth* in their books, but they have narrated the *h adīth* in such a way that it gives rise to cessation and discontinuity of transmitters on the chains of transmission, which classifies them as weak *h adīth*s.

The problem with the text of this *h adīth*

The fundamental problem with the text of this *h adīth* is that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar have been called ‘the two leaders of the elderly of Paradise’ whereas other texts of *h adīth* explicitly state that there are no old people in heaven; on the contrary, such *h adīth*s state that the people in Paradise are all youths aged thirty. Note the following:

1. Abū Hurayrah has recounted that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, “The people that are destined to enter paradise will be tall, will have no beards on their faces, will have curly thick hair on their heads and will be thirty years of age. Their youth will be endless and their clothes will not wear out.”[1]

2. Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī narrated from the Holy Prophet (*s*) that he said, “Whoever dies, whether young or old and is destined to Paradise will enter as a thirty-year-old youth and his age will never be increased. Those entering the Hell will be of the same age.”[2] **?**

[1] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 4, p. 683; Al-Dāramī, *Sunan*, vol. 2, p. 335; *Majma‘ al-Zawā’id*, vol. 10, p. 398.

[2] *Al-Tāj al-Jāmi‘ li’l-Us ūl*, vol. 5, p. 375.

YAZĪD
AND
HIS HOUSEHOLD

ABŪ SUFIYĀN, YAZĪD'S GRANDFATHER

Before giving an account of the life of Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah, and before demonstrating his unscrupulousness and viciousness, especially through the brutal martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) and the incident of H arrah, it is appropriate here to give a brief historical account of Yazīd's background. Through awareness of Yazīd's family standing, his actions can better be comprehended.

First, we will give a brief life account of his grandfather, Abū Sufiyān.

Abū Sufiyān's beliefs

During the 'Age of Ignorance', the majority of Arabs used to worship idols with the aim of gaining nearness to Allah through the intercession of their idols. The Holy Qur'an quotes them saying,

﴿ ما نَعبُدُهُم إِلا ليقَرِّبُونا إِلى الله زُلفى ﴾

> "*We do not worship them save that they may make us nearer to Allah.*"[1]

In spite of worshiping idols, they still believed in the creatorship of Allah. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an,

﴿ وَلَئِن سَأَلتَهُم مَن خَلَق السَّمَوات وَ لأ َض وَسَخَّر الشَّمس وَ لقَمَر ليقُولَنَّ الله ﴾

> *"And if you ask them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth and made the sun and the moon subservient', they will certainly say, 'Allah'."*[2]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Zumar* 39:3.

[2] *Sūrat al-'Ankabūt* 29:61.

Abū Sufiyān, however, was a worldly apostate during the Age of Ignorance who did not believe in anything at all, not even idols. Maqrīzī says, “Abū Sufiyān was a bastion of hypocrisy. During the Age of Ignorance, he was considered to be an atheist.”[1]

Abū Sufiyān’s enmity towards the Holy Prophet (*s*)

Abū Sufiyān was the leader of the enemies of the Holy Prophet (*s*) and Islam. One day, he came with a group of men to Abū T ālib and said, “Your nephew denounces our gods and finds fault with our religion. He regards our thoughts to be foolish and says our fathers and forefathers were unguided and lost. Either stop him from saying these things or step aside and let us deal with him ourselves.”[2]

Abū Sufiyān was also the mastermind behind a plot to kill the Holy Prophet (*s*). He planned to execute his plan at Dār al-Nadwah. He selected a youth from every tribe and gave each one of them a sword with orders to attack the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) house and kill him.[3]

For the Battle of Uh ud, Abū Sufiyān alone spent forty measures of gold. Each measure contained forty-two pieces [*mithqāl*] of gold. As well, he personally took part in the battle. Seventy-two companions of the Holy Prophet (*s*) were martyred in the battle, including H amzah ibn ‘Abd al-Mut t alib, the Prophet’s uncle.[4]

In order to incite and encourage the polytheists to fight at the Battle of Uh ud, Abū Sufiyān shouted, “Long live Hubal! Long live Hubal!”[5] When they heard this, the Muslims replied, “Allah is more Elevated and more Majestic!” When he heard this, Abū Sufiyān personally answered, “We have (the idol) al-‘Uzzā, whereas you have no ‘Uzzā.” The Holy Prophet (*s*) ordered his followers to say,

---

[2] *Kitāb al-Nizā‘ wa al-Takhās um*, p. 54.

[2] Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 1, p. 283, vol. 2, p. 58.

[3] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 126.

[4] *Kitāb al-Niza‘ wa al-Takhās um*, pp. 52-53.

[5] Hubal was the name of one of the important idols at the Age of Ignorance.

«الله مولانا ولا مولى لكم.»

"Allah is our Master and you have no master."[1]

After the martyrdom of H amzah, Abū Sufiyān came to thrust spears into H amzah's corpse. He was doing this while saying, "Taste of this, you who has been disinherited and cursed."[2] Even after the death of the Holy Prophet (*s*), Abū Sufiyān came to the tomb of H amzah and started trampling and stamping upon it saying, "O Abā 'Ammārah! That over which you fought with us and for which you died has now fallen into the hands of our youths and they are playing with it."[3]

One day Abū Sufiyān saw people walking behind the Holy Prophet (*s*). With a heart filled with jealousy and envy, he said, "If I can, I will organize an army against this man once again." The Holy Prophet touched his chest and said, "On that day, Allah will make you abject, contemptible and despised."[4]

Abū Sufiyān's conversion to Islam

It is well known that Abū Sufiyān did not convert to Islam of his own volition and inclination. On the contrary, he became a Muslim out of a feeling of fear and intimidation.

When the Holy Prophet (*s*) conquered Mecca, Abū Sufiyān came with 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Mut t alib before the Holy Prophet (*s*) and requested immunity and safe-conduct from the Holy Prophet (*s*). The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, "Woe unto you O Abū Sufiyān! Has the time not yet come for you to know that there is no god but Allah?" Abū Sufiyān said, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you. How generous and kind you are!" Again, the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, "O Abū Sufiyān! Has the time not yet arrived for you to accept that I am Allah's Prophet?" Abū Sufiyān repeated his previous statement and added, "This issue of you being Allah's Prophet has not yet been settled in my heart." 'Abbās said to him, "Woe unto you! Testify to the

---

[1] Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 99; Ibn al-'Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 23, p. 444, no. 2849.

[2] *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 99.

[3] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 16, p. 136.

[4] *Al-Is ābah*, vol. 2, p. 179.

truth before your neck is cut." It was only at this time out of compulsion and fear that Abū Sufiyān testified to the truth and accepted Islam.[1]

Abū Sufiyān's conspiracies against Islam

Here we provide only a brief account of one of the many conspiracies that Abū Sufiyān committed against Islam:

After the demise of the Holy Prophet (*s*), the people paid allegiance to Abū Bakr. Solely because he intended to create sedition in the Muslim community [*ummah*], Abū Sufiyān said, "I surely foresee disturbances and civil disorders which will not be extinguished save by Allah. O Children of ʻAbd al-Manāf! How can Abū Bakr become your leader? How can he be the one who holds responsibility over your affairs? Where are those two oppressed people who have been sidelined and made inferior?" (He meant Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) and ʻAbbās ibn ʻAbd al-Mut t alib) Then he turned to Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) and said, "Give me your hand so that I may swear allegiance to you. I swear upon Allah! If you wish, I will fill the battleground with horsemen and footmen willing to fight for you!" However, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) withheld his hand and said,

والله ما أردت بهذا الا الفتنة، وانّك والله طالب بغيت للاسلام شرّاً، لا حاجة لنا في نصحك.

> "I swear upon Allah! You intend nothing but sedition. I swear upon Allah! For a long time now, you have been looking for an opportunity to make mischief and deliberately cause trouble for Islam. We are not in need of your help and advice."[2]

Denial of the existence of resurrection and hereafter

One of the incredulous things that Abū Sufiyān did after his apparent acceptance of Islam was to deny and repudiate the Day of Resurrection.

Ibn ʻAbd al-Barr says, "One day during the caliphate of ʻUthmān, Abū Sufiyān came to see him. He addressed ʻUthmān as follows: ʻAfter a lot of fighting and tribulation, the caliphate has finally come to you, one of our own kinsmen. You should therefore nail its foundations strongly in our family. You must strengthen its roots in the family of Banī Umayyah. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, this is the very same sultanate that was previously in our

---

[1] *Al-Istīʻāb*, vol. 4, p. 86; *Kitāb al-Nizāʻ wa al-Takhās um*, vol. 3, p. 356.

[2] Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol 2, p. 11, events that occurred in the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet's (*s*) migration to Medina.

hands. And I believe in neither heaven nor hell.' 'Uthmān shouted at him and said, 'Leave me! May Allah chastise and punish you!'"[1]

It has been narrated in the book "*Tārīkh T abarī*" that Abū Sufiyān said to 'Uthmān, "O Banī Umayyah! You should pass the caliphate to one another from among yourselves only, in the same way that team-mates pass a ball to each other in a game, because neither heaven nor hell exist."[2]

Mas'ūdī recounts the story this way: "Abū Sufiyān said, 'O Banī Umayyah! You should preserve the caliphate for yourselves, just like teammates preserve control over the ball by passing it among themselves. I swear upon the one whom Abū Sufiyān swears upon, I always wished this for you. You must preserve it for the inheritance of your children'."[3]

Abū Sufiyān said this on a day when 'Uthmān gave him two thousand *dīnār*s from the Islamic public treasury. On the same day, 'Uthmān also gave Marwān ibn al-H akam (one of his cousins) a thousand *dīnār*s from the Islamic public treasury.[4]

Ibn 'Asākir quotes Anas saying that after Abū Sufiyān became blind, he came to 'Uthmān and said, "Are there any strangers with you here?" 'Uthmān said, "No." Then Abū Sufiyān said, "(I swear) Upon Allah! You must reverse the circumstances to what they were during the Age of Ignorance."[5]

The curse of the Holy Prophet (*s*) upon Abū Sufiyān

It is well known that the Holy Prophet (*s*) has cursed Abū Sufiyān on seven instances:

1. One day the Holy Prophet (*s*) was traveling from Mecca towards T ā'if to invite the tribe of Thaqīf to accept the religion of Islam; Abū Sufiyān obstructed the Holy Prophet (*s*) and reviled him using abusive comments. As if this were not enough, in order to further torment and injure the Holy Prophet (*s*), he swore to take revenge against Allah's Prophet (*s*). This is one incident when Allah and his Prophet (*s*) cursed him.

---

[1] *Al-Istī'āb*, no. 3005.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 10, p. 58, events that occurred in the eleventh year after the Holy Prophet's (*s*) migration to Medina.

[3] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 360.

[4] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 199, sermon [*khut bah*] 3.

[5] *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Damishq*, vol. 23, p. 471, no. 2849.

2. The Muslims intercepted a trade caravan of Meccan polytheists returning from Shām. When news about this incident reached Abū Sufiyān, he tried to hinder the Muslims from obtaining the booty and spoils. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cursed Abū Sufiyān for this action and it was this incident that lead to the Battle of Badr.

3. On the day of the Battle of Badr, Abū Sufiyān was at the bottom of the mountain and the Holy Prophet (*s*) was at the top. Abū Sufiyān was incessantly shouting, "Long live Hubal! Long live Hubal!" This caused the Holy Prophet (*s*) and the Muslims to curse him ten times.

4. Another incident that caused the Holy Prophet (*s*) to curse Abū Sufiyān was when he, along with members of the Ghat fān tribe and the Jews, assaulted and attacked Medina.

5. On the day of H udaybiyyah (one of the important days on the Islamic calendar), Abū Sufiyān together with a group of people belonging to the tribe of Quraysh obstructed the Holy Prophet (*s*) from entering Masjid al-H arām. On this day, the Holy Prophet (*s*) cursed Abū Sufiyān.

6. Another occasion when the Holy Prophet (*s*) cursed Abū Sufiyān was the Day of the Red Camels.

7. One day a gang of scoundrels camped at ʻAqabah with the aim of startling the Holy Prophetʼs camel when he rode by. They numbered twelve people in all. Abū Sufiyān was one of these villains. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cursed and damned them all.[1]

H ad rat ʻAlīʼs (*ʻa*) viewpoint of Abū Sufiyān

In one *h adīth*, Amīr al-Muʼminīn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) describes Muʻāwiyah and Abū Sufiyān in this way,

> معاوية طليق ابن طليق، حزب من هذه الاحزاب، لم يزل لله عز وجل ولرسوله وللمسلمين عدوّ هو وابوه حتى دخلا في الاسلام كارهين.
>
> "Muʻāwiyah is unrestrained. He is the son of one who was unrestrained, and he is a party of this party. He and his father have always been enemies of Allah, the Holy Prophet (*s*) and the

[1] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 6, pp. 290-291, sermon [*khut bah*] 83.

> Muslims. This enmity continued until the time they were compelled under duress to become Muslims."[1]

In a letter addressed to Muʿāwiyah, Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) writes, "O son of the ill-fated one! O son of the accursed one…"[2] It seems that Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʿAlī (*ʿa*) was referring here to the curses which the Holy Prophet (*s*) pronounced on Abū Sufiyān, his son Muʿāwiyah and his grandson Yazīd.

It has been recounted that one day Abū Sufiyān was riding a horse and one of his offsprings (either Muʿāwiyah or Yazīd) was in front and the other in back. When the Holy Prophet (*s*) saw them, he said,

«اللهم العن الراكب والقائد والسائق.»

> "O Allah! Banish from your mercy the rider of this horse and those that are leading it."[3]

In another letter to Muʿāwiyah, Amīr al-Muʾminīn (*ʿa*) writes,

«منّا النبي ومنكم المكذّب.»

> "The Prophet (*s*) is from us, and the denier of his prophethood is from you."[4]

Commenting on this, Ibn Abī al-H adīd says, "Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) was referring to Abū Sufiyān ibn H arb, because Abū Sufiyān was one of the Prophet's (*s*) most vicious enemies and a denier of his prophethood."

Addressing Muʿāwiyah, Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʿa*) said,

وانّک یا معاویة! واباک مِن المؤلّفة قلوبهم، تسرّون الکفر، وتظهرون الاسلام، وتستمالون بالاموال.

> "Without doubt, you, Muʿāwiyah, and your father, are among the people who have used money from the Islamic public treasury for the sake of pleasing your hearts. You have concealed your infidelity and unbelief [*kufr*] and instead displayed your false belief in Islam. You have lured people towards yourselves by means of your possessions."[5] **?**

---

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 8, events of the year 37 AH.

[2] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 15, p. 82.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 10, p. 58, events of the year 284 AH.

[4] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 15, p. 196.

[5] *Ibid*., vol. 6, pp. 288-289.

MU‘ĀWIYAH, YAZĪD’S FATHER

Mu‘āwiyah before accepting Islam

In all the wars that the Quraysh declared on Islam and fought against the Muslims, Abū Sufiyān and his son, Mu‘āwiyah occupied positions at the forefront of the army of the polytheists. Even though Mu‘āwiyah had heard the marvelous sound of the Holy Qur’an in Mecca, and although he had witnessed people entering the fold of Islam in great multitudes, he remained a polytheist [*mushrik*] up to the conquest of Mecca. Finally, Mu‘āwiyah and his father became Muslims, albeit not of their own accord, but rather out of fear and compulsion. This period was sufficient for any impartial and reasonable person to embrace Islam, but Mu‘āwiyah was not such a person. Had Mecca not been conquered, Mu‘āwiyah would have surely remained an uncompromising polytheist and continued fighting against the Muslims.

Mu‘āwiyah’s antagonism against Islam

Under the pretext of Islam, Banī Umayyah possessed and controlled the caliphate for nearly a century. During this period, they utilized massive power, deceit and diplomacy for the destruction of Islam. They tried to obliterate the religion by distancing the people from the legacy of the Holy Prophet (*s*).

Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān, the forerunner of this corrupt dynasty, aspired to destroy every manifestation of Islam, and he followed his aspirations with a firm resolution and strong determination.

Zubayr ibn Bakkār writes, “Mut raf the son of Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah says, ‘My father and I had gone to Shām during the rule and caliphate of Mu‘āwiyah. During our stay in Shām, my father used to go and see

Muʻāwiyah on a daily basis. Upon returning, he would praise and extol Muʻāwiyah with great excitement. One night, however, he refused to eat dinner. Instead, he anxiously sunk into deep and worried thought. This happened after returning from seeing Muʻāwiyah. I feared that some very unpleasant event had happened in our life. An hour later, I asked him what had happened. He said, ʻMy son, I have just come from the presence of the most evil infidel among mankind.ʼ I said, ʻWhy do you say this?!ʼ He replied, ʻTonight, the gathering at Muʻāwiyahʼs place was devoid of strangers and outsiders, so I seized the opportunity and said to Muʻāwiyah, ʻO Leader of the Believers! You have attained your worldly desires and aspirations. If you act fairly and equitably towards your kith and kin, the Banī Hāshim, and adopt kindness towards them and observe the bonds of relationship, you will leave behind a good reputation for yourself when you die. I swear upon Allah! They possess nothing that should arouse your anxiety and apprehension.ʼ Muʻāwiyah replied, ʻFar be it! Far be it! This is not possible at all. The name of this Hashemite man (i.e. the Holy Prophet of Islam) is called five times daily all across the Islamic world from the minarets when the Islamic call to prayer [*adhān*] is being recited, and in this way the people remember his greatness. In such circumstances, what effects and reputation will ever remain for me, O motherless one? I swear to God that I will not attain peace until I do everything in my power to bury his nameʼ.ʼʼʼ[1]

Muʻāwiyah and his great [*kabīrah*] sins

Muʻāwiyah the son of Abū Sufiyān was not a person who refrained from committing great sins. He was so daring that he openly committed illegitimate actions among the people. Here, reference will be made to some of the actions he committed that were in flagrant contradiction to the divine law [*sharīʻah*] of Islam:

1. Muʻāwiyah dranked alcoholic beverages

Ah mad ibn H anbal quotes ʻAbd Allāh ibn Buraydah saying, "My father and I went to visit Muʻāwiyah. He spread a carpet for us and made us sit on it. Then, he brought us some food, which we ate. After that, he brought us some alcohol. Muʻāwiyah drank from it and invited my father to partake of

[1] Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Al-Akhbār al-Muwāfiqāt*, pp. 576-577; *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 454; Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 176, vol. 5, p. 129.

it, but my father refused and said, 'Since the time that the Noble Prophet (*s*) made alcohol *h arām* (forbidden), I have not drunk it'."[1]

Mu'āwiyah did this heedless of the fact that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«شارب الخمر كعابد وثن.»

"One who drinks alcohol is the same as one who worships idols."[2]

2. Mu'āwiyah engaged in usury

'At ā' ibn Yasār says, "Mu'āwiyah sold a cup made out of gold at a price more than its weight. Abū al-Dardā' said to him, 'I heard Allah's Prophet (*s*) forbidding this kind of action. Selling and buying should not be concluded unless the deal is equal as regards weight.' Mu'āwiyah boldly answered him, 'I see nothing wrong with taking usury.' Abū al-Dardā' said, 'Who will justify Mu'āwiyah's actions? I am telling him what Allah's Prophet (*s*) has said, and he is telling me what he himself thinks. From now on, I will never live in the same territory with Mu'āwiyah'."[3]

Mu'āwiyah used to take usury in spite of the fact that Allah has cursed the one who takes usury, the one who gives it, the two witnesses required for recording such a contract, and the writer of the transaction.[4]

The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, "Refrain from seven actions because these seven deeds invite Allah's punishment and wrath." The people asked, "O Prophet of Allah! What are those seven deeds?" He said, "Associating others with Allah (polytheism), sorcery and witchcraft, killing of a life which Allah has made honorable except by justice, consuming that which belongs to orphans and taking usury."[5]

On his own chain of transmission, Bukhārī quotes from Abī Juh ayfah that the Holy Prophet (*s*) cursed both the giver and taker of usury.[6]

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 6, p. 476.

[2] Ibn al-Mundhir, *Al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb*, vol. 3, p. 102.

[3] Mālik, *Al-Muwat t ā'*, vol. 2, p. 59.

[4] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 5, p. 500.

[5] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 271.

[6] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 5, p. 2219, *h adīth* 6501.

3. Muʻāwiyah altered the practice of obligatory rituals

In his book entitled "*Kitāb al-Umm*", Shāfiʻī recounts that Zuhrī said, "The the Islamic call to prayer [*adhān*] was never recited for the two festival prayers (*ʻĪd al-Qurbān* and *ʻĪd al-Fit r*) during the time of the Holy Prophet (*s*), Abū Bakr, ʻUmar and ʻUthmān. The only time when the *adhān* was recited before the two *ʻĪd* prayers was when Muʻāwiyah innovated and introduced it during his reign in Shām, and H ajjāj followed up on this innovation when he became the governor of Medina."

Ibn H ajar says, "On a sound chain of transmission, Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates from Saʻīd ibn al-Musayyib that the first person who innovated and introduced the *adhān* into the two *ʻĪd* prayers was Muʻāwiyah."

Shāfiʻī also quotes Zuhrī who recounts from a truthful and trustworthy person that it was Muʻāwiyah who innovated and introduced the *adhān* into the two *ʻĪd* prayers.[1]

Muʻāwiyah, the son of Abū Sufiyān, brought about this innovation in the two *ʻĪd* Prayers despite the fact that there is no legitimate justification in Islam for the *adhān* and *iqāmah* to be read for any prayers except the obligatory daily prayers. This is a legal verdict in the practical laws of Islam which is undisputed by any school of Islamic thought.

Jābir ibn ʻAbd Allāh says, "I was present when the Holy Prophet (*s*) offered prayers on the day of *ʻĪd*. He offered the prayers before the sermon and without reciting either the *adhān* or *iqāmah*. Then, while he was leaning on Bilāl, he invited the people to piety and obedience of Allah."[2]

Ibn ʻAbbās and Jābir say, "The Holy Prophet (*s*) never recited the *adhān* for the prayers of *ʻĪd al-Fit r* or *al-Qurbān*."[3]

4. Failure to recite the traveler's prayer on journeys

T abarānī and Ah mad ibn H anbal narrate from ʻIbād ibn ʻAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr on an authentic chain of transmission that he said, "When Muʻāwiyah intended to go for the *h ajj*, he came to inform us about his intention and we traveled together to Mecca. He prayed two *rakʻat*s for the noon prayers with

---

[1] *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 1, p. 353, 452.

[2] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 332, *h adīth* 935; Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 2, p. 284, *h adīth* 4.

[3] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 327, *h adīth* 917; Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 2, p. 285, *h adīth* 5.

us. Then, he went to Dār al-Nadwah. ʻUthmān was there and was praying full prayers (four *rakʻat*s). When Muʻāwiyah reached Mecca, he also prayed four *rakʻat*s for the *z uhr*, *ʻas r* and *ʻishā*ʼ prayers. After leaving Minā and ʻArafāt, he shortened his prayers. And after leaving the *h ajj*, he stopped and camped at Minā and prayed full prayers until he left Mecca."[1]

Notice how the son of Abū Sufiyān daringly scorns, mocks and derides Allahʼs laws and acts in whatever way he pleases regardless of the fact that everyone knows that the prayers of a person on a journey must be shortened.

5. Friday Congregational Prayers done on Wednesday

Masʻūdī narrates, "The obedience of the people of Damascus to Muʻāwiyah had reached such an extent that, when Muʻāwiyah intended to travel towards S iffīn, they allowed him to pray the Friday congregational prayers for them on Wednesday!"[2]

Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān made this innovation in spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet (*s*) always prayed the Friday congregational prayers at its proper time under all circumstances. Muslim quotes Salamah saying, "We used to pray *jumʻah* prayers on Friday with the Holy Prophet (*s*), while the walls had no shadows under which we could take refuge."[3]

Bukhārī quotes from Anas ibn Mālik, "The Prophet of Allah used to pray the Friday congregational prayers on Friday when the sun started its incline just after high noon."[4]

6. Muʻāwiyah provides verdict opposed to the Qurʼan

Ibn Mundhar quotes from Qāsim ibn Muh ammad, "A certain tribe asked Muʻāwiyah about the Islamic verdict of a man who owned two slave girls. The slave girls were blood sisters, and this man used to have intimacy with both of them. Muʻāwiyah advised, ʻThere is no problem with thisʼ."[5]

The son of Abū Sufiyān provided this improper verdict even though in the Holy Qurʼan Allah, the High, clearly prohibits marrying two sisters at the same time:

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 58, *h adīth* 16415.

[2] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 42.

[3] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 2, p. 266, *h adīth* 32.

[4] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 307, *h adīth* 862.

[5] *Durr al-Manthūr*, Suyūt ī, vol. 2, p. 477.

﴿ وَأَنْ تَجمَعُوا بين الأُختين ﴾

“Forbidden to you…and that you should not have two sisters together.”[1]

7. Innovations due to enmity with Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*)

Nassā’ī and the other transmitters of *h adīth* quote Sa‘īd ibn Jabīr saying that on the Day of ‘Arafah, Ibn ‘Abbās asked him, “Why is it that I do not hear the people saying the *talbīyah* (*labbayk*)?” Sa‘īd ibn Jabīr answered, “The people are afraid of Mu‘āwiyah.” At that moment, Ibn ‘Abbās came out of his tent and defiantly said, “*Labbayk! Allāhumma Labbayk!* (Here I am! O my Lord, here I am at Your service!). I say this even though Mu‘āwiyah hates it and becomes debased by it. O my Lord! Curse these people because they have forsaken and abandoned the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) way of life [*Sunnah*] because of their enmity towards ‘Alī.”[2]

On an authentic chain of transmission, Ibn Kathīr narrates that Mu‘āwiyah previously used to say the *labbayk* during the *‘ishā’* prayers at ‘Arafah, but when he learned that ‘Alī also says the *labbayk* during the same *‘ishā’* prayers, he immediately quit and abandoned it for the sake of opposing ‘Alī (*‘a*).[3]

Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān did this in spite of the fact that his actions were opposed to the clear tradition of the Holy Prophet (*s*). Fad l says, “The Holy Prophet (*s*) and I set off from ‘Arafāt, and the Holy Prophet (*s*) kept saying the *talbīyah* until he started throwing stones at ‘*Aqabah*. He would say *takbīr* (*Allāh-u Akbar*) with every stone that he threw, but he did not stop saying the *labbayk* until he threw the last stone.”

Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Usāmah and Ibn ‘Abbās also narrate that the Holy Prophet (*s*) always continued to say *labbayk* until he threw stones at ‘*Aqabah*.[4]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Nisā’* 4:23.

[2] *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 2, p. 419, *h adīth* 3993.

[3] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 139; the events that occurred in the year 60 AH.

[4] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 2, p. 605, *h adīth* 1602; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, vol. 2, p. 1011, *h adīth* 3039.

8. Mu‘āwiyah and abandonment of divine limits

Al-Māwardī and other transmitters of *h adīth* have recounted that a number of thieves were brought before Mu‘āwiyah for judgment. He cut the hands of all the thieves save one. Then, Mu‘āwiyah said to the remaining thief, “I have cut the hands of all of your companions. What should I do with you?” The mother of the thief whose hands had not yet been cut interjected and pleadingly said, “O Amīr! Consider this to be one of those sins which you forgive.” Mu‘āwiyah let the thief go free. This was the first Islamic injunction that was abandoned.[1]

The son of Abū Sufiyān did this despite the fact that, according to the explicit text of the Holy Qur’an, a man or woman who steals must have their hand cut off.

The Holy Qur’an says,

﴿ والسَّارِقُ والسَّارِقَة فَاقطَعُوا أيديهُمَا ... ﴾

> *“The Man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands for what their hands have earned.”*[2]

Therefore, in circumstances where all the evidence has been presented and guilt proven, no one has the right to overlook the limits set forth by Allah.

Allah, the Most High, says,

﴿ ... وَمَن يتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ الله فَقَد ظَلَم نَفسَه ... ﴾

> *“And whoever goes beyond the limits of Allah, he indeed does injustice to his own soul.”*[3]

9. Mu‘āwiyah wore clothing that was prohibited

Abū Dāwūd quotes from Khālid, “Miqdām ibn Ma‘dī Karb, ‘Amru ibn Aswad and a man of Banī Asad from the tribe of Qansarīn went to see Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. Mu‘āwiyah said to Miqdām, ‘Do you know that al-H asan ibn ‘Alī has passed away?’ Miqdām quoted the Qur’anic verse that says we shall all return to Allah:

---

[1] *Al-Ah kām al-Sult ānīyyah*, vol. 2, p. 228; *Tārīkh ibn Kathīr*, vol. 8, p. 145; the events which occurred in the year 60 AH.

[2] *Sūrat al-Mā’idah* 5:38.

[3] *Sūrat al-T alāq* 65:1.

«إنّا لله وإنّا إليه راجِعُون »

“We are from Allah and to whom we shall return.”

Mu‘āwiyah said, ‘Do you think al-H asan death is a tragedy?’ Miqdām said, ‘Why should I not regard it as a tragedy when I know that the Holy Prophet used to put al-H asan on his lap and say,

«هذا مني وحسين من علي.»

“This one is from me and al-H usayn is from ‘Alī’.”

‘Umrū ibn Aswad said, ‘He was a fire that Allah extinguished.’ Miqdām added, ‘But today will not pass until I bring you to anger because I must give you annoying news.’ Then he added, ‘O Mu‘āwiyah! If I tell the truth, confirm what I say. And if I lie, refute what I say.’

Mu‘āwiyah answered, ‘Say whatever you want to say.’

Miqdām continued, ‘I swear upon Allah! Are you aware of the fact that Allah’s Prophet (*s*) forbade men from wearing silk?’ Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān answered, ‘Yes.’ Miqdām said, ‘Do you not know that Allah’s Prophet forbade wearing leather made from wild carnivorous animals?’ Mu‘āwiyah answered, ‘Yes, I know.’ Miqdām said, ‘I swear upon Allah that I have seen your household engaging in all these forbidden actions.’ Mu‘āwiyah said, ‘I know that I cannot escape your accusations, O Miqdām’!”[1]

10. Ziyād attributed to Abū Sufiyān

Mu‘āwiyah testified that Ziyād was the son of Abū Sufiyān, his father. Mu‘āwiyah claimed that during the Age of Ignorance, his father had committed adultery with Sumayyah, the wife of ‘Ubayd. Mu‘āwiyah claimed that Ziyād was born as a result of this sinful act. In order to prove his shameful claim, Mu‘āwiyah relied on the testimony of Abī Maryam, a liquor seller who also acted as an intermediary for anyone who wanted to commit adultery.[2]

---

[1] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, vol. 4, p. 68, *h adīth* 4131; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 118, *h adīth* 16738.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 220; *Al-‘Aqd al-Farīd*, vol. 3, p. 2; Ibn ‘Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 5, p. 409.

Mu'āwiyah claimed this child for his father paying no heed to the fact that the Holy Prophet (*s*) had said,

«الولد للفراش وللعاهر الحجر.»

> "The child belongs to the owner of the bed, and is forbidden to the adulterer."[1]

It has been narrated on another authentic chain of transmission that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«من ادّعى أبا في الاسلام غير أبيه فالجنة عليه حرام.»

> "Heaven is forbidden to anyone who falsely claims someone as his father."[2]

In addition:

«ليس من رجل ادّعي بغير ابيه وهو يعلم اِلاّ كفر، ومن ادّعى ما ليس له فليس منّا.»

> "Anyone who falsely claims that someone is his father, while he knows that it is not true has become an unbeliever [*kāfir*] and anyone who claims something that does not belong to him is not from us."[3]

This issue has been reported in many other credible Sunnī books of *h adīth.*

11. Coercion used to get allegiance for Yazīd

One of Mu'āwiyah's transgressions which was a clear violation of Islamic law, common logic and societal mores was getting allegiance from the people for his son Yazīd by force and coercion. This allegiance was opposed by the council of elders which, according to Sunnī traditional practice, is charged with the duty of choosing and appointing the next *caliph* after the death of the previous one. This unlawful allegiance was also opposed by the Immigrants [*muhājirīn*], the Helpers [*ans ār*], and the eminent of the Holy Prophet's (*s*) companions [*s ah ābah*]. It was an allegiance that was obtained by the use of force and the sword. It was an allegiance characterized

---

[1] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 6, p. 2499, *h adīth* 6432; Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 3, p. 256, *h adīth* 37.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 6, p. 17, *h adīth* 19883, 19953; Bayhaqī, *Sunan*, vol. 7, p. 403.

[3] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 3, p. 1292, *h adīth* 3317; Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 1, p. 113, *h adīth* 112.

by intimidation, threats and terror, on the one hand, and bribery and extortion, on the other. Worshippers of the carnal passions were paid to give allegiance to Yazīd.

Ibn Kathīr says, "In the fifty sixth year of the Islamic calendar, Muʻāwiyah called upon the people of Shām to pay allegiance to his son Yazīd. This made his wicked son the crown prince and heir apparent after his death."[1]

Ibn ʻAbd al-Barr and other narrators of *h adīth* have recounted that Muʻāwiyah read a sermon for the people of Shām, and in the middle of the sermon, said, "O people of Shām! My age has increased and my death has drawn near. I want to arrange an agreement for the caliphate and leave someone in my place so that he may bring about order and discipline for you. Surely, I am one of you and I am concerned about your affairs. Please tell me your suggestions."

The people came together and after consulting one another, said, "We are pleased with ʻAbd al-Rah mān ibn Khālid ibn Walīd, one of the Prophet's companions."

This suggestion was unbearably painful for the son of Abū Sufiyān, but he kept his displeasure hidden in his heart. One day, ʻAbd al-Rah mān became ill. Muʻāwiyah had a private Jewish doctor whom he held in high respect. He instructed this Jewish doctor to go to visit ʻAbd al-Rah mān and give him a specific poison that would kill him. The Jew did as he was ordered, and gave the liquid poison to ʻAbd al-Rah mān. ʻAbd al-Rah mān's stomach was torn apart, resulting in his death.[2]

Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān committed this dishonorable act of murder and assassination in order to secure the caliphate for his son Yazīd.

12. Muʻāwiyah's rebellion against the righteous leader

Another one of Muʻāwiyah's disobedient acts was rebellion against the rightful and legitimate Imām of the Time, Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʻAlī (*ʻa*). Muʻāwiyah rebelled against the Imām who, besides being explicitly appointed by Allah and His Prophet (*s*) to be Imām and caliph for the Muslims, had also gotten unanimous allegiance from the Islamic community.

---

[1] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 86; the events which occurred in the year 56 AH.

[2] *Al-Istīʻāb*, no. 1402; *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 16, p. 209.

Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān used the pretext that he wanted to avenge the death of ʿUthmān in order to bring about sedition and disturbances in the Islamic community and with the purpose of seizing power and transferring control from Medina to Shām, he initiated the Battle of S iffīn.

He did this despite the fact that, according to Sunnī *h adīth*s, the Holy Prophet (*s*) had absolutely forbidden Muslims from rebelling and rising up in arms against the Imām of the Time.

Muslim recounts that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

من خلع يدا من طاعة لقى الله يوم القيامة ولا حجة له، ومن مات وليس في عنقه بيعة مات ميتة جاهلية.

> "A person who quits obeying the Muslim caliph will meet Allah on the Day of Judgment having no plea for himself, and anyone who dies without paying allegiance to the Imām of his time has died the death of a *kāfir* [unbeliever] of the Age of Ignorance."[1]

13. Muʿāwiyah's heinous crimes against the Shīʿahs

Starting from the thirty ninth year of the Islamic calendar, Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān started to carry out widespread terrorist attacks on the Shīʿahs of Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʿAlī (*ʿa*). He dispatched cruel and irreligious people to attack the Shīʿahs. He intended to subdue Imām ʿAlī's followers by sending gangs of faithless people to invade and attack anyone under the protection of Imām ʿAlī's (*ʿa*) government.

1. He sent Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr with a thousand people to crush and terrorize the people of ʿAyn al-Tamar.

2. He sent Sufiyān ibn ʿAwf with six thousand men to suppress the people of Hīt. After that, he sent them to Anbār and Madāʾīn for more acts of terror and plunder.

3. Muʿāwiyah sent a sworn enemy of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) by the name of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿadah ibn H ikmah Fazārī with one thousand seven hundred men to attack the people of Taymāʾ.

4. He sent D ah h āk ibn Qays with three thousand armed men to Upper Mesopotamia to plunder and loot the possessions of anyone known to be a follower and Shīʿah of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). To counter this cowardly act of Muʿāwiyah, Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) sent H ujr ibn ʿUday with four thousand men to

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 4, p. 126, *h adīth* 58, *Kitāb al-Amārah*.

resist and confront this army.

5. Muʻāwiyah sent ʻAbd al-Rah mān ibn Qubāth ibn Ushaym with a group of men to the land of the Arabian Peninsula. Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) sent Kumayl to counter and resist their forces.

6. He sent H arath ibn Namr Tanūkhī to the Arabian Peninsula to suppress anyone known to be a follower and Shīʻah of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). Many people were killed in this confrontation.[1]

7. In the fortieth year of the Islamic calendar, Muʻāwiyah sent Busr ibn Art āt with an army to Mecca, Medina and Yemen. When Busr ibn Art āt reached Medina, Imām ʻAlī's (ʻa) agent and governor in Medina ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās was forced to flee to Kūfah to join and be under the protection of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). However, Busr martyred two of ʻUbayd Allāh's children who had remained behind in Medina.[2]

Another place that was plundered by Busr was an area inhabited by a tribe from Hamadān that were Shīʻahs of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). Busr made a surprise attack on them. He killed many of their men, and took a large number of their women and children into captivity. This was the first time in the history of Islam up to that time that Muslim women and children had been taken into captivity.[3]

Masʻūdī says, "Busr ibn Art āt killed a large number of people who came from Khuzāʻah, Hamadān and an area called "al-Anbā'" who were people of Iranian origin living in Yemen. He killed anyone he suspected of being inclined to ʻAlī (ʻa)."[4]

Ibn Abī al-H adīd says, "Busr descended upon the people of H asbān. They were all Shīʻahs of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). He entered into a vicious conflict with them and killed them savagely. After leaving that place, he went towards S anʻā, where he killed a hundred elderly men originating from Persia. The only crime they were guilty of committing was that two children

---

[1] *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 15, p. 44; Ibn ʻAsākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 10, p. 152; *Al-Istīʻāb* vol. 1, p. 65; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 134; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 425.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 139; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 425; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 10, p. 152; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7, p. 356.

[3] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 5, p. 11.

[4] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 22.

of ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās had hidden in a home belonging to a woman of their clan.

In his wild and brutal attacks on the Shīʻahs, Busr killed about thirty thousand people in all. He even burnt a number of them alive."[1]

Ibn Abī al-H adīd further writes, "In a letter addressed to all his government workers, Muʻāwiyah wrote, 'Do not give permission to anyone of ʻAlī's followers or descendants to testify their faith. On the other hand, respect and protect the followers of ʻUthmān.' In another letter addressed to his subordinates, he wrote: 'Erase the names of those who are proven to love ʻAlī and his *Ahl al-Bayt* from the register, and stop giving them their share of stipends from the Islamic treasury.' In a postscript to this letter, the son of Abū Sufiyān wrote, 'Anyone who is accused of loving the *Ahl al-Bayt* must be arrested and his house destroyed.' The people who suffered most as a result of these orders were people of Iraq, especially the people of Kūfah…"[2]

14. Muʻāwiyah's crimes after the peace settlement

When Imām al-H asan (ʻ*a*) was obliged to compromise and make peace with Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān, he felt great concern for the safety of Imām ʻAlī's (ʻ*a*) followers. It was for this reason that, in his peace agreement with Muʻāwiyah, Imām al-H asan (ʻ*a*) stressed that Imām ʻAlī's followers (ʻ*a*) must be guaranteed truce and safety. Muʻāwiyah agreed to this demand, but he had other plans in mind. In a clear act of treachery, he announced that he was not committed to the agreement and would not follow it. He said, "The agreement I made with al-H asan is null and void. It lies trampled under my feet." What aggravates the repugnancy of his actions is that Muʻāwiyah committed himself to breaching the peace settlement on the very same day of signing it, in spite of having earlier promised to be faithful to the pact.

Ibn Abī al-H adīd quotes from Abī al-H asan Madā'īnī, "In a letter to his governors general, Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān wrote, 'I have discharged myself from obligation to anyone who recounts *h adīth* in praise of the virtues of Abū Turāb [Imām ʻAlī] and his *Ahl al-Bayt*.' After this command, his governors gave orders to all the public speakers employed by the government to start reviling Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) and making derogatory and defamatory comments about his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*) from the pulpits. The people

[1] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, pp. 116-121.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 11, pp. 44-45.

of Kūfah were the most seriously affected by this calamity because at that time Kūfah was inhabited by a large number of the Shīʻahs. Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān appointed Ziyād to be the governor general of Kūfah and Bas rah. Ziyād knew the Shīʻahs very well. Acting on orders from Muʻāwiyah, he either killed or terrorized them wherever he could find them. After cutting off their hands and legs and removing their eyes from their sockets, he would hang their bodies from a scaffold. He also forcefully exiled a large number of them from Iraq."[1]

Ibn Aʻtham writes, "Ziyād was constantly searching for the Shīʻahs. He put most of them under state surveillance. He would kill them wherever he could find them, to such an extent that he killed a large number of them. He also cut their legs off and made them blind. Of course, Muʻāwiyah himself killed a lot of the Shīʻahs with his own hands, too."[2]

Muʻāwiyah himself gave direct orders for the hanging of a large number of the Shīʻahs of Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*). Another of Ziyād's contemptible tactics was to gather the Shīʻahs in mosques and force them to show hatred and disrespect towards Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*).[3]

In Bas rah, also, Ibn Ziyād was constantly searching for ʻAlī's (*ʻa*) followers with the intention of killing them. A large number of the Holy Prophet's (*s*) renowned companions and *tābiʻīn* were martyred by the direct command of Muʻāwiyah because they loved ʻAlī (*ʻa*) and his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*).[4]

In the year 53 AH, H ujr ibn ʻUday and his companions were killed on direct orders from Muʻāwiyah. H ujr ibn ʻUday and his companions were the first people in the history of Islam that were killed by means of 'patience towards death'.[5]

ʻAmru ibn H umaq Khuzāʻī, named "the Master of Martyrs" by Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), was killed by Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. Muʻāwiyah

[1] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 11, p. 44.

[2] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 4, p. 203.

[3] *Al-Mah bar*, p. 479.

[4] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 9, p. 88.

[5] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 3; *Siyr Aʻlām al-Nubalāʼ*, vol. 3, p. 642.

deceived him by promising to provide him with safety and then turned against him and, in a clear act of betrayal, killed him.[1]

Muʿāwiyah is also guilty of killing Mālik ibn Ashtar, one of the Arab nobles and a great and revered man in Islamic history. Mālik ibn Ashtar was one of Imām ʿAlī's (*ʿa*) bravest commanders. Muʿāwiyah killed him with poison that was given to him by one of his traitorous slaves while on his way to Egypt.[2]

Ziyād once requested one of Imām ʿAlī's (*ʿa*) special students named Rashīd al-Hijrī to curse and disown Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). Rashīd al-Hijrī flatly refused to do it. As a result, Ziyād cut both his hands, both legs, and his tongue, and then hung his body from a scaffold.[3]

Juwayrīyyah ibn Mashar al-ʿAbdī was arrested for the crime of accepting the *wilāyah* (spiritual and temporal guardianship) of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). His body was hung from a date tree after his hands and legs were cut off.

15. Muʿāwiyah himself cursed Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*)

As long as the Holy Prophet (*s*) was alive, Banī Hāshim and Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) holding the foremost position among them, were held in great honor and high respect, but soon after the death of the Holy Prophet (*s*), hostilities and enmities began to appear. These antagonisms were especially directed towards Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). These enmities reached their climax during the reign of Banī Umayyah especially under the leadership of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. Muʿāwiyah could not content himself with only going to war with Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) for the sake of seizing and usurping the caliphate, an action that made him acquire the title "oppressor" with regard to Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) even in the view of Sunnī Muslims; in addition, he started cursing Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) from the pulpits in a very public manner. This custom continued to prevail up to the time of the caliphate of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz who finally gave orders to discontinue the custom.

Muʿāwiyah's purpose for annihilating Banī Hāshim

By trying to eliminate Banī Hāshim, Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān was endeavoring to achieve two main aims: one of his goals was to annihilate the

---

[1] *Siyr Aʿlām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 4, p. 34.

[2] *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 91.

[3] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2, p. 294.

very roots of the religion and in this way nip Islam in the bud. The other objective was to avenge the blood of his polytheist forefathers and the other elders of Banī Umayyah who had been sent to perdition by the holy sword of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). It was for this reason that during the Battle of S iffīn, Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) refused to allow anyone of the family members of Banī Hāshim to enter the battlefield and gave orders preventing them from engaging in one on one battle with the enemy.[1]

Apart from employing savage methods, including assassination, terrorism, imposition of wars on his enemies, plunder and robbery, Muʻāwiyah also engaged in other tactics with the aim of annihilating and destroying Islam and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa).

We will now mention some of these tactics:

a. Obstruction of knowledge of the virtues of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa)

In his book called "*Al-Ih dāth*", ʻAlī ibn Muh ammad ʻAbd Allāh Madāʾinī writes, "After usurping the caliphate, Muʻāwiyah announced to all his government officials and workers that for anyone that recounted the virtues of Abū Turāb (Imām ʻAlī) or praised his household, neither his life nor his property would be secure."[2]

b. Initiating enmity and cursing of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa)

The insurgence that took place against ʻUthmān was, in all truth, a peoples' revolt and uprising. The people came to Medina from all the corners of the Islamic world except Shām and H ams , because these lands were under the control of Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. The injustice, intimidation and oppression imposed upon the people by ʻUthmān's government officials had caused a state of complete annoyance and utter frustration among the common people. It was this weariness of harassment which persuaded them to revolt and rebel and this insurgency led to the death of ʻUthmān.[3]

After ʻUthmān's death, Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr Ans ārī took ʻUthmān's blood soaked shirt to Shām.[4] Muʻāwiyah was quick to exploit this opportunity. He gave orders that this shirt must be hung on the pulpit of the Shām's Aʻz am

---

[1] Nas r ibn Muzāh im, *Waqaʻatu S iffīn*, pp. 462-463.

[2] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 3, p. 15.

[3] *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 5, pp. 59-60; *Tārīkh-e Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 150.

[4] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 562.

Mosque. White haired old men were either compelled by force or paid to gather and hold mourning ceremonies next to the shirt. They continued mourning in this way for over one year. News of the event reached all the cities and towns that were under the domain of Muʿāwiyah.[1]

In his first speech after this event, Muʿāwiyah endeavored to portray ʿUthmān as an innocent martyr and introduced Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*) as the responsible party for ʿUthmān's death. From then on, Muʿāwiyah's politics took the form of creating unfounded charges against Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*). On a daily basis, he sketched new plans to cause spite, animosity and malevolence against Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*).[2]

The people of Shām and H ams were bombarded with heavy propaganda as regards the issue of ʿUthmān's death. Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*) was being used as a scapegoat for a killing which he had personally renounced and condemned. The issue of revenge was falsely presented under the guise of religion. The plea that the caliph had been oppressed and unjustly killed excited the emotions and sentiments of the common people. Some who were gullible to state propaganda believed the lie and thus the people's feelings and emotions were vehemently raised against the people of Kūfah and Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*).

Muʿāwiyah and the Umayyad government did not stop at this in their devious propaganda games, but undertook all possible means to cause lasting hatred and animosity against Imām ʿAlī (ʿ*a*). They hoped to gain maximum benefit from the people of these two large provinces by resorting to such tactics.

ʿĀmir, the son of Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqās recounts, "One day Muʿāwiyah invited my father to his palace and said to him, 'Why don't you curse and insult Abū Turāb (Imām ʿAlī)?' Saʿd said, 'As long as I remember the three things which the Holy Prophet (*s*) said in favor of him, I will never say anything unpleasant against ʿAlī. This is because if anyone of those three things had been said about me, it would be far more beloved for me than owning a host of fine red camels. During one of the battles, Allah's Prophet (*s*) appointed ʿAlī (ʿ*a*) to be his representative in Medina. ʿAlī said, 'O Prophet of Allah! Are you appointing me to be your representative and deputy among the women and children?' The Holy Prophet (ʿ*a*) answered, 'Are you not pleased that with respect to me you hold the position which Hārūn (Aaron) held with respect to Mūsā (Moses), with the exception that

[1] *Waqʿatu S iffīn*, p. 127; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 562.

[2] *Waqʿatu S iffīn*, pp. 31-32, 127-128.

there will not be a Prophet after me?' Secondly, on the day of Khaybar, I heard the Holy Prophet (*s*) saying, 'I will give the Islamic banner and commandership to a man who loves Allah and the Prophet dearly and whom Allah and the Prophet also love very much.' We all waited anxiously and were turning our heads to see who that lucky person was. Then, the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, 'Tell ʻAlī to come here.' They brought ʻAlī forward and it became clear that he had sore eyes. The Holy Prophet (*s*) took some saliva from his mouth and rubbed it in ʻAlī's eyes. ʻAlī (*ʻa*) instantly got well. Then, Allah's Prophet (*s*) gave the Islamic banner to ʻAlī and through him Allah bestowed conquest and sweet victory for the Muslims. Thirdly, when the following verse was revealed, Allah's Prophet (*s*) called ʻAlī (*ʻa*), Fāt imah (*ʻa*), al-H asan (*ʻa*) and al-H usayn (*ʻa*). Then, he said, 'O Allah! These people are the ones who belong to me'."[1]

﴿ ... فَقُلۡ تَعالَوا نَدعُ أَبناءَنا وَأَبناءَكُم... ﴾

> *"And whoever disputes with you after what has come to you of the knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars…"*[2]

ʻAlī ibn Muh ammad Madā'inī recounts, "After usurping the government and gaining control of the caliphate, Muʻāwiyah wrote orders to all his officials and agents that he was not duty-bound to provide protection or security to anyone who recounted any of the virtues of Abū Turāb (Imām ʻAlī) or narrated favorable *h adīth*s about his household members. Muʻāwiyah commanded that the blood and property of such people should be taken without impunity. Government appointed speakers began distancing themselves from Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*), cursing him and speaking ill of his household in every community and from every pulpit."[3]

Yaʻqūbī writes, "Whenever some Shīʻahs of Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*), among them H ujr ibn ʻUday and ʻAmru ibn al-H imaq Khuzāʻī, heard Mughayrah ibn

---

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 7, pp. 120-121; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, pp. 108-109.

[2] *Sūrat Āl ʻImrān* 3:61.

[3] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 11, p. 44.

Shu'bah and his likes cursing Imām 'Alī (*'a*), they would arise and cast the curses back at them."[1]

After the martyrdom of Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*'a*), Mu'āwiyah intended to go to Mecca for the *h ajj*. He first went to Medina. There, he requested to curse Imām 'Alī (*'a*) from the Prophet's (*s*) pulpit. The people told him that Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās was present in the city and that it was very unlikely that he would be pleased or ascent to such an act. The son of Abū Sufiyān then sent someone to ask Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās for permission to curse Imām 'Alī (*'a*) from the Prophet's (*s*) pulpit. Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās replied, "If you do such a thing, I will leave this Mosque forever and never return to it at all!" As long as Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās was the governor of the holy city of Medina, Mu'āwiyah restrained himself from cursing Imām 'Alī (*'a*) in Medina.

After the death of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās , Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān started cursing Imām 'Alī (*'a*) again and wrote letters to his officials commanding them to revile Imām 'Alī (*'a*) from the pulpits. They did as they were ordered. Umm Salamah, one of the Prophet's (*s*) wives, wrote a letter to Mu'āwiyah complaining that Mu'āwiyah and his agents were cursing Allah and his Prophet (*s*) from their pulpits because of their cursing of 'Alī (*'a*) and those who love him. She declared, "I bear witness that Allah and his Prophet (*s*) love 'Alī." Mu'āwiyah did not pay the least attention to this letter.[2]

Jāh iz narrates, "Verily, at the end of his sermons Mu'āwiyah always used to say, 'O Allah! Abū Turāb (Imām 'Alī) has become an apostate and a hindrance in the way towards you. Therefore, curse him and punish him with painful chastisement.' He wrote these words and sent them to all the horizons of the Muslim World to be repeated by his agents and public speakers. This curse continued to be said on the pulpits up to the reign of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Azīz.

Some members of Banī Umayyah told Mu'āwiyah, 'O Amīr! You have attained your ambitions and worldly desires. Why don't you stop cursing this man?' Mu'āwiyah answered, 'I swear by Allah that I will not stop reviling him until I am assured that all the newborn children are brought up on the custom of cursing him, and likewise, all the old ones become grey-haired

[1] *Tārīkh Ya'qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 205.

[2] *Al-'Aqd al-Farīd*, vol. 4, p. 159.

while vilifying him. I want to make sure that no one ever remembers him kindly'."[1]

Zamakhsharī narrates, "During the days of the reign of Banī Umayyah, and in accordance with Muʻāwiyah's custom, ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʻa*) was cursed and reviled from more than seventy pulpits."[2]

Ah mad ibn Yah yā al-Balādhurī recounts, "Muʻāwiyah appointed Mughayrah ibn Shuʻbah to be the governor of Kūfah. Mughayrah kept this post for nine years… and he was never negligent in his duty of slandering and vilifying ʻAlī (*ʻa*)."[3]

Hākim al-Neyshābūrī narrates from ʻAbd Allāh ibn Z ālim that Mughayrah ibn Shuʻbah used to insult Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*). He even appointed and delegated people to carry out this task.[4]

ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Abī Malīkah recounts that a man from Shām vilified and used insulting language against ʻAlī (*ʻa*) in the presence of Ibn ʻAbbās. Ibn ʻAbbās said, "O enemy of Allah! You have wronged the Holy Prophet (*s*). Do you not know that Allah has said,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذين يؤذُونَ الله وَرَسُولَه لَعَنَهُم الله في الدُّنيا وَالآخِرة وَأَعَدَّ لَهُم عَذَابًا مُهينا﴾

> *'Surely, as for those who speak evil things of Allah and His Apostle, Allah has cursed them in this world and the hereafter, and He has prepared for them a disgraceful chastisement'.*"[5]

Then, Ibn ʻAbbās added, "If the Holy Prophet (*s*) were alive today, he would be annoyed by your conduct."[6]

ʻAbd al-Rahmān ibn Baylamānī says, "I was in the presence of Muʻāwiyah when a man stood up and started flinging abuses at Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) one after the other. Saʻīd ibn Zayd ibn ʻUmru ibn Nafīl stood up and protested, saying,

---

[1] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 4, pp. 56-57, sermon [*khut bah*] 56.

[2] *Rabīʻ al-Abrār*, vol. 2, p. 186.

[3] *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 5, p. 252; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 254; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 488.

[4] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 509, *h adīth* 5898; *Siyr Aʻlām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 3, p. 31.

[5] *Sūrat al-Ah zāb* 33:57.

[6] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 138, *h adīth* 4618.

‘O Mu‘āwiyah! Do I have to endure the pain of hearing them slandering ‘Alī (‘*a*) without you showing any indignation at it? Verily, I heard Allah’s Prophet (*s*) saying,

«هو مني بمنزلة هارون من موسى.»

‘Alī is to me what Aaron was to Moses’.”[1]

Ah mad ibn H anbal quotes from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Z ālim Māzanī, “When Mu‘āwiyah left Kūfah, he appointed Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah to be his agent there. Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah appointed speakers to curse and slander ‘Alī (‘*a*). Māzanī says, ‘I was seated next to Sa‘īd ibn Zayd ibn ‘Umru ibn Nafīl. I noticed that he had got very angry. When I asked him why, he got my hand and took me to a corner. Then, he asked me, ‘Don’t you see that this man is committing injustice against himself by cursing ‘Alī (‘*a*), a man whose place is in paradise’”[2]

Ibn Abī al-H adīd relates that Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah, Mu‘āwiyah’s governor and agent in Kūfah, commanded H ujr ibn ‘Uday to stand up and curse ‘Alī (‘*a*) in the presence of all the people. H ujr ibn ‘Uday refused. Mughayrah intimidated and threatened him with punitive action if he did not do as he had been ordered. H ujr ibn ‘Uday stood up and said to the people, “Your leader has commanded me to curse ‘Alī (‘*a*); therefore, curse him.” The people of Kūfah said, “O Allah! Curse him.” Of course, the people’s curse was meant for Mughayrah ibn Shu‘bah himself.[3]

The Holy Prophet (*s*) forbade the cursing ‘Alī (‘*a*)

1. The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«لاتسبّوا عليا ً فانّه كان ممسوسا في ذات الله عز وجل.»

“Do not curse ‘Alī, because he is heedless of any dangers in the way of Allah.”[4]

2. The Holy Prophet (*s*) also said,

«من سب عليا فقد سبّني، ومن سبّني فقد سب الله تعالى.»

---

[1] Ibn Abī ‘Ās im, *Al-Sunnah*, p. 588, *h adīth* 1350.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 400, *h adīth* 1644.

[3] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 4, p. 58.

[4] *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 19, p. 148; *H iliyah al-Awliyā’*, vol. 1, p. 68.

“Whoever vilifies ‘Alī has certainly vilified me. And whoever curses me has without doubt cursed Allah.”[1]

3. He also said,

«عادى الله من عادى عليا.»

“O Allah! Hate anyone who hates ‘Alī.”[2]

4. Hākim al-Neyshābūrī recounts that Abī ‘Abd Allāh said, “One day I went to see Umm Salamah. She asked me, ‘Do you curse the Holy Prophet (*s*) among yourselves?’ I said, ‘I seek refuge in Allah’ or ‘Glory be to Allah’, or a similar phrase. Umm Salamah then said, ‘On several occasions I heard the Holy Prophet (*s*) say:

«من سب عليا فقد سبّني.»

‘Whoever curses ‘Alī has certainly cursed me’.”[3]

The judgment for anyone who curses Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*)

1. On his own chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī narrates from Umm Salamah that the Holy Prophet (*s*) always used to say,

«لا يحب عليا منافق ولا يبغضه مؤمن.»

“No hypocrite loves ‘Alī, and no believer hates ‘Alī.”[4]

2. Al-Tirmidhī also recounts that Imām ‘Alī (*s*) said,

«لقد عهد الى النبي الأمي صَلَّى الله عَليه وآله: انّه لا يحبك الا مؤمن، ولا يبغضک الا منافق.»

“Verily, the unlettered Prophet (*s*) gave me a firm promise when he said that no one will love you except a true believer; and no one will hate you except a hypocrite.”[5]

---

[1] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 131.

[2] *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 11, p. 601, *h adīth* 32899.

[3] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 130, *h adīth* 4615.

[4] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 635, *h adīth* 3717; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 10, p. 176, *h adīth* 26569.

[5] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 635, *h adīth* 3717; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 10, p. 176, *h adīth* 26569.

Another *h adīth* narrated by Muslim confirms the above-mentioned *h adīth*.[1]

3. Al-Tirmidhī relates that Abū Sa'īd said,

«انّا كنّا لنعرف المنافقين . نحن معشر الانصار . ببغضهم علي بن ابي طالب.»

"Indeed, the Helpers [*ans ār*], used to recognize and distinguish who the hypocrites were by observing who hated 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*'a*)."[2]

?

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 1, p. 86, *h adīth* 78.

[2] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 635, *h adīth* 3717.

THE ILLEGITIMACY OF YAZĪD'S CALIPHATE

Some misguided traditionalists and historians have attempted to portray Yazīd's caliphate and government as legitimate according to Islam. They have endeavored to demonstrate that the people pledged allegiance to Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah. By doing so, they try to make Yazīd's government appear acceptable. At the same time, they try to show Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) uprising against Yazīd to be an illegitimate rebellion that was against the common will of the people. In this section, we substantiate the falsity of these claims, but first we mention some of the statements made in support of Yazīd.

Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī writes, "The allegiance paid to Yazīd was legally concluded, because one man paid allegiance to him, even though that one man was his father, Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān."[1]

Muh ibb al-Dīn Khat īb writes, "Yazīd was just, vigilant and perseverant in prayer. He used to perform good deeds. He always enforced the Prophet's (*s*) *Sunnah* and was very attached to it."[2]

Ibn al-ʿArabī also writes, "Anyone who went to war against al-H usayn did so with the emphatic recommendation of his ancestor the Prophet (*s*). They say that the Prophet (*s*) said, 'Kill by the sword anyone who wants to sow discord and division in the Islamic community [*ummah*], no matter whom it may be'."[3]

---

[1] Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī, *Al-ʿAwās im min al-Qawāh im*, p. 222.

[2] Muh ibb al-Dīn Khat īb, *Al-Khut ūt al-ʿArīd ah*, p. 232.

[3] *Al-ʿAwās im min al-Qawāh im*, Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī, p. 222.

Ibn Khaldūn has said, "Al-H usayn was killed by his grandfather's sword."[1]

Muh ammad Abū al-Yasr ʻĀbidīn, the Mufti of Shām, says, "The Allegiance paid to Yazīd was legal and legitimate. Therefore, whoever rebelled against him was an insurgent."[2]

Abul Khayr Shāfiʻī Qazvīnī writes, "Yazīd was an *imām* and a supreme religious jurisprudent [*mujtahid*]."[3]

We will now survey and discuss the legitimacy of Yazīd's claim to the caliphate.

Evidence regarding the illegitimacy of Yazīd's caliphate

Supporters of Banī Umayyah and Yazīd's partisans among some Islamic sects have been persistent in trying to portray the issue of Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) uprising against Yazīd as a rebellion against a legitimate Muslim caliph whose allegiance and caliphate was concluded in a correct and unflawed manner. By this means, they have striven to depict Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) as an insurgent who rebelled against the "rightful Imām" of the time. They have asserted that Yazīd only intended to protect his legitimately acquired position when he brutally massacred Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and all his companions at Karbalā.

In fact, however, the reality is quite the opposite. The real *imām* and caliph was Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). His Imamate and caliphate were sanctioned by Allah and the Holy Prophet (*s*). It was actually Yazīd who secured the caliphate by means of usurpation and extortion. Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah's caliphate, in fact, lacked any legitimacy. Therefore, Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) uprising against Yazīd was not only legitimate and rational, but also an obligatory and binding duty upon Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) as well. Evidence for these assertions follows:

1. The Imamate of H usayn ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*)

In a sound and well-established *h adīth* recounted by successive witnesses among the Sunnīs, the Holy Prophet (*s*) explicitly mentioned the Twelve

[1] Manāwī, *Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 1, p. 265, vol. 5, p. 213; *The Introduction of Ibn Khaldūn*, p. 181.

[2] *Aghālīt al-Muwarikhīn*, p. 120.

[3] *Tarājum Rijāl al-Gharnayn, Al-Sādis wa al-Sābiʻ*, p. 6.

Imāms who would come after him and introduced them as the rightful caliphs.

Jābir ibn Samrah recounts, "I heard the Holy Prophet (*s*) saying, 'As long as the Twelve Caliphs govern, Islam will always be honored.' Then, he said something I did not understand clearly. I asked my father, 'What has the Prophet just said?' My father answered, 'They will all belong to the tribe of Quraysh'."[1]

On his own chain of transmission, Bukhārī, too, quotes from Jābir ibn Samrah that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, "They will be twelve *Amīr*s (leaders). Then he said something that I did not hear properly. My father said, 'They will all belong to the tribe of Quraysh'."[2]

With recourse to the *H adīth al-Thaqalayn*, we understand that these twelve people are of the Prophet's (*s*) Household. With attention to the *H adīth Ghadīr al-Khumm*, we come to know that the first of them is 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*'a*). All the *h adīth*s mentioned above were quoted from the Holy Prophet (*s*) during the same period of time and can therefore be used to interpret each other, especially when it is born in mind that, according to other *h adīth*s, the names of these twelve people were explicitly mentioned by the Holy Prophet (*s*).

In the book "*Farā'id al-Samt ayn*", H amawaynī recounts on his own chain of transmission from Ibn 'Abbās that a Jewish person named Na'thal was granted an audience by the Holy Prophet (*s*). Na'thal asked him, "O Muh ammad! I will ask you a number of questions about certain issues that have remained hidden in my heart for a long time. If you answer them all, I will believe in you." The Holy Prophet (*s*) said to him, "Ask O Abā 'Amārah!" One of the questions which the Jew asked was this, "Inform me about who will be the inheritor and executor of your will after your death? I am asking this question because there has never been a prophet who died and did not leave behind an administrator for himself. Indeed, our Prophet, Mūsā ibn 'Imrān left Yūsha' ibn Nūn to be his administrator." The Holy Prophet (*s*) answered, "Verily, 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib is my inheritor and the administrator of my will. After him, I will be succeeded by my descendants al-H asan and al-H usayn; and after these two, there will come nine Imāms

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 6, p. 3, *Kitab al-Amārah*.

[2] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 8, p. 127, *Bāb al-Istikhlāf*.

one after another (in successive order) from the loins of al-H usayn." Naʻthal said, "O Muh ammad! Mention their names to me."

The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, "After al-H usayn, his son ʻAlī ibn al-H usayn, then Muh ammad ibn ʻAlī, then his son Jaʻfar ibn Muh ammad, then his son Mūsā ibn Jaʻfar, then his son ʻAlī ibn Mūsā, and after him his son Muh ammad ibn ʻAlī, and after him his son ʻAlī ibn Muh ammad, and then H asan ibn ʻAlī and his son, the final and ultimate proof of Allah upon mankind, Muh ammad Mahdī ibn al-H asan will be the last Imām. These are the twelve people who will succeed me."[1]

These twelve people have also been clearly mentioned in other *h adīth*s.[2]

In another *h adīth*, the Holy Prophet (*s*) has said,

الحسن والحسين إماما أمتي بعد أبيهما.

> "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two Imāms of my Islamic community [*ummah*] after their father."[3]

Therefore, if Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is the rightful *imām* and caliph nominated and appointed by the Holy Prophet (*s*) himself, it follows that Yazīd's caliphate is illegitimate and invalid.

2. Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) infallibility

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is one of the people included in the 'Verse of Purification' [*Ayah al-Tat hīr*] of the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, he is free of any sort of sin, error or forgetfulness. Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) cannot commit any sort of wrongdoing because he has been purified of sin by the Almighty Allah.

On his chain of transmission, Muslim quotes ʻĀ'ishah recounting, "One morning Allah's Prophet (*s*) left my house carrying a piece of cloth made from raw wool on his shoulders. Al-H asan ibn ʻAlī, al-H usayn, Fāt imah and ʻAlī all came to join the Prophet (*s*) in the order mentioned. Then, he recited this verse,

---

[1] H amawaynī, *Farāʻid al-Samt ayn*, vol. 2, p. 132; *Yanābīʻ al-Mawaddah*, vol. 3, pp. 281-282.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] H amawaynī, *Farāʻid al-Samt ayn*, vol. 1, p. 55.

﴿ إِنَّما يريد الله ليذهِب عَنكُم الرِّجس أَهل البيت ويطَهِّرَكُم تَطهيرا ﴾

> *"Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O people of the house, and to purify you a thorough purifying."*[1] [2]

If, as reported in these *h adīth* from Sunnī sources, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) is purified of sin, or infallible, it follows that his uprising is correct and justified. It also implies that the government of Yazīd was not credible.

3. Allah's Prophet (*s*) is pleased with al-H usayn (*'a*)

On his own chain of transmission, T abarānī narrates from Rib'ī ibn H arāsh that Imām 'Alī (*'a*) said, "I visited the Holy Prophet (*s*) one day while he had spread a piece of cloth on the ground. The Prophet, Fāt imah, al-H asan, al-H usayn and I sat together on that piece of cloth. Then, the Holy Prophet (*s*) picked up the corners of the cloth and spread it over all of us. After that, he said,

«اللّهم ارض عنهم كما أنا راض عنهم.»

> 'O Allah! Be pleased with these people in the same way that I am pleased with them!'"[3]

Haythamī has recounted this *h adīth* in his book "*Majma' al-Zawā'id*". He says, "T abarānī has narrated this *h adīth* in the book "*Al-Awsat* ". All the people mentioned on this chain of transmission are well known for transmitting authentic *h adīth*, while 'Ubayd ibn T ufayl, one of the transmitters mentioned on this channel, is reliable and trustworthy [thaqah]."[4]

We can understand from this *h adīth* that the Holy Prophet (*s*) is pleased with Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) and, as a result of this pleasure, makes a supplication in his favor. We also know that Allah, the High, certainly accepts the Holy Prophet's (*s*) prayers and supplications; therefore, it follows that Allah is certainly pleased with Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). We can deduce that Imām al-H usayn's uprising and revolt against Yazīd was also a source of pleasure for Allah. This point casts more doubt upon the legitimacy of Yazīd's claim for caliphate.

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Ah zāb* 33:33.

[2] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , vol. 7, p. 130.

[3] *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 169.

[4] *Ibid*.

4. al-H usayn (ʻa), the master of the youths of Paradise

Abū Saʻīd recounts that the Holy Prophet (s) said,

«الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب أهل الجنة.»

> "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two leaders of the youths of paradise."[1]

Al-Tirmidhī believes that this *h adīth* is sound and correct, and al-Albānī agrees with him.[2]

If Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), according to the sayings of the Holy Prophet (s), is the master of the youths of Paradise, then it follows that all his actions and works in this world, including rising up against Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah, are pleasing to Allah. Again, the legitimacy of Yazīd's caliphate becomes subject to question and doubt.

5. The continuity and stability of the Prophet's (s) mission depended heavily on al-H usayn's (ʻa) uprising

On his own chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī narrates from Yaʻlā ibn Marrah that the Holy Prophet (s) said,

«حسين مني وأنا من حسين.»

> "Al-H usayn is from me and I am from al-H usayn."[3]

It is clear that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) comes from the Prophet (s) because he is the Holy Prophet's (s) grandson born from his daughter Fāt imah (ʻa). However, what is the meaning of the second part of the Prophet's (s) saying that he is from al-H usayn (ʻa)?

We can positively assert through examination of the results of his uprising that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) revived the Prophet's (s) mission by rising up against Yazīd. His martyrdom and the martyrdom of the youths of Banī Hāshim and all his companions kept the true message of the Holy Prophet (s) alive. The survival of the religion of Islam and the continuity of the

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 3, 62, 64, 82; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 321; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, pp. 154, 166-167.

[2] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 321; *Silsilah al-Ah ādīth al-S ah īh ah*, vol. 2, p. 423, no. 796.

[3] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 324.

Holy Prophet's (*s*) mission were secured by Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) uprising. Therefore, it can be said that the Holy Prophet's (*s*) characteristics is dependent on Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*).

Al-Tirmidhī considered the previously mentioned *h adīth* of the Prophet (*s*) to be good [*h asan*].[1] After recounting this *h adīth*, Hākim al-Neyshābūrī has also presented its sound and correct chain of transmission [*s ah īh al-asnād*], and Dhahabī agrees with him.[2]

In his book entitled "*Mis bāh al-Zajājah fī Zawā'id ibn Mājah*", Būsayrī says that the chain of transmission of this *h adīth* is good [*h asan*] and the transmitters recounting it are all honest and trustworthy [*thaqah*].[3]

After narrating this *h adīth*, Haythamī says that its chain of transmission is good [*h asan*].[4]

6. Peace treaty with Imām al-H asan and the caliphate

The conditions that Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufiyān accepted in the peace agreement he signed with Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*'a*) are worthy of careful thought and consideration.

Mu'āwiyah had mentioned certain conditions in his proposal for peace, and Imām al-H asan (*'a*) added other conditions.[5] Among the items that were agreed upon was a stipulation that Imām al-H asan (*'a*) would cede the caliphate to Mu'āwiyah on the condition that, when Mu'āwiyah died, the caliphate would be handed back to Imām al-H asan (*'a*). In the event that Imām al-H asan (*'a*) were not alive, the caliphate would be handed over to his brother Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).[6]

That is why as soon as Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) heard that Mu'āwiyah had died, he told 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, "I will never pay allegiance to Yazīd, because after my brother, al-H asan (*'a*), the caliphate returns to me. Mu'āwiyah did as he wanted, and swore to my brother that he would never

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 177.

[3] *Mis bāh al-Zajājah*, vol. 1, p. 85.

[4] *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 181.

[5] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 124.

[6] *'Umdah al-T alib*, p. 67.

hand the caliphate over to anyone of his children. He promised that if I were alive, the caliphate would return to me."[1]

It has been clearly stated in many Sunnī sources that Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (ʻa) put a condition on Muʻāwiyah that he should not hand over the caliphate to anyone after he died.[2]

This peace agreement and its conditions, which were agreed upon by both parties of the treaty, substantiate the illegitimacy of the succession of Yazīd to the caliphate after his father's death.

7. Muʻāwiyah himself was not the legitimate caliph

Sunnī Islam accepts the legitimacy of the incoming caliph by relying on the oath of the previous caliph. However, the caliphate and Imamate of the previous caliph must indisputably be proven before his oath can be considered valid. In Muʻāwiyah's case, this was not so. His caliphate was never proven legitimate, as the following information shows:

Firstly, Muʻāwiyah gained control of the caliphate and predominance over the Islamic community by rebelling against the rightful Imām of the Muslims, Amīr al-Muʾminīn Imām ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa). Therefore, Muʻāwiyah's caliphate itself lacked legitimacy and was void of any reasonable religious or legal base.

Secondly, in Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) peace agreement, it was stated that the tax, revenue and tribute of Abjard must be handed over to Imām al-H asan (ʻa). This confirms that Imām al-H asan (ʻa) did not recognize Muʻāwiyah as the rightful caliph of the Muslims. The reason is that the area of Abjard had come under the fold of Islam peacefully, and had not been conquered by force or the strength of an army. According to the Islamic law, the tax from this kind of place is exclusively reserved for the legitimate Imām of the Muslims. Therefore, Imām al-H asan (ʻa), who was the legitimate Imām of the Muslims, demanded this share and allotment in his agreement with Muʻāwiyah.[3]

Thirdly, one of the conditions that Imām al-H asan (ʻa) included in the peace pact was that Muʻāwiyah would have to abstain from calling himself

---

[1] Ibn Aʻtham, *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 12.

[2] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 16, p. 22; *Al-Futūh* , vol. 4, p. 291; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 13, p. 265.

[3] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 380.

amīr al-mu'minīn (the Commander of the Faithful). This is a clear declaration from Imām al-H asan (*'a*) that he did not in reality support or endorse the legitimacy of the government of Mu'āwiyah, the son of Abū Sufiyān.

8. The absence of allegiance for Yazīd

Some have ventured to prove that the people paid allegiance to Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah, but upon study of historical accounts and reflection regarding the events that happened, one can easily see that this assertion is not true.

Firstly, in a letter to his governor of Medina, Yazīd wrote, "You must secure the allegiance of individuals who enjoy special honor and status among the people by whatever means there are at your disposal; secure the allegiance of such people as al-H usayn ibn 'Alī, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar, 'Abd al-Rah mān ibn Abī Bakr and 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr. If they refuse to pay allegiance, kill them."[1] Of course, it must be pointed out that allegiance that is paid reluctantly or out of coercion is not considered to be legitimate or valid at all.

Secondly, the people of Iraq had written a letter to Imām al-H usayn ibn 'Alī (*'a*) in which they manifestly declared that they did not have an *imām* and were not going to pay allegiance to anyone save al-H usayn ibn 'Alī (*'a*).[2]

Thirdly, Shabrāwī Shāfi'ī strongly opposes any defence of Yazīd's caliphate by certain scholars. First, he quotes and recounts the reasons which have been put forward by Ghazzālī and Ibn al-'Arabī as their legal bases and reasons for prohibiting cursing or reviling Yazīd. Then, he gives a detailed account of the overstatements of these two people regarding the issue of cursing Yazīd. He says, "The statements of Ghazzālī and Ibn al-'Arabī are false, because they are founded on the assumption that the allegiance paid to Yazīd—Allah's curse be on him—was correct and sound, in spite of the fact that this view is opposed by historians."[3]

The supporters of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) uprising

---

[1] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, pp. 10-11; *Tārīkh Ya'qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 241.

[2] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, pp. 151-152.

[3] *Al-Ith āf bi H ubb al-Ashrāf*, p. 68.

Most Muslims, including the Sunnīs, remember the historical epic of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) with unanimous honor and respect. In addition, after the event of Karbalā, those who had either opposed the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) or had taken a position of neutrality and non-alignment soon abandoned these positions and in the course of events, the majority of them announced their support for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) in various ways.

1. ʻUbayd Allāh ibn H urr Juʻfī was one who had initially refused to help Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). After the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), he became an intolerant opponent of Banī Umayyah's government. He composed songs of lamentation for the martyrs of Karbalā and started calling on the people to rebel and rise up against the rule of Yazīd.[1]

2. Zayd ibn Arqam was a man who had tried to dissuade Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from continuing on his course of action by appealing to the Imām (ʻa) in a devout and mystical manner. In the end, he was persuaded to give up his opposition because of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) legitimate and moral right. When he saw the captives of Karbalā being taken to Shām and the heads severed from the dead bodies of the martyrs being carried on lances, when he observed the shameful way in which Ibn Ziyād was behaving towards the victims, when he saw how low the Muslims had sunk and how abject they had become, he was deeply moved by the sorrowful event. He could not help breaking down and crying. He said "O people! From now on, you will be worse off than slaves. You have killed the son of Fāt imah (ʻa), and have made yourselves subjects of the son of Marjānah. I swear upon Allah! He will kill the best of you and enslave the worst among you. Woe on he who is content with abjectness and disgrace!"[2]

3. Abū al-ʻAlā' Muʻarrī says, "The brutal killing of al-H usayn (ʻa) and the usurpation of the caliphate by Yazīd was a wicked act of our age and our people."[3]

4. Shaykh Muh ammad ʻAbduh is one who believes in supporting only a religious and just government. He maintains that opposing an unjust and tyrannical government is obligatory upon all Muslims. He considers Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) uprising against Yazīd as opposition against an unjust

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, pp. 469-470.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 6, p. 262.

[3] Al-Muʻarrī, *Luzūm mā lā Yulzam*, pp. 310-311.

usurper and oppressor.[1]

5. ʿAbd Allāh ʿAlāyikī writes, "Al-H usayn (ʿa) did not rise up against an *imām*. On the contrary, he revolted against a transgressor who had imposed himself upon the people or had been imposed upon them by his father. It is very likely that if this movement had been made by a person other than Imām al-H usayn (ʿa), and against a person other than Yazīd, the filthy propaganda apparatus of the rulers of that time would have easily and skillfully succeeded at distorting the lofty aims of the uprising. But al-H usayn (ʿa) was a unique and different man; he had a very brilliant background and was famous among the Muslims. There was also much testimony given in his favor by the Holy Prophet (s). There were *h adīth*s recorded which foretold this uprising. Now we have a scenario where al-H usayn (ʿa) is on one side of event, and the wicked Yazīd and the corrupt household of Banī Umayyah is on the opposite side. This sharp contrast made the movement of al-H usayn (ʿa) shine like a bright star in a dark night so much so that even where the positions of opponents of al-H usayn's (ʿa) uprising are mentioned in Sunnī books, it is for the purpose of negating and condemning them."[2]

6. ʿAbbās Mah mūd ʿAqqād believes that it is unfair to analyze and evaluate Imām al-H usayn's (ʿa) uprising using narrow human standards. He writes, "Al-H usayn's (ʿa) exodus from Mecca towards Iraq is not a movement which can be judged according to ordinary standards because this uprising is among rare historical movements that involve the invitation of the people towards religion and political awareness. The only people who are capable of making such unique movements are those who have been created solely for such missions. Exposing oneself to danger in the way that al-H usayn (ʿa) did, does not even occur to the minds of ordinary people… Rather, this is an unparalleled movement in the history of mankind which calls for unique and remarkable individuals…"[3]

He criticizes orientalists for failing to understand the conditions surrounding Imām al-H usayn's (ʿa) uprising. While protesting against their lack of perception, he states, "How good it would have been had the orientalists comprehended the issue of religious belief in the person of Imām al-H usayn (ʿa). Orientalists have to be reminded that for Imām al-H usayn

---

[1] *The Qur'anic Commentary of Al-Manār*, vol. 1, p. 367.

[2] ʿAlā'ilī, *Al-Imām al-H usayn*, pp. 33-34.

[3] ʿIqād, *Al-ʿAbqariyyāt al-Islamiyyah*, vol. 2, p. 222.

(*ʻa*), Islam was not a temporal issue that could be compromised. Al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was a person with the strongest faith in Islamic law. He was a man who believed that suspension of the limits set by Allah (cessation in the practice of Islamic laws) was the greatest of all calamities that would sooner or later befall not only him and His household, but the Arab nation and the Islamic community as whole…"[1] **?**

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 228.

YAZĪD, INSTIGATOR OF IMĀM AL-H USAYN'S ('A) DEATH

Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah was an Umayyad caliph who committed uncountable crimes during his short-lived reign. In the first year of his three-year rule, he issued orders that the Prophet's (*s*) grandchild, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), must be put to death along with all his companions. The method in which this objective was carried out was so abominable that it gave birth to countless subsequent uprisings against Yazīd. To this day, this despicable action has remained a legitimate cause for constant sorrow and protest, and many Sunnī scholars have voiced strong objections against Yazīd. Unfortunately though, some biased and extremist 'scholars' and their narrow minded followers have ventured to come to Yazīd's defence and have fabricated writings in praise of Yazīd to try to deceive readers about his dark and treacherous role in history.

We will now examine this issue in detail and provide historical evidence to bear witness to the fact that Yazīd was the direct instigator of the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).

Ibn Taymiyyah's defence of Yazīd

Driven by undisguised hostility against the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*), Ibn Taymiyyah rose in defence of Yazīd. He endeavored by all means to exonerate Yazīd of all corruption and unscrupulousness including his guilt in the killing of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). He has done so by shamelessly resorting to guile and deceit to justify Yazīd's actions.

Ibn Taymīyyah writes, "Yazīd was not pleased with the killing of al-H usayn. He even expressed his displeasure at this action."[1]

He also repudiates the truth of the events in which the Shām army carried the head of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) on a lance to Shām.[2] At one point, he even denies that Imām al-H usayn's (ʻ*a*) Household, the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*), were taken into captivity by Yazīd's soldiers.[3]

At another juncture, Ibn Taymīyyah says, "Yazīd did not issue orders to kill al-H usayn. Yazīd's soldiers did not bring the heads of those killed at Karbalā on lances to Shām to be presented to Yazīd. Yazīd did not hit the teeth of al-H usayn with his stick. In fact, it was ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād who did all these actions."[4]

In this section, evidence will be cited to substantiate the fact that when Ibn Ziyād killed Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), he was acting under strict and direct orders issued by Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah.

1. Yazīd appointed Ibn Ziyād governor of Kūfah

Upon examination of historical evidence, it is apparent that it was Yazīd that appointed ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād to the post of governor of Kūfah. Before then, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād was the governor of Bas rah. This appointment sheds light upon the view that Yazīd intended to confront Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). Appointing Ibn Ziyād to the position of governor of Kūfah was a premeditated plan because he was the only person Yazīd deemed capable of carrying out the duty of killing al-H usayn (ʻ*a*).

It is worth noting that Yazīd did not, previous to that time, have a good relationship with ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. He had even considered dismissing him from the governorship of Bas rah. However, because he did not deem Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr, who was the incumbent governor of Kūfah, capable of confronting Muslim ibn ʻAqīl and Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah was left with no option but to appeal to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād for help. He not only expressed his sudden pleasure with Ibn Ziyād, but also appointed him to the governorship of both Kūfah and Bas rah as well. In a letter to Ibn Ziyād, Yazīd wrote, "Put Muslim ibn ʻAqīl under strict

---

[1] *Raʾs al-H usayn*, p. 207.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 206.

[3] *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 2, p. 226.

[4] *Suʾāl fī Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah*, p. 16.

surveillance. Follow and track him down. If you arrest him, put him to death."[1]

Muslim ibn ʻAqīl had come to Kūfah as Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) envoy. His mission was to inform the people that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was on his way to Kūfah.

2. Yazīd and Ibn Ziyād were in constant contact

History bears witness to the fact that when Yazīd appointed ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād as the governor of Kūfah, he ordered Ibn Ziyād to be in constant consultation with him on every matter, large or small, that involved Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). From this, one can rightly infer that all the crimes which the son of Ziyād committed, including the killing of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), were carried out on direct orders from Yazīd.

T abarī writes, "After martyring Muslim ibn ʻAqīl and Hānī, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād cut their heads from their bodies and sent them together with a letter to Shām for Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah. In his reply to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād's letter, after mentioning various issues, Yazīd pointed out, 'News has reached me that al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī has set off towards Kūfah. Enlist spies to keep anyone allied to al-H usayn under strict surveillance and employ armed men to arrest his followers. Imprison al-H usayn's followers on any accusation you can trump up, and inform me about everything that takes place. May God's peace, mercy and blessing be upon you'."[2]

We can deduce from this historical evidence that Yazīd not only entrusted the city of Kūfah and confrontation with Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, but that Yazīd himself was also personally involved in the events that took place and in direct command of all affairs. Consequently, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād kept reporting whatever he did to Yazīd.

Additional evidence to substantiate that Yazīd had complicity in all the crimes committed by ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād is that Yazīd extolled Ibn Ziyād for every decision and action he took.

---

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 258; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 268; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 164.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 285.

3. Yazīd's order: allegiance or death

History bears witness that Yazīd was determined to kill Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) in the case that he refused to pay him allegiance. In his book of history, "*Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*", Ya'qūbī writes, "In a letter which he wrote to Walīd ibn ʻAqabah ibn Abī Sufiyān, his agent and governor in Medina, Yazīd commanded, 'When my letter reaches you, summon al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī and ʻAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr. Make sure that you get allegiance from them on my behalf. If they refuse to pay allegiance, cut their necks and send their heads to me'."[1]

It is obvious from this historical record that Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah had a premeditated intention to kill Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) if the Holy Imām (ʻa) refused to pay allegiance.

Question

Of course, it is true that some historians have recorded Yazīd's letter in a different manner. For example, T abarī has recorded the letter in this way: "Yazīd wrote to Walīd, 'Adopt extreme harshness when you confront al-H usayn, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar and 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr. Do not permit them leave until they pay allegiance. May God's peace be upon you'."[2]

In this version of the letter, there is no talk of killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) or his followers.

Response

Firstly, there is no real inconsistency between these two historical texts, because killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) has not been explicitly prohibited in the wording of the text recorded by T abarī. Both letters are quite strong except that the ultimate order in the text quoted by T abarī does not mention killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). It is therefore possible that Yazīd wrote both letters; the first one was recorded by T abarī while the second and stronger one in tone was recorded by Yaʻqūbī. Bearing this in mind, we can accept both records.

Secondly, in the letter which T abarī has recorded, the expression that has been used is "adopt extreme harshness". This might mean that the people

---

[1] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 241; *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, pp. 10-11.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 250.

mentioned in this letter should not be given permission to leave until they have paid allegiance. From this expression, three possibilities come to mind:

A. That "adopt extreme harshness" means a kind of sharp and hot-tempered verbal encounter with these people to insist on getting allegiance from them.

B. That the intention was to put pressure on Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) so that he would be left with no option but to pay allegiance, but this encounter should not culminate in killing Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). (Neither of these two possibilities seems logical, because Yazīd knew Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) character and personality well. He knew with certainty that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) would never pay allegiance to him no matter what the cost.)

C. The third possibility; the possibility which conforms to what really happened, is that "adopt extreme harshness" means Yazīd had given Walīd complete jurisdiction over the issue of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and he was free to deal with Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) in whatever way he deemed suitable to get the job done. If Walīd felt compelled to kill Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), should he refuse to pay allegiance to Yazīd, it would have been acceptable.

This possibility is confirmed by the following points:

1. When Marwān ibn H akam ordered Walīd to kill Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) in the case that he refused to pay allegiance to Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah, Walīd excused himself from carrying out this abominable act. The reason he put forth was not that killing Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) was not compatible with orders from Yazīd, but because killing Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) was *h arām* and therefore forbidden by Islamic dictates.[1]

2. When Walīd called Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) to the governor's palace, Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) knew that Walīd had been ordered to kill him if he refused to pay allegiance. Therefore, he went to the governor's palace accompanied by a number of young men from the tribe of Banī Hāshim. He also advised ʿAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr to do the same.[2]

3. In the holy month of Ramad ān of the same year in which he ascended to the caliphate, Yazīd dismissed Walīd ibn ʿAqabah from his post as governor. It is important to mention that this happened only about two months after Yazīd claimed the caliphate. Yazīd discharged Walīd despite

---

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 251; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 264; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, pp. 157-158; *Al-Akhbār al-T awāl*, p. 228.

[2] *Ibid*.; *Al-Muntaz am*, vol. 5, p. 323; *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, pp. 15-18.

reinstating in their posts all the governors who had worked for his father. The reason for dismissing Walīd was that Yazīd knew that Walīd was not capable of carrying out his orders as regards killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). So he dealt with him in the same manner that he had previously dealt with Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr, the governor of Kūfah. Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr had been ordered to have a harsh and violent encounter with Muslim ibn ʻAqīl. When he did not do this, Yazīd replaced him with ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād.[1]

Yazīd discharged Walīd ibn ʻAqabah just like he had previously dismissed Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr. Therefore, it can be deduced that Yazīd wanted Walīd to kill Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) if necessary. Since Walīd was not ready to do so, he paid the price and was dismissed.

4. Yazīd's second letter to Walīd ibn ʻAqabah

Ibn Aʻtham recounts that Walīd wrote a letter to Yazīd informing him about the events that had transpired between him and Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and between him and Zubayr. Yazīd was infuriated by what had taken place. In a reply to Walīd, he wrote, "When my letter reaches you, get a second allegiance from the people of Medina. Let ʻAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr go free, because he cannot escape us. However, send the head of al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻa) to me together with the reply of this letter. If you do so, I will provide you with well-bred horses along with greater gifts and better rewards…"[2]

5. Exposing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) to death

Ibn ʻAsākir recounts, "When Yazīd was informed about Imām al-H usayn's exodus towards Kūfah, he wrote a letter to his governor, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, in which he ordered him to battle Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and send the Imām to Shām."[3]

Ibn Aʻtham narrates, "Ibn Ziyād addressed the people of Kūfah in this way, ʻYazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah has sent a letter to me. Along with it, he has sent four thousand *dīnār*s and two hundred thousand *dirham*s for me to distribute among you. Yazīd has ordered me to send you to war with his enemy al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī. Therefore, follow Yazīd's orders and obey him'."[4]

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] Ibn Aʻtham, *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, section [*bāb*] 5, p. 18.

[3] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 14, p. 208.

[4] Ibn Aʻtham, *AlFutūh* , vol. 3, section [*bāb*] 5, p. 89.

Suyūt ī says, "In a letter to 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, Yazīd's governor in Iraq, he ordered him to engage in battle with al-H usayn and kill him."[1]

Ibn A'tham writes, "When Ibn Ziyād killed Imām al-H usayn, Yazīd paid him a reward of one million *dirham*s."[2]

After the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), the brother of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, Salam ibn Ziyād, went to visit Yazīd. When Yazīd saw him, he said, "O household of Ziyād, love and friendship has become obligatory upon you from the household of Abū Sufiyān."[3]

When Ibn Ziyād went to see Yazīd after killing Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), Yazīd came forward to welcome him. He embraced Ibn Ziyād and kissed him on the forehead. Yazīd had Ibn Ziyād sit on the throne and even brought him his womenfolk. He ordered a singer to sing a beautiful song for Ibn Ziyād. Yazīd addressed his butler, "Make us drunk with wine!" Then, he gave Ibn Ziyād and 'Umar ibn Sa'd a reward of one million *dirham*s each from the public treasury. He even ceded the revenue of Iraq to 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād for a period of one year."[4]

6. While in Mecca, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) foretold that the enemies of Allah were planning to kill him

T abarī recounts that Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) publicly addressed the people, "Do you know what Ibn Zubayr says?" The people said, "No, we don't know. May Allah sacrifice us for you!" Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) said, "Ibn Zubayr says, 'Stay in this mosque. I will gather a group of fighters for you'." Then the Imām (*'a*) said, "I swear upon Allah! It is better for me to be killed an inch outside Mecca than to be killed an inch inside it. I swear upon Allah! Even if I hide and seek refuge in caves, they will never rest until they pull me out and do to me what they have already decided to do."[5]

We can conclude from this historical information that Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) was aware of Banī Umayyah's malicious intentions. He knew that the government headed by Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah had no other objective but to kill him.

---

[1] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, p. 193.

[2] Ibn A'tham, *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, section [*bāb*] 5, p. 135.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 136.

[4] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 290; *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 67.

[5] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 289; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 276.

7. Yazīd issued the order to put Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) to death

Yaʻqūbī recounts, "By the time al-H usayn started off towards Iraq, Yazīd had appointed ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād to be the governor of that land. Yazīd wrote to his newly appointed governor, ʻNews has reached me that the people of Kūfah have written a letter to al-H usayn inviting him to come to them. At this very moment as I write, he is moving towards Kūfah… If you kill him, then so much the better; there will remain no more duty on you. However, if you do not put him to death, I will send you to join your dead ancestors. So beware, and do not lose this opportunity'."[1]

From this historical text, we can conclude that Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah had charged ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād with the duty of killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). He had even gone so far as to intimidate Ibn Ziyād with death if he dared disobey his orders.

8. Ibn Ziyād's letter to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

Ibn Aʻtham narrates that H urr ibn Yazīd and his companions had descended upon Imām al-H usayn with the intention of encountering him at war. H urr wrote a letter to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād informing him that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) had arrived at Karbalā. The son of Ziyād decided to write a letter to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), in which he said, "... and after this, O al-H usayn! News has reached me that you have arrived at Karbalā. Amīr al-Muʼminīn Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah has written a letter to me ordering that I should not be content with anything save sending you to the Omniscient one or dealing with you in whatever way I wish..."[2]

This is yet another document that shows that Yazīd himself had given ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād the responsibility of killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) if he refused to pay allegiance.

9. Ibn ʻAbbās's letter to Yazīd

One of the documents which serves as evidence to prove that Yazīd played a direct role in the killing of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) is a letter which ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās wrote to Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah. In this letter, Ibn ʻAbbās admonished Yazīd to kill Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). A Part of the letter reads, "From ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās to Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah. And after this… O

---

[1] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 242; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 28, p. 19.

[2] Ibn Aʻtham, *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 150; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 1, p. 140.

illegitimate child! It is you who killed al-H usayn with your contaminated and filthy hands. Do not suppose that I have forgotten that you have blood on your hands and that you have martyred al-H usayn and the youths of Banī Hāshim who were bright shining lights and stars of guidance for those in darkness…"[1]

It is important to note that Ibn ʻAbbās was known as a man that would not accuse any person falsely.

10. Yazīd publicly boasted about killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

Ibn Athīr narrates, "After al-H usayn's martyrdom, Yazīd called for a general meeting. The people of Shām were coming in to meet him while the blessed head of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was placed next to him. He had a wooden stick in his hands with which he was hitting Imām al-H usayn's throat (ʻa) while reciting poems composed by al-H usayn ibn H amām. These actions made his arrogance and pride at killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) obvious."[2]

If Yazīd were in fact not pleased about killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), why would he hit the throat, and according to narrations of other historians the lips and teeth, of the severed head of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)? Moreover, why would he recite poems which alluded to his pride at having done such a deed?

Suyūt ī writes, "After al-H usayn (ʻa) and his father's progeny were massacred, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād sent their heads on lances to Shām for Yazīd. At first, Yazīd became very happy, but when he realized that the Muslims had started to regard him as their enemy and had begun to hate him with all their hearts for what he had done, Yazīd showed superficial remorse and regret. It was appropriate that the people had every right to hate him."[3]

Sibt ibn al-Jawzī recounts, "When they brought the head of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) to Yazīd, he invited the people of Shām to come to his palace. He then started hitting Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) head with a staff while reciting poems composed by Ibn Zabʻarī. The purport of these poems was: By killing the elders of Banī Hāshim, we have taken revenge for our

---

[1] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 248; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 318.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 298.

[3] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, p. 208.

forefathers who were killed in the Battle of Badr. By killing the elders of Banī Hāshim, we have gotten even."[1]

11. Ibn Ziyād, highly regarded after killing al-H usayn (ʻa)

Ibn Athīr writes, "When Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) head was brought for Yazīd, ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād gained high esteem before Yazīd. Yazīd bestowed numerous favors upon him. He was extremely pleased with him. However, it did not take long before Yazīd learnt that the people had been angered by what he had done, and were cursing and insulting him. He subsequently feigned remorse about Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) killing…"[2]

T abarī narrates, "When ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād killed al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻa) and his father's progeny, he sent their heads on lances to Shām for Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah. Yazīd was initially pleased by this and the son of Ziyād acquired an excellent position before Yazīd…"[3]

12. Declaration of one present in Yazīd's court

T abarī recounts, "Then Yazīd gave permission to the people to come to visit him. The people entered the king's court and saw Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) head placed opposite Yazīd. Yazīd was hitting Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) head with a wooden stick in his hands. A man from among the Prophet's (s) companions named Abū Bazrah Aslamī addressed Yazīd protestingly, 'Are you hitting the throat of al-H usayn with your staff? Be aware that your stick is hitting a place that I personally saw the Holy Prophet (s) kissing. O Yazīd! You will arise on the Day of Resurrection without an intercessor save Ibn Ziyād, but al-H usayn will come on the Day of Resurrection with Muh ammad (s), Allah's Prophet, as his intercessor.' Then, Abū Bazrah Aslamī rose up, turned his back to Yazīd and left the gathering."[4]

13. Yazīd was informed about everything

History testifies to the fact that Yazīd was completely aware of everything Ibn Ziyād did regarding Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) even after his martyrdom. Ibn Athīr narrates, "When the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) of Imām al-H usayn reached

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 235.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 300.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, pp. 388-389; *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 238.

[4] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 356; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 298.

Kūfah, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād imprisoned them and sent the news of what had taken place to Yazīd… Afterwards, a reply letter came from Yazīd to Ibn Ziyād containing orders that the captives should be brought to Shām…”[1]

From this historical information, along with other information previously mentioned, we can deduce that the son of Ziyād did not perform any significant action without Yazīd’s permission.

14. Yazīd’s son admitted his father’s guilt

Ya‘qūbī relates from Mu‘āwiyah ibn Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah, Yazīd’s son, that after inheriting his father’s position and ascending to the caliphate, he addressed the people in this way, “And after praising Allah… Be informed that my grandfather Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufiyān had quarrelled and disputed about the caliphate with a person who was more deserving and worthy of it as regards blood relationship and proximity to the Holy Prophet (*s*). Then, after him, my father got the reigns of power while he did not possess an acceptable moral character at all. In fact, he was overridden by his carnal desires.” Then, Mu‘āwiyah, the son of Yazīd, started crying and said, “One of the hardest things for us to bear is that we know what affliction and tragedy he was caught up in, and what a terrible fate he has endorsed for himself. He killed and disregarded the honor of the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) progeny with impunity and set the Ka‘bah on fire…”[2]

This historical text is excellent evidence to substantiate that Yazīd had total involvement in the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). There was no one closer to Yazīd than his own son, and he publicly announced that his father was Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) killer.

15. Ibn Ziyād was not censured for killing Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

If one were to assume, as some people say, that Yazīd did not issue orders to kill Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and that Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) was in fact killed as a result of ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād’s independent actions and that Yazīd was displeased by Ibn Ziyād’s deeds, Yazīd should have confronted him strongly with intense opposition to his insubordinate behavior. He ought to have reproached him in a way that suited his appalling act.

---

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 298; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 254.

[2] *Tārīkh Ya‘qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 254.

Even in the case that Yazīd was opposed to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), if he in fact did not issue orders to kill the Imām and ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād committed this hideous crime without Yazīd's authorization, he should have been sharply censured for overstepping his authority and defying the central government. However, what historians have recorded is that not only Ibn Ziyād was not rebuked by Yazīd in the slightest, but was instead rewarded handsomely on many occasions. Yazīd's unanticipated behavior under the circumstances casts grave doubt on the veracity of the idea that Ibn Ziyād was acting independently rather than under direct orders from Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah.

16. Ibn Ziyād retained his high governmental post

History bears witness to the fact that even after killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād was retained in his position of authority as the governor of both Kūfah and Bas rah. This in itself demonstrates that Yazīd was satisfied with the actions of ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād.

Ibn Athīr writes, "When Yazīd died, news of his death was brought to Ibn Ziyād... a call for congregational prayer was made. The people gathered for prayer, and ʻUbayd Allāh went on the pulpit and informed the people about the death of Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah."[1]

This shows that ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād remained in his position of authority as the governor of Kūfah and Bas rah up to the time of Yazīd's death. We also know that if ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād had acted in an independent manner when killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), a manner which was displeasing to Yazīd, he certainly would have relieved him of his post just as he had previously dismissed Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr and Walīd ibn ʻAqabah. Yazīd had dismissed Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr from the governorship of Kūfah and Walīd ibn ʻAqabah from the governorship of Medina because he was displeased with both of them.

17. Yazīd sent rewards for ʻUbayd Allāh in Ziyād

After the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah sent numerous rewards for ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād and he gained a very special proximity to Yazīd.

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, pp. 319-320.

1. Ibn Athīr recounts, "When the head of al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī was sent for Yazīd, ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād was raised in stature. He was now regarded with high esteem by Yazīd. A lot of rewards and gifts were bestowed on him by the son of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. Yazīd made strenuous efforts to be sure that ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād was happy with his rewards for killing Imām al-H usayn (ʿ*a*)."[1]

2. T abarī narrates, "When ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād killed al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī (ʿ*a*) and his father's progeny, he sent their heads on lances to Shām for Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah. At first Yazīd was pleased and held ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in great esteem."[2]

18. Yazīd protected 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād from criticism

Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah not only did not reprimand ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād for killing Imām al-H usayn (ʿ*a*), he even went so far as to prevent others from reproaching him.

T abarī and other historians recount "When the captives were brought to Yazīd, Yah yā ibn H akam verbally reproached ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād for what he had done in two verses of poetry... but Yazīd punched him on the chest and said, 'Keep Quiet!'"[3]

This behavior, along with his obstinate defence and support of ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, is a sign of approval that Yazīd was pleased with him for killing Imām al-H usayn (ʿ*a*) and that it is highly likely that the crime of killing Imām al-H usayn (ʿ*a*) was carried out under direct orders from Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah.

19. 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād was Yazīd's courtier and advisor

Masʿūdī and other historians have recounted, "Yazīd was always a pleasure-seeking man… One day after killing al-H usayn Ibn ʿAlī (ʿ*a*), he was seated in a gathering where liquor was being served with ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād on his right hand side. Yazīd said to his bartender in verse,

إسقني شربة تروي مشاشي ثم مل فَاسق مثلها ابن زياد

---

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 300; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 388; *Tārīkh Khulafā'*, p. 208; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 254; *Kitāb al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 252.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 288.

[3] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 301; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 252; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 209.

صاحب السر والامانة عندي ولتسديد مغنمي وجهادي

“Give me liquor that is strong enough to completely satisfy my whole being.

After you have served me, turn to Ibn Ziyād, and quench his thirst in the same way.

He is the possessor of my secrets and trusts.

And do it for the purpose of confirming his awards and endeavors.”[1]

Sibt ibn al-Jawzī writes, “Yazīd called for the son of Ziyād and gave him many rewards. He made him a close companion and elevated his position. Yazīd even brought his womenfolk for Ibn Ziyād and gave him his goblet of wine. Then, he said to his private musician, ‘Play a song.’ Then, he himself recited the two previous verses.”[2]

Ibn A‘tham recounts that Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah gave a reward of one million *dirham*s to ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād for killing Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*).[3]

20. Choosing one of two options

In his book “*Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*”, Ibn Athīr narrates that ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād addressed Musāfir ibn Sharīh Yashkarī thus, “I killed al-H usayn because Yazīd made it clear that I had to choose between killing al-H usayn or myself being killed. I preferred killing al-H usayn to being killed.”[4]

Ya‘qūbī writes, “In a letter addressed to ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, Yazīd wrote, ‘News has reached me that the people of Kūfah have written to al-H usayn inviting him to come to them. I have been informed that right now, as I write, he has left Mecca and is traveling towards Kūfah in order to join them. Your territory, from among all other territories, is being put to the test and your life is on the line. If you kill al-H usayn, there will be no problem. However, if you do not kill him, you will join your forefathers. So beware that you do not lose this opportunity’.”[5]

---

[1] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 77.

[2] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 260.

[3] *Kitab al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 252.

[4] *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 324.

[5] *Tārīkh Ya‘qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 242.

21. Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) made the truth clear

On various occasions, Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) made it clear that Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah was Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) killer.

1. When they brought Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) to Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah, the son of Muʿāwiyah addressed Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) in this way, "Are you the son of that man who has been killed by Allah?" Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) replied, "I am ʿAlī, the son of the man whom you have killed." Then, Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) recited this verse,

﴿ وَمَن يقتُل مُؤمِنا مُتَعَمِّدا فَجَزآؤُه جَهَنَّم خالِدا فيها ... ﴾

> "*And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell; he shall abide in it forever.*[1]"[2]

2. At another time, Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) said, "O Yazīd! It is enough of your shedding our blood…"[3]

3. Ibn Aʿtham relates, "Imām al-Sajjād (*ʿa*) addressed Yazīd as follows, 'If only you could perceive what you have done against my father, if only you could comprehend what you have done against my Household, and if only you could understand what you have done against the rights of my brothers and uncles, then you would run away to the hills and mountains. There, you would spread gravel stones and roll yourself upon them. You would raise your voice high weeping for yourself. How is it possible that the head of al-H usayn (*ʿa*), the son of Fāt imah (*ʿa*) and ʿAlī (*ʿa*), has been hung on the city gates when he was Allah's trust among you, the people?'"[4]

4. There is also Imām al-Sajjād's (*ʿa*) address to Yazīd in his famous sermon in Damascus, when he said, "Is the Muh ammad that you talk about your ancestor or my ancestor? If you want to pretend that he is your ancestor, you have undoubtedly lied and become a disbeliever. And if you say that he is my ancestor, then why have you killed his progeny?"[5]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Nisāʾ* 4:93.

[2] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 63, as narrated by Ghazālī.

[3] *Maqātil al-T ālibiyyīn*, p. 120.

[4] Ibn Aʿtham, *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, section [*bāb*] 5, p. 132.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 133; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʿa)*, vol. 2, p. 242.

22. Yazīd expressed pleasure at killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

When we pay careful attention to diverse historical documents, it becomes clear that Yazīd was very happy with killing al-H usayn (ʻa). There are many historical documents which provide evidence beyond doubt that Yazīd was pleased with what had transpired. We also have to pay attention to the *h adīth* which says, "Anyone who is pleased with an action of a group of people is one of those people." Let us now refer to some evidence to prove our assertion.

1. While talking to Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr, Yazīd said, "Praise Allah because He has killed al-H usayn."[1]

2. Yaʻqūbī writes, "Yazīd was in his garden when the news that Imām al-H usayn had been killed was brought to him. He shouted out aloud, '*Allāh-u Akbar*!'"[2]

3. When the captives were brought to Shām, Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah called the elders of Shām to come and congratulate him for the victory.[3]

4. Maqrīzī and other historians have recounted that when ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād placed the head of Imām al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻa) before Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah, he started hitting Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) teeth with a rod. He was doing this while reciting poetry. Then, he gave orders that Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) head should be hung in the palace for three days.[4]

Many Sunnī scholars have opposed Yazīd due to his pleasure at killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), and even cursed him.

5. Suyūt ī narrates, "May Allah curse al-H usayn's (ʻa) killers. May Allah curse Ibn Ziyād and Yazīd."[5]

6. Some people asked al-Jawzī what his opinion was regarding cursing Yazīd. He answered, "Ah mad ibn H anbal permitted cursing him, and we say that we do not like Yazīd because of what he did to the son of the

---

[1] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 2, p. 59.

[2] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 222.

[3] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 197; *Siyr Aʻlām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 3, p. 309.

[4] *Maqrīzī, Al-Khit at* , vol. 2, p. 289; *Siyr Aʻlām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 3, p. 319.

[5] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, p. 207.

Prophet's daughter (*'a*) and because he sent the Prophet's (*s*) Household in a state of captivity to Shām aboard camel litter."[1]

7. Dhahabī says, "Yazīd was a cruel and hardhearted man. He used to drink wine and commit forbidden acts [*munkarāt*]. His reign began with killing al-H usayn ibn 'Alī and ended with the event of H arrah."[2]

8. Ibn Khaldūn recounts the killing of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) thus, "Without doubt, Imām al-H usayn was killed by Yazīd. Killing Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) is an action that underscores Yazīd's immoral nature. In this event, al-H usayn is a martyr in Allah's way."[3]

23. Yazīd's actions correspond with his personality

For anyone who examines historical accounts, it becomes clear that Yazīd had a treacherous personality. When one understands Yazīd's real personality, he can easily see why he could not refrain from killing such a revered person as Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), and why doing so was an easy task for him.

Mas'ūdī narrates, "Yazīd was a pleasure-seeking person who owned slave girls, dogs, monkeys, leopards and drunken jesters. Whatever ugly act he committed was imitated by those close to him. During the three years of his caliphate, music became widespread both in Mecca and Medina. Instruments of pleasure and amusement were commonplace. The people openly and publicly engaged in wine drinking."[4]

A group of people from Medina, among them 'Abd Allāh ibn H anz alah and other noble men of Medina, went to see Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah. Yazīd agreed to meet them. When they returned to Medina, some of the people of the group began talking ill of and castigating Yazīd. They announced that they were returning from the presence a man who lacked religion, drank wine and played the tambourine. They said that Yazīd played with dogs. They reported to the people that Yazīd also had singers who sang seductive music for him…[5]

---

[1] *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, vol. 8, p. 496; *S awā'iq al-Muh riqah*, vol. 2, p. 634.

[2] *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 69.

[3] *The Introduction of Ibn Khaldūn*, p. 181.

[4] *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 77.

[5] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 368; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 307; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 238.

‘Umar ibn Sabī‘ah says, “During his father’s reign, Yazīd went to Mecca for the *h ajj*. When he reached Medina, he sat at a wine drinking gathering and recited poetry.”[1]

Suyūt ī writes, “The reason the people of Medina retracted the allegiance they had made to Yazīd was that he used to exceed limits in committing transgressions.”[2]

24. Yazīd in the viewpoint of Sunnī scholars [*‘ulamā’*]

As previously mentioned, many Sunnī scholars have strongly criticized Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah for killing Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and for numerous other crimes he committed. We will now mention some of these scholars and some of their criticisms:

1. Ālūsī says, “Anyone who says that Yazīd did not sin, and hence cursing him is not permissible, should be considered as one of Yazīd’s helpers and partisans.”[3]

2. Ibn Khaldūn writes, “Ibn al-‘Arabī Mālikī erred when he said, ‘Al-H usayn was killed by his grandfather’s sword.’ By making such a statement, he openly declared his consent to Yazīd’s iniquitous and immoral life.”[4]

3. Taftāzānī writes, “Yazīd’s satisfaction and pleasure at the killing of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), and his contempt towards the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*), are among his many vices detailed in the traditions. We have no hesitation about his true status. On the contrary, we do not hesitate in saying that he was a man who lacked faith. May Allah’s curse be on him and his partisans.”[5]

4. Jāh iz says, “The crimes Yazīd committed including killing al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī, taking the members of his household into captivity, hitting Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) teeth and severed head with a staff, intimidating and terrorizing the people of Medina, and destruction of the Ka‘bah are all evidence of his cruelty, wickedness, hypocrisy and apostasy. Without doubt, he is corrupt and cursed and anyone who prevents the

---

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 317; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 28, p. 24.

[2] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p. 209.

[3] *Rūh al-Ma‘ānī*, vol. 26, p. 73.

[4] *The Introduction of Ibn Khaldūn*, p. 254.

[5] *Sharh ‘Aqā’id Nasfīyyah*, p. 181.

damning of such a man is damned himself."[1]

5. Doctor T āhā al-H usayn, the Egyptian author, writes, "Some people suppose that Yazīd is exonerated from the heinous massacre of al-H usayn (*'a*). They make 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād the scapegoat for the savage killing. If Yazīd is innocent of wrongdoing and Ibn Ziyād the guilty party, why did Yazīd not reproach 'Ubayd Allāh? Why did he not punish him? Why did he not relieve him of his post?"[2]

Responses to doubts

Now that Yazīd's role in killing Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) has been examined, we will now analyze some of the objections put forth by Yazīd's supporters.

1. Mu'āwiyah's last will and testament to Yazīd

Some people say that Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān had ordered his son in his last will and testament not to offend al-H usayn (*'a*) nor to interfere with him in any way whatsoever because al-H usayn (*'a*) had a greater right of kinship and nearness to the Holy Prophet (*s*). They believe that it is therefore impossible and unreasonable to imagine that Yazīd would have dared act against his father's wishes.

Response

Firstly, the text of Mu'āwiyah's reads, "... If al-H usayn revolts against you and you become triumphant over him, forgive and overlook because he has ties of relationship and kinship to you, and hence has a great right due from you..."[3]

We can deduce from this text that Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān requested his son to forgive al-H usayn ibn 'Alī (*'a*) if Yazīd were to be militarily victorious over the Holy Imām, but we cannot conclude that Yazīd was ordered not to have any conflict with Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) at all.

Secondly, we have previously cited abundant evidence to substantiate that Yazīd was responsible for Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) martyrdom. Therefore, there is no room left for doubt or skepticism about who Imām al-H usayn's killer is.

---

[1] *Risā'il Jāh iz* , p. 298.

[2] *Al-Fitnah al-Kubrā*, vol. 2, p. 265.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 238.

Thirdly, when we refer to history with special attention paid to Yazīd's corrupt personality, it is obvious that Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah was not at all bound or obligated to act according to his father's will. There is no historical evidence to substantiate that Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah felt a strong obligation to act according to his father's last wishes.

It is worthy reminding skeptics that Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān had commanded his son Yazīd in his last will and testament to consent to the people's wishes if they asked him to dismiss and change the governor of Iraq. Yazīd did not act according to his father's wishes in this case.

2. Yazīd exonerated himself of the killing of al-H usayn (ʻa)

According to some texts, Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah claimed himself to be innocent of killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). They say Yazīd cursed ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād and laid the blame on him for this heinous crime.[1]

Response

Firstly, according to evidence previously cited regarding this issue, there is convincing testimony to substantiate that Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah played a direct role in killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). It has already been pointed out that some people have made intense efforts to deceive others by inventing stories for the sake of justifying Yazīd's despicable actions. The fantasy that Yazīd was not responsible for killing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) must be regarded as an effort by ill-intentioned people to deceive others because, after the event of Karbalā, there were numerous public disclosures of Yazīd's flagrant atrocities given by eye witnesses. These public disclosures caused the people to become disgusted with Yazīd. As a result, they rebelled against him. Yazīd therefore found himself forced to lay the blame on another. By making Ibn Ziyād the scapegoat, he intended to exonerate himself from this savage crime and dissipate the people's anger.

Secondly, according to historical documents, a number of the Prophet's (s) companions such as Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās, ʻAbd Allāh ibn H anz alah and most of the nobles of Medina have associated Yazīd with moral corruption and debauchery. When we have indubitable testimony from such a group of highly respected companions of the Holy Prophet (s) confirming Yazīd's immoral and corrupt nature, baseless claims of his innocence cannot be accepted.

---

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 300.

3. The long distance between Shām and Kūfah

Some opponents say that because there is a long distance between Kūfah and Shām, which was then the administrative centre of the Umayyad government, it is unreasonable to imagine that Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah could have been getting accurate reports and detailed accounts of the events that were taking place. For this reason, they claim that Yazīd was not able to issue direct orders to Ibn Ziyād.

Response

Firstly, abundant historical testimony has already been presented to substantiate that Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah did in fact receive regular reports from Kūfah and write direct orders to Ibn Ziyād regarding the killing of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), such that there can remain no room for doubt about his role as the main player in this hideous crime. So, although there was a considerable distance between Shām and Kūfah, Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah was in fact in constant consultation with his agents through letter carriers and deliverers and in this way was able to issue all the necessary orders. **?**

YAZĪD IBN MU‘ĀWIYAH AND THE MASSACRE OF THE PEOPLE OF MEDINA

Some biased scholars and partisans of Banī Umayyah such as Ibn Taymīyyah have endeavored to come to the defence of Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah. They have gone so far as to recognize him as the legitimate Muslim caliph of his time. However, in the end, reality compelled most scholars to admit Yazīd’s atrocious crimes because his entire life was full of abominable actions and he was the cause of numerous calamities for the Muslims, especially during the three years of his usurped caliphate. In the long term, biased adherents of Banī Umayyah could not continue to overlook Yazīd’s many atrocities. Therefore, some schemed to either completely deny or justify Yazīd’s brutal crimes.

One of the acts of sheer barbarity and inhumanity Yazīd brought down on the Muslims was the event of H arrah. This incident resulted in the brutal killing of thousands of the Muslim people of Medina. The order for this massacre was issued by Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah himself. The event of H arrah is a well-known incident which has been discussed either briefly or in detail by numerous historians.[1] Now, let us examine this event.

The event of H arrah

The deplorable atrocity of H arrah, which blackened the pages of history, took place in the sixty-third year of the Islamic calendar during the reign of Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah between the powerful armies of Shām and the people of Medina.

[1] *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 4, p. 575.

H arrah literally means a rocky and uneven terrain full of black stones passage through which is quite difficult. This well-known event acquired its name because the assault, which the government armies of Shām made on the ordinary people of Medina, began in a rocky eastern region of Medina.[1]

The event of H arrah is in all truth one of the most savage and horrible crimes of human history and the most appalling incident which occurred during the reign of Banī Umayyah. Ibn Mushkuwiyyah narrates, "The incident of H arrah is one of the most dreadful and formidable events of history."[2]

Origins of the uprising of the people of Medina

The uprising by the people of Medina occurred in 63 AH. Besides being an uprising against Yazīd's authoritative reign and Banī Umayyah's tyrannical sultanate, it was more a peoples' uprising against government policies. The uprising of the people of Medina was a popular and self-perpetuating social movement rooted in the people's unanimous rejection of the rule of Yazīd and Banī Umayyah.

The group of the Helpers [*ans ār*] had chosen ʻAbd Allāh ibn H anz alah to be their army commander and leader in the confrontation with Banī Umayyah and the Quraysh appointed ʻAbd Allāh ibn Mat īh to be their commander.[3]

This revolution and uprising was caused by various factors, some of which we will now discuss:

1. Religious sentiments

Medina has always been an exceptionally important city because it is the city of Allah's Prophet (*s*) and the land where the divine message grew, developed and flourished. It is the land where divine knowledge and wisdom where introduced. It was in Medina where the Prophet's way of life was explained and people were instructed regarding it. Medina is the land where people learned Qur'anic commentary and interpretation of the divine message from the Holy Prophet (*s*) himself. The Prophet's (*s*) distinguished companions, including the Helpers [*ans ār*] and the

[1] Ibn Qutaybah, *ʻUyūn al-Akhbār*, vol. 1, p. 238.

[2] *Tajārub al-Umam*, vol. 2, p. 79.

[3] *T abaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 106; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 368.

Immigrants [*muhājirīn*], had lived there since the Holy Prophet's (*s*) time. After the Prophet's (*s*) death, some of his most renowned companions preferred to stay in that city because of the fond memories they held about Allah's Prophet (*s*). It is evident why the people of Medina had a fervent inclination towards Islamic tenets and stronger religious sentiments than the people of Shām; they were more familiar with the Prophet's (*s*) conduct [*sunnah*] and that of his successors and companions. It was for this reason that they were able to discern the wrong ways of Banī Umayyah earlier than others.

It was the people of Medina who previously were the first to voice their objections to ʻUthmān ibn ʻUffān. Now, these same people were experiencing the rule of a raw inexperienced youth called Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah. He knew absolutely nothing about politics and failed to uphold the sanctity of the tenets of religion. Accordingly, their disapproval and protest against Yazīd sprang up.

ʻUthmān ibn Muh ammad ibn Abū Sufiyān, the governor of Medina, had sent a group of men consisting of Immigrants and Helpers to meet with the caliph in Damascus, so they could present their grievances to Yazīd and so Yazīd could bestow gifts upon them to silence them.[1] During this meeting, not only did Yazīd fail to win them over to his side, but his ignorant behavior proved his incompetence to them.[2]

When they returned to Medina, they explained what they had seen from Yazīd. They gathered in the Holy Prophet's (*s*) Mosque and started shouting to the people, "We have come from meeting a person who is depraved of religion, drinks wine, plays the tambourine and spends the night with base men, slave girls and female singers and as a result has abandoned prayer."[3]

The people asked ʻAbd Allāh ibn H anz alah what news he had brought from the caliph. He replied, "I am coming from meeting a man whom, I swear by Allah, I would have fought if no one were present except my sons." The people said, "We have heard that Yazīd has given you money and gifts." ʻAbd Allāh answered, "It is true, but I accepted his money and gifts only for the purpose of using it to acquire and prepare an army against Yazīd

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 368; *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 5, p. 135.

[2] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 179.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 368; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 6, p. 233.

himself.” In this way, ‘Abd Allāh started inciting and instigating the people against Yazīd and the people responded positively to his calls for an uprising.[1]

Suyūt ī writes, “The reason for the uprising of the people of Medina was that Yazīd had exceeded all bounds and every limit in committing sins.”[2]

2. Karbalā and the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

Ibn Khaldūn recounts, “When Yazīd’s tyranny and the oppression by his deputies became widespread, and after he killed the Prophet’s (*s*) son, the people of Medina started a rebellion and uprising.”[3]

When Bashīr ibn Jadhlam brought the news of the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and the taking of captives, it seemed in Medina as though the trumpet had been blown announcing the Day of Resurrection. The women of Medina came out of their homes and marched towards the city gates. Men, women and children, came out of their houses barefoot and shouting, “O Muh ammad! Alas Muh ammad! O al-H usayn! O al-H usayn! O al-H usayn!” It was very similar to the day the Holy Prophet (*s*) passed away.[4]

Imām al-Sajjād (*‘a*) made a sermon and his words had a strong effect on the people of Medina. In addition to that, Zaynab Kubrā and other women, all mothers who had lost children in the battle against Yazīd, gave public speeches and detailed what had occurred at Karbalā. Each of the survivors was explaining the event of ‘Āshūrā and what had transpired at Karbalā. They also gave comprehensive accounts of what had taken place for the captives on the way from Kūfah to Shām and their meeting with Yazīd. All this news had a deep impact on the community of Medina.

3. Political chaos and disorganization

One of the main causes for the uprising by the people of Medina against the Umayyad government was the immoral behavior and corruption that characterized political decisions. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr wrote a letter to

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p. 209.

[3] Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 37.

[4] *Maqtal Abī Mukhnaf*, p. 200.

Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah in which he criticized Walīd ibn ʻAqabah, Yazīd's governor and representative in Medina.[1]

Ibn Zubayr wrote, "You have sent a harsh and brutal man for us. He does not pay the least attention to what is right and just. He does not pay any attention to the advice of well-wishers, nor does he heed the words of the wise. If you had sent a flexible person, we could be hopeful that complicated work might be made easier."

Later, Yazīd relieved Walīd ibn ʻAqabah of his post and replaced him with ʻUthmān ibn Muh ammad ibn Abū Sufiyān. ʻUthmān, too, was an arrogant and vain youth who lacked experience.[2] It was during his time as governor of Medina that the event of H arrah took place.[3]

The accumulation of the mentioned factors laid the groundwork for an explosion; the only thing that was needed was a spark and it came as follows: Ibn Mīnā, Yazīd's financial representative and the man responsible for collecting tax, made the intention of taking all the wealth he collected from H arrah to Shām for Yazīd. A group of protesters from Medina blocked his way. They confiscated all the tax and wealth which Ibn Mīnā was carrying. Ibn Mīnā reported the issue to ʻUthmān ibn Muh ammad ibn Abū Sufiyān, the governor of Medina. ʻUthmān reported the issue to Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah in a letter he sent to Shām. As a result of this, Yazīd was incited against the people of Medina.[4]

Yazīd became very angry when he heard this news. He said, "I swear by Allah! I will send a large army towards them, and in this way I will crush them under the feet of horses."[5]

Direct confrontation

ʻAbd Allāh ibn H anz alah invited the people for the ultimate confrontation and battle with Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah and the whole of Banī Umayyah. His good public standing was the reason the people trusted him and organized around him. They even elected him to be the governor of

---

[1] *Nihāyah al-Arab*, vol. 6, p. 216.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Al-Maʻārif*, p. 345.

[4] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 250; *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 206.

[5] *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 127.

Medina and paid their allegiance to him and deposed Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah from the caliphate.[1]

After this, the people expelled Yazīd's agent, ʻUthmān ibn Muh ammad ibn Abū Sufiyān, from the city of Medina. This happened on the first day of the month of Muh arram, the year 63 of the Islamic calendar (*hijrah*). Then, they imprisoned all the family members of Banī Umayyah and their partisans among the Quraysh in the house of Marwān H akam. They did not, however, harm the prisoners in any way.[2]

The deposed governor of Medina sent his torn shirt along with a letter to Shām imploring for help. He wrote to Yazīd, "Answer our call for help. The people of Medina have driven our clan out of the city."[3]

This letter reached Yazīd at night. Yazīd went to the mosque immediately, got on the pulpit and called out, "O people of Shām. ʻUthmān ibn Muh ammad ibn Abū Sufiyān, the governor of Medina, has written to me saying that the people of Medina have expelled the family members of Banī Umayyah and all our partisans out of the city. I swear upon Allah, swallowing this news is harder for me than living without the beauties and pleasures of the world."[4]

Dispatching the army to Medina

At first, Yazīd chose D ah h āk ibn Qays Fihrī to be the army commander responsible for carrying out the attack on Medina, but he declined to accept this responsibility. Then Yazīd chose ʻAmru ibn Saʻīd Ashdaq. He also declined to accept the responsibility. After him, Yazīd chose ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. However, all three men, in one way or another, refused to carry out this responsibility.[5]

Finally, a man named Muslim ibn ʻAqabah accepted to be responsible for carrying out the attack on Medina. Yazīd appointed him as army commander

---

[1] Ibn Saʻd, *Al-T abaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 47.

[2] *Ibid*., Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 111; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 37.

[3] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 114; *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 127.

[4] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 2, p. 9; *Al-Mah āsin wa al-Masāwī*, vol. 1, p. 46.

[5] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 179; Ibn Saʻd, *Al-T abaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 176; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 11.

for this confrontation. This man agreed to carry out this responsibility in spite of the fact that he was an ill person aged over ninety years.[1]

Government heralds called out, "O people! Mobilize for war with the people of H ijāz[2] and come to collect your reward." The government was handing out a hundred *dīnār*s in cash to every person who was ready to go to war. It was not long before nearly twelve thousand people were gathered. According to another report, twenty thousand mounted soldiers and seven thousand ground forces were mobilized.[3]

Yazīd paid two hundred *dīnār*s to every mounted soldier and one hundred *dīnār*s to every soldier of the ground forces. He then ordered them to march towards Medina in company with Muslim ibn 'Aqabah.[4]

Yazīd himself accompanied the army for a distance of about three kilometres before he bade them farewell.[5] Shām Christians eager to fight the Muslims of Medina could also be seen among the soldiers of Yazīd's army.[6]

Yazīd gave the following orders to Muslim ibn 'Aqabah, "Invite the people of Medina to pay allegiance to me three times. If they respond positively and pay allegiance, let them go free. However, if they do not respond positively and refuse to pay allegiance, fight them. If you triumph over them, continue the massacre for three days. Anything that belongs to that city will be permissible for your army to loot. Do not stop the Shām army from doing whatever it wishes with its enemy. After three days, stop the killing and pillaging. Then, again ask for allegiance from the people. They should promise to be Yazīd's slaves and servants. When you leave Medina, move towards Mecca for another attack and confrontation."[7]

---

[1] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 180.

[2] The area now considered as the Arab Peninsula where Medina lies.

[3] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 112; *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 128.

[4] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 371; *Akhbār al-T uwāl*, p. 310.

[5] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 56.

[6] *Tārīkh al-'Arab*, vol. 1, p. 248.

[7] *Akhbār al-T uwāl*, p. 310; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 112; *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 180.

Muslim ibn ‘Aqabah marched from Wādī al-Qurā’ towards Medina with his soldiers. They camped at a place called “Jurf”, which was three kilometers from Medina.[1]

On the other side, the people of Medina were preparing themselves for confrontation and defence. They had been informed that the people of Shām were moving towards Medina.

When the army of Shām gained proximity to Medina, ‘Abd Allāh ibn H anz alah called the people to the Prophet’s (*s*) Mosque. The people assembled near the Prophet’s (*s*) pulpit. ‘Abd Allāh ibn H anz alah requested that anyone who concurred with him about this uprising should pay allegiance and promise to stand by him to the death. The people responded positively and paid allegiance to him. They promised to stand by his side to the death.

‘Abd Allāh went on the pulpit. After praising Allah and mentioning a few other issues, he said, “O people of Medina! We have rebelled for no other reason save that Yazīd is a fornicating and adulterous man. He is a drunkard who does not pray. Tolerating his reign will bring Allah’s punishment and tribulation upon us...”[2]

Confrontation between Shām army and forces of Medina

To protect Medina, the Islamic resistance forces of Medina used a trench which had remained since the Prophet’s (*s*) time. They neglected the eastern part of the city because they believed that there was a remote possibility that the Shām army would begin their attack from the rugged rocky area. They thought that even if the Shām army were to begin their attack from this area, it was still improbable for them to achieve any success. However, the Shām army took them by surprise and began its attack on Medina from that same stony area which the Islamic resistant forces had ignored.

The battle continued from morning up to afternoon. The Islamic forces of Medina were fighting and resisting fiercely. At noon, ‘Abd Allāh ibn H anz alah asked one of his slaves to watch and protect him from behind so that he could recite his prayers. ‘Abd Allāh then recited his prayers and

[1] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 211.

[2] Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-T abaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 47.

returned to the battlefront to lead the valiant resistance against the Shām army. [1]

Muslim ibn ʻAqabah asked Marwān to help him enter Medina. Marwān went to Medina and visited the tribe of Banī Hārthah. There, he called for a man he was acquainted with and in the process of a secret conversation, Marwān managed to persuade this traitor to show him the way for the Shām army to penetrate Medina in return for generous rewards. He showed Marwān a way which passed through the area of the tribe of Banī al-Ashhal and the Shām army used this route to infiltrate Medina.[2]

The first line of the Islamic resistant fighters responsible for defending Medina suddenly heard the shout of '*Allāh-u Akbar*' by the Shām army from right inside Medina. It was not long before they realized that they were being attacked from behind by the Shām army. Many of the Islamic resistance fighters left the battlefield and returned to Medina in order to defend their women and children. The Shām army attacked and killed innocent civilians from every direction. When ʻAbd Allāh ibn H anz alah was finally killed, the Shām army gained the upper hand against the resistance movement of Medina. Finally, they gained complete control of the whole city.[3]

Massacre and looting of property in Medina

Ibn Qutaybah recounts that, "'The Shām army entered Medina on the twenty seventh day of Dhū al-H ijjah in 63 AH. For three days Medina was plundered by the Shām army up to the appearance of the new moon of the month of Muh arram."[4]

Following Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah's orders, and after the seizure of Medina, Muslim ibn ʻAqabah told his soldiers, "Your hands are open and you are free to do whatever you want. You must plunder and loot Medina for three days."[5]

Thus, the city of Medina was subjected to wholesale murder and plunder by the Shām army. Everything was permissible for the Shām soldiers. No man

---

[1] *Ibid*., p. 48; *Al-Iʻlām*, vol. 4, p. 234.

[2] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 211; *Akhbār al-T uwāl*, p. 310; *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 129.

[3] *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 130.

[4] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, pp. 220-221.

[5] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 10.

or woman remained safe from their harm. The civilians of Medina were killed and their property was looted.[1]

The brutal and wholesale massacre of the people of Medina was detestable. It was loathsome to see the descendants of the Prophet’s (*s*) companions, the Helpers and the Immigrants being butchered. The looting was despicable. However, the wholesale violation of females by the depraved and reckless soldiers of Shām was more contemptible and disgraceful than all else.

In this invasion of the Prophet’s city, thousands of women were violated. Thousands of children were born whose fathers were not known and these children later became known as ‘the Children of H arrah [*awlād al-h arrah*].’[2]

The streets of Medina were filled with dead bodies. Blood flowed on the ground up to the Prophet’s (*s*) Mosque.[3] Children were mercilessly killed in their mothers’ arms.[4] The elderly companions of the Holy Prophet (*s*) were exposed to torture and dishonor.[5]

The scale of the killings was so great that because of his extravagance in killing people, Muslim ibn ‘Aqabah was from then onwards nicknamed “Musrif” ibn ‘Aqabah which in the Arabic language means ‘the one who is extravagant’. After this horrendous event, the people of Medina wore black mourning clothes and the sounds of their weeping could be heard from their homes for up to one year.[6]

Ibn Qutaybah narrates, “On the day of H arrah, eighty companions of the Prophet (*s*) were killed and after that day there was no *Badrī* (person that took part in the Battle of Badr) left. Seven hundred members of the Quraysh and *ans ār* were put to death and ten thousand innocent people of the community were killed from among Arabs, the *tābi‘īn* and other virtuous people of Medina.”[7]

---

[1] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 181; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 17.

[2] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 2, p. 10; *Al-Futūh* , vol. 3, p. 181; *Al-Bada’ wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 6, p. 14; *Wafiyyāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 6, p. 276; *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p. 209.

[3] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 113.

[4] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 215.

[5] *Akhbār al-T uwāl*, p. 314.

[6] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 220.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 216; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 242.

Suyūt ī writes, "In the year 63 of the Islamic calendar, the people of Medina rebelled against Yazīd. They even dismissed him from the caliphate. In retaliation, Yazīd sent a huge army towards them with orders to kill anyone who had rebelled. After that, the army was commanded to go to Mecca and kill Ibn Zubayr. The Shām army came to the holy city of Medina and the event of H arrah came to pass. But what can make one comprehend what the event of H arrah was? Al-H asan once narrated, 'I swear upon Allah! There was no man who was spared in that event. A large number of the Prophet's (*s*) companions and other people were killed. Medina was looted and a thousand virgin girls were violated. *We are from Allah and to whom is our return!*'

Allah's Prophet (*s*) had said,

«من أخاف أهل المدينة اخافه الله وعليه لعنة الله والملائكة والناس أجمعين.»

> 'Anyone who terrorizes and intimidates the people of Medina will be terrorized by Allah and may the curse of Allah, the angels and all the people be upon him.'

This *h adīth* has been narrated by Muslim'."[1]

Ibn Qutaībah recounts, "When Muslim ibn 'Aqabah finished his killing and looting in Medina, he wrote to Yazīd, 'Peace upon thee O leader of the believers… I did not recite the noon [*z uhr*] prayers until I conquered Medina and prayed right in the Prophet's Mosque. This was, however, after a lot of killing and extensive looting. In keeping with your command, we followed anyone who escaped and killed all those who were wounded. We looted their houses three times just as you, the commander of the faithful, had ordered."[2]

Sibt ibn al-Jawzī narrates from Madā'inī in a book named "*H arrah*", that Zuhrī said, "On the day of H arrah, seven hundred people, among them the elders of the Quraysh, the Helpers, the Immigrants, and the well known and honored of Medina were killed. In addition to this, ten thousand others including men, women and slaves were killed. There was so much bloodshed in Medina that blood reached the Prophet's (*s*) tomb, and his mosque and garden were filled with blood."

---

[1] *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, p. 209; *Siyr A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 4, pp. 37-38.

[2] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 218.

Mujāhid says, “The people of Medina even took refuge in the Prophet’s (*s*) quarters and at his pulpit but there were swords that would even enter these places.”

Madā’inī quotes from Ibn Qarrah who quotes Hishām ibn H isān, “After the event of H arrah, a thousand unmarried women gave birth to children whose fathers were not known.” Apart from Madā’inī, other historians too have narrated that a thousand women without husbands gave birth after this event.[1]

Some well-known people who were executed

After gaining victory over the people of Medina, Muslim ibn ‘Aqabah called for an assembly of some of the well-known personalities of the uprising. After a special and summary trial, he condemned all of them to death. The significance of these trials was to force these prominent people to promise publicly to be Yazīd’s loyal slaves and servants.[2]

Some of the most prominent people that were tried and executed include:

1. Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far ibn Abū T ālib,[3]

2. Two daughters of Zaynab (daughter of Umm Salamah),[4]

3. Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ibn Khat t āb,[5]

4. Ma‘qul ibn Sanān (One of the standard-bearers of the Prophet during the conquest of Mecca),[6]

5. Fad l ibn ‘Abbās ibn Rabī‘ah ibn H arith ibn ‘Abd al-Mut t alib,[7]

6. Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī (One of the Prophet’s companions that had accompanied the Prophet in twelve of the holy wars [*ghazwah*s]),[8]

7. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mut ī‘.[1]

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , pp. 259-260; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 242; *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 316.

[2] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 2, p. 182.

[3] *Al-Nihāyah al-Arb*, vol. 6, p. 227.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] *Al-Ma‘ārif*, p. 187.

[6] *Wafā’ al-Wafā’*, vol. 1, p. 133.

[7] *Al-Nihāyah al-Irb*, vol. 6, p. 227.

[8] *H ilyah al-Awliyā’*, vol. 1, p. 369.

Jābir and the event of H arrah

Ibn Qutaybah writes, "Jābir was a blind man when the event of H arrah took place. He used to walk in the streets of Medina and say, 'May the person who tormented Allah and the Holy Prophet (*s*) perish!' A man asked him, 'Who terrorized Allah and his Prophet?' Jābir answered, 'I heard Allah's Prophet (*s*) say, 'Anyone who terrorizes the people of Medina has tormented that which I hold dear.'' A man from Shām who happened to hear this conversation attacked Jābir with a sword intending to kill him. Marwān stopped that man and ordered Jābir to be taken home."[2]

It has to be mentioned, however, that one of the houses which was attacked and looted by the Shām army was that of Jābir. All of his household property was plundered.[3] **?**

[1] *Nasab al-Quraysh*, p. 384.

[2] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 214.

[3] Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 2, p. 194.

MOURNING
AND
LAMENTATION

MOURNING AND PAYING HOMAGE TO ALLAH'S AWLIYĀ'

One of the precepts strongly recommended by the divine law of Islam [*sharīʿah*] is holding ceremonies with the intention of paying homage to the signs of Allah. Upholding this precept is considered an act resulting from the piety of the hearts. There is no dispute or disagreement among the various schools of thought regarding the essential verdict pertaining to this precept. Disagreement, however, lies in the question of whether application of this verdict must be determined by divine decree alone or whether instances of its application can also be determined by common sense and wisdom. In this chapter regarding mourning and paying homage to Allah's saints [*awliyāʾ*], we will examine this difference of opinion.

Different types of religious rites and ceremonies

Religious rites, which have been subject to objection or disagreement by certain sects of Islam, are of diverse kinds listed as follows:

1. Celebrating the birth anniversaries of the great personalities of the religion, such as birth anniversaries of the Noble Prophet (*s*) and the Holy Imāms of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*). The Wahhābī sect considers such celebrations to be acts of innovation in religion. They contend that celebrating these days amounts to heresy [*bidʿah*], straying and deviation.

2. Celebrating memorable days in the history of Islam like days on which great events happened, such as the day when the Holy Prophet (*s*) was appointed to prophethood, the day the glorious Battle of Badr took place, the day the Battle of Khandaq occurred, the day of the Conquest of Mecca, the night of the Prophet's (*s*) ascension to heaven [*laylat al-miʿrāj*], the night

of his migration to Medina, the Day of *Mubāhalah*,[1] the Day of *Ghadīr*[2], and other similar events.

3. Another level of holding religious rites and paying homage to the signs of Allah occurs, for example, when followers of the Fourteen Infallibles (*ʻa*) inhabit and improve the areas around the graves and shrines of the religious *awliyāʼ*. The followers of these infallible people build domes and minarets over their shrines in order to serve as a declaration to mankind that the people buried there are the true Imāms and divine leaders for mankind. Therefore, the act of raising shrines on their graves serves to invite people to follow the Fourteen Infallibles (*ʻa*).

4. Yet another way of paying homage to the signs of Allah is when Muslims make diligent efforts to preserve geographical places where important events took place. For instance, Muslims have preserved the sacredness of the location where the event of *Ghadīr* took place, the Cave of H irāʼ,[3] the place where the Battle of Badr occurred, the mosques wherein the Holy Prophet (*s*) performed prayers, and various other places of this kind. Nowadays, many Muslims visit these sacred places with the hope of seeking gifts of divine favor.

5. Organizing mourning ceremonies in memory of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and the other *awliyāʼ* of Allah is another way of paying homage to the signs of Allah. This takes the form of establishing memorial gatherings to commemorate the lives and the struggles against oppression of these great people. Muslims all over the world establish memorial ceremonies to honor

---

[1] *Mubāhalah* was the day when the Noble Prophet (*s*) received orders from his Lord to challenge the Christians to come forward and engage in calling upon Allah to curse the liars. The Prophet was ordered to come with his near ones and the Christians too were supposed to bring their near ones. The Prophet came with al-H asan, al-H usayn, Fāt imah and ʻAlī. The Christians changed their minds about engaging in this encounter and backed down. The Qurʼan says, *"But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say, Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars."* (*Sūrat Āl ʻImrān* 3:61) [Trans.]

[2] The day that Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) was appointed as the Prophetʼs successor. [Trans.]

[3] H irāʼ is the name of a cave where the Noble Prophet (*s*) used to go on retreat for meditation before being appointed to the prophethood. It was actually while he was in the cave of H irāʼ when the first revelation from Allah was revealed to him: *"Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is Honourable, who taught (to write) with the pen, taught man what he knew not."* (*Sūrat al-ʻAlaq* 96:1-5) [Trans.]

Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom and recite accounts of his sufferings and the hardships imposed upon him, his family and all his companions in an attempt to keep alive his battle against corruption and oppression.

6. Another type of religious ceremony is gathering to recite group prayers and supplications with a common intention.

Reasons for the preference for holding ceremonies

People who believe that it is permissible and even desirable to hold religious ceremonies have resorted to a number of proofs. We will now refer to some of them:

A. Verses of the Holy Qur'an that permit ceremonies

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which talk about organizing and holding ceremonies:

1. *"O you who believe! Do not violate the signs (rites) appointed by Allah nor the sacred month, nor interfere with the offerings, nor the sacrificial animals with the garlands, nor those going to the Sacred House seeking the grace and pleasure of their Lord."*[1]

﴿ يا أَيُّهَا الَّذين آمَنُوا لا تُحِلُّوا شَعَائِر الله وَلاَ الشَّهر الحَرَام وَلا الهَدي وَلا القَلائِد وَلا آمِّين البيت الحَرَام ...﴾

We can infer two possibilities from this verse:

a. One possibility is that the verdict is affirmative; meaning that Allah has in fact ordered believers to pay homage and reverence to religious signs and rites.

b. The other possibility is that the verdict is prohibitive, meaning that Allah intends to prohibit laziness when it comes to organizing divine rites. In other words, Allah has forbidden negligence as regards holding religious rites when we have distinguished their instances of application.

2. *"That shall be so [the rites of the pilgrimage to Mecca], and whoever respects the signs of Allah, this is the outcome of the piety of the hearts."*[2]

﴿ ذَلِک وَمَن يعَظِّم شَعَائِر الله فَإِنَّهَا مِن تَقوي القُلُوب ﴾

[1] *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

[2] *Sūrat al-H ajj* 22:32.

This is the most clear and indisputable verse of the Holy Qur’an which proves the permissibility of holding religious rites. This verse denotes in a general and explicit way that paying homage to divine rites is an act beloved by Allah.

3. *“And as for the camels (of sacrifice), We have made them of the signs of Allah for you, for you therein is much good.”*[1]

﴿ وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُم مِن شَعَائِرِ اللهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ... ﴾

In this verse, the discriminate [*tab‘īd iyyah*] preposition “of” [*min*] (of the signs) has been employed. It denotes that the camels brought for sacrifice during the days of the *h ajj* are also considered the signs of Allah.

4. *“Surely, S afā and Marwah are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit to it, there is no blame on him if he goes around them both.”*[2]

﴿إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا... ﴾

5. *“There is no blame on you seeking bounty from your Lord, so when you hasten on from ‘Arafāt, then remember Allah near the Holy Monument…”*[3]

﴿ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُم مِن عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللهَ عِندَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ... ﴾

This Qur’anic verse intends to pronounce and hence permit holding religious ceremonies, but it has employed the Arabic word “*mash‘ar*” instead of the word “*sha‘ā’ir*”, which has been used in the other previously cited verses. Both these words connote ‘upholding the signs of Allah’.

B. Analogous verses permit celebrating signs of Allah

Analogous verses are verses which allude to celebrating the signs of Allah but the word “*sha‘ā’ir*” has not been explicitly used in the wording of the verses.

1. *“And proclaim among men the Pilgrimage: they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path, that they may witness advantages for them and mention the name of Allah during stated days over what he has given them of the cattle quadrupeds, then eat of them*

---

[1] *Sūrat al-H ajj* 22:36.

[2] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:158.

[3] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:198.

and feed the distressed one, the needy. Then let them accomplish their needed acts of shaving and cleansing, and let them fulfil their vows and let them go around the Ancient House. That (shall be so); and whoever respects the sacred ordinances of Allah, it is better for him with his Lord."[1]

﴿ وَأَذِّن في النَّاس بِالحَجِّ يأتُوك رِجَالا وَعَلي كُلِّ ضَامِر يأتين مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَميق * ليشْهَدُوا مَنَافِع لَهُم ويذكُروا اسْم الله في أيَّام مَعلُومَات عَلَى مَا رَزَقَهُم مِن بَهيمَة الأَنعَام فَكُلُوا مِنهَا وَأَطعِمُوا البَآئِس الفَقير * ثُمَّ ليقضُوا تَفَثَهُم وَليوفُوا نُذُورَهُم وَليطَّوَّفُوا بِالبيت العَتيق * ذَلك وَمَن يعَظِّم حُرُمَات الله فَهُو خير لَه عِند رَبِّه ﴾

Scholars of the divine message and commentators of the Glorious Qur'an regard the above mentioned verse—which indicates veneration of divine ordinances—as an enjoinment to perform religious rights. This is because according to principle, just as one can reason using a rationale regarding a specific subject so also may one reason using rationales regarding similar subjects or subjects that have something in common with the intended subject. However, this is only valid when the subject is generic or of a general type that includes many objects; otherwise, there would be an invalid analogy. In other words, although this verse is specifically about the *h ajj* ceremony, at the end of the verse 'sacred ordinances of Allah' are mentioned generally, so the verse can be applied generally.

2. "*They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and Allah will not consent save to perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse.*"[2]

﴿ يريدُونَ أَن يطفِئُوا نُور الله بِأَفوَاهِهِم ويأبي الله إِلاَّ أَن يتِمَّ نُورَه وَلَو كَرِه الكَافِرُون ﴾

Because this verse comes along with verses about holy war [*jihād*], inviting people to the Oneness of Allah [*tawh īd*], and propagating religion, it can be inferred that the part of the religion that the enemies of Islam want to extinguish is, in fact, the divine signs and rites which have been alluded to in the verse, "*And whoever respects the signs of Allah, this is the outcome of the piety of the hearts.*"[3]

3. "*In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them; glorify Him therein in the mornings and the*

[1] *Sūrat al-H ajj* 22:27-30.

[2] *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (or *Barā'ah*) 9:32.

[3] *Sūrat al-H ajj* 22:32.

evenings.”[1]

﴿ في بيوت أَذِنَ اللهُ أَن تُرفَع ويذكَر فيهَا اسمُه يسَبِّح لَه فيهَا بِالغُدُوِّ وَالآصَال ﴾

If we take the verse that comes before this verse, the Verse of Light [*āyat al-nūr*], into consideration, it shows that “in houses” [*fī buyūtin*] means those houses wherein the light of Allah shines and the centres where the light of religion radiates. These places are the sources of radiation of the light of religion. They are centres of guidance and venues of observing the divine law of Islam [*sharī‘ah*].

Allah, the Exalted, has willed that these radiant houses should be revered and elevated in status. These places deserve to be venues of continuous remembrance, worship and obedience of Allah.

We can deduce from this Qur’anic verse that Allah has willed that every place which serves as a custodian for the exposition of Islamic laws and divine teachings (the light of Allah) has to be honored and revered. We can also infer from the same above-mentioned verse that *sha‘ā’ir* (the signs and rites of Allah) are not confined to any particular place; that is to say, they are not confined only to the rites and ceremonies of the *h ajj* or other rites of worship specifically mentioned. On the contrary, everything that serves to spread and propagate divine laws is included in the meaning of *sha‘ā’ir*, and anything that propagates Islamic knowledge and teachings is also included in the meaning of this word.

4. “*And He made lowest the word of those who disbelieved; and the word of Allah, that is the highest; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.*”[2]

﴿ ... وَجَعَلَ كَلِمة الَّذين كَفَرُوا السُّفلي وَكَلِمة الله هي العُليا وَلله عَزيز حَكيم ﴾

It can be understood from this verse that those things that serve to honor the word of Allah and to exterminate unbelief [*kufr*] are among the goals and objectives of divine law and religion.

5. “*And Allah will by no means give the unbelievers a way (to triumph) against the believers.*”[3]

﴿ ... وَلَن يجعَل الله لِلكَافِرين عَلى المُؤمِنين سَبيلا ﴾

[1] *Sūrat al-Nūr* 24:36.

[2] *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (or *Barā’ah*) 9:40.

[3] *Sūrat al-Nisā’* 4:141.

This blessed verse alludes to another dimension of the reality of the word *sha'ā'ir* and that reality is the aspect of proliferation of the glory and esteem of Islam and Muslims. Another aspect of *sha'ā'ir* is veneration of the Word of Allah [*kalimat Allāh*] and attaching special importance to Muslims in general.

The meaning of *sha'ā'ir*

1. Khalīl ibn Ah mad Farāhīdī says, "*Sha'artuhū* (from the same root as *sha'ā'ir*) means: I contemplated and reasoned it out and I understood it…"[1]

2. Jawharī says, "*Sha'ā'ir* are the deeds and rites of the *h ajj*, and anything which is a standard of obedience and banner of submission to Allah, the Exalted, is a part of *sha'ā'ir*… and the *sha'ā'ir* of a group of people in war is their banner which distinguishes them from their enemies. Also, *ash'artuhū fasha'ara* means, 'I explained it to him, and he understood'."[2]

3. Fīrūzābādī says, "*Ash'arahu'l-amr* means that 'an order/command was made known to him'… and the *shi'ār* of *h ajj* are rites, ceremonies and manifestations of the *h ajj*…"[3]

4. Ibn Fāris says, "*Ish'ār* means 'manifesting and making something known by means of the senses', and *mashā'ir* means 'things that are apparent and known'. Its singular is *mash'ar*, which means 'position, situation or place which has been made manifest and apparent by means of certain signs'."[4]

5. Qurt ubī says, "Anything which is intended for Allah, the Exalted, and comprises a command serving as a sign of manifestation and declaration is called *shi'ār* or *sha'ā'ir*. *Shi'ār* means 'a sign or indication' and *ash'artu* means 'I declared'. *Sha'īrah* means 'a sign', and the *sha'ā'ir* of Allah refer to the signs and symbols of the religion of Allah."[5]

What we can deduce from the preceding discussion is that the word *sha'ā'ir* can be employed for sensory declarations. Also, according to the usage employed by the Holy Qur'an, this word indicates ceremonial declarations and propagation of religion and spreading the Light of Allah.

---

[1] *Kitāb al-'Ayn*, vol. 1, p. 251.

[2] *S ih āh al-Lughah*, vol. 2, p. 699.

[3] *Qāmūs al-Muh īt* , vol. 2, p. 60.

[4] *Mu'jam Maqā'īs al-Lughah*, vol. 3, pp. 193-194.

[5] *Tafsīr Qurt ubī*, vol. 12, p. 56.

This word has an additional aspect though and can also be employed to include the dimension of reverence and exaltation. Even though this dimension is not found in the essence and substance of the word *shaʻāʾir*, it exists in the essence of words which are affiliated to the word *shaʻāʾir*.

In conclusion, *shaʻāʾir* does not merely mean rites and ceremonies of the *h ajj* as such. True, the ceremonies and rites of the *h ajj* are called *mashāʻir* because there is an aspect of declaring and manifesting in them. However, to put it another way, the *shaʻāʾir* are not the religion of Allah in and of themselves, but exist as dimensions of honoring and revering the religion of Allah.

Implementation according to common sense and wisdom

When Allah, the Divine, has not intervened in the meaning of a given word, it means that the Divine Legislator has entrusted the duty of applying the meanings and themes of that word as is deemed relevant according to common parlance, common wisdom and based upon the judgement of pious people who are well-versed in the religious law [*sharīʻah*].

The term ʻ*shaʻāʾir* of religionʼ which has been exhorted and encouraged by Allah belongs to the above-mentioned group. For further clarity, we refer to three important points:

a. Terms which are used in the language of divine law and there is no reason for them to convey and transmit any new meaning apart from their literal meanings, retain their original and literal meanings.

b. If the Divine Legislator has supplied the meaning of a certain word, and has explicitly stipulated the manner of applying it, we must apply that word in the same manner He has stipulated. If Allah has not explicitly stipulated the meaning of a word, we must apply the meaning that is understood according to common practice and common sense.

c. Things exist in two ways: genetically (relating to origin) and contractually. For example, the terms used for most transactions such as buy, sell and rent are forms of contractual existence. Correspondingly, the word *shaʻāʾir,* which is often combined with words like *Allah* or *religion* to form compound words such as *shaʻāʾirullāh* (the signs of Allah) or *shaʻāʾiruddīn* (the signs of religion), can exist in these two ways. This is due to the fact that the genuine meaning of the word *shaʻāʾir* is manifestation or propagation, and because the Divine Legislator has not assigned a specific meaning for this word, we must return to the two previous points (a and b above); that is to

say, all compound words made from this root word retain their commonly understood meanings and the genuine meaning of such words must be interpreted through religious custom.

On the other hand, since *sha'ā'ir* of religion indicate other issues, even though they are considered to be intrinsically genetic, *sha'ā'ir* indicate contractual meanings, not genetic ones.

Consequently, because the Divine Legislator (Allah) has not supplied the meaning of this word, *sha'ā'ir*, it therefore means what is understood from it by religious parlance.

To put it briefly, we adopt anything which the Divine Legislator has stipulated and apply it in the way He has specified. However, with the passage of time, new instances will appear which are deemed an instance of *sha'ā'ir* by religious parlance, common wisdom and pious people who are well-versed in divine law. Therefore, there is no reason to shun acting upon these cases. With all certainty, we include them among the general meanings which denote revering and exalting the signs of Allah.

Responses to doubts

Opponents of holding mourning ceremonies for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), such as the Wahhābīs, have put forward some objections. In this section, we will discuss these doubts and skepticisms.

1. Only the Divine Legislator can originate laws

Some sceptics of holding religious ceremonies say, "Every ceremony that is based on religion has to be devised by the Divine Lawgiver (Allah). In cases where Allah has not devised a religious ceremony, holding such ceremonies will amount to innovation, heresy, deviation and attributing falsehood to Allah."

Response

With recourse to the exhaustive explanations which have already been given, there remains no room for doubt or skepticism about this issue because:

Firstly, originating or officializing laws is of two kinds: exclusive and general. In the case of exclusive origination by Allah, the laws must be followed. Regarding general origination of laws, we adopt all dictates that Allah has specified, and in instances where the Divine Lawgiver has not

mentioned specific religious rites and their instances of application, we adopt and act upon religious parlance.

Secondly, it has been stated in the principals of jurisprudence of Islam that if Allah orders his servants to carry out a general act and does not place any limitations on performing it, man is at liberty to apply that act in every way he likes so long as there is no specific restriction placed on it by divine law. A suitable example would be the place of prayer. Man is at liberty to pray in every place he likes so long as the place is not specifically prohibited by the religious law. The same rule is applied regarding revering and honoring the signs and rites of religion.

2. The necessity of delegation of auhtority by Allah

Some doubters say that if the Divine Lawgiver entrusts the matter of deciding when and how to hold religious rites to common parlance it follows that Allah has delegated religious lawmaking. They contend that this type of relinquishment is null and void.

Response

Application of a general rule to a current specific instance does not amount to entrusting or delegating one’s lawgiving authority. Delegation in this sense is only true when the general rule has been obtained by common parlance. To put it another way, secondary meanings are of two types:

a. Predicate secondary meaning: in which the essence is consequential; hence, the predicate is also consequential, such as loss, sin, forgetfulness, disinclination, anxiety, etc.

b. Subject secondary meaning: which is defined as an instance that occurs to the subject, not to the predicate. The essences of these accompanying instances are not secondary but primary and only their subjects are secondary; such as instances which pertain to holding one’s parents in high respect and paying due honor to a guest and other topics of this kind. Their predicates are primary, but their subjects are secondary; that is to say, different conditions apply in various instances.

About this particular matter, we say: paying due respect is a primary concept that is demanded by wisdom and divine law, but the customs and common practices that apply to paying due respect to others are subject to change and only originate in the subject of the predicate, not in the predicate itself. In other words, respect itself is a constant, but the customs regarding respect

vary. These customs have been entrusted to common parlance so long as there is no specific prohibition placed on the particular subject by divine law.

3. The *ḥalāl* (lawful) will be mistaken to be *ḥarām* (unlawful) and vice versa

Some sceptics say that if Allah has ceded the command of holding religious ceremonies and other religious customs to common sense and wisdom, there will be mistakes in distinguishing what is unlawful [*ḥarām*] as proscribed by Islamic law from the lawful [*ḥalāl*] because common sense and wisdom are not infallible. People are liable to make mistakes in perception and hence discern mistakenly. With use of common sense and wisdom, we are at risk of perceiving wrongly and of failing to distinguish correctly what is *ḥalāl* from what is *ḥarām* and vice versa. Sometimes, something can be perceived to be *ḥalāl* when in actual fact it is *ḥarām*. Sometimes the opposite could happen and an act that is *ḥalāl* will wrongly be perceived to be *ḥarām*.

Response

Legalising that which is *ḥarām* and making illegal that which is *ḥalāl* can only happen when one that is duty-bound makes a judgement about an act without presenting any sound reason, evidence or proof. In this instance, the above-mentioned protest put forth by the skeptics could be acceptable. However, if the act of putting forth new edicts is based on proper evidence which conforms to divine law, even when that evidence is general in nature, there is no problem with such a decree because the evidence offered is correct.

4. This amounts to playing with basic doctrines of *sharī'ah*

Some maintain that if creation or establishment of religious ceremonies has been entrusted to the discernment of common sense and wisdom, the result will be vain sporting with the fundamental doctrines of Islam and futile play with the fixed bounds of the religious law [*sharī'ah*].

Response

It seems that one who raises such an objection desires to reject the holding of religious ceremonies and perhaps harbours fears about acts which actually amount to spreading and publicizing the *sharī'ah* not distorting it as they contend. In fact, propagating the *sharī'ah* is an act that Qur'anic verses have emphasized.

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ ... اللهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ ﴾

"Allah has willed to spread His light and religion and sharīʻah."

He also says,

﴿ ... وَكَلمة الله هي العُليا ﴾

"And Allah has willed that His religion should be high and honored."

Holding religious ceremonies is one of the many ways of propagating the *sharīʻah*. It is one way of exalting the divine law and completing the light of Allah. This is something that Allah has willed in a general way.

If the intended goal of propagating the religion and *sharīʻah* is to bring about some change and transformation in these two, then without doubt this act is null and void. However, applying the general concept of the signs of Allah to new cases and different themes does not automatically change or transform the religion and *sharīʻah*.

5. Extension of the concept to all instances

The skeptics also ask the following questions: if holding religious ceremonies and honoring the signs of Allah has been entrusted to people to decide, what difference is there with the different topics and instances of the *sharīʻah*? We know that common sense and wisdom do not have any right to interfere in instances such as prayer, fasting, *h ajj*, *zakāt*, *khums*, and other similar instances. We know that no group of people can set up conditions and limitations for themselves regarding these topics. How then could Allah entrust the issue of deciding about religious ceremonies to common sense and wisdom, and yet forbid it from interfering in the above-mentioned instances?

Response

The difference here lies in the restriction of certain instances; that is to say, one must differentiate between 'the reality of the *sharīʻah*' and its lexical meaning. In instances where the subject is the reality of the *sharīʻah*, the law of restriction to certain instances applies in full. This is opposed to instances where Allah has intervened in their subjects and meanings and has determined that the meaning of a particular word has to depend on its literal

meaning. It is in such instances where Allah puts the instance and meaning to general application in its entirety when He legislates and makes a law applicable. For example, when Allah commanded us to be kind and beneficent to our parents, he did not place the reality of the *sharī'ah* in this instance. He did not fix specifications or details regarding its exact performance. Therefore, that which is incumbent upon man is to do anything which is an instance of kindness and altruism to his parents. Allah has not placed limitations on this instance and has left it to retain its literal meaning.

This is opposed to those instances that Allah has categorized as part of 'the reality of the *sharī'ah*' like the five daily prayers, *h ajj*, fasting and other issues that pertain to submission and servitude [*'ubūdiyyah*]. These are instances where we can not of our own accord add limits and conditions, but have to follow the limits and conditions which Allah has placed on them up to the Day of Resurrection. However, as regards details which are outside the essence of that action, we are at liberty to do as we wish, like when deciding in which place we would like to perform our prayers, unless we know that there is a particular prohibition on a particular place. In Islamic jurisprudence, this is called 'reasonable and logical choosing' [*takhyīr-e 'aqlī*].

6. Desecration of fundamentals of Islam and pillars of the *sharī'ah*

The doubters say that if those things pertaining to the laws of Islam are entrusted to people to decide, it will lead to irreverence [*hatk-e h urmat*] and insult to the foundations of Islam as well as the pillars of the *sharī'ah*. It is clear that this is not compatible with the lofty aims and teachings of Islam.

Response

The literal meaning of *hatk* (the Arabic term for dishonor and violation), is tearing the veil of modesty or the covering over a hidden affair.[1] In Islam, the intended meaning is attempting to discover the weak points of Muslims.

Regarding the above scepticism, we agree that allowing people to freely decide issues of the *sharī'ah*, such as issues and duties that are restricted, will doubtlessly lead to violating the honor of religion and the *sharī'ah* and result in the foundations of Islam being held in mockery and scorn. However, in instances where the reality of the *sharī'ah* are not stipulated by the Divine

[1] *Sih āh al-Lughah*.

Legislator, the duty of identifying the applicability of a general instance to individuals has been left to the wisdom and the common sense of the people.

7. Some rites and rituals are harmful

Some people say that performing certain rites and celebrating certain signs of Allah will bring about a lot of harm for Islam and Muslims, especially holding mourning rites for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) the performance of which necessitates bearing a lot of sorrow and grief. They say that, according to the laws of Allah, repelling harm by whatever means is incumbent upon man.

Response

Regarding religious rites whose general instances are not from the category of restricted instances, we apply it in such a way that will not lead to unlawful acts. Non-confined instances consist of such issues as respect for one's parents. They can only be applied on the meaning that verifies and ascertains the general instance. This is because we do not claim that in general and in every circumstance every instance of non-confinement is applicable to every meaning.

In other words, that meaning has not been particularly prohibited. On the contrary, it has been specifically made lawful or encompassed in a general law. Otherwise, what harm can holding mourning ceremonies and explaining Islamic laws pose for Islam?

8. Ridiculing the *sharīʻah*

Some say that entrusting the application of the *sharīʻah* in some instances to common sense will result in deriding and making fun [*istihzā'*] of the *sharīʻah*. And because it is incumbent upon every Muslim to protect the honor of the *sharīʻah*, it is therefore clear that the issue of applying the *sharīʻah* in all its aspects should be entrusted to none other than Allah.

Response

Making fun of something is of several kinds:

1. Derision which is not right and so null and void

This type of *istihzā'* is not of concern because it involves mockery of something that is right and just in one ideology but misunderstood by those of other ideologies. For instance, sometimes people of other religions or ideologies ridicule or sneer at Islamic acts of servitude like prayer. This type

of derision does not prove any deficiency or defect in the believers or in Islam itself.

2. Customary derision

This type of derision is a result of social differences in different environments and common practices that pertain to them. The actions of every group of people depend on their interpretation of their environment, but it is always possible to find other groups of people who understand things in a very different way. However, these differences should not make us prohibit the application of what we understand to be the truth.

3. Derision in a true sense

Some kinds of derision have true aspects and will therefore lead to true violation of the honor of the *sharī'ah* and the religion. However, reason is capable of perceiving this kind of derision, because it is a matter of distinguishing decency from indecency. Therefore, in instances where the application of the general instance leads to real derision and scorn, we condemn and forbid such practices. **?**

MOURNING FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF REASON

One of the objections put forward by certain skeptics, such as the Wahhābīs, is why the Shī'ahs and lovers of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) mourn or wail for the distresses which befell Allah's *awliyā'* [*awliyā'*] and why they cry for their sufferings and hold mourning ceremonies for them. They ask: why do the Shī'ahs hit their chests in lamentation? Why do they dwell on past events? Do *awliyā'* of Allah need us to mourn them or is it we who are in need of mourning for them?

The Wahhābīs consider mourning for the *awliyā'* of Allah to be an act of innovation and heresy and say that there is no evidence in Islam to prove that it is permitted to hold mourning ceremonies. Therefore, they contend that mourning ceremonies are not a part of the *sharī'ah* and must be abandoned.

We will now examine this topic on different levels.

1. Mourning and the revival of the culture of 'Āshūrā

With recourse to sound reasoning, we come to know that holding mourning ceremonies for Allah's *awliyā'*, especially the master and leader of all the martyrs Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), is in accordance with logic because honoring Allah's *awliyā'* through various ceremonies amounts to revering their great personalities and reviving their messages. Without doubt, any nation or community which does not honor the great personalities of its history is condemned to failure and doomed to destruction. It is often a few great people who build history.

Some of Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) messages

1. “In circumstances like these, I do not see death to be anything save prosperity and life with the oppressors is nothing but shame and distress.”[1]

«انّي لا أرى الموت إلا سعادة، وَالحياة مع الظالمين إلا برما.»

2. “Death with honor is nothing but eternal life while life with abjectness is nothing but death.”

«ليس الموت في سبيل العزِّ إلا حياة خالدة، وليست الحياة مع الذلِّ إلا الموت الذي لاحياة معه. »

3. “Beware that the illegitimate son of an illegitimately born man (Ibn Ziyād) has given me two options: either to draw my sword and fight, or to wear the dress of abjectness by swearing allegiance to Yazīd. However, acceptance of abjectness is very far from us.”

«ألا وإنَّ الدعي ابن الدعي قد ركز بين اثنتين، بين السلة والذلة وهيهات منّا الذلة... »

4. “We are from Allah and to whom is our return. When the Islamic community is afflicted by the governance of the like of Yazīd, we have to bid farewell to Islam.”[2]

«إنّا لله وإِنّا إليه راجِعُون وعلى الاسلام السلام إذ قد بليت الأمة براع مثل يزيد. »

5. “I have risen not to create disunion and inequity nor oppression and corruption among the Muslims, but to rectify and reform the *ummah* of my ancestor the Holy Prophet (*s*). I want to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. I desire to revive the way of my grandfather, the Holy Prophet (*s*), and my father ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib.”[3]

«... إني لم أخرج أشراً ولا بطراً ولا مفسداً ولا ظالماً، وإنّما خرجت لطلب الاصلاحِ في أمة جدي صَلَّى الله عَليه وآله، أريد أن آمر بالمعروف وأنهى عن المنكر وأسير بسيرة جدي وابي علي بن ابي طالب عليه السّلام. »

2. The affectionate relationship between the Islamic community and Allah’s *awliyā’* (*‘a*)

One of the most effective ways to prove people’s beliefs is inciting their sentiments. Stirring up people’s feelings is an important way of explaining or

[1] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 14, p. 218.

[2] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (‘a)*, vol. 1, p. 184.

[3] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 328.

justifying their political and social beliefs. Man is more liable to be influenced when he looks at issues from the emotional point of view than from logical or other viewpoints. In other words, when it comes to proving man's beliefs, the emotional or psychological perspective is more effective than other methods.

Now, when we pay attention to the issue of the martyrdom of Allah's *awliyā'* (*'a*), especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), we come to the conclusion that reminding people about the sad event of 'Āshūrā and refreshing their memories about what transpired in the history of Islam will result in incitement of their feelings. In this way, we can take those great people to be our role models in life. We can thus communicate their messages to the people, because the messages and orders we receive from Allah's *awliyā'* (*'a*) are in actual fact messages and commands of Allah. It is for this reason that after the event of 'Āshūrā, Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn (*'a*) used to weep and mourn for the martyrs of Karbalā, especially for his father Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).

The issue of mourning the *awliyā'* of Allah becomes clearer when we bear in mind the tribute paid by the Holy Prophet (*s*) to Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).

The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«حسين مني وأنا من حسين، أحبّ الله من أحبّ حسينا.»

> "Al-H usayn is from me and I am from al-H usayn, Allah loves the one who loves al-H usayn."[1]

Similarly, the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«الحسن والحسين سيِّدا شباب أهل الجنَّة.»

> "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two masters of the youths of Paradise."[2]

3. Spiritual benefits derived from the atmosphere at gatherings where mourning for Allah's *awliyā'* takes place

Whenever mourning ceremonies are held for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), his heavenly spirit and divine soul is always present at the gatherings. This is

---

[1] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, vol. 1, p. 51, *Fad ā'il As h āb Rasūl Allāh (s)*.

[2] Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 5, p. 617; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 369.

also true of the other *awliyā'* of Allah (ʻ*a*); wherever mourning ceremonies are held for them, their divine souls are present in those gatherings. Therefore, people from all walks of life can benefit spiritually by attending such mourning ceremonies. Elderly people and children alike can derive vast spiritual benefits from the graces and favors present in these ceremonies.

It has been narrated that one of the great people had said, "For the first few months after birth, take the cradles of your newborns to academic gatherings and assemblies where invocation of Allah takes place. Take them to *H usayniyyah*s[1]. Carry them with you when you go to places of mourning where the name of the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), is mentioned because the souls of the newborns are like magnets; they easily absorb knowledge and the invocations which are recited. They easily absorb the sacred soul of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). Even though the newborn cannot speak, it still perceives and absorbs what occurs around it. And if it is taken to a place or places where sin is committed during the period of its childhood, the sins which are committed there corrupt the baby. If it is, on the contrary, taken to places of worship and knowledge, the newborn perceives the purity and serenity of those places."

That same great man also said, "You should place the cradles of your newborns next to the rooms of commemoration of the martyrs of Karbalā and the rooms where invoking Allah takes place. This was the custom of the scholars of past times. The effects which the newborn absorbs during this period remain firm and stable in its soul up to the end of its life. They become a part of its instincts and natural attributes, because the newborn has absolute ability to perceive during the period of its infancy, even though simple or ordinary people do not comprehend this important secret."

4. Reform and guidance of the community

In addition to the fact that people gathering in mourning ceremonies where the name of the Doyen of Martyrs is mentioned express and feel love for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), they also attain to great graces from these gatherings because eulogy of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) is presented along with discussion of Islamic sciences including beliefs, laws and morals. By participating in such gatherings, people can achieve spiritual prosperity and stimulate perfection of their faith, and that is exactly what Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) sacrificed his life for. **?**

[1] Places of assembly specially built for mourning Imām al-H usayn. [trans.]

MOURNING AS A MANIFESTATION OF LOVE AND HATRED

Love and hatred are two opposing sentiments which occur in man's heart and mind. Inclination or disinclination that we feel in our hearts and souls is derived from these two opposing emotions.

The love of some is incumbent upon man

We can deduce from logic and from evidence that has been transmitted to us in traditions that loving certain people is incumbent and binding upon man.

1. Allah

Allah, the Exalted, is the first of those for whom love is intrinsically incumbent upon man, because He possesses all the attributes of perfection and beauty, and all creatures are dependant upon him. Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ قُلْ إِن كَانَ آبَاؤُكُم وَأَبْنَاؤُكُم وَإِخْوَانُكُم وَأَزْوَاجُكُم وَعَشِيرَتُكُم وَأَمْوَال اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَة تَخْشَوْن كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِن تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِن اللهِ وَرَسُولِه وَجِهَاد فِي سَبِيلِه فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللهُ بِأَمْرِه وَاللهُ لا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِين ﴾

"Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kindred and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and the dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and striving in His

way, then wait until Allah brings about His command; and verily Allah does not guide the transgressing people.”[1]

2. Allah’s Prophet (*s*)

Among the people who have to be loved for the sake of Allah is the honorable and beloved Prophet, Muh ammad (*s*). The reason for loving the Noble Prophet (*s*) is that he is the intermediary of all temporal and spiritual graces. It is for this reason that he has been mentioned immediately after the name of Allah in the above-mentioned verse and it has been ordered that he, too, must be loved.

The Prophet of Islam (*s*) says,

«احبُّوا الله لما يغذوكم وأحبُّوني بحبِّ الله...»

“You must love Allah because he gives you all sustenance, and love me for the sake of Allah…”[2]

Moreover, the lofty spiritual virtues and moral perfection of the Noble Prophet (*s*) attract the love and affection of the hearts of all believers.

3. The Prophet’s Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]

There is plentiful emphasis in the Qur’an and in Islamic traditions of both Sunnīs and Shī‘ahs that believers must show their love and affection towards the people of the Prophet’s Household, not just because they are the Prophet’s offspring but because they posses the same lofty moral virtues, spiritual attainments and moral perfections as the Prophet. In other words, they possess all the attributes of perfection and beauty in a comprehensive manner. Putting it more accurately, they are the very manifestation of Allah’s attributes of perfection and beauty. Therefore, showing heartfelt love and affection towards these lofty personalities in fact means loving the excellence that has manifested itself in them in a complete and perfect manner. The source of this good and excellence is Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, expressing affection and devotion to the Prophet’s *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*) is tantamount to loving and being devoted to Allah, the Exalted. Loving good and virtuous people compels and drives man towards noble virtues because love is a force that drives man to his Beloved, and therefore he strives to conduct himself in the way that his Beloved approves. Loving exemplary

[1] *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (or *Barā’ah*) 9:24.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 194.

models, especially Allah's *awliyā'*, is extremely beneficial from the aspect of personal training and self-purification.

Who are the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*)?

When we study scholars' books of etymology and terminology, we come to know that what is meant by term *Ahl al-Bayt* of the Holy Prophet (*s*) are certain special and distinguished people. When we refer to books of tradition [*h adīth*], we understand that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) do not comprise all the genealogical and causal relatives of the Holy Prophet (*s*). In other words, the term *Ahl al-Bayt* does not include all the ancestral relatives nor those related to the Prophet through marriage.

a) The term *Ahl al-Bayt* in etymology and common parlance

In his book entitled, "*Lisān al-'Arab*", Ibn Manz ūr Ifrīqī says, "The *Ahl al-Bayt* of a person are those people who are nearest to him. The *Ahl al-Bayt* are people who are gathered together by genealogy and religion."[1]

b) The term *Ahl al-Bayt* in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*

Ahl al-Bayt has been employed for certain special people in the Holy Qur'an and the traditions. The term has been used for the Holy Prophet (*s*), Imām 'Alī (*'a*), Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*'a*), al-H asan (*'a*), al-H usayn (*'a*) and the remaining pure offspring, the nine Infallibles from the progeny of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). Umm Salamah says, "When the *āyah, 'Allah only intends to keep away the uncleanliness from you, O people of the house, and to purify you a thorough purifying.'* was revealed to the Prophet (*s*), he summoned 'Alī, Fāt imah, al-H asan and al-H usayn (*'a*) and said, 'These are my *Ahl al-Bayt*'."[2]

Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) said,

«إنّا اهل بيت النُبوَّة.»

"We are the *Ahl al-Bayt* of the Holy Prophet (*s*)."[3]

---

[1] *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 11, pp. 27-28, *Māddah Ahl*.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 158, *h adīth* 4705; *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 7, p. 63.

[3] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn ('a)*, vol. 1, p. 184.

On his authorized chain of narration, Muslim quotes ‘Ā’ishah narrating, “One morning the Prophet (*s*) left my house with a piece of cloth called “*Kisā*” woven out of black wool hanging on his shoulder. Al-H asan ibn ‘Alī joined the Prophet and was permitted to enter the *Kisā*. Then, al-H usayn joined them and was permitted to enter the *Kisā* also. After him came Fāt imah and the Prophet made her enter the *Kisā* as well. Lastly, ‘Alī came and he too was permitted to enter the *Kisā*. Then, the Holy Prophet (*s*) recited the Qur’anic verse,

﴿ اَنَّما يريد الله لِيذهِب عَنكُم الرِّجس أَهل البَيت وَيطَهِّرَكُم تَطهيرا ﴾

‘Allah only intends to keep away the uncleanliness from you, O people of the house, and to purify you a thorough purifying’.”[1]

Ah mad ibn H anbal says, “When the *Verse of Mubāhalah* was revealed to the Holy Prophet (*s*), he called for ‘Alī, Fāt imah, al-H asan and al-H usayn. Then, he said, ‘O my Lord! These are my *Ahl al-Bayt*!’”[2]

The Holy Qur’an and love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*)

In the Holy Qur’an, Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ ... قُل لا اَسأَلُكُم عَليه اَجرا إِلاَّ المَوَدَّة في القُربي... ﴾

“… Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love of my near relatives…”[3]

This Qur’anic verse is popularly known as “the Verse of Love” [*mawaddah*]. In most books of Qur’anic commentary, Islamic traditions and history, the Verse of Love is known to have been revealed about the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

Suyūt ī has interpreted this verse. While commenting on it, he quotes from Ibn ‘Abbās, “When this verse was revealed to the Noble Prophet (*s*), his companions asked, ‘O Prophet of Allah! Who are your near relatives, the ones whom loving has been made incumbent upon us?’ The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, ‘Alī and Fāt imah and their two children’.”[4]

---

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 4, p. 1883, *h adīth* 2424, *Kitāb al-Fad ā’il al-S ah ābah*.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 185.

[3] *Sūrat al-Shawrā* 42:23.

[4] *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 7; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah ī h ayn*, vol. 3, p. 172; *Majma‘ al-Zawā’id*, vol. 9, p. 168; *Kashāf*, vol. 4, p. 219.

After praising and glorifying Allah in a sermon that he delivered after the martyrdom of Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*), Imām al-H asan (ʻ*a*) said,

> **... وأنا من أهل البيت الذي افترض الله مودّتهم على كلّ مسلم، فقال تبارك وتعالي: ﴿ قُل لا اَسبَألُكُم عَلَيْه اَجْرا إلاَّ المَوَدَّة فِي القُربي وَمَن يقتَرِف حَسَنة نَزِد لَه فيها حُسْنا ﴾ فاقتراف الحسنة مودّتنا أهل البيت.**
>
> "… And I am one of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, whose love Allah has made incumbent upon every Muslim. Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has said, *'Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love of my near relatives; and whoever earns good, We increase for him good therein…'* Therefore, doing good works manifests your love of the *Ahl al-Bayt*."

Imām al-S ādiq (ʻ*a*) asked Abī Jaʻfar Ah wal, "What do the people of Bas rah say about this verse, *'Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love of my near relatives…'*" Abī Jaʻfar Ah wal answered, "May I be your ransom, they say that this verse was revealed regarding the status of all the relatives of the Holy Prophet (*s*)."

Imām al-S ādiq (ʻ*a*) said, "They speak falsehood! This verse was revealed only regarding the *Ahl al-Bayt*, ʻAlī, Fāt imah, al-H asan and al-H usayn, the companions of the *Kisā*."[1]

The exclusiveness of this verse is additional, not real. Therefore, the verse also includes the remaining Imāms (ʻ*a*).

Love of *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*) in *h adīth*s

Crying and shedding tears has been mentioned in many *h adīth*s recounted by the different sects of Islam. In the *h adīth*s, just like in the Gracious Qur'an, love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* has been emphasized in a clear and explicit manner.

We shall now refer to some of the relevant traditions:

1. Obligation for loving the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*)

The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

[1] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 79, *h adīth* 66; *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 128.

«ادّبوا أولادكم على ثلاث خصال: حب نبيكم، وحبّ أهل بيته، وقراءة القرآن.»

"Instruct and train your children to have three characteristics; love for your Prophet, love for the Prophet's *Ahl al-Bayt* and reciting the Holy Qur'an."[1]

Amīr al-Muʾminīn**,** Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*), said,

«أحسن الحسنات حبُّنا، وأسوأُ السيئات بغضنا.»

"The best of good works is loving us and the worst of bad works is hating us the *Ahl al-Bayt*."[2]

2. Love of Allah's *Ahl al-Bayt* and His Prophet (*s*) are one

Allah's Prophet (*s*) has said,

«أحبّوا الله لما يغذوكم من نعمه، وأحبّوني لحبّ الله، وأحبّوا أهل بيتي لحبي.»

"You should love Allah because he gives you sustenance from his bounties. You should love me because of your love for Allah, and you should love my *Ahl al-Bayt* because of your love for me."[3]

Zayd ibn Arqam said, "I was in the presence of Allah's Prophet when I saw Fāt imah al-Zahrā enter the Prophet's house along with her two children al-H asan and al-H usayn. ʻAlī came after them and entered the house as well. The Prophet looked at them and said,

«من أحب هؤلاء فقد أحبّني، ومن أبغضهم فقد أبغضني.»

'The one who loves these people has loved me, and anyone who hates them has hated me'."[4]

Imām al-S ādiq (*ʻa*) said,

«من عرف حقّنا وأحبّنا فقد أحب الله تبارك وتعالى.»

---

[1] *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 16, p. 456, *h adīth* 45409; *Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 1, p. 225, *h adīth* 331.

[2] *Ghurar al-H ikam*, vol. 1, p. 211, *h adīth* 3363.

[3] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 664, *h adīth* 3789; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 150.

[4] *Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) in the History of Damascus*, vol. 91, p. 126.

"Anyone who recognizes our right, and loves us, has in reality loved Allah, the Blessed and Exalted."[1]

3. Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) is a foundation of faith

The Prophet of Allah has said,

«أساس الإسلام حبي وحبّ أهل بيتي.»

"The basis and foundation of Islam is love for me and my *Ahl al-Bayt*."[2]

He also said,

«لكل شيء أساس، وأساسُ الإسلام حبُّنا أهل البيت.»

"There is a base for everything, and the foundation of Islam is love of us, the *Ahl al-Bayt*."[3]

4. Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) is worship

Allah's Prophet (*s*) said,

«حبُّ آل محمّد يوما خير من عبادة سنة، ومن ماتَ عليه دخل الجنة.»

"One day of loving Muh ammad's *Ahl al-Bayt* is better than one year of worship. Anyone who dies loving the *Ahl al-Bayt* will enter the Paradise."[4]

5. Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) is a sign of faith

Allah's Prophet (*s*) said,

«لا يؤمن عبد حتى أكون أحبَّ إليه من نفسه، وأهلي أحبُّ إليه من أهله، وعترتي أحبُّ إليه من عترتِه، وذاتي أحبُّ إليه من ذاته.»

"None of Allah's servants attain complete faith unless he loves me more than he loves himself, loves my *Ahl al-Bayt* more than he loves his own family, loves my progeny more than he loves his own

---

[1] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 112, *h adīth* 98.

[2] *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 12, p. 105, *h adīth* 34206; *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 7.

[3] *Al-Muh āsin*, vol. 1, p. 247, *h adīth* 461.

[4] *Nūr al-Abs ār*, p. 127; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 46, *h adīth* 3.

progeny, and loves my essence more than he loves his own essence."[1]

6. Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) is a sign of purity of birth

The Holy Prophet (*s*) pointed at ʻAlī (*ʻa*) and said,

«أيها الناس! إمتحنوا أولادكم بحبّه، فإنّ عليا لايدعو إلى ضلالة، ولا يبعد عن هديً، فمن أحبّهُ فهو منكم، ومن أبغضه فليس منكم.»

"O people! Test your children with love for ʻAlī, because he does not invite you to misguidance and he does not keep you away from guidance. Therefore, anyone of your children who loves ʻAlī is from you and anyone of them who does not love ʻAlī is not yours."[2]

Amīr al-Muʼminīn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) said, "In his last will and testament to Abū Dharr, the Noble Prophet (*s*) instructed him thus,

«يا أباذر! من أحبّنا أهل البيت فليحمدالله على أوّل النعم. قال: يا رسول الله! وما أوّل النعم؟ قال: طيب الولادة، انّه لا يحبّنا إلا من طاب مولده.»

ʻO Abū Dharr! Anyone who loves us, the *Ahl al-Bayt*, must praise Allah for being granted the foremost blessing. Abū Dharr asked, ʻWhat is the foremost blessing?ʼ The Holy Prophet (*s*) answered, ʻPurity and legitimacy of birth, because no one loves us unless his birth was pure and legitimateʼʼ."[3]

7. Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) inquired on the Day of Judgement

Allahʼs Prophet (*s*) said,

«أوّل ما يسأل عنه العبد حبّنا أهل البيت.»

"The first thing on the Day of Resurrection to be asked from any of Allahʼs servants is about their love for us, the *Ahl al-Bayt*."[4]

He also said,

---

[1] *Al-Muʻjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 7, p. 86, *h adīth* no 6416; S adūq, *Al-Amālī*, p. 274, *h adīth* 9.

[2] *Tārīkh Mukhtas ar Damishq*, vol. 2, p. 225, *h adīth* 730.

[3] S adūq, *Al-Amālī*, p. 455.

[4] *ʻUyūn Akhbār al-Rid ā (ʻa)*, vol. 2, p. 62, *h adīth* 258.

«لا تزول قدما عبد يوم القيمة حتى يسأل عن أربع: عن عمره فيما أفناه، وعن جسدِه فيما أبلاه، وعن ما له فيما أنفقه ومن أين كسبه، وعن حبّنا أهلَ البيت.»

"On the Day of Resurrection, none of Allah's servants will take a step forward unless he is asked about four things: how he spent his life, in what way he used his body, in what way he earned his wealth and spent it, and whether he loved us, the *Ahl al-Bayt*, or not."[1]

Special or particular proofs

The *h adīth*s which we have so far mentioned refer to love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) in general. There is another group of *h adīth*s which allude to love and affection for some of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) in particular. We will now recount these *h adīth*s:

1. Love of Imām 'Alī (*'a*)

The Holy Prophet (*s*) has said,

براءة من النار حبُّ عليٍّ.

"The only way to gain salvation from the hell fire is to love 'Alī."[2]

Allah's Prophet (*s*) also said,

«يا عليُّ! طوبي لمن احبك وصدق فيك، وويل لمن أبغضك وكذب فيكك.»

"O 'Alī! Happy and blessed is the man who loves you and is sincere in recognizing your right and woe on any person who hates you and is a deceitful liar who does not recognize your right."[3]

Umm Salamah narrates that she heard the Holy Prophet (*s*) say,

«لا يحب عليا منافق، ولا يبغضه مؤمن.»

"No hypocrite loves 'Alī and no true believer hates him."[4]

Imām 'Alī (*'a*) said,

---

[1] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 11, p. 102, *h adīth* 11177.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 2, p. 241.

[3] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 135.

[4] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 635, *h adīth* 3717; *Jāmī' al-S awl*, vol. 8, p. 656, *h adīth* 6499.

«والذي فلق الحبة وبرأ النسمة، إنّه لعهدَ النّبي الأمي إليَّ انّه لا يحبّني إلا مؤمن، ولا يبغضني إلا منافق.»

“I swear upon He who split the seed and created man, the Prophet verily promised me that no one will love me except the true believer, and no one will hate me except the hypocrite.”[1]

2. Love of Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*‘a*)

Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said,

«فاطمة بضعة مني، من أغضَبها فقد أغضبني.»

“Fāt imah is part of me. Whoever makes her angry, angers me.”[2]

It was asked of ‘Ā’ishah, “Who among the women was more beloved by the Holy Prophet?” She answered, “Fāt imah.” They again asked her, “Who from among the men was more beloved by the Holy Prophet?” She answered, “Fāt imah’s husband.”[3]

3. Love of Imām al-H asan (*‘a*) and Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

The Holy Prophet (*s*) said about al-H asan (*‘a*) and al-H usayn (*‘a*),

«هذان ابناي الحسن والحسين، أللّهم إنّي أُحبُّهما، أللّهم فأحبَّهما وأحب من يحبُّهما.»

“These two are my children. O Lord! I love these two. O Lord! May you too love them and love anyone who loves them.”[4]

He also said,

«الحسن والحسين ريحانتاي.»

“Al-H asan and al-H usayn are my two fragrant flowers.”[5]

The manifestations of love in man’s life

---

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 1, p. 86, *h adīth* 131; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 643.

[2] *S ah ī h Bukhārī*, vol. 5, p. 92; Muslim, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 4, p. 1902.

[3] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 701, *h adīth* 3874.

[4] *S ah ī h Bukhārī*, vol. 5, pp. 100-101; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 656; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 446.

[5] *S ah ī h Bukhārī*, vol. 5, p. 102, *h adīth* 241; Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 657, *h adīth* 3770; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 85.

The love of a person who loves another is not confined to the heart and soul only. As has already been mentioned, love requires a practical application. The practical application of love is a source of manifestation in a person's life, and it follows that if love for a person gains precedence, its manifestations and practical appearance are also promoted. The logic of preference also includes practical applications of love, except in certain instances where manifesting love has been forbidden like in the case where it is implied that a person must bring about his own destruction or ruin for the sake of his beloved. This has been forbidden because there is no logic for its preference.

Now, we refer to some logical manifestations of love:

1. Submission and obedience.

2. Honoring and visiting the beloved.

3. Revering and paying tribute to the beloved.

4. Granting the needs and requirements of the beloved.

5. Defending the beloved in diverse ways.

6. Feeling sorrow because of separation from the beloved.

7. Preserving the literary and non-literary works of the beloved.

8. Respecting the children and descendants of the beloved.

9. Kissing that which is associated with the beloved.

10. Organising ceremonies to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the beloved.

One can easily see that holding mourning ceremonies is also one of the necessities and manifestations of love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). **?**

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MOURNING

The most important benefits derived from mourning ceremonies are its psychological effects. Most people who take part in mourning gatherings do so with the desire of gaining psychological and emotional benefits. Nevertheless, some people say that holding mourning ceremonies and having many sorrowful rites during the course of a year deprives the society of happiness and joy. They contend that these practices cause people to feel more unhappy and downcast and in effect bring about more discouragement and depression in the society. In this section, we will examine and analyze this issue.

The stages of mourning

Mourning or crying has an exterior (outer manifestation) and an interior (inner manifestation). Its outer appearance is physiological, and is a result of psychological influences by means of external or internal stimuli, such as thought and reflection. These psychological effects enter the physiology of the brain and the nerves and activate a special part of the brain which sends messages to the lachrymal glands to stimulate the eyes to become active. The result is that tears flow and this is what is known as crying.

The interior or mental manifestation of crying comprises its internal psychological effects. The psychological view, to which we concur, is that crying establishes affectionate and benevolent feelings. Crying is emphasized in the traditions [*h adīth*s], to the extent that it has been said that crying, causing others to cry or even being in a mood of lamentation when a person attends mourning ceremonies for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) is a source of both worldly and heavenly benefits. Here that which is implied is the internal effects.

The internal psychological consequences of crying are divided into four types. The first is directed at the self and its repressed needs. This type of crying can intensify depression and can also cause an individual's social abilities to be disturbed or confused.

However, the other three types of crying are encouraging and motivational because they have an inverse relationship with sorrow and depression. The first kind of crying is as a result of real sorrow caused, for example, by death; but the other three types do not possess real sorrow for present events, even though they take place in present-day mourning ceremonies. The four types of crying are as follows:

1. Crying as a result of relationship and affection

This type of crying takes place due to problems or when tragic events, like bereavement of a beloved, come to pass. Crying of this kind does not usually happen out of one's own volition, but occurs involuntarily. This type of crying, in the terminology of psychologists and mental therapists, is termed psychological emptying or emotional release of the aroused feelings and is related to the individual and his repressed or unfulfilled needs.

2. Crying as a result of belief

This type of crying is that of a person who sheds tears during supplication while evaluating his present and future deeds and circumstances. This type of crying has its roots in faith and ideology and is not related to fears about this world and our day to day life.

3. Crying to seek perfection and excellence

Sometimes crying is a result of seeking virtue and moral perfection, like the crying which takes place when a teacher, a moral adviser, a prophet, an *imām* or anyone of high moral calibre departs this life. This type of crying views things from this perspective that we, in the deepest recesses of our hearts, have a strong admiration for perfection and spiritual growth. We are overwhelmed when these types of perfection are available, and we become distressed when they are lost. The crying that takes place in mourning ceremonies is sometimes of this type.

4. Crying for the persecuted and oppressed

In this type of crying, we feel sympathy for one who is being treated unjustly or inhumanely like when we cry because of the harsh oppression that was

imposed upon the Holy Prophet (*s*) and the Holy Imāms (*ʿa*), especially the brutal oppression which was committed against the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), and other numerous hardships that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) suffered.

Mourning ceremonies and depression

Depressive disorders are divided into three main groups:

1. Major depression.
2. Habitual depression.
3. Circumstantial depression.[1]

Major depression is the most intense type of depression. Some of its signs include:

a. Feelings of sorrow, emptiness or purposelessness for the greater part of the day or even the whole day.

b. Visible and apparent decrease of interest in and enjoyment of daily activities for the better part of the day.

c. Visible decrease in body weight without abstaining from food or noticeable increase in body weight in the course of one month.

d. Inability to sleep (insomnia) or sleepiness throughout the day.

e. Fatigue and loss of energy for most of the day.

f. Lack of self-worth or excessive feelings of guilt.

g. Decrease in mental capacity, lack of concentration and inability to make decisions.

h. Recurring thoughts about death.

Upon consideration of these three types of depression, it is clear that the first and third types are not intended by those who say that mourning ceremonies are a cause of sorrow and depression in the society. The first type is extreme and it is clearly invalid to claim that the Shīʿah societies are widely afflicted by major or chronic depression and sorrow.

[1] *Anjuman-e Rawānshenāsī-ye Āmrīkā* (American Psychological Association), p. 602.

The third type of depression is also not intended by the sceptics because it is related to special and particular instances like premenstrual syndrome (PMS) or depressive disorders that follow psychological distress like schizophrenia.

Therefore, habitual depression and sorrow is that which is intended by critics. Habitual depression is relatively minor and has the following features:

a. Lack of appetite or excessive appetite.

b. Lack of sleep (insomnia) or excessive sleepiness.

c. Lack of energy or excessive fatigue.

d. Difficulty in decision making or feelings of helplessness.

e. The appearance or manifestation of these symptoms for the greater part of the day or for most days for a period of at least two years.

f. The symptoms are not a result of physiological effects due to inappropriate use of medicines, etc.

g. The symptoms result in disruption of the individual’s work and social activities.

Now, we will examine whether or not mourning ceremonies bring about the symptoms of habitual depression in man, and therefore cause social despondency.

In order to make this issue clear, it is necessary to scrutinize the factors which cause depression and despondency from the viewpoint of psychology. Psychologists have enumerated three main factors that cause depression: existential, hereditary and environmental stimulants.[1]

The surroundings or situation alone do not cause depression. In fact, negative stimuli in the environment are only effective in people who have a background of hereditary depression or biological disorder in the brain affecting its normal function.

In addition, mourning ceremonies cannot be classed as environmental causes that generate intense stress. Real grief and sorrow resulting from current tragic events can cause extreme distress and depression, but mourning ceremonies for the *awliyā’* of Allah play no part in producing intense stress. On the contrary, and with due attention to issues discussed in social

[1] *Anjuman-e Pezeshkī-ye Āmrīkā* (The American Medical Association), Trans. Mahdī Ganjī, pp. 67-88.

psychology about the characteristics of religious rituals, it can be said that mourning ceremonies play a strong part in stress relief. In cases where tears and sorrow arise as a result of belief, because of seeking moral perfection and excellence, or due to sympathy for the persecuted and oppressed, they can produce tranquillity in man and remove agitation from his soul. To substantiate this issue, we will refer to an example in this regard.

Doctor Tayjānī Tūnisī says, "My friend called Mun'im came and together we traveled on pilgrimage to Karbalā. There, like the other Shī'ahs, I came to understand the hardships and sufferings which befell our master al-H usayn (*'a*). That was when I understood that Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) had not really ever died. The people were crowding and pressing upon one another all round his shrine. They were crying with unmatched grief and anguish the like of which I had never seen before. They showed so much agitation that it seemed like al-H usayn (*'a*) had just been martyred. I heard clergymen reviving the tragic event of Karbalā. Their retelling of what came to pass on the day of 'Āshūrā was arousing the people's emotions and causing much wailing and lamentation. No one could listen to the story and bear its intense sorrow. On the contrary, some who listened to the account would involuntarily pass out. I, too, cried. I cried and cried. I cried so much that it seemed as though grief had been trapped in my throat for years, and it was now exploding out.

After that wailing though, I felt inner peace. I felt tranquillity like I had never felt before. It seemed as though previously I had been one of the enemies of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), and in a split second I had been converted and become one of his companions. In a moment, I had become a follower of that great man who had sacrificed his life for the preservation of Islam.

Even more interesting is that at that very moment, a clergyman was giving an account of the story of H urr. H urr was one of the leaders of the enemy troops who had come to Karbalā with the intention of fighting Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). All of a sudden, H urr started shaking and trembling on the battlefield. His friends asked him, 'What is wrong with you? Are you afraid of death?' He answered: 'I swear upon Allah! I do not fear death at all, but I see myself having the option to choose between eternal bliss in heaven and eternal perdition in hell.' Suddenly, H urr mounted his horse and started riding towards al-H usayn (*'a*). He hastened to meet the Holy Imām (*'a*) and, as he was crying, said, 'O son of the Holy Prophet! Is there repentance for me?'

Believe it when I say that this was the very moment when I could not bear it any more. I started wailing and threw myself on the ground. It seemed as though I was reliving H urr’s part and was asking al-H usayn, ‘O son of the Prophet! Is there repentance for me? O son of the Prophet! Forgive me!’

The preacher’s voice had such a strong impact on the listeners that it caused the wailing voices of the people to raise to unprecedented levels. My friend, who had heard my wailing voice, took me in his arms while he himself was crying. He embraced me in the same way that a mother embraces her child. He, too, was shouting, ‘O al-H usayn! O al-H usayn!’

Those were moments when I perceived and understood what real crying was. I felt that my tears were cleaning and cleansing my heart. My entire body was being cleaned right from the core. It was at that moment when I understood the meaning of the Prophet’s words when he said, ‘If you knew what I know, then you would laugh less and cry more.’ I spent that whole day in deep sorrow. My friend wanted to console me, so he brought some juice and cookies, but I had lost my appetite. I refused to eat and instead asked my friend to repeat the story of the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (‘*a*), because I did not know anything about it at all…’’’[1] **?**

[1] *Thumma Ahdaytu* (Then, I was Guided), pp. 96-98.

THE RELIGIOUS VERDICT CONCERNING ATTENDING MOURNING CEREMONIES FOR THE AWLIYĀ' OF ALLĀH

On his own chain of transmission, Bukhārī narrates that ʻĀ'ishah said, "When the news of the martyrdom of Zayd ibn H ārithah and Jaʻfar and ʻAbd Allāh ibn Rawāh ah was brought to the Holy Prophet (*s*), he entered the mosque and sat there with signs of grief and sorrow showing on his face."[1]

Ibn Hishām recounts, "When the Noble Prophet (*s*) returned to Medina, he heard sounds of crying and mourning. His eyes filled with tears. Then, the Noble Prophet (*s*) said, 'But no one cries for H amzah.' When they heard this, the women of Banī Ashhal came out and started crying for the uncle of Allah's Prophet (*s*)."[2] **?**

[1] *Irshād al-Sārī*, vol. 2, p. 393.

[2] *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 105.

HOLDING MOURNING CEREMONIES IN THE INTEREST OF UNITY

It is sometimes said that holding mourning rites is not compatible with Islamic unity because these ceremonies include protest against and condemnation of some of the Muslim caliphs. Therefore, it is felt by some that discontinuation of such protests and cursing for the sake of creating unity among the Muslims is binding and necessary.

Response

Firstly, remembering the uprising of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) is not only in the interest of Shīʿah Muslims, but also in the interest of all Muslims and freedom-seekers of the world, because holding mourning rites in memory of Abā ʿAbd Allāh al-H usayn (*ʿa*) establishes in man the spirit of seeking martyrdom for the sake of securing and establishing freedom and faith. This orientation can help free human societies which are now living under the yoke of captivity and exploitation.

Secondly, when the suffering of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) is kept alive there is no negative mention of the Prophet's faithful companions. It must be realized that the Prophet's loyal companions loved and respected Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). Some of them were even with him at Karbalā and they attained martyrdom. The Prophet's companions who were martyred include H abīb ibn Maz āhir, Muslim ibn ʿAwsajah, Burayr ibn Khad īr Hamadānī, ʿUrwah Ghaffārī and others.

Commemorating the ʿĀshūrā uprising of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) has not been and will never be a cause of disagreement and disunity among Muslims. Commemorating the struggle of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) against those

hypocrites that desired to blot out the religion of Islam can only bring about more unity among Muslims and create division and discord between the Muslims and such deceitful tyrants as Yazīd, Ibn Ziyād, ʻUmar ibn Saʻd and others that wish to destroy Islam, but, then again, this is precisely what the tyrants and oppressors fear. **?**

BEATING THE CHEST TO MOURN IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A)

It can be understood from Shī‘ah and Sunnī traditions [*h adīth*s] that there is no prohibition for beating the chest when mourning and grieving for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), even though it may cause redness of the chest. On the contrary, the action of beating the chest is in fact preferred.

A. The Shī‘ah traditions

The following traditions show that it is permissible and legitimate to hold different types of mourning ceremonies, including beating the chest.

1. Shaykh T ūsī recounts that Imām al-S ādiq (*‘a*) said,

> «لا شيء في اللطم على الخدود سوى الاستغفار والتوبة، وقد شققنَ الجيوب ولطمن الخدود الفاطميات على الحسين بن على عليهما السَّلام وعلى مثله تلطم الخدود وتشقُّ الجيوب.»
>
> “Hitting the face is nothing but seeking forgiveness and repentance, because the women from among the descendants of Fāt imah (*‘a*) tore their clothes and hit their faces when mourning for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). For people like al-H usayn (*‘a*), we should hit our faces and rend our clothes.”[1]

2. A part of the holy prayer of “*Ziyārat Nāh iyah Muqaddasah*” (Pilgrimage to the Holy Places) reads,

> فلمّا رأيْن النساء جوادك مخزيا... برزن من الخدود ناشرات الشعور، على الخدود لاطمات وبالعويل ناحيات.»

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Ah kām*, vol. 8, p. 325.

"Like wounded horses, the women saw you… they came from behind their curtains with their hair disheveled and they were hitting their faces and wailing in loud voices."[1]

3. In the same prayer, we read that the Imām of the Age, Imām al-Mahdī (*ʻa*), addresses Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) in this way,

«ولأندبنك صباحاً ومساءاً، ولأبكينَّ عليك بدل الدموع دما.»

"I weep for you every mourning and evening, and instead of shedding tears, I cry blood."[2]

4. It is narrated that Imām al-Rid ā (*ʻa*) said,

«ان يوم الحسين اقرح جفوننا وأسبل دموعنا وأذلَّ عزيزنا بأرض كرب وبلا، واورّثنا الكرب والبلاء الى يوم الانقضاء.»

"Verily the day of al-H usayn (*ʻa*) has lacerated our eyes and made our tears flow. It has made our beloved one (Imām al-H usayn) become forlorn in the land of affliction and grief. Al-H usayn (*ʻa*) has left grief for us to inherit and sorrow to accompany us until the Day of Resurrection."[3]

5. Shaykh Mufīd recounts, "When Zaynab heard her brother, al-H usayn (*ʻa*), reciting verses,

«يا دهر افٍّ لك من خليل...»

She slapped her face, rent her clothes and passed out."[4]

6. Sayyid ibn T āwūs narrates, "When the captives reached Karbalā on their return from Shām to Medina, they saw that Jābir ibn ʻAbd Allāh Ans ārī along with a number of people of Banī Hashim had come for pilgrimage to the grave of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). All of them reached the place at the same time and started crying. They were grieving and hitting themselves. They mourned bitterly. The women of that land joined them and copied their mode and they mourned for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) for three days."[5]

---

[1] *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, pp. 260-261.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 284.

[4] Shaykh Mufīd, *Al-Irshād*, p. 232.

[5] *Luhūf*, pp. 112-113; *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 146.

7. Ibn Qūlūyah narrated that the houris of paradise in the high heavens hit their breasts and faces for the sake of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).[1]

8. On his authorized chain of transmission, Kulaynī relates that Jābir asked Imām al-Bāqir (*'a*) to explain what grief [*jaza'*] meant. He (*'a*) said,

«أشدُّ الجزع الصراخ بالويل والعويل، ولطم الوجه والصدر...»

> "The most intense grief is yelling, crying, shouting and hitting the face and chest…"[2]

B. Sunnī traditions

Sunnī Muslims have also recounted a number of traditions which prove the desirability of beating the chest when mourning over the *awliyā'* of Allah, especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*).

Now, we will refer to some of these *h adīth*s,

1. Ibn Kathīr narrates that when the captives passed by Karbalā on their way back to Medina and remembered Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), the women started crying and hitting their faces. Zaynab raised her voice and said, "O Muh ammad!"[3]

All this took place in the presence of Imām al-Sajjād (*'a*), who was in their company, but he showed no protest against their behavior.

2. Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) recited the following epic verse at Karbalā,

يا دهر اف لك من خليل كم لك في الاشراق والاصيل

When Zaynab heard his words, at that moment she rent her clothes, hit her face and and came out of the tent bareheaded and cried out loudly, "O my sorrow! O my misery!"[4]

3. Among the reasons cited to substantiate the permissibility of hitting one's chest and face when mourning for the prophets, the *awliyā'* and their descendants, especially unique and unparalleled people in the history of

---

[1] *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, p. 80; *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 201.

[2] *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 2, p. 915.

[3] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 210; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn ('a)*, p. 39.

[4] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 319; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 59; Mufīd, *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 94.

mankind, is a *h adīth* which Ah mad and other historians have recounted on authentic chains of transmission. They have recounted that ʻĀ'ishah said, "… The soul of the Prophet of Allah (*s*) was taken […], then I put his head on a pillow and the other women and I arose and started hitting ourselves. I was hitting my face…"

Regarding the chain of transmission of this tradition, Muh ammad Salīm Asad says, "This chain of transmission is correct and authentic." (It must be mentioned, that the Shīʻahs do not consent to the truth of all parts of this tradition, but that argument is reserved for another place and time. The current argument is in regard to the acceptability of hitting oneself to show grief.)[1]

4. It cannot be said that hitting oneself due to an affliction that has befallen him is prohibited, because Ah mad ibn H anbal, on his own chain of transmission, has recounted through Abū Hurayrah that an Arab man came to see the Prophet of Allah and started hitting himself on the face. He was pulling out his hair while saying, "I see myself delivered to destruction and perdition." The Prophet of Allah asked him, "What is it that has delivered you to destruction and perdition?" He answered, "In the holy month of Ramad ān, my wife and I had intimate relations!" The Holy Prophet (*s*) asked him, "Are you able to free one slave?"[2]

We notice from this *h adīth* that the Holy Prophet (*s*) did not protest against this man's action of hitting himself and pulling out his hair. In addition, he did not announce a particular prohibition regarding hitting the face and pulling one's hair out. Instead he only told the man what to do to atone for his sin.

5. Ibn ʻAbbās narrates about the Holy Prophet's (*s*) divorce from some of his wives, ʻUmar said, "I went to see H afs ah at her house. I noticed that she was standing and hitting herself, and the other wives of the Holy Prophet (*s*) were standing and hitting themselves." I asked H afs ah, "Has the Prophet of Allah granted you a divorce?"[3]

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 6, p. 274; Abū Yaʻlā, *Al-Musnad*, note written in the margin, vol. 5, p. 63.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 516.

[3] *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 2, p. 534.

6. Sibt ibn al-Jawzī says, "When al-H usayn was killed, Ibn ʻAbbās was constantly crying for him until finally his eyes became blind."[1]

7. Jurjī Zaydān says, "There is no doubt that Ibn Ziyād committed a great crime when he killed al-H usayn, a crime whose atrociousness has never before been seen nor occurred in the whole universe. Therefore, it is not a matter of concern if the Shīʻahs expose the oppression which characterized the killing of Imām al-H usayn. It is not a cause of worry if the Shīʻahs weep or cry for him every year, and rend their collars while showing their remorse and sorrow, because he was killed in an unjust way."[2]

Examination of the reasoning of opponents

Those who oppose beating the chest in intense grief for Allah's *awliyā'* have resorted to a number of *h adīth*s recorded by different Islamic sects and schools of thought:

A. *H adīth* recounted by Sunnī Muslims

Bukhārī quotes from ʻAbd Allāh that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«ليس منّا من لطم الخدود وشقَّ الجيوب ودعا بدعوى الجاهلية.»

> "A man who slaps his face, rends his collar and promotes the legacy of the Age of Ignorance (before the advent and rise of Islam) is not from us."[3]

Some have made use of this *h adīth* to prohibit beating the chest and mourning for the *awliyā'* of Allah, including the Doyen of Martyrs, Abā ʻAbd Allāh al-H usayn (*ʻa*).

Response

This *h adīth* views the act of beating the chest as an objection to Allah's decree and mourning as a means of protesting against one's destiny when a beloved one dies. This is the view which most of the commentators of the

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 152.

[2] *Tarīkh al-Nīyāh ah*, vol. 2, p. 30, as narrated by Jarjī Zaydān.

[3] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, no. 1220.

book of *h adīth* of *S ah īh Bukhārī* have adopted; among them ʻAsqalānī, Mullā ʻAlī Qārī, Kirmānī and Qast alānī.[1]

Kirmānī writes, "If a person says that rending one's collars and hitting one's face will not cause man to be banished from this *ummah* (Islamic community), what therefore is the meaning of such a prohibition?" In response, we say that this prohibition is a result of intensity and severity. If the statement regarding the Age of Ignorance is interpreted to mean disbelief [*kufr*], like making lawful what is unlawful [*h arām*] or the lack of submission to and acceptance of divine decree, then the prohibition is correct.[2]

Manāwī adds a footnote to this *h adīth* saying, "The above interpretation denotes lack of contentment, and assumes a lack of satisfaction with devine decree."[3]

In conclusion, this *h adīth* is not proof against beating the chest on the day of ʻĀshūrā while mourning over the sufferings of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and the other *awliyā'* of Allah, because in this case beating the chest is a deed which is meant to show homage and paying tribute. It is done to show reverence to the religion and as a manifestation of love for the *Ahl al-Bayt*. This sorrow and grief is in no way a display of discontentment with Allah's decree. Such grief, in fact, is in one aspect exhibition of intense sorrow over the failure of Muslims to support Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) in his struggle to keep alive Allah's law and decree.

B. The traditions of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*)

There are some traditions in Shīʻah sources of *h adīth* which appear to prohibit beating the chest and mourning.

1. Jābir ibn ʻAbd Allāh Ans ārī says, I asked Imām al-Bāqir (*ʻa*) about grief [*jaza ʻ*]. He (*ʻa*) said,

«أشدُّ الجزع الصراخ بالويل، ولطم الوجه والصدر وجزُّ الشعر من النواصي، ومن أقام النواحة فقد ترك الصبر، واخذ في غير طريقة.»

---

[1] *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 3, p. 195; *Sharh al-Kirmānī ʻalā al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7, p. 88; *Irshād al-Sārī*, vol. 2, p. 406; *ʻUmdah al-Qārī*, vol. 8, p. 87.

[2] *Sharh al-Kirmānī ʻalā al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7, p. 88.

[3] *Fayd al-Qadīr*, vol. 5, p. 493.

> "The most intense grief is wailing while saying "woe", slapping the face and pulling the front hair out. Anyone who mourns and expresses grief has certainly lost his patience and is on the path of impatience."[1]

2. It has been recounted that Imām al-S ādiq (*'a*) said,

> «نهى رسول الله صَلَّى الله عَليه وآله عن الرنة عند المصيبة، ونهى عن النياحة والاستماع اليها.»

> "The Prophet of Allah forbade crying loudly when one is afflicted with a misfortune. He also forbade mourning or listening to it."[2]

3. 'Amru ibn Abī Miqdām narrates that I heard Imām al-Bāqir ('a) commenting on the Qur'anic verse, *"And will not disobey you in what is good."*[3] He said,

> «إذا أنا متُّ فلا تخمشي عليَّ وجها، ولا تُرخي عليَّ شعرا، ولا تنادي بالويل، ولا تقيمنَّ على نائحة.»

> "The Prophet of Allah (*s*) told his daughter, Fāt imah (*'a*), 'When I die, do not scratch your face, dishevel your hair nor mourn or cry loudly'."[4]

Response

Firstly, this type of *h adīth*s does not prohibit the holding of mourning ceremonies. On the contrary, they intend to restrain or prohibit any action that is not compatible with submission to divine decree and the will of Allah because some people lose their control when a beloved one dies or when they are afflicted with calamity. They complain and grumble in protest, and question Allah's decree. However, when holding mourning ceremonies involves the recounting of the virtues and good deeds of the deceased through elegies and mournful poems, there is no problem with this.

Secondly, the traditions which apparently prohibit mourning and the reading of mournful poems are related to instances that do not have positive practical effects. However, mourning for the *awliyā'* of Allah is reasonable and rational. We have previously shown that mourning for Allah's *awliyā'* (*'a*) is reasonable under stated general rationales. It has also been shown that

---

[1] *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 2, p. 915, *Bāb Kirāhat al-S irākh bi'l-Wayl wa'l-'Awīl.*

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] *Sūrat al-Mumtah anah* 60:12.

[4] *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 2, p. 915.

mourning for Allah's *awliyā'* was the conduct of the Prophet of Allah (*s*), the pure and chaste *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) and the Prophet's companions. Even the generation which came after the Noble Prophet and Muslims throughout the entire history of Islam have been holding mourning ceremonies for the *awliyā'* of Allah, especially for the sufferings of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). We have also shown that such ceremonies have practical positive results for Muslim individuals and society.

Thirdly, in some *h adīth*s, it has been explicitly stated that holding mourning ceremonies is permissible and that it is even quite desirable and preferable to grieve and express sorrow over the sufferings of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*).

1. A *h adīth* has been recounted that Imām al-S ādiq (*ʻa*) said,

«كلُّ الجزع والبكاء مكروه سوى الجزع والبكاء على الحسين عليه السّلام.»

"Every kind of despondency and crying is disapproved [*makrūh*], except grieving and crying for Imām al-H usayn (*s*)."[1]

2. Imām al-Rid a (*ʻa*) told his son,

«... إن يوم الحسين عليه السّلام اقرح جفوننا واسبل دموعنا واذلَّ عزيزنا بأرض كرب وبلا واورثنا الكرب والبلاء الى يوم الانقضاء...»

"… Verily, the day of al-H usayn (the day of ʻĀshūrā) has lacerated eyes and made them swollen. It has caused our tears to flow because our beloved one has been exposed to abjectness in the land of Karbalā. He has left for us to inherit sorrow and affliction for as long as we are to live in this world…"[2]

3. Imām al-S ādiq (*ʻa*) told ʻAbd Allāh ibn H ammād, "News has reached me that a group of people around the area of Kūfah and other places and also a group of women gather on the 15th of Shaʻbān near the holy shrine of al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī and mourn the loss of al-H usayn (*ʻa*). They recite the Holy Qur'an, and some among them recount the story of ʻĀshūrā and the events that came to pass while the rest of them weep and wail."

H ammād told the Imām (*ʻa*), "I witnessed these mourning ceremonies myself." Imām al-S ādiq (*ʻa*) said, "Praise be to Allah that He has made

[1] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 289.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 285.

some men inclined and affectionate towards us (the *Ahl al-Bayt*), so that they may praise and extol us. They mourn for us and rebuke our enemies, and in this way clearly expose the ugly and unacceptable deeds of those who oppose us."[1]

4. Ibn Qūlūyah quotes Masma' Kardīn recounting that Imām al-S ādiq (*'a*) asked him, "Do you commemorate the events of Karbalā?" I answered, "Yes, I do." He asked, "Do you grieve and express sorrow?" I said, "Yes, I swear upon Allah that I cry!" The Imām (*'a*) said, "May Allah accept your crying and reward you for it. Be aware that you are one of those people who express sorrow for our sake, and show joy for our joy."[2] **?**

[1] Ibn Qūlūyah, *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, p. 539, section [*bāb*] 108.

[2] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 289.

WEARING BLACK CLOTHES

There is no doubt that wearing black clothes, especially during recitation of prayers, is widely considered as disapproved [*makrūh*]. Muslim scholars have unanimous agreement on this verdict. The question here is whether or not this aversion to black is inherent? In other words, are black clothes disapproved just because they are black in themselves or are they disapproved for a specific reason, such as because they were the banner of the tyrannical caliphs of Banī ʿAbbās[1] or because they are the clothes of the people dwelling in hell?[2]

A. Shīʻah traditions

1. On his authentic chain of transmission, Barqī recounts that Imām al-Bāqir (*ʿa*) said, "When my forefather al-H usayn was killed, the women of Banī Hāshim wore black clothes while mourning him. They did not change this practice whether in the hot summer or in the cold winter. My father ʿAlī ibn al-H usayn prepared their food during this period of mourning."[3]

2. On his authentic chain of transmission, Ibn Qūlūyah recounts that an angel from heaven landed on the sea and spread its wings. Then, she yelled and cried out aloud, "O inhabitants of the sea! Wear morning clothes, because the child of the Prophet of Allah has been killed (today). Then, he took some of the holy soil from Karbalā, and took it with himself to heaven. Every angel it passed by stopped it in order to smell the holy soil. Spiritual

---

[1] *Man lā Yah d aruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 252.

[2] *Wasā'il al-Shīʻah*, vol. 3, p. 281, section [*bāb*] 20 from among the sections on clothing of one reciting prayer [*libās mus allā*], *h adīth* 3.

[3] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, p. 188; *Wasā'il al-Shīʻah*, vol. 2, p. 890.

effects and graces derived from it remained on them."[1]

B. Sunnī traditions

1. Ibn Abī al-H adīd quotes Madā'inī saying, "When ʻAlī (*ʻa*) passed away, ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās ibn ʻAbd al-Mut t alib came to the people and said, ʻVerily, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (*ʻa*) has passed away. He has left someone to succeed him. If you endorse him, he will come to meet you. If you are displeased with him, you will not be coerced to accept his leadership.' The people broke down crying and said, ʻLet him come to meet us because we endorse him.' Al-H asan (*ʻa*) came to meet the people and gave a sermon while wearing black clothes'."[2]

2. Abī Mukhnaf recounts that Nuʻmān ibn Bashīr communicated the news of Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom to the people of Medina… All the women of Medina came out of their houses wearing black clothes and started mourning.[3]

3. ʻĪmād al-Dīn Idrīs Qurashī quotes Abī Naʻīm Is fahānī recounting on his authentic chain of transmission that when the news of Imām al-H usayn's death reached Umm Salamah, she made a black tent in the Prophet's Mosque and wore black clothes.[4]

4. Ibn Abī al-H adīd recounts that As bagh ibn Nabātah said, "After the martyrdom of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (Imām ʻAlī) (*ʻa*), I entered the Mosque of Kūfah. I saw al-H asan and al-H usayn wearing black clothes.[5] **?**

---

[1] *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, pp. 67-68; *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 45, pp. 221-222.

[2] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 16, p. 22.

[3] Abī Mukhnaf, *Maqtal*, pp. 222-223.

[4] *ʻUyūn al-Akbār wa Funūn al-Āthār*, p. 109.

[5] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*.

RECITING ELEGIES

RECITING ELEGIES IN THE FORM OF PROSE

Some people ask: Why do the Shī'ahs recite elegies when mourning over the *awliyā'* of Allah? Were these practices prevalent among the people who came before? Did the Prophet of Allah (*s*) and his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) participate in these practices when mourning for great people? Did the Holy Prophet's (*s*) companions and those generations that came immediately after them take part in mourning practices or not?

With attention to history, we come to the conclusion that reciting prose was a common practice when mourning over the *awliyā'* of Allah during the early days of Islam. We will now refer to some examples:

A. Reciting mournful songs for the *awliyā'* of Allah (*'a*)

Upon study of the history of Islam, one can see that the Prophet of Allah (*s*) and his companions used to recite elegies. We will now refer to some examples:

1. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose

H alablī narrates from Ibn Mas'ūd, "We did not see the Prophet of Allah weep for someone as much as he did for H amzah. He put H amzah's corpse in the direction of the *Qiblah* and stood over his deathbed. After that, he cried loudly and nearly passed out. He recited, 'O uncle of the Prophet of Allah! O lion of Allah! O H amzah! O doer of good works! O H amzah! O repeller of sorrows! O supporter! O protector of the Prophet of Allah!'"[1]

[1] *Al-Sīrah al-H albīyyah,* vol. 1, p. 461.

2. Fāt imah al-Zahrā (ʻa) recited elegies in the form of prose

Anas ibn Mālik recounts, "When I was returning from burying the Prophet of Allah, Fāt imah looked at me and said, 'O Anas! How did you manage to drop clay on the head of Allah's Prophet?' Then, she started crying, and called out, 'O my father! You who accepted call of Allah! O my father! You who have gone to the presence of Allah! O my father! You who answered call of Allah!'"[1]

3. Ā'īshah recited elegies in the form of prose

Ibn ʻAbd Rabbih says, "'Ā'ishah stood beside the tomb of Abū Bakr and said, 'The biggest affliction for me, after the loss of the Holy Prophet, is the loss of you'."[2]

4. Imām al-H asan (ʻa) recited elegies in the form of prose

On his own chain of transmission, T abarī narrates that Khālid ibn Jābir quotes Imām al-H asan (ʻa), while reading out a sermon after the martyrdom of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa), saying,

«لقد قتلتم الليلة رجلا في ليلة فيها نزل القرآن، وفيها رفع عيسى بن مريم عليه السّلام وفيها قتل يوشع بن نون فتى موسى عليهِما السَّلام، والله ما سبقه أحد كان قبله، ولا يدركه أحد يكون بعده. والله إن كان رسول الله صَلَّى الله عَليه وآله ليبعثه في السرية، وجبرئيل عن يمينه وميكائيل عن يساره، والله ما ترك صفراء ولا بيضاء الا ثمانمائة أو سبعمائة أرصدها لخادمه.»

"You have killed a man on the night the Holy Qur'an was revealed, on a night that Jesus, the son of Mary, was taken to the skies, and Yūshaʻ (Joshua) was killed. I swear upon Allah! No one outran him before him and no one can comprehend him after him. I swear upon Allah! The Prophet of Allah used to send the man you have killed tonight to lead wars, while the Archangel (Jibrā'īl) Gabriel was on his right hand side and the Angel Mīkā'īl (Michael) was on his left hand side. I swear upon Allah! He did not leave behind any silver or gold, except seven or eight hundred *dīnār*s that he had put aside for his servant."[3]

---

[1] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 31; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 197.

[2] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 37.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 157.

5. Women recited elegies mourning for Imām al-H asan (*'a*)

On his chain of transmission, al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī recounts that Umm Bakr ibn Muswir said, "When al-H asan ibn 'Alī passed away, the women of Banī Hāshim recited elegies while mourning over him for a period of one month."[1]

B. Reciting elegies when mourning for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

With reference to sources of Islamic *h adīth*s (traditions) and history, we draw the inference that the Holy Prophet (*s*), the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*), the Prophet's companions, and even the generation which came after the Prophet used to recite elegies when mourning over Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) during the days of their lives. We will refer to a few examples:

1. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) even before the birth of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

On his authentic chain of transmission, al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī quotes Umm al-Fad l saying, "One day, I came to the Prophet and said, 'I dreamt a bad dream last night.' The Noble Prophet (*s*) asked, 'What did you dream?' I said, 'It was a bad dream.' The Holy Prophet (*s*) insisted, 'What did you dream?' I said, 'In my dream, I saw a part of your body being separated from you and being placed in my lap.' The Prophet of Allah said, 'You dreamt a good dream. If Allah so wills, Fāt imah my daughter will give birth to a son who will be brought up in your lap.'

"Umm al-Fad l recounts, 'Fāt imah gave birth to al-H usayn, and just like the Noble Prophet had predicted, he was always on my lap. One day, I went to see the Prophet of Allah and placed al-H usayn in his lap. I looked at the Prophet (*s*) and I suddenly noticed that he was shedding tears. I said, 'O Prophet of Allah! May my father and mother be your ransom! What makes you cry?' The Holy Prophet (*s*) answered, 'The Archangel Gabriel came to me and informed me that my *ummah* will soon martyr him.' I asked, 'They will martyr this child?' The Prophet (*s*) answered, 'Yes!' Then, he gave me a bit of the bloody soil of Imām al-H usayn which Gabriel had brought from the holy site of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) martyrdom'."

This *h adīth* has been recorded and recounted by a number of Sunnī scholars, among them: al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, Khat īb Khwārazmī, Ibn

[1] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 173.

al-S abbāgh al-Mālikī, Ibn H ajar al-H aythamī al-Makkī, al-Bayhaqī, Muttaqī Hindī.[1]

2. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) in the Mosque after the birth of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*)

Khwārazmī H anafī narrates, "One complete year after the birth of Imām al-H usayn, twelve angels came to see the Noble Prophet while their faces were red and their wings were spread wide, and addressed him thus, 'O Muh ammad! Soon it shall pass that which befell Hābīl (Abel) from the hands of Qābīl (Cain) for this child of yours, and soon it shall pass that the reward which Abel was awarded will be awarded to him. Also, soon it shall pass that the same kind of punishment which was accorded to Cain be accorded to the one who kills him. On that day, all the angels in the heavens descended upon the Prophet (*s*) and consoled him over the sufferings and martyrdom of al-H usayn (*ʻa*). They also informed the Noble Prophet about the favors which would be granted to al-H usayn (*ʻa*). They gave him the holy clay which they had taken from the site of Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom.' The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, 'O Lord! Make abject any person who abuses al-H usayn, and kill the one who kills al-H usayn. Do not let him live to enjoy the pleasures he seeks in his actions.'

When two complete years elapsed after the birth of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), the Holy Prophet (*s*) went on a journey. Along the way, he stopped and recited the Qur'anic verse,

﴿ إنّا لله وإنّا إليه راجِعُون ﴾[2]

'We are from Allah and to Him is our return.'

And his eyes filled with tears. I asked him, 'Why are you shedding tears?' He answered, 'The Archangel Gabriel was here. He was informing me about a place called Karbalā near the river Euphrates where my child al-H usayn ibn Fāt imah will be martyred.' It was asked, 'Who will martyr him?' He (*s*) answered, 'A man by the name of Yazīd, may Allah withdraw all blessings from him, and it seems as though I see his burial place in Karbalā

[1] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 176; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 1, pp. 158-159; *Al-Fus ūl al-Muhimmah*, p. 154; *Al-S awāʻiq al-Muh riqah*, p. 115; *Al-Khas ā'is al-Kubrā*, vol. 2, p. 125; *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 6, p. 223.

[2] *Sūrat Āl -Baqarah* 2:156.

although they take his head as a gift to someone.' The Prophet cut his journey short and returned in a state of sorrow. He got on the pulpit and gave a sermon. He advised the people to fear Allah. Then he said, 'O Lord! I have been informed by the Archangel Gabriel that my child will be made abject and killed…'"[1]

3. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) in the house of Umm Salamah

On his authentic chain of transmission, Ah mad ibn H anbal narrates from Anas ibn Mālik saying, "The Angel of Rain got permission from Allah to descend upon the Prophet. Allah granted it permission. The Noble Prophet told Umm Salamah to take care not to let anyone come in. Umm Salamah recounts, 'Al-H usayn came and wanted to go in. I stopped him from doing so. He ran away from me and went into the room where the Holy Prophet (*s*) was meeting the angel. He climbed on the shoulders and head of Allah's Prophet. The angel said to the Prophet, 'Do you love him?' The Noble Prophet (*s*) said, 'Yes, I do.' The angel said, 'Beware! Verily your *ummah* (community) will soon kill him. If you wish, I will show you the place where he will be killed.' The angel clapped his hands and in the split of a second brought red clay from the site of Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom. Umm Salamah got some of that clay and hid it. Thābit said that news reached them that this soil was from Karbalā'."[2]

4. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose in the house of 'Ā'ishah

On his authentic chain of transmission, Ibn 'Asākir narrates that 'Ā'ishah recounted, "One day when the Prophet of Allah was asleep, al-H usayn suddenly entered and went towards him. I tried to keep him away from the Prophet (*s*). Afterwards, I got busy doing my own work and took no notice of al-H usayn. He went near the Prophet (*s*). The Holy Prophet (*s*) suddenly woke up from sleep in a tearful state. I asked him, 'Why are you crying?' He (*s*) answered, 'The Archangel Gabriel has just shown me the holy land where al-H usayn will be martyred. The wrath of Allah will be very intense on the person who sheds his blood.' Then, the Holy Prophet (*s*) put out his hand and showed a handful of dirt and said, 'O 'Ā'ishah! I swear upon Him in whose Hands is my life (Allah), this affair makes me

[1] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn ('a)*, vol. 1, p. 163.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 242, 265.

mournful. Who is this person from my *ummah* that will kill al-H usayn after I have gone?!'"[1]

5. The Holy Prophet (*s*) recited elegies in the form of prose after the death of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*)

On his authentic chain of transmission, Ah mad ibn H anbal narrates that Ibn ʻAbbās said, "I saw the Prophet in a dream. He was standing in a sad and distressed way. He was soiled and was holding a glass full of blood in his hands. I said, 'May my father and mother be your ransom! What is this in your hands, O Prophet of Allah?' He answered, 'This is the blood of al-H usayn and his companions. I got it today.' Ibn ʻAbbās says, 'We calculated when that day was, and found out that it was the same day when al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was martyred'."[2]

On their authentic chain of transmission, al-Tirmidhī and al-H ākim quote Salmī recounting, "One day, I saw Umm Salamah crying. I asked her, 'Why are you crying?' She said, 'In my dreams, I saw the Noble Prophet (*s*) with clay on his head and beard. I asked, 'What is this clay, O Prophet of Allah?' He (*s*) answered, 'A while ago I was witnessing the martyrdom of my al-H usayn.'"[3]

6. Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) recited elegies for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*)

a. On his authentic chain of transmission, Ah mad ibn H anbal quotes Najjā recounting that he and ʻAlī made a journey to S iffīn. When they reached the valley of Niynawā, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) yelled and cried out aloud, "When you come next to the Euphrates River, bear patiently O Abā ʻAbd Allāh!" I asked him, "What is the matter?" Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) answered, "One day, I went to see the Holy Prophet (*s*) while he was shedding tears. I asked, 'O Prophet of Allah! Has anyone annoyed you? Why are your eyes tearful?' The Prophet (*s*) answered, 'Yes, a while before you came, the Archangel Gabriel left me. He came to inform me that al-H usayn will be killed near the Euphrates River.' Then, the Noble Prophet (*s*) asked me, 'Do you want me to show you a part of the clay from the land where he will be killed?' I said, 'Yes I do.' Then, he stretched his arm out and gave me a

[1] Ibn ʻAsākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, trans. Imam ʻĀlī, *h adīth* 229.

[2] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 283; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 4, p. 397.

[3] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 4, p. 19; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 4, p. 340.

handful of soil. I could not stop my tears from flowing, and I broke down and cried."[1]

b. On his chain of transmission, Nas r ibn Muzāh im recounts that ʿAlī (*ʿa*) reached the land of Karbalā and temporarily stopped there. It was said to him, "O Amīr al-Muʾminīn! This place is Karbalā." The Imām (*ʿa*) said, "This place has much pain and suffering." Then, he pointed to a place and said, "That is where their blood will be shed."[2]

c. On his authentic chain of transmission, Hāfiz T abarānī narrates that Shaybān said, "When ʿAlī reached Karbalā, he got emotionally excited and said, 'In this place lie martyrs comparable to none save the martyrs of Badr'."[3]

7. Imām al-S ādiq (*ʿa*) recited elegies in the form of prose

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbah narrates, "Imām al-S ādiq (*ʿa*) stood by the tomb of his father and said,

> «أشهد انك قد اقمت الصلاة وآتيت الزكاة وأمرت بالمعروف ونهيت عن المنكر وأطعت الله ورسوله، وعبدته مخلصا وجاهدت في سبيله صابرا محتسبا حتى اتاك اليقين، فلعن الله امة قتلتك ولعن الله امة ظلمتك، ولعن الله امة سمعت بذلك فرضيت به.»
>
> "I bear witness that verily you upheld the prayers, gave charity, and enjoined the lawful and forbade sinful acts. You obeyed Allah and his Prophet, and worshiped Him with sincerity of heart. You struggled in His way patiently with firm forbearance, and left everything to be judged by Allah. You reached the station of complete certainty. May Allah therefore curse the community which killed you, curse the people who oppressed you, and curse the nation who heard about your martyrdom and became pleased by it!"[4]

8. Umm al-Banīn recited elegies in the form of prose

Abū al-Faraj Is fahānī narrates, "Umm al-Banīn was a mother of four sons who had all been killed. She used to go to the Baqīʿ graveyard and recite heart-rending prose. The people would encircle her and listen to her

---

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, pp. 60-61.

[2] *Waqʿatu S iffīn*, p. 158; Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1, p. 278.

[3] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʿa)*, p. 162, as narrated by T abrānī.

[4] *Al-ʿAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 8.

heartbreaking lamentations. One of the people who used to come and listen to her was Marwān, and he used to cry upon listening to her sorrowful prose."[1]

9. Zaynab (ʻa) recited elegies in the form of prose

Abū al-Faraj Is fahānī and other historians have quoted from H amīd saying, "When ʻAlī ibn al-H usayn Akbar made the intention to go on the battlefield, I saw a woman come out of a tent with such speed that it seemed as if the sun had just arisen. She repeated,

«يا حبيباه، يابن اخاه!»

ʻO my dear friend! O son of my brother!'

I asked people about her. They said, ʻShe is Zaynab, the daughter of ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa).' Later, when ʻAlī Akbar was martyred, she came and threw herself on his corpse. Al-H usayn came and got her by the arm and returned her to the tent."[2]

T abarī and other historians have recounted, "When the eleventh day of the month of Muh arram came, Ibn Saʻd gave orders that the caravan of captives should leave Karbalā. The wives of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), his children, his sisters and the daughters of the Imām were with Zaynab in the caravan. They were moved around like Turkish and Roman captives. The women said, ʻBy Allah, let us pass through the battle area of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).' The captives were taken through the area where the bodies of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and his companions had fallen. When the women saw the dead bodies, they cried out and wailed loudly and hit their faces."

The narrator of this incident says, "I swear upon Allah! I cannot forget Zaynab who was lamenting with a broken heart and a desolate voice,

يا محمّداه،! صلى عليك مليك السماء، هذا حسينك مرمل بالدماء، مقطّع الاعضاء، وبناتك سبايا، الى الله المشتكى، والى محمد المصطفى والى علي المرتضى والى فاطمة الزهراء، والى حمزة سيد الشهداء. يا محمّداه،! هذا حسين بالعرى، تسفي عليه ريح الصبا، قتيل اولاد البغايا،! واحزناه، واكرباه عليک يا ابا عبد الله،! اليوم مات جدي رسول الله، يا أصحاب محمّد! هولاء ذرية المصطفي يساقون سوق السبايا.

[1] *Maqātil al-T ālibiyyīn*, p. 85.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 115; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 33; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 6, p. 256.

> ‘O Muh ammad! Upon whom the angels send blessings, this is your al-H usayn who is immersed in blood. His body parts have been torn to pieces and his daughters have been taken into captivity. I complain to Allah, to Muh ammad al-Mus t afā (the Chosen One of Allah), ‘Alī al-Murtad ā, Fāt imah al-Zahrā and H amzah, the Doyen of Martyrs! O Muh ammad! This is al-H usayn left forlorn in this desert and wilderness while the wind blows over him. He has been killed by children born out of adultery. I seek safety from your sorrow and suffering, O Abā ‘Abd Allāh! Today, my grandfather, the Prophet of Allah, passed away. O companions of Muh ammad! These are the progeny of al-Mus t afā who are being taken as captives’.”

Then, the narrator says, “I swear upon Allah! At that very moment, Zaynab caused everyone to cry, friend and foe alike.”[1]

10. Ibn ‘Abbās recited elegies in the form of prose

While addressing Yazīd, Ibn ‘Abbās said, “You want me to help you and you compel me to become friends with you while it is you who killed al-H usayn and the youths of ‘Abd al-Mut t alib. These people were the lights and bright stars of guidance. The armies, acting under your direct orders, shed their blood and plundered their bodies. Their heads were separated from their bodies while they were thirsty.”[2]

11. Zayd ibn Arqam recited elegies in the form of prose

Ibn H ajar and others have narrated that, “When they brought the head of Imām al-H usayn before Ibn Ziyād in Kūfah, he started hitting the teeth of Imām al-H usayn with a wooden stick. Zayd ibn Arqam was also present and said to Ibn Ziyād, ‘Remove that wooden stick from your hand, I swear upon Allah! For a long period of time I saw the Prophet of Allah kiss between those two lips.’ Then, he started crying.”[3]

---

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 465; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 32; Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, vol. 8, p. 189.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 50; *Majma‘ al-Zawā’id*, vol. 7, p. 25; *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 4, p. 18.

[3] *S awā‘iq al-Muh riqah*, p. 118; *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 231; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 349.

12. H asan Bas rī recited elegies in the form of prose

Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates from Zuhrī, “When the news about al-H usayn’s death reached H asan Bas rī, he cried so much that both his cheeks became wet. Then, he said, ‘May the *ummah* (community) which killed the son of the daughter of the Prophet be despised. I swear upon Allah! The head of al-H usayn will return to his grandfather, and his grandfather and father will exact vengeance upon the son of Marjānah’.”[1] **?**

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 240.

RECITING ELEGIES IN THE FORM OF POETRY

There is no doubt that reciting elegies in the form of poetry has a useful effect on the spirit, psyche and emotions. Therefore, if lamentation is presented in the form of poetry, the hearts and souls of people are affected more.

When the event of Karbalā, which in itself is a stimulator of the emotions and feelings of Muslims, is presented in the form of poetry, the effects produced are even more worthwhile. Poetry is highly effective at awakening the feelings and emotions of people, so through poetry Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and his lofty aims and objectives can be made known to the people more effectively.

Now, we will examine this issue from the viewpoint of the divine law of Islam:

Reasoning regarding the recitation of poetic elegies

To substantiate that it is permissible, even desirable, to recite elegies in the form of poetry, we refer to a number of proofs:

1. The precept of permissibility [*ibāh ah*]

The basic principle in all acts is that all things are permissible [*mubāh*] so long as there is no evidence that contradicts it. This precept is applicable to the recitation of elegies also. Because reciting elegies in the form of poetry has not been refuted, on the contrary, there is evidence to prove that it is desirable; it is therefore included in this basic principle of permissibility [*ibāh ah*].

2. Exalting and venerating the mottos [*sha‘ā’ir*] of religion

If the person about whom one intends to recite mourning poetry is an *awliyā’* of Allah or one of the pious leaders of the Islamic community, we can easily attract the people’s attention towards him by reciting elegies in the form of poetry. In the end, this will encourage people to follow and obey that person. This is what is meant by following and obeying the friends and trusted ones of Allah and their orders. Therefore, it can be said that reciting elegies in the form of poetry is one of the most evident forms of exalting divine sanctities and venerating the signs of Allah.

3. The poetic elegies of Prophet Adam (*‘a*)

On his chain of transmission, T abarī narrates that Imām ‘Alī said, “When the child of Adam (Abel) was killed by his brother (Cain), Prophet Adam cried and recited this elegy,

تغيرت ○ البلاد ○ ومن عليها　　فلون ○ الارض ○ مغبّر قبيح ○

تغير كل ○ ذي طعم ○ ولون ○　　وقل بشاشة ○ الوجه ○ المليح ○[1]

4. Poetic elegies recited for the Holy Prophet (*s*)

A large number of the Prophet’s (*s*) companions used to recite elegies when mourning over the Holy Prophet (*s*).

A. Poetic elegies of Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*‘a*)

Ibn ‘Abd Rabbah recounts that Fāt imah (*‘a*) stood at the head of her father’s tomb and recited,

فقد ناك فقد ○ الارض ○ وابلها　　وغاب ○ مذغبت عنّا الوحي ○ والكتب ○

فليت ○ قبلك كان ○ الموت ○ صادفنا　　لمّا نعيت ○ وحالت دونك الكثب ○[2]

B. Poetic elegies of the daughter of ‘Abd al-Mut t alib

ألا يا رسول ○ الله ○ كنت ○ رجاء ○نا　　وكنت ○ بنا برّ ولم تك جافيا

وكنت ○ رحيما هاديا ومعلّما　　لبيك ○ عليك اليوم ○ من كان ○ باكيا[3]

---

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 1, p. 37; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1, p. 43.

[2] *Al-‘Aqd al-Farīd*, vol. 3, p. 218.

[3] *Al-Istī‘āb fī H āshiyah al-Is ābah*, vol. 4, p. 312.

C. Poetic elegies of H assān ibn Thābit

ومالك لا تبكين ○ ذاالنعمة ○ التي ○ على الناس ○ منها سائغ ○ يتغمّد ○

فجودي عليه ○ بالمدموع ○ وأعولي ○ لفقد ○ الذي لا مثله ○ الدهر ○ يوجد ○

وما فقد ○ الماضون ○ مثل ○ محمّد ○ ولا مثله ○ حتى القيامة ○ يفقد ○

D. Poetic elegies of Abū Sufiyān ibn H ārith

Ibn Ish āq says, "Abū Sufiyān ibn H ārith cried a lot in grieving for the Holy Prophet and recited this elegy,

أرّقت ○ فبات ○ ليلي لايزول ○ وليل ○ أخي المصيبة ○ فيه طول ○

فاسعدني البكاء ○ وذاك فيما أ ○صيب المسلمون ○ به قليل ○

لقد عظمت مصيبتنا وجلت عشية ○ قيل ○: قد قُبِض الرسول ○[1]

E. Poetic elegies of Abī Dhu'ayb ibn Hadhalī

كسفِت لمصرعه النجوم وبدرها وتزعزعت آطام بطن الأبطح

وتزعزعت أجبال يثرب كلُّها ونخيلها لحلول خطب مفدح[2]

F. Poetic elegies of Abī al-Haytham ibn Tayyahān

لقد جدعت آذاننا وانوفنا غداة فجئنا بالنبي محمّد[3]

G. Poetic elegies of Umm Ra'lah Qushayrīyyah

يا دار فاطمة المعمور ساحتها هيجت لي حزنا حييت من دار[4]

H. Poetic elegies of 'Āmir ibn Tufayl

بكت الارض والسماء على النو ر الذي كان للعباد سراجا

من هدينا به الى سبيل ال ق وكنّا لانعرف المنهاجا[1]

---

[1] *Al-Istī'āb*, vol. 4, p. 134.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 98.

[3] *Al-Is āb*ah, vol. 4, p. 186.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 276.

I. Poetic elegies of Suād ibn Qārib

بكت عليه ارضنا و سماؤنا وتصدّعت وجدا به الاكباد

لو قيل: تفدون النّبيَّ محمدا بذلت له الاموال والاولاد

5. Recitation of poetic elegies before the Holy Prophet (*s*)

The Prophet's (*s*) companions used to recite elegies for many people in the presence of the Holy Prophet (*s*) himself and the Prophet not only did not prohibit them from doing so, but he encouraged them as well.

A. Poetic elegies for H amzah ibn ʻAbd al-Mut t alib

S afīyyah, the daughter of ʻAbd al-Mut t alib and the sister of H amzah, recited,

أسائلة اصحاب أحد مخافة بنات أبي من أعجم وخبير

فقال الخبير إن حمزة قد ثوى وزير رسول الله خير وزير

دعاه الى الحق ذوالعرش دعوة الى جنة يحيا بها وسرور[2]

When mourning for H amzah, Kaʻb ibn Mālik used to recite,

صفية قومي ولا تعجزي وبكي النساء على حمزة

ولا تسأمي أن تطيلي البكا على أسد الله في الهزة

فقد كان عوّ لأ يتامنا وليث الملاحم في البزة

يريد بذاك الرضا احمدا ورضوان ذي العرش والعزة[3]

B. Poetic elegies for ʻUbaydah ibn H ārith ibn ʻAbd al-Mut t alib, one of the martyrs of the Battle of Badr

When ʻUbaydah was killed at Badr, Kaʻb ibn Mālik Ans ārī cried mournfully and recited,

---

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 54.

[2] Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 167.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 158.

ايا عين جودي ولا تبخلي بدمعك حقا ولا تنزري

على سيد هدّنا هُلَله كريم المشاهد والعنصر[1]

C. Elegies for Ja‘far ibn Abī T ālib and those Martyred with him

H assān ibn Thābit recited,

فلا يبعدنَّ الله قتلى تتابعوا بمؤتة منهم ذو الجناحين جعفر

وزيد وعبد الله فيمن تتابعوا جميعا وأصحاب المنية تخطر[2]

Ka‘b ibn Mālik Ans ārī recited,

نام العيون ودمع عينك يهمل سحّا كما وكفَّ الطباب المخضّل

في ليلة وردت علي همومها طورا أحنُّ وتارة أتململ

صبروا بموتة للإله نفوسهم حذر الردى ومخافة ان ينكلوا

اذ يهتدون بجعفر ولوائه قدّام اوّلهم فنعم الاوّل[3]

D. Poetic elegies for those killed on the day of Rajī‘

A group of people came to see the Prophet of Allah (*s*). They requested that a number of people be sent to their area to teach them the laws of Islam. The Prophet (*s*) sent six of his companions to them.

When these six companions arrived at the spring of Rajī‘, which was the source of water for the tribe of Hudhayl, those who had made this request from the Prophet attacked these six people with the help of the local people of the tribe of Hudhayl. The attackers first said, “We do not intend to kill you, but just want to hand you over to the people of Mecca so as to receive a reward from them.” Some of the Prophet’s companions started fighting their attackers and in the process were martyred. However, Khabīb and his companion surrendered themselves. Along the way, Khabīb’s companion wanted to draw his sword against these people, but they martyred him with a large stone. In the end, Khabīb was given over to the people of Mecca, who hanged him.

---

[1] *Ibid*., p. 25.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 4, pp. 384-385.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 386.

H assān recited the following about these six martyrs,

صلى الإله على الذين تتابعوا يوم الرجيع فأكرموا واثيبوا

رأس السرية مرثد واميرهم وابن البكير امامهم وخُبيب[1]

And then, while crying, he said,

ما بال عينك لا ترقأ مدامعها سحّا على الصدر مثل الؤلؤ القلق

على خُبيب فتى الفتيان قد علموا لا فشل حتى تلقاه ولا نزق[2]

E. Poetic elegies of Naʻam when grieving over her husband who was one of the martyrs of the Battle of Uh ud

يا عين جودي بفيض غير ابساس على كريم من الفتيان لبّاس[3]

F. Elegies for Saʻd ibn Maʻādh, wounded at Khandaq

A man from among the Helpers [*ans ār*] says this about Saʻd,

وما اهتزَّ عرش الله من موت هلك سمعنا به الا لسعد أبي عمرو[4]

H assān ibn Thābit, while mourning Saʻd, recited,

لقد سجمت من دمع عينيَّ عبرة وحقَّ لعيني أن تفيض على سعد

قتيل ثوى في معرك فجعت به عيون ذواري الدمع دائمة الوجد[5]

G. Elegies for the martyrs of the Well of Maʻūnah

Abū Barrāʾ said to the Holy Prophet (*s*), "If you send someone from among your companions to invite the people of Najd, there is hope that they will accept your call to Islam." The Noble Prophet (*s*) sent a number of his companions to Najd. On their way, they stopped for a time at the well of Maʻūnah. When they were confronted, they gave a letter from the Holy Prophet (*s*) to their attackers, but the attackers paid no attention to it. They

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 183.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 177.
[3] *Ibid*., p. 168.
[4] *Ibid*., vol. 4, p. 54.
[5] *Ibid*., p. 296.

martyred the carrier of the Prophet's letter and, with the help of other tribes, killed the remaining Muslims. ʻAbd Allāh ibn Rawāh ah grieved for Nāfiʻ ibn Badīl ibn Warqāʾ Khazāʻī, who was among the martyrs and recited,

رحم الله نافع بن بديل رحمة المبتغي ثواب الجهاد

صابر صادق وفيٌّ اذا ما أكثر القوم قال قول السداد[1]

While grieving over them, H assān ibn Thābit recites,

على قتلي معونة فاستهلي بدمع العين سحا غير نزر[2]

H. Poetic elegies for ʻUthmān ibn Maz ʻūn

When ʻUthmān ibn Maz ʻūn passed away, his wife said this about him,

يا عين جودي بدمع غير ممنون على رزية عثمان بن مظعون

على أمري كان في رضوان خالقهِ طوبي له من فقيد الشخص مدفون[3]

I. Poetic elegies for Walīd ibn Walīd ibn Mughayrah

Umm Salamah, the Prophet's (s) wife, while grieving for Walīd, recited,

ألا يا ليت امي لم تلدني ولم اك في الغزاة لدى البقيع

ولم أر مصرع بن الخير زيد وهدّته هنا لك من صريع[4]

J. Elegies for Zayd ibn ʻUmar ibn Khat t āb

Ayās ibn Bakīr in an elegy for Zayd ibn ʻUmar ibn Khat t āb, who was killed in the war with the tribe of Banī ʻUday, says,

يا عين فابكي للوليد بن الوليد بن مغيرة قد كان غيثا في السنين ورحمة فينا وميره[5]

K. Poetic elegies of Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) grieving Fāt imah (*ʻa*)

---

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 3, p. 188.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 89.

[3] *Al-Istīʻāb*, vol. 3, p. 630.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 102.

Amīr al-Muʾminīn Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) stood at the tomb of Fāt imah al-Zahrā (ʻ*a*) in a sorrowful state. Sorrow was choking his throat, and he could not stop the burning tears flowing from his heart. It was at this time that he recited,

لكلّ اجتماع من خليلبن فرقة وكلُّ الذي دون الممات قليل

وإن افتقادي واحدا بعد واحد دليل على أن لا يدوم خليل[1]

Poetic elegies recited for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*)

Abū al-Faraj Is fahānī maintains that, "Poets did not recite elegies for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*)."[2]

However, in fact, there are many records of people that recited poetry while grieving for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates from Saddā that he said, "The first person who recited elegies for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) was ʻUtbah ibn ʻAmru ʻAbasī."

In addition, upon study of history, one can see that there have been poets who recited elegies when grieving for Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). Some of these instances are listed in the following discussion:

1. Sulaymān ibn Quttah

Ibn Quttah was one of the men of the tribe of Banī Tamīm ibn Marrah ibn Kaʻb ibn Luʾay and one of the supporters of Banī Hāshim. He was from among the generation which came after the Holy Prophet (*s*) [*tābiʻīn*]. He has composed a poem eulogizing Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) in verse. The first part reads,

مررت على ابيات آل محمّد فلم أرها كعهدها يوم حلّت[3]

2. Abū al-Rajah Khazāʻī

Marzbanī narrates, "Abū al-Rajah Khazāʻī went to see Fāt imah, the daughter of al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻ*a*), and recited elegies to her about al-H usayn, including,

---

[1] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 9.

[2] *Maqātil al-T ālibiyyīn*, p. 90.

[3] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 91; *Maqātil al-T ālibiyyīn*, p. 91.

أجالت على عيني سجائب عبرة — فلم تصحُّ بعد الدمع حتى ارمعلّت

تبكي على آل النبيَّ محمّد — ما اكثرت في الدمع لا بل اقلّت[1]

3. Zaynab, the daughter of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa)

When the blessed severed head of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and the captives reached Medina, all the people of Medina came out of their houses crying and weeping. At this time, Zaynab (ʻa), the daughter of ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa), cried out sorrowfully, "O al-H usayn! O my brother! O members of my Household! O Muh ammad!" Then, she recited prose saying,

ماذا تقولون إذ قال النبيُّ لكم — ماذا فعلتم وانتم آخر الأمم

بأهل بيتي وأولادي أما لكم — عهد أما أنتم توفون بالذمم

ذريتي وبنو عمي بمضيعة — منهم أسارى ومنهم ضرّجوا بدم

ما كان هذا جزاءي اذ نصحت لكم — أن تخلفوني بسوء في ذوي رحمي[2]

4. Jaʻfar ibn ʻAffān

Ibn ʻAffān was one of the companions of Imām al-S ādiq (ʻa). He eulogizes Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) in this way,

لبيك على الاسلام من كان باكيا — فقد ضيعت احكامه واستحلّت

غداة حسين للرماح دريئة — وقد نهلت منه السيوف وعلّت

وغودر في الصحراء لحما مبدّ ا — وقد نهلت منه السيوف وعلّت

فما نصرته أمة السوء اذ دعا — لقد طاشت الاحلام منها وضلّت[3]

5. Muh ammad ibn Idrīs Shāfiʻī

Muh ammad ibn ʻIzz al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn al-H asan Zarandī, the scholar of traditions [*h adīth*s] in the Prophets Mosque in Medina, quoted from Abū al-Qāsim Fad l ibn Muh ammad Mustamlā, who quotes Qād ī Abū Bakr

---

[1] *Muʻjam al-Shuʻarā'*, p. 232.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 5, p. 293; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 198; *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 275.

[3] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 2, p. 144.

Sahl ibn Muh ammad, from Abū al-Qāsim Bakrān ibn T ayyib that news reached him that Shāfiʻī used to recite the following,

تأوّه همي والفؤاد كئيب ... وأرّق عيني والرقاد غريب

وممّا نفى نومي وشيب لُمّتي ... تصاريف ايام لهنَّ خطوب

تزلزلت الدنيا لآل محمد ... وكادت لهم صمُّ الجبال تذوب

وغارت نجوم واقشعرّ ذوائب ... وهتك استار وشقَّ جيوب

فللنصل إعوال وللرّمح رنة ... وللخيل من بعد الصّهيل نحيب

فمن مبلغ عني الحسين رسالة ... وإن كرهتها انفس وقلوب

قتيل بلا جرم كأن قصيصه ... صبيغ بماء الأُجوان خضيب

يصلي على المختار من آل هاشم ... ويغزي بنوه ان ذا لعجيب

لئن كان ذنبي حبُّ آل محمّد ... فذلك ذنب لست عنه أتوب

هم شفعائي يوم حشري وموقفي ... وحبُّهم للشافعيَّ ذنوب[1]

6. Amīr Ad id al-Dīn

Zarandī recounts that Amīr Ad id al-Dīn Muh ammad ibn ʻAlī ibn Ah mad ibn ʻAlī ibn ʻAbd Allāh Wazīr narrates that elegies have been recited about al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) and his household (ʻ*a*) that are as lucid as water, rather even more subtle and exquisite, such as the following,

بدت كربلا ملأى من الكرب والبلا ... فقوما معي في ارضها وقفا نبكي

بها قتلوا سبط النبيَّ محمد ... وباعوا هذاك الرّشد بالمال والمُلك

وضاعت دماء بالعراق عزيزة ... مكرّمة اذ كان راما من المسك

فياويل اقوام طغاة تعرّضوا ... لتلك الدماء الفاطميات بالسفك[2]

7. The grandfather of Sibt ibn Jawzī

[1] Zarandī, *Maʻārij al-Wus ūl*, p. 80; Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 2, p. 126.

[2] *Maʻārij al-Wus ūl*, Zarandī, p. 81.

Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates from his grandfather that he used to recite elegies when grieving for Imām al-H usayn, some parts of which read,

ولمّا رأوا بعض الحياة مذلة عليهم وعزَّ الموت غير محرّم

أبوا أن يذوقوا العيش والذلُّ واقع عليه وماتوا ميتة لم تذمم[1]

8. Rubāb, the wife of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

Abū al-Faraj Is fahānī recounts from Hishām that he said, "After the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), a marriage proposal was presented to Rubāb, the wife of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). She refused the proposal, and said, 'After the Prophet's child, I will never marry anyone.' Then, she recited these verses while grieving for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*),

إن الذي كان يستضاء به بكربلاء قتيل غير مدفون

سبط النبيَّ جزاك الله صالحة عنّا وجنّبت خسران الموازين

قد كنت لي جبلا صعبا ألوذ به وكنت تصحبنا بالرحم والدين

من لليتامى ومن للسائلين ومن يغني ويؤوي اليه كلّ مسكين

والله لا أبتغي صِهرا بصحركم حتى أغيب بين الرمل والطين[2]

9. 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr Ju'fī

Ibn Athīr recounts, "When Mu'āwiyah passed away and al-H usayn ibn 'Alī (*'a*) was killed, 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr was one of the people who had not participated in killing Imām al-H usayn and had deliberately hidden himself. When al-H usayn was killed, Ibn Ziyād started searching for the nobles and renowned figures among the people of Kūfah but he did not find 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr until 'Ubayd Allāh, on his own accord, presented himself to Ibn Zīyad. Ibn Ziyad said to him, "Where were you?" He replied, "I was ill." Ibn Ziyad said, "Was it your heart or your body which was sick?" He replied, "My heart was not ill. My body was, but thanks to Allah, who has now granted me good health." Ibn Ziyād said, "You lie. You were with our enemies." He replied, "If I were with them, then you would find me, too."

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 373.

[2] *Al-Aghānī,* vol. 16, pp. 141-142.

Later, Ibn Ziyād became inattentive of ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr. Therefore, ‘Ubayd Allāh managed to leave the governor’s palace and got on his horse. Ibn Ziyād asked about his whereabouts. Others replied, “He got on his horse, went out of the palace and is now riding away.” Ibn Ziyād said, “Bring him back to me.” The officials of the palace followed ‘Ubayd Allāh and when they found him, they said, “You have to follow the orders of the governor and return.” He replied, “Inform him that I will never return to him of my own accord.” Then, he rode to the house of Ah mad ibn Ziyād T ā’ī where his friends and companions gathered around him.

Then, he left that place and went to Karbalā. He looked at the death place of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and his companions and asked forgiveness. He then set out for Madā’in. In a eulogy of the massacred martyrs he said,

يقول أمير غادر وابن غادر ألا كنت قابلت الشهيد بن فاطمه

ونفسي على خذلانه واعتزاله وبيعة هذا الناكث العهد لائمه

فيا ندمي أن لا اكون نصرته ألا كلُّ نفس لا تسلَّد نادمه

ويا ندمي أن لم أكن من حماته لذو حسرة ما أن تفارق لازمه

سقى الله ارواح الذين تآزروا على نصره سقيا من الغيث دائمه

وقفت على اجداثهم ومجالهم فكاد الحشى ينفضُّ والعين ساجمه[1]

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, pp. 237-238.

CRYING

CRYING FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE HOLY QUR'AN AND TRADITIONS

By studying the Holy Qur'an and traditions [*h adīth*s], realities of weeping and shedding tears become known and various secrets about crying are clarified. We now refer to some of the Qu'ranic verses and traditions which discuss this issue:

A. Qur'anic verses

1. Crying as a sign of perceiving realities

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴾

> *"And when they hear what has been revealed to the Apostle, you will see their eyes overflowing with tears on account of the truth that they recognize; they say: Our Lord! We believe, so write us down with the witnesses of the truth."*[1]

This Qur'anic verse is an account of the reaction of the Ethiopian King, Najjāshī, who had received and welcomed the Muslims that had migrated from Mecca to Ethiopia at the begining of the Prophet's mission to seek safety.

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* 5:83.

2. Crying for repentance

Allah, the Exalted, says in the Qur’an,

﴿ فَليضحَكُوا قَليلا وَليبكُوا كَثيرا جَزَاء بِمَا كَانُوا يكسِبُون ﴾

“Therefore they shall laugh little and weep much as a recompense for what they earned.”[1]

This verse of the Qur’an is an account of the hypocrites [*munāfiqīn*] at the time of the Prophet Muh ammad (*s*) who used to avoid fighting in battles against the enemies of Islam and also encouraged others to do so, on the pretext that the weather was too hot or too cold.

3. Shedding tears of belief is a sign of wisdom

Allah, the Exalted, states,

﴿ ويقُولُون سُبحَان رَبِّنَا إِن كَان وَعد رَبِّنَا لَمَفعُولا * ويخِرُّون لِلأَذقَان يبكُون ويزيدُهُم خُشُوعا ﴾

“And they say: Glory be to our Lord! Most surely the promise of our Lord was to be fulfilled. And they fall down on their faces weeping, and it adds to their humility.”[2]

4. Prophets shed tears for Allah

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿إِذَا تُتلي عَليهِم آيات الرَّحمن خَرُّروا سُجَّدا و بُكيا ﴾

“When the communications of the Beneficent God were recited to them [the prophets], they fell down making obeisance and weeping.”[3]

5. Tears of regret are a remedy for those who have gone astray

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿فَإِذَا فَتحَت الازِفة * ليس لَها مِن دُون الله كاشِفة * أَفَمِن هذا الحَديث تَعجَبُون * وَتَضحَكُون وَلا تَبكُون ﴾

[1] *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (or *Barā’ah*) 9:82.

[2] *Sūrat Banī Isrā’īl* (*al-Isrā’*) 17:108-109.

[3] *Sūrat Maryam* 19:58.

> *"The near event draws nigh. There shall be none besides Allah to remove it. Do you then wonder at this announcement? And will you laugh and not weep?"*[1]

B. Islamic traditions [*h adīth*s] regarding crying

Crying and shedding tears have been given special value in Islamic traditions.

1. Tears are a sign of Allah's mercy

Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Imām 'Alī (*'a*), has said,

«بكاء العيون وخشية القلوب من رحمة الله.»

> "The tears of the eyes and the fear of the heart (for the sake of Allah) are among the blessings and mercies of Allah."[2]

2. Tears: Allah's gift to mankind

The Prophet of Allah (*s*) has said,

«انّما هي رحمة يجعلها في قلوب عباده.»

> "Verily, tears are a mercy that Allah has placed in the essence of his servants (the human beings)."[3]

3. Tears illuminate the heart

Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Imām 'Alī (*'a*), has said,

«البكاء من خشية الله ينير القلب ويعصم من معاودة الذنب.»

> "Crying out of fear of Allah illuminates the heart and prevents a person from returning to past sins."[4]

4. Tears soften the heart and bring prosperity

In his last will and testament to Imām 'Alī (*'a*), the Prophet of Allah (*s*) said,

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Najm* 53:57-60.

[2] T abarsī, *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 317, *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 90, p. 336.

[3] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 79, p. 91, *h adīth* 43.

[4] *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 11, p. 245, *h adīth* 36.

«يا علي! اربع خصال من الشقاء: جمود العين وقساوة القلب وبُعد الامل وحب البقاء.»

"O ʻAlī! There are four notable signs of misfortune and wretchedness: lack of tears, hardness of the heart, unrealistically drawn out hopes, and desire to live forever."[1]

5. Tears bring deliverance from Allah's punishment

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) said,

«البكاء من خشية الله نجاة من النار.»

"Crying due to fear of Allah brings deliverance from hell."[2]

6. Tears bring about a great reward from Allah

The Prophet of Allah (*s*) has said,

«ما من عمل الا وله وزن وثواب الا الدمعة، فانّها تطفي غضب الرب.»

"Every action and every good deed has a fixed heavenly reward, except tears. Verily, tears extinguish the fire of Allah's wrath."[3]

7. Tears have the value of the blood of martyrs

The Prophet of Allah (*s*) said,

«... وما من قطرة احب الى الله من قطرتين: قطرة دم في سبيل الله، وقطرة دمع في سواد الليل من خشية الله.»

"… There are no drops more beloved by Allah than two: a drop of blood that has been shed due to sacrifice in the way of Allah, and a tear that flows from the eyes in the dark of the night due to fear of Allah."[4] **?**

---

[1] *Man lā Yah d uruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 360; *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, p. 164, *h adīth* 21.

[2] *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 11, p. 245, *h adīth* 35.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 240.

[4] Shaykh Mufīd, *Amālī*, p. 11, *h adīth* 8.

THE EFFECTS OF CRYING

Religious scholars and academics have mentioned a number of beneficial effects derived from crying, some of which we will now mention.

1. Inner purification and refinement

People who shed tears as an instrument of devotion to their Lord benefit from numerous spiritual and intellectual rewards because every tear that is shed for Allah while grieving for His *awliyā'* have extraordinary spiritual effects. That is why the Commander of the Faithful, Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*), in the Prayer *al-Kumayl*, says,

«يا الهي وربي وسيدي ومولاي، لأي الأمور اليك اشكوا ولما منها اضج وأبكي.»

> "O my Lord, Master and Protector! For which of my affairs should I complain to you! And for which of them should I lament and weep?"

And elsewhere, he says,

«ولأبكين عليك بكاء الفاقدين.»

> "And (due to separation from you) I will weep before You with the weeping of the bereft."

And in the last part of the prayer, he says,

«إرحم من رأس ماله الرجاء، وسلاحه البكاء.»

> "Have mercy on one whose only capital is hope and whose weapon is tears."

2. Tears are a means of self-building

Crying and shedding tears is a strong and cutting weapon that can help us tremendously along the way of self-knowledge and self-building. Again, this is why Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) in the Prayer *al-Kumayl* says,

«إرحم من رأس ماله الرجاء وسلاحه البكاء.»

> "Have mercy on one whose only capital is hope and whose weapon is tears."

In the inner spiritual struggle against our internal enemy (egotism), that is to say the Greater Holy War [*Jihād Akbar*], crying is the weapon used, not the sword. That is to say, in the battlefield of self-building, shedding tears is the tool, not steel blades. There are some people who attend gatherings where mourning over Imām al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) takes place, but they do not possess that deep perception and discernment which is needed to bring about the flow of tears. Assuming that they do possess the needed perception and discernment which is needed to cry, if they cannot cry it suggests that they are not blessed with the necessary compassion or softness of heart. Of course, acquiring softness of heart is not easy and is granted by Allah in accordance with our capacity.

From the viewpoint of scholars of ethics, the root cause of most crimes is hardheartedness. When man is afflicted by hardheartedness and lacks compassion, he loses a lot of his natural blessings and talents. The result is that neither will the sufferings of others affect him, nor will his heart beat in love and affection for others. A heartless man finds no inclination in himself to pray silently and present his needs to Allah. He does not feel in himself the compassionate disposition to give and receive love and affection. Clearly, one of the best ways to prevent and treat the affliction of hardheartedness is shedding tears and crying.

3. Tears are a means of attaining love

Love literally means fond affection and devotion. The renowned traditionalist Muh addith Qummī says, "Love is an excess of affection."[1]

After gaining knowledge and enlightenment, it is beyond doubt that crying or shedding tears is one of the best tools or means required for man to bond with true love—which is devotion to the Beloved of the Worlds, Allah the

[1] *Safīnah al-Bih ār*, vol. 1, p. 197.

Most High. It is for this reason that no matter how eager a person might be to reach out and find reality and truth, he will never bring about a successful and effective spiritual transformation within himself unless he seeks help from tears.

The tongue expresses wisdom and intellect while the eyes express the love that is felt in the heart and dwells in the soul. Love is always present where tears, arising from feelings of pain and heartache, are shed whereas the mind is the active agent wherever the tongue searches for orderly and logical sentences to express itself. Therefore, just as logical and compelling discourses can show the unity that exists between the aims of the leaders of a particular school of thought and the speaker, a tear too can declare an emotional war against the enemies of a school of thought.

William Shakespeare, the erudite English writer and poet, says that thoughts, dreams, heartache, hopes, and tears are inseparable from love.

In another place, he says, "Love that is cleansed by tears will forever remain pure, clean and beautiful."[1]

Victor Hugo, the famous western writer, says, "Happy and prosperous is he whom God has granted a heart that has the capacity for burning love and compassion."[2]

4. The effects of crying on man's health

Researchers of the empirical and medical sciences believe that tears possess special medical properties, some of which we will now mention:

1. As tears flow, an enzyme is released that disinfects the eyes and all the surrounding parts.

2. According to conducted medical tests, those who cry more suffer less from gastritis and ulcers.

3. Scholars are of the belief that crying has very beneficial and surprising effects in reducing inner pain and spiritual, mental or psychological pressures.

4. Some diseases can be identified through examination of tears because tears that flow from the eyes are a substance that has been filtered or sieved

---

[1] *Chekīdeh-ye Andīsheh-hā* (A Summary of Thoughts), p. 250.

[2] *Ibid*.

from the body's blood, and therefore making use of this substance can help us identify different types of disorders. ?

THE REASONING BEHIND CRYING ABOUT THE SUFFERINGS OF THE AWLIYĀ' OF ALLAH

Crying out of sorrow for the *awliyā'* of Allah, especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Abā ʿAbd Allāh al-H usayn (*ʿa*), is compatible with sound logic and reason. Shedding tears for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) has many positive effects and benefits, some of which we will now refer to:

1. Crying for the *Ahl al-Bayt*, especially Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), is one of the important ways of manifesting one's love for them, which (as shown in previous chapters) has been ordered by Allah and is also confirmed by logic and reason.

2. Shedding tears is one of the ways to venerate the signs of Allah, because by crying we show our compassion and acceptance of the purpose and struggle of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*).

3. Crying for al-H usayn (*ʿa*) is a means of repentance. Shedding tears for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) is a means of returning to that which is all-good and pure, because there is no personal interest involved in crying for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). On the contrary, we shed tears for him because he is the child of Allah's Prophet (*s*) and because his essence and nature possesses all the beautiful attributes. We cry for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) because he was oppressed, wronged and martyred on a mission to revive the religion of Allah. Crying for such people is in reality an act of repentance and gaining proximity with that which is all-good and pure. It has been recounted in Islamic traditions [*h adīth*s] that Paradise becomes incumbent upon every person who cries, incites others to cry, or forces oneself to cry for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) because this type of crying is an act of remorse and returning to Allah, the Exalted.

4. As long as man has not examined his inner conscience and spirit and by means of such introspection gotten in contact with the *awliyā'* of Allah, especially Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), his heart cannot break and his tears cannot flow. Crying for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is a means for a limited human being to get in contact with an infinite being by way of internal intuition. It is clear that through such connection, a limited being can become unlimited. A good example of this is a limited amount of water that collects in a place. If it is not attached to an unlimited sea, it either becomes polluted or dries up, due to the intensity of heat, in a very short period of time. However, if it is connected to an unlimited sea, it will acquire the properties of the sea water and will become immune and unsusceptible to microbes, contamination and drying up.

5. Crying for the oppressed moves man's emotions and awakens his compassion. It makes him a defender of the downtrodden. Shedding tears is more effective when a person cries for is an infallible person and a 'Trust of Allah' on earth or a successor of the Holy Prophet (*s*), who is the possessor of divine law [*sharīʻah*]. In this case, man becomes a defender of divine law. Such a man is able to defend the oppressed and downtrodden. It is for this reason that the Shīʻahs of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*), by utilizing and benefiting from this great elixir of life—shedding tears for the oppression and wrong committed against the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*)—have historically been the persistent helpers and protectors of the oppressed.

6. Crying for the *awliyā'* and trustees of Allah, especially Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), is a tranquilizer for those sick at heart. Crying for the *awliyā'* of Allah soothes the soul because the oppression and sufferings that were imposed upon the *awliyā'* of Allah are like hot flames of fire and tears shed for them are gifts from a heart which is burning with love and affection. These drops go far in extinguishing those flames.

7. Shedding tears, especially for the *awliyā'* of Allah, causes the heart to become tender and keeps man away from hardheartedness. It lays the foundation for the light of Allah to enter freely and settle in the heart, because tears that are shed for good reason polish the rust out of man's heart.

8. Shedding tears for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is a kind of practical struggle against tyrants; that is to say, by crying we express our disgust with the tyrants' ways, just like when Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*ʻa*) cried a lot after her beloved father (*s*) passed away and the event of "Saqīfah" came to pass. The purpose of her crying was to make the people contemplate the reason for

the sadness and tears of the daughter of the Holy Prophet (*s*) and ask themselves why Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*ʿa*) was crying in spite of the fact that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) had been, up to that time, role models of forebearance, firmness and perseverance.

9. Shedding tears for *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*), especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), is an announcement of support for the continuation and revival of the way of those great people. It is also a clear announcement that throughout history we are and will continue to be opposed to Yazīd and all tyrants like Yazīd and also that we are aligned with and obey Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and those like al-H usayn in our own time, as well as their ideals and mottos. **?**

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF CRYING FOR THE SUFFERINGS OF ALLAH'S AWLIYĀ'

Crying for the *awliyā'* of Allah is included in the previously mentioned precept of permissibility [*ibāh ah*]. The precept of permissibility is applicable so long as there is no dictate or decree that opposes permissibility; that is to say, all actions are permissible so long as there is no evidence to prove that they are forbidden by the divine law [*sharī'ah*] of Islam. In the following discussions, we will refer to this issue and show that there is no proof for prohibiting crying when mourning for the afflictions that befell the *awliyā'* of Allah. On the contrary, we will prove that crying is preferred and encouraged. First, we will refer to some historical examples of crying for the *awliyā'* of Allah.

1. Prophet Adam (*'a*) cried for Abel

T abarī on his chain of transmission narrates from 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib that he said, "When the child of Adam was killed by his brother, Adam cried for him."[1]

2. Jacob (*'a*) cried due to separation from Joseph

On his own chain of transmission, T abarī recounts the following statement of al-H asan Bas rī while interpreting the verse,

[1] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 1, p. 37.

﴿ ... تَاللهِ تَفتَؤا تَذكُر يُوسُف حَتَّى تَكُون حَرَضاوأ َ تَكُون مِن الهلِكين ﴾

"They said: By Allah! You will not cease to remember Yūsuf until you are a prey to constant disease or until you are of those who perish."[1]

Al-H asan Bas rī said, "Eighty years elapsed from the time that Prophet Yūsuf (Joseph) (*ʻa*) left his father up to the time that they next saw each other. During this time, sorrow and grief did not leave the heart of Yaʻqūb (Jacob). He cried so much that his eyes became blind." He also said, "I swear upon Allah! There was no creature on earth at that time that Allah looked upon with generosity more than Jacob."[2]

3. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cried for H amzah

Ibn Hishām says, "When the Holy Prophet (*s*) returned from the Battle of Uh ud, he heard voices crying for those who had been martyred. The Prophet's (*s*) eyes filled with tears. Then, he said, "But H amzah has no one to cry for him." When the women of Banī ʻAbd al-Ashhal heard this, they started weeping for the uncle of the Holy Prophet (*s*)."[3]

He also narrates from Ibn Masʻūd saying, "We had never seen the Noble Prophet (*s*) cry so much save when he cried for H amzah. He put his corpse in the direction of the *Qiblah*, stood over his dead body and cried. He wept so much that he was close to passing out."[4]

4. The Noble Prophet (*s*) cried for his progeny

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn Abī Shaybah recounts that Masʻūd said, "One day, we were in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (*s*), when suddenly a group of people of Banī Hāshim arrived. When the Holy Prophet saw them, his eyes were filled with tears. His color, too, changed. I said to him, 'We see something in your face showing that you are in pain.' The Prophet said,

---

[1] *Sūrat Yūsuf* 12:85.

[2] *Tafsīr T abarī*, vol. 13, p. 32.

[3] *Al-Sīrah al-H albīyyah*, vol. 3, p. 105.

[4] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 323.

«انّا اهل بيت اختار الله لنا الآخرة على الدنيا، وانّ أهل بيتي سيلقون بلاء.»

> 'Verily, we are the *Ahl al-Bayt*, for whom Allah has preferred the afterlife over this worldly life. And verily, soon it shall be that suffering should afflict my *Ahl al-Bayt*'."[1]

5. The Prophet (*s*) cried for his grandfather, 'Abd al-Mut t alib

Umm Ayman says, "I saw the Prophet of Allah (*s*) at the foot of 'Abd al-Mut t alib's coffin crying as he moved."[2]

6. The Prophet (*s*) cried for martyrs of the War of Mu'tah

Bukhārī recounts, "News that Zayd, Ja'far and Ibn Rawāh ah had been martyred was brought to the people by the Prophet (*s*) himself before any one else. He said, 'Zayd had the banner, and then he fell to the ground (got martyred). Then, Ja'far took the standard, and he too fell to the ground. After that Ibn Rawāh ah got the banner, and he too fell to the ground.' The Prophet was saying all this while crying."[3]

7. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cried for Ja'far

When Ja'far and his companions were martyred, the Prophet of Allah (*s*) went to his house and requested to see Ja'far's children. He smelt their sweet scent and his eyes became tearful. Ja'far's wife Asmā' said to the Prophet (*s*), "May my parents be your ransom! Why are you crying? Has any news come to you from Ja'far and his companions?" The Noble Prophet (*s*) answered, "Yes, they were martyred today." Asmā' says, "I got up and started crying. A number of women also surrounded me. Then, Fāt imah (*'a*) came in, while she was crying and saying, 'O uncle! O uncle!'"

The Prophet of Allah said,

على مثل جعفر فلتبك البواكي.

> "People ought to shed tears for people like Ja'far."[4]

---

[1] *Al-Mus annaf*, vol. 8, p. 697.

[2] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 7.

[3] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 2, p. 240; *Kitāb Fad ā'il al-S ah ābah, Bāb Manāqib Khālid*.

[4] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 90.

8. The Noble Prophet (*s*) cried for his mother

Abū Hurayrah says, “The Prophet (*s*) went to visit his mother’s grave. There he cried and made everyone around him cry, too.”[1]

9. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cried for Fāt imah bint Asad

It has been recounted that the Noble Prophet (*s*) recited prayers for Fāt imah, the mother of ‘Alī (*‘a*), and put her in the grave. Then, he broke down and cried. He said, “May Allah rewards you goodly for your motherhood. Verily, you were a good mother.”[2]

10. The Noble Prophet (*s*) cried for ‘Uthmān ibn Maz ‘ūn

On his chain of transmission, H ākim narrates from ‘Ā’ishah that the Holy Prophet (*s*) kissed the dead body of ‘Uthmān ibn Maz ‘ūn and cried.[3]

11. The Holy Prophet (*s*) cried for his child Ibrāhīm (*‘a*)

Anas ibn Mālik says, “When Ibrāhīm (Abraham), the son of the Noble Prophet (*s*), died the Prophet (*s*) cried and told his companions,

«لا تدرجوه في اكفانه حتى انظر اليه.»

‘Do not put him in the shroud until I see him’.”[4]

12. The Noble Prophet (*s*) gave permission to cry

Ibn Mas‘ūd, Thābit ibn Ziyād and Qarz ah ibn Ka‘b say, “The Holy Prophet (*s*) gave us permission to cry at the time of affliction and trouble.”[5]

On his chain of transmission, al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī narrates that Abū Hurayrah said, “There was a corpse that was being taken to its burial place. ‘Umar ibn Khat t āb was among the people taking it for burial. He heard the voices of women crying, and commanded them to stop. The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

---

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 2, p. 671; *Kitāb al-Janā’iz*, section [*bāb*] 36, *h adīth* 108.

[2] *Dhakhā’ir al-‘Uqabā*, p. 56.

[3] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah ī h ayn*, vol. 1, p. 361.

[4] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, vol. 1, p. 473; *Kitāb al-Janā’iz, Bāb Mā Jā’a fī al-Naz ar ilā al-Mayyit*.

[5] *Al-Mus annaf*, vol. 3, p. 268.

«يا عمر! دعهنّ، فانّ العين دامعة، والنفس مصابة والعهد قريب.»

‘O ‘Umar! Leave them alone, because tearful eyes, a troubled soul and the promise are near’.”[1]

13. Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī (‘a) cried mourning Fāt imah

Ibn S abbāgh Mālikī recounts that Ja‘far ibn Muh ammad (‘a) said, “When Fāt imah (‘a) passed away, ‘Alī used to visit her grave everyday. One day he went to visit her and threw himself on her grave while crying. He recited this poem,

مالي مررت على القبور مسلّما قبر الحبيب فلم يردّ جوابي

يا قبر مالك لا تجيب مناديا أمللت بعدي خلة الأحباب

What has happened to me that I visit the graves and give my greetings and peace [salām] to my friend and beloved but I do not hear a reply!?

O grave! What has happened to you that you do not answer the calls of those who cry out!? Is it that you are tired of associating with the weary after associating with me?”[2]

14. Amīr al-Mu’minīn (‘a) cried mourning over ‘Ammār

Ibn Qutaybah says, “When ‘Ammār was killed, Imām ‘Alī (‘a) said to ‘Uday,

«يا عدي! قتل عمار بن ياسر؟»

‘O ‘Uday! Has ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir been killed?’

‘Uday replied, ‘Yes.’ Then, Imām ‘Alī (‘a) said,

«رحمك الله يا عمار! استوجب الحياة والرزق الكريم...»

‘May Allah forgive you, O ‘Ammār. You were worthy of a bountiful life and sustenance…’”[3]

---

[1] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 1, p. 381; Al-Nassā’ī, *Sunan*, vol. 4, p. 190; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 333.

[2] *Al-Fus ūl al-Muhimmah*, p. 130.

[3] *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1, p. 110.

15. Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) cried mourning for Hāshim ibn ʻUtbah

Sibt ibn Jawzī says, "… on that day, viz. Siffīn, Hāshim ibn ʻUtbah ibn Abī Waqās also got killed. Imām ʻAlī cried for both of them, and prayed for them. He placed ʻAmmār in his direction and Hāshim ibn ʻUtbah in the direction of the *Kaʻbah*. He did not perform the ritual ablution [*ghusl*] for these two."[1]

16. Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) cried for Muhammad ibn Abī Bakr

Sibt ibn Jawzī says, "When the news that Muhammad ibn Abī Bakr was killed reached ʻAlī, he cried and showed sorrow, and cursed his killer."[2]

17. Fātimah al-Zahrā (*ʻa*) cried for her father (*ʻa*)

Sibt ibn Jawzī says, "Then Fātimah (*ʻa*) withdrew from the people. She was always crying for the Holy Prophet (*s*) until she joined him in the afterlife."[3]

Anas ibn Mālik says, "When we were returning from burying the Holy Prophet (*s*), Fātimah came forward and addressed me,

«كيف طابت انفسكم ان تحثوا على وجه رسول الله (ص) التراب؟»

ʻHow did you manage to drop dirt on the Prophet's face?'

Then she cried, ʻO my beloved father…'"[4]

18. Fātimah al-Zahrā (*ʻa*) cried for her mother

Yaʻqūbī says, "When Khadījah (*ʻa*) passed away, Fātimah (*ʻa*) was crying when she came to the Prophet and asked, ʻWhere is my mother? Where is my beloved mother?'"[5]

19. Fātimah al-Zahrā (*ʻa*) cried for Ruqayyah

Ibn Shubbah narrates on his chain of transmission that Ibn ʻAbbās said, "When Ruqayyah, the Prophet's daughter, passed away, the Prophet said,

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās* , p. 94.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 107.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 318.

[4] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 3, p. 194; *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 7, p. 261; Suyūtī, *Musnad Fātimah*, p. 30.

[5] *Tārīkh Yaʻqūbī*, vol. 2, p. 35.

‘May you be joined to our good predecessor ‘Uthmān ibn Maz ‘ūn…’ It was then that Fāt imah cried beside her grave and the Holy Prophet wiped away her tears with the corner of his shirt.”[1]

20. Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*‘a*) cried for Ja‘far

Ibn Athīr narrates, “The Prophet of Allah came to see Asmā’ and gave her the news that Ja‘far had been martyred, and offered her his condolences. Fāt imah came in and started to cry.”[2]

21. Al-H asan (*‘a*) and people of Kūfah cried for Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*)

Ibn Abī al-H adīd says, “Al-H asan ibn ‘Alī (*‘a*) gave a sermon on the night when Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī (*‘a*) was martyred. After praising and glorifying Allah, he sent peace and blessings upon the Noble Prophet (*s*). Then he said, ‘Tonight, a man has passed away who is unsurpassable both by those who came before and will come after him. Those who will come in the future will never understand nor perceive him. He was always fighting in the way of Allah during the holy *Jihād*s alongside the Noble Prophet (*s*). Amīr al-Mu’minīn (*‘a*) used to protect the Prophet (*s*) with all his soul. The Prophet of Allah used to entrust him with his banner while he was accompanied by the Archangel Jibrā’īl (Gabriel) on his right side and the Angel Mīkā’īl (Michael) on his left side. He never returned from war until Allah gave him victory and made him triumphant over the enemy. He has been martyred on the night when Jesus, son of Mary, was taken to the heavens and Yūsha‘ (Joshua), the son of Nūn, passed away. He did not keep any gold or silver for himself except seven hundred *dirham*s which he intended to use for employing a servant for his family.’ Then, an overflow of painful feelings choked his throat and he broke down crying, and the people cried also…”[3]

22. Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) cried for his brother ‘Abbās (*‘a*)

Al-Qundūzī al-H anafī narrates, “… A man hit the blessed head of ‘Abbās with an iron club that caused a deep cut to his skull. He dropped to the ground and then he cried, ‘O Abā ‘Abd Allāh! O al-H usayn! Peace be upon you!’ When Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) heard this, he said, ‘O my ‘Abbās! O blood of my heart!’ Then Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) made a fierce attack on the

---

[1] *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, vol. 1, p. 103.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2, p. 90.

[3] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 4, p. 11.

enemy’s army and pushed them aside making way for himself to reach ‘Abbās. Then, he got off his horse and put ‘Abbās up on his horse and took him to the camp. Imām al-H usayn cried bitterly and said, ‘May Allah, for my sake, give you the best of rewards’.”[1]

23. Imām al-H usayn (‘a) cried for Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl

Ah mad ibn A‘tham Kūfī writes, “A man came from Kūfah and brought the news to Imām al-H usayn (‘a) that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl had been killed. Imām al-H usayn (‘a) asked, ‘Where are you from?’ He answered, ‘I am from Kūfah. I escaped Kūfah after seeing that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl and Hānī ibn ‘Urwah Madhh ajī had both been killed and hanged. I saw that their bodies were dragged on the ground in streets around the butcher shops. They also sent their heads to Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah. Imām al-H usayn sighed deeply and cried. He then said,

«إِنّا لِلّه وإِنّا إِليه راجِعُون»

‘We are from Allah and to Him is our return.’’’’[2]

24. Imām al-H usayn (‘a) cried for his breastfeeding newborn

Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates from Hishām ibn Muh ammad saying, “When Imām al-H usayn (‘a) realized that the army of ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d was insistent on killing him, he got the Holy Qur’an, put it on his head and said, ‘Let the Book of Allah brought for mankind by my grandfather the Prophet (‘a) judge between us. O people! What crime have I committed that you deem shedding my blood a permissible act? Am I not the son of your Prophet’s daughter? Have not the Prophet’s (s) words reached you about my brother and I when he said, ‘Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two leaders of the youths of Paradise’? If you do not acknowledge what I say, then ask Jābir, Zayd ibn Arqam and Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī. Is Ja‘far T ayyār not my uncle?’

At that moment, Imām al-H usayn’s (‘a) newborn who was fretful due to thirst took his attention. He shouted, ‘O People! If you do not have mercy on me, then at least have mercy on this infant.’ A man from among the army shot an arrow at the newborn’s neck piercing it and killing the infant. Imām al-H usayn (‘a) started to cry and said,

---

[1] *Yanābī‘ al-Mawaddah*, p. 409.

[2] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 110.

«اللهم احكم بيننا وبين قوم دعونا لينصرونا فقتلونا. فنودي من الهواء: دعه يا حسين! فان له مرضعا في الجنة.»

‘O my Lord! Jugde between us and the people who invited us on the pretext that they would help us but have instead betrayed and killed us.’ A voice was heard from the heavens, ‘O al-H usayn! Deliver the child because he will be given milk in heaven’.”[1]

25. Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) cried for Qays ibn Musahhar

When Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) was informed that Qays had been killed, he cried out and shed tears. Then he said,

«اللهم اجعل لنا ولشيعتنا منزلا كريما عندك واجمع بيننا وايا هم في مستقر رحمتك، انّك على كل شيء قدير.»

“O my Lord! Give us and our Shī‘ahs a generous abode near Thyself, and gather us and them in Thy abode of mercy, because Thou art powerful over all things.”[2]

26. Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) cried for H urr ibn Yazīd Riyāh ī

Al-Qundūzī al-H anafī recounts, “… H urr carried out an attack on the people from Kūfah and killed fifty of them before attaining martyrdom. They cut his head off and threw it in the direction of Imām al-H usayn. Imām al-H usayn put H urr’s head on his lap and as he cried, he wiped blood from H urr’s face and said,

«والله ما اخطأت أمك اذ سمّتك حرّ فانك حر في الدنيا وسعيد في الآخرة.»

‘I swear upon Allah! Your mother did not make a mistake when she named you H urr, because you were a free man in this world and one who has gained salvation in the next world’.”[3]

27. The people of Medina cried mourning the Prophet (*s*)

Abū Dhu’ayb Hudhalī says, “I entered Medina and heard wailing and crying, just like when the pilgrims at the *h ajj* are leaving the Holy Shrine. I asked,

---

[1] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 252.

[2] *Al-Futūh* , vol. 5, p. 145.

[3] *Yanābī‘ al-Mawaddah,* p. 414.

ʻWhat has happened?ʼ The people answered, ʻThe Prophet of Allah (*s*) has passed away'."[1]

28. The people of Medina cried for Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*)

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ʻAsākir narrates that Ibn Abī Najīh quoted his father saying, "The people of Mecca and Medina, all of them, including the children, cried for Imām al-H asan ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) for seven days."[2]

29. Abū Hurayrah cried for Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*)

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ʻAsākir recounts that Musāwir Mawlā Banī Saʻd said, "I saw Abū Hurayrah in the Prophet's Mosque on the day when al-H asan ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) was martyred. He was crying out while standing and shedding tears, ʻO People! Today the beloved one of the Prophet has passed away.ʼ He made every one cry with these words."[3]

30. Saʻīd ibn ʻĀs cried while mourning Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*)

H ākim narrates on his chain of transmission that Muslimah ibn Muh ārib said, "Al-H asan ibn ʻAlī passed away when fifty five days from the first of Rabīʻ al-Awwal had passed and he was forty six years of age. Saʻīd ibn ʻĀs was crying while sending greetings to Imām al-H asan."[4]

31. Muh ammad ibn H anafiyyah cried for Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*)

Ibn ʻAbd Rabbah and other historians have narrated, "When al-H asan ibn ʻAlī (*ʻa*) was buried, his brother Muh ammad ibn H anafiyyah stood at the head of his grave while crying and said, ʻMay Allah have compassion and mercy on you, O Abā Muh ammad!'"[5]

32. People of Medina cried remembering the Prophet (*s*)

Jazrī recounts, "Bilāl saw the Noble Prophet in a dream telling him,

---

[1] *Kanz al-ʻUmmāl*, vol. 7, p. 265; *H ayāt al-S ah ābah*, vol. 2, p. 371.

[2] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, trans. Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*), p. 235.

[3] *Siyr Aʻlām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 3, p. 277; *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, trans. Imām al-H asan, p. 229.

[4] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 173.

[5] *Al-ʻAqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, p. 8; *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 213.

«ما هذه الجفوة يا بلال؟ امانٍ َ لك ان تزورنا؟»

> ‘What kind of unkindness and disloyalty is this, O Bilāl? Has not the time come for you to come and visit us?’

Bilāl woke up feeling very sad. He mounted his horse and rode to Medina. He went directly to the Prophet’s (*s*) tomb and started crying. He was pressing himself against the Prophet’s (*s*) grave. Al-H asan (*‘a*) and al-H usayn (*‘a*) came by. Bilāl started kissing these two and pressing them to himself. They said to Bilāl, ‘We want you to recite the call to prayer [*adhān*] at sunrise.’ Bilāl went on top of the Mosque roof and said, ‘Allah is Greater than to be perceived.’ [*Allāh-u Akbar! Allāh-u Akbar!*] Medina vibrated and trembled with yells of crying. When he said, ‘I testify that there is no god but Allah.’ [*ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh!*] The wailing of the people increased. When he said, ‘I testify that Muh ammad is the Messenger of Allah!’ [*ashhadu anna Muh ammadan rasūlullāh!*], the women came out of their homes, and there has never been a day since that the men and women cried so much.[1] **?**

[1] *Usd al-Ghābah,* vol. 1, p. 208.

CRYING WHILE MOURNING FOR IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A)

When we refer to history and *h adīth*, we can see that the Holy Prophet (*s*), his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*), his companions, the generation that came just after the Prophet’s (*s*) death, and great men of the Islamic *ummah* all cried when mourning over Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). We now will narrate some examples from Sunnī sources:

1. The Prophet (*s*) cried mourning for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

‘Ā’ishah recounted, “Al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī came into the house while revelation was being given to the Noble Prophet (*s*). He grabbed the Prophet’s waist and climbed up on his back and started playing. The Archangel Jibrā’īl (Gabriel) said to the Holy Prophet, ‘O Muh ammad! Verily, soon it will be that your *ummah* will create sedition and conspiracy after you and kill this child of yours.’ Then, Gabriel stretched his fist out and brought out clay which he gave to the Noble Prophet (*s*). He said, ‘It is in this land where your child will be killed. A land called “T aff”.’

When the Archangel Gabriel left, the Prophet of Allah joined his companions. He still had the clay in his hands. Among them were Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Alī, H adhayfah, ‘Ammār and Abū Dharr. The Holy Prophet (*s*) started crying. They asked, ‘Why are you crying, O Prophet of Allah?’ He answered, ‘Gabriel has told me that my child al-H usayn will surely be killed in a land called T aff. He brought clay for me from that land. He also informed me that al-H usayn will be buried in that same place’.”[1]

---

[1] *Tārīkh Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 11, pp. 29-30; *Tadhkirah al-H uffāz* , vol. 2, p. 164; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 5, p. 364; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 176; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 342.

2. Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) cried for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

Ibn ʻAsākir narrates that Najjā said, "Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) and I started off on a journey. When we reached the valley of Naynawā, which is on the way to S iffīn, Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) gave out a loud cry and said, ʻO Abā ʻAbd Allāh! Bear patiently near the River Euphrates, O Abā ʻAbd Allāh!' Najjā says he asked Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) why he had said this. Imām ʻAlī replied, ʻOne day, I visited the Noble Prophet and found him shedding tears. I asked, ʻO Prophet of Allah! Has any one made you angry? Why are you crying?' The Holy Prophet answered, ʻA few moments ago, the Archangel Gabriel was here. He informed me that al-H usayn will be killed next to the River Euphrates'."

Najjā recounts, "Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) said to me, ʻDo you want me to give you a part of the soil on which al-H usayn will be killed? Do you want to smell it?' I said, ʻYes.' Then, he stretched his hand out and gave me a handful of the soil. I could not control myself, and hence my tears fell."[1]

3. Imām al-Sajjād (ʻa) cried in mourning for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ʻAsākir narrates that Jaʻfar ibn Muh ammad (ʻa) said, "It was asked of ʻAlī ibn al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa) why he used to cry so much for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). He answered, ʻDo not reproach me, because when Jacob (Yaʻqūb) lost one of his children, he cried so much that his eyes became white, and yet he knew that his child was alive and had not died, but I saw fourteen of my family members slaughtered in one morning. Do you want the sorrow and pain which I feel for them to leave my heart?'"[2]

4. Imām al-S ādiq (ʻa) cried for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)

On his chain of transmission, Abū al-Faraj Is fahānī recounts that Ismāʻīl Tamīmī said, "I was with Abā ʻAbd Allāh Jaʻfar ibn Muh ammad when his servant asked for permission to allow the poet Sayyid H umayrī to enter. The Imām (ʻa) gave him permission to enter. The Imām's family went behind a curtain and Sayyid H umayrī came in. When he entered, he greeted Imām al-S ādiq (ʻa) and went to sit in a corner. Imām al-S ādiq (ʻa) asked

---

[1] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, trans. Imam al-H usayn (ʻa), p 238; *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 300; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 58; *Al-Muʻjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 105.

[2] *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, trans. Imām Zayn al-ʻĀbidīn (ʻa), p. 56; *H ilīyah al-Awlīyā'*, vol. 3, p. 138.

him to recite some poetry. Sayyid H umayrī recited the following poem of lamentation for Imām al-H usayn,

أمرر على جدث الحسين	فقل لأعظمه الزكيه
آأعظما لازلت من	وطفاء ساكبة روية
وإذا مررت بقبره	فأطل به وقف المطية
وابك المطهّر للمطهّر	والمطهّرة النقية
كبكاء معولة أتت	يوما لواحدها المنية

H umayrī says, "I saw the tears of Ja'far ibn Muh ammad flowing on the sides of his cheeks, and loud voices of wailing were heard in the Imām's house, to such an extent that Imām al-S ādiq (*'a*) asked them to control themselves. Everyone obeyed and they became quiet..."[1]

5. Ibn 'Abbās cried for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates, "After al-H usayn got killed, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās constantly cried for him until his eyes became blind."[2]

6. Anas ibn Mālik cried for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

Al-Qundūzī al-H anafī says, "When the blessed head of Imām al-H usayn ibn 'Alī was brought to Ibn Ziyād, he put it in a basin and started hitting the Imām's teeth with a wooden stick in his hand while saying, 'I have never seen teeth this beautiful.' Anas was in his company, and he started crying and said, 'Of all the people, al-H usayn is the one who resembles the Holy Prophet most'."[3]

7. Zayd ibn Arqam cried for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā' recounts a *h adīth* that Zayd ibn Arqam was in the presence of Ibn Ziyād. He said to him, "Take your wooden stick away, I

---

[1] *Al-Aghānī,* vol. 7, p. 240.

[2] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 152.

[3] *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah,* p. 389, as narrated by al-Tirmidhī.

swear upon Allah! I have countless times seen the Prophet of Allah kiss those two lips.” Then, Zayd ibn Arqam started crying.[1]

8. Umm Salamah cried for Imām al-H usayn (‘a)

When Umm Salamah was told that Imām al-H usayn (‘a) had been killed, she said, “Have they really done this? May Allah fill their graves with fire!” Then, she broke down and cried so much that she passed out.[2]

9. H asan ibn Abī al-H asan Bas rī cried for al-H usayn (‘a)

Zuhrī says, “When al-H asan Bas rī was informed that Imām al-H usayn (‘a) had been killed, he cried so much that his cheeks got wet with tears. Then, he said, ‘May the people who have killed the son of their own Prophet’s daughter be abased…’”[3]

10. Rabī‘ ibn Khuthaym cried for Imām al-H usayn (‘a)

One of the people among the *tābi‘īn* who mourned for Imām al-H usayn’s (‘a) suffering was Rabī‘ ibn Khuthaym. Sibt ibn Jawzī narrates, “When Rabī‘ was informed that Imām al-H usayn (‘a) had been killed, he cried and said, ‘They have killed youths whom the Prophet loved to look at, used to feed with his own hands, and sat on his knees’.”[4]

11. The people of Kūfah cried for Imām al-H usayn (‘a)

When the caravan of captives reached Kūfah, all the people came to see the womenfolk of the Prophet’s Household. Sounds of crying and wailing rose high. The women and men of Kūfah, while yelling and rending their collars, cried for the captives.[5]

12. The generation that came after the Prophet’s companions cried for Imām al-H usayn (‘a)

---

[1] *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 2, p. 21; *Siyr A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 3, p. 315; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 434.

[2] *Al-S awā‘iq al-Muh riqah*, p. 196.

[3] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 265; *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 227; *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, p. 127.

[4] *Tadhkirah al-Khawās s* , p. 268.

[5] Dr. ‘Ā’īshah bint al-Shāt ī, *Mawsū‘ah Āl al-Nabī (s)*, p. 734.

‘Ā’ishah bint al-Shāt ī says, “The year 65 AH had not yet arrived when the loud cries of the *tawwābīn* were heard, ‘O blood of al-H usayn!’ [*yā al-thārāt al-H usayn!*] These cries sent a quake under the feet of Banī Umayyah. The people of Kūfah picked up their weapons and went towards the grave of al-H usayn (*‘a*) while reciting this verse of the Qur’an along the way,

﴿ فَتُوبُوا إِلى بَارِئِكُم فَاقتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُم ذَلِكُم خير لَكُم عِند بَارِئِكُم ﴾

> *‘… therefore turn to your Creator (penitently) and slay yourselves, that will be better for you with your Creator.’*[1]

When they reached the tomb of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), they all yelled and cried out. The people had never before been seen to cry as much as they did on that day. They stayed there for twenty four hours…”[2] **?**

[1] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:54.

[2] *Mawsū‘ah Āl al-Nabī (s)*, p. 764; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 4, p. 451.

EXAMINING OPPOSING CLAIMS

Some Muslim sects have denied the permissibility of shedding tears for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). In their denials, they have cited and held fast to a number of proofs which we will now discuss and examine:

1. *H adīth*s which prohibit crying for the dead

Muslim and other historians have recounted that ʻAbd Allāh said, "H afs ah cried for ʻUmar." ʻUmar said to her, "Keep quiet, my little daughter. Don't you know that the Prophet of Allah said,

«إن الميت يعذب ببكاء اهله عليه.»

'The crying of the family tortures the dead person'."[1]

It has also been narrated that when ʻUmar was hit by a spear, he fainted. They started yelling and crying for him. When he became conscious again, he said, "Don't you know that the Prophet of Allah said,

«إن الميت ليعذب ببكاء الحي.»

'Verily, the dead get tortured by the crying of the living'."[2]

Response

Firstly, these traditions contradict all the previously related traditions which prove that crying is not only permissible but also preferred. Secondly, it can

---

[1] Muslim, *Al-S ah ī h* , vol. 2, p. 639; *Kitāb al-Janā'iz, Bāb al-Mayyit Yuʻadhdhabu bi-Bukā'i Ahlihī ʻAlayh*.

[2] *Ibid*.

be shown by citing other traditions that ‘Umar made a mistake in applying the Prophet’s tradition, because S uhayb says, “After hearing this tradition from ‘Umar, I went to see ‘Ā’ishah and told her what I had heard from ‘Umar. ‘Ā’ishah said, ‘No, I swear upon Allah! The Prophet of Allah never said that the crying of a person tortures the dead. On the contrary, he said,

ان الكافر يزيده الله ببكاء اهله عذاباً، وانّ الله لهو اضحک وأبكي، ولا تزر وازرة وزر اخري.

> ‘Verily Allah increases the torture and pain of an unbeliever [*kāfir*] when his family cries for him. Verily it is Allah that makes people laugh and cry. No one bears the burden of another.’’’’[1]

Hishām ibn ‘Urwah narrates from his father that the saying (words) of Abā ‘Abd al-Rah mān ibn ‘Umar were repeated to ‘Ā’ishah, that the dead get tortured by the crying of his family. ‘Ā’ishah said, “May Allah have mercy on Abā ‘Abd al-Rah mān. He heard something but did not commit it to his memory. One day the corpse of a Jew was passed near the Prophet of Allah while his family was crying. The Holy Prophet said,

انتم تبكون وانّه ليعذب.

> ‘You are crying while he is getting tortured’.”[2]

Thirdly, as previously mentioned ‘Umar forbade women from crying in the presence of the Holy Prophet (*s*). The Noble Prophet (*s*) said to him,

دعهن يا عمر! فان العين دامعة والقلب مصاب والعهد قريب.

> “O ‘Umar! Leave them alone, because tearful eyes, grieving hearts and the promise are near.”

Fourthly, this tradition is not compatible with the apparent meanings of many verses of the Holy Qur’an because Allah says,

﴿ وَلا تَزِرُ وازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخرِي ﴾

> *“A burdened soul shall not bear the burden of another.”*[3]

---

[1] *S ah īh Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Janā’iz*, vol. 1, p. 155; Muslim, *Al-S ah īh , Kitāb al-Janā’iz*, section [*bāb*] 9, *h adīth* 22-23.

[2] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh , Kitāb al-Janā’iz*, section [*bāb*] 9, *h adīth* 25; *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 156.

[3] *Sūrat Fāt ir* 35:18.

2. ‘Umar made a prohibition against crying for the dead

Some people say that ‘Umar ibn Khat t āb forbade crying for the dead. They say that ‘Umar’s verdict is proof that it is not permissible to cry for the dead.

Response

Firstly, ‘Umar’s prohibition is opposed to explicit tenets or statements that prove not only the permissibility, but the preference for crying.

Secondly, ‘Umar’s way of life is not credible when it is opposed to the words and actions [*sunnah*] of the Holy Prophet Muh ammad (*s*).

Thirdly, he was opposed by the Holy Prophet (*s*) when he disallowed crying, as has already been mentioned.

Fourthly, how is it possible that ‘Umar made crying for the dead unlawful when he himself cried for Nu‘mān ibn Muqran,[1] Zayd ibn Khat t āb[2] and Khālid ibn Walīd[3]. He even ordered other people to cry for Khālid ibn Walīd.[4]

The Torah forbade crying for the dead

If one ponders the Tawrāt (Torah or the Old Testament), he understands that the prohibition for crying for the dead has roots in this book. ‘Umar was known to have good relations with the People of the Book [*ahl al-kitāb*], especially the Jews, and he read their books. Therefore, it can be surmised that he may have applied this Jewish law in Islam.

In the Jewish books, we read, “O child! I will get the desire of your two eyes with one stroke. Therefore, do not weep and cry, and do not shed your tears. Keep cool and quiet, and do not weep or wail for the dead.”[5] **?**

---

[1] *Al-Mus annaf*, vol. 3, p. 344.

[2] *Al-‘Aqd al-Farīd*, vol. 3, p. 191.

[3] *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 15, p. 731.

[4] *Al-Mus annaf*, vol. 7, p. 175.

[5] *Sifar H azqiyāl, is h āh* 24, *faqarah* 16-18.

PRETENDING TO CRY WHILE MOURNING FOR THE AWLIYĀ' OF ALLAH

The verdict regarding making pretence of crying [*tabākī*]

Because of certain conditions that exercise control over the hearts, some people find it hard to cry and shed tears. When such people present the appearance of crying, they will acquire the same reward as acquired by those who actually cry. It has been recounted that the Noble Prophet (*s*) recited the last part of the *Sūrat al-Zumar* for a sizable number of the Helpers [*ans ār*],

﴿ وفَسيق الَّذين كَفَرُ ا إِلى جَهَنَّم زُمَرا ﴾

"And those who disbelieved shall be driven to hell in companies."[1]

All the people who were present cried except one youth. The youth said, "Tears did not flow from my eyes, but I pretended to cry." The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«من تباكى فله الجنة.»

"Whoever feigns to cry will be rewarded with Paradise."[2]

Jarīr narrates that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«إني قاري عليكم ﴿ ألهكُم التَّكَاثُر ﴾ من بكى فله الجنة ومن تباكى فله الجنة.»

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Zumar* 39:71.

[2] *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 1, p. 147.

> "Verily, I am reciting *Sūrat al-Takāthur*. Paradise will become incumbent upon whoever cries and whoever feigns to cry."[1]

Shaykh Muh ammad ʻAbduh says, "*Tabākī* occurs when a person forces himself to cry, but without the intention of acting hypocritically."[2]

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī says, "The source of feigning to cry is the word of the Prophet (*s*), who said,

«إن لم تبكوا فتباكوا.»

> "If you cannot cry, then give the appearance of crying."

The objective of this sentence is for a person who has a desire to cry but is unable to, not a person who feigns to cry with the intention of sport and hypocrisy."[3]

It can also be understood from the traditions of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) that feigning to cry with correct intention is desirable.

Imām al-S ādiq (*ʻa*) said,

«من تباكى فله الجنة.»

> "Any who feigns to cry will be rewarded with Paradise."[4]

And he also said,

«... ومن أنشد في الحسين شعرا فتباكى فله الجنة.»

> "… and Paradise becomes incumbent on any person that recites elegies and presents the appearance of crying for al-H usayn (*ʻa*)."[5]

?

[1] *Ibid*., p. 148.

[2] *Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol. 8, p. 301.

[3] *Al-Taʻrīfāt*, p. 48.

[4] S adūq, *Al-Amālī*, p. 86, *majlis* 29.

[5] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 282.

THE EFFECTS
OF
ʿĀSHŪRĀ

‘ĀSHŪRĀ FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF GREAT THINKERS OF THE WORLD

Any person who reads about the event of Karbalā and carefully ponders what came to pass on the day of ‘Āshūrā, or hears about it from another person, will certainly be deeply saddened by what befell Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*) and the rest of his companions. When a person with a sound conscience and healthy mind truly comprehends the heartrending occurrence, he will definitely decide to undertake a spiritual journey. He will embark on an inner pilgrimage and expedition towards Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). He will find Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and the purpose of his uprising captivating and concur with the objectives. In fact, this is exactly what has happened to many people who have read or heard about this event and we will now mention a few examples of such people:

1. The English author and explorer, Freya Stark

In her famous book entitled, “*The Faces of Baghdad*” [*S uwar Baghdādiyyah*], Freya Stark has assigned a short chapter to the event of ‘Āshūrā. At the beginning of that chapter she says, “Shī‘ahs from all corners of the Muslim World remember al-H usayn and the site of his execution. They publicly follow up on this event for the first ten days of the month of Muh arram**.** Sorrow and grief is so predominant over them that on the last day, they parade mourning dramas and engage in public wailing and group weeping…”[1]

In a separate chapter of this book, and in a more detailed manner, she has talked about the holy city of Najaf. She recounts, “And at a distance not far

[1] *S uwar Baghdādiyyah*, pp. 145-150.

from the mausoleum, his son al-H usayn arrived from the other side of the desert. He rode his horse and crossed the desert until he reached the land of Karbalā. There, he pitched a tent. His enemies surrounded him and closed all access to water from him. The events which came to pass have been retained in the memories of people. Detailed accounts about the sad events that occurred at Karbalā have been passed from one generation to the next for the last 1257 years. There is no possibility of deriving benefit from this holy city unless one has enough knowledge and information about this event, because the tragedies which befell al-H usayn penetrate and seep through every existing being to the extent that it shakes the very roots of their inner conscience and the foundations of their beliefs. This event is one of those rare occurrences which make men shed tears involuntarily."

She then says, "When these tragic events came to pass, history stopped at Karbalā and Najaf because people migrated to settle in these two cities with the intention of renouncing Yazīd and washing their hands of the enemies of al-H usayn, the oppressed."[1]

2. Proffessor Edward Granville Browne (1862-1926)

The famous orientalist Edward Browne, professor of Arabic and oriental studies at the University of Cambridge, recounts the appalling events which befell Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) at Karbalā in this way, "… a reminder of the blood-stained field of Karbalā, where the grandson of the Apostle of God fell at length, tortured by thirst and surrounded by the bodies of his murdered kinsmen, has been at anytime since then sufficient to evoke, even in the most lukewarm and heedless, the deepest emotions, the most frantic grief, and an exaltation of spirit before which pain, danger and death shrink to unconsidered trifles."[2]

He also says, "Is it possible to find a person who hears about the event of Karbalā and is at the same time not overwhelmed by sorrow and grief? Even non-Muslims cannot refute the purity of spirit and morality which accompanied this Islamic holy war."[3]

---

[1] *Ibid*., as narrated by *Mawsūʻah al-ʻAtabāt al-Muqaddasah*.

[2] ʻĀlī Pāshā S ālih , *Ādāb al-Kalām*, p. 199, from the book *Tārīkh al-Adab al-Īrānī* (*A Literary History of Persia*) by Brown, London, 1919.

[3] *Rahbar-e Āzādegān*, p. 53.

3. Charles Dickens

This English Writer says this about the uprising of ʻĀshūrā, "If al-H usayn fought to quench his worldly desires, then I do not understand why his sisters, wives and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore that he sacrificed purely for Islam."[1]

4. Thomas Masaryk

While comparing Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) with Prophet Jesus (ʻ*a*), Thomas Masaryk says, "The sufferings of Jesus Christ, when compared to the sufferings of al-H usayn, are like feathers made out of straw in the face of a huge mountain."[2]

5. Justice A. Russell

This English poet describes the sorrowful event of ʻĀshūrā in this way:

"… they hit the blessed mouth of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) with their wooden sticks. O holy body that has been crushed under hooves! You are that same body which used to charm every person who cast a glance at you. Blood that has been shed from your blessed veins and has dried is a heavenly mixture which no horse hoof has ever had the opportunity to be painted with such a holy mixture (or color) up to now. O bare and barren earth of Karbalā! There is neither grass nor herbs growing on you! Forever the song of sorrow will be chanted for you and the dress of sorrow put on you because it was on your land that the holy body of Fāt imah's son was torn to pieces. He dedicated his spirit to God."[3]

6. Captain H. Niblet

While describing the night of ʻĀshūrā, he recounts, "That night, when the camp fires were burning all around him, the Imām called his followers and gathered them around him. In one long speech, he addressed them, 'Those who will stay with me are going to be martyred tomorrow.' Then, he acted in a very gracious manner; a manner which proves that he possessed complete knowledge about the weaknesses of mankind, which shows the strength which his sacrificial soul possessed and is a sign of how generous and kind that great man was. He said to his followers, 'Anyone who does not find in

---

[1] *Ibid*., p. 52. See also *The Martyrdom of Imam al-H usayn (ʻa)* by Yūsuf Lalljee.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 53.

[3] *H usayn (ʻa), Pīshvā-ye Insān-hā*, pp. 11-12.

himself the courage and strength for steadfastness and martyrdom should secretly sneak out under the cover of darkness towards the east, and there is no reason whatsoever for anyone to feel ashamed.' When the morning of ʻĀshūrā emerged, purple clouds gathered in the eastern sky, and seventy one people possessing strong faith and certainty surrounded Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). All of them were ready for death and martyrdom."[1]

7. Gibbon, the English historian (1737-1794)

He writes, "Notwithstanding that a long period of time has elapsed since the event of ʻĀshūrā occurred, and we too are not countrymen with the main actors in that event, nevertheless the unbearable hardships which Imām al-H usayn endured still arouse emotions in the most cold and stonehearted of readers; so much so that every reader finds in himself a kind of affection and love towards that great man."[2]

8. Morris Duxbury

This American historian has written about mourning for Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). He recounts, "If our writers of history could percive the reality of the day of ʻĀshūrā, they would not view mourning ceremonies which are held for Imām al-H usayn to be something queer or unusual. Al-H usayn's followers know that by means of mourning for their Imām, they are refusing to go under the yoke of oppression, lowliness and foreign domination because the message of their Imām and leader was that they should never surrender to oppression and tyranny.

Al-H usayn deliberately overlooked his own life, possessions and children for the sake of morality, principle, the people and the integrity of Islam. It is for this reason that he did not go under the yoke and adventurousness of Yazīd. Therefore, come and let us all imitate his way of life and free ourselves from the oppression of Yazīd and those like Yazīd. Let us prefer honorable death to living our lives in lowliness. In a nutshell, these are the basic teachings of Islam. It is clear what status such a community will attain; a community which has been trained on such values from their cradles to the graves. Such a people possess every kind of honor and dignity, because all

[1] *Ibid*., p. 46.

[2] *Rahbar-e Āzādegān*, p. 51. See also *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, London, 1911, vol. 5, pp. 391-392.

the people of that community are soldiers fighting for what is right, honorable and dignified.”[1]

9. Borris Salama

This Christian poet says, “On nights when I stayed awake, I could not but spend them with pain. The cause of my mental torment was my own thoughts and imagination about the people of the past. I especially thought about the two great martyrs of history: Imām ‘Alī and his son Imām al-H usayn. At one moment, I cried a lot because of the affection and fondness which I felt for those two great men. Finally, I composed a poem for ‘Alī and al-H usayn.”[2]

10. Gabriel Dankiri

He describes the savagery and barbarity of Yazīd’s army in this way, “Yazīd’s soldiers on the day of ‘Āshūrā showed so much cruelty and ravenousness that no one can call to mind a day (in the history of mankind) equal or parallel to it in barbarity. They did not even have mercy on breast feeding newborns and minors. They went so far as to take the bloody head of Imām al-H usayn to Damascus. Yazīd imagined that with this apparent victory, he would live forever in peace and tranquility, but memories of that day have been revived everyday from the day when that sad event occurred up to today, by way of shedding tears, mourning and grieving…”[3]

11. George Jordaq

This Lebanese Christian Writer recounts, “Yazīd was a man who had inherited all the evil qualities of his ancestors, the Banī Umayyah. He even exceeded them. Yazīd shared in all the vice, iniquity and mischief of Banī Umayyah in general… There was no one more deprived of human values than Yazīd… and in comparison, there was no one more perfect in human values and morality than al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī, the martyr in this event. Yazīd possessed all the ugly traits imaginable; he was a spineless power seeking opportunist who lacked strength and a man who would never hesitate to commit murder. And on the opposite side, that is to say on the side of ‘Alī’s children, was to be found all the lofty and praiseworthy human attributes in

---

[1] *Zendegī-ye Pīshvā-yān*, pp. 84-85.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 86.

[3] *Shahsavār-e Islām*, pp. 267-268.

the best sense of the word; such traits as a generous disposition, courage, liberality and martyrdom…"[1]

12. Doctor Joseph

This French historian narrates, "During the days of ʻĀshūrā, the Shīʻahs mention and listen to the sufferings of al-H usayn. They make every effort to recount the virtues of the Prophet's family and Household in the best possible manner…"[2]

13. Claudine Rulu

He is a news commentator for the Le Monde Newspaper who has written about Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) and the event of ʻĀshūrā. He recounts, "In the month of Muh arram of every year, the Shīʻahs procced to remind one another about the event of ʻĀshūrā and revive the sufferings of Imām al-H usayn, who is the symbol of courage and justice, as opposed to Yazīd, the incarnation of abomination and villainy. They draw similitudes between the tyrants of their time and Yazīd."[3]

14. Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi was the architect of Indian independence. He was the leader of the national liberation struggle of the people of India during their quest for freedom from British colonization. He has been quoted as saying, "I have not brought anything new for the people of India; I just brought for them the results which I obtained from my researches about the history of Karbalā and that of the champions of the event of ʻĀshūrā. If we want to free India, it is incumbent upon us to traverse the same path which al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī (ʻ*a*) traversed."[4]

15. Sawir Jiny Naid

This Indian poet believes that the mourning ceremonies of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻ*a*) followers bring about revival of the heart-rending event of Karbalā. He says that the uprising of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) strengthens the

---

[1] George Jordaq, *Al-Imām ʻAlī (ʻa)*, trans. Abū al-H asan Shahrānī; see also *ʻAlī (ʻa), the Voice of Human Justice*, trans. M. Fazal Haq, Qum: Ans āriyān Publications, 1990.

[2] *Rahbar-e Āzādegān*, p. 56.

[3] *Zendegī-ye Pīshvā-yān*, p. 87.

[4] *H usayn (ʻa), Pīshvā-ye Insān-hā*, p. 30.

religion of Muh ammad. This poet believes that by this uprising, Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) proved his ultimate love and affection for Allah. He says, “During the night preceding that of al-H usayn’s martyrdom, his disciples wear black shirts, remain bare footed and congregate to remember the heart-rending event of ‘Āshūrā with tearful eyes. While describing the incidents which took place that night, they all shout with one voice, ‘O al-H usayn! O al-H usayn! Why do your thousands of thousands of friends shed tears like this for you? O holy one possessing a high status! Is all this not because of your matchless sacrifices? Because you raised the banner of Muh ammad’s great religion and proved to the amazed world your wonderful love for Allah’.”[1]

16. Irunick

This American historian recounts, “I do not like to make the account of al-H usayn’s martyrdom long because of the distastefulness and revulsion of the nature of that event. No incident uglier than this event came to pass in the entire history of Islam. Even though the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, Imām ‘Alī, is considered as a great calamity, the incident of al-H usayn consisted of atrocious killings, mutilations and taking people into captivity; acts which listening to send a shiver down a man’s spine… because it is the most outstanding account of what suffering means.”[2]

17. Al-Jamīlī

Even though he expresses sorrow for both sides of the confrontation on the day of ‘Āshūrā, he says this about Yazīd’s apparent regret, “His remorse was false. Had it been real, he would have punished ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d and Shimr ibn Dhī al-Jawshan. If he showed apparent remorse, it was because he realized that he had inflamed the anger of the Muslims throughout eternity, not because of the actual crimes which he had committed.”[3]

18. The German researcher Martin

He recounts, “… al-H usayn was the only person in the last fourteen centuries to stand up against an oppressive and tyrannical government… He remains the only politician in the entire history of mankind to employ such

---

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, *Negāhī be Tārīkh-e Jahān*, vol. 1, p. 298, trans. Mah mūd Tafad d ulī.

[2] *Tārīkh-e Fakhrī*, p. 5.

[3] Al-Jamīlī, *Istishhād al-H usayn (‘a)*, p. 13.

effective politics through uprising and revolution. Al-H usayn’s unchanging motto was ‘I will die in the way of truth and virtue, but I will not pay allegiance to iniquity…’ Al-H usayn realized that Banī Umayyah, who had changed the caliphate to an absolute monarchy and authoritative sultanate, were deliberately disregarding and even purposefully trodding upon the laws of Islam. He could foresee that very soon the foundations on which Islam was founded would fall. He perceived that nothing would remain of Islam and the Muslims if he delayed any more. Therefore, he decided to stand up against oppression and tyranny.

By sacrificing his most beloved ones, proving how right he was and exposing the wrong which was committed against him by Banī Umayyah, al-H usayn taught mankind valuable lessons in self-sacrifice and risking one’s life for what is right. He recorded the name of Islam in history and made it renowned in the world. If such a heart-rending event had not taken place, Islam and the Muslims would certainly have been effaced and completely wiped out.”[1]

19. Jurjī Zaydān

He narrates about Imām al-H usayn in this way, “… The sight of Imām al-H usayn’s head affected all, making everyone sorrowful… When Yazīd’s eyes fell on the cut head of Imām al-H usayn, he shivered from head to foot and realized what an abominable act he had committed.”[2]

20. Nicholson

He recounts, “The event of Karbalā caused regret and remorse for Banī Umayyah because it united the Shī‘ahs, who became unanimous in their agreement to avenge the blood of Imām al-H usayn.”[3] **?**

[1] *H usayn (‘a), Pīshvā-ye Insān-hā*, pp. 37-40.

[2] Jurjī Zaydān, *Fāji‘ah-ye Karbalā*, p. 143, trans. Muh ammad ‘Alī Shīrāzī.

[3] Dr. H asan Ibrāhīm H asan, *Tārīkh-e Siyāsī-ye Islām*, p. 352.

‘ĀSHŪRĀ AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION

The event of Karbalā has not only been influential on the hearts of mankind in general, but has also been the reason for many individuals who did not even profess Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) beliefs to become attracted to him. It has also become a cause for makind to denounce the religion and customs of Mu‘āwiyah, and to be led towards that great Imām (*‘a*).

The Frenchman, Dr. Joseph, in his research work entitled, “*The Shī‘ahs and Their Astounding Progress*” writes, “Portraying and depicting the leaders of their religion as oppressed is one of the things which has served to prove the rightfulness of the Shī‘ahs. This, too, has managed to leave an effective impression on other sects. And this is natural, because the nature of every man is inclined to assist the oppressed. Every man wants to see the weak overpower the strong and iniquitous, because man’s natural inclination is towards the weak…

Despite apparently not believing in Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and his companions, such European authors have written detailed accounts about the battle and martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and his companions. They have acknowledged the oppression which was committed against Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and the barbarity of his killers and have, as a result of all this, been led to hold the names of Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) killers in contempt. Nothing can stand against these natural forces, and this is the point which proves the rightfulness of the Shī‘ite sect…”[1]

[1] Sayyid Amīn, *Iqnā‘ al-Lā’im*, p. 356.

Now, we will mention some of the people who have undergone a kind of religious transformation and hence gained discernment after reading or hearing about the event of ‘Āshūrā.

1. The Egyptian instructor, Abū Sharīf, known as ‘Abd al-Majīd

In one of the letters he has written to an orator specializing in preaching about Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*), Abū Sharīf says, “One day, I was holding a small portable radio in my hands and searching for a Cairo radio frequency to listen to. I was alone in my room and I was tuning my radio in search of the frequency. Suddenly, I heard a pleasant and touching voice. I kept the tuner of my radio on that frequency. This voice was unique and different from all the voices I had previously heard. Gradually, my whole attention was absorbed by it. When I paid careful attention, I found out that a man was talking about Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). He was recounting the bitter events which came to pass at Karbalā in detail. I do not know for sure what month that was, but I guess it was the month of Muh arram.

Up to that day, I had not understood the issue of crying for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). However, when I heard a part of the events of ‘Āshūrā, I cried bitterly. Tears flowed from my eyes spontaneously. The tears I shed were hot and intense. I cried with such bitterness like I have never cried before in all my life. My tears continued to flow to the last words of the preacher. This condition overwhelmed me and affected my whole being…”

Continuing his narrative he said, “… After this experience, new and wide horizons were opened to me regarding the issue of shedding tears for the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*).”[1]

After this occurrence, he converted to the Shī‘ism and moved to Iran where he became a television presenter.

2. Professor S ā’ib ‘Abd al-H amīd

In his book entiltled, “*Manhaj fī al-Intimā’ al-Madhhabī*”, he recounts the story of his religious transformation and spiritual insight in this way, “Yes, the beginning was like this. The actual beginning was the guiding light of al-H usayn. The ship of salvation began with al-H usayn; a beginning that I had not intended, but one which he had intended. Allah granted me success

[1] Dr. Muqaddasī, *Dawr al-Manbar al-H usaynī fī al-Taw‘iyah al-Islāmiyyah*, pp. 112-113.

by giving me the wisdom to welcome al-H usayn. Allah held my hand and took me to al-H usayn's doorstep… and this happened on the day when a sad voice touched my ears. How often before had that voice reached my ears, but I had passed by paying no attention to it. I had placed veils over this voice and, as a result, it paid no attention to me either. However, this time, al-H usayn himself had invited me, at a time when I was near seclusion or something like that. Because of that voice, all my senses trembled, and I surrendered all my feelings, affections and will to him...

That voice captivated all my attention… its stormy waves and scattered flames were affecting me every moment as it narrated, to the extent that my whole being melted into it. All my being was entirely attentive to this voice. I started to move along with the voice and started to relive the events which was relating. I melted into all these events with my imagination, picturing everything as the voice was narrating. I was moving with the caravan of Imām al-H usayn, and wherever they camped, I camped too. I followed them from the beginning to the end of the journey. Step by step, I traversed the way.

The incident which was being described by the voice was the story of Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom. The voice belonged to Shaykh ʻAbd al-Zahrā Kaʻbī. The day was the tenth of Muh arram, the year 1402 of the Islamic calendar. I was listening to the calls and mottos of Imām al-H usayn and my whole body was shaking. I was shedding tears and learning lessons as all this occurred. Then, something occurred in my blood… it seemed as if there was a call and a revolution in my being… here I am, O my master! Here I am, O son of the Prophet! Here I am, O al-H usayn (*ʻa*)...

There were endless questions in my mind. It seemed as if I were seeing a light within myself; a light that had been veiled in my soul all this time. This light had now been incited, and in a split second, the light had opened up and lit my whole inner being. This luminosity was acquired from imitating al-H usayn. Al-H usayn, a gift for mankind and a remembrance from the Chosen One of Allah, Mus t afā Muh ammad (*s*), was one of the great leaders of religion.

The light of Islam was newly incited in me in the best sense of the expression; a light which the Prophet of Allah (*s*) guided me to through a religious preacher and one of his own family members, Imām al-H usayn.

Wherever the call of Islam is made, it spreads and everyone recognizes it. There is no other meaning for Islam than this.

Yes, the places where the Prophet’s children fell…”[1]

3. Professor Idrīs H usaynī Maghribī

In his book entitled, “*Laqad Shayya‘anī al-H usayn (‘a)*” (Al-H usayn Made Me a Shī‘ah), he writes, “One of the people close to me asked, ‘Who made you a Shī‘ah and what books did you trust and find reliable for your research?’ I answered, ‘As regards who made me a Shī‘ah, I must say that my ancestor al-H usayn made me a Shī‘ah. The atrocious injustices which were imposed on him at Karbalā converted me to the Shī‘ism. And, as regards which books I found reliable while pursuing this, I must say that the books are *S ah īh Bukhārī* (the Authentic Book of Bukhārī) and the other *S ah īh* s (other authentic Sunnī books of tradition). These are the books which made me a Shī‘ah.’ He asked, ‘How is this possible?’ I said, ‘Read the authentic books of Sunnī *h adīth*, and do not ignore any contradictions. Note all the discrepancies down and reflect upon them. Count all the inconsistencies you can find in these books and do not bypass anything unless you have deliberated and reflected upon it… This is when you will obtain the object of your desire.’

With all certainty, the people who killed al-H usayn and took his chaste family into captivity are not at all trustworthy. There is no justification whatsoever for their abominable actions. For a free thinking mind liberated from religious bigotry, there is no way of justifying the event of ‘Āshūrā in the same way that it is unthinkable to interpret pure blood as being natural water. This pool of blood which flowed was not a river of water. On the contrary, it was the blood of the most honorable people. These people were the ones about whom the Holy Prophet (*s*) expressed his will and desire that Muslims should love them. This community, the Islamic *ummah*, is responsible for losing its own credibility. Whatever they say, they cannot convince me as regards why a certain group of Sunnī scholars have good relations with the people on whose hands there is so much blood. I cannot understand why some so-called Sunnī scholars maintain good ties with the criminals who shed the blood of al-H usayn for the sake of gaining predominance and rule over the Muslim community [*ummah*]. After the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) departure, this community did not assist the Holy Prophet’s children. They even abandoned the *sunnah* and did not observe or follow the

[1] S ā’ib ‘Abd al-H amīd, *Minhaj fī al-Intimā’ al-Madhhabī*, pp. 31-32.

Prophet's way of conduct. You can say whatever you wish in your endeavors to justify these distasteful actions; you can say what you always say, that the Muslims strove hard in reaching consensus regarding the application of religious law in the first era after the departure of the Holy Prophet (*s*) when they killed al-H usayn! And that narratives which are found in Shīʻah books are all products of wild imagination and do not correspond with the real history of Islam. However, can anyone ever be found in the world who refutes the fact that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was killed in an oppressive manner on direct orders issued by Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah by means of an official *fatwā* (religious edict) passed by Sharīh Qād ī? Can anyone in the whole world be found denying the sad reality that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was killed by the revengeful swords of Banī Umayyah's armies? It is more saddening when we realize that all this barbarism occurred in a community where the thinking of the common man had made considerable advances! It was in this very community where another unparallel event came to pass; this occurred when the caliphate was reduced to a monarchy and sultanate. After that, Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah was tyrannically imposed over the Muslims…

Never and a thousand times never… has anyone had the courage to refute or the ability to justify this heartrending event because history is never negligent as regards the oppression which is committed against the weak? I say so in spite of the fact that the mischief-makers hate to hear this truth."[1]

He continues, "Imām al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) desire was to free the *ummah* (Islamic community) from the stiffness it had acquired and to incite a revolution against the depraved kings of Banī Umayyah who depended on repression to rule. This kind of revolution needed self-sacrifice. It was necessary to shed blood in order to bring about a revolution in the people's hearts and souls."[2]

He adds, "Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was eager for the prominence of the Islamic community and desired to protect its interests. That is why he stood up against Yazīd and his misguidance… Yes indeed! Al-H usayn was left forlorn at a time when he was in grave need of help from the people."[3]

---

[1] Idrīs Maghribī, *Laqad Shayyaʻanī al-H usayn (ʻa)* (Al-H usayn made me a Shīʻite), pp. 63-65.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 297.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 303.

After briefly recounting the event of ʻĀshūrā, he reaches this conclusion, "Al-H usayn made me a Shīʻah." Then he adds, "I swear upon my soul! This place is a holy place for one who always calls out to the innermost recesses of my conscience and has made all my states and actions sorrowful.

I did not feel satisfied with short accounts about the killings of Karbalā; I kept delving deeper until an uprising took place in my heart; a revolution against all the doctrines and teachings which I had inherited from my ancestors. Yes, al-H usayn's revolution entered my mind and soul…

The people of Shām and Kūfah came with their swords but Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) came with his blood; and blood was victorious over the sword. Blood triumphed over deviated history. Therefore, al-H usayn (*ʻa*) is a light which will never be overcome by the darkness of distortion. We exalt this event because we know that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was killed for standing up for what was right. We also know and are proud that only a drop of his blood burried all of his enemies in the annals of history. We cry for those negligent people who either killed al-H usayn or abandoned him. We regard those who helped as our role-models and leaders. We take al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) helpers to be our examples of self-restraint and we imitate them in our lives… we hate the people who killed Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) while they knew that he was better than their King, and that he was the rightful leader for the Muslims. We detest those who martyred al-H usayn (*ʻa*) because of the material rewards which Yazīd had promised them. Did not these people have the motivation to distort Islam and the power to forge traditions [*h adīth*s] for the sake of earning rewards from Yazīd?

Yes, it was al-H usayn (*ʻa*) who made me Shīʻah because of the whole truth of his sufferings and the sufferings of his *Ahl al-Bayt*. He made me Shīʻah with his blood; fresh blood shed on orange gravel stones in the land of T aff (Karbalā). He made me a Shīʻah with the cries of newborn children and the wailing of women. I was shouting out loudly as I remembered that day, while hot tears were falling from my eyes because of the sorrow which I felt deep inside my heart. With a heart torn by deep sorrow, I said,

ويرثي ربابك دنيا السّجون ودمع النواح وفيض الدما

What did the enemies of al-H usayn (*ʻa*) achieve, except digging their own graves?! Their crushed bodies got buried in the annals of history in a disgraceful and lowly manner. O Abā ʻAbd Allāh! You are the greatest man in the history of mankind! Life has become enlightened by your pure and sweet-smelling blood!

سطعت بريقا كوَمض الشموس وشاع سناك كبر السما

Whenever I read detailed accounts about Karbalā, they attracted me from afar. Then, my breathing would quicken. I used to see al-H usayn next to myself covered in blood. I wish I were with him so that I could attain great success. O how I wish I could disappear into the attraction and captivation I feel for al-H usayn! Yes, there is someone in this place who understands what I percieve. But, is it possible that others might not understand what I understood and that great historical event might not leave an impression upon him?

Yes, Karbalā is the place of my entry into history and the time of my admission into proper Islam. How can I not be attracted to this reality like a sensitive [*raqīq al-qalb*] mystic? Or like the attraction of an erudite person whose intelligence led him to fall in love and perish with reality? Yes, this is the path I came along and the road I traversed. I have briefly mentioned the sufferings imposed upon Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and the historical crimes committed against the prophets' descendants. Now, I would like to end my words."[1]

4. Dr. Muh ammad Tījānī of Tunisia

In his book entitled, "*Thumma Ahdaytu*" (Then, I was Guided), he says, "My friend Munʻim and I traveled together to Karbalā and there I understood the sufferings of our leader al-H usayn, like the Shīʻahs do. I understood that Imām al-H usayn is not dead. The people were crowding and pressing together all around his resting place, going round it with grief and anguish the like of which I had never seen before. They were crying and expressing restlessness as if Imām al-H usayn had just recently been martyred. I heard preachers who were arousing people's emotions by retelling the tragic event of Karbalā. These accounts made the people cry, grieve and wail. No one who hears these accounts can endure it. On the contrary, he spontaneously loses himself. I too cried. I cried and cried. I cried so much that it seemed as if for years sorrow had accumulated in my throat and it was now exploding out.

After crying, I felt peace like I had never felt before. It seemed as if I was previously one of the enemies of Imām al-H usayn and, in a split second, I had now transformed into one of his friends. I now felt like I was one of the

[1] *Ibid*., pp. 313-315.

helpers and followers of the man who had sacrificed his life, Imām al-H usayn. I became calm. It was amazing that, at that very moment, the preacher was narrating and explaining the story of H urr. H urr was one of the soldiers who had come with the opposing army to battle Imām al-H usayn, but suddenly, right on the battlefield, he trembled. His friends asked him, ‘What is wrong with you? Are you afraid to die?’ He answered, ‘I swear upon Allah! I have never feared death, but I see before myself the option to choose either paradise or hell.’ Suddenly, he rode his horse towards al-H usayn and hastened to see him. He was crying as he asked, ‘O son of the Holy Prophet! Is repentance from me acceptable?’

At that very moment, I could not bear it anymore and I threw myself down on the ground crying and wailing. It seemed as though I was replaying the part of H urr and was pleading with Imām al-H usayn thus, ‘O son of the Holy Prophet! Is repentance from me acceptable? O son of the Holy Prophet! Overlook my sins and pardon me.’

The preacher’s voice had produced such an effect on the listeners that it caused the people’s crying voices to become louder. My friend, who had heard my cries, embraced me while he too cried. He held me the way a mother holds her child, and he was repeating, ‘*Yā al-H usayn! Yā al-H usayn*!’ (O al-H usayn! O al-H usayn!)

This was the moment that I understood and perceived what real crying was. I felt as if my tears were washing my heart and cleansing my entire body from inside. It was then that I understood the real meaning of the Prophet’s tradition, when he used to say, ‘If you knew what I knew, then you would surely laugh less and cry more.’ I spent the whole of that day in sorrow. My friend wanted to console me, so he brought some cookies for me, but I had lost my appetite entirely. I requested that my friend retell the story of Imām al-H usayn’s martyrdom, because I did not know much about it…”[1]

5. Ah mad H usayn Ya‘qūb of Jordan

Ah mad H usayn Ya‘qūb had traveled to Iran on the anniversary of the death of Imām Khomeinī. He says, “One of the things on my programme during the death anniversary was to visit the shrine of Imām Khomeinī. In the morning of that day, I went to visit his shrine. I found a large number of pilgrims. Not less than three million men and women altogether. They had surrounded the shrine in such a way that they seemed to form a chain. Their

[1] *Thumma Ahdaytu* (Then, I was Guided), pp. 96-98.

hands were spread to the sky and were shouting together Persian poetry. I asked my translator to accurately translate what those people were saying. He said, ‘They are saying, ‘We are not like those people who deserted and left their Imām alone. We are with you, O Imām!’’

I broke down crying and I understood that the Imām who was left alone and was killed by the caliph’s huge army was Imām al-H usayn. On that day, it occurred to me that I should write a book about the event of Karbalā. I reached the conclusion that informing the people about this event was necessary. Therefore, I dedicated a part of my time to this issue and started reading, collecting data and keeping records of whatever I found out in this field with the intention to publish the results…

When I was busy writing my book on this issue, there were times when I was definitely sadder than other days. I would be affected by the events which took place and would cry a lot during the day. What kind of man would not cry as he passes through the varying parts of the event at Karbalā…”

Ah mad H usayn Ya‘qūb is a person who possessed foresight and was guided to the right path. He became a Shī‘ah and has written a number of books in defence of the Shī‘ism.[1]

6. ‘Allāmah Dr. Muh ammad H asan Shah h ātah

He is one of the professors and scholars of al-Azhar University. After a lot of research about the Shī‘ahs, he understood the legitimate claims of this sect and traveled to Iran. In a speech to the people of Ahwāz, a province in Iran, he said, “My love for Imām al-H usayn was the reason that I left all the worldly opportunities that I had.”

In another part of his speech, he said, “If you ask me, ‘Can you find Imām al-H usayn in the east or in the west?’ I will answer you that you will see Imām al-H usayn in my heart. Allah has also granted me the fortune and honor that I should be favored with visiting the holy presence of Imām al-H usayn.”[2] **?**

[1] Ah mad H usayn Ya‘qūb, *Karbalā, al-Thawrah wa al-Ma’sāh*, pp. 7-8.

[2] As narrated in the Newspaper Jumhūrī-ye Islāmī, no. 6771.

PROSTRATION
ON
THE SOIL OF KARBALĀ
(THE LAND OF IMĀM AL-HUSAYN'S MARTYRDOM)

THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND PROSTRATING ON THE SOIL OF KARBALĀ

One of the subjects which has attracted the attention of both Sunnīs and Wahhābīs is why the Shīʿahs prostrate on soil from Karbalā, known as the soil [*turbat*] of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). They question the essence of this prostration and wonder whether it is for Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) or the soil itself. We will now examine this topic to make this issue clear.

The Shīʿahs prostrate on any kind of soil

The Shīʿah scholars [*ʿulamāʾ*] do not say that it is obligatory [*wājib*] to prostrate on soil from Karbalā. They have said that it is permissible to prostrate on any clay, earth and dust in general. Because of the fact that the soil from Karbalā has special distinctions, it is considered preferable and more desirable to prostrate on it.

The superiority of some lands over other lands in the Qur'an

It can be deduced from a number of verses of the Holy Qur'an that certain lands have been blessed and have special distinctions over other lands. Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بيت وُضِع لِلنّاس لَلَّذي بِبكَّة مُبارَكا وَهُدي لِلعالَمين﴾

> *"Most surely the first house appointed for men is the one at Bekka, blessed and a guidance for the nations."*[1]

And He also says,

[1] *Sūrat Āl ʿImrān* 3:96.

﴿ وَقُل رَّبِّ أَنزِلني مُنزَلا مُبارَكا وَأَنت خير اَلمُنزِلين ﴾

“And say: O my lord! Cause me to disembark a blessed alighting, and Thou art the best to cause to alight.”[1]

Another Qur’anic verse says,

﴿ وَنَجَّيناه وَلُوطا إِلى الأَرض الَّتي بارَكنا فيها لِلعالَمين ﴾

“And We delivered him as well as Lut (removing them) to the land which We had blessed for all people.”[2]

Talking about the Prophet Moses (*‘a*), the Holy Qur’an says,

﴿إِذ ناداه رَبُّه بِالواد المُقَدَّس طُوي ﴾

“When his Lord called upon him in the holy valley, twice.”[3]

And likewise, while addressing him, the Holy Qur’an says,

﴿ فَاخْلَع نَعْلَيْك إِنَّك بِالواد المُقَدَّس طُوًى ﴾

“Therefore put off your shoes; surely you are in the sacred valley, T uwā.”[4]

In a story about Sulaymān, the Holy Qur’an says,

﴿ وَلِسُليمان الرِّيح عاصِفة تَجري بِأَمرِه إِلى الأَرض الَّتي بارَكْنا فِيها ... ﴾

“And We made subservient to Sulaīmān the wind blowing violent, pursuing its course by his command to the land which We had blessed.”[5]

About the Holy Prophet of Islam, the Holy Qur’an says,

﴿ سبحان الَّذي أَسري بِعَبدِه ليلا مِن المَسجِد الحَرام إِلى المَسجِد الأَقصي الَّذي بارَكنا حَولَه ... ﴾

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Mu’minūn* 23:29.

[2] *Sūrat al-Anbiyā’* 21:71.

[3] *Sūrat al-Nāzi‘āt* 79:16.

[4] *Sūrat T ā Hā* 20:12.

[5] *Sūrat al-Anbiyā’* 21:81.

> *"Glory be to Him who made His servant to go on a night from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque of which We have blessed the precincts."*[1]

The superiority of some lands over others in *h adīth*s

From the viewpoint of both Sunnī and Shī'ah traditions, it can be inferred that certain parts of the earth, and likewise the people dwelling therein, are endowed with qualities of either wickedness or prosperity and salvation:

1. On his own chain of transmission, Bukhārī recounts that 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar said, "When the Holy Prophet (*s*) was passing through the land of Thamūd, he said, 'Do not enter lands whose owners have committed oppression against themselves so that you may not be afflicted with suffering as they were, unless you pass through while crying.' Then, the Prophet of Allah covered his blessed head and passed through that valley quickly."[2]

2. Bukhārī also narrates, "'Alī disliked performing his prayers in the valley of Babylon."[3]

3. H alabī recounts, "The consensus of the Islamic community [*ummah*] is that this place (Medina), which contains the body of the Holy Prophet (*s*), is the best part of land on earth. It is even higher than the Ka'bah (Mecca). Some say it is the most excellent part of the earth and is even higher than the Throne [*'arsh*] of Allah."[4]

4. In a discussion about why Medina is higher than all the other parts of the earth, Samhūdī Shāfi'ī says, "The second reason is this: this land consists of parts of the earth that are considered by consensus of the Islamic community [*ummah*] to possess the holy body of Allah's Prophet (*'a*)."[5]

5. Likewise, it is narrated that after the death and burial of the Holy Prophet (*s*), people used to come and carry some soil from his grave with the aim of seeking divine favors from it. 'Ā'ishah got worried that the soil would get finished and hence reveal the body of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, she

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Isrā'* (or *Banī Isrā'īl*) 17:1.

[2] *S ah ih Bukhārī*, vol. 6, p. 7, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī.*

[3] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 90; *Kitāb al-S alāt.*

[4] *Al-Sīrah al-H alabiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 306.

[5] *Wafā' al-Wafā'*, vol. 1, p. 52.

ordered that a wall should be raised around the Prophet's grave.[1]

The excellence and superiority of the clay of Karbalā

Clay from Karbalā is one of the soils on earth which Allah, the Exalted, has blessed for certain reasons, and one of the reasons is that this piece of the earth is where the pure and noble body of the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), rests.

While explaining the hidden meaning of prostrating on soil from Karbalā, ʻAllāmah Amīnī says, "This issue is based on two basic principles:

a. That the Imamate Shīʻahs try to always have a clean cake of natural earth in their possession so that they may prostrate on it.

b. That some graves are superior to others; therefore, there are special blessings derived from these tombs. It is for this reason that the precincts of the Kaʻbah and other holy shrines have special religious laws. One of the lands which has gained superiority over other lands and has become a source of blessings and favors is Karbalā, the place where the body of the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), lies. Karbalā is that same holy piece of land from which Imām ʻAlī (ʻ*a*), long before the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), had picked up a handful of clay. He smelled the soil and cried so much that the soil got wet with the tears flowing from his eyes."

Then, he said, "Seventy thousand people will be raised from this land. They will enter heaven without their actions of this world being accounted."[2]

Can it not be said that prostrating on such holy soil is a desirable and virtuous act? Won't prostrating on such soil bring about nearness to Allah, the Exalted? Is it not deserving that man should prostrate on soil which is the symbol of monotheism and reminds him of the sacrifices which have to be made for the Beloved, Allah the Exalted? A piece of soil which, if man looks at it from the perspective that it truly deserves, brings about tenderness of heart and brings man closer to Allah.[3]

Professor ʻAbbās Mah mūd ʻAqqād, Egyptian author, says the following about the land of Karbalā,

---

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 385.

[2] *Al-Muʻjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 3, p. 111, *h adīth* 2825.

[3] *Al-Sujūd ʻalā al-Turbat al-H usayniyyah ʻinda al-Shīʻah al-Imāmiyyah*, pp. 69-87.

"The land of Karbalā is a holy place where Muslims go for pilgrimage in order to learn lessons from the example of Imām al-H usayn. For those who are not Muslims, they come here as tourists to see and visit the holy land. However, in order for us to do justice to this land, we have to make it a place of pilgrimage for all inhabitants of the earth so that everyone might gain his portion of virtue which this land has to offer, regardless of what they believe in, because we do not have any piece of land in living memory that possesses as much virtue nor as many benefits as Karbalā. The main reason is that this land called Karbalā is the resting place of al-H usayn, and thus is connected and joined to him."[1]

Shaykh Muh ammad H usayn Āl Kāshif al-Ghit ā', while explaining why it is preferable and desirable to prostrate on soil from Karbalā, said, "One of the high motives and aims of preferring to prostrate on soil from Karbalā is that when the person who is praying puts his forehead on this soil, he remembers the sacrifices that were made by Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) and the love which he displayed when he was in the presence of Allah. The man who is praying on the soil from Karbalā becomes overwhelmed by such thoughts as how it is possible for a man to sacrifice as Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) did for his beliefs and convictions, and stand up against the oppressors! Considering the fact that prostration is the best posture where a servant of Allah finds himself in the presence of Allah, it is befitting that while in this state he remembers holy and pure souls; souls which sacrificed their lives in the way of their Beloved, Allah. At this moment, and with such thoughts, man acquires a condition of humility and modesty. Everything that is in this world will then appear low and abject before him. With such thoughts, man's soul acquires a strong mystical and spiritual attachment to Allah, like the station of conviction which was attained by Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) and his companions. This is the benefit of betaking a strong connection with Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) by means of prostrating on soil from Karbalā. It is for this reason that we read in narrations about Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) that his clay (the soil of Karbalā) removes the seven veils [*h ijāb*]. Therefore, in reality, prostration on the soil of Karbalā is a secret for ascending from the earthly domain towards the Lord of lords…"[2]

'Abd al-Razzāq Muqarram writes, "One of the methods that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) have employed to manifest the oppression which Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

[1] *Abū al-Shuhadā*, p. 145.

[2] *Al-Ard wa al-Turbat al-H usayniyyah*, pp. 32-33.

suffered is prostrating on soil from Karbalā. This action has lots of hidden meanings. The most important secret is that every time man’s eyes fall on the soil of Karbalā as he performs his five daily prayers, he is reminded about Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and his companions and the sacrifices they made. It is clear that remembering such role models will produce remarkable psychological and spiritual effects in man’s soul…”[1]

The grave of al-H usayn (*‘a*) is likened to the Holy Prophet’s (*s*)

At the beginning of this discussion, we mentioned the virtues and special qualities of the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) shrine and the whole area where his holy body rests. Now, we have to bring back to mind that the grave of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is just like the Prophet’s (*s*), because Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is a part of the Holy Prophet (*s*). The Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«حسين مني وأنا من حسين.»

“Al-H usayn is from me, and I am from al-H usayn.”[2]

Umm al-Fad l recounts that she saw the Holy Prophet (*s*) in a dream. She dreamt that a part of the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) body had gotten separated from him and was placed in her lap. When she asked the Holy Prophet (*s*) to interpret that dream, he said that a blessed son called al-H usayn (*‘a*) was going to be born from his daughter Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*‘a*). That son would later be raised on the lap of Umm al-Fad l.[3]

It follows therefore that if Imām al-H usayn is part of the Holy Prophet (*s*), the same kind of respect and status which is reserved for the Holy Prophet should also be reserved for him. If the soil from the Prophet’s grave is blessed, then soil from the grave of Imām al-H usayn is also blessed.

The virtues of clay from Karbalā

1. Ah mad ibn H anbal narrates from ‘Āmir Shāt ibī, “I once accompanied ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib on a journey. He was traveling to S iffīn. When he reached the valley of Naynawā, he shouted out, ‘O Abā ‘Abd Allāh! Bear patiently near the River Euphrates.’ ‘Āmir Shāt ibī says, ‘I asked him: why?’ ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*) answered, ‘One day I went to

[1] *Maqtal al-H usayn (‘a)*, pp. 103-104.

[2] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, vol. 5, p. 658; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 174; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *h adīth* 144.

[3] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 176.

visit the Holy Prophet and found him crying. I asked him, 'O Prophet of Allah! Has anyone annoyed you? Why are you crying?' The Holy Prophet (*s*) answered, 'No one has annoyed me, but just a while ago the Archangel Gabriel left. He brought the news that al-H usayn will be martyred near the River Euphrates. Gabriel asked me if I wanted to smell the scent of that soil. I agreed. Then, he brought out a handful of soil from the place where al-H usayn will be martyred in Karbalā. It was at that moment that I could not control myself and started crying.'"[1]

2. Umm Salamah says, "One day, the Prophet of Allah woke up in a very disturbed state. He slept again and once more woke up in the same agitated state. He repeated this three times. When he woke up for the third time, I saw him holding red soil in his hand. He was kissing it while shedding tears. I asked him, 'O Prophet of Allah! What is that soil?' He said, 'Gabriel has informed me that my son al-H usayn will be martyred in Iraq. I asked Gabriel, 'Show me the soil where al-H usayn will be martyred' Gabriel brought this soil and gave it to me'."[2]

It is essential to point out that there is a difference between "the one for whom prostration is done" and "on what material it is done". The Shī'ahs do not consider the soil from Karbalā to be "the one for whom prostration is done". On the contrary, they consider it to be "the material on which prostration is done". This means that the Shī'ahs do not prostrate for or to the soil of Imām al-H usayn. On the contrary, they prostrate before Allah, the Exalted, by using the soil of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) as a pure place where they place their foreheads (a *medium* of prostration). There is a clear distinction between these two. **?**

[1] Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 60.

[2] Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 4, p. 398.

RESPONSES
TO
DOUBTS

WHO KILLED IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A)?

One of the accusations often raised against the Shī‘ahs in recent times is that they themselves were the killers of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*). The accusers say that the majority of the soldiers who were recruited in the army of ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d to fight with Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) were people from Kūfah, and the people of Kūfah at that time were all Shī‘ahs of ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*). The fault-finders say that the reason the Shī‘ahs hold mourning ceremonies for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is to show penance for the actions of their predecessors. They believe that the Shī‘ahs cry in order to express remorse at why their forefathers killed the Prophet’s grandson.

In his book entitled, “*Al-H usayn*”, the Egyptian writer, Sayyid ‘Alī Jalāl H usaynī writes, “A surprising thing about Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is that his own Shī‘ahs killed him, and then started holding mourning ceremonies for him every year in all countries of the Muslim World.”[1]

We intend to analyze this accusation to show who the real killers of Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) were.

The different aspects of the Shī‘ah Islam

The Shī‘ism has different aspects and forms, but we will only mention the four main ones here:

1. Political Shī‘ism

Political Shī‘ism [*tashayyu‘-e siyāsī*] signifies belief in the superiority and preference of Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) over all the other companions of the Holy

[1] *A‘yān al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 1, pp. 584-585.

Prophet (*s*), including the caliphs. Political Shīʻism denotes belief that in the battles against the Khawārij and the companions at S iffīn and Jamal, truth and justice was on the side of Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʻAlī (*ʻa*).

Political Shīʻism refers to the presence of a group of people in the history of Islam who had determined a definite political point of view. They had accepted the leadership of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) not because they believed that the fourteen Infallibles were appointed by Allah, but because they understood the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) to be the most learned and virtuous of all the people on earth. This view was prevalent among most of the people who lived after the Holy Prophet (*s*). Many specialists in *h adīth* and jurisprudents held this view. They preferred the judgement of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, especially in political affairs, over the verdicts of anyone else. It is for this reason that they are called Political Shīʻahs. This group opposed the group which was following the caliphs in political affairs.

This point of view has been extended to books written by scholars of Sunnī *h adīth*. It can be seen in history that some people in the first, second and third centuries of the Islamic era [*hijrah*] were endowed with the Shīʻism, and a large number of them became popularly known as '*fīhi tashayyuʻ yasīr*'. They regarded Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) to be superior over all the other caliphs, especially ʻUthmān. Again, the people with these beliefs are called Political Shīʻahs.

2. Ideological Shīʻism based on religious conviction

The Shīʻism of Faith [*tashayuʻ-e ʻaqīdatī*] is belief in the Imamate, caliphate, administratorship and religious authority of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) as ordained by Allah, the Exalted, and that the forerunner and first of them is ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʻa*). This point of view was a prevalent opinion among the people beginning during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (*s*). These were people who followed the instructions of the Qurʾan strictly. They obeyed the Prophetʾs commands to the letter. They were some of the most pious and sincere companions of the Holy Prophet (*s*) who followed the explicit wording of holy texts and the Prophetʾs directives and did not practice religious jurisprudence or inference. It is these people who accepted Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) as the heir and successor of Allahʾs Prophet (*s*). They believed that following Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) was in accordance with Allahʾs orders and the Holy Prophetʾs (*s*) directives. This line of thought continued to exist among the Holy Prophetʾs (*s*) companions, the *tābiʻīn* and the generations which followed them.

These pious Shī'ahs knew that even though the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) had been sidelined and unjustly pushed aside from political authority, their identity as religious and scholarly jurisprudents and authorities had become manifest right from the beginning.

Abān ibn Taghlab, who was one of Imām al-S ādiq's and Muh ammad al-Bāqir's (*'a*) companions, describes the Shī'ahs in this way: "The Shī'ahs are people who, whenever people differ about a matter which has reached us from the Holy Prophet (*'a*), refer to Imām 'Alī (*'a*) and adopt his verdict, and whenever a disagreement appears about a matter which has reached us from Imām 'Alī (*'a*), the Shī'ahs refer to the words of Ja'far ibn Muh ammad (*'a*)."[1]

3. The Shī'ism of love and affection for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*)

The third aspect of the Shī'ism seen among Muslims is what has been called the Shī'ism of Love [*tashayyu'-e h ubbī*]. When the term Shī'ism is applied in this sense, many Sunnīs will also be considered as Shī'ahs because a lot of people, even among the Sunnīs themselves, possess strong love and affection for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). There are numerable accounts about the virtues and spiritual accomplishments of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) in the Prophet's sayings which are recorded in Sunnī Books of *h adīth*. For examples, we can mention Ibn 'Abd Rabbah Andulusī, the author of the book entiltled, *Al-'Aqd al-Farīd*, and Muh ammad ibn Idrīs Shāfi'ī.

Muh ammad ibn Idrīs Shāfi'ī has recited a wonderful poem in which he says,

إن كان حب الولي رفضا فانّني أرفض العباد

"If love of the walī (the temporal and spiritual guardian Imām 'Alī) makes a person a heretic, then, I am surely the most heretical of all of Allah's servants."[2]

4. Religious Shī'ism

The fourth aspect of Shī'ism is interpreted as religious and cultural Shī'ism [*tashayyu'-e dīnī*]. These people believe that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) are the only legitimate religious authorities on earth. That is, the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) are the source of religious edicts and the only people who have been entrusted with

[1] *Rijāl Najjāshī*, p. 9.

[2] *Al-Kawākib al-Durriyyah*, p. 30.

interpreting the Holy Qur'an. They believe that, within this religious and cultural aspect, it is the duty of every person in the community to seek guidance and refuge in the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) when the need arises.

They hold this belief, but at the same time follow the Sunnīs (the caliphs) in political and governmental affairs. They do not believe in divine appointment of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) as explicitly expressed in religious texts, the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's (*s*) sayings. Instead, they consider the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) to be superior over the rest of the people in knowledge and general religious affairs. An example of such people is Shahrestānī, the author of the book entitled, "*Al-Milal wa al-Nih al*".

Who is a real Shīʻah?

We find many people in the world who claim to hold certain beliefs but do not act upon their professed convictions at all. These people are not steadfast in their beliefs. They claim to belong to a certain religious group, but are not faithful to the basic teachings of the religious sect they profess. They may not even know much about the fundamental beliefs of their own religious order. They sometimes even go so far as to trample the basic beliefs of their professed religious denomination underfoot due to lack of real faith and piety. We cannot seriously consider such people as really belonging to a particular sect, even though they may apparently appear to belong to that sect. In reality, they are a deadly army of hypocrites posing the greatest danger against the very religion or sect they claim to adhere to. Even the opponents of that particular religion or sect do not take such people seriously, and do not fear them. In reality, they do not consider them to be members of that sect at all. On the contrary, the real people belonging to a particular religion or sect are the people who are faithful and steadfast to the basic teachings of that group. They are the people that are ready to sacrifice their lives and property for their beliefs that are genuinely considered to be members of a particular group.

The same can be said about the Shīʻism and the Shīʻahs; in the sense that even though many may claim to be ʻAlī's (*ʻa*) Shīʻahs and followers of the Prophet's *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*), if their profession of belief has not gone beyond mere words and has not settled in their hearts, they are not dedicated to the basic beliefs of the Shīʻah Islam and cannot be considered to be real Shīʻahs. We cannot consider such people to be pious Shīʻahs, and neither can we judge the Shīʻism by their actions. A real and pious Shīʻah is a person who certainly would not dare kill an *imām* who he professes to love and follow.

On the contrary, he sacrifices his life and soul for his *imām*, in the same way that many real Shī'ahs sacrificed their lives on the day of 'Āshūrā in order to assist Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). The real Shī'ahs reached out to their Imām lovingly, and sincerely gave their lives up in his way as martyrs.

We can ask those who doubt and dispute these questions: Can we say that all the people living in Islamic countries are real and pious Muslims? Are they all steadfast to their professed beliefs? Who are the people living in Islamic countries that are busy working for world imperialists and by doing so are helping destroy and wipe out Islam? Are there not people in Islamic societies who are abject slaves and servants of the unbelievers [*kuffār*] and are working with the colonizers against Islam and the Muslims? It is certainly not possible for reasonable persons to consider such people to be real Muslims. On the contrary, such people only possess Islamic names and identities.

It is also possible to find some 'Shī'ahs' who are like this and there is nothing unusual at all about it. They call themselves pious or believing, but are not steadfast to their basic beliefs of their professed religion.

Religious instructor, Shaykh 'Alī Āl Muh sin, says, "There is open contradiction and discrepancy in the words of those who accuse the Shī'ahs of killing of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) because the very word Shī'ah means someone who follows and loves the Imām. How is it possible to compromise this meaning with fighting against and killing an *imām*? Does a real Shī'ah kill an *imām*? If the accusation that Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) killers were Shī'ah is right, their treacherous action would certainly expel them from the fold of the Shī'ism."[1]

While responding to this unfair and unfounded accusation, Sayyid Muh sin Amīn 'Āmilī says, "I seek refuge in Allah that the real Shī'ahs should be the killers of al-H usayn (*'a*)! The people who martyred Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) were of various categories; some were people drowned in worldly appetites and pleasures who had nothing to do with religion whatsoever, others were low, mean and wicked people of the flesh, and the rest consisted of those people lacking religious conviction and pursuing their worldly dreams. Love of this world persuaded all these people to commit such a great crime.

None of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) lovers and Shī'ahs took part in killing him. On the contrary, all the sincere and real Shī'ahs accompanied and helped

[1] *Lillāhi wa lil-H aqīqah*, p. 97.

Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). They stood by their Imām to the last drop of their blood, devoting and sacrificing their lives for him until they attained martyrdom. They stayed at the service of their Imām despite the insurmountable hardships which lay in the way and never gave up on him to the very last moments of their lives. Many of these people did not expect any financial reward from Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) for their loyalty, so they were definitely not motivated by money when they decided to sacrifice for him and take part in his hardships. In order to escape and join their beloved Imām (ʻa), others took such high risks as tearing down the fortification which Ibn Ziyād had raised around Kūfah, and made their escape. These steadfast Shīʻahs underwent every kind of hardship imaginable to join their beloved Imām. The fallacious accusation that even one of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) Shīʻahs and lovers took part in killing him is something that never took place in reality…"[1]

The Shīʻism of the people of Kūfah

With recourse to history, especially after the death of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) and during the time of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), and with careful examination of the beliefs of the people of Kūfah, we come to the conclusion that the predominant type of Shīʻism which existed in Kūfah at that time was Political Shīʻism. The Shīʻism of Kūfah was not founded on religious conviction. The people of Kūfah only believed in the superiority of ʻAlī (ʻa) over ʻUthmān and the other companions. They did not believe in the Divine Guardianship [*wilāyat wa imāmat*] of ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa) or the other Infallibles by way of divine appointment as has been explicitly stated in holy texts (the Holy Qu'ran and *h adīth*s). Furthermore, we cannot consider political Shīʻahs in the same light as the pious Shīʻahs who believed in the Divine Guardianship of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa).

In order to prove this, we will cite an example:

In his book called "*Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*" (*The Short History of Damascus*), Ibn ʻAsākir Damishqī Shāfi'ī narrates on an authentic chain of transmission that H arīth ibn Abī Mat ar said, "I heard Salmah ibn Kuhayl saying, ʻMusayyib ibn Najbah Fazārī and I were once seated in the Mosque of Kūfah. There were many Shīʻahs in the Mosque. I did not hear any of them speak about anyone of the companions of the Prophet (*s*) save ʻAlī

[1] *Aʻyān al-Shīʻah*, vol. 1, p. 585.

(*'a*), and they spoke about him with lots of praise and laudation. All their talk was about 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*'a*) and 'Uthmān'."[1]

The Sunnīs praise all the Prophet's companions without exception. They believe that all of the Prophet's companions were just and equitable people. The people they consider to be political Shī'ahs are those who later believed in the superiority of Imām 'Alī (*'a*) over 'Uthmān. There were people in Kūfah who held this belief. There were, though, others who did not believe in Imām 'Alī (*'a*) to this extent, as we have shown from the *h adīth* (tradition) recounted by Ibn 'Asākir.

The exile of religious and pious Shī'ahs from Kūfah

Ibn Abī al-H adīd recounts that Abū al-H asan Madā'īnī said, "Mu'āwiyah issued these orders to his governor generals in a letter he had circulated to them, 'I have acquitted myself from any obligation regarding anyone who recounts the virtues of Abū Turāb (Imām 'Alī) and his *Ahl al-Bayt*.' It has been narrated that Mu'āwiyah went so far as to declare that whoever would transmit a *h adīth* in praise of the virtues of the Household of the Prophet (*s*) would have no immunity or protection concerning his life, property and merchandise. After this command, the governor generals gave orders to their state preachers to start cursing and insulting Imām 'Alī (*'a*) and his pure *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) from the pulpits. The people most affected by this misfortune were the people of Kūfah because at that time there were many Shī'ahs in that city. Then, Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān appointed Ibn Ziyād to be the governor general of Kūfah and Bas rah because he knew and recognized the Shī'ahs very well. Ibn Ziyād kept very strict surveillance over the Shī'ahs through his secret network of spies. 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād used to look for the Shī'ahs and kill them wherever he found them, or terrorize them by cutting off their hands and legs and by plucking their eyes from their eye-sockets. His tactics included hanging innocent Shī'ahs from trees and expelling a large number of them from Iraq. That is why no well-known Shī'ahs remained in Iraq."[2]

The Shī'ahs from Kūfah joined Imām al-H usayn (*'a*)

History bears witness to the fact that a number of the Shī'ahs found opportunities to escape from Kūfah and join their beloved Imām. They did so

---

[1] *Tārīkh Madīnat al-Damishq*, vol. 57, p. 198.

[2] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 11, p. 44.

at great risk of their lives and by exerting strenuous effort. One example of such Shīʻahs is Yazīd ibn Thubayt ʻAbdī and his two children ʻAbd Allāh and ʻUbayd Allāh.

Yazīd ibn Thubayt was a Shīʻah and one of the companions of Abū al-Aswad. He was a person well-known among his people for his praiseworthy virtues and benevolence.

Abū Jaʻfar T abarī recounts, "Māriyah, the daughter of Munfidh ʻAbdiyyah, was a Shīʻah woman. Her house was a place for the Shīʻahs to meet and engage in conversation. News reached Ibn Ziyād that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was on his way towards Karbalā in response to the letter the people of Kūfah had written to him. Ibn Ziyād therefore ordered guards to keep strict surveillance over the city. He ordered them to close the way and control the entry and exit of people into and out of Kūfah. Yazīd ibn Thubayt decided to leave Kūfah and join Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). He had ten children. He informed all of them about his will and decision. He suggested to them that anyone willing was welcome to come with him on this journey. Two of his ten children accepted to go with him. Their names were ʻAbd Allāh and ʻUbayd Allāh. After that, he went to the house of Māriyyah and addressed his companions, 'I have the intention of leaving Kūfah and joining Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). Who will join me on this journey?' Most of them replied that they were afraid of Ibn Ziyād's spies and companions… Then, accompanied by his two children, ʻĀmir and his slave, Sayf ibn Mālik, and Adham ibn Umayyah, Yazīd ibn Thubayt left Kūfah with the intention of joining Imām al-H usayn's caravan. They made every effort and managed to reach Imām al-H usayn in Mecca in a short period of time. When news reached Imām al-H usayn that some of his followers had arrived, he went out to meet them. They said to him, 'Yazīd ibn Thubayt and some of his companions have come to join you also.' Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) waited for them. After a while, Yazīd ibn Thubayt arrived and said to Imām al-H usayn,

﴿ ... بِفَضل الله وَبِرَحمَتِه فَبِذلِک فَليفرَحُوا ... ﴾[1]

With this statement, he implied that it was a grace and favor from Allah to meet Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and that he ought to be happy and be congratulated. Then, he gave his greetings [*salām*] to Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and sat on the ground in front of him. He told the Imām (*ʻa*) that he had come with two of his children and a number of his companions to help him. Imām

[1] *Sūrat Yūnus'* 10:58.

al-H usayn (*'a*) made a prayer asking Allah to grant Yazīd ibn Thubayt a good reward both in this world and in the hereafter. Then Yazīd ibn Thubayt 's caravan was brought next to that of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). They all accompanied Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) to Karbalā, where they were martyred after courageous battle."

Another person who joined Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) from Kūfah was Burayd ibn Khad īr Hamadānī. He had not met or seen the Holy Prophet (*s*), but had met and seen the Prophet's (*s*) companions. He was an excellent reciter of the Holy Qur'an, and was one of the companions of 'Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*'a*). He was known to be of the nobles of Kūfah. Writers of biography say, "When the news reached him that Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) was on his way from Medina towards Mecca, he started off from Kūfah towards Mecca where he joined Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). He stayed with the Imām (*'a*) until they arrived in Karbalā where he was martyred."

Other people who had joined Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) from Kūfah were Sa'd ibn H arath Ans ārī and Abū al-H utūf ibn H arath Ans ārī. These two had initially come together with the army of 'Umar ibn Sa'd with the intention of killing Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). However, on the day of 'Āshūrā, and after the martyrdom of many of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) companions, and after hearing the wailing voices of women and children on the other side calling for help for Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), they used their weapons to find their way out of 'Umar ibn Sa'd's army and managed to join Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) side. In short, they defected from 'Umar ibn Sa'd's army and came to the defence of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). After courageous battle and killing a lot of people in the army of 'Umar ibn Sa'd, they attained martyrdom.

Another group of Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) sincere Shī'ahs who came from Kūfah to join him at Karbalā consisted of six people. Their names were 'Amru ibn Khālid S aydāwī, Sa'd Mawlā 'Amru ibn Khālid, Majma' al-'Ā'idhī, 'Ā'idh ibn Majma', Junādah ibn H arath Salmānī and the servant of Nāfi' Bajalī (or Jamalī) who was leading the horse that belonged to Nāfī' because Nāfi' had already joined Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). They were informed and persuaded to join Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) by leaflets passed around by Qays ibn Mushir al-S aydāwī. The leaflets said Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) had left Mecca for Iraq. These six people knew that there were guards along the way who had been charged with the duty of arresting anyone going to help Imām al-H usayn. They found a guide who could ride to show them a secluded way out of Kūfah. Their guide took them to Imām

al-H usayn (ʻa) as fast as he could. They made every effort to hide themselves from the sentries. When they joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), the newcomers recited some poems they had learnt from their guide for the Imām (ʻa).

Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) said, "I hope that Allah intends good for us, whether we are killed or are the victors."

H urr had tried to stop these newcomers from joining the caravan of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), and told them to return to Kūfah or they would be taken prisoner. Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) said, "We will never allow such. We will protect them in the same way that we protect ourselves. These people are my helpers. You promised not to interfere until the letter of Ibn Ziyād arrives." H urr said, "That is true, but these people did not come with you." Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) said, "These people are my helpers and companions. It is better for you to keep your promise or we will be forced to fight you." When H urr heard this, he dropped his opposition and left them alone. The six people mentioned were not only martyred at Karbalā, but were among the earliest to be martyred. At the beginning of the battle, they were surrounded by the enemy. Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) told his courageous brother, ʻAbbās, to go and free those six people from encirclement. ʻAbbās followed his brother's orders and made a vicious attack on the enemies who had surrounded those six people. He broke the enemy line and freed them. These six youths returned to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) covered in blood. ʻAbbās ibn ʻAlī was behind them keeping watch over them. Yazīd's soldiers tried to close the way for them. When the six men saw this, they separated themselves from ʻAbbās and in a fierce counter attack they all attained martyrdom. ʻAbbās gave the final report of what had happened to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and the Imām prayed for them and wished them a peaceful return to their Lord.[1]

Yet another person who joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from Kūfah was H abīb ibn Maz āhir Asadī, a very popular companion of the Holy Prophet (*s*). He and Muslim ibn ʻAwsajah were among those who had gotten the people's allegiance on behalf of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). After ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād entered Kūfah and isolated Muslim ibn ʻAqīl, they left Kūfah with the intention of going to help Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).

[1] *Abs ār al-ʻAyn fī Ans ār al-H usayn (ʻa)*, p. 66.

Writers of biography narrate, "H abīb equipped his horse and told his slave to take his horse and go to a certain place, being careful not to attract anyone's attention. He told him to wait for him at that place. H abīb bade farewell to his wife and children. He then secretly left the city. When the slave saw that H abīb was late, he started talking to the horse, 'O Horse! If your owner does not come, go by yourself to help al-H usayn (*'a*).' At that very moment, H abīb arrived and heard what the slave said to his horse. He could not help but start crying. As his tears were flowing, he said, 'May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O son of the Holy Prophet! Even slaves have hopes of helping you, let alone the free.' Then, he freed his slave in the way of Allah. The slave started crying and said, 'O my master! I will never leave you alone. I am coming with you to help Imām al-H usayn'."

Another person from Kūfah who came to the help of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) was H ajjāj ibn Masrūq Ju'fī. He was one of the followers of Imām 'Alī (*'a*). He came from Kūfah to Mecca in order to join Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). He came with the Imām to Karbalā. At prayer times, he was the one who recited the call to prayer [*adhān*]. He was one of those martyred at Karbalā.

Two others from Kūfah were Nu'mān ibn 'Amru Azdī Rāsibī and his brother H ulās ibn 'Amru. These two brothers were initially in the army of 'Umar ibn Sa'd, but escaped to join Imām al-H usayn's (*'a*) army by night. They stayed with him and were among the people martyred in the early confrontation with the enemy.

Also, from among the people of Kūfah was Zuhayr ibn Qayn Bajalī. He was one of the nobles and brave men of Kūfah. He was extraordinary in battle. In the beginning, he was a supporter of 'Uthmān, but in the year 60 of the Islamic calendar, he went on pilgrimage [*h ajj*] to Mecca together with his family. When returning to Kūfah, he met Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) along the way. Allah, the Exalted, guided him. From then on, he became one of the supporters of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*). He came with the Imām to Karbalā and was martyred there.

It can be deduced from this that there were other supporters and well-wishers of 'Uthmān in Kūfah. They existed up to the time of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*), and did not have much inclination towards the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). Therefore, it cannot be supposed that all the people of Kūfah were devout and faithful to Imām 'Alī (*'a*).

One of the Shī'ahs who escaped to join Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) was Sa'īd ibn 'Abd Allāh H anafī. He was one of the bravest and most devoted Shī'ahs of

Kūfah. When the news of Muʻāwiyah's death reached him, he called the Shīʻahs of Kūfah together. They wrote a joint letter to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) inviting him to come to Kūfah. When Muslim ibn ʻAqīl came to Kūfah, Saʻīd ibn ʻAbd Allāh H anafī swore that he would sacrifice his life to help Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).

Muslim ibn ʻAqīl wrote a letter and entrusted it to Saʻīd to take to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). When Saʻīd joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), he stayed with him until the day of ʻĀshūrā when he got martyred. On the night before the day of ʻĀshūrā, Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) gave a speech in which he gave his companions the liberty to stay with him or escape under the cover of darkness. In the beginning, every one of the members of Banī Hāshim said something pledging loyalty to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and promising to stay with him to the very end. When they finished talking, the first person from the companions to speak in defence of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was Saʻīd ibn ʻAbd Allāh. He said to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), "We will never leave you alone until we are sure that we have safeguarded the Prophet's right in you. I swear to Allah! Even if I knew that I would be killed, then brought back to life, then burnt alive, and this were repeated seventy times, I still would never stop at anything to help you."

On the day of ʻĀshūrā, he was the one shielding Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from spears by acting as a human shield. His body took all the spears and arrows that were aimed at the Imām. As a result of this, no spear or arrow hit the Imām. He got so wounded by the arrows and spears which hit him that he finally fell on the ground. Then after cursing the enemies, he turned to Imām al-H usayn and said, "O son of Allah's Prophet! Have I been faithful to my promise?" Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) replied, "Yes, you will be my advance guard in paradise." Then, the soul left his blessed body and he was martyred.

Others from Kūfah include Shawdhab ibn ʻAbd Allāh Hamadānī and ʻĀbis ibn Abī Shabīb Shākirī. Shawdhab was one of the bravest Shīʻahs of Kūfah. He was one of the reliable memorizers and transmitters of *h adīth* (Islamic traditions) from Amīr al-Muʾminīn Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). Together with his master, he brought Muslim ibn ʻAqīl's letter from Kūfah to Mecca for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and then they accompanied him to Karbalā where they were both martyred.

ʻĀbis ibn Abī Shabīb Shākirī was one of the most famous Shīʻah personalities in Kūfah. He was a tribal headman and a very brave man. He was an eloquent speaker and a man devoted to worship. The tribe of Banī

Shākir was among the most sincere believers in the *wilāyat* (guardianship) of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). On the day of ʿĀshūrā, he came alone on the battlefield and challenged the enemy, "Is there anyone to fight me?" No one had the courage to come forward and fight him, so in the end, ʿUmar ibn Saʿd ordered his troops to shower him with stones. When he saw this, he threw his armor and headcover off and went forward to fight them. He fought on till he attained martyrdom.

Yet another of the true Shīʿahs from Kūfah was ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmaīr Kalbī. He and his wife Umm Wahab hastened to help Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). On the day of ʿĀshūrā, Umm Wahab held the pillars of the tents and said to her husband, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! Go and fight in the way of the Prophet's grandson!" ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmayr sent her to the women's side of the camp, but this lioness could not leave her husband. She tightly held his clothes and said, "I will not leave you at all, till I attain martyrdom by your side." Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) said to her, "May you have a good reward from the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) and may Allah have mercy on you. Return to the women and stay there with them, because women are exempted from fighting." She returned to the women. After her husband's martyrdom, this heroine came to the place where her husband's body had fallen and brushed the dirt off him while saying, "May you enjoy paradise." Shimr, the accursed, gave orders to his slave to hit the woman with a wooden stick in the head. Rustam, Shimr's slave, struck her head with a wooden stick so hard that she attained martyrdom right there.

Two others who escaped from Kūfah and managed to join Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) were ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUrwah Ghaffārī and his brother ʿAbd al-Rah mān. These two brothers joined Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) at Karbalā. They were honored to be in the presence of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) on the day of ʿĀshūrā. They said to Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), "The enemy has surrounded you from every side. We would love to be at your service and fight your enemies so as to repel them from you." Imām al-H usayn said, "Well done! Come with me." They joined Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and fought by his side bravely until they attained martyrdom.

ʿAmru ibn Qarz ah Ans ārī is also one of the companions of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) who came from Kūfah. He had fought beside Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) in all the wars that had taken place during his time. He was a trusted memorizer and narrator of *h adīth*. He joined Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) in Karbalā before anyone could prevent him. He too was one of the people who took turns guarding Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) on the day of ʿĀshūrā. He came forward

with his face and chest towards the enemy in order to stop arrows and spears from harming Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). He fell on the ground covered in blood. He said, "Have I been faithful to my promise?" Imām al-H usayn answered, "Yes, you are my guard in paradise. Give my greetings and *salām* to the Prophet of Allah. Tell him that I too will join him very soon." Then, ʻAmru ibn Qarz ah Ans ārī achieved martyrdom and returned to his Lord.

Abū Thamāmah ʻAmru al-S ā'idī was also a Shīʻah from Kūfah from the time of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). He had taken part in the wars that Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) had fought, and later in the battles his son Imām al-H asan (ʻa) had fought. Then, he remained in Kūfah. After the death of Muʻāwiyah, he wrote a letter to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) asking him to come to Kūfah. In Kūfah, he was one of those who had been ordered by Muslim ibn ʻAqīl to collect donations for buying arms. ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād sent a person to arrest him. He and Nāfiʻ ibn Hilāl Bajalī escaped from Kūfah and joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). On the day of ʻĀshūrā, he stood in line to protect the Imām from spears and arrows when Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was performing his prayers. By the end of the prayers, he had been hit by thirteen arrows. He suffered a lot of wounds and finally fell on the ground and attained martyrdom.

Muslim ibn ʻAwsajah was one of the Prophet's (s) companions. He was one of the people of Kūfah who had written the letter to Imām al-H usayn. He was also one of those who got the people's allegiance for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). After the martyrdom of Muslim and Hānī ibn ʻUrwah, he went into hiding in Kūfah. Later, he and his family escaped. They joined Imām al-H usayn and he sacrificed his life for Imām al-H usayn in the way of Allah.

Another one of the people of Kūfah who joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was the One Legged Martyr, Muslim ibn Kathīr Aʻraj Azdī. He had lost one of his legs fighting on the side of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) in one of the wars. Even though he was legally exempted from war, and it was not at all incumbent for him to fight, he escaped from Kūfah and went to Karbalā to be at the service of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). He became one of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) soldiers and was one of the first people to be martyred at the beginning of the battle. Masʻūd ibn H ajjāj Taymī and his child ʻAbd al-Rah mān ibn Masʻūd were also among the people who came from Kūfah and were martyred at the beginning of the battle on the day of ʻĀshūrā. These two had employed a very good trick. When they noticed that they could not manage to escape from Kūfah and join Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) in Mecca, they enrolled in the army of ʻUmar ibn Saʻd and in this way were able to reach

Karbalā. After reaching Karbalā, they escaped from ʻUmar ibn Saʻd's army and joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).

Mawaqqiʻ ibn Thamāmah Asadī was also one of the people who came to Karbalā from Kūfah. He traveled by night until he joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). On the day of ʻĀshūrā, he fought very bravely. When his strength was exhausted, he fell on the ground. The enemies wanted to cut his head from his body, but he had relatives in the army of Yazīd who hurried to protect him from his enemies and managed to take him back to Kūfah. They wanted to secretly cure him, but their secret could not remain hidden. When news reached the Governor of Kūfah about what they intended to do, he gave orders that Asadī's wounded and incapacitated body should be put in yoke and chains and sent into exile to a distant land. Mawaqqiʻ ibn Thamāmah Asadī spent a year in yoke and chains with a body covered in blood until he finally joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) by attaining martyrdom.

These were some of the religious and devoted Shīʻahs of Kūfah who joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and sacrificed their lives and souls for the Imām and his aims and objectives.

There are many people who joined Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from Kūfah, but we cannot mention all of them here.[1]

Martyrs who carried messages

There were other Shīʻahs who took the duty of carrying messages between Kūfah and Mecca. They attained martyrdom as letter carriers. We will now mention some of them here:

1. ʻAbd Allāh ibn Yaqt ar H umayrī, Imām al-H usayn's foster brother

Biographers write, "Imām al-H usayn sent ʻAbd Allāh ibn Yaqt ar H umayrī to Kūfah to deliver the reply he had written to Muslim ibn ʻAqīl. Ibn Ziyād's notorious spy, H as īn ibn Tamīm, arrested him in an area called Qādissiyyah near Karbalā. H as īn ibn Tamīm took him to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. ʻUbayd Allāh asked ʻAbd Allāh ibn Yaqt ar H umayrī what Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) had sent him to do. He did not give any answer to this question. ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād ordered him to the top of the palace

[1] Tustarī, *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*; *Abs ār al-ʻAyn fī Ans ār al-H usayn (ʻa)*; *Dhakhīrah al-Dārīn fīmā Yataʻalliqu bi al-H usayn wa As h ābih*; *Maʻālī al-Sibt ayn*; *Pīshvā-ye Shahīdān* (The Leader of Martyrs); *Nafs al-Mahmūm*; *Tārīkh T abarī*; *etc.*

where he must curse ʻthe lying son of the liarʼ [*kadhdhāb ibn kadhdhāb*]. (By this ʻUbayd Allāh meant Imām al-H usayn.) ʻUbayd Allāh said, "Then you must come down and get the judgement I will issue for you."

He went on top of the palace, turned to the people and addressed them, "O people! I am a messenger from al-H usayn son of Fāt imah the daughter of Allahʼs Prophet. I have been sent to you. The message he entrusted to me to give to you, the people, is that he requests you to help and support him in his uprising against the sons of Marjānah and Sumayyah." At this point, ʻUbayd Allāh gave orders to his agents that they should drop ʻAbd Allāh ibn Yaqt ar H umayrī from the top of the palace to the ground. When they did this, his bones were broken. Then, as he was breathing his last, ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻUmayr, a *faqīh* (religious jurisprudent) of Kūfah, cut his head off. When the people criticized him for doing so, he sarcastically replied, "I wanted to put him out of his misery."

2. Qays ibn Mashar al-S aydāwī

One of the couriers who was martyred was Qays ibn Mashar al-S aydāwī. He had carried a letter from Muslim ibn ʻAqīl to Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*), and was bringing the Imāmʼs reply to Kūfah when he was arrested by the villainous spy H as īn ibn Tamīm and brought before ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād asked him what the contents of the letter were. He replied, "I tore the letter to pieces so that you could not find out what the contents were." ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād asked, "To whom was the letter addressed and written?" Qays said, "A number of people whose names I do not know." ʻUbayd Allāh said, "If you do not know their names, then at least go on the pulpit and curse ʻthe lying son of the liarʼ [*kadhdhāb ibn kadhdhāb*]." Qays ibn Mashar al-S aydāwī went on the pulpit and said, "O people! Verily al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī is the best creation of Allah and son of Fāt imah the daughter of the Holy Prophet (*s*). I am a messenger from him sent to you. We separated from each other at an area called H ājar. You should hasten to join and help him." At that moment he cursed ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād and his father, and sent peace and blessings upon Amīr al-Muʾminīn, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*). Ibn Ziyād gave orders to his agents to bring Qays ibn Mashar al-S aydāwī down from the pulpit and kill him."[1]

These were the true Shīʻah.

[1] See previous footnote.

The forerunners of martyrdom

After Muslim ibn ʿAqīl came to Kūfah, and before the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (ʿa), a number of people were martyred because of paying allegiance or sending messages to Imām al-H usayn. Others were martyred because they wanted to escape and help Imām al-H usayn but were discovered before they could succeed. We will now mention some of them:

1. ʿAmmārah ibn S alkhab Azdī

He was one of the Shīʿahs who had paid allegiance to Muslim ibn ʿAqīl in Kūfah. When Muslim was captured, Ibn Ziyād also captured ʿAmmārah ibn S alkhab Azdī and asked, "What tribe are you from?" He answered, "I come from the tribe of Azd ibn Ziyād." ʿUbayd Allāh bin Ziyād gave orders to his agents to take ʿAmmārah to his tribesmen and separate (cut) his head from his neck.

Abū Jaʿfar recounts, "They cut his head off in the presence of his tribesmen."

2. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā ibn Yazīd al-Kalbī

ʿAbd al-Aʿlā ibn Yazīd al-Kalbī was an astute horseman and a very brave Shīʿah of Kūfah. He was a supporter of Muslim ibn ʿAqīl. After Muslim ibn ʿAqīl was deserted by the people, Kathīr ibn Shahāb arrested ʿAbd al-Aʿlā and handed him over to ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād.

Abū Mukhnaf recounts, "After the martyrdom of Muslim ibn ʿAqīl, ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād called for ʿAbd al-Aʿlā. He asked him how he was feeling. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā answered, 'I came out in order to be a spectator at the battlefield. I did not have any intention of fighting against you.' ʿUbayd Allāh asked him to swear upon Allah that he was telling the truth. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā refused to swear. Therefore, they took him to a place infested with wild and vicious animals and he was martyred there."[1]

The presence of Khawārij in Kūfah

When we inspect historical accounts, we see that the commanders of ʿUmar ibn Saʿd's army were bitter and obstinate enemies of Imām al-H usayn (ʿa) and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʿa). They were all of Nawās ib, Khawārij and Umayyad descent, including ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, ʿUmar ibn Saʿd, Shimr ibn Dhī al-Jawshan, Qays ibn Ashʿath, ʿAmru ibn H ajjāj Zubaydī, ʿAbd

[1] See previous footnote.

Allāh ibn Zuhayr Azdī, ʻUrwah ibn Qays Ah masī, Shabath ibn Ribʻī Yarbūʻī, ʻAbd al-Rah mān Abī Sīrah Jaʻfarī, H as īn ibn Numayr and H ajjār ibn Abjar.

Likewise, there was no one famous as a Shīʻah among the people who took part in killing Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). On the contrary, most of the enemy combatants were reputed for being hostile and for bearing grudges against the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*). These include Sanān ibn Anas Nakhaʻī, H armalah Kāhilī, Munqidh ibn Marrah ʻAbdī, Abī al-H utūf Juʻfī, Mālik ibn Nasr Kandī, ʻAbd al-Rah mān Juʻfī, Qashʻam ibn Nadhīr Juʻfī, Bah r ibn Kaʻb ibn Taym Allāh, Zarʻah ibn Sharīk Tamīmī, S ālih ibn Wahab Marī, Khawlī ibn Yazīd As bah ī, Has īn ibn Tamīm and others.

The presence of followers of Abū Sufiyān in Sa'd's army

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) bestowed the title, "the Shīʻahs of Abū Sufiyān" on the soldiers of ʻUmar ibn Saʻd. He addressed them in this way,

«ويحكم يا شيعه آل ابي سفيان! إن لم يكن لكم دين، وكنتم لا تخافون المعاد، فكونوا أحرارا في دنياكم.»

> "Woe upon you, O followers of the household of Abū Sufiyān! If you lack religion and do not fear the Day of Resurrection, then at least be free in your world."[1]

When we refer to and ponder the words and speeches of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) at Karbalā, we do not find a single instance where he calls his rivals his Shīʻahs or followers. In the same way, the killers of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) were never called the Shīʻahs of Imām al-H usayn in the words of other narrators either. This in itself is proof that the traitors who enrolled as soldiers of ʻUmar ibn Saʻd were not real Shīʻahs of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*).

When Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) asked why they wanted to shed his blood, some of ʻUmar ibn Saʻd's soldiers answered, "We are at war with you because of the enmity and grudges which we bear against your father."[2]

It is clear that these people held deep-seated enmity and hatred of Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) due to the sinister propaganda machine of Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. A true Shīʻah of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*) would never say that they were enemies

[1] Khwārazmī, *Maqtal al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 2, p. 38; *Al-Luhūf*, p. 45.

[2] *Yanābīʻ al-Muwaddah*, p. 346.

of Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*). Some of the enemy soldiers called Imām al-H usayn ʿthe lying son of the liarʾ [*kadhdhāb ibn kadhdhāb*].[1] Some of them addressed him thus, "Al-H usayn! We give glad tidings to you that you are going to the fire!"[2] They also told Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and his companions, "O al-H usayn! Your prayers will not be accepted by Allah."[3]

A true Shīʿah of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) would never utter ugly words from his mouth regarding his leader and guide. All these ugly statements were a result of hatred and grudges that were held against the Prophetʾs *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) by followers of Abū Sufiyān and Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. **?**

[1] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, p. 67.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 66; *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 183.

[3] *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p. 185.

DID IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A) HAVE PRIOR INFORMATION ABOUT HIS MARTYRDOM?

One of the doubts often raised by skeptics in connection with the event of Karbalā is about the Shī‘ah belief that every *imām* is prescient so has knowledge of things that are hidden from most human beings. They believe that the Imāms are able to foresee and know exactly what is going to happen in the future. Skeptics dispute that if this Shī‘ah assertion is true, then how can they justify Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) uprising against Yazīd, the son of Mu‘āwiyah, when he knew very well that he was going to be martyred in the end? If Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) had prior knowledge about his death, then why did he undertake the uprising?

The reality is that the above-raised question is not confined to Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) alone. This question is valid about the martyrdom of all the Imāms, because they all knew by what means they would be martyred but still proceeded towards their own martyrdoms willingly.

We will now discuss this topic in detail because it is an important one.

Evidence that the Imāms knew of their martyrdoms

The topic of Imām al-H usayn’s (*‘a*) knowledge about his own martyrdom is something that is not hidden to any researcher of history and can be proven in a variety of ways:

1. In general, all Shī‘ahs believe that Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) and all the other Imāms had and have prior knowledge of events and knowledge about what would and will happen in the future. They acquire this knowledge from the Holy Prophet’s (*s*) teachings and divine inspiration. One of the issues they have prior information about is their own martyrdoms. Although this topic

has been a subject of exhaustive debate and dispute among Islamic scholars, we have shown the truth of this matter in a separate article entitled, "*ʻIlm-e Ghayb-e Imām*" (Hidden Knowledge of the Imām).[1]

2. There are a lot of *h adīth*s (traditions) recounted in books by the various sects of Islam which prove that the Holy Prophet (*s*) knew everything about the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and the place and manner of the tragic event of Karbalā. These traditions have been traced and seen in the words of Amīr al-Muʼminīn ʻAlī (*ʻa*), Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*), Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) himself, Umma Salmah, ʻĀʼishah, and others. There is no doubt that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) had heard these traditions and knew about them well.

Asmāʼ bint ʻUmays says, "I was Fāt imah al-Zahrāʼs attendant after the birth of Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*). One day the Holy Prophet (*s*) came and said, ʻO Asmāʼ! Bring my child to me.ʼ I wrapped a piece of cloth around al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and took him to the Noble Prophet (*s*). The Prophet put him on his lap and started reciting the call to prayer [*adhān*] in his right ear and the prelude to prayer [*iqāmah*] in his left ear." She adds, "Then, the Noble Prophet started crying and said, ʻVerily, soon it must be that a horrible event must come to pass for you. O Lord! Curse his killer!ʼ Then, the Prophet turned to me and said, ʻDo not inform Fāt imah about this'."

Asmāʼ recounts, "On the seventh day after the birth of Imām al-H usayn, the Holy Prophet (*s*) came and sacrificed a sheep for the blessed newborn. He performed all the Islamic ceremonial acts according to Allahʼs laws such as naming the child and reciting supplications that are supposed to be recited for newborns on the seventh day. Then the Noble Prophet (*s*) put the newborn on his lap and said, ʻO Abā ʻAbd Allāh! It is very hard and unbearable for me.ʼ Then, he cried. I said, ʻMy father and mother be your ransom! Why are you crying on this first important day of celebration after the birth of a child?ʼ He answered, ʻI am crying for this child of mine because a group of oppressors from the tribe of Banī Umayyah and other unbelievers [*kuffār*] will kill him. Allah will not permit me to intercede for these people on the Day of Resurrection'."[2]

---

[1] ʻAlī As ghar Rid wānī, *Shīʻah-shenāsī va Pāsokh be Shubahāt* (To Know the Shīʻahs and Responses to Doubts).

[2] *H ayāt al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 1, p. 98; Al-H ākim al-Neyshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 3, p. 176; Ibn ʻAsākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, vol. 13, p. 62.

Ibn ʻAbbās says, "One day, Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was on the Prophet's lap. The Archangel Gabriel said, 'Do you love him?' The Noble Prophet (*s*) said, 'How can I not love him when he is the fruit of my heart?' Gabriel said, 'Verily, your *ummah* (nation) will kill him. Do you want me to show you the site of his martyrdom and grave?' Then, Gabriel brought out a fist full of soil full of blood and showed it to the Holy Prophet."[1]

3. It has been directly reported in various *h adīth*s that Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) knew about his martyrdom at Karbalā. Although the chains of transmission for some of these *h adīth*s have problems, some sections of these chains are authentic.

We will now refer to some of these *h adīth*s:

Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) said, "There is no believer who sheds tears for my martyrdom unless it serves as a lesson."[2]

One day, when Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) was leaving the Kaʻbah, ʻAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr came to escort Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and see him off. ʻAbd Allāh ibn Zubayr said, "O Abā ʻAbd Allāh! It is time for the *h ajj*. Are you abandoning the *h ajj* and going to Iraq?" Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) replied, "O son of Zubayr! It is better for me to be buried next to the River Euphrates than next to the Kaʻbah."[3]

In a letter to Muh ammad ibn H anafiyyah, Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) wrote, "*In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*, from al-H usayn ibn ʻAlī to Muh ammad ibn ʻAlī and before him Banī Hāshim. Verily, whoever does not join me will not attain victory; *wa salām*."[4]

When Imām al-H usayn (*ʻa*) reached the pass of Bat an, he told his companions, "I do not see myself in a situation other than that I should be killed." They said, "How is that, O Abā ʻAbd Allāh?" He answered, "I saw a dream a while ago." His companions asked, "What did you dream?" He answered, "I saw dogs attacking me viciously…"[5]

---

[1] *Majmaʻ al-Zawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 62.

[2] S adūq, *Al-Amālī*, *majlis* 28, *h adīth* 7.

[3] *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, section [*bāb*] 23, *h adīth* 5.

[4] *Ibid*., *h adīth* 15.

[5] *Ibid*., *h adīth* 14.

4. When we refer to history, we come to know that some people tried to stop Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from going to Iraq. They reminded the Imām that if he undertook this journey, he would certainly be killed.

In a letter to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), ʻAbd Allāh ibn Jaʻfar said, "I request that you change your mind about going on this journey, because I fear that it will result in your death…"[1]

Ibn ʻAbbās, Muh ammad ibn H anafiyyah and Abū Bakr Makhzūmī also tried to prevent Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) from undertaking this dangerous journey, and warned him about the disloyalty of the people of Iraq.

5. Political and military analysis also confirms this issue because events which testify to this subject all prove that the way which Imām al-H usayn followed would end in his martyrdom. After hearing that Muslim ibn ʻAqīl had been martyred, and also after H urr ibn Yazīd Riyāh ī had informed Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) about ʻUmar ibn Saʻd's intention, it was very clear for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) that his action could have no other conclusion other than martyrdom. He did not require supernatural powers or inspiration to perceive this—common knowledge was enough for him to understand this issue.

Examination of the Qur'anic verse regarding self-destruction

We have gathered from the proofs previously presented that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) had knowledge about his impending martyrdom. But the question is: Does Islam allow a person to take measures which are sure to result in his own death? Wouldn't this be considered self-destruction [*tahlukah*] which is forbidden by the divine law [*sharīʻah*] of Islam according to explicit texts of the Holy Qur'an?

Now, it is important to examine and analyze the following Qur'anic verse that talks about self-destruction, well-known as "the Verse of Self-destruction" [*āyah al-tahlukah*].

Allah, the Exalted says,

﴿ وَأَنفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴾

[1] *H ayāt al-Imām al-H usayn (ʻa)*, vol. 3, p. 24.

> *"And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves into perdition by your own hands, and do good to others, surely Allah loves the doers of good."*[1]

Response

Responding to this objection, we say,

Firstly, this verse cited as evidence pertains to charity (and spend in the way of Allah), and the intended meaning is that a person is not supposed to bring about his own perdition as a result of giving charity. The aim of this verse is to say that man should not give charity to the extent that he himself becomes helpless and needy. Therefore, this Qur'anic verse is not relevant to the subject of martyrdom and being killed in the way of Allah.

Secondly, if the meaning of the above-mentioned verse could be extended to donating and pledging one's soul in the way of Allah, it would only forbid man from commiting acts that are unfruitful and purposeless. This means that man should not commit acts which result in wasting and ruining his life without reason. However, if exposing oneself to the danger of death leads to martyrdom which will in turn lead to the awakening of the society from indifference and apathy and the result is that a better society should be built from the radiance of this action, this kind of 'self-destruction' will never be considered as throwing oneself into perdition. It is for this reason that Allah, the Exalted, in the Holy Qur'an interprets the death of martyrs not as death, but as 'spiritual life'.

Martyrs never die because with their apparent death in the form of a body without a soul, the blood of a martyr injects new life into society. Can it be said that a self-sacrificing man who dies fighting at the war front has thrown himself to perdition and destruction? Were all those companions of the Holy Prophet (*s*) who were invited to *jihād* in the way of Allah cast into perdition and destruction? Such an idea cannot be accepted.

Thirdly, what is the intent of "perdition by your own hands" as mentioned in the above quoted verse? If the purpose is worldly perdition and destruction, then the intended meaning of the verse is: do not let the corrupt and unbelieving people gain predominance over you. If the purpose is about the

[1] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:195.

hereafter (in the sense that, man does not respond positively to divine call and duty), then the meaning is that the one who abandons self-sacrifice and charity should be wary about his hereafter. He should not throw himself into perdition and self-destruction because of not responding positively to the divine call.

The judgement of reason

This issue can also be approached from the viewpoint of reason and logic. Some say, “Reason judges that man should protect his life from every kind of danger and calamity. He should not go out looking for trouble exposing himself into self-destruction.”

As has been mentioned earlier, logic and reason reproach taking measures that will lead to self-destruction and perdition when the result is not beneficial. However, if the dead man is in essence alive, his spirit remains in the society, and he has spiritual life which goes with receiving sustenance directly from Allah, common sense and logic cannot consider such a death to be ‘self-destruction’. On the contrary, refraining from such a death would be an unwise or foolish thing opposed to reason.

Measures taken by the Imāms regarding the means of their martyrdoms

In a previous discussion, although we considered the topic of Imām al-H usayn’s (*ʿa*) divine knowledge about his martyrdom, it is possible that this question has not been fully answered as regards the other Imāms. The question which remains is, “Why did the Imāms take measures which they knew would finally lead to their own deaths? For example, if they knew that the food they were taking contained deadly poison which was meant to kill them, why then did they eat that food? Do their actions, just like the uprising of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), result in blessings and graces which persuaded them to undertake such action? Considering that he knew that Ibn Muljam was lying in ambush for him in the Mosque of Kūfah, why did Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) go to the mosque? And why did Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*) and Imām al-Rid a (*ʿa*) eat the food they were given although they knew that the food they were taking was poisonous? Is this not suicide? Does this not amount to self-destruction?

Response

There are a number of ways to respond to the above question:

1. Regarding the nature of the knowledge of the Imāms, there is debate about whether their knowledge is intuitive [*h ud ūrī*] or acquired [*h us ūlī*]. In addition, there is a question of whether the knowledge of an *imām* depends upon his will or whether it is always present with him without requiring him to use his will or exert any effort to get it? That is to say, do the Imāms know things whenever they wish to know them, especially in external issues?

According to the opinions of some religious scholars and on the authority of *h adīth*s, the knowledge of the Imāms about the hidden [*ghayb*] is dependent upon their own wills [*mashiyyah*].

2. Even if the Imāms of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) have complete awareness about events that will come to pass, and supposing their understanding about the reality of things and events is intuitive knowledge, not dependent on their own free will, they still cannot trespass or violate the destiny of Allah because they depend on Allah and follow His divine will and decree in all matters.

Shaykh Yūsuf Bah rānī, in the book "*Al-Durrah al-Najafiyyah*", says, "The reason the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) were pleased to be killed either by poison or by the sword, or by means of any other hardship imposed upon them by the oppressors, even when they had the power to repel these events, is that they knew that their actions were pleasing to Allah, the Exalted. Therefore, their actions do not amount to self-destruction and perdition. The mentioned verse is about an instance where Allah has forbidden undertaking a certain action. On the contrary, we know that the measures undertaken by the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) were all a source of Allah's satisfaction."

3. Because the martyrdoms of none of the Shīʿah Imāms was futile or fruitless, and because their martyrdoms all had significant social benefits, we can therefore compare their martyrdoms with the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*). Their martyrdoms: a) helped people recognize their enemies better; that is why some of their martyrdoms resulted in uprisings and revolts against usurper governments; b) were causes of social awareness in the *ummah* during their time and awoke the people from indifference and apathy; c) caused people gather together to commemorate their death anniversaries, and in this way helped people get to know and understand their virtues and spiritual perfections better. Gathering to commemorate the death anniversaries of the Infallible Imāms (*ʿa*), in itself, has a lot of blessings and graces for the awareness of the Muslim World in any age or time. Because

the origin of their martyrdoms is in itself a great blow against the body of Islam and the Muslims and is a cause of deprivation of the favors and graces resulting from their presence in the *ummah*, it is therefore appropriate to hold ceremonies to commemorate them and participate in mourning ceremonies.

4. ʻAllāmah H illī, commenting on the action Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) took by going to the Mosque of Kūfah where he would become martyred on the nineteenth of the holy month of Ramad an, says, "It is possible for me to say that Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) knew about his martyrdom on that night. He knew where he was going to be killed. But his duty cannot be compared to our duty; there is a difference between what measures he is charged with undrertaking and the measures we are charged with undertaking. It is possible that giving the blood of his heart generously in the way of Allah is incumbent for him, in the same way that steadfastness is incumbent upon the holy soldier who is fighting in Allah's way, even though his steadfastness may lead to his death."[1] **?**

[1] *Mir'āt al-ʻUqūl*, vol. 3, p. 126, as narrated by ʻAllāmah H illī.

DID ALLAH LEAVE IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A) UNAIDED?

One of the questions which is often asked about the event of Karbalā and Imām al-H usayn (‘*a*) is why Allah did not help Imām al-H usayn (‘*a*)? Allah is capable of doing whatever He wishes. Why then did Imām al-H usayn (‘*a*) not resort to miraculous and supernatural powers in order to repel and exterminate his enemies? Did Allah not, according to explicit Qur’anic texts, help His Prophet (*s*) with invisible aid in the Battle of Badr and other wars? Why did the event of Karbalā have to end with the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (‘*a*), all his companions and some members of his family and the captivity of those who remained alive?

The concept of help in Islamic thought

The concept of help [*nus rat*] enjoys a special position in Islamic thought, and the Holy Qur’an has mentioned a number of instances in this regard.

A. The means of Allah’s help

Some verses of the Holy Qur’an have recounted the means of Allah’s help, such as:

1. Eradicating the unjust

The Holy Qur’an mentions eradicating and uprooting the unjust, an action that is in reality a kind of help to the monotheists and believers. Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ قَال ربِّ انصُرني بِمَا كَذَّبُون * قَال عَمَّا قَليل ليصبْحُنَّ نَادِمين * فَأَخَذَتهُم الصَّيحة بِالحَقِّ فَجَعَلنَاهُم غُثَاءا فَبُعْدا لِلقَوم الظَّالِمين * ثُمَّ أَنشَأنَا مِن بَعدِهِم قُرُونا آخرين ﴾

“He said: O my Lord! Help me against their calling me a liar. He said: In a little while they will most certainly be repenting. So the punishment overtook them in justice, and We made them as rubbish; so away with the unjust people. Then we raised after them other generations.”[1]

2. Invisible soldiers

Sometimes Allah helps believers with invisible soldiers; meaning that He helps believers by means of the angels.

Allah the Most High says,

﴿ إِلا تَنصُرُ ه فَقَد نَصَرَه اللهُ إِذ أَخرَجَه الَّذين كَفَرُ ا ثَاني اثنين إِذ هُمَا في الغَار إِذ يقُول لِصَاحِبِه لا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنزَلَ اللهُ سَكِينَتَه عَليه وَأَيَّدَه بِجُنُود لَم تَرَوهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمة الَّذين كَفَرُ ا السُّفلي وَكَلِمَة اللهِ هِي العُليا وَاللهُ عَزيز حَكيم ﴾

“If you will not aid him, Allah certainly aided him when those who disbelieved expelled him, he being the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion: Grieve not, surely Allah is with us. So Allah sent down His tranquillity upon him and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved; and the word of Allah, that is the highest; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.”[2]

3. Intimidation and fear

Sometimes, the fear that Allah puts in the hearts of the unbelievers is a kind of help to the believers. By this means, Allah intimidates the unbelievers. Allah says,

﴿ سَنُلقي في قُلُوب الَّذين كَفَرُ ا الرُّعب بِمَا أَشرَكُوا بِالله مَا لَم يَنَزِّل بِه سُلطَانا وَمَأوَاهم النَّار وَبِئس مَثْوي الظَّالِمين ﴾

“We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, because they set up for Allah that which He has sent down no authority, and their abode is the fire; and evil is the abode of the unjust.”[3]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Mu’minūn* 23:39-42.

[2] *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (or *Barā’ah*) 9:40.

[3] *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān* 3:151.

Intimidation and fear are the most effective weapons on the battlefield, and Allah has helped the believers enjoy the benefits of this weapon.

B. The conditions for help

Allah's help and aid has conditions, which have been mentioned in the verses of the Holy Qur'an; among them:

1. Patience and steadfastness

Allah says,

﴿ وَلَن تَرضَى عَنْكَ اليهُود وَلا النَّصَارى حَتَّى تَتَّبِع مِلَّتَهُم قُلْ إِنَّ هُدى الله هُو الهُدى وَلَئِن اتَّبَعْت أَهوَاءَهُم بَعد الَّذي جَاءَكَ مِن العِلم مَا لَكَ من الله مِن وَلي وَلا نَصير ﴾

"And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor the Christians until you follow their religion. Say: Surely Allah's guidance is the true guidance. And if you follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to you, you shall have no guardian from Allah, nor any helper."[1]

He also says,

﴿ أَمْ حَسِبتُمْ أَن تَدخُلُوا الجَنَّة وَلَمَّا يأتِكُم مَثَل الَّذين خَلَوا مِن قَبلِكُم مَسَّتهُم البَأسَاء وَالضَّرَّاء وَزُلزِلُوا حَتَّى يقُول الرَّسُول وَالَّذين آمَنُوا مَعَه مَتى نَصر الله أَلا إِنَّ نَصر الله قَريب ﴾

"Or do you think that you would enter the Garden while yet the state of those who have passed away before you has not come upon you, distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, so that the Apostle and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allah come? Now surely the help of Allah is nigh!"[2]

2. Preserving and safeguarding help

One of the conditions for receiving Allah's help is that the people for whom this help is meant should possess the capacity and worthiness to receive that help, meaning that they should preserve it and bring about social justice after the fulfilment of Allah's help.

Allah, the Exalted, says,

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:120.

[2] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:214.

﴿ أُذِنَ لِلَّذين يقَاتَلُون بِأَنَّهُم ظُلِمُوا وإِنَّ الله عَلي نَصرِهِم لَقَدير * الَّذين أُخرِجُوا مِن دِيارِهِم بِغيْر حَقٍّ إِلاَّ أَن يقُولُوا رَبُّنَا الله وَلَو لا دَفْع الله النَّاس بَعضَهُم بِبَعض لَهُدِّمَت صَوَمِع وَبِيَع وَصَلَوَت وَمَسَاجِد يُذكَر فِيهَا اسْم الله كَثيرا وَلينصُرَنَّ الله مَن ينصُرُهُ إِنَّ الله لَقَوي عَزيز * أَلَّذين إِن مَّكَّنَاهُم فِي الأَرْض أَقَامُوا الصَّلاة وءاتَوُا الزَّكَاة وَأَمَرُوا بِالمَعرُوف وَنَهَوا عَن المُنكَر وَلله عَاقِبة الأُمُور ﴾

“Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them; those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah’s repelling some people with others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah’s name is much remembered; and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause; most surely Allah is Strong, Mighty. Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep prayer and pay the poor rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah’s is the end of affairs.”[1]

C. Testing a believer by withholding help

It can be inferred from certain verses of the Holy Qur’an that sometimes Allah tests the believers by withholding help from them. He intends to manifest whether they have perseverance and firmness of purpose or are weak and fainthearted. Will they run away from the battlefield or stand firmly defending the religion of Allah? Allah, the Exalted says,

﴿ وَلا تَهِنُوا وَلا تَحزَنُوا وَأَنتُم الأَعلَونَ إِن كُنتُم مُؤمِنين *إِن يمسَسكُم قَرح فَقَد مَسَّ القَوم قَرح مِثلُه وَتِلْك الأَيَّام نُداوِلُها بَين النَّاس وَلِيعلَم الله الَّذين آمَنُوا ويتَّخِذ مِنكُم شُهَدَاء وَالله لا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمين * وَلِيمَحِّص الله الَّذين آمَنُوا ويمحَق الكَافِرين * أَم حَسِبتُم أَن تَدخُلُوا الجَنَّة وَلَمَّا يعلَم الله الَّذين جَاهَدُوا مِنكُم ويعلَم الصَّابِرين ﴾

“And be not infirm, and be not grieving, and you shall have the upper hand if you are believers. If a wound has afflicted you (at the Battle of Uh ud), a wound like it has also afflicted the unbelieving people; and We bring these days to men by turns, and that Allah may know those who believe and take witnesses from among you; and Allah does not love the unjust. And that He may purge those who believe and deprive the unbelievers of blessings. Do you think that

[1] *Sūrat al-H ajj* 22:39-41.

you will enter the Garden while Allah has not yet known those who strive hard from among you, and (He has not) known the patient."[1]

Responses to two questions

Sometimes it is asked whether or not Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) achieved the professed objectives of his movement. Also, the question is sometimes asked as to whether Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) was militarily victorious over his enemies or not. Here, what is meant by victory is a victory which leads to rule and government.

The answer to the first question is that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) certainly attained to the professed aims and objectives of his uprising and undoubtedly came out of the war victorious as shown in previous discussion.

As for the second question, it must be said that the answer is negative; because outwardly the army of ʿUmar ibn Saʿd managed to prevail over the tiny army of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), killing Imām al-H usayn himself (*ʿa*), the youths of Banī Hāshim and many of his companions. This is something which, from a military perspective, apparently looks like defeat.

However, Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) uprising had aims and objectives beyond military defeat and governmental rule. The Imām intended to awaken the Islamic community; a community that had sunk into apathy and indifference, and had turned the teachings of Islam upside down. The only factor that could awaken the consciences of these insensible people from their deep sleep of negligence was Imām al-H usayn's martyrdom. That is why we see that after the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*), uprisings sprang up against the rule of Banī Umayyah which finally led to the downfall of this cursed sultanate. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«حسين مني وأنا من حسين.»

"Al-H usayn is from me, and I am from al-H usayn."

That is to say that the Holy Prophet (*s*) and his message is intricately connected to Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and his uprising.

The triangle of prosperity, trial and free will

Man attains advancement and success by means of trials and difficulties and the use of his free will to make correct decisions about his life. Therefore,

[1] *Sūrat Āl ʿImrān* 3:139-142.

prosperity and salvation have no meaning and become worthless when they are attained without trials and self-determination. In the same way, a man who has never been tempered by trials and afflictions will not put in the same effort to improve and advance and so will never achieve success at the level of his innate and inherent propensity.

Trials are sometimes personal and private and they are sometimes social, including under their fold all aspects of the society. Sickness, poverty, disbelief, children, worldly life, help, opportunity to escape from the battlefield, and other things like this are all kinds of trials for a believing person. Mention has been made in the Holy Qur'an about trials and temptations for believers, when it says,

﴿ وَلَنَبلُوَنَّكُم حَتَّى نَعلَمَ المُجَاهِدِين مِنكُم وَالصَّابِرِين ... ﴾

> *"And most certainly, We will try you until We have known those among you who exert themselves hard, and the patient, and made your case manifest."*[1]

The event of Karbalā was a trial for the Muslim *ummah*

The event of Karbalā was a scene of great trial for the Islamic *ummah* in the same way that the wars which occurred during Imām ʻAlī's caliphate and the peace which Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʻa*) made with Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān were all incidents of Allah's trials for the Islamic community. Allah tried the Muslims to manifest who in reality was trudging the path of truth and justice and would follow the Infallible Imāms (*ʻa*) from those who had deviated from the path of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʻa*). In this way, everyone was made known by his own actions. **?**

[1] *Sūrat Muh ammad* 47:31.

WHY DID IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A) BRING HIS FAMILY TO KARBALĀ?

Another question brought forth for discussion is why Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) brought his family to Karbalā while he knew very well that a brutal battle would ensue between him and the army of Kūfah and that this battle would end with his martyrdom and his family being taken into captivity. Why would he bring his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*‘a*) along on this dangerous journey?

First response

There have been various responses provided for the above-mentioned question. One of the answers is that it was a prevalent custom among the Arabs of that time to bring their families and wives to the battlefield.

Objection

This response does not meet the needs of our question because it brings other questions to mind: Why did the Arabs bring their families to the battlefield? Even if it is true that this custom did exist among the Arabs, what benefit and gain would there be in bringing one’s household to a battlefield? Was it usual for Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) to follow or imitate the customs and social practices of the Arabs? Was Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) not following Allah’s decree when he brought his family and newborn children to the battlefield?

Second response

Another answer put forward as a possibly correct response is that Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) knew that he bore a great divine mission on his shoulders. The mission was to bring about social awareness and consciousness in the Muslim *ummah*. For fulfillment, this mission had to traverse different stages.

One of those stages was fulfilled by the martyrdom of certain individuals. Another stage would have to reach fulfilment after the martyrdom of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and his companions, and was accomplished by way of speeches and open and public display of the oppression imposed upon Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) by Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah's government. Only with the manifestation of this second stage does the divine mission of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) become complete.

This second aspect was well fulfilled by the household of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) and the captives of Karbalā. Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah wanted to secure his position and government by killing Imām al-H usayn and then later claiming that he had only been compelled to do so because Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) had strayed from the religion. It was by means of the speeches given by the captives of Karbalā, led by Imām al-Sajjād (ʻa) and Zaynab al-Kubrā, that the oppression and crimes committed by Yazīd were exposed. It was because these crimes were publicly disclosed by the captives that Yazīd could not achieve his sinister and ominous objectives.

Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) knew very well that if he and all his children and companions were killed, and some of his household members were not present to witness his martyrdom, no one would disclose the oppression committed against him to the public. There had to be some family members who should remain alive and be taken into captivity so that they could disclose the oppression that was committed against him, or all the blood which would be shed would have been futile. This is why Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) brought the womenfolk of his household along with him and why this act was considered necessary. It can therefore be said that the public speeches which were given by the womenfolk of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) household shook the foundations of Yazīd's government and eventually brought about its collapse.

Objection

This possibility, although rational, does not completely meet the needs of our question either because still a second question comes to mind: Why did Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) bring even the newborns of his household? The duty of divulging the events of Karbalā could be left to certain older members of his household, as was done by Imām al-Sajjād (ʻa) and Zaynab al-Kubrā, and the other women who were in Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) caravan. There was no need to bring the children and newborns to accomplish this duty. Therefore, this argument does not explain the entire cause for bringing all the

members of his household, although it can be cited as one of the philosophies behind bringing his family along.

Third response

Some people, while trying to provide a response to this question, have focused on the human tragedies of this event, and have emphasized that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) intended to prove and expose Yazīd's inner self and the crimes he had committed against Islam and the Prophet's *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*). That is why Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) brought all the members of his household, including the women and children. Even though he knew what Yazīd would do to his family members, Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) brought them along in order to prove the true nature and identity of Yazīd and his government. In this way, he could substantiate that Yazīd was not worthy of being the caliph for the Muslim *ummah*.

This response can also be cited as one of the causes of Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) bringing his household along, but is still not a complete reason for this act.

Fourth response

Others say: the reason for bringing all his household members to Karbalā was that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) wanted to incite people to come to his help, because when the Imām is seen with all his children and womenfolk, his friends and supporters would be persuaded to join him out of mercy and compassion, and the hearts of his enemies would become sympathetic.

However, this possibility does not seem correct because:

Firstly, Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) could use other means of persuading both his friends and enemies, like making speeches and sending representatives to different cities and countries.

Secondly, Imām al-H usayn did not want to create a state of anxiety and uneasiness in the *ummah*. He did not desire to obtain the people's help at all costs by arousing their emotions and sympathies. On the contrary, he wanted the people to choose their way by their own volition.

Fifth response

Another answer, which is probably a better answer to this question, is that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) brought his *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*), womenfolk and newborns because he was worried about them. If Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) had

gone on his own and left his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) in Medina when he rose up against Yazīd, there was the fear that the caliphate apparatus would arrest and imprison them. The Imām saw it to be in everyone's interests to take his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) along with him so that, on the one hand, he could keep them under his own protection and, on the other, they could be charged with continuing the mission by sermonizing and divulging the oppression suffered by the pure and chaste *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa). This possibility can also be confirmed as follows:

a. When we take Yazīd's government's way of conduct into consideration, it is probable that Yazīd would have arrested and taken the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) into custody.

b. On the night before the day of ʻĀshūrā, Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) told all his companions to feel free to leave him alone at Karbalā, but he did not give permission for his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) to do the same.

c. The governor of Medina at that time was ʻAmru ibn Saʻīd Ashdaq. When the news of Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) death reached him, he rejoiced. At a time when the whole of Medina was engulfed in sorrow and everyone was crying and feeling miserable, he said, "This cying and weeping should be for ʻUthmān." And also in another speech, he severely criticized the people for mourning over Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), and rejoiced at their misfortune.[1]

Now, if the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) and womenfolk of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) had remained in Medina, no one can imagine what such a vile man would have done to them? Would he not have arrested, tortured and imprisoned them? Saʻīd was the one who gave orders that all the houses of Banī Hāshim should be destroyed. And he was very stubborn in his enmity and hatred of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa).[2] **?**

[1] Muqarram, *Maqtal al-H usayn (ʻa)*, p. 334.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 335.

WHY DID IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A) GIVE HIS COMPANIONS PERMISSION TO LEAVE?

One of the objections and questions put forward by some people regarding the event of Karbalā is why Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) gave his companions permission to go and leave him alone at Karbalā on the night of ‘Āshūrā.

Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) knew that he was facing a large number of enemy soldiers whose hearts did not possess any mercy at all. He knew that fighting with them was certain. He also knew that in any war, there is need for help from friends and supporters. Why then did he give his companions permission to leave the desert of Karbalā? Why did he advise them to take advantage of the darkness of the night and leave him alone?

Two types of permission from Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)

With recourse to history, we come to know that Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) gave two types of permission to his companions.

A. General permission

Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) addressed his companions in a general way,

> «أمّا بعد؛ فاني لا اعلم اصحابا اوفى ولا خيرا من اصحابي، ولا اهل بيت ابر واوصل من اهل بيتي، فجزاكم الله عني خيرا. ألا واني لأظن يومنا من هولاء غدا. ألا وانّي قد اذنت لكم، فانطلقوا جميعا في حلّ، ليس عليكم حرج مني ولا ذمام، هذا الليل قد غشيكم فاتخذوه جملا.»
>
> “And after this; verily, I have never known companions more loyal and better than my companions. I have never found household members more excellent in observation of bonds of relationship than my Household (the *Ahl al-Bayt*). Allah will reward you graciously on

> my behalf. Beware! I strongly predict that the day of our confrontation with them will be tomorrow. Beware! I have given you permission to leave. You are all free to go. I do not and will not reproach anyone of you for doing so. This is a night whose darkness has covered you like a mounted camel. Therefore, take advantage of it and make your escapes."[1]

B. Special or personal permission

History narrates that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) did not content himself with the general permission he had given to his companions. He went further and gave personal and special permission to some people for certain reasons.

Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) addressed Muh ammad ibn Bushr H ad ramī on the night of ʻĀshūrā in this way, "Your child is being held captive in Marzarī." Muh ammad ibn Bushr replied, "I entrust his captivity and mine to Allah and His account. I would rather die than live to see my child in captivity. I would not desire to remain alive after him." When Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) heard this, he said, "May Allah have mercy on you. You are free from any obligation to me. Go and strive hard to free your child. You are not obliged to me at all." He answered, "May the wild beasts tear me to pieces alive if I should leave you." Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) gave him some clothes and said, "Give these clothes to your son so that he may exert himself to free his brother." The value of those clothes was one thousand *dīnār*s.[2]

Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) came out of the tents in the heart of the night to examine the pits and holes which were in the desert. Nāfiʻ ibn Bilāl followed the Holy Imām (ʻa). Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) asked him, "Where are you going?" Nāfiʻ ibn Bilāl answered, "O son of Allah's Prophet! Your movement towards this rebellious army has aroused my fears." The Holy Imām (ʻa) said, "I came out of my tent in order to examine the highs and lows of this desert so as to be able to distinguish the enemy's military strategic position." Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) took Nāfiʻ ibn Bilāl's hand into his hands and said, "Verily, it is exactly as I have already predicted. I swear upon Allah! The promise cannot be abrogated." After this he said, "Are you not going to take advantage of the darkness and pass through these two hills in the heart of the night in order to save yourself?"

---

[1] Muqarram, *Maqtal al-H usayn (ʻa)*, p. 212.

[2] *Ibid*.

Nāfiʿ ibn Bilāl fell at Imām al-Ḥusayn's (ʿa) feet and started kissing them. He said, "May my mother mourn for me! My sword is worth a thousand *dīnār*s and my horse is worth a hundred *dīnār*s. I swear upon Allah who holds me indebted for the favor of your presence! I will never leave you."[1]

The reality of permission and consent

The question which is put forward at this juncture is this: Does this permission mean that Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) gave his companions clearance from duty and acquittal from the obligation of fighting? Does it imply that they were free from any obligation if they left him alone in those dangerous circumstances? Does it denote that no sin and requital would be recorded for them if they left their Imām unaided? Or is there a deep secret lying beneath this permission?

We believe that Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) had a number of aims in mind when he gave his permission:

1. When Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) made his sermon of giving permission, he wanted to allow the ones who still harboured doubts about his uprising to leave and not get involved in a war they did not fully believe in. The Holy Imām (ʿa) wanted to let those who had joined him for the sake of worldly position, power and money quit the battleground.

2. Additionally, the presence of people lacking strong motivation and character can harm an army and is not beneficial. This is because such people spread the fear and uncertainty which they feel in their hearts to the other soldiers in the camp. This reduces the morale and discipline of the entire army. Fear is contagious and can cause irreparable division among the soldiers of an army.

3. We can also infer that Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) was inspiring his true companions with this kind of discourse to strengthen their determination for war. He was stimulating his true and loyal companions to be even more steadfast in his defence.

4. We can deduce that because the tents were pitched close to each other and the people could hear each other's voices, Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿa) wanted his family members to hear for themselves the answers that would be provided by his loyal and faithful companions. This would warm their hearts and raise their spirits high.

---

[1] *Ibid.*

5. We can infer that with his speech Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) intended to motivate his followers for a holy war and free them from tribal and clan bigotry. He wanted them to defend him not because of tribal ties, but out of divine motivation to defend what is right and true. He wanted to motivate them to come to the defence of Islam, the faith and monotheism.

Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) aim when he made his speech was not to acquit his companions from duty and obligation. In these sensitive circumstances, no one had any pretext for leaving his Imām alone when he needed their help the most. In reality, the battle that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was involved in was such that there was no need for him to ask for help from his companions. Everyone was duty-bound to aid the Holy Imām (ʻa). The very fact that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) found himself in these circumstances is a call of invitation for help. Is it not incumbent upon people to protect the life of Allah's trust on earth?

6. When Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) witnessed that his companions possessed sincere and honest intentions, he prayed for them and said, "Lift your heads to the sky and see for yourselves." When they looked up, they observed their places in heaven. We can deduce from this that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) wanted to get their allegiance and loyalty before showing them their places in heaven. Seeing and witnessing their places in heaven would strengthen their wills and make them fight with more determination and certainty.

7. On the day of ʻĀshūrā, Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was repeatedly asking for help. He would say,

«هل من ناصر ينصرني؟»

This is not compatible with giving his companions permission to leave and setting them free from any obligation.

8. It has been narrated in some history books that Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) entered Zaynab's tent after talking to Nāfiʻ ibn Bilāl and the other companions. Nāfiʻ ibn Bilāl stood outside Zaynab's tent waiting for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) to come out. He heard Zaynab's voice. She was talking to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). She was saying, "Have you tested the determination and will of your companions? I fear that they will leave you alone and surrender you to the enemy when the war gets fierce and the enemies intensify their attack on you." Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) said, "I swear upon Allah! I have tested them. I have observed that they are capable of being

steadfast and patient during hard times. They are more attracted to death than a newborn is attracted to its mother's breast for milk."[1]

Opposing positions

In order to substantiate that the permission granted by Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) meant that everyone was at liberty to quit the scene of fighting and was exempted from obligation on the condition that they should go far enough that the voice of Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) calling for help and assistance should not reach them, the sceptics have resorted to certain incidents which came to pass. One of these incidents was when Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) encountered 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr Ju'fī in the palace of Banī Maqātil. Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) invited 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr Ju'fī to join him and become one of his helpers but 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr refused and withheld his help from the Holy Imām (*'a*). Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) said, "I advise you then to do all that is in your capacity to avoid hearing us, the oppressed, when we call out for help. I recommend that you do all that you can to avoid witnessing what will befall us. Because I swear upon Allah! No one who hears our oppressed voices and withholds his help from us will be exempted from the fire of hell."

Response

If Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) had set everyone at liberty to leave him, then why did he ask for help and assistance from 'Ubayd Allāh ibn H urr Ju'fī? Yes, it is true that the Holy Imām (*'a*) asked him to go so far that he could not hear the Imām's voice calling for help against the oppressors or witness the killing. The Imām was trying to help him not to get caught up in an even greater sin than refusing his help because on the Day of Judgement, any person who hears an oppressed person calling for help and withholds his help will meet with the wrath of Allah. If that oppressed person happens to be a Holy Imām, the person who withholds his help will certainly be afflicted with harder retribution than the one who does not hear or witness the battle. **?**

[1] *Ibid*., p. 219.

WHY DID MUSLIM IBN ‘AQĪL NOT KILL ‘UBAYD ALLĀH IBN ZIYĀD IN HĀNĪ’S HOUSE?

Historians have recounted: When Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl was informed that ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād had made a speech warning the people of Kūfah not to follow him, Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl feared that the government agents would arrest and kill him. For this reason, he left Mukhtār’s house and sought refuge in the house of Hānī ibn ‘Urwah Madhh ajī, a strong and proud Shī‘ah. Hānī was one of the nobles of Kūfah and a renowned reciter of the Holy Qur’an in that part of the Muslim World. He was also a *shaykh* and spokesman of a religious group that had pledged allegiance of brotherhood to one another and formed what they called a ‘religious clan’. He had four thousand mounted soldiers and eight thousand ground troops at his command. In addition, if we take the contributions of his allies (in times of need) into consideration, his troops would reach thirty thousand able and willing fighters. He was considered to be one of the closest people to Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*). He had participated in all the three wars which were imposed on Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*). He had also had a limited personal experience with the Holy Prophet (*s*) and understood well the era of the Holy Prophet (*s*).

Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl sought refuge in Hānī’s house. At that time, there was someone else in Hānī’s house. His name was Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh A‘war H ārithī. He was one of the highly respectable and renowned Shī‘ahs of Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) in Bas rah. He was very honorable and considered to be a great man among the companions. He had taken part in the Battle of S iffīn and had been seen fighting alongside ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir. Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh and Hānī ibn ‘Urwah were very close and special friends. While Sharīk

ibn ‘Abd Allāh was in Hānī’s house, he became very ill. ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād came to visit this sick person in Hānī’s house.

Before Ibn Ziyād had arrived, Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh addressed Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl in this way, “Your aim and the aims of your Shī‘ahs is to bring ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād to perdition. Therefore, hide yourself in that secret closet over there. Whenever you feel certain that he has arrived, leave your secret hiding place and come forward to kill him. I will guarantee your safety.”

When they were still discussing this, it was said that the governor (‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād) had arrived at the doorstep. Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl hid himself in the closet and a while later ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād came in to visit Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh. After waiting for some time, Sharīk noticed that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl was not coming out of his hiding place to kill ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. He feared that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl was delaying and losing time. In order to give him a sign that the time was right for killing Ibn Ziyād, Sharīk kept removing his head turban and placing it on the ground. In order to induce Muslim to come out of his hiding place and kill ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, he would repeatedly recite poetry. He kept reciting poetry while his eyes were locked on Muslim’s hiding place. Finally, with a voice loud enough for Muslim to hear, he said, “Quench his thirst, even though that will lead to my death.”

At that moment, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād turned his face towards Hānī ibn ‘Urwah Madhh ajī and said, “Your cousin hallucinates because of his illness.” Hānī answered, “Since he got ill, Sharīk has been speaking deliriously. He does not understand what he utters.”

‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād left the gathering. Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl did not make the least attempt to kill him. The question that can be asked here is: Why did Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl not act according to their discussion and kill the matrix of corruption and the zenith of perversion, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, before the event of Karbalā? In other words, why did he not exact vengeance and retribution before the crime?

Response

Various responses have been offered for the above question and objection, and we will now mention some of them:

1. Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl could not resort to deceit and trickery in order to kill ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād because the Holy Prophet (*s*) forbade any kind of guile. Therefore, Muslim could not employ craftiness in order to fight

‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. Imām al-S ādiq (*‘a*) recounts a *h adīth* in which Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said,

«إن الاسلام قيد الفتك.»

> “Verily, Islam became an obstruction of deceit and an obstacle of trickery. (Islam has tied and chained guile and craftiness).”[1]

2. It has been narrated in history books that the wife of Hānī ibn ‘Urwah had made Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl swear not to kill ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in her house. She even cried in front of Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl in order to persuade him not to carry out their plan. This is something which Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl himself mentioned.

3. Killing ‘Ubayd Allāh by means of deceit was not compatible with Muslim’s conduct and personality because he was a man endowed with strong faith and abstinence. He was raised and brought up in the house of Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*). The responsibilities he was carrying from Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) were to get and secure the people’s allegiance for the Holy Imām (*‘a*) and inform him about all that was taking place in Kūfah, not killing ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. Therefore, if he had killed ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, he would have gone beyond the domain of his duties and beyond his line of responsibilities.

4. Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl considered his duty to be the awakening of the consciousness of the people. If ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād and the likes of him were assassinated in the absence of social consciousness arising from awareness among the people, the result would be that the people would bring to power someone similar or even worse than Ibn Ziyād. The people had to become aware and informed about the corruption and perversion of the caliph himself. This social awareness and awakening could not be attained by assassinating one man. This is why there is no historical document confirming that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl had concurred with Sharīk’s plan of assassinating ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. It is possible that Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl was thinking about this plan, but did not have a definite intention of executing it.

5. When we deeply reflect upon this event, we come to the conclusion that Hānī ibn ‘Urwah had granted guarantees of safety to ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. The reason is that when Ibn Ziyād asked Hānī to give him permission to

---

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Ah kām*, vol. 10, p. 214; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 7, p. 375.

come and visit Sharīk, Hānī ibn ʻUrwah granted him the permission. This in itself is a kind of verbal guarantee which Hānī gave to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. In these circumstances, Islam binds a man to respect the rules of civility by stipulating that he should not kill any one who has been granted guarantees of safety, even if that person is a matrix of corruption and a source of perversion like Ibn Ziyād especially when this person is visiting another person's house, not yours, and the host's wife is not pleased with such an action and is pleading with you to quit the plan; particularly when she insists that if you seriously intend to carry out the assassination, you should do it elsewhere, and not in her house.

6. ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād had come with bodyguards. Some of his bodyguards had remained outside the house behind the door and some had come inside the house along with him. The atmosphere prevailing in Kūfah at that time demanded that everyone take every precaution about their lives. There was no guarantee that Muslim ibn ʻAqīl would have succeeded at killing ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād even if he had carried out his plan.

7. There was also no guarantee that had Muslim ibn ʻAqīl succeeded at killing ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, the people of Kūfah would have judged in his favor and put him in the governor's palace. The people of Kūfah feared that if ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād got killed in Kūfah, the central government in Shām would just send a more bloodthirsty man, worse than ʻUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, to Kūfah to kill them indiscriminately. They were afraid that the central government in Shām would hold them responsible for killing the governor, and as a result avenge his death with massacre of the people of Kūfah. **?**

WHY DIDN'T ABŪ AL-FAD L DRINK WATER?

Historians have narrated that when Abū al-Fad l al-'Abbās (*'a*) decided to go on the battlefield, Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) requested that he bring some water for the children and newborns. Abū al-Fad l (*'a*) got a water skin and mounted his horse. He started moving towards the River Euphrates. Four thousand men surrounded him and were showering spears on him from every direction, but the lone soldier Abū al-Fad l al-'Abbās (*'a*) did not pay the least attention to them, nor to the spears which were being showered all around him. He managed to drive the enemies away from the river bank and gain access to water all by himself. He dismounted his horse and went next to the river with astounding ease and calmness. He then got a handful of water from the river and wanted to drink it because of the intense thirst he was feeling. All of a sudden, he remembered that Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) and his children and the entire family were thirsty. He dropped the water that was in his hands back into the river and recited the famous poem,

يا نفس من بعد الحسين هوني وبعده لا كنت ان تكوني

هذا حسين وارد المنون وتشربين بارد المعين

تالله ما هذا فعال ديني

"O soul! You should be debased for al-H usayn ('a) and never live after him.

Al-H usayn ('a) has come face to face with death and yet you want to drink cold and delicious water!?

I swear upon Allah that this is not in accordance with the dictates of my religion!"

Then, he filled the waterskin, mounted his horse and returned towards Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) camp. The enemy closed his way…[1]

Some ask why Abū al-Fad l al-ʻAbbās did not drink the water. It would have been better if he had quenched his thirst first in order to gain the necessary strength that was needed to fight, and by this means inflict heavy blows on the enemy or even exterminate them altogether. If he had drunk the water, he would have been able to help Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) and Islam better.

Response

Firstly, Imām al-H usayn's (ʻ*a*) aim at Karbalā was not to bring about the deaths of all the people. On the contrary, Imām al-H usayn's (ʻ*a*) main aim was to awaken the Islamic community and bring about social consciousness. Even killing the enemy has to occur when there is a pressing need and expedience in the action.

Secondly, the issue of Abū al-Fad l's not drinking water has served as further proof of the oppression that was committed against Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). This action has attracted sympathy and affection and led human hearts towards Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*). It has drawn people to initiate uprisings against Yazīd and others like him.

Thirdly, Abū al-Fad l al-ʻAbbās knew very well that he and his brother, the Holy Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*), were going to get killed, whether he took the opportunity to drink water or not. He knew that he was not going to leave this battlefield safe, sound and alive. He knew that the enemies were determined and bent on killing all the household of Banī Hāshim at all costs. Therefore, was it not better to attain martyrdom and return to his Lord with thirsty lips?

What bears witness to this is that man drinks water whenever he knows with certainty that drinking water will save his life, but Abū al-Fad l al-ʻAbbās had no hope of living after this war. He knew with certainty that he was going to be martyred.

Fourthly, Abū al-Fad l al-ʻAbbās believed that drinking water when Imām al-H usayn (ʻ*a*) and his household were thirsty amounted to treachery in some way. The rules of proper Islamic conduct did not allow him as a follower to satiate his thirst when his holy leader was thirsty.

[1] Muqarram, *Maqtal al-H usayn (ʻa)*, p. 267.

Fifthly, generosity and self sacrifice are among the morals and gracious virtues of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*). Abū al-Fad l al-ʿAbbās sacrificed in the same way that his father Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʿAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʿa*), Fāt imah al-Zahrā (*ʿa*), al-H asan and al-H usayn (*ʿa*) had sacrificed generously and given the food they so badly needed to break their fast with in the holy mounth of Ramad ān to the poor, orphans and the captives for three days in a row while they themselves were forced to remain hungry all this time. **?**

IS OBEYING A TYRANICAL RULER INCUMBENT UPON MUSLIMS?

One of the issues about which the Sunnīs and the Imamate Shīʻahs differ is obedience to a corrupt ruler or submission to a tyrannical government. Is it permissible to dismiss the caliph from office if he is corrupt or becomes corrupt? Is it permissible to rise up in arms against him or is it never permissible?

The Sunnīs have reached consensus that the caliph cannot be dismissed and removed from office, even if he is corrupt and perverted. Therefore, they say it is not permissible to revolt against him. The only thing Muslims can do is to advise him to change his corrupt ways.

In contrast, the Imamate Shīʻahs not only regard obeying a tyrannical and corrupt ruler not to be incumbent, but consider it to be forbidden [*h arām*] by the Islamic law to submit to such a leader. In certain circumstances, it is obligatory [*wājib*] to rise up against a tyrannical ruler.

In this discussion, we intend to prove the truthfulness of the Shīʻah standpoint.

Religious edicts [*fatwā*s] issued by the Sunnīs about obeying a corrupt and oppressive ruler

1. Imām Nūwī says, "The Sunnīs have reached consensus that the sultan and caliph cannot be dismissed from office, even though he is corrupt…"[1]

2. Qād ī ʻAyād says, "All the Sunnīs from different fields of

[1] Nūwī, *Sharh S ah ī*h *Muslim*, vol. 12, p. 229.

specialization such as Islamic jurisprudence, *h adīth*, history and theology believe that the sultan cannot be dismissed from office, even if he is corrupt, perverted, oppressive and tramples the rule of law underfoot.”[1]

3. Qād ī Abū Bakr Bāqilānī writes, “All the Sunnīs believe that an *imām* cannot be dismissed from office even if he is corrupt, oppressive, or seizes people’s property by force. He cannot be removed from power although he hits or slaps people in their faces and does not respect the honor of others, and even though he tramples the rule of law underfoot. It is not permitted to rise up against him. The Muslims can only go so far as to advise and warn him about the negative consequences of his actions. It is of course not binding upon the people to obey him when he invites them to participate in his sinful actions, but they cannot dismiss him from office. There are a number of narrations which assert that it is incumbent to obey an *imām* and caliph, even though he might be an oppressor or even if he forcibly usurps and seizes people’s property. Because the Prophet (*s*) has said, ‘Listen to and obey your ruler, even if he is a slave with a flat nose or an Ethiopian. Also, pray behind every person, virtuous or perverted.’ He also said, ‘Follow and obey your rulers, even if they loot your property and break your backs’.”[2]

However, some Sunnī scholars have opposed this point of view, and instead believe that a corrupt ruler should not be obeyed. Some of those who have opposed obeying the corrupt ruler are Māwardī in his book “*Al-Ah kām al-Sult āniyyah*”[3], ‘Abd al-Qāhir Baghdādī in his book “*Us ūl al-Dīn*”[4], Ibn H azm Z āhirī in his book “*Al-Fis al fī al-Millal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Nih al*”[5], and Jurjānī in his book “*Sharh al-Mawāqif*”.[6]

Edicts regarding illegality of rising up against a tyrant

Many Sunnī scholars [‘*ulamā’*] have agreed that rising up against a corrupt ‘*imām*’ or caliph who is an oppressor is not permissible.

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] Bāqilānī, *Al-Tamhīd*.

[3] *Al-Ah kam al-Sult ānīyah*, p. 17.

[4] *Us ūl al-Dīn*, p. 190, 278.

[5] *Al-Fis al fī al-Millal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Nih al*, vol. 4, p. 175.

[6] *Sharh al-Mawāqif*, vol. 8, p. 353.

Among those of old, ʻAbd Allāh ibn ʻUmar and Ah mad ibn H anbal are some of the most headstrong opposers of rising up against the Muslim caliph even if he is an oppressor and a perverted man. Abū Bakr Marwazī narrates that Ah mad ibn H anbal used to advocate preventing bloodshed and strongly denied the legitimacy of uprising against the Muslim caliph.[1]

Dr. ʻAt īah al-Zahrānī adds a footnote at the bottom of Abū Bakr Marwazī's narration saying, "The chain of transmission of this narration is correct. This is the true belief of the Salafī sect."[2]

Imām Nūwī, while expounding on the agreement of the Sunnī scholars on this issue, says, "According to the consensus of the scholars, rising up against the Muslim caliph is forbidden [*h arām*], even though he is corrupt and oppressive."[3]

However, this claim is not correct and, as we will explain later, the Imamate Shīʻahs oppose it and believe that not only is obeying a corrupt and oppressive ruler not permissible, but it is also obligatory [*wājib*] to rise up against him under certain circumstances.

Dr. Muh ammad Fārūq Nahbān attributes the edict [*fatwā*] which forbids rising up against a corrupt and oppressive caliph to the majority of Sunnī scholars and says, "Sunnī scholars have two opinions regarding revolution and rising up against a tyrannical and perverted ruler:

The first opinion is that rising up against the ruler and dismissing him from power is permissible. This opinion is held by the Muʻtazilites, the Khawārij, the Zaydīs, and a number of sects. They even say that it is incumbent to rise up against an oppressive ruler. They have resorted to the following Qur'anic verses to prove their claim,

﴿ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلى البِرِّ وِلَتَّقوي ﴾

"… and help one another in goodness and piety…"[4]

﴿ … فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتي تَبغي حَتَّى تَفيء إِلى أَمر الله … ﴾

[1] *Al-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p. 131

[2] *Ibid*., *h āshiyah*.

[3] Nūwī, *Sharh S ah īh Muslim*, vol. 12, p. 229.

[4] *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* 5:2.

“… but if one of them acts wrongfully towards the other, fight that which acts wrongfully until it returns to Allah’s command…”[1]

﴿ ... لا ينَال عَهدي الظَّالِمين ﴾

“… My covenant does not include the unjust.”[2]

The second opinion is that drawing one’s sword and rising up against the caliph is not permissible, because it brings about sedition [*fitnah*] and bloodshed. This is the opinion held by most Sunnīs and the *Rijāl al-H adīth*[3] as well as a number of the Prophet’s (*s*) companions like Ibn ‘Umar, Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās and Usāmah ibn Zayd.”[4]

Reasons put forward by the Sunnīs

A. Traditions [*h adīth*s]

In order to prove the illegality of rising up against a corrupt ruler and the incumbency of obeying him, Sunnī scholars have resorted to a number of traditions narrated through Sunnī sources. Now, we will mention some of these *h adīth*s:

1. In his book “*Al-S ah īh* ”, Muslim quotes from H udhayfah that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, “There will come after me *imām*s who will not be guided to what I have been guided, and who will not act according to my *sunnah* (way of life). Soon it will come to pass that people will rise up against them. Some of the people revolting will possess hearts like those of the satans [*shayāt īn*] in their bodies.” H udhayfah says, “I asked the Noble Prophet (*s*), ‘What should I do, O Prophet of Allah, if I experience such a period?’ The Noble Prophet (*s*) said, ‘You must listen to the rulers. Obey them even if they break your back and take your property by force. You should listen to the ruler and obey him’.”[5]

2. Muslim also quotes from Ibn ‘Abbās that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said, “Anyone who witnesses something from his *imām* which is displeasing to

[1] *Sūrat al-H ujurāt* 49:9.

[2] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:124.

[3] Those who interpreted the *h adīth*s literally, and did not believe in esoteric meanings of the *h adīth*s. [trans.]

[4] *Niz āmal-H ukm fī al-Islām*, pp. 527-529.

[5] Muslim, *Al-S ah īh* , *Kitāb al-Amārah, Bāb al-Amr bi-Luzūm al-Jamā‘ah,* section [*bāb*] 13, *h adīth* 52.

him should exercise patience, because a person who separates himself from the community and then dies in that state has died the death of the Age of Ignorance [*'as r al-jāhiliyyah*]."[1]

3. Muslim recounts another *h adīth* from the Holy Prophet (*s*) saying, "Anyone who turns his back for just a span on his sultan and dies in that state has died the death of the Age of Ignorance [*'as r al-jāhiliyyah*]."[2]

4. Muslim narrates yet another *h adīth* from 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar ibn Khat t āb. He says that when the event of H arrah occurred, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar ibn Khat t āb used to say, "I heard the Noble Prophet say, 'Anyone who quits obeying his sultan will meet Allah without any plea or appeal for themselves. And anyone who dies in a state where he has not paid allegiance to the sultan has died the death of the Age of Ignorance [*'as r al-jāhiliyyah*]'."[3]

B. Political and social structures of Muslim affairs

In order to prove the illegality of rising up against a corrupt and perverted ruler, some Sunnī scholars have resorted to reasoning that preserving the standing structures of Muslim affairs is the most important duty of all, and hence rising up against the ruler will cause sedition [*fitnah*], chaos, anarchy and bloodshed among the Muslims. Therefore, they say it is not permissible to rise against any ruler. Rather, it is forbidden [*h arām*].

Dr. Muh ammad Fārūq Nahbān says, "… the majority of Sunnīs believe that it is not permissible to rise up against a corrupt and oppressive ruler because this will lead to sedition [*fitnah*] and much bloodshed…"[4]

Incongruities in this argument

A. Response regarding traditions

The belief that it is obligatory [*wājib*] to obey and follow the caliph and sultan, even if he is corrupt and oppressive, and that rising up against him is forbidden [*h arām*], has a lot of faults and weaknesses according to Islamic thought.

---

[1] *Ibid*., *h adīth* 55; *S ah ī h Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Fitan, h adīth* 6530.

[2] *Ibid*., *h adīth* 56.

[3] *Ibid*., *h adīth* 58.

[4] *Niz ām al-H ukm fī al-Islām*, p. 527.

We will now mention some of those faults:

1. Opposition with the explicit wording of the Holy Qur’an

It can be understood from Qur’anic verses that the Imamate and caliphate are not bestowed upon or granted to oppressive and corrupt people, and that if the ruler is a corrupt man, it is not at all permissible to obey him.

a. *“And when his Lord tried Ibrāhīm with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an imām of men. Ibrāhīm said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust: said He.”*[1]

﴿ وَإِذِ ابتَلَى إِبْرَٰهِيم رَبُّه بِكَلِمَات فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَال إِنِّي جَاعِلُک لِنَّاس إِمَاما قَال وَمِن ذُرِّيتِي قَال لا ينَال عَهدي الظَّالِمين ﴾

b. *“Say: Is there any of your associates who guides to the truth? Say: Allah guides to the truth. 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?”*[2]

﴿ ... أَفَمَن يهدي إِلي الحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَن يتَّبَع أَمَّن لا يهِدِّي إِلاَّ أَن يهدي فَمَا لَكُم كيف تَحكُمُون ﴾

It can be deduced from this verse that a person who does not guide towards the truth of Allah is not worthy of being followed and obeyed.

c. Some Qur’anic verses have said that submission and inclination towards oppressors will make man taste the fire of Hell. One verse says,

﴿ وَلا تَركَنُوا إِلى الَّذِين ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُم النَّار ... ﴾

“And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you…”[3]

d. The Holy Qur’an has called a ruler who does not rule and judge according to what Allah has revealed to be an unbeliever [*kāfir*]. It says,

﴿ ... وَمَن لَم يحكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ الله فَأُولَئِک هُم الكَافِرُون ﴾

“… and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the kāfirs.”[1]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Baqarah* 2:124.

[2] *Sūrat Yūnus* 10:35.

[3] *Sūrat Hūd* 11:113.

All Muslims agree that obeying and following an unbeliever is not permissible.

2. These *h adīth*s are opposed to Qur'anic verses which prove that it is forbidden to follow and obey sinners

There are a lot of verses in the Holy Qur'an which have unconditionally and generally (in such a way that no limitations are mentioned) forbidden obeying anyone who is well-known for sin, regardless of whether he is a caliph, sultan and *imām* or otherwise.

a. Allah, the Exalted says,

﴿ فَلا تُطِعِ المُكَذِّبين ﴾

"So do not yield to the rejecters."[2]

b. *"And yield not to any mean swearer."*[3]

﴿ وَلا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلّافٍ مَهين ﴾

c. *"And be not compliant to the unbelievers and the hypocrites."*[4]

﴿ وَلا تُطِعِ الكافِرين وَالمُنافِقين ... ﴾

d. *"And do not obey the bidding of the extravagant."*[5]

﴿ وَلا تُطيعُوا أَمرَ المُسرِفين * الَّذين يفسِدُ ون في الأَرضِ وَلا يصلِحُون ﴾

e. *"Therefore wait patiently for the command of your Lord, and obey not from among them a sinner or an ungrateful one."*[6]

﴿ فَاصبِر لِحُكمِ رَبِّكَ وَلا تُطِع مِنهُم آثِماً أَو كَفُورا ﴾

f. *"And do not follow him whose heart we have made unmindful to Our remembrance, and he follows his low desires and his case is one in which due bounds are exceeded."*[1]

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* 5:44.

[2] *Sūrat al-Qalam* 68:8.

[3] *Sūrat al-Qalam* 68:10.

[4] *Sūrat al-Ah zāb* 33:48.

[5] *Sūrat al-Shu'arā'* 26:151,152.

[6] *Sūrat Insān* (or *Jāthiyah*) 76:24.

﴿ ... وَلا تُطِع مَن أَغفَلنَا قَلبَه عَن ذِكرِنَا وَاتَّبَع هَوَاه وَكَان أَمرُه فُرُطاً ﴾

g. *“On the day when their faces shall be turned back into the fire, they shall say: O would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Apostle! And they shall say: O our Lord! Surely we obeyed our leaders and our great men, so they led us astray from the path; O our Lord! Give them a double punishment and curse them with a great curse.”*[2]

﴿ يوم تُقلَّب وُجُوهُهُم فِي النَّار يقُولُون يا ليتَنَا أَطَعنَا الله وَأَطَعنَا الرَّسُولا * وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبيلا * رَبَّنَا آتِهِم ضِعفين مِن العَذَاب وَالعَنهُم لَعنا كَبيرا ﴾

h. *“And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped.”*[3]

﴿ وَلا تَركَنُوا إِلى الَّذين ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُم النَّار ... ﴾

3. These *h adīth*s are opposed to the Qur’anic verses which prove that enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is incumbent upon Muslims

In the Holy Qur’an, Allah, the Exalted, has ordered people in general or specific ways that they should enjoin the good and forbid the evil. This generality covers all people from all walks of life, the rulers and the ruled alike. Enjoining the good and forbidding the evil [*amr bi’l-ma‘rūf wa nahy ‘an al-munkar*] takes various forms, among them:

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ وَلتَكُن مِنكُم أُمَّة يدعُون إِلى الخير ويأمُرُون بِالمَعرُوف وينهَون عَن المُنكَر وَأُولئِک هُم المُفلِحُون ﴾

> *“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful.”*[4]

And, He also says,

---

[1] *Sūrat al-Kahf* 18:28.

[2] *Sūrat al-Ah zāb* 33:66-68.

[3] *Sūrat Hūd* 11:113.

[4] *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān* 3:104.

﴿ كُنتُم خير أُمَّة أُخرِجَت لِلنّاس تَأمُرُ ن بِالمَعرُ ف وَتَنـهَون عَن المُنكَر وَتُؤمِنُون بِالله ... ﴾

"You are the best of nations raised up for the benefit of mankind; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah..."[1]

And He also says,

﴿ لُعِن الَّذين كَفَرُ ا مِن بَني إِسرائيل عَلي لِسان داوٍ ُ وَعيسى ابن مَريم ذٰلِک بِما عَصَوا وَكانُوا يعتَدُ ن * كانُوا لا يتَناهَون عَن مُنكَر فَعَلُوه لَبِئس ما كانوا يفعَلُون ﴾

"Those who disbelieved from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus, son of Mary; this was because they disobeyed and used to exceed the limit. They used not to forbid each other the hateful things they did; certainly evil was that which they did."[2]

4. These *h adīth*s are opposed to other *h adīth*s narrated by the Sunnīs themselves

This belief is opposed to another set of *h adīth*s which have been recounted in Sunnī sources. This other set of *h adīth*s forbids following a corrupt and perverted ruler.

It also must be taken into account that:

Firstly, every *h adīth* must be compared with the Holy Qur'an; if it is opposed with the verses of the Holy Qur'an, it cannot be considered authentic because all Muslims believe the Holy Qur'an to be completely authentic and unchanged. In addition, from the previous section we can see that the *h adīth*s which say that it is incumbent to obey a corrupt ruler are opposed to the verses of the Holy Qur'an; therefore, they are not acceptable.

Secondly, there is obvious contradiction and disagreement between *h adīth*s which prohibit following a corrupt ruler and those which say that it is incumbent to follow the Muslim ruler whether he is corrupt or not. In accordance with the law of incongruity, the final judge is Allah's Book, the Holy Qur'an. When faced with such a dilemma as having discrepancies in the wordings of *h adīth*s, we act upon those *h adīth*s which are in accordance with the Holy Qur'an and reject those *h adīth*s which disagree

[1] *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān* 3:110.

[2] *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* 5:78-79.

with the Book of Allah. In this case, it means we must follow the *h adīth*s which have forbidden obeying and following a corrupt ruler.

Thirdly, if there are no contradictions between *h adīth*s and hence there is no seeming need to refer to the Holy Qur’an, we still must suspend all the *h adīth*s and only refer to the general verses of the Holy Qur’an if they prohibit obeying a corrupt leader.

We will now mention a few *h adīth*s which have been recounted in Sunnī sources of *h adīth* prohibiting obedience to a corrupt leader.

a. Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said, “The spinning wheel of Islam is soon to roll. Wherever the Holy Qur’an is, you must revolve around it. A day shall come when sultans and the Holy Qur’an will be separated from each other. With all certainty, soon it will come to pass that kings will rule over you. They will judge for themselves in one way and for others in another way. If you obey them, they will mislead you. If you do not follow them they will kill you.” The people asked, “O Prophet of Allah! What should we do if we experience that period?” The Noble Prophet (*s*) said, “You should be like Jesus’ followers, whose bodies were cut to pieces or they were hung to death, but they never followed the corrupt rulers. Death in the way of obedience to Allah is better than life in sin.”[1]

b. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar says, “Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said, ‘It is incumbent upon every Muslim man to follow his caliph in things he likes and things he dislikes, except when he is ordered to sin. In this case, obeying the caliph is not permissible’.”[2]

c. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd says, “Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said, ‘Soon it will come to pass after me that custodians who will extinguish the *sunnah* and act according to their own innovations will take charge of your affairs. They will delay the prayers from being said at their right times.’ I asked, ‘O Prophet of Allah! What should I do if I experience that period?’ He said, ‘Are you asking me what you ought to do, O son of Umm ‘Abd!? A person who commits sins against Allah is not supposed to be followed or obeyed’.”[3]

---

[1] *Durr al-Manthur*, vol. 3, p. 125; Similar *h adīth* in: *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, *h adīth* 1081.

[2] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, *Kitāb al-Ah kām*, *Bāb al-Sam‘ wa al-T ā‘ah*, vol. 3.

[3] Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, vol. 2, p. 956; Ah mad ibn H anbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 400.

5. These *h adīth*s are opposed to *h adīth*s of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*)

a. In interpreting the Qur'anic verse,

﴿ لا ينَال عَهدي الظَّالِمين ﴾

"My covenant does not include the unjust: said He."[1]

Suyūt ī quotes ʿAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʿa*) saying, "Obedience is only in good and virtuous acts."

b. T abarī and other historians narrate that while Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) was on his way towards Kūfah, he stopped at Bayd ah's house. There, he addressed the people in this way, "O People! Allah's Prophet (*s*) said, 'Any person who sees an oppressive sultan making illegal that which is lawful [*h alāl*], breaking Allah's covenant, opposing the *sunnah* of Allah's Prophet (*s*), conducting himself in a sinful and tyrannical way among Allah's servants (the people) and does not speak out against such a sultan in order to bring about change; it becomes binding upon Allah to throw this apathetic person where he belongs, in Hell'."[2]

c. T abarī and other historians narrate that in his reply to the letter which the people had written to him, al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī (*ʿa*) wrote, "I swear upon my own soul! No one is an *imām*, unless he acts according to the Book of Allah, and is equitable and just. He does what is right, and restrains his passions for the sake of Allah."[3]

d. T abarī and other historians have also narrated that al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī (*ʿa*) addressed Walīd in this way, "O Amīr! We are the *Ahl al-Bayt* of the Holy Prophet, the abode of the prophetic mission, the place of frequentation of the angels, and the place of divine revelation. It is through us that Allah begins and ends things. Yazīd is a drinker of wine and a killer of innocent people. He publicly commits sins and immorality; a person such as I cannot pay allegiance to him."[4]

---

[1] *Surat al-Baqarah* 2:124.

[2] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 7, p. 300; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 280; *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 3, p. 171.

[3] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 7, p. 235; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 267.

[4] *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 7, pp. 216-218; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 263.

Who is Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*)?

Imām al-H usayn (*‘a*) is a person who, according to the explicit wording of the Qur’anic Verse of Purification [*āyah al-tat hīr*], is infallible [*ma‘s ūm*]. Allah’s Prophet (*s*) said this about him,

«الحسن والحسين سيدا شباب اهل الجنة.»

> “Al-H asan and al-H usayn are the two leaders of the youths of Paradise.”[1]

The Holy Prophet (*s*) also said,

«حسين مني وأنا من حسين.»

> “Al-H usayn is from me and I am from al-H usayn.”[2]

Elsewhere, he said,

«خير رجالكم علي بن أبي طالب، وخير شبابكم الحسن والحسين، وخير نساءكم فاطمة بنت محمد.»

> “The best man among you is ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib. The best youths among you are al-H asan and al-H usayn. The best woman among you is Fāt imah, the daughter of Muh ammad.”[3]

Ibn ‘Abbās says, “The Holy Prophet (*s*) said, ‘On the night that I went on the ascension [*mi‘rāj*], I saw it written in heaven,

«لا إله إلاّ الله، محمّد رسول الله، علي حب (حبيب) الله، الحسن والحسين صفوة الله، فاطمة أَمَة الله (خيرة الله)، على باغضهم لعنة الله.»

> “There is no god but Allah, Muh ammad is his Prophet, ‘Alī is Allah’s beloved, al-H asan and al-H usayn are Allah’s chosen ones and Fāt imah is Allah’s servant. Allah’s curse and wrath be upon anyone who harbors hatred in their heart for them’.”[4]

The reality behind *h adīth*s that permit obeying a corrupt ruler

The presence of so many *h adīth*s (traditions) in Shī‘ah and Sunnī books which forbid obeying a corrupt and perverted ruler points to the fact that the

---

[1] Ibn ‘Asākir, *Mukhtas ar Tārīkh Damishq*, section [*bāb*] *Imām al-H usayn (‘a)*, p. 41.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 80.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 122.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 130.

other set of *h adīth*s, which contradict these *h adīth*s and the Holy Qur'an and permit following a corrupt leader and forbid rising up against him, are all fabrications. These *h adīth*s were forged by the dynasties of Banī Umayyah and Banī 'Abbās for the sake of justifying their perverted and oppressive ways of conduct. They fabricated these *h adīth*s in order to preserve the people's loyalty to themselves and encourage the masses to follow the rulers' orders no matter what the circumstances. They intended to prevent any kind of uprising against their dynasties by the people, so they were left with no option but to invent false *h adīth*s.

It is regrettable that some scholars chose to record these forged *h adīth*s in their books without considering their contents and comparing these sayings with the verses of the Holy Qur'an and other *h adīth*s. Unfortunately, as a result, some jurisprudents have issued religious edicts [*fatwā*s] based on these fabricated *h adīth*s that have caused great harm to the Muslim *ummah*. It must be borne in mind that if an enemy desires to forge a *h adīth*, it is possible to fabricate chains of transmission which are 'correct'.

B. Response to the false claim that it is binding upon all Muslims to preserve the system

That which can be inferred from the reasons put forward by those who oppose rising up against a corrupt and perverted caliph is that preserving political and social structures of the Muslims is binding and incumbent [*wājib*]. However, it has to be borne in mind that preserving any kind of power structure is not *wājib*. The only political system that must be preserved is an Islamic government whose leader is just and acts according to Allah's orders as noted in Qur'anic verses. This kind of government and its ruler must be preserved. There is no reason to oppose such a government. However, if the political system rules 'in the name of Islam' but its leaders are corrupt and perverted, then preserving such a power structure is not *wājib* at all. On the contrary, an uprising must take place in order to establish an Islamic political system and exterminate a corrupt and oppressive political system. That is exactly what Imām al-H usayn (*'a*) did: he rose up against the corrupt and oppressive political system of Yazīd, the son of Mu'āwiyah, and kept true Islam alive. **?**

WHY DID IMĀM AL-H ASAN (‘A) MAKE PEACE WHILE IMĀM AL-H USAYN (‘A) ROSE UP IN ARMS?

The issue of the peace treaty of Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*‘a*) with Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān is one of the subjects about which there is controversy and differing opinions among historians.

Some historians have accused Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*‘a*) of being unworthy and say that Imām al-H asan (*‘a*) was not fit for the caliphate and Imamate. Some even believe that the Holy Imām (*‘a*) did not possess enough strength and fortitude to handle the responsibilities of government affairs.

Other historians say that Imām al-H asan (*‘a*), just like his father, ‘Alī ibn Abī T ālib (*‘a*), had the capability for the caliphate, but sensitive circumstances which prevailed during his time demanded that he should make peace. In other words, Imām al-H asan (*‘a*) was forced to make peace and avoid war.

In this topic, we intend to give a clear explanation and description of the events that led to Imām al-H asan’s (*‘a*) peace agreement with the people of Shām.

Imām ‘Alī’s (*‘a*) reproach of the people of Kūfah

In order for us to understand the conditions of the people of Kūfah, the people who pledged allegiance with Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*‘a*), it is important to refer to Imām ‘Alī’s (*‘a*) words about them, because he lived with them for many years and was their leader.

1. Addressing the people of Kūfah, Imām ‘Alī (*‘a*) said,

«الحمد لله على ما قضى من أمر، وقدّر من فعل، وعلى ابتلائي بكم أيتها الفرقة التي اذا امرتُ لم تطع، واذا دعوت لم تُجب...»

"I praise Allah for what He willed and destined. And I praise Him for my entanglement in the troubles created for me by you, the people of Kūfah. O people! You who did not follow any of the orders which I gave! Whenever I called out to you, you did not respond positively…"[1]

2. Elsewhere, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) says,

«... لقد كنت أمس أميرا فاصبحت اليوم مأموراً، وكنت أمس ناهيا فأصبحت اليوم منهيّاً، وقد أحببتم البقاء وليس لي أن أحملكم على ما تكرهون...»

"Until yesterday, I was a leader and commander, but today I am the one who is being commanded. Until yesterday, I was the one preventing people from acting in certain ways, but today I am the one who is being prevented. You love staying alive. I cannot force you take a path which you do not like…"[2]

3. After hearing the news that Busr ibn Art āt had conqurred Yemen for Muʻāwiyah and become Muʻāwiyah's representative and official in that land, Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) went on the pulpit and, while complaining about his companions' shortcomings and opposition, addressed the people in this way,

«... انبئت بسرا قد اطلع اليمن واني والله لأظن ان هولاء القوم سيدالون منكم باجتماعهم على باطلهم وتفرّقكم عن حقّكم وبمعصيتكم امامكم في الحق وطاعتهم امامهم في الباطل، وبأدائهم الى صاحبهم وخيانتكم، وبصلاحهم في بلادهم وفسادكم، فلو ائتمنت احدكم على قعب لخشيت ان يذهب بعلاقته، اللّهم اني قد مللتهم وملّوني وسئمتهم وسئموني، فابدلني بهم خيراً منهم، وأبدلهم بي شرّ مني...»

"News has reached me that Busr ibn Art āt has gained predominance over Yemen. I swear upon Allah! I knew that very soon the people of Shām were going to prevail over you because they are united in their support of that which is wrong while you are disunited in defending that which is right. You have disobeyed your Imām every time he ordered you to do what was right, while they have obeyed their leader when he ordered them to commit what was

[1] Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 10, p. 67.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 11. p. 29.

wrong. They are loyal to their leader while you are treacherous! They are busy trying to build and improve their cities, while you are busy corrupting and destroying yours. You have sunk so low in corruption that I fear to entrust a wooden water carrier to anyone of you because you might steal its leather cord. O my Lord! I have made these people tired with my incessant advice and counsel, and they too have made me tired with their unceasing disobedience. They have lost their patience with me, and I have lost my patience with them, too. I am heartbroken. O my Lord! Change these people for me with better ones, and change me for them with a worse one…"[1]

4. When he was inviting the people to move towards Shām, he said,

«أفٍّ لكم لقد سئمت عتابكم، أرضيتم بالحيوة الدنيا من الآخرة عوضاً، وبالذلّ من العزّ خلفاً، اذا دعوتكم الي جهاد عدوّكم دارت أعينكم كأنّكم من الموت في غمرة ومن الذهول في سكرة...»

"Damnation and curses be upon you O people of Kūfah! I am tired of reproaching you. Do you prefer the transient life of this world over the everlasting one of the hereafter? Instead of self-respect and honor, have you chosen a life of misery and abjectness? I invite you to fight in *jihād* against the enemies, but your eyes are turning in circles because of fear. It seems that fear of death has hijacked your intellects. Like drunken people who have lost their minds, you are bewildered and disoriented…"[2]

We understand from these statements that Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī T ālib (*ʿa*) was displeased with the contravention of his soldiers and followers. These are the same people who would later pay allegiance to Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*) and choose him to be the one in charge of their affairs.

We will now summarize some of the negative circumstances and conditions that existed at the time:

a. A spirit of despotism, mutiny and freedom-seeking existed among the people.

b. Both Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) and his soldiers were tired and impatient of each other.

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 1, p. 332.

[2] *Ibid*., vol. 2, p. 189.

c. Some of Imām ʻAlī's soldiers were inclined towards the government of Shām (the government of Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān) because of hatred and animosity that they held against Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*).

d. The presence of the Khawārij among Imām ʻAlī's (*ʻa*) soldiers was another negative factor because they had taken steps that were to the detriment of the Islamic army.

Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʻa*) inherited such an army; an army that had behaved treacherously with his father. In such sensitive times, what else could Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*) have done? How was he supposed to handle both the irresolution of his own soldiers and the open enemy under the leadership of Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān? Under such circumstances, can it be said that Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʻa*) accepted truce and signed an armistice because of negligence of duty or was it because of lack of loyal and obedient followers?

It is clear that Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*) was compelled by the circumstances which prevailed at the time to make peace.

Imām al-H asan's (*ʻa*) army

Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*) ascended to the leadership of Kūfah at a time when Muʻāwiyah was planning to mount a decisive war against the Imām and bring about a final conquest of Kūfah.

In some of his letters to his governors and appointed stooges, Muʻāwiyah wrote, "Some of the people of Kūfah have written to me asking me for their protection and the protection of their near ones."[1]

At the same time, Imām al-H asan (*ʻa*) was calling on the people of Kūfah to go to war and confront the army of Shām. However, Imām al-H asan's (*ʻa*) soldiers and followers consisted of people with various beliefs that can be divided into a number of groups:

1. The Khawārij

They were the same people who mutinied against Imām ʻAlī (*ʻa*) and went to war with him.

[1] *Ibid*., vol. 16, p. 38.

2. Those inclined to the government of Banī Umayyah

Such people were present among the soldiers of Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʿa*), and can be divided into two groups:

a. Those who did not attain to their earthly desires and aspirations by remaining loyal to the government of Kūfah, so they set their covetous eyes on the government of Shām under the leadership of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān,

b. Those who were opposed to Imām ʿAlī (*ʿa*) and held grudges against Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) father.

3. The bigoted and prejudiced

This group consisted of people who were drowned in clan and tribal prejudice, and it was for this reason that they joined the army of Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*) rather than for Islamic goals.

4. Those who lacked any objective or purpose

Another group of people who took part in Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) army were those who lacked any aim or purpose in life. In other words, they joined Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) army just because they saw other people enlisting.

5. The sincere and faithful

There was one sincere group among the followers of Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*). This group recognized and acknowledged the rightful status of Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*). They followed his orders without complaint or misgiving. These were the real Shīʿahs who were religious and devoted to their Imām (*ʿa*). They were ready to sacrifice their lives for Allah following Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) orders. These were, however, outnumbered by the other irresolute groups.

Awareness about the circumstances which prevailed

Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʿa*) was aware of the sensitivity of the circumstances; he knew that the large numbers of Muʿāwiyah's army and their sacrifices for him for worldly gain were apt to vanquish the Imām's small and disloyal army. At the same time, Muʿāwiyah was aware of the weak points of Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) army and how to infiltrate it. That is why Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān suggested the peace plan to Imām al-

H asan al-Mujtabā (ʻa); the aim was to weaken the spirit of the Imām's (ʻa) army right from the start so as to reduce their enthusiasm.

Because Imām al-H asan (ʻa) was also well-aware of Muʻāwiyah's deceit and previous tricks, he initially sent an army of twelve thousand soldiers under the command of ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās to confront Muʻāwiyah's army. Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) army encountered Muʻāwiyah's army at a place called "Maskan". The Imām (ʻa) was aware of signs of sedition which had began to appear inside his own army as a result of Muʻāwiyah's stratagems to attract his soldiers' attention by sending spies to create conspiracies inside Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) army by bribing the soldiers.

For the sake of weakening the spirit of Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) army, some people started spreading false rumors and hearsay that the Imām (ʻa) had accepted Muʻāwiyah's suggestion for peace. They cynically asked, "Why then should we fight against Muʻāwiyah's army?"[1]

Turmoil and confusion arose inside Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) army. Signs of division began to appear. Some confirmed as true the news that Imām al-H asan (ʻa) had accepted peace while others dismissed the news as false. Finally, through various intrigues and the payment of great sums of money, and by issuing threats, Muʻāwiyah was able to corrupt the aides and commanders of Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (ʻa).

In his letter to ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās, Muʻāwiyah wrote, "Al-H asan has written a letter to me suggesting peace. He has entrusted the caliphate to me. If you become one of my followers, I will appoint you to be a governor. If you do not follow me, you will remain an ordinary person." Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān sent this letter together with a million *dirham*s for ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās.[2]

In his wars against his enemies, Muʻāwiyah always knew the weak points of his enemies and penetrated them from there.

When ʻUbayd Allāh ibn ʻAbbās thought about the situation, he accepted Muʻāwiyah's invitation and joined Muʻāwiyah's army by night. When morning arose, Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) army found themselves without a leader and commander. Imām al-H asan (ʻa) appointed another commander from the tribe of Kindah. He sent him with four thousand additional soldiers

[1] *Ibid*., p. 42.

[2] *Ibid*.

to combat and encounter the army of Muʿāwiyah. When they reached a place called "al-Anbār", Muʿāwiyah sent five hundred thousand *dirham*s for this new leader and promised him the governorship of certain cities under Muʿāwiyah's rule. This new commander too defected and joined Muʿāwiyah's army together with two hundred people from his clan. Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) appointed a third commander from the tribe of Murād to go and lead the army into war against Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān. He, too, acted treacherously and defected like the previous commanders and joined Muʿāwiyah's side. He did this after ferverntly swearing before Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) that he was not going to be deceived by Muʿāwiyah's tricks. Nevertheless, he was seduced by Muʿāwiyah and he, too, betrayed Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*).[1]

Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) made a very firm stand and insisted on fighting against Muʿāwiyah, but he knew at the same time that this was not going to end in the best interests of Islam and the Muslims. He could foresee that a continuation of such a state of affairs was going to end in self-slaughter and suicide for Banī Hāshim and the few dedicated Shīʿahs he had. He had the duty to protect Islam and the Muslims.

In order to test and prove the weaknesses of his own army, Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) made a speech in which he said, "Beware! Muʿāwiyah has invited us to something which is devoid of glory and equity. If you have made up your minds to die, then let us encounter him with the sword and apply Allah's law on him. However, if you prefer to stay alive, I will agree and make peace with him for your sake and good pleasure."[2]

The people shouted from all corners that they preferred life. They called out, "Sign the peace agreement!"

It was after making this speech that Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) knew the real intentions of his army and found them to be weak in spirit. A majority of them preferred a peaceful life to fighting against Muʿāwiyah.

Conditions of the peace treaty

Muʿāwiyah took advantage of this opportunity. He sent a letter to Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) in which he proposed peace. He said Imām al-H asan (ʿ*a*) was

[1] *Aʿyān al-Shīʿah*, vol. 4, p. 22.

[2] Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 204.

free to demand any conditions for himself, his *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻa) and his Shīʻahs.

In his reply, Imām al-H asan (ʻa) inserted demands and asked Muʻāwiyah to act according to his promises. On the surface, Muʻāwiyah accepted whatever demands Imām al-H asan (ʻa) made, though deep inside he did not believe in any one of the conditions. Actually, he planned to deliberately undermine all these conditions when the right opportunity arose.

Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) conditions were as follows:

1. Entrusting the caliphate to Muʻāwiyah on the condition that he would act according to Allah's Book and the Prophet's (*s*) *sunnah*.

2. The caliphate should be handed over to Imām al-H asan (ʻa) after the death of Muʻāwiyah, and in case of Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) death, the caliphate should be entrusted to his brother Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). Muʻāwiyah ibn Abū Sufiyān agreed not to hand the caliphate over to anyone else.

3. Muʻāwiyah agreed to stop cursing and vilifying Imām ʻAlī (ʻa). He agreed to stop insulting Imām ʻAlī (ʻa) in the supplications he offered at the time of prayers. He even agreed to remind himself and the people about the good works and excellent virtues of Imām ʻAlī (ʻa).

4. Muʻāwiyah agreed not to claim the money belonging to the public treasury of Kūfah. (This money amounted to five thousand *dirham*s.) In addition to that, Muʻāwiyah agreed to send one million *dirham*s every year to Imām al-H usayn (ʻa). He recognized the tribe of Banī Hāshim to have higher family ties with him than tribe of Banī Shams. Muʻāwiyah had to share and divide a million *dirham*s among the children of the people who were martyred in the wars of Jamal and S iffīn when he fought against Amīr al-Muʼminīn, ʻAlī ibn Abī T ālib (ʻa).

5. All Muslims in all corners of the Muslim World, whether in Shām, Iraq, H ijāz or Yemen, would be able to live in peace and enjoy safety. All races and sects would be able to live in safety and no one should follow up on old grudges and seek retribution from the other.

Imām ʻAlī's (ʻa) companions were guaranteed to live in peace and safety wherever they might be, and no trouble should be made for his Shīʻahs. Their lives, property, children and women would be left in peace and security and none of them should be persecuted or attacked. Every one of their rights should be observed and respected. None of their rights should be abused…

and never should any aggression, whether openly or secretly, be carried out on Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*), Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and anyone of the Prophets's (*s*) *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*). None of them should be terrorized no matter where they live.

These were some of the conditions which Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʿa*) inserted in the peace treaty. If we carefully ponder the conditions which Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*) demanded, we realize that he never planned to affirm or stabilize Muʿāwiyah's caliphate. On the contrary, these conditions were against the interests of Muʿāwiyah. Imām al-H asan al-Mujtabā (*ʿa*) was only trying to buy time to his own advantage.[1]

Two opposing circumstances

Some people, because they lack sufficient knowledge about the position and status of an *imām*, have endeavored to portray Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) as higher in status than Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*). The reason they put forward is that Imām al-H usayn (*ʿa*) fought the enemies of Allah with very few companions until they all attained martyrdom while Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*) chose the way of peace and compromise. However, this belief is a result of misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about the Imām and his infallibility, because:

Firstly, we believe that the duty of every one of the Imāms was previously planned and determined, and was foretold by the Holy Prophet (*s*). In addition, each of them has executed all the duties they were charged with in the best interests of the Muslims and for the expedience of Islam.

Secondly, with careful consideration of the circumstances of these two Infallible Imāms, the decision made by each of them was correct and reasonable (in the interests of Islam and the Muslims). The treachery of the people of Kūfah was such that they prepared the ground for Imām al-H usayn's (*ʿa*) apparent victory and invited him to come with his family and entire household to Iraq, while they had never done such a thing for Imām al-H asan (*ʿa*).

Thirdly, it has to be borne in mind that Imām al-H asan's (*ʿa*) soldiers broke their allegiance after promising loyalty but the people of Kūfah during the

[1] *Al-Nas āyih al-Kāfiyah*, pp. 156-157; *Tārīkh T abarī*, vol. 6, pp. 92-97; Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3, p. 166; *Maqātil al-T ālibiyyīn*, p. 26; Ibn Abī al-H adīd, *Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 4, pp. 8, 15; *Aʿyān al-Shīʿah*, vol. 4, p. 43; *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 194; *Tārīkh Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 8, p. 41; *Al-Is ābah*, vol. 2, p. 12; *ʿUmdah al-T ālib*, p. 52.

time of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), even though they had invited him in order to pay their allegiance to him, started opposing one another before actually paying their allegiance and going to war. It is for this reason that Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) soldiers are considered more treacherous than the people of Kūfah during the time of Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).

Imām al-H asan (ʻa) did not have as many loyal people in his army as Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), so it was practically impossible to fight any war against the enemy.

Fourthly, when we consider the ways and stratagems of the enemies of these two Imāms in their different times of Imamate, we realize that Imām al-H asan (ʻa) and Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) faced two different kinds of enemies. These two different kinds of enemies needed to be confronted with two different strategies, one was to make peace and the other was to fight with the sword until martyrdom was attained.

The enemy facing Imām al-H asan (ʻa) was Muʻāwiyah, and the enemy facing Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was Yazīd, the son of Muʻāwiyah. These two false caliphs had two different ways of life and handling affairs. Even though Muʻāwiyah was a trickster and a perverted man who did not waste any resources to annihilate the basic teachings of Islam, he nonetheless apparently followed the laws of Islam to some extent. However, Yazīd ibn Muʻāwiyah was not only an enemy of Islam in his inner being, but also showed his enmity and hatred of Islam and Allah's Prophet (*s*) publicly. He did not observe or respect any one of the revered orders of Islam. Although Muʻāwiyah apparently showed some respect to Banī Hāshim, Yazīd did not show any kind of respect for them.

It is for this reason that that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«الحسن والحسين امامان قاما او قعدا.»

> "Al-H asan and al-H usayn are *imām*s, whether they make peace or rise up."[1]

Therefore, we believe that if Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was in Imām al-H asan's (ʻa) position, he would do exactly the same thing which Imām al-H asan (ʻa) did. And if Imām al-H asan (ʻa) was in Imām al-H usayn's (ʻa) position, he too would do what Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) did. The reason is that they both were sharp at analyzing the times in which they lived and were

[1] Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Munāqib*, vol. 3, p. 394; *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p. 291, *h adīth* 54.

aware about their circumstances. Whatever decisions they made were for the best interests and expedience of Islam and the Muslims. **?**

WHAT IS THE RULING REGARDING THE FAST OF ‘ĀSHŪRĀ?

There are deep and intense divisions among jurisprudents about fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā. Some jurisprudents believe that it is highly recommended to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā. Others say it is prohibited [*h arām*] to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā and some believe that fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā is disapproved but not absolutely prohibited. There are also other questions related to this issue. For example, has the fast of ‘Āshūrā been enacted or legalized for the sake of appeasing and being in agreement with the Jews? Was it enacted before the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān and later suspended when the fast of Ramad ān was enacted? Did the Holy Prophet (*s*) and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*ʿa*) ever fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā? Did Banī Umayyah put emphasis on this fast to show their happiness and pleasure? These are some of the questions that will be discussed in this chapter.

Enacting and enforcing the fast of ‘Āshūrā before the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān

Jurisprudents differ in their opinions about whether the judgement of the fast of the day of ‘Āshūrā was enacted before the Qur’anic verse which enacted the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān and whether it was obligatory [*wājib*] to fast on that day or not.

According to certain opinions put forth by some Shī‘ah scholars and the purport of some Islamic traditions, the first possibility is that it was *wājib* to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā before the Qur’anic verse enacting the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān was revealed. Also, some Sunnīs, among them Abū H anīfah, believe that it was *wājib* to fast on the day of ‘Āshūrā. The Shāfi‘ī sect apparently believe that it was not *wājib* to fast on the day of

ʻĀshūrā. Two opinions have been quoted from Shāfiʻī and two *h adīth*s have been quoted by Ah mad. We will now mention some of the opinions expressed by jurisprudents belonging to different sects.

Opinions put forth by Shīʻah scholars

1. The renowned researcher Muh aqqiq Qummī says, "What can be deduced from the wording of *h adīth*s is that apparently the fast of the day of ʻĀshūrā was enacted before the fast of Ramad ān and was later abandoned."[1]

2. Sayyid ʻĀmilī writes, "There are a lot of differing opinions about fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā. Was it *wājib* or was it not? That which has been recorded in our *h adīth*s is that fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā was *wājib* before the enactment of fasting in the holy month of Ramad ān. Among the people who narrated these *h adīth*s are Zurārah and Muh ammad ibn Muslim."[2]

3. Allāmah Majlisī relates from the book, "*Al-Muntaqī*" that in the first year of migration to Medina, Allah's Prophet (*s*) fasted on ʻĀshūrā and the other people followed suit."[3]

Upon study of the sayings of the Shīʻah scholars, we infer that they have not put forward a definite opinion about fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā. They have contented themselves with narrating the differences which exist among the scholars and in *h adīth*s. Only the renowned researcher Muh aqqiq Qummī has cited *h adīth*s that apparently indicate the necessity of fasting on this day.

The opinions of Sunnī jurisprudents

1. Qād ī ʻAynī says, "They have differed about the judgement of fasting during the early days of Islam. Abū H anīfah has said that it was *wājib* to fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā in the past. Shāfiʻī's companions have given two opinions: the most famous opinion is that it was highly recommended [*mustah abb-e mu'akkad*] right from the beginning of Islam and Islamic law and never has it been *wājib* for the Islamic *ummah*. After the revelation of the Qur'anic verse enacting the fast of Ramad ān, it remained *mustah abb*, but

[1] *Ghanā'im al-Ayyām*, vol. 6, p. 78.

[2] *Madārik al-Ah kām*, vol. 6, p. 268.

[3] *Bih ār al-Anwār*, vol. 19, p. 130.

lost the recommendation and emphasis it enjoyed before. The second opinion of Shāfi'ī's companions is similar to that of Abū H anīfah. 'Ayād has said that some predecessors used to believe that this fast was *wājib* and remained *wājib* without any abrogation even after the verse enacting the fast of Ramad ān, but supporters of this opinion have been weakened and vanquished and hence common consensus is that this fast is not *wājib*, and they maintain that it is *mustah abb*."[1]

2. Ibn Qudāmah says, "There are differing opinions about the fast of the day of 'Āshūrā as to whether it was *wājib* or not. Qād ī says that it was *wājib* and this is as a result of religious deduction and conclusion. He has deduced this using two rationales. It has also been quoted from Ah mad ibn H anbal that the fast of the day of 'Āshūrā was *wājib*."[2]

3. Kāsānī writes, "The fast of the day of 'Āshūrā was *wājib* during those days."[3]

4. 'Asqalānī says, "It can be deduced from the total sum of reported *h adīth*s that this fast was *wājib*." After this, he has listed six reasons to support and prove his claim.[4]

A critique of 'Asqalānī's statements

Ibn H ajar writes, "In matters where Allah's command and law had not yet been revealed, the Holy Prophet (*s*) preferred to follow the Jewish ways, especially in matters where the Jews were opposed to the ways of the idol-worshipers."[5]

Problem

This claim is opposed to *h adīth*s quoted from the Holy Prophet (*s*) because he said the following about opposing the Jews,

«صوموا عاشوراء وخالفوا فيه اليهود.»

"Fast on the day of 'Āshūrā and by doing so oppose the Jews."[6]

---

[1] *'Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. 11, p. 118.

[2] *Al-Mughnī*, vol. 3, p. 174.

[3] *Badā'i' al-S anā'i'*, vol. 2, p. 262.

[4] *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 4, p. 290.

[5] *Ibid*., p. 288.

[6] *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, p. 475.

Also, Yaʻlā ibn Shaddād narrates that he heard from his father that Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«صلّوا في نعالكم وخالفوا اليهود.»

> "Pray your prayers in your slippers and in this way oppose the Jews."[1]

And it has been reported in another *h adīth* that the Holy Prophet (*s*) said,

«لا تشبّهوا باليهود.»

> "Do not resemble the Jews in any way."[2]

In light of the above traditions, it cannot be claimed that the fast of the day of ʻĀshūrā was enacted for the sake of imitating or resembling the Jews.

Jews and fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā

When we study history, we come to know that the Jews organized their traditions around their own calendar. The Jews had their own months which did not coincide with the Islamic calendar. There is no logic in saying that they ʻfasted on the 10th of Muh arram', unless it could be proven that this date always coincided with the Jewish day of fast. Their fasting did not take place every year on the day of ʻĀshūrā and certainly not in the holy month of Muh arram.

Apparently, the tradition of the Jews at the time of the Holy Prophet (*s*) was that on the 10th of the month of Tishri of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, the Jews observed a fast. They say God delivered Moses and his people and drowned Pharaoh and his forces on that day. It cannot be said, however, that Pharaoh was drowned on the day of ʻĀshūrā. On the contrary, these events are said to have taken place on the 10th of Tishri which does not correspond to the day of ʻĀshūrā. Therefore, that which has been said about the fast of ʻĀshūrā having its roots in Judaism and that it has been imported from the Jews is baseless and not founded on truth.

Abū Rayh ān says, "Tishri lasts thirty days… and on the tenth day of that month, the Jews start their fast of Yom Kippur, which some call ʻĀshūrā.

---

[1] *Al-Muʻjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 7, p. 290, *h adīth* 7165; *Al-Mustadrak ʻalā al-S ah īh ayn*, vol. 1, p. 260.

[2] *Al-Muʻjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 7, p. 290, *h adīth* 7164.

This fast carries more virtues for the Jews than the other fasts. That is why it is *wājib*."[1]

H asan ibn ʿAlī Saqqāf Shāfiʿī says, "We do not find any evidence to prove that the Jews used to fast or hold a festival on the tenth of Muh arram. There is no written historical evidence to suggest this. On the contrary, they used to fast on the tenth of Tishri."[2]

He also says, "The Jews have their own special calendar which has very apparent differences with the Islamic calendar. This calendar begins with the month of Tishri, which is followed by the month of Heshvan, and ends with the twelfth month called Elul… The number of days in a normal year is either 353 or 354 or 355 days. However, in a leap year, the number of days is either 383 or 384 or 385. And therefore, the calendar that is now observed by the Jews is such that the months are lunar but the years are solar."[3]

About the Arab calendar that was used before the Islamic calendar came into effect, Mah mūd Pāshā Falakī says, "It can be gathered and deduced from history that the Arab Jews also had ʿĀshūrā, but their ʿĀshūrā was on the tenth of Tishri which is the first month of their calendar according to Jewish civil law and the eighteenth month of their religious calendar. Also, the Jews follow a solar calendar. Therefore, the day of ʿĀshūrā on which Pharaoh was drowned is not at all connected to Muh arram. In addition to that, it was merely accidental that it coincided with the Holy Prophet's (*s*) entry into Medina."[4]

The verdict of fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā

There is a number of *h adīth*s that have mentioned the fast of ʿĀshūrā:

With recourse to Shīʿah sources of *h adīth*s, we come to know that it has been narrated in some *h adīth*s that the one who quits this fast has to atone and expiate for his actions for up to one year. It has also been reported that the Holy Prophet (*s*) himself used to fast on the day of ʿĀshūrā, and strongly advised everyone, even children, to fast on that day. This

[1] *Al-Āthār al-Bāqiyah*, p. 277.

[2] *Al-Hādī Magazine*, no. 2, p. 37.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 36.

[4] Bustānī, *Dā'irah al-Maʿārif*, vol. 11, p. 446.

demonstrates and proves that the day of ʻĀshūrā and its fast are overflowing with heavenly blessings.[1]

In other reported *h adīth*s, the opposite has been narrated; that is to say, the fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā has been forbidden and is one of the prohibited actions. Some other *h adīth*s say it is an act of innovation, and fasting on that day is not a part of the religion. Others have gone so far as to say that the reward of fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā is the fire of Hell. It has been reported in other *h adīth*s that the Holy Prophet never used to fast on that day.

As regards the conduct of the Infallible Imāms (*ʻa*), it is important to mention that no *h adīth* has reached us suggesting that they or their companions used to fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā. If fasting on this day were *mustah abb*, the Infallibles would not fail to fast on that day.[2]

The *h adīth*s which have been recorded in Sunnī books regarding this issue are also varied. The meaning of many of these *h adīth*s is that it is highly recommended [*mustah abb-e mu'akkad*] to observe the fast of ʻĀshūrā. However, another group of *h adīth*s contradict the first, in the sense that they say that the Holy Prophet (*s*) never used to fast on that day and never at all ordered anyone to fast on that day after the Qur'anic verse enacting the fasting of the month of Ramad ān.[3]

*H adīth*s which prevent fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā

1. On his own chain of transmission Shaykh S adūq narrates that Imām al-Bāqir (*ʻa*) said,

«كان صومه قبل شهر رمضان، فلمّا نزل شهر رمضان ترك.»

> "The fast of the day of ʻĀshūrā used to be observed before the Qur'anic verse about the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān, but after that it was discontinued."[4]

---

[1] *Tahdhīb al-Ah kām*, vol. 4, pp. 299 -300, *h adīth* 895, 906-908; *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 10, section [*bāb*] 20.

[2] *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 10, section [*bāb*] 21; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 146, *h adīth* 4-7.

[3] *S ah īh Bukhārī*, vol. 1, p. 341.

[4] *Man lā Yah d uruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 51, *h adīth* 224; *Wasā'il al-Shī'ah*, vol. 10, p. 452, *h adīth* 1.

2. Kulaynī on his own chain of transmission narrates from both Imām al-Bāqir (*ʿa*) and Imām al-S ādiq (*ʿa*) that they said,

«لا تصم في عاشوراء، ولا عرفة بمكة، ولا في المدينة، ولا في وطنك، ولا في مصر من الامصار.»

"On the days of ʿĀshūrā and ʿArafah, do not fast whether you are in Medina, your hometown, or any other city."[1]

3. Kulaynī has also narrated that he asked Imām al-Bāqir (*ʿa*) about fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā. Answering his question, Imām al-Bāqir (*ʿa*) said,

«صوم متروك بنزول شهر رمضان، والمتروك بدعة.»

"This is a fast which was discontinued after the Qurʾanic verse enacting the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān was revealed. Doing that which is abandoned is an act of innovation."[2]

The narrator (Kulaynī) says, "I asked this same question from Imām al-S ādiq's (*ʿa*) father, too. He gave the same answer as Imām al-S ādiq (*ʿa*) and added,

«أما انّه صوم يوم ما نزل به كتاب، ولا جرت به سنة، الاّ سنّة آل زياد بقتل الحسين بن علي.»

ʿBeware! This is a fast about which no Qurʾanic verse has been revealed and is not an observed way of conduct. It was only the way of conduct for the partisans of Ziyād when they killed al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī (*ʿa*)'."

4. Kulaynī again on his own chain of transmission narrates that ʿAbd al-Malik said, "I asked Imām al-S ādiq (*ʿa*) about fasting on the ninth day of Muh arram and the day of ʿĀshūrā. Imām al-S ādiq said, 'The ninth day is the day when al-H usayn ibn ʿAlī (*ʿa*) and his companions got besieged and surrounded by the enemy. It was the day that the mounted soldiers of Shām were enlisted and brought to Karbalā where they camped. Ibn Marjānah and ʿUmar ibn Saʿd were very pleased because of the great numbers of mounted soldiers and considered al-H usayn (*ʿa*) and his companions as weak. They believed that no help would come for al-H usayn (*ʿa*) because the people of Iraq would not help him. O my Father! May I be sacrificed for you, O you

[1] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 146, *h adīth* 3; *Wasāʾil al-Shīʿah*, vol. 10, p. 462, section [*bāb*] 41, *h adīth* 6.

[2] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 146, *h adīth* 4; *Wasāʾil al-Shīʿah*, vol. 10, p. 461, section [*bāb*] 21, *h adīth* 5.

who were oppressed in a foreign land!’ Then, Imām al-S ādiq continued, ‘However, the day of ‘Āshūrā is the day when al-H usayn ibn ‘Alī (*‘a*) fell to the ground (was martyred) along with all his companions. Should fasting be observed on such a day? Never at all! I swear upon the Lord of the Sacred House (the *Ka‘bah*)! Such a day is not a day for fasting. That day is only reserved for sorrow and mourning that has been inflicted on the inhabitants of the skies and the earth altogether. It is a day of happiness and pleasure for the son of Marjānah and Ibn Ziyād’s partisans and the people of Shām. Allah’s curse be on them and their offspring. The day of ‘Āshūrā is a day when all the tombs and mausoleums of the earth except the tombs of Shām cry for al-H usayn. Therefore, Allah will unite on the Day of Resurrection anyone who fasts on that day or looks upon that day as a day of celebration with Ibn Ziyād and his partisans, discontent with a transformed heart…’’’[1]

5. Kulaynī also quotes from Ja‘far ibn ‘Īsā that he said, “I asked Imām al-Rid ā (*‘a*) about fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā. I also asked his opinion about what people say about this fast. The Imām (*‘a*) said,

«عن صوم ابن مرجانة تسألني.»

‘You are asking me about the fast of the son of Marjānah?’’’[2]

6. On his own chain of transmission, Kulaynī quotes from Zayd Narsī that he said, “I heard ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Zurārah asking Imām al-S ādiq about fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā. Imām al-S ādiq (*‘a*) replied saying,

«من صامه كان حظّه من صيام ذلك اليوم حظ ابن مرجانة وآل زياد.»

‘The reward for anyone fasting on that day will be given to the son of Marjānah and Ibn Ziyād’s partisans’.’’[3]

Zayd says, “I asked what the reward of fasting on that day is.’ The Imām (*‘a*) replied,

«النار، اعاذنا الله من النار، ومن عمل يقرب من النار.»

---

[1] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 147, *h adīth* 7; *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 10, p. 459, section [*bāb*] 21, *h adīth* 2.

[2] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 146, *h adīth* 5; *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 10, p. 460, section [*bāb*] 21, *h adīth* 3.

[3] *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 147, *h adīth* 6; *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 10, p. 461, section [*bāb*] 21, *h adīth* 4.

> "The Fire, may Allah save us from the Fire. Anyone who fasts on the day of ʿĀshūrā has made himself nearer to the Fire."[1]

Preference for traditions which prevent fasting on ʿĀshūrā

Although the chains of transmission of *h adīth*s which denote that fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā is prohibited have been disputed by some jurisprudents, we can nonetheless vindicate them and make up for their weak forms and aspects:

1. These *h adīth*s have been recorded in reliable and credible books. Narāqī is quoted to have said, "The weaknesses of chains of transmission for these *h adīth*s cannot prevent us from utilizing them because these *h adīth*s have been recorded in authoritative and credible books, especially those that are situated among authentic *h adīth*s."[2]

2. These *h adīth*s are common; perhaps they are even close to a state of successive transmition. Sayyid ʿAlī T abāt abāʾī writes, "Texts that exhort and encourage fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā, because of the weaknesses of their chains of transmission and the absence of someone to put them to general practical application, contradict many *h adīth*s. These are contradictory *h adīth*s that are near to successive transmission; as such it is not at all possible to act upon them even out of laxity…"[3]

3. *H adīth*s which prevent fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā have credible chains of transmission because Shaykh T ūsī has proven that there is opposition and discrepancy between these *h adīth*s and *h adīth*s that encourage and exhort fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā. This denotes the credibility of *h adīth*s which prevent fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā because contradictions are secondary to the credibility and dependability of the chain of transmission.

4. *H adīth*s which prevent fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā are very credible because they conform with the way of life of the Infallibles (ʿ*a*) and their companions and also the way of life of all those committed and faithful to the religion.

In conclusion, it is preferable to avoid fasting on the day of ʿĀshūrā.

---

[1] *Ibid*.

[2] *Mustanad al-Shīʿah*, vol. 10, p. 492.

[3] *Al-Riyād al-Masāʾil*, vol. 5, p. 467.

The aversion of fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā

Some contemporary Shīʻah jurisprudents have issued religious edicts [*fatwā*s] that fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā is undesirable [*makrūh*] but not absolutely prohibited [*h arām*]. Other Shīʻah jurisprudents, such as Bah rānī and Majlisī, have gone so far as to say that it is *h arām* to fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā.

We will now examine the proofs put forward as reasons for the abhorrence [*kirāhat*] of fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā:

1. Fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā was a way of life for the enemies of Islam and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*) which Muslims should not revive and imitate.

2. *H adīth*s which denote the permissibility or even the incumbency of fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā can be interpreted as staying hungry as a result of deep sorrow on the day of ʻĀshūrā, not for the sake of ritual fasting, and/or can be interpreted as instances of dissimulation [*taqiyyah*].

3. Fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā was not customary among the *Ahl al-Bayt* (ʻ*a*) and their companions. It was not their way of life.

4. We interpret the *h adīth*s that appear to prohibit fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā to denote abhorrence, not absolute prohibition, because there is unity of conjecture and analogy between them and those *h adīth*s which prohibit fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā, especially that some of those prohibitive *h adīth*s appear to denote abhorrence.

Many Shīʻah jurisprudents have issued religious edicts that it is recommended [*mustah abb*] to abstain from food from morning up to mid-afternoon on ʻĀshūrā, but not with the intention of fasting. Among those who have issued this *fatwā* are Shahīd Thānī[1], Muh aqqiq Kurkī[2], ʻAllāmah H illī[3], Muh aqqiq Ardabīlī[4], Shahīd Awwal[5], Shaykh Bahāʼī[6], Sabzevārī[7],

[1] *Masālik al-Afhām*, vol. 2, p. 78.

[2] *Jāmiʻ al-Maqās id*, vol. 3, p. 86.

[3] *Tadhkirah al-Fuqahāʼ*, vol. 6, p. 192; *Tah arīr al-Ah kām*, vol. 1, p. 84.

[4] *Majmaʻ al-Fāʼidah wa al-Burhān*, vol. 5, p. 188.

[5] *Al-Durūs al-Sharʻiyyah*, vol. 1, p. 382; *Ghāyah al-Murād*, vol. 1, p. 329.

[6] *Jāmiʻ ʻAbbāsī*, p. 106.

[7] *Kifāyah al-Ah kām*, p. 520.

Fayd Kāshānī[1], H urr ʻĀmilī[2], Majlisī[3], Kāshif al-Ghit ā'[4], Narāqī[5], Muh aqqiq Qummī[6], and others.

ʻĀshūrā, a festival for Banī Umayyah

Banī Umayyah not only opposed holding mourning ceremonies for the Doyen of Martyrs, Imām al-H usayn (ʻa), but they also went so far as to introduce it as a day for festivities and happy celebrations. They did this as a practical measure of opposing mourning for Imām al-H usayn (ʻa).

Abū Rayh ān Bīrūnī writes, "Muslims believed that it was ominous and a cause of bad omens to burn tents or cause fires, carry the heads of dead people on spears, making horses race or run over dead bodies on the day of ʻĀshūrā because that was the day when the child of the Holy Prophet was killed. These ominous actions have never at all occurred in the history of mankind, even among the most corrupt and perverted peoples. However, Banī Umayyah used to decorate and adorn themselves and hold festivities on the day of ʻĀshūrā. They used to invite guests to participate in their happy celebrations. This custom was prevalent during their reign, and continued to exist even after their decline. On the other hand, the Shīʻahs used to mourn and weep and visit the holy land, Karbalā, where Imām al-H usayn (ʻa) was killed."[7]

Maqrīzī writes, "The ʻAlavīs, followers of Imāmʻ Alī (ʻa), in Egypt used to mourn and cry on the day of ʻĀshūrā. After the fall of the Fāt imīds and their government, the Ayyūbīs ascended to power and started holding joyful celebrations in the same way and custom as the Shāmīs. This vile custom was established by H ajjāj ibn Yūsuf during the reign of ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān for the sake of opposing the Shīʻahs of ʻAlī (ʻa) who used to mourn and express sorrow on the day of ʻĀshūrā." Then, he adds, "I myself have experienced and witnessed the celebrations held by the Ayyūbīs."[8]

---

[1] *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 11, p. 76; *Mafātīh al-Sharā'iʻ*, vol. 1, p. 284.

[2] *Bidāyah al-Hidāyah*, vol. 1, p. 238.

[3] *Mir'āt al-ʻUqūl*, vol. 16, p. 361.

[4] *Kashf al-Ghit ā'*, p. 323.

[5] *Mustanad al-Shīʻah*, vol. 10, p. 487.

[6] *Ghanā'im al-Ayyām*, vol. 6, pp. 78-79.

[7] Bīrūnī, *Al-Āthār al-Baqiyah*, p. 524.

[8] Maqrīzī, *Al-Khit at* , vol. 2, p. 385.

Ibn H ajar Haythamī says, "The first person who instituted and inaugurated celebrations on the day of ʻĀshūrā was H ajjāj ibn Yūsuf Thaqafī. He did this in the presence of ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān and a number of the Holy Prophet's (*s*) companions and *tābiʻīn*. It was then that it was announced that remembering al-H usayn (*ʻa*) and his afflictions in sermons was forbidden [*h arām*].[1]

H asan ibn ʻAlī Saqqāf Shāfiʻī says, "In the book called, "*Al-Amīr*", Mākiyāfillī has written about these issues and derived the contents of this book from facts regarding political survival. One of the strategies for political survival that he has adapted is the logic that "the end justifies the means". According to this principle, it is permissible for political leaders to bury the event of ʻĀshūrā for the sake of achieving their political aims; even though this is inconsistent with religion and acceptable moral standards; they have tried to extinguish the fire of ʻĀshūrā and have endeavored to bury the event of Karbalā in this manner. It is for this same reason that they resorted to fabricating and forging *h adīth*s and attributing them to al-H usayn's (*ʻa*) ancestor, the Holy Prophet (*s*). Because the government propaganda apparatus was not consistent, discrepancies and contradictions appeared. They forged numerous *h adīth*s for the sake of burying the event of Karbalā, but none of these were successful. The only thing that continued to hold and survive against all the odds was the event of Karbalā. The issue of considering shedding the blood of al-H usayn (*ʻa*) to be permissible [*h alāl*] is truly significant…"[2]

Accounting for *h adīth*s which oppose each other

We can interpret the Shīʻah *h adīth*s which permit or even order fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā to have been said out of dissimulation [*taqiyyah*] for the sake of bringing about agreement and conformity with *h adīth*s narrated by the Sunnīs and avoiding hostility and conflict. Therefore, the contradiction of these *h adīth*s should not be considered. Even if we consider these inconsistencies in Shīʻah *h adīth*s, we should put into practice those *h adīth*s which oppose the Sunnī belief of fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā; that is to say, those *h adīth*s which prevent fasting on this day.

Regarding those *h adīth*s which say that the Holy Prophet (*s*) used to fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā, we interpret them to mean that the Holy Prophet (*s*)

[1] *S awāʻiq al-Muh riqah*, p. 221.

[2] *Al-Hādī Magazine*, 7th year, no. 2.

used to do this before the Qur'anic verse enacting the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān.

In addition, those *h adīth*s that have permitted fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā and consider this fast to be recommended [*mustah abb*] do not seem to be correct because the *h adīth*s narrated by H asan ibn Abī Ghandar indicates that it is not acceptable to fast on a day of affliction and sorrow, but on the contrary fasting is done for the sake of thanksgiving and good fortune.

When we consider these *h adīth*s together, we understand that it is recommended to abstain from food on the day of ʻĀshūrā up to the afternoon, but without the intention of fasting, and that we have to eat before the evening prayers. This is the purport and meaning of the *h adīth*s narrated by Ibn Sanān.

*H adīth*s in this regard narrated by the Sunnīs can also be justified and explained:

First of all, recently the Wahhābīs of Saudi Arabia have published an encyclopedic collection of fifteen volumes about weak [*d aʻīf*] *h adīth*s arranged according to subject in a comprehensive manner. A group of renowned instructors including ʻAlī H asan ʻAlī H alabī, Dr. Ibrāhīm T āhā Qaysī and Dr. H amdī Muh ammad Murād have done this extensive job. Twelve volumes of this work are about weak *h adīth*s and three volumes are a table of contents of the *h adīth*s. Some of the *h adīth*s shown to be weak in this extensive work are about the event of ʻĀshūrā. They have arranged these particular *h adīth*s under various topics, such as: the heavens and the earth were created on the day of ʻĀshūrā; the event of ʻĀshūrā was on the ninth day; the fast of ʻĀshūrā atones for sins for a period of one year; anyone who provides the needs of his family on the day of ʻĀshūrā will be provided for a period of one year; on the day of ʻĀshūrā Allah divided the Red Sea for the Children of Israel [Banī Isrā'īl].

Secondly, the contents of *h adīth*s narrated about fasting on the day of ʻĀshūrā are various: some denote that the Holy Prophet (*s*) ordered that we should fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā, but they have not made it clear when this order was issued; some denote that the Holy Prophet (*s*) gave this order in Medina; some denote that the Holy Prophet (*s*) used to observe this fast before the advent of Islam and that it was abrogated after the Qur'anic verse which enacted the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān; some say that this fast was begun when the Holy Prophet (*s*) entered Medina and this was done just for the sake of appeasing the Jews; some say that fasting on the day

of ʻĀshūrā was instituted for the sake of opposing the Jews; some say that the Holy Prophet (*s*) did not order anyone to fast on the day of ʻĀshūrā after the Qurʾanic verse which instituted the fast of the holy month of Ramad ān; some say that the fast of ʻĀshūrā continued to be observed up to the time when the Holy Prophet (*ʻa*) passed away. The many inconsistencies noted weaken the dependability of these *h adīth*s.

Thirdly, many of these *h adīth*s have either weak or false chains of narration, in spite of the fact that they have been narrated in the most dependable books of Sunnī *h adīth*s.

Fourthly, some of these *h adīth*s have problems and weaknesses of denotation. **?**

χ