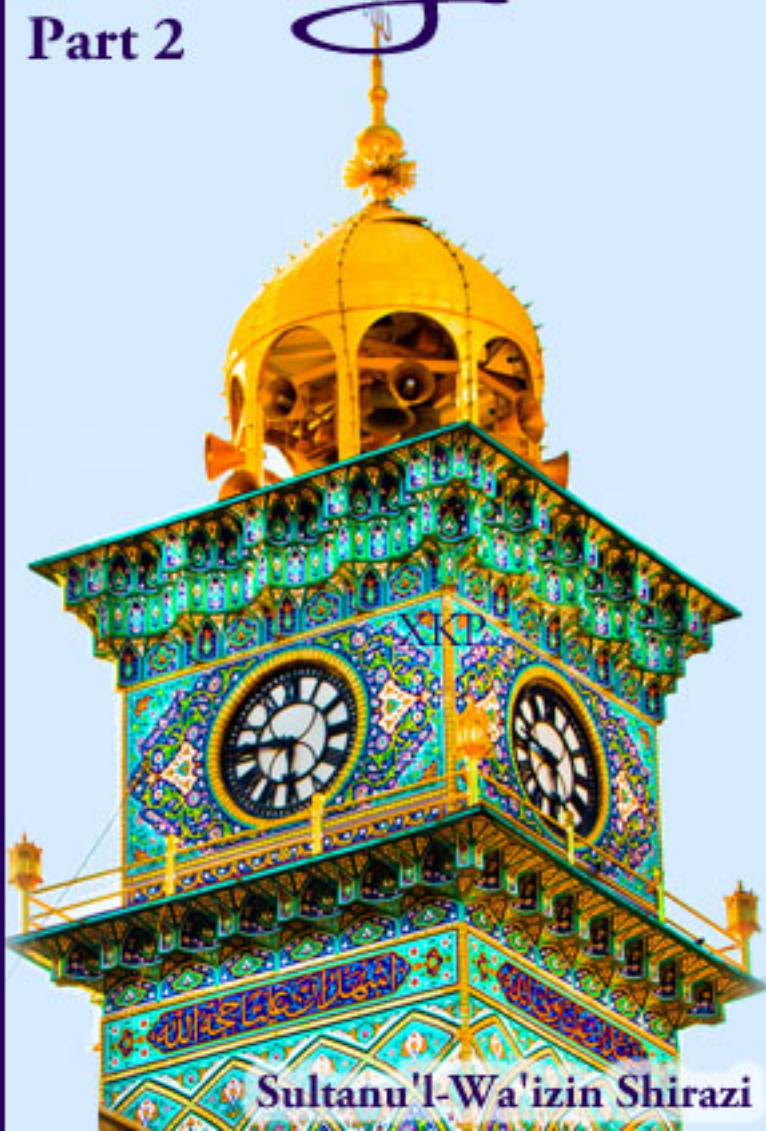


Nights

Part 2



Sultanu'l-Wa'izin Shirazi

Part 1
NINTH SESSION, Friday night, 2nd
Sha'ban, 1345 A.H.

Chapter 1

9th Session - Part 1

Sheikh: You always fault the actions of the Sunnis but do not care about the ways of the Shias. You unjustly defend them although their actions are depraved.

Well-Wisher: I am accustomed to defending the truth. Our Imam, Amiru'l-Mu'minin, exhorted his sons, particularly Hasan and Husain, in these words: "Always speak the truth and perform your deeds in light of the hereafter. Be hostile to the oppressor and help the oppressed. "

If I have found fault with the opponents or defended the Shias, I have done so in support of the truth. What I complained of was based on logical reasoning. I will listen to your charges concerning wrongdoing of the Shias.

'SHIAS' ACCUSING A'YESHA OF ADULTERY' AND ITS REPLY

Sheikh: The worst thing that the Shias are guilty of is that they accuse Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha of adultery. It is an acknowledged fact that she had the honor of sexual intercourse with the Holy Prophet of Allah and that she was his loving wife. They do not realize what this slanderous accusation leads to. Have they not read sura an-Nur (Light) of the Holy Qur'an? Allah says: "Bad women are for bad men and bad men are for bad women. Good women are for good men and good men are for good women." (24:26)

Well-Wisher: First the charge that the Shias accuse Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha of immoral actions and adultery is absolutely false. Never has such a thing been said by Shias. This assertion is a blatant calumny circulated centuries ago by the Nawasib and Khawarij in order to instigate confusion. They attributed to the Shias what they themselves said. Subsequently others, without making inquiries, attacked the Shias as you are now doing. If you would study Shia books, you would not find anywhere that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha has been accused of adultery.

A'YESHA'S EXONERATION FROM THE CHARGE OF ADULTERY

If you read the Shia histories and commentaries, you will see how they have defended Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha from the charges of adultery. The fact is that such reports were made by a group of hypocrites during the time of the Holy Prophet. Some of those involved were Mista Bin Uthatha, Hasan Bin Thabit and Abdullah Bin Ubayy. Concerning A'yesha's exoneration from the false charges of the hypocrites, seven verses were revealed in the Holy Qur'an. Shias believe that to make a false charge of adultery or immoral action against any Muslim is unlawful, not to mention a wife of the Holy Prophet, whether she is A'yesha or Hafsa.

A HUSBAND AND WIFE DO NOT NECESSARILY SHARE THE SAME LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT

Second, the holy verse you have recited does not mean what you have said. It is not necessarily so that if a husband is a virtuous believer and worthy of Paradise that his wife will be the same. There are many instances which prove that spouses may attain different levels of virtue.

Allah says in the Sura Tahrim (The Prohibition): "Allah sets forth an example to those who disbelieve, the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot: they were both under two of Our righteous servants, but they were unfaithful to them, so they availed them nothing against Allah, and it was said: 'Enter the fire with those who enter.' And Allah sets forth an example to those who believe, the wife of Pharaoh when she said: 'My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the Garden and deliver me from Pharaoh and his doing, and deliver me from the unjust people.'" (66:10-11)

Sheikh: It is strange that during this short period there appears to be a clear inconsistency in your statements.

Well-Wisher: Please tell me what you see as inconsistent.

Sheikh: At one point you say that accusing anybody of adultery is unlawful but at another you say that Noah's and Lot's wives were unfaithful to their husbands. Are these two sentences not inconsistent with each other? Is it not unbecoming of you to accuse the wives of the prophets of adultery and faithlessness?

Well-Wisher: I am sure you know you are adopting a deceptive manner. You know very well what "faithlessness" means in the holy verse referred to earlier.

MEANING OF FAITHLESSNESS OF NOAH'S AND LOT'S WIVES

It is strange of you that you mistake faithlessness to mean adultery though there is a vast difference between the two. The wives of the prophets were absolutely free from adultery. Here the discussion is about their faithlessness. First, if a wife of a prophet acts against the instructions of her husband, she is certainly faithless. Second, I am not the one who says that they proved faithless. The Qur'an itself states it: "They were unfaithful to their husbands," and unfaithfulness was not adultery. As I have said earlier, the wives of the prophets were free from this kind of unfaithfulness. So the meaning of their unfaithfulness was disobedience.

The Prophet Noah's wife was opposed to her husband and used to insult him in public. She said: "My husband is mad. Since I am associated with him all day and night, I know his true state. Do not be deceived by him." The Prophet Lot's wife used to inform the people of every guest that came to his house. She used to create mischief by disclosing the secrets of the house to his enemies.

FAITHLESSNESS OF WIVES DOES NOT IMPLY IMPURITY

According to Qur'anic commentators and also according to the statements of the infallible ones, the meaning of the verse of the sura an-Nur (Light) from which you make your point is that impure women deserve impure men and impure men are inclined towards them. Pure women deserve pure men and pure men are inclined towards them. In the same chapter in the preceding verse Allah says: "The fornicator shall not marry any but a fornicatress or idolatress and (as for) the fornicatress, none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolater." (24:3)

In short, the holy verse "impure women are for impure men..." in no way proves your point.

REFERENCE TO A'YESHA'S CONDUCT

The criticism of A'yesha is not due to prejudice. It is because of her wrong conduct. She committed misdeeds which no other wife of the Holy Prophet, including Hafsa, daughter of Umar, did. Moreover, the Shias' criticism is strictly within the bounds of the comments made by your own ulema, who have reported that this anxious woman committed serious wrongs.

Sheikh: Is it proper for a noble man like you to make such charges against Ummu'l-Mu'minin?

Well-Wisher: All the wives of the Holy Prophet except Ummu'l-Mu'minin Khadija, are of equal rank. Umme Salma, Suda, A'yesha, Hafsa, Maimuna, and the others in our view all are Ummu'l-Mu'minin. But A'yesha's conduct and her words were certainly different from those of the other women. Again, this is not merely my version, but your own prominent ulema have written that her life was blemished. The good and bad actions of people cannot remain hidden forever. Eventually truth reveals itself.

Sheikh: Assuredly, because she opposed Ali, you find fault with her regarding insignificant matters.

Well-Wisher: We do not find fault regarding insignificant matters. A'yesha's opposition to Amiru'l-Mu'minin, Imam Hasan, Imam Husain, and the Ahle Bait is a separate issue. But the foundation of the ugly history of her life had been laid during the period of the Holy Prophet himself. She used to vex and torment him.

Sheikh: It is strange that you consider Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha, the beloved wife of the Holy Prophet, so morally debased that you dare to say that she vexed the Holy Prophet. How can we accept your assertion when Ummu'l-Mu'minin had definitely read the Holy Qur'an and the following verse: " 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 chastisement bringing disgrace." (33:57)

So it is possible for her to vex the Holy Prophet so that she could be cursed by Allah? This is definitely one of the slanders of the Shias.

Well-Wisher: No it is not a lie! Regarding these holy verses, I admit that not only Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha must have read them, but her father Abu Bakr and other eminent companions must have also read them. In the light of those reports and hadith which I have mentioned in previous nights, many truths may be revealed to us provided that we are just.

A'YESHA GRIEVED THE HOLY PROPHET

The fact that A'yesha grieved the Holy Prophet is not only related by Shia ulema, but by your own eminent ulema. Imam Ghazali in his 'Ihya'u'l-Ulum, vol. II, ch. 3, Kitab-e-Adabu'n-Nika, p. 135, has reported many hadith condemning A'yesha's conduct. Among them is her quarreling with the Holy Prophet and Abu Bakr's intervention. This event is also narrated by Mulla Ali Muttaqi in Kanzu'l-Ummal, vol. VII, p. 116; Abu Yala in his Musnad and Abu'sh-Sheikh in his Kitab-e-Amthal. They write that when Abu Bakr went to see his daughter, he found that there was a grievance between A'yesha and the Holy Prophet. The decision was left in Abu Bakr's hands. A'yesha used insulting language in her remarks. In the course of her conversation, she asked the Holy Prophet to be fair in his attitude. This insolent remark made Abu Bakr so indignant that he slapped her so severely in her face that blood flowed down her clothes.

Also Imam Ghazali in the same Chapter on Marriage and others, too, have narrated that once, when Abu Bakr reached his daughter's house, he found that the Holy Prophet was displeased with A'yesha. He asked them to tell him what was the cause of their grievance so that he might bring about reconciliation. The Holy Prophet asked A'yesha if she should begin telling it. She replied, 'You may begin but you should speak the truth.' In her next sentence she added, 'You are a man who really thinks himself to be a Prophet!'

These remarks show that A'yesha did not believe that the Holy Prophet was the divinely appointed Prophet. Such degrading remarks are reported in your books in large numbers. They were the cause of great anguish to the Holy Prophet.

NO SUCH REPORTS ABOUT OTHER WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET

You will note that the ulema and historians of both the sects have not recorded such things about the other wives of the Holy Prophet. They have not attributed such things even to Hafsa, daughter of Umar. It was only A'yasha's behavior which led to her indignity. We related only as much as your prominent ulema have said about her. Have you not studied Imam Ghazali's books, the histories by Tabari, Mas'udi and Ibn A'tham Kufi etc. which report that all your eminent ulema have described her as disobedient to the Holy Prophet. Still, you complain because I have criticized Ummu'l-Mu'minin's conduct. Can there be any clearer blot on one's character than transgression against the order of Allah and His Prophet and revolution against the Caliph of the Holy Prophet?

In the sura of al-Ahzab (The Clans), Allah has addressed the wives of the Holy Prophet: "And stay in your houses and display not your finery like the display of the ignorance of yore." (33:33)

Of course the other wives of the Holy Prophet complied with this order and never left their houses without an urgent reason. Even A'mash has reported this fact.

UMMU'L-MU'MININ SUDA DID NOT GO OUT EVEN FOR HAJJ OR UMRA

It is reported in the Sahih and other books of your traditionists and historians that people asked Suda, wife of the Holy Prophet, why did she not perform the Hajj and the Umra. She replied, "It is compulsory for me to perform one Hajj and Umra and no more. And He says: 'And stay in your houses.' So in obedience to this command, I shall not go out of my house; rather, my intention is that I will not, as far as possible, go out of the room in which the Holy Prophet of Allah had placed me until I die." In fact she did this and it was her dead body which was taken out of the room.

Suda, A'yesha, and Umme Salma, were wives of the Holy Prophet and were mothers of the believers. Of course they differ from one another because of their conduct.

According to the community, A'yesha and Hafsa are worthy of respect, not because they were the daughters of Abu Bakr and Umar, though you respect them on that score, but because they were the wives of the Holy Prophet. But the wives of the Holy Prophet deserve honor when they are devout, as it is clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an. "O wives of the Prophet! you are not like any of the other women." (33:32)

Chapter **2**

9th Session - Part 2

A'YESHA GOES OUT TO FIGHT AGAINST ALI

So Suda was a pious, obedient wife of the Holy Prophet of Allah. A'yesha was a stubborn wife who conspired with Talha and Zubair against Ali and went to Basra. There Uthman Bin Hanafi, a great companion of the Prophet and governor of Basra appointed by Ali, was captured. His hair and beard were pulled out; he was tortured and driven out. More than 100 innocent, helpless persons were killed. Ibn Athir, Mas'udi, Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, and others have written in detail about this event.

After this outrage, she mounted a camel named Askar, dressed in the skin of a lion, protected by armor and entered the battlefield like a soldier. Because of her revolt, thousands of Muslims lost their lives. Was this initiative on her part not a transgression against the command of Allah and His Holy Prophet?

ALI'S VIRTUES ARE BEYOND NUMBER

And what is more surprising is that she adopted this shameless stand against Ali Bin Abi Talib, whose virtues and merits have been so extensively recorded by your own distinguished ulema that it is impossible to recount them all.

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Masnad, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in his Tafsir-e-Kabir, Katib Khawarizmi in his Manaqib, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Muhammad Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in Kifayatu't-Talib, ch. 62, and Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Mawadda V, narrate from the second Caliph, Umar Bin Khattab and Abdullah Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "If all the oceans were ink, all the trees were pens, and all human beings were writers and all the Jinn maintained the records, even then, O Abu'l-Hasan! Your virtues could not be numbered."

When the Holy Prophet states that "all men and jinn combined cannot account for his virtues," how can we, with our limited means, give a complete account of his merits?

Apart from the Shia ulema, your own ulema, for all their fanaticism, have filled their books with only part of his innumerable virtues.

HADITH IN PRAISE OF ALI'S VIRTUES

You should study your Siha-e-Sitta, the six books of hadith. Apart from these, it is stated in Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani's Mawaddatu'l-Qurba; Tabrani's Mu'ajam Kabir; Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i's Matalibu's-Su'ul; Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal's Musnad and Faza'il; Hamidi's Bainu's-Sahihain; Khawarizmi's Manaqib; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid's Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol. II, p.449; Ibn Sabbagh Maliki's Fusulu'l-Muhimma, particularly p.124, from Hafiz Abdu'l-Aziz Bin Al'Akhzaru'l-Janabiz, who writes in his book Ma'alimu'l-'Atratu'n-Nabawiyya that Fatima Zahra said that on the night of Arafa her father, the Holy Prophet of Allah, went to her and said, "Allah Almighty takes pride in you people before the angels and has forgiven you all and particularly Ali. I, the Prophet of Allah, say without any consideration for love due to kinship that verily the most fortunate and prosperous man is he who is a friend of Ali during his life or after his death. The most damned of the damned is he who is an enemy of Ali, during his life or after death."

Also in the above books is a detailed hadith which I think I have referred to in earlier nights, from Caliph Umar Bin Khattab, who said that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "A liar is he who thinks that he loves me while he is your enemy. O Ali! He who is your friend is my friend. If somebody is my friend, Allah is his friend. If Allah is somebody's friend, He admits him to Paradise. He who is your enemy, is my enemy. If somebody is my enemy, Allah also is his enemy and He throws him into Hell."

FRIENDSHIP WITH ALI IS FAITH AND OPPOSITION TO HIM IS INFIDELITY AND HYPOCRISY

It is also reported from the Kitabu'l-Al of Ibn Khalawayh, narrating from Abu Sa'id Khadiri, that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "O Ali! Friendship with you is faith and opposition to you is hypocrisy. The first person who enters Paradise shall be your friend, and the first person who is thrown into Hell shall be your enemy."

Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Mawadda III, and Hamwaini in his Fara'id report that the Holy Prophet said while among his companions: "No one loves Ali except one who is a believer, and no one is hostile to him except one who is an infidel." On another occasion he said: "O Ali! It is only the believer who loves you, and it is only the hypocrite who hates you."

ALI 'BEST OF MANKIND' SAID THE HOLY PROPHET REPORTED BY A'YESHA

Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, p. 119, ch.62, quotes from *Ta'rikh-e-Damishqi*, *Muhadith-e-Sham*, and *Muhadith-e-Iraq*, narrating from Hudhaifa and Jabir that the Holy Prophet said: "Ali is the best of mankind; one who refuses to accept this is an infidel."

It is also reported from Ata that people asked A'yesha about Ali and she said: "He is the best of mankind. No one except an infidel has any doubt of it."

He says that Hafiz Ibn Asakir in his *Ta'rikh*, a work comprised of 100 volumes three volumes of which are written in praise of Ali, has reported this hadith from A'yesha.

Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p.17, Ibn Sabbagh Makki in *Fusulu'l-Muhimma*, report from Tirmidhi and Nisa'i that Abu Sa'id Khudri said: "During the days of the Holy Prophet we used to recognize the hypocrites by their animosity towards Ali."

It is related in *Fusulu'l-Muhimma* that the Holy Prophet said to Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali: "O Ali! To fight against you is to fight against me; your blood is my blood. I fight against him who fights against you; it is only the legitimate person who loves you, and it is the illegitimate one who has animosity towards you. It is only the believer who loves you, and it is only the hypocrite who is hostile to you."

Sheikh: Such hadith are not unique to Ali; they have also been narrated about other caliphs.

Well-Wisher: Kindly cite other such hadith by way of example.

Sheikh: Abdu'r-Rahman Ibn Malik Maghul narrates from his sources that Jabir said that the Holy Prophet of Allah said: "A believer has no animosity towards Abu Bakr and Umar, and a hypocrite has no love for them."

Well-Wisher: I am again surprised to hear such a thing from you. Have you forgotten our mutual agreement on the first night that we would not rely on questionable hadith. You should not quote concocted hadith, whose narrators are liars and forgers. Quote authentic hadith.

Sheikh: Your response indicates that you have decided that if you hear any hadith from us, you will reject it.

Well-Wisher: It is not I alone who have rejected it. Even your own prominent ulema have rejected it. Refer to *Mizanu'l-I'tidal* of Dhahabi and *Ta'rikh* of Khatib-e-Baghdadi, vol. X, p.236. You will find that most of the eminent commentators have written about the character of

Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Malik saying: "Verily, he was such a liar, a blasphemer, and a forger of hadith that no one has any doubt about it."

Please tell us if such a one-sided hadith narrated by a liar and forger, can be compared to those hadith which your prominent ulema have narrated and some of which I have already mentioned. I would advise you to consult Jami'u'l-Kabir, by Suyuti, vol. VI, p.390, Riyazu'n-Nazara, vol. IX, p.215, by Muhibu'd-din; Jami'i Tirmidhi, vol. II, p.299; Isti'ab, vol. III, p.46, by Ibn Abdu'l-Barr; Hilyatu'l-Auliya, vol. VI, p.295, by Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Matalibu's-Su'ul, p.17, by Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i; Fusulu'l-Muhimma, p.126, by Ibn Sabbagh Maliki. You will find that every one of them narrated in slightly different words from Abu'dh-Dharr Ghifari who said: "During the time of the Holy Prophet we used to recognize the hypocrites by three signs: the denial of Allah and the Holy Prophet, failing to offer prayers, and animosity towards Ali Bin Abi Talib." It is reported from Abi Sa'id Khudri that Abu'dh-Dharr Ghifari said: "We used to recognize the hypocrites by their enmity against Ali and in the time of the Holy Prophet we had no other sign of finding out the hypocrites except that they were hostile to Ali."

AUTHORS WHO NARRATE HOLY PROPHET'S HADITH ABOUT HYPOCRITES' HATRED OF ALI

In addition, the following authors narrate the hadith concerning hypocrites' hatred of Ali: Imam Ahmad Hanbal in *Musnad*, vol. I, pp.95, 138; Ibn Abdu'l-Barr in *Isti'ab*, vol. III, p.37; Ahmad Khatib Baghdadi in *Ta'rikh-e-Baghdad*, vol. XIV, p.426; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol. IV, p.264; Imam Nisa'i in *Sunan*, vol. VIII, p.117 and *Khasa'isu'l-Alawi*, p. 27; Hamwaini in *Fara'id*, ch.22; Ibn Hajar in *Isaba*, vol.II, p.509; Hafiz Abu Nu'aim in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, vol.IV, p.185; Sibti Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkira*, p.15; Suyuti in *Jami'u'l-Kabir*, pp. 152, 408; Muhammad Ibn Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p.17; Tirmidhi in *Jami'i*, vol. II, p.13, all these have reported in their books in slightly different words from Umme Salma or Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said: "O Ali! A hypocrite is not your friend and a believer is not your enemy. It is only the believer who loves you, and it is only the hypocrite who hates you. A hypocrite does not love Ali and a believer does not hate Ali."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol. I, p.367, reports from Sheikh Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi, the chief of Mu'tazilites, that he said, 'All the hadith unanimously report those correct hadith and there is no doubt in the authenticity of those which say that the Holy Prophet said to Ali, 'No one is hostile to you except the one who is a hypocrite. No one is your friend except the one who is a believer.'

Also, in volume IV of his book, on page 264, he quotes the sermon of Amiru'l-Mu'minin, in which the Holy Imam says: "If I strike a believer with this sword in his face so that he might be hostile to me, he will never be hostile to me; but if I give the whole world to a hypocrite so that he might love me, he will never love me. And this is in accordance with the utterance of the Holy Prophet who said: 'Only believers love you, only hypocrites are hostile to you.'"

There are many hadith of this kind in your reliable books. I have cited only a few of them.

Wasn't A'yesha's revolt against Ali's authority a revolt against the Prophet himself? Was this fighting or her urging the people to fight against Ali, due to her friendship or was it due to enmity? Obviously, it was due to hostility. In all the hadith which I have just related, the Holy Prophet said that one of the signs of infidelity is fighting against Ali. How would you reconcile the stand taken by Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha in fighting Ali with these hadith? It has just come to my mind that Mir

Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i in his *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba*, Mawadda 3, has reported from A'yesha herself that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah has pledged His word to me that whoever revolts against Ali is an infidel and his place is in Hell."

It is strange that when people asked her why she revolted against Ali having heard such a hadith from the Holy Prophet she merely replied: "I forgot this hadith on the day of the Battle of the Camel. I did not remember it until I came to Basra."

Sheikh: But how can you find fault with Ummu'l-Mu'minin, when it is obvious that to forget is but human.

Well-Wisher: Even if I admit that she forgot that hadith on the day of the Battle of the Camel, didn't she remember it when she was returning from Mecca and all her friends including the pious wives of the Holy Prophet warned her that she should not perpetrate such an action, since opposition to Ali was opposition to the Holy Prophet?

Your own historians who have recorded the Battle of the Camel have drawn attention to the fact that the Holy Prophet said: "O A'yesha! Fear that path on which the dogs of Haw'ab may bark at you." When however, on her way to Basra, she reached the brook of the Bani Kilab, dogs surrounded her litter and began barking. She asked the people what place it was. She was told that it was Haw'ab. Then she remembered what the Holy Prophet had said. Why then did she walk into the trap of Talha and Zubair? Why did she proceed until she reached Basra where she created such a tumultuous uproar? Would you say that she had forgotten this also, or that she trod that path deliberately?

She deliberately transgressed the order of Allah and the Holy Prophet and, having conspired with Talha and Zubair, went to fight against the Caliph and vicegerent of the Holy Prophet, although she had herself reported that the Holy Prophet said: "One who fights against Ali is an infidel."

Was it not a cause of distress to the Holy Prophet that as soon as the Commander of the Faithful assumed the reins of the caliphate, disturbances were created and conspirators prepared for battle against him. I have told you earlier with authentic sources that the Holy Prophet said, "He who distresses Ali, verily distresses me. He who distresses me, verily distresses Allah. O people! he who distresses Ali shall be raised as a Jew or Christian on the day of resurrection."

SLAUGHTER OF SAHABA (COMPANIONS) AND INNOCENT BELIEVERS IN BASRA BY ORDER OF A'YESHA

These reports can be found in your authentic books. Why then should you find fault with the Shias? Responsibility for the blood of innocent believers, the torture and expulsion of Uthman Bin Hunaif, and the murder of more than 100 including the unarmed keepers of the Treasury who had no concern with the battle - forty of whom were killed in the mosque - lay squarely on the instigator of the battle. Allama Mas'udi in his *Muruju'z-Dhahib*, vol. II, p.7, has written about this in these words: "Besides those who were injured, seventy of the unarmed guards of baitu'l-mal (Treasury) were put to death. Of these seventy, fifty were beheaded in prison. These people were the first among the Muslims to have been tortured to death."

Among your ulema and historians, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Athir have given detailed accounts of these events.

SHIAS SAY ABOUT A'YESHA EXACTLY WHAT HISTORY SHOWS

Perhaps you should expunge these reports from your authentic books. In fact, in the reprints of these books, some of your ulema have changed some of this disagreeable information and in some cases have omitted it altogether. You should either refuse to accept what your notable ulema and historians have written, or you should give up censuring the Shias. They say only what is recorded in your own reliable books.

NO EVIDENCE THAT A'YESHA REPENTED

Sheikh: What you say is of course true, but Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha was only a human being; she was not infallible. Having been misguided she committed a fault. It was because of her simplicity that she fell into the trap of two prominent companions, but later she repented for her revolt. Allah excused her for that.

Well-Wisher: First, you have admitted that some of the prominent companions were sinners, although they were among those who were present "under the tree" and at Bai'atu'l-Rizwan. On previous nights you argued that the Sahaba (companions) were like stars, and should we follow any of them, we would be rightly guided. You now admit that this is not true. Second, you have said that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha repented of her action. It is only a hollow claim. While the revolt, battle and the slaughter of the Muslims are unanimously accepted, there is no evidence for her repentance.

A'YESHA PREVENTS BURIAL OF IMAM HASAN NEAR THE HOLY PROPHET

Of course, it is a fact that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha was restless. She committed many foolish mistakes. But you claim that she repented of her fault and, being ashamed, confined herself to her house. But if this were true, why did she treat the body of the grandson of the Holy Prophet so shamefully?

We have discussed how she vexed the Holy Prophet and how she subsequently went into battle mounted on a camel to fight against his successor. But later, this time mounted on a mule she stopped the corpse of the elder grandson of the Holy Prophet from moving ahead for burial near the Holy Prophet. Your own eminent ulema and historians, including Yusuf Sibt Ibn Jauzi in his *Tadhkira Khawasu'l-Umma*, p.122; Allama Mas'udi, author of *Muruju'z-Dhahab*, in *Isbatu'l-Wasiyya*, p.136; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol. IV, p.18, reporting from Abu'l-Faraj and Yahya Bin Hasan, author of *Kitabu'n-Nasab*; Muhammad Khwawind Shah in his *Rauzatu's-Safa*, and many others have written that when the corpse of Imam Hasan was being transported to Medina, A'yesha, mounted on a mule and accompanied by a group of the Bani Umayya and their slaves, stopped the group with Imam Hasan's body. They said that they would not let Imam Hasan be buried by the side of the Holy Prophet. According to the report of Mas'udi, Ibn Abbas said: "It is strange of you, A'yesha! Was not the Day of Jamal, that is, your entering the battlefield mounted on a camel, sufficient for you? Now should the people also keep in memory the Day of Baghl (mule)?"

Mounted on a mule, you have stopped the bier of the son of the Holy Prophet. One day mounted on a camel, another mounted on a mule, you have torn asunder the modesty of the Holy Prophet of Allah. Are you determined to destroy the Light of Allah? But surely Allah perfects His light however unpleasant it is to the polytheists; verily, we are Allah's and to Him shall we return."

Some people have written that Ibn Abbas said to her: "One time you mounted a camel and one time a mule. If you live longer, you will also mount an elephant (that is you will fight against Allah)! Though out of one-eighth you have one-ninth share, yet you took possession of the whole."

The Bani Hashim drew their swords and intended to drive them away. But Imam Husain intervened and said that his brother had told him that he did not want a drop of blood to be spilled because of his funeral

procession. Accordingly, the corpse was taken back from there and buried in Baqi' (a cemetery in Medina still visited by pilgrims today).

A'YESHA'S PROSTRATION AT MARTYRDOM OF AMIRU'L-MU'MININ

If A'yesha repented of her revolt against Amiru'l-Mu'minin why did she perform a prostration of thanks when she heard the news of the Holy Imam's martyrdom? Abu'l-Faraj Ispahani, author of Aghani, writing about the Holy Imam in his Maqatilu't-Talibin, says: "When A'yesha heard the news of the martyrdom of Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali, she offered a prostration (of thanks)." Later however, she asked the informant who had killed Ali. She was told that it was Abdu'r-Rahman Ibn Muljim of the Bani Murad clan. Instantly she recited the following couplet: "If Ali is away from me, the news of his death was brought by a slave, who may not have dust in his mouth."

Zainab, daughter of Umme Salma, was present at that time. She asked A'yesha if it was proper for her to express her jubilation and utter such words about Ali. It was a bad thing. A'yesha replied that she was not in her senses and that she uttered those words through forgetfulness. "If such a thing appears in me again and I repeat those things, you may remind me, so that I may refrain from doing that."

These facts clearly show that A'yesha did not repent later in life as you have claimed.

Chapter **3**

9th Session - Part 3

CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS OF A'YESHA ABOUT UTHMAN

At this time I recall another thing. You people object to the Shias because they criticize Caliph Uthman for his faults, faults which your own ulema have recorded in their books.

Accordingly, you should not look with favor on Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha either because ulema and historians, like Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol. II, p.77; Mas'udi in his *Kitab-e-Akhiru'z-Zaman* and *Ausat*; Sibti Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkira Khawasu'l-umma*, p.36; Ibn Jarir, Ibn Asakir, and others have written that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha always spoke ill of Uthman, so much so that she called out: "Kill Na'thal (the old dotard)! May Allah kill him, as he has become an infidel." But as soon as Uthman was killed, she, because of her opposition to Ali, began to say: "Uthman has been killed as an oppressed one. By Allah, I will avenge his death. So rise up and help me."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes, "Certainly A'yesha was the greatest enemy of Uthman. So much so that she hung the garment of the Holy Prophet in her house and used to tell the people who came there: "This is the garment of the Holy Prophet of Allah. It has not yet become old, but Uthman has made the Holy Prophet's sunna old and worn out.""

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes that, when A'yesha heard in Mecca the news of Uthman's murder, she said, "May Allah reject him from His mercy. He committed bad actions. And Allah does not oppress His subjects." That is, if He chastises anyone, it is because of his sinful actions.

You hear these remarks from A'yesha about Uthman without any proof and yet you take no notice of it. But if the same words are used by Shias, you immediately call them infidels.

We should take an impartial view of things. It is an established fact that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha bitterly opposed Imam Amiru'l-Mu'minin. When she heard that the Muslims had sworn allegiance to the Holy Imam she said: "The falling of the skies on the earth is better than the establishment of Ali's caliphate. Uthman has been slain as an oppressed one."

Certainly these inconsistent statements indicate an unstable mind.

ALLAH IS MERCIFUL BUT THE BLOOD OF INNOCENT MUSLIMS CANNOT GO UNQUESTIONED

Sheikh: These inconsistencies of Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha have of course been generally reported, but two things are accepted and proved. First, that she had been deceived and that for a brief time she was not mindful of the vicegerency of Ali. She herself said that she had forgotten it and only remembered it at Basra. Second, she repented for her action. Certainly Allah, having forgiven her, will give her a high place in Paradise.

Well-Wisher: I will not repeat what I have already said on the question of repentance. The blood of those Muslims who were killed for no fault, the disgrace and insults they were subjected to, and the plundering of their property will not go unquestioned. It is true that at the place of forgiveness, Allah is most merciful, but at the place of chastisement He is most strict. Apart from this, she herself admitted until her death that she was responsible for all those odious events. As your own ulema have reported, she stipulated in her will that she could not be buried by the side of the Holy Prophet. She knew that she had sponsored many of the disturbances after him. Hakim in his Mustadrak; Ibn Qutayba in his Ma'arif, Muhammad Bin Yusuf Zarandi in his Kitab-e-A'lam bi siratu'n-Nabi and Ibnu'l-Bayya Nishapuri and others have reported that A'yesha exhorted Abdullah bin Zubair in these words: "Bury me beside my sisters in Baqi. I brought about innovations and novelties after the Holy Prophet of Allah."

A'YESHA CANNOT PLEAD LOSS OF MEMORY BECAUSE SHE WAS REMINDED BY UMME SALMA

You said she recollected the virtues of Ali at Basra and had forgotten what the Holy Prophet had forbidden her to do. This is not true. You should consult the authentic books of your own prominent ulema. For example, refer to Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol. II, p.77, by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid reports from the Ta'rikh-e-Abi Makhnaf Lut Bin Yahya Azadi that Umme Salma also was present in Mecca when she heard that A'yesha intended to take vengeance for the murder of Uthman and was going to Basra. She was shocked at this and began proclaiming the merits of Ali in all congregations. A'yesha went to Umme Salma in order to win her over to her point of view before leaving for Basra.

Umme Salma said to her, "Until yesterday you were abusing Uthman and calling him a stupid dotard, and now you have turned against Ali to avenge Uthman's murder. Are you not aware of Ali's virtues? If you have forgotten them, I would recall them to you."

"Remember the day, when I came to your room along with the Holy Prophet of Allah? Then Ali came in and began talking privately with the Holy Prophet. When the private talk continued for some time, you got up to scold the Holy Prophet. I dissuaded you from doing that, but you did not pay any attention to my advice. You said to Ali in anger, 'Of every nine days, one is for me, and on that day too you come in and keep him engaged in talking.'

At this the Holy Prophet became so indignant with you that his face became red and he said, 'Get back! I swear by Allah that whoever has any hostility towards Ali, whether he belongs to my house or otherwise, is excluded from Iman (belief).' Then, being ashamed, you turned back."

A'yesha said, "Yes, I remember it."

Umme Salma said: "You may remember that one day you were washing the head of the Holy Prophet, and I was preparing 'hais' (a kind of food). The Holy Prophet raised his head and said: 'Who among you is that sinner who will mount the camel, and at whom the dogs of Haw'ab bark, and who will fall headlong from the Bridge of Sirat?' I then left the 'hais' and said, 'O Holy Prophet of Allah! I seek refuge of Allah and His Holy Prophet from such an action. After this the Holy Prophet, striking you in your back said, 'Eschew this; it is you who will do these deeds.'"

A'yesha said, "Yes, I remember it."

Umme Salma further said, "I remind you that on one of the journeys you and I were with the Holy Prophet. One day Ali was mending the shoes of the Holy Prophet, and we two were sitting in the shade of a tree. It so happened that your father, Abu Bakr, and Umar came and sought permission. You and I went behind the screen. They sat down and after talking for a while said, 'O Holy Prophet of Allah! We do not know the value of your companionship. So we ask you to let us know who will be your successor and caliph, so that after you he may be our guide.'

The Holy Prophet said to them: 'I know his place, rank, and position, but if I introduce him directly, you will reject him as the Bani Israel rejected Aaron.' They both were silent and soon left. After they left we came out. I said to the Holy Prophet, 'Who will be your caliph for them?' The Holy Prophet said, 'He is mending my shoes.' We saw that there was no one except Ali. Then I said, 'O Holy Prophet of Allah! I did not find anybody except Ali.' He said, 'The same Ali is my caliph.'"

A'yesha said, "Yes, I remember it."

Umme Salma then said: "Since you know these hadith, where are you going?" She replied: "I am going to make peace among the people."

It is clear, therefore, that Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha had not been merely deceived by others. She herself caused huge problems and, knowing all these things, she deliberately rose in rebellion even though Umme Salma reminded her of the hadith of the Holy Prophet. Even after admitting the rank and position of Amiru'l-Mu'minin, she left for Basra and created a violent tumult, which resulted in the killing of many Muslims.

HADITH OF MENDING SHOES IS THE GREATEST PROOF OF THE IMAMATE AND CALIPHATE OF ALI

The hadith of mending shoes is the greatest proof for the Imamate and caliphate of Ali.

The Shias make searching inquiries into the affairs of the past 1400 years. With a knowledge of the verses of the Qur'an and the authentic books of the ulema of both sects, they draw fair conclusions. Accordingly, we believe that, although historically Ali was given the fourth place, this apparently inferior position does not affect his superiority nor belittle the importance of the hadith that prove his rightful place as the Prophet's successor.

We also admit that it is a recorded fact of history that Abu Bakr (through political devices) was nominated caliph in the Saqifa in the absence of Ali, the Bani Hashim, and other prominent Companions, in spite of the opposition of the Khazraj clan of the Ansars. After that it was through personal dictatorship that Umar and Uthman occupied the seat of the caliphate. But there is a difference. These men were caliphs of the Community; their associates made them caliphs. On the other hand Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali was the caliph of the Holy Prophet and was ordained by Allah and the Holy Prophet to be the vicegerent.

Sheikh: This is unkind of you. There was no difference between them. The very people who unanimously decided to entrust the caliphate to the three caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman also entrusted it to Ali.

DIFFERENCE IN MODE OF APPOINTMENT OF THE FIRST THREE CALIPHS IS PROOF OF INVALIDITY OF THEIR CALIPHATE

Well-Wisher: There were many clear differences in the manner of the appointments of the caliphs. First, you referred to the Ijma.' (unanimous decision). It is unnecessary to repeat my point. I have proved the baselessness of the issue of Ijma' in the previous nights. There was in fact no unanimous decision about the caliphate of any one of them.

OTHER PROOFS FOR INVALIDITY OF CONSENSUS (IJMA')

Second, if you rely on consensus as the basis of the caliphate and consider it permissible from the side of Allah and the Holy Prophet then whenever a caliph died, the whole Community should have gathered together to appoint a caliph. Whoever would have been unanimously elected would have been the caliph of the people (of course not of the Holy Prophet of Allah). And this procedure should have been followed in all ages.

You must, however, acknowledge that such an Ijma or consensus has never been held. Even the incomplete consensus for which the Bani Hashim and the Ansar were not present was not held for any one except Abu Bakr Bin Abi Qahafa. The caliphate of Umar, according to the opinion of all historians and traditionists of Islam, was based on the solitary verdict of Abu Bakr Bin Qahafa. If consensus were a requirement for the appointment of a caliph, why was it not held for entrusting the caliphate to Umar and why was consensus of opinion not obtained thereon?

Sheikh: It is obvious that when Abu Bakr was made the caliph through consensus, the verdict of the caliph for the appointment of his successor was quite valid. There was no need for calling another consensus. Rather, the verdict of every caliph for the appointment of the caliph after him was basically sound and sufficient. This right is vested in the caliph that he might appoint a caliph after him so that the people might not be thrown into confusion and perplexity. Accordingly, when the acknowledged caliph, Abu Bakr, appointed through general agreement, nominated Umar as the next caliph, the latter became the rightful caliph of the Holy Prophet.

HOLY PROPHET'S NOMINATION OF ALI IGNORED AND ABU BAKR'S NOMINATION OF UMAR UPHELD

Well-Wisher: You believe that the acknowledged caliph has the right to nominate his successor. It is his responsibility not to leave the Community confused and unguided, and his decision is sufficient for the appointment of the caliph. But if you believe this, why do you deprive the Holy Prophet of this right? And why do you disregard all those clear indications which the Holy Prophet explicitly and repeatedly gave on different occasions, naming Ali as his successor, and which are all present in your authentic books. You simply sidetrack the issue and advance irrelevant interpretations just as Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has rejected the hadith of Umme Salma on ridiculous grounds.

Moreover on what basis can you claim that the first caliph, who was appointed by means of consensus, had the right to nominate his successor. Did the Holy Prophet give any such instruction? No. You also claim that when the first caliph secured his appointment through consensus, there was no need for the appointment of other of the caliphs through ijma. The same caliphs had the authority from the Community to nominate the caliph after them.

OBJECTION TO MAJLIS-E-SHURA (CONSULTATIVE BODY)

If that were so, why was that principle adopted for the caliphate of Umar alone? For the caliphate of Uthman this principle was not followed. Instead of nominating a caliph after him, Umar left the question to be decided by a consultative body of six members. I do not know what you consider the principle on which the selection of a caliph is based. You know that if there are basic differences in the arguments, the real issue becomes void.

If your position is that the basis of the caliphate is consensus and the entire Community should unanimously make the decision (not to mention the fact that such a consensus was not held for the caliphate of Abu Bakr) why then was such a consensus not held for the caliphate of Umar? If you consider that consensus was necessary only for the first caliphate, and for the appointment of the future caliphs the verdict of the elected caliph was sufficient, then why was this principle not followed in the case of Uthman? Why did Caliph Umar abandon the principle enunciated by Abu Bakr? Why did he leave the selection of the caliph to a Majlis-e-Shura (a consultative committee)? Caliph Umar arbitrarily nominated the committee though it should have been the representative body of the community (so that there might be some slight representation of the views of the majority).

OBJECTION TO ABDU'R-RAHMAN BIN AUF BEING ARBITER

The most surprising thing is that the rights of all other members of the committee were made subservient to Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Auf. We do not know what was the basis of Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Auf's selection. Was it religion, reputation, knowledge, or performance? We can only note that he was a near relation of Uthman and would not support any one else except him. It was decided that what Abdu'r-Rahman said was right, and when he swore allegiance to somebody, all others must follow him.

ACCORDING TO THE HOLY PROPHET, ALI SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN PREFERENCE TO ALL THE OTHERS

When we consider the matter carefully we find that it was a dictatorial order issued under the guise of Shura (consultation). Even today we see that the principles of democracy are completely contrary to it. But the Holy Prophet repeatedly said, "Ali revolves round the truth and truth revolves around Ali." Also the Holy Prophet said: "Ali is the 'Faruq' (Discriminator) of this Community and draws a distinction between right and wrong." Hakim in his Mustadrak, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim in Hilya; Tabrani in Ausat; Ibn Asakir in Ta'rikh; Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in Kifayatu't-Talib; Muhibu'd-din Tabari in Riyazu'n-Nuzra; Hamwaini in Fara'id; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha and Suyuti in Durru'l-Mansur narrate from Ibn Abbas, Salman, Abu Dharr and Hudhaifa that the Holy Prophet said, "Soon after me a disturbance will take place. On that occasion it will be necessary for you to attach yourselves to Ali Bin Abi Talib since he is the first man who will clasp hands with me on the Day of Judgement. He is the most truthful one and is the Faruq of his Community; he draws a distinction between right and wrong, and he is the chief of the believers."

According to a hadith from Ammar Yasir (to which I have referred earlier with full details of its sources) the Holy Prophet said: "If all the people go one way and Ali goes the other, you should follow Ali and leave all the others. O Ammar! Ali will not misguide you and will not lead you to destruction O Ammar! Obedience to Ali is obedience to me, and obedience to me is obedience to Allah."

WORST INJUSTICE DONE BY UMAR TO AMIRU'L-MU'MININ'S POSITION

Even then, Caliph Umar, defying the instructions of the Holy Prophet, makes Ali subordinate to Abdu'r-Rahman in the Shura. Is that authority justified which repudiates the distinguished Companions? Respected men! Be fair! Study the historical accounts of this period, such as Isti'ab, Isaba and Hilyatu'l-Auliya. Then compare Ali with Abdu'r-Rahman, and see whether he deserved to have the right of veto or Amiru'l-Mu'minin. You will find that it was through political manipulation that Ali's right was usurped.

Moreover, if the method of selection adopted by Caliph Umar Bin Khattab was worth following, that is, if the Majlis-e-Shura was necessary for the appointment of the caliph, why was it not done when Amiru'l-Mu'minin was made caliph?

It is strange that for the caliphate of the four caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali) four different methods were adopted. Now which of those methods was basically right and which one was void? If you say that all four methods were justified, then you must admit that you have no fundamental principle for the establishment of the caliphate.

Sheikh: Perhaps your statements are correct. You say we should deeply ponder this question. We find that the caliphate of Ali is also of a dubious nature since the kind of consensus, which appointed the previous caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman also elected Ali caliph.

Well-Wisher: What you say might be considered tenable were it not for the statement of the Holy Prophet. In fact the caliphate of Ali did not depend upon the ijma'(consensus) of the Community. It was ordained by Allah.

CALIPHATE OF ALI WAS ORDAINED BY ALLAH

The Holy Imam assumed the caliphate by way of taking back his right. If somebody's right has been usurped, he may take it back whenever he gets the opportunity to do so. Accordingly, when there were no obstructions and the atmosphere demanded it, the Holy Imam secured his right.

If you have forgotten the points we have made previously, you may consult the newspapers, which reported information we presented regarding this issue. We have proved that Ali's occupying the caliphate was based on Qur'anic verses and on the hadith of the Holy Prophet.

You cannot cite a single hadith accepted by both sects in which the Holy Prophet said that Abu Bakr, Umar, or Uthman were his successors. Of course, apart from hadith in Shia books, there are a large number of hadith from the Holy Prophet recorded in your own authentic books, which show that the Holy Prophet expressly appointed Ali as his successor.

Sheikh: There are also hadith which show that the Holy Prophet said that Abu Bakr was his caliph.

Well-Wisher: Apparently you have forgotten my argument of previous nights which disproves the acceptability of those hadith. I will, however, reply again tonight. Sheikh Mujaddidu'din Firuzabadi, the author of Qamusu'l-Lughat says in his Kitab-e-Safaru's-Sa'adat: "What ever has been said in praise of Abu Bakr is based on such fictitious stories that common sense does not admit them as true."

If you properly scrutinize the problem of the caliphate, you will find that there was actually no consensus for any of the four major caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) or for any of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs. The whole Community was never assembled nor were representatives of the entire community gathered together to cast their vote. But, comparatively speaking, we find that Ali's caliphate was supported by what was very close to consensus. Your own historians and ulema write that for the caliphate of Abu Bakr at first only Umar and Abu Ubaida Jarra, the grave digger, were present. Later some of the Aus clan swore allegiance to him only because they were opposed to the Khazraj clan which had nominated Sa'd Bin Ubaida as a candidate. Later on others through intimidation, (as I have stated in detail earlier) and another group prompted by political considerations swore allegiance to Abu Bakr. The Ansars, who followed Sa'd Bin Ubaida, did not acknowledge the caliphate till the last moment. Then the caliphate of Umar was founded only on Abu Bakr's proposal, which had nothing to do with

consensus. Uthman subsequently became caliph through the decision of the Majlis-e-Shura (consultative committee) which had been arbitrarily formed by Caliph Umar.

At the time of Ali's caliphate a majority of the representatives of most of the Islamic countries, who by chance had come to Medina to seek redress of grievances, insisted on Ali being the caliph.

Nawab: Did the representatives of the Islamic countries gather in Medina for the purpose of electing their caliph?

Well-Wisher: No. Caliph Uthman was still caliph. Representatives of most of the major Muslim tribes and clans assembled in Medina to complain of the atrocities of the Umayyad governors, officers, and other notables of the court, like Marwan. The result of this consensus was that Uthman, who persisted in his oppressive policies, was murdered.

It was after this affair that the people of Medina approached Ali and with insistent entreaties brought him to the mosque, where all the people swore allegiance to him. Such an open consensus had not been held for any of the caliphate of any of the first three caliphs. The people of Medina and the leaders of the nations swore allegiance to a particular person and acknowledged him as their caliph.

REAL BASIS OF ALI'S CALIPHATE IS NOT CONSENSUS BUT THE HOLY PROPHET'S DECLARATIONS

But despite this consensus held for Amiru'l-Mu'minin, we do not consider it the basis of his caliphate. To validate his caliphate we rely only on the Holy Qur'an and the ordinances of the Holy Prophet. It was a practice of the Prophets that they themselves, in accordance with the command of Allah, appointed their successor and caliph.

You said that there was no difference between Amiru'l-Mu'minin and other caliphs. And yet there are many indications that there was a vast difference between Ali and other caliphs.

ALI WAS SUPERIOR TO ALL THE OTHER CALIPHS

The first characteristic of Amiru'l-Mu'minin which made him distinctly superior to other caliphs was that he was appointed the Prophet's successor by Allah and His Prophet. All others were appointed by small groups of people. Obviously the caliph appointed by Allah and His Holy Prophet must be superior to those who have been appointed by the people. Of course the most distinguishing characteristic of Amiru'l-Mu'minin was the superiority of his knowledge, virtue, and piety. All the ulema of the community (except a few Kharijis, Nasibis, and followers of Abu Bakr) are unanimous in their view that, after the Holy Prophet, Ali surpassed all others in knowledge, virtue, justice, nobility, and piety.

In support of this fact, I have previously quoted a number of hadith and verses from the Holy Qur'an. Now I have recalled still another hadith regarding this point.

HADITH OF HOLY PROPHET REGARDING ALI'S SUPERIORITY

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad, Abu'l-Mu'ayyid Muwaffaq Ibn Ahmad Khawarizmi in the fourth chapter of the Manaqib; Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i in Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Hafiz Abu Bakr Baihaqi Shafi'i in his Sunan, and many others have narrated from the Holy Prophet in slightly different words and versions that he said: "Ali among you is the most learned scholar, the most virtuous man, and the best judge. He who rejects his statement, action, or opinion, really rejects me. He who rejects me, rejects Allah, and he is within the confines of polytheism." Moreover, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali, who is one of your eminent ulema, has written in many places in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha that the superiority of Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali was the belief of many companions and followers. The Sheikhs (the chiefs) of Baghdad also acknowledged it.

Would you kindly let me know what you consider to be the virtues in man which make him superior to others?

Sheikh: In fact there are many virtues and praiseworthy qualities which can claim superiority to others, but in my opinion the most meritorious qualities after believing in Allah and the Holy Prophet are these: (1) pure ancestry (2) knowledge, and (3) piety.

Well-Wisher: Allah bless you! I will confine my discussion to these three points.

Of course every companion, whether he was the caliph or not, had some distinctive quality. But those who possessed all these virtues were definitely superior to all others. If I prove that in these three characteristics it was Amiru'l-Mu'minin who excelled all others, then you must admit this holy man was the worthiest claimant for the caliphate. And if he was deprived of the caliphate, it was because of political contrivances.

ALI'S PURE ANCESTRY

In the matter of ancestry with the exception of the Holy Prophet, no man can compare with Ali. Even some of the fanatical ulema of your sect, like Ala'u'd-din Mulla Ali Bin Muhammad Ushji, Abu Uthman Amr Bin Bahr Jahiz Nasibi, and Sa'idu'd-din Mas'ud Bin Umar Taftazani have said: "We are in awe at the words of Ali who said, 'We are the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet. No one can bear comparison to us.'"

Also, in the second sermon of Nahju'l-Balagha, the Holy Imam after accepting the caliphate said, "No person of this Community can bear comparison with the family of Muhammad. How can those who have received blessings, knowledge, and kindness from them equal them? They are the foundation of religion and the pillars of belief. Those who diverge from the right path turn to them, and those who lag behind, step forward to attach themselves to them. They alone have the exclusive right of vicegerency and Imamate. It was for them alone that the Holy Prophet made his will. They were his rightful inheritors. Now the right has returned to its legitimate claimant and has again reached the place from which it had been removed."

These statements of Amiru'l-Mu'minin about his claim for the caliphate are the best proof for his right to the caliphate.

But these words were not uttered by Amiru'l-Mu'minin alone. Even his opponents have acknowledged the same thing. I have pointed out on a previous night that Mir Seyyed Ali Hamdani reports in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba Mawadda 7, from Abi Wa'il, who reports that Abdullah Bin Umar said: "In pointing out the companions of the Holy Prophet, we mentioned the names of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. A man asked where was Ali's name. We said, 'Ali belongs to the Ahle Bait of the Prophet, and no one can bear comparison with him; he is with the Holy Prophet of Allah in the same rank.'"

Also he narrates from Ahmad Bin Muhammad Kurgi Baghdadi, who said that Abdullah Bin Ahmad Hanbal (the Imam of the Hanbalites) about the Companions who were worthy of praise, he named Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman. He then asked what he thought about Ali Bin Abi Talib. Ahmad Bin Hanbal said, "He belongs to the Ahle Bait. The others cannot be compared to him."

As for the ancestry of Ali, it has two aspects: one of light and one of the body. So in this respect Ali had a unique position after the Holy Prophet of Allah.

Chapter **4**

9th Session - Part 4

ALI'S CREATION FROM LIGHT AND HIS ASSOCIATION WITH THE HOLY PROPHET

From the point of view of light, Amiru'l-Mu'minin occupied the foremost place, as many of your illustrious ulema point out. Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamdani Faqih Shafi'i in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba; Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in his Manaqib and Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-Su'ul Fi Manaqib-e-alu'r-Rasul narrate from the Holy Prophet that he said, "I and Ali Bin Abi Talib both were a single light in the presence of Allah 14,000 years before the creation of Adam. When Allah created Adam, he deposited that light in Adam's loins. We remained together as one light until we separated in Abu'l-Muttalib's loins. Then I was endowed with Prophethood and Ali with the caliphate."

Mir Seyyed Ali Hamdani Faqih Shafi'i in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Mawadda VII, mentions this point. "Ali and the Holy Prophet are from one Light. Ali was endowed with such qualities as were not given to any one else in all the world."

Among hadith which have been recorded in this Mawadda, there is a report from the third Caliph, Uthman Bin Affan, who said that the Holy Prophet said, "I and Ali were created from one light 4,000 years before the creation of Adam. When Allah created Adam, He deposited that light into Adam's loins. We remained as one light until we were separated in Abdu'l-Muttalib's loins. Then I was endowed with prophethood and Ali with vicegerency."

In another hadith he writes that the Holy Prophet, addressing Ali, said: "So prophethood and messengership came to me. Vicegerency and the Imamate came to you, Ali."

The same hadith has been narrated by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol.II, p.450 (printed in Egypt) from the author of Kitab-e-Firdaus. Also Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, part I, reports from Jam'u'l-Fawa'id, Manaqib of Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i, Firdaus of Dailami, Fara'idu's-Simtain of Hamwaini and Manaqib of Khawarizmi, with slight difference in wording but not in purport, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Ali were created from light thousands of years before the creation of the universe and that both of them were one light until they were separated from each other in the loins of Abdu'l-Muttalib. One part was placed in the loins of Abdullah and through it was born the Holy Prophet. The other part was placed in the loins of Abu Talib and through it was born Ali. Muhammad was

selected for prophethood and Ali for vicegerency, as was disclosed by the Holy Prophet himself.

Abu'l-Mu'ayyid Mu'affaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi and many others have reported from reliable sources that the Holy Prophet said: "I and Ali were born of one light. We remained together until we reached the loins of Abu Talib where we were separated from each other."

ALI'S PHYSICAL ANCESTRY

So far as Ali's physical creation was concerned, he was evidently of the most exalted rank from both his maternal and paternal side. All of his forefathers back to Adam himself were worshipers of Allah. This light never settled in an impure loins or womb. None of the other companions can make such a claim. The lineage of Ali is as follows:

(1) Ali Bin (2) Abu Talib Bin (3) Abdu'l-Muttalib (4) Hashim (5) Abd-e-Manaf (6) Qusai (7) Kilab (8) Murra (9) Ka'b (10) Luwai (11) Ghalib (12) Fehr (13) Malik (14) Nazr (15) Kinana (16) Khazima (17) Madreka (18) Ilyas (19) Muzar (20) Nizar (21) Ma'd (22) Adnan (23) Awwad (24) Al-Yasa' (25) Al-Hamis (26) Bunt (27) Sulayman (28) Haml (29) Qidar (30) Isma'il (31) Ibrahim Khalil-Ullah (32) Ta'rikh (33) Tahur (34) Sharu (35) Abraghu (36) Taligh (37) Abir (38) Shale' (39) Arfakhad (40) Sam (41) Noah (42) Lumuk (43) Mutu Shalkh (44) Akhnukh (45) Yarad (46) Mahla'il (47) Qinan (48) Anush (49) Seth (50) Adam Abu'l-Bashir.

Except for the Holy Prophet, no one else had such a brilliant ancestry.

AZAR WAS ABRAHAM'S FATHER

Sheikh: You have said that all the ancestors of Ali were monotheists. I think you are mistaken. Some of his ancestors were idol worshipers. For instance Abraham Khalilullah's father, Azar, worshipped idols. The Holy Qur'an clearly says "And when Abraham said to his father, Azar: 'Do you take idols for gods? Surely I see you and your people in manifest error.'"

Well-Wisher: You repeat what your elders have said although you know that the scholars of genealogy unanimously agree that Abraham's father was Tarukh, and not Azar.

Sheikh: But this is ijtiḥād (reasoning based on your own judgement) in face of divine ordinance. You are putting forward the views of the scholars of genealogy in opposition to the Holy Qur'an, which clearly says that Abraham's father was Azar, who was an idol worshiper.

Well-Wisher: I never argue in opposition to divine law. My aim is to know the real interpretation of the Qur'an. In order to accomplish this, I seek guidance from those who are equal to the Holy Qur'an as sources of guidance, the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet. The word in the holy verse has been used in the general sense because in the general sense even the uncle and the mother's husband are also called "father."

There are two views about Azar. One is that he was Abraham's uncle and the second is that in addition to being his uncle, after the death of Abraham's father, Tarukh, he married Abraham's mother. Hence Abraham used to address him as his father, since he was his uncle as well as his mother's husband.

Sheikh: We cannot ignore the explicit meaning of the Holy Qur'an, unless we find its other meaning in the Qur'an itself, clearly indicating that uncle or mother's husband are also called 'father'. If you fail to produce such evidence (and certainly you will fail), your argument will be unacceptable.

Well-Wisher: There are instances in the Holy Qur'an where words have been used in their general sense. For example, verse 133 of chapter II, Baqara (The Cow) of the Holy Qur'an supports my point. It records the questions and answers of the Prophet Jacob with his sons at the time of his death. It says: " When he said to his sons: What will you serve after me? They said: we will serve your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Isma'il and Isaac, the one God only, and to Him do we submit." (2:133)

In this verse the proof of my claim is the word Isma'il. According to the Holy Qur'an, Jacob's father was Isaac and Isma'il was his uncle, but, according to the general practice, he used to call him his father. Since the sons of Jacob also according to the general practice, called their uncle their father, they used the same word in reply to his father. God reported their question and answer as it was. Similarly, Abraham also used to call his uncle and his mother's husband, 'father', although, according to strong evidence of historical and genealogical accounts, it is an acknowledged fact that Abraham's father was not Azar, but Tarukh.

FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF THE HOLY PROPHET WERE NOT POLYTHEISTS BUT THEY WERE ALL BELIEVERS

The second proof of the fact that the Holy Prophet's ancestors were not polytheists and infidels is verse 219 of Chapter 26 of Shu'ara (The Poets) which says, "And your turning over and over among those who prostrate themselves to Allah." (26:219)

Concerning the meaning of this holy verse Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, vol.II, and many others of your ulema have narrated from Ibn Abbas, who said, "Allah transferred particles of the being of the Holy Prophet from Adam's loins to successive prophets, one after the other, all of whom were monotheists, until He made him appear from his father's loins through nika (lawful wedlock) and not unlawfully."

There is also a well known hadith which all of your ulema have narrated. Even Imam Tha'labi, who is called the Imam of traditionists, writes in his commentary and Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, vol. II, narrates from Ibn Abbas, that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah sent me to the earth in the loins of Adam and transferred me to the loins of Abraham. He continued transferring me from the distinguished and exalted loins to pure wombs until He created me from my father and mother, who never met unlawfully."

In another hadith he is reported to have said, "Allah never mixed in me any base element of ignorance."

In the same chapter Sulayman Balkhi reports from Ibkaru'l-Afkar of Sheikh Salahu'd-din Bin Zainu'd-din Bin Ahmad known as Ibnu's-Sala Halbi and from Sharh-e-Kibrit-e-Ahmar of Sheikh Abdu'l-Qadir narrating from Ala'u'd-Dowlat Semnani, a detailed hadith from Jabir Ibn Abdullah that the Holy Prophet was asked about what Allah created first. He answered the question in detail, which I cannot relate at this time. Towards the end of the hadith the Holy Prophet said: "Similarly, Allah continued transferring my light from pure side to pure side, until He deposited me in my father, Abdullah Bin Abdu'l-Muttalib. From there He brought me to the womb of my mother, Amina. Then He caused me to appear in this world and conferred upon me the title of Sayidu'l-Mursal-in (the chief of the Messengers) and Khatamu'n-Nabiyyin (the Seal of the Prophets)."

The Holy Prophet's statement that he continued to be transferred from pure one to pure one proves that none of his forefathers was an infidel.

According to the Holy Qur'an, which says: "Verily, the polytheists are polluted ones," (9:28) every infidel and polytheist is polluted. He said that he was transferred from pure wombs to pure wombs. Since idol worshipers are not pure, it follows that none of his forefathers was an idol worshiper.

In the same chapter of Yanabiu'l-Mawadda a hadith from Ibn Abbas is reported via Kabir that the Holy Prophet said: "I was not born through the unlawful wedlock of the days of ignorance. I was born through the Islamic ways of Nika."

Have you not read sermon 105 of Nahju'l-Balagha?. The Commander of the Faithful says about the forefathers of the Holy Prophet: "Allah provided for them (i.e., the Prophets) the best place (the loins of their forefathers) and gave them the best placements (the holy wombs of their mothers). He transferred them from distinguished and respectable loins to pure wombs. When the father of any of them passed away, his son succeeded him with the religion of Allah, until Allah Almighty made Muhammad His Prophet and Messenger. So He made the source of the Holy Prophet's creation the most exalted one. The Holy Prophet's lineage included His Prophets who were of high rank."

In short, the ancestors of the Holy Prophet, back to the Prophet Adam, were all believers and monotheists. It is quite obvious that the people of the Ahle Bait (the Progeny) of the Holy Prophet knew more about the status of their forefathers than others knew.

ALI'S FOREFATHERS WERE EQUALLY FREE FROM POLYTHEISM

When it is proved that the ancestors of the Holy Prophet were believers and monotheists, it naturally follows that Ali's ancestors were also worshipers of Allah. I have already proved through your own books that Muhammad and Ali were from one light and always remained together in pure loins and wombs until they were separated from each other in the loins of Abdu'l-Muttalib. Every sensible man would admit that such a distinguished personality was the rightful claimant to the caliphate.

MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT ABU TALIB'S FAITH CLARIFIED

Sheikh: I accept the fact that Tarukh was Abraham's father, and you have proved the purity of the Holy Prophet's ancestors. But it is not possible to find such evidence in the case of Ali. Even if we admit that all of his ancestors down to Abdu'l-Muttalib were monotheists, his father, Abu Talib, certainly left this world an infidel.

Well-Wisher: I admit that there are differing opinions among the community concerning Abu Talib's faith. But we should say, "O Allah! curse the first tyrant who showed injustice to Muhammad and curse his descendants. Allah's curse be on him who fabricated hadith with the result that the Nasibis and Kharijis began to claim that Abu Talib left this world an unbeliever.

The Shia ulema in general and all the members of the entire family of the Holy Prophet believe in the faith of Abu Talib. Also, many of your scholars and fair minded ulema, like Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Jalalu'd-din Suyuti, Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi, Abu Ja'far Askafi, their teachers from the Mu'tazali sect, and Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Faqih Shafi'i - all agree that Abu Talib was a Muslim.

SHIA CONSENSUS REGARDING BELIEF OF ABU TALIB

The Shia believe that Abu Talib, from the very beginning, believed in the Holy Prophet. The Shia, following the holy Ahle Bait, acknowledge with one accord "Abu Talib never worshipped an idol; he was one of the successors of Abraham." The same view has also been expressed in the authentic books of your own ulema. For instance, Ibn Athir says in his *Jam'u'l-usul*: "According to the holy Ahle Bait among all the uncles of the Holy Prophet, only Hamza, Abbas, and Abu Talib accepted Islam.

The common agreement of the holy Ahle Bait regarding a point must be considered decisive. The Hadith-e-Thaqalain and other hadith which I have referred to on previous nights clearly prove that the Holy Prophet made clear statements regarding his family's infallibility. They were the parallels of the Holy Qur'an and one of the Thaqalain (two weighty things) which the Prophet left as sources of infallible guidance for his people. It is necessary for all Muslims to adhere to them so that they may not be led astray.

Second, according to the saying "The people of the house know better about family matters," this exalted family knew more about the belief of their forefathers than Mughira Bin Sha'ba, the Bani Umayya, the Kharijis and Nasibis, or other uninformed people.

It is really surprising that your ulema do not accept statements of the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet, including the chief of the pious, the Commander of the Faithful, to whose veracity and truthfulness Allah and the Holy Prophet testified. All say that Abu Talib died a believer. You do not believe that, but you accept the word of the confirmed liar and sinner, Mughira, some Amawis, Kharijis, and Nasibis.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali, who is one of your accredited ulema, says in his *Shahr-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.III, p.310: "There is a difference of opinion concerning the Islam of Abu Talib. The Imamiyya sect and most of the Zaidiyyas say that he left this world a Muslim. Apart from the entire Shia ulema, some of our own chief ulema, like Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi and Abu Ja'far Askafi hold the view that Abu Talib embraced Islam, but he did not reveal his belief so that he might give full support to the Holy Prophet and, because of his (Abu Talib's) influence, the opponents might not block the Holy Prophet's way."

MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT CONCOCTED HADITH OF ZUHZAH CLARIFIED

Sheikh: Apparently you are not familiar with the "Hadith of Zuhzah" which says: "Abu Talib is in the fire of Hell."

Well-Wisher: This is a fabricated hadith invented during the period of Mu'awiya Bin Abu Sufyan by some of the enemies of the Holy Prophet. Later the Bani Umayya and their followers continued their efforts to fabricate hadith against Ali Bin Abi Talib and circulated them among the people. They did not allow Abu Talib's belief to become well known like that of Hamza and Abbas. The forger of Hadith Zuhza was one Mughira, who was a sinner and an enemy of the Commander of the Faithful.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.III, pp 159-163; Mas'udi in *Muruju'z-Dhahab* and other ulema write that Mughira committed fornication in Basra. When his witnesses were produced before Caliph Umar, three of them testified against him, but the fourth was tutored to say such things as made his evidence unacceptable. Accordingly, the three other witnesses had to suffer the prescribed penalty, and Mughira was acquitted.

The author of this hadith, however, was a fornicator and drunkard upon whom the penalty prescribed by religion was about to be inflicted. He invented hadith because of his opposition to the Commander of the Faithful and to flatter Mu'awiya. Mu'awiya and his followers and other Umayyads strengthened this spurious hadith and began testifying that "Abu Talib is in the fire of Hell."

Moreover, those connected with the narration of this hadith like Abdu'l-Malik Bin Umar, Abdu'l-Aziz Rawandi and Sufyan Thawri, are weak and unacceptable reporters. This fact has been verified by your own eminent commentator and scholar, Zahi, who has expressed this view in his *Mizanu'l-I'tidal*, vol.II. So how can one rely on a hadith like this, which has been narrated by such notorious liars and weak reporters?

Chapter **5**

9th Session - Part 5

EVIDENCE FOR ABU TALIB'S BELIEF

There is plenty of evidence to prove the belief of Abu Talib.

(1) The Holy Prophet says in a hadith (joining his two fingers): "I and the supporter of the orphan are together in Paradise like these two fingers."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid also has reported this hadith in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.IV, p.312, where he says that it is obvious that the Holy Prophets statement does not mean all supporters of orphans, since most of the supporters of orphans are sinners. So the Holy Prophet meant by it Abu Talib and his distinguished grandfather, Abdu'l-Muttalib, who looked after the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet was known in Mecca as the yatim (orphan) of Abu Talib because after the passing away of Abdu'l-Muttalib, the Prophet, from the age of eight, had been in the care of Abu Talib.

(2) There is a well known hadith which both the Shia and Sunni sects have narrated in different ways. Some of them say that the Holy Prophet said: "Gabriel came to me and gave me good news in these words: 'Allah has definitely exempted from the fire the loins through which you appeared, the womb which sustained you, the breasts which suckled you, and the lap which supported you.'"

Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani in his *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba*, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, and Qazi Shukani in his *Hadith-e-Qudsi* have reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Gabriel came to me and said 'Allah sends greetings to you and says verily He has exempted from the fire the loins which gave you shelter, the womb which sustained your weight, and the lap which supported you.'"

These reports and hadith clearly prove the faith of the Prophet's supporters, namely, Abdu'l-Muttalib, Abu Talib and his wife Fatima Bint Asad, and also the Holy Prophet's father, Abdullah, and mother, Amina Bint Wahhab, and his wet nurse, Halima.

IBN ABI'L-HADID'S COUPLETS IN PRAISE OF ABU TALIB

(3) Your great scholar, Izzu'd-din Abdu'l-Hamid Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali, composed the following couplets in praise of Abu Talib. They are recorded in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol.III, p.318: "Without Abu Talib and his son (Ali Bin Abi Talib), Islam would have no distinction or strength. Abu Talib protected the Holy Prophet in Mecca and supported him and Ali in Medina. Abda'l-Manaf (Abi Talib) by order of his father Abdu'l-Muttalib, continued taking care of the Holy Prophet and Ali and perfected those efforts.

When Abu Talib died through Allah's will, it did not cause any loss because he left his fragrance (Ali) as his memory. Abu Talib initiated outstanding services in the way of Allah, and Ali perfected them for the sake of Allah.

Abu Talib's eminence cannot be harmed by the foolish utterances of people, or by the willful suppression of his virtues (by his opponents), just as when a man calls the light of day darkness, the light will not be affected."

COUPLETS OF ABU TALIB PROVE HIS ISLAM

(4) Similarly, the couplets Abu Talib himself composed in praise of the Holy Prophet are a clear proof of his faith. Some of these couplets have been recorded by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.III, p.316. Moreover, your prominent ulema, like Sheikh Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi and Abu Ja'far Askafi, have produced them as evidence for Abu Talib's belief.

Abu Talib wrote: "I seek shelter in Allah from those who rail at us or attribute profanity to us, from the sinner who speaks ill of us, and from the person who associates things in religion from which we are aloof.

I swear by the House of Allah that he lies who says that we shall leave Muhammad, though we have not yet fought against his enemy with the sword and lance.

We will indeed help him until we have crushed his enemy. We will offer such sacrifice that we will forget our wife and children.

His light is such that through the brightness of his face we invoke the shower of Allah's mercy.

He comes to the assistance of orphans; he is the refuge of widows. The helpless people of the Bani Hashim go to him for help and are blessed with all kinds of favors.

I swear by my life that I have a passionate love for Ahmad. I love him like a pure friend.

I found my self fit for sacrifice to him, so I helped him as he is an ornament for the people of the world, a curse for enemies, and a grace for society.

May the Creator of the World support him with His help and reveal His religion, which is the way to Allah, and in which there is not a particle of wrong."

There are some special couplets of Abu Talib which Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.III, p.312, and others have quoted in proof of his belief. In his panegyric, he says:

"These people expect us to fight against Islam with sword and lance; they think that we will kill Muhammad. But our faces have not yet been colored with blood in his help. I swear by the House of Allah that you have told me a lie; you may fall into disaster. Hatim and Zamzam may fill to the brim with severed heads. Injustice is being done to the Prophet, who has been sent by Allah to guide the people. He has been given the book, which has been revealed by the Lord of the Sky."

Apart from these clear evidences, which prove the faith of Abu Talib, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.III, p.315, quotes the following couplets:

"You bear witness to the existence of Allah! Bear witness that verily I follow the religion of the Prophet of Allah, namely, Ahmad. Others may be misled in their religion, but I am one of these who are guided."

Gentlemen! Be fair and tell us if the writer of such couplets can be called an infidel.

Sheikh: These couplets are not acceptable for two reasons. First, there is no continuity of narration about them. Second, it was nowhere seen that Abu Talib acknowledged Islam. Reporting some of his couplets does not conclusively prove that he was a Muslim.

Well-Wisher: Your objection about lack of continuity of narration is strange. Whenever you wish, you accept a lone report to be reliable and when you do not wish, you use the weapon of lack of continuity.

If you reflect for a moment that if these couplets have not been continuously reported by individuals, even so, taken as a whole, they prove that Abu Talib believed in the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet. There are many such things whose continuity of narration is determined in the same way. For instance, the battles of the Commander of the Faithful and the examples of his bravery also depend upon lone reports. But taken as a whole these reports create the sense of continuity, which gives us the necessary knowledge of his valor. Hatim's generosity and Nushirwan's justice are known in the same way.

Since you are so fond of continuity, please let us know how you would prove that the Hadith of Zuhza has been successively transmitted.

ABU TALIB'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS BELIEF IN ALLAH AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH

As for your second objection, my reply is quite simple. It is necessary to express one's acknowledgement of the unity of Allah, prophethood, the Day of Resurrection, etc. in prose. But if one composes couplets in which he expresses his belief, it is quite sufficient. When Abu Talib said: "You who believe in Allah! Bear witness that verily I follow the religion of the Prophet of Allah, Ahmad," it had the same effect as if he had said it in prose.

Besides this, he acknowledged his belief at the time of his death in prose as well. Seyyed Muhammad Rasuli Bazranji, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim, and Baihaqi have reported that a party of the chiefs of the Quraish, including Abu Jahl and Abdullah Ibn Abi Umayya, came to Abu Talib when he was dying. At that time the Holy Prophet said to his uncle Abu Talib: "Say that 'there is no god but Allah,' so that I may bear witness to it before Allah." Instantly Abu Jahl and Abi Umayya said, "Abu Talib! Will you turn away from the creed of Abdu'l-Muttalib?" They repeated these words time and again until he said, "You should know that Abu Talib follows the creed of Abdu'l-Muttalib." The result was that those people went away well pleased. When the signs of death appeared on Abu Talib, his brother Abbas, who was sitting on the edge of his bed, saw that his lips were moving. When he listened to what he said, he heard him saying: "There is no god but Allah." Abbas said to the Holy Prophet: "Nephew! I swear by Allah that my brother (Abu Talib) has said what you ordered him to say." Since Abbas had not himself embraced Islam at that time, he did not utter those words.

We have proved earlier that the ancestors of the Holy Prophet were all believers in the unity of Allah. You should know that it was expedient for Abu Talib to say that he followed the creed of Abdu'l-Muttalib. He satisfied those people, and in reality he acknowledged his faith in the unity of Allah because Abdu'l-Muttalib followed the creed of the Prophet Abraham. Moreover, he did utter the words "There is no god but Allah." If you study the historical facts about Abu Talib, you will certainly acknowledge that he was a believer.

HOLY PROPHET'S CONVERSATION WITH ABU TALIB AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS PROPHETHOOD

On the day of his bi'that (announcement of Prophethood) the Holy Prophet, along with his uncle, Abbas, went to Abu Talib and said to him: "Verily, Allah has ordered me to announce His command; verily, He has made me His Prophet; so how will you treat me?"

Abu Talib was the chief of the Quraish, the Head of the Bani Hashim, and the most veracious man in the eyes of the people of Mecca. He had reared the Holy Prophet. Had he been an infidel, he would have at once opposed him. And if that had not proven sufficient, since the Holy Prophet had come to him to seek help to propagate his prophethood, Abu Talib seeing that it was against his religion, would have confined the Holy Prophet or at least would have turned him out of his place. Such a rejection would have hindered the Holy Prophet from his great resolve. Abu Talib's religion (supposing it to be polytheism) would have been saved, and he would have earned the gratitude of his associates. Abu Talib could have rebuked the Holy Prophet as Azar had done to his nephew the Prophet Abraham.

ABRAHAM'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROPHETHOOD AND HIS CONVERSATION WITH AZAR

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah Almighty tells of the raising up of Abraham Khalilu'r-Rahman as Prophet of Allah. He said to his uncle, Azar, "O my father! Truly knowledge has come to me which has not come to you; therefore follow me, I will guide you on a right path." (19:43) "He said: Do you dislike my gods, O Abraham? If you do not desist, I will certainly revile you; leave me for a long time." (19:46)

ABU TALIB ASSURES HOLY PROPHET OF FULL SUPPORT AND ALSO RECITES COUPLETS IN PRAISE OF ISLAM

But, on the contrary, when the Holy Prophet sought his help, Abu Talib said: "O my nephew! Proceed with your mission. Verily, you are high in rank, strong in your clan and the most exalted in family lineage. I swear by Allah that the tongue which speaks ill of you will be answered by me with sharp swords. By Allah, the whole Arab world will kneel down before you, as an animal humbles itself before its master."

Moreover, he composed the following verses, referring to the Prophet's mission. These have been recorded by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.III, p. 306, and Sibt Ibn Jauzi in his *Tadhkira*, p. 5:

"I swear by Allah that those people with their partisans will never reach you, till I consign them to their graves.

So you should go on performing your duty. I give you the good news of your success. Make your eyes cool with it.

You have called me to your religion. I believe that you have guided me to the right path; you are surely the truthful one and have ever been trustworthy.

You have brought us a religion which I know is the best of all religions.

If I had no fear of taunt and reproach, you would have found me openly supporting you."

These couplets show that Abu Talib recognized Muhammad to be a messenger of Allah. There are however many other similar couplets which Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, and many other ulema, have recorded in their books.

Is a man who recites such couplets an infidel or a true believer?

ABU TALIB WAS A SUPPORTER AND GUARDIAN OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Most of your prominent ulema have recorded this fact. You might consult Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi's *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.52, in which it is reported from Abu Uthman Amr Bin Bahr Jahiz that, writing about Abu Talib, he said, "Abu Talib was a supporter of the prophethood and messengership of the Holy Prophet. He wrote many couplets in praise of the Holy Prophet. He was the leader of the Quraish."

This clear evidence proves the sincerity of Abu Talib's faith. Of course the Bani Umayya encouraged people to curse the chief of the monotheists, the Commander of the Faithful, and the grandsons of the Holy Prophet, Hasan and Husain. They also fabricated hadith condemning the holy imam and forged reports that his father (Abu Talib), died an infidel. The reporter was the accursed Mughira Bin Sha'ba, an enemy of Ali and friend of Mu'awiya. The Kharijis and Nasibis propagated the view that Abu Talib was an infidel. The simple people were led to believe that it was a correct view. It is strange that they consider Abu Sufyan, Mu'awiya, and Yazid (May Allah's curse be upon them) believers and Muslims, even though there are countless indications to the contrary. And yet they attribute infidelity to Abu Talib in spite of clear proofs which show that he was a firm believer.

NOT PROPER TO CALL MU'AWIYA 'KHALU'L-MU'MININ'

Sheikh: Is it proper for you to call the Khalu'l-Mu'minin (uncle of the believers), Mu'awiya Bin Abu Sufyan "infidel" and always curse him. Will you let us know what evidence you have that Mu'awiya Bin Abu Sufyan and Yazid were infidels and fit to be cursed. These two distinguished men were among the caliphs. In fact Mu'awiya was both Khalu'l-Mu'minin (uncle of the believers) and also Katib-e-Wahi (scribe of revelations).

Well-Wisher: Would you please tell me how Mu'awiya merits the title Khalu'l-Mu'minin (uncles of the believers)?

Sheikh: Since Mu'awiya's sister, Umme Habiba, was the wife of the Holy Prophet and Ummu'l-Mu'minin (mother of believers), her brother Mu'awiya was Khalu'l-Mu'minin.

Well-Wisher: In your opinion was the rank of Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha greater or that of Umme Habiba, sister of Mu'awiya?

Sheikh: Although both were Ummu'l-Mu'minin, A'yesha was definitely superior to Umme Habiba.

Well-Wisher: According to your criteria, all brothers of the wives of the Holy Prophet are Khalu'l-Mu'minin. Then why don't you call Muhammad Bin Abi Bakr Khalu'l-Mu'minin? According to you his father was superior to Mu'awiya, and his sister was also superior to Mu'awiya's sister. No, Mu'awiya's being Khalu'l-Mu'minin has no reality.

MU'AWIYA PRONOUNCES TAKBIR AT IMAM HASAN'S MARTYRDOM

Abu'l-Faraj Ispahani in his *Maqatilu't-Talibin*, Ibn Abdu'l-Bar in his *Isti'ab*, Mas'udi in his *Isbatu'l-Wasiyya*, and many other ulema have reported that Asma Ju'da, by order and promise of Mu'awiya, gave poison to Abu Muhammad Hasan Ibn Ali. Ibn Abdu'l-Bar and Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari have also reported that when Mu'awiya was informed of the demise of the holy imam, he shouted the takbir ("Allah is Great"). Of course, such a damned person should be called Khalu'l-Mu'minin according to you!

MUHAMMAD BIN ABI BAKR WAS KILLED THIRSTY AND BURNT TO ASHES FOR LOVE OF AHLE BAIT

But look at Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr, who was brought up by the Commander of the Faithful and was one of the staunchest friends of the holy Ahle Bait!

Addressing this illustrious family he says: "O descendants of Fatima! You are a place of safety for me and my guardian. It is through you that on the Day of Judgement, the significance of my good actions will be greater. Since my love for you is sincere, I do not mind if somebody barks near me."

Although he was the son of the first caliph, Abu Bakr, and the brother of Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha, he was not call Khalu'l-Mu'minin. He was abused and deprived of his father's legacy!

When Amr Bin As and Mu'awiya Bin Khadij conquered Egypt, the supply of water was cut off to Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr. When he had nearly died of thirst, he was killed. He was then enclosed in the skin of an ass and the bundle was thrown into a fire. When Mu'awiya learned of this, he was very pleased.

Hearing these facts, you do not question why these damned people treated Abu Bakr's son, Khalu'l-Mu'minin Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr, so cruelly. But when Mu'awiya is cursed, you immediately become angry. So you see the opposition to the progeny of the Holy Prophet, and it continues today.

Since Muhammad Bin Abi Bakr was one of the friends of the descendants of the Holy Prophet, you neither call him Khalu'l-Mu'minin nor regret his murder. Since Mu'awiya was the bitterest enemy of the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet, you call him Khalu'l-Mu'minin. Allah save us from such fanatical perversity!

MU'AWIYA WAS NOT A SCRIBE OF WAHI (REVELATION) BUT ONLY OF LETTERS

Second, Mu'awiya was not the writer of Wahi. He embraced Islam in the tenth year of the Hijra when revelation was complete. In fact he was the scribe who wrote letters. He caused immense trouble for the Holy Prophet. In the eighth year of the Hijra when Mecca was conquered and Abu Sufyan embraced Islam, Mu'awiya wrote many letters to his father railing at him because he had accepted Islam. When, however, the whole Arabian peninsula and beyond came under the influence of Islam, Mu'awiya was himself forced to embrace Islam. In doing so he lost all his prestige. Abbas then asked the Holy Prophet to assign Mu'awiya some position so that he might no longer feel humiliated. In view of the recommendation of his uncle, the Holy Prophet appointed him as scribe for the writing of letters.

Chapter **6**

9th Session - Part 6

EVIDENCE FOR MU'AWIYA'S INFIDELITY

Third, there are many suras of the Qur'an and hadith proving that he was an infidel and worthy of curses.

Sheikh: I would like very much to hear these suras and hadith.

Well-Wisher: Only a few will be pointed out. If I narrate them all, it would form a complete book. Muslim, in his Sahih, reports Mu'awiya was a scribe of the Holy Prophet. Mada'ini says: "Sa'id Bin Thabit was the Wahi (revelation) and Mu'awiya used to write the letters of the Holy Prophet to other Arabs."

EVIDENCE FROM SURAS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN AND HADITH MU'AWIYA AND YAZID ARE CURSED

(1) Please refer to ayat 60 of Sura 17 (Bani Israel). Commentators from your own ulema, like Tha'labi, Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi, and others say that the Holy Prophet saw in a dream that the Bani Umayya, like monkeys, ascended and descended his pulpit. Thereafter Gabriel brought this holy ayat: "And when We said to you: Surely your Lord encompasses men. And we did not create the vision which We showed you except as a trial for men and the cursed tree in the Qur'an as well. And we cause them to fear, but it only adds to their grievous transgression." (17:60)

Allah Almighty has called the Bani Umayya, whose leaders were Abu Sufyan and Mu'awiya, the "cursed tree" in the Holy Qur'an. Mu'awiya, who was a strong limb of this tree, was definitely accursed.

(2) Again Allah Almighty says, "But if you held command, you would surely make mischief in the land and cut off the ties of kinship. Those it is whom Allah has cursed so He has made them deaf and blinded their eyes." (47:22-23)

In this verse those who make mischief in the earth and sever the ties of kinship are cursed by Allah. Who was a greater mischief monger than Mu'awiya, whose caliphate was notorious for its evil practices. Besides this, he severed the ties of kinship.

(3) Also Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "Surely as for those who speak evil things of Allah and His Apostle, Allah has cursed them in this world and in the hereafter, and He has prepared them for a chastisement bringing disgrace." (33:57)

Certainly tormenting the Commander of the Faithful and the two grandsons of the Holy Prophet Hasan and Husain as well as Ammar-e-Yasir and other distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet was the equivalent of tormenting the Holy Prophet himself. Since Mu'awiya did torment these pious people, he was, according to the explicit wordings of the verse, definitely accursed in this world and in the hereafter.

(4) In sura Mu'min (The Believer), Allah says: "The day on which their excuse shall not benefit the unjust, and for them is a curse and for them is an evil abode." (40:52)

(5) In the sura Hud, He says: "Now surely the curse of Allah is on the unjust." (11:18)

(6) In the sura Al-A'raf (The Elevated Places) Allah says: "Then a crier will cry out among them that the curse of Allah is on the unjust." (7:44)

Similarly, in many other verses revealed about the unjust ones, it is clear that every unjust one is accursed. I do not think any of you would deny the open injustices perpetrated by Mu'awiya. So the very fact that he was unjust, proves that he deserved Allah's curse in the light of these clear indications we too can curse the one who deserves Allah's curse.

(7) In the sura Nisa (The Women) Allah says: "And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is Hell; he shall abide in it, and Allah will send His wrath on him and curse him and prepare for him a painful chastisement." (4:93)

MURDER OF PROMINENT BELIEVERS, LIKE IMAM HASAN, AMMAR HAJAR BIN ADI MALIK ASHTAR, AND MUHAMMAD BIN ABI BAKR, , BY ORDER OF MU'AWIYA

This holy verse explicitly says that if a man kills a single believer intentionally, he deserves Allah's curse and his abode is in Hell. Wasn't Mu'awiya associated with the murder of believers? Did he not order the killing of Hajar Ibn Adi and his seven companions? Did he not order that Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Hasan Al-Ghanzi be buried alive?

Ibn Asakir and Yaqub Bin Sufyan in their Histories; Baihaqi in his Dala'il; Ibn Abdu'l-Bar in Isti'ab; and Ibn Athir in Kamil have reported that Hajar Bin Adi was one of the eminent companions who, along with seven companions was brutally murdered by Mu'awiya. Their crime was refusing to curse Ali.

Imam Hasan was the elder grandson of the Holy Prophet. Was he not included in Ashab-e-Kisa (people of the mantle)? Was he not one of the two leaders of the youths of Paradise and a believer of exalted rank? According to the reports of Mas'udi, Ibn Abdu'l-Bar, Abu'l-Faraj Ispahani, Tabaqa of Muhammad Bin Sa'd, Tadhkira of Sibt Ibn Jauzi, and other accredited ulema of the Sunnis, Mu'awiya sent poison to Asma' Ju'da and promised her that if she killed Hasan Ibn Ali, he would give her 100,000 dirhams and would marry her to his son Yazid. After the martyrdom of Imam Hasan, he gave her 100,000 dirhams but refused to marry her to Yazid. Would you hesitate to call Mu'awiya accursed? Is it not a fact that in the Battle of Siffin the great companion of the Holy Prophet, Ammar Yasir, was martyred by Mu'awiya's order? All your prominent ulema say with one accord that the Holy Prophet said to Ammar Yasir: "It will not be long before you will be killed by a rebellious and misguided group."

Have you any doubt that thousands of devout believers were killed by Mu'awiya's subordinates? Wasn't the pure and valiant warrior, Malik Ashtar, poisoned by Mu'awiya's order? Can you deny that Mu'awiya's chief officials, Amr Bin As and Mu'awiya Bin Khadij, brutally martyred the Commander of the Faithful's governor, the pious Muhammad Bin Abi Bakr? Not content with that, they put his body into the carcass of a donkey and set it on fire. If I were to give you the details about the believers killed by Mu'awiya and his officials, it would require not one night, but several.

MURDER OF 30,000 BELIEVERS BY BUSR BIN ARTAT ON ORDER OF MU'AWIYA

The greatest atrocity was that of Busr Bin Artat who killed thousands of believers on Mu'awiya's orders.

Abu'l-Faraj Ispahani and Allama Samhudi in Ta'rikhu'l-Medina, Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Asakir and Tabari in their histories; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol.I, and many others of your notable ulema have written that Mu'awiya ordered Busr to attack San'a and Yemen from Medina and Mecca. He gave a similar order to Zuhak Bin Qais Al-Fahri and others. Abu'l-Faraj reports it in these words: "Whoever from the companions and Shia of Ali is found should be killed; even women and children should not be spared." With these strict orders, they set out with a force of 3000 and attacked Medina, San'a', Yemen, Ta'if, and Najran. When they reached Yemen, the governor, Ubaidullah Ibn Abbas, was out of the city. They entered his house and slaughtered his two sons Sulayman and Dawud in the lap of their mother.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol.I, p.121, that in this raid 30,000 people were killed, excluding those who were burnt alive.

Do you gentlemen still doubt that Mu'awiya deserves to be cursed?

MU'AWIYA ORDERED THAT ALI BE CURSED

Among the many clear proofs that Mu'awiya was an infidel and deserved damnation was his public rejection of the Commander of the Faithful and his ordering the people to recite imprecations against the holy Imam in their qunuts (supplication in daily prayers). This fact is acknowledged by both you and us. Even the historians of other nations have recorded that this vile practice was openly pursued and that many people were put to death because they did not utter the curses. This outrage was discontinued by the Umayya Caliph, Umar bin Abdu'l-Aziz.

Obviously, one who curses the brother of the Holy Prophet, the husband of Fatima, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali Bin Abi Talib, and who orders others to do it is definitely damned. This fact has been recorded by all your eminent ulema in their authentic books. For instance, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, Imam Abu Abdu'r-Rahman Nisa'i in his Khasa'isu'l-Alawi, Imam Tha'labi and Imam Fakhru'd-in Razi in their Tafsir (commentary), Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his Kifayatu't-Talib, Sibti Ibn Jauzi in his Tadhkira, Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani in his Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Dailami in his Firdaus, Muslim Bin Hajjaj in his Sahih, Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in his Matalibu's-Su'ul, Ibn Sabbagh Maliki in his Fusulu'l-Muhimma, Hakim in his Mustadrak, Khatib Khawarizmi in his Manaqib, Abraham Hamwaini in his Fara'id, Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in his Manaqib, Imamu'l-haram in his Dhakha'iru'l-Uquba, Ibn Hajar in his Sawa'iq, and your other prominent ulema have, in slightly different words, reported that the Holy Prophet said: "One who reviles Ali, really reviles me; who reviles me, really reviles Allah."

Dailami in his Firdaus, Sulayman Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda have reported that the Holy Prophet said: " One who gives pain to Ali, really gives pain to me, and the curse of Allah is upon him who causes pain to me." Ibn Hajar Makki in his Sawa'iq narrates a hadith concerning the consequence to one who curses against any of the progeny of the Holy Prophet. He reports that the Holy Prophet said: "If anyone curses my Ahle Bait, there is nothing for him but exclusion from Islam. If anyone injures me concerning my Ahle Bait, may Allah's curse be upon him."

Therefore Mu'awiya was certainly cursed. As reported by Ibn Athir in his Kamil, Mu'awiya used to curse Ali, the grandsons of the Holy Prophet, Hasan and Husain and also Abbas and Malik Ashtar in the qunut of his daily prayers.

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal reports in his Musnad from a number of sources that the Holy Prophet of Allah said: "If any one injures Ali he shall be treated as a Jew or Christian on the Day of Judgement." Certainly you must know that it is one of the tenets of Islam that to call Allah and the Holy Prophet by ill names leads to infidelity.

Muhammad Bin Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, part X, reports that once Abdullah Ibn Abbas and Sa'id Ibn Jabir saw on the brink of Zamzam a group of Syrians railing at Ali. They went to them and said: "Who among you was abusing the Holy Prophet of Allah?" They replied: "None of us was abusing the Holy Prophet of Allah." Then they said: "Well, who among you was abusing Ali?" They said: "Yes, we have been abusing Ali."

Then Abdullah and Sa'id said: "You should bear witness that we heard the Holy Prophet saying to Ali, 'One who abuses you really abuses me; one who abuses me, really abuses Allah. If someone abuses Allah, He will throw him headlong into the fire of Hell.'"

THE COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET WERE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING

Sheikh: Is it proper for a man of your caliber to condemn such an able and dignified companion of the Holy Prophet? Is it not a fact that Allah Almighty revealed a number of verses in praise of the companions of the Holy Prophet and gave them the good tidings of their deliverance. And Khalu'l-Mu'minin Mu'awiya, who was definitely a distinguished companion, deserved the praise contained in the holy verse. Doesn't insulting the companions amount to insulting Allah and the Holy Prophet?

Well-Wisher: Perhaps you have forgotten what I have already told you on previous nights. No one denies that verses have been revealed in praise of the companions. But if you understand the meaning of the sahaba or companions, you will admit that the verses revealed in praise of the companions are not generally applicable to all. We cannot regard all of them as entirely pure.

Respected man! You know full well that "sahaba" literally means the joining together of persons. So it may mean living together or, as is commonly understood, helping or giving assistance to others. According to Arab lexicography, the Qur'an, and the hadith, a companion of the Holy Prophet refers to one who has spent his life in the company of the Holy Prophet, whether he was a Muslim or an infidel. So your interpretation that all the companions deserve Paradise is not correct. This contradicts common sense as well as the hadith.

IN THE WORDS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN "SAHAB" AND "SAHABA," MEANING "COMPANIONS", HAVE NO REVERENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE

I will submit additional Qur'anic verses and authentic hadith from Sunni scholars so that you will not be mistaken about the word "companion." This word was used for all companions, whether they were Muslims or not.

(1) In the sura Najm (the Star), Allah says to the Polytheists: "Your companion does not err, nor does he go astray." (53:2)

(2) In the sura of Saba (Sheba), Allah says: "Say: I exhort you only to one thing, that you rise up for Allah's sake in pairs and singly, then ponder: your companion is not possessed." (34:46)

(3) In the sura of Kahf (The Cave), Allah says: "and said he to his companion while he disputed with him: I have greater wealth than you and am mightier in followers." (18:34)

(4) In the same sura, Allah says: "His companion said to him while disputing with him: Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a sperm drop, then He made you a perfect man." (18:37)

(5) In the sura of A'raf (The Elevated Places), Allah says: "Do they not reflect that their companion had not unsoundness in mind? He is only a plain warner." (7:184)

(6) In the sura of An'am (The Cattle), Allah says: "Say: Shall we call on that besides Allah, which does not benefit us nor harm us, and shall we be returned back on our heels after Allah has guided us, like him whom the devils have made to fall down perplexed on the earth. He has companions who call him to the right way, (saying): 'Come to us.' Say: Surely the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance, and we are commanded that we should submit to the Lord of the worlds." (6:71)

(7) In the sura of Yusuf (Joseph) He says: (Yusuf addressing his two fellow prisoners who were polytheists) "O my two Companions of the prison! Are many lords better or Allah, the One, the Supreme?" (12:39)

These are a few verses, which I have quoted by way of example. It is clear that the words "sahaba," "sahib," "musahib" and "ashab" have no special relationship to Muslims. They are used in reference to Muslims and polytheists alike. As I have said, a man who has a social dealing with another man is called his musahib or ashab. The companions of the Holy Prophet refer to those who had social dealings with him.

Certainly among the companions of the Holy Prophet and among those who sat in his company, were all sorts of people, good and bad,

believers as well as hypocrites. The verses revealed in praise of the companions cannot be attributed to all of them. They refer only to the good companions. It is also true that none of these exalted prophets of the past had companions as distinguished as those of our Holy Prophet. For instance, the companions of Badr, Uhud, and Hunain were such as stood the test of time. They helped the Holy Prophet and were firm in their resolve.

But among his companions were also a number of men of debased character, enemies of the Holy Prophet and his Ahle Bait, men like Abdullah Bin Ubayy, Abu Sufyan, Hakam Bin As, Abu Huraira, Tha'labi, Yazid Bin Sufyan, Walid Bin Aqaba, Habib Bin Musailima, Samra Bin Jundab, Amr Bin As, Busr Bin Artat (a tyrant and bloodthirsty man), Mughira Bin Sha'ba, Mu'awiya Bin Abi Sufyan, and Dhu's-Sadiyya. These men, both during the life time of the Holy Prophet and after his death, caused great tumult among the people. One such man was Mu'awiya, whom the Holy Prophet cursed in his own time. After the death of the Holy Prophet, when Mu'awiya got an opportunity, he rose in revolt in the name of seeking vengeance for Uthman's murder and caused the blood shed of many Muslims. In this slaughter, many respected companions of the Holy Prophet, like Ammar Yasir, were martyred. The Holy Prophet himself foretold his martyrdom. I have already mentioned some hadith regarding this event.

HOLY QUR'AN PRAISES GOOD COMPANIONS BUT ALSO CONDEMNS BAD COMPANIONS

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an and hadith in praise of distinguished companions and pious believers. And there are also many verses and hadith condemning those companions who were sinners.

Sheikh: How can you claim that the companions of the Holy Prophet caused social disturbances?

Well-Wisher: This is not merely my claim. Allah Almighty in the sura of Ahle Imran (the House of Imran) says: "If then he (Muhammad) dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels?" (3:144)

Apart from this and other verses of the Holy Qur'an, your own ulema, including Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Asakir, Yaqub Bin Sufyan, Ahmad Bin Hanbal, Abdu'l-Bar, and others have recorded a number of reports and hadith concerning the condemnation of some of the companions. I will refer to only two hadith. Bukhari reports from Sahl Ibn Sa'd and Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud that the Holy Prophet of Allah said, "I shall be waiting for you at the fountain of Kauthar. When a group of you goes astray from my way, I will say, 'O Allah! These were my companions!' Then a reply from Him will come to me: 'You do not know what innovations they introduced after you.'"

Again Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, Tabrani in his Kabir, and Abu Nasr Sakhri in his Ibana narrate from Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said: "I want to save you from the chastisement of Hell. I ask you to fear Hell and to make no changes in the religion of Allah. When I die and am separated from you, I shall be present at the Fountain of Kauthar. Whoever reaches me there is saved. At the end of time when I find a large number of people caught in divine chastisement, I shall say: 'O Allah! These are the people of my Community.' The reply shall come, 'Verily, these people returned to their old creed after you.'" According to Tabrani's report in Kabir, the reply shall be: "You do not know what innovations they introduced after you. They adopted their former religion of ignorance."

ABU TALIB WAS A FIRM BELIEVER

You insist that Mu'awiya and Yazid are Muslims even though their many atrocities are recorded in your own books. Some of the Sunni ulema have written complete books in their condemnation, but you stubbornly insist that they were praiseworthy and that Abu Talib a sincere believer was an infidel!

It is quite evident that this foolish talk is the product of enmity against the Commander of the Faithful, Ali. You try to refute the arguments which prove the infidelity and hypocrisy of Mu'awiya and Yazid. And yet you reject Abu Talib's open pronouncements regarding his belief in Allah and the Holy Prophet.

ADDITIONAL PROOF OF ABU TALIB'S BELIEF

Is it not a fact that the Holy Prophet's Ahle Bait have said that Abu Talib was a believer and that he died a believer? Has not Asbagh Bin Nabuta, a highly trusted man, narrated from the Commander of the Faithful that he said, "I swear by Allah that my father, Abu Talib, my grandfather, Abdu'l-Muttalib Hashim, and Abdu'l-Manaf never worshipped idols."

Is it proper that you should reject the statements of Ali and the holy Ahle Bait and give credence to the statements of the cursed Mughira, Amawis, Kharijis, Nasibis, and other enemies of the Commander of the Faithful?

JA'FAR TAYYAR'S EMBRACING ISLAM BY HIS FATHER'S ORDER

Moreover, many of your ulema, including Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, have written that one day Abu Talib came to the mosque and saw that the Holy Prophet was offering prayers. Ali was offering prayers on the right side of the Holy Prophet. Abu Talib ordered his son Ja'far (Tayyar) who was with him and had not yet embraced Islam, "Stand on the side of your cousin and perform the prayers with him." Ja'far moved forward and, standing on the left side of the Holy Prophet, began to say his prayers. At that time Abu Talib composed these lines of poetry:

"Verily Ali and Ja'far are my strength and solace in my distress and disappointment. O Ali and Ja'far! Never leave the company of your cousin and my nephew, but help him. I swear that I will never leave the Holy Prophet. Can anyone leave the company of a Prophet of such noble family?"

So it is the unanimous view of your own ulema that Ja'far's embracing Islam and his performing the prayers with the Holy Prophet were at the order of Abu Talib.

THE HOLY PROPHET WEPT BITTERLY AT ABU TALIB'S DEATH AND INVOKED ALLAH'S BLESSINGS ON HIM

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* and Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkirat-e-Khawasu'l-Umma* report from *Tabaqat-e-Muhammad* Ibn Sa'd, who reports from Waqidi and Allama Seyyed Muhammad Bin Seyyed Rasul Barzanji in his *Kitabu'l-Islam Fi'l-'am-o-Aba'-e-Seyyedu'l-An'am*, a report from Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Asakir, who report on authentic sources from Muhammad Bin Ishaq that Ali said: "When Abu Talib died, and I informed the Holy Prophet of Allah about it, he wept bitterly. Then he said to me, 'Go and wash his body in preparation for burial, wrap his body in a shroud, and bury him. May Allah bless him and have mercy upon him!'"

Is it permitted by Islam to perform the burial rituals for a polytheist? Is it right for us to say that the Holy Prophet invoked the blessings of Allah upon an infidel and a polytheist? The Holy Prophet did not leave his house for several days and continued praying to Allah for Abu Talib's eternal peace.

ALI'S ELEGY FOR HIS FATHER, ABU TALIB

If you consult the Tadhkira of Sibt Ibn Jauzi, p.6 you will see what the Commander of the Faithful said in his eulogy for his father. "O Abu Talib! You were a haven for the seeker of refuge, a rain of mercy for dry lands, and a light which penetrated the darkness. Your death has toppled the pillars of safety. Now the real Benefactor has bestowed mercy upon you. Allah Almighty has attached you to His Court. Verily, you were the best uncle of the Holy Prophet."

Can it be believed that a man who was the embodiment of monotheism would write such a eulogy for a person who died an infidel?

ABU TALIB CONCEALED HIS FAITH WHILE HAMZA AND ABBAS PROCLAIMED THEIRS

Sheikh: If Abu Talib was a believer, why did he not reveal his faith as his brothers, Hamza and Abbas did?

Well-Wisher: There was a great difference between Abbas, Hamza, and Abu Talib. Hamza was so fearless and formidable that all Meccans dreaded him. His embracing Islam proved a great help to the Holy Prophet.

Abbas, however, did not announce his Islam immediately. Ibn Abdu'l-Bar writes in his *Isti'ab* that Abbas embraced Islam while he was in Mecca, but he concealed his faith from the people. When the Holy Prophet migrated from Mecca, Abbas also intended to be with him. But the Holy Prophet wrote to him that his stay in Mecca would be useful to him (the Holy Prophet). Accordingly, he remained in Mecca and used to send the Holy Prophet news from there. The idolaters brought him with them to the Battle of Badr. When the infidels were defeated, he was taken prisoner. On the day of the conquest of Khaibar he was finally allowed to reveal his faith.

Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.56, p.226 reports from the *Dhakha'iru'l-Uquba* of Imamu'l-Haram Abu Ja'far Ahmad Bin Abdullah Tabari Shafi'i, who reports from Faza'il of Abu'l-Qasim Ilahi that scholars know that Abbas had embraced Islam in the beginning but that he kept it secret. In the Battle of Badr, when he came along with the infidels, the Holy Prophet told his men, "Whoever sees Abbas should not kill him because he unwillingly accompanied the infidels. He was ready to migrate, but I wrote to him that he should remain there and give me information about the idolaters." On the day Abu Rafi'i informed the Holy Prophet that Abbas proclaimed his acceptance of Islam, the Holy Prophet set Abu Rafi'i free.

WHY ABU TALIB CONCEALED HIS FAITH

If Abu Talib had revealed his faith, all of the Quraish and the entire Arab nation would have united against the Bani Hashim. Abu Talib understood the expedience of concealing his Islam. He pretended to be loyal to the Quraish in order to thwart the activities of the enemy.

So long as Abu Talib remained alive the same condition continued, and the Holy Prophet was protected. But at the death of Abu Talib, the Angel Gabriel appeared before the Holy Prophet and said: "Now you should leave Mecca. After Abu Talib, you have no helper here."

Sheikh: Was the Islam of Abu Talib known during the time of the Holy Prophet of Allah, and did the community believe in it?

Well-Wisher: Yes, it was commonly known to the people and they pronounced his name with full reverence.

ABU TALIB'S FAITH WAS COMMONLY KNOWN DURING THE TIME OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Sheikh: How is it possible that during the time of the Holy Prophet a thing was so much spoken of and commonly known to all, but after a period of thirty years, a contrary view gained credence because of a false hadith?

Well-Wisher: This was not a unique instance. Often what was accepted during the time of the Holy Prophet completely changed its form after a few years because of a forged hadith. Other religious orders and practices in force during the life of the Prophet were abandoned after some years due to the influence of the people.

Chapter **7**

9th Session - Part 7

MUT'A MARRIAGE AND HAJJ NISA WERE LAWFUL UP TO ABU BAKR'S TIME BUT MADE UNLAWFUL BY UMAR

Sheikh: Kindly cite one example of such a change.

Well-Wisher: There are many examples; two should suffice to make my point. I will discuss mut'a (temporary marriage) and hajj nisa. Both sects agree that these two practices were common during the time of the Prophet. Moreover, they were practiced during Abu Bakr's caliphate and also during part of Umar's caliphate. But Caliph Umar brought about a complete reversal of the Qur'anic order. He said, "Two mut'as were in effect during the time of the Holy Prophet. I now decree both of them unlawful and will punish those who engage in this practice."

What was made lawful by Allah was suddenly abrogated. Umar's decree was so widely promulgated and so blindly followed that the original law soon fell into oblivion. Even today many of our Sunni brothers regard mut'a as an innovation of the Shia.

If Umar's whim could overturn the clear ordinance of Allah and the historical fact that mut'a was practiced, can you doubt that Abu Talib's well known belief could also be denied?

Sheikh: Are you saying that millions of Muslims have violated the injunctions of the Qur'an and the sunna of the Prophet? Remember, the whole world calls us Sunnis, i.e., followers of the sunna. The Shia are called Rafizis, i.e., those who stray from the sunna of the Prophet.

SUNNIS ARE REALLY RAFIZIS AND SHIA ARE SUNNIS

Well-Wisher: In reality the Shias are Sunnis, that is, they follow the Holy Qur'an and the sunna of the Holy Prophet. You people are Rafizis because you violate the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the commands of the Prophet.

Sheikh: This is strange indeed! You have transformed millions of pure Muslims into Rafizis! Can you advance any argument to support this?

Well-Wisher: I have already told you during previous nights that the Holy Prophet instructed us that after him we should follow the Holy Qur'an and his progeny. But you people deliberately abandoned the progeny of the Prophet and followed others. You rejected the practices of the Holy Prophet. You left those people by order of your two sheikhs and then call the real followers of the sunna of the Holy Prophet Rafizis.

Among such orders there is another explicit injunction in the Holy Qur'an which says, "And know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the way fairer." (8:41) The Holy Prophet observed this order and gave khums (1/5) of the wealth acquired from the enemy to his relatives and kinsmen. But you people opposed this practice.

The practice of mut'a is another case in point. It was in accordance with Allah's command. It was sanctioned by the Prophet and his companions. The practice continued during Abu Bakr's caliphate and also during a part of Umar's caliphate. But at the command of Umar you people have made unlawful what Allah made lawful. Moreover, you have rejected the sunna of the Holy Prophet. And yet you call yourselves Sunnis and call us Rafizis.

Caliph Umar himself did not advance any reason for his revoking the divine order. The Sunni ulema have tried in vain to prove that Caliph Umar's decision was just.

ARGUMENTS FOR LAWFULNESS OF MUT'A

Sheikh: Can you prove the lawfulness of mut'a? Can you prove that Caliph Umar violated the Qur'anic injunction and the sunna of the Holy Prophet?

Well-Wisher: The strongest proof is furnished by the Holy Qur'an. In the sura of Nisa (The Women) Allah says: "... then as to those by whom you benefited (from mut'a), give them their dowries as appointed... ." (4:24)

Obviously the Holy Qur'an's command is obligatory forever unless it is abrogated by the Qur'an, itself. Since it has not been abrogated, this command holds good forever.

Sheikh: How is this verse not related to permanent wedlock? It is this same verse that gives instruction about paying back dowry.

Well-Wisher: You have confused the main point. Your own prominent ulema, like Tabari in his Tafsir-e-Kabir, part V and Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in his Tafsir-e-Mafatihul-Ghaib, part III, have confirmed that this verse refers to mut'a.

Apart from the explicit interpretation of your ulema and commentators, you are also aware that throughout the entire sura of Nisa, several kinds of marriage and wedlock have been mentioned: nika (permanent marriage), mut'a (temporary marriage), and marriage with mulk-e-Yamin (servants). For permanent marriage the Holy Qur'an says in the sura of Nisa: "Then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then only one or what your right hands possess." (4:3)

About Mulk-e-yamin (servants), Allah says: "And whoever among you has not within his power ample means to marry free believing women, then (he may marry) of those whom your right hands possess from among your believing maidens; and Allah knows best your faith: you are sprung the one from the other; so marry them with the permission of their masters and give them their dowries justly." (4:25)

The command in verse 4 of sura Nisa to the effect that: "... as to those by whom you benefitted (from mut'a), give them their dowries as appointed... ." was for mut'a, or temporary marriage. It could not be for permanent wedlock, for otherwise, it would mean that in the same chapter the decree regarding permanent wedlock has been repeated twice, which is against the rule, and if it is for mut'a, then it evidently is a permanent and separate decree.

Second, not only Shias but all Muslims agree that mut'a was practiced during the early days of Islam. The distinguished companions practiced it in the time of the Holy Prophet. If this verse refers to permanent wedlock then which is the verse for mut'a? Evidently this is the verse regarding mut'a, which your own commentators have accepted. There is no verse in the Holy Qur'an which abrogates this command.

AHLE-SUNNA REGARDING LAWFULNESS OF MUT'A

It is reported in Sahih of Bukhari and the Musnad of Imam Ibn Hanbal from Abu Raja on the authority of Imran Ibn Hasin that "... the verse of mut'a was revealed in the Book of Allah. So we acted in accordance with it during the time of the Holy Prophet. No verse was revealed to make it unlawful, nor did the Holy Prophet ever prohibit it." One man decided to change this law. Bukhari says that the man was Umar.

Muslim in his Sahih, part I, in the chapter of Nikatu'l-Mut'a, says "Hasan Halwa'i reported to us that he was told by Abdu'r-Razzaq, who was informed by Ibn Jarir, who was told by 'Ata that Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari came to Mecca for the Umra and they went to him at his residence. People asked him many questions. When they came to the question of mut'a he said, 'Yes, we used to practice mut'a during the time of the Holy Prophet and during the caliphate of Abu Bakr and Umar.'" Also in the same book in part I, in the chapter of al-Mut'a Bi'l-Hajj wa'l-Umra, it is narrated on the authority of Abu Nazara that he said: "I was in the company of Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari when a man came and said, 'There is a difference of opinion between Ibn Abbas and Ibn Zubair concerning the two mut'as, Mut'atu'n-Nisa and Mut'atu'l-Hajj.' Then Jabir said, 'We have performed both of these during the time of the Holy Prophet. Thereafter, when Umar forbade it, we could not do it.'"

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, part I, p.25, narrates Abu Nazara's report in another way. Also both narrate another report from Jabir that he said: "In the days of the Holy Prophet and Abu Bakr, we used to practice mut'a for the consideration of a handful of dates and flour until Umar forbade it in the case of Amr Bin Harith."

Hamidi, in his Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain, narrates from Abdullah Ibn Abbas that he said: "We used to practice mut'a during the time of the Holy Prophet. When Umar was caliph, he said that 'Allah Almighty made lawful whatever He liked for His Holy Prophet. Now he is dead, and the Qur'an takes his place. So when you begin the Hajj or the Umra, you should complete them as Allah has ordered you. You should repent of and abstain from mut'a. Bring him who has practiced mut'a to me so that I may stone him.'"

There are many such reports in your own reliable books showing that mut'a was permissible during the days of the Holy Prophet. The companions practiced it until Umar made it unlawful.

Besides these reports, some of the companions, like Ubayy Ibn Ka'b, Ibn Abbas, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, Sa'id Ibn Jabir and Sa'd have recited

the verse of mut'a in this way, "And as such of them you had mut'a with until such time as was fixed."

Jarullah Zamakhshari reports in his *Kashshaf* from Ibn Abbas and also Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari in his *Tafsir-e-Kabir* and Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in his *Tafsir-e-Mafatihul-Ghaib*, vol.III, writing about this holy verse and Imam Nuwi in his *Sharh-e-Muslim*, chapter I, *Nikatu'l-Mut'a* report from Nazari that Qazi Ayaz stated that "Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, the writer of wahi (i.e., recorder of revelations), used to recite this verse in the same way, that is, 'until such time as has been fixed.'"

Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi, after quoting the statement of Ubayy Ibn Ka'b and Ibn Abbas, said: "The community did not reject their recitation of the verse in this way, so what we have said has been accepted through consensus." Again on the next page he argues in this way: "This reading evidently proves that mut'a had the sanction of religion. We have no difference of opinion that mut'a was permitted in the time of the Holy Prophet."

COMMAND PERMITTING MUT'A WAS NOT REPEALED

Sheikh: Can you prove that it was lawful during the days of the Holy Prophet but was not repealed later?

Well-Wisher: There is plenty of proof that it was not annulled. The most convincing argument is that mut'a had been permitted from the time of the Holy Prophet until the middle of the caliphate of Umar.

Caliph Umar's own statement has been generally reported by your ulema. They have written that he went to the pulpit and said, "In the time of the Prophet two mut'as were permitted. I make both of them unlawful, and if any one does it, I will punish him."

Sheikh: What you say is correct, but my point is that there are many orders which were current earlier in the time of the Holy Prophet but were repealed later. Mut'a was also permitted in the beginning, but later it was forbidden.

Well-Wisher: Since the basis and foundation of religion is the Holy Qur'an, if any ordinance is present in the Holy Qur'an and is abrogated, its abrogation must also be present in it. Now please let me know where in the Holy Qur'an this order has been repealed.

Sheikh: In sura 23, Mu'minin (The Believers), verse 6 repeals this order. It says "Except before their mates or those whom their right hands possess, for surely they are not blameworthy." (22:6)

This verse lays down two conditions for conjugal relations: marriage, or intercourse with slaves. So this verse proves that the ordinance of mut'a has been repealed.

Well-Wisher: This verse does not in any way prove that mut'a was repealed; it confirms it. The woman united by mut'a is the real wife of the man. Had she not been his real wife, Allah would not have ordered her mehr (dowry) to be paid. Moreover, the sura of The Believers was revealed while the Prophet was in Mecca, the sura of Women while he was in Medina. Obviously the Meccan chapters preceded the Medinan chapter. Can verse A abrogate verse B, if verse A came before B?

DISTINGUISHED COMPANIONS AND IMAM MALIK INSIST THAT THE ORDINANCE OF MUT'A WAS NOT ABROGATED

Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari, Salama Ibn Akwa', Abu'dh-Dharr Ghifari, Subra Bin Ma'bad, Akwa' Bin Abdullah Al-Aslami and Imran Bin Hasin have stated that the ordinance of mut'a was not abrogated. Moreover, your eminent ulema have also held that it was not abrogated. For instance, Jarullah Zamakhshari, in his Tafsir-e-Kashshaf regarding Abdullah Ibn Abbas's statement that the verse of mut'a was one of the clear ordinances of the Holy Qur'an, says that this verse was not repealed. Imam Malik Bin Anas also said that the permissibility of mut'a had not been repealed.

Mulla Sa'idu'd-din Taftazani in Sharh-e-Maqasid, Burhanu'd-din Hanafi in his Hidayah, Ibn Hajar Asqalani in his Fathu'l-Bari and others also have reported the statement and verdict of Malik who says: "Mut'a is lawful. It is permitted by religion. Its lawfulness, as confirmed by Ibn Abbas, is quite well known and most of his companions from Yeman and Mecca have practiced it. At another place he says: "Mut'a is lawful since it has been permitted and its lawfulness and permissibility hold good unless it is repealed." You will notice that until Malik's death there was no evidence that the ordinance of mut'a had been annulled.

Moreover, your prominent commentators, like Zamakhshari, Baghawi, and Imam Tha'labi have adhered to the position of Ibn Abbas and other distinguished companions and have believed in the lawfulness of mut'a.

ALL CONDITIONS OF WEDLOCK ARE FULFILLED BY MUT'A

Sheikh: Since there are no provisions for a woman united by mut'a, such as inheritance, divorce, after divorce (waiting period) and maintenance, as are necessary for a wife, she cannot be a real wife.

Well-Wisher: A woman joined with a man through mut'a is protected by all the provisions of any wife except those which have been reasonably excluded. Mut'a is a kind of nika (marriage), which entitles a woman to wifedom. Of course for the convenience of the community and to save them from lawlessness, some of its conditions and formalities have been waived. As for its conditions, first, it is not proved that inheritance is a necessary condition of marriage. Many women, in spite of being wives, do not receive an inheritance from their husbands. For example, disobedient wives or those who murder are deprived of inheritance.

Second, it is not definitely established whether a woman united by mut'a is deprived of her right of inheritance. The jurists differ in their opinions about it, and such differences exist among you also.

Third, the Imamiyya ulema unanimously hold the view that a woman united by mut'a must also observe 'idda (waiting period before re-marriage). Its shortest period has been fixed as 45 days. If the husband dies, she should observe the usual 'idda of four months and ten days, whether she had had sexual intercourse with her husband or not, or whether she has passed the age of menstruation or not.

Fourth, the right of maintenance is not a necessary condition attached to marriage. There are a number of wives who are not entitled to maintenance, such as those who are disobedient or who murder their husbands.

Fifth, the expiration of the agreed upon period is itself her divorce. Similarly, with the consent of her husband, she may be divorced before the expiration date.

Therefore none of the conditions that you have mentioned has any force. A renowned Shia scholar, Allama Jamalud-Din Hilli (Hasan Bin Yusuf Bin Ali Bin Mutahhar), has given in detail the same arguments in reply to the views of your prominent ulema. I have referred to them briefly. Anyone who wants to study it in detail, may consult Allama Hilli's *Mabahithat-e-Sunniyya wa Ma'rifat-e-Nussairiyya*.

WAS QUR'ANIC COMMAND FOR MUT'A ABROGATED BY THE HOLY PROPHET?

Sheikh: Besides the holy verse there are also a large number of hadith which say that the ordinance concerning mut'a had been abrogated during the time of the Holy Prophet.

Well-Wisher: Kindly let us know about that order of abrogation.

Sheikh: It has been narrated with some variations. Some reporters say that it was decreed on the day of the conquest of Khaibar, some say it happened on the day of conquest of Mecca, some reports say that it was on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage, and some say that it was on the day of Tabuk. Others, however, are of the opinion that the order of nullity was revealed on the occasion of Umratu'l-Qaza (The Farewell Pilgrimage).

ARGUMENTS CONCERNING ITS ABROGATION DURING THE TIME OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Well-Wisher: The contradictory reports clearly prove that there was no such order of abrogation. And how can those reports be relied upon when, on the contrary, there are many hadith reported in Sahih-e-Sitta, Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain, Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahih-e-Sitta, Musnad, etc, from distinguished companions which prove that this verse was not abrogated until the caliphate of Umar.

The most compelling argument that your own ulema have themselves cited is the statement of Caliph Umar, who said: "I make both those two mut'as which were current in the days of the Holy Prophet, unlawful." Had there been any verse, or order of the Holy Prophet, the caliph would have said: "According to the instructions of the Holy Prophet, which is supported by the Qur'anic verse, if any one committed the unlawful act in violation of the abrogated ordinance, I will punish him." Such a statement would have been more impressive for the people. But he merely said: " Two mut'as were permitted in the time of the Holy Prophet, I make them unlawful."

If, however, your claim is correct and the verse of mut'a was abrogated, why didn't the pupils of the Holy Prophet, like Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Imran Bin Hashim and other companions act upon it. Your own great traditionists and historians, including Bukhari and Muslim, have recorded this fact. All these things clearly prove that from the time of the Holy Prophet to the caliphate of Umar the companions followed this ordinance.

COULD CALIPH UMAR ABROGATE MUT'A?

So it is clear that mut'a shall continue to be lawful forever. Abu Isa Muhammad Bin Sawratu't-Tirmidhi in his Sunan, which is regarded as one of the six Sahih by you, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, PART II, p.95, and Ibn Athir in his Jam'u'l-Usul have reported that a Syrian man asked Abdullah Bin Umar Bin Khattab what he considered about Mut'a-e-Nisa. He said: "Of course, it is lawful." The man said again, "But your father, the caliph, forbade the people to do it." He said, "It was ordered by the Holy Prophet; so if it has been prohibited by my father that order cannot supersede the order of the Holy Prophet. I am the follower of the Holy Prophet's order."

For the reports which have been narrated, perhaps people later forged hadith in order to support Caliph Umar's statement. The matter is too clear to call for any further elucidation. The fact is that you have no real evidence for the unlawfulness of mut'a except the statement of Caliph Umar.

Sheikh: Caliph Umar's statement in itself is the strongest evidence for Muslims, and they must follow it. If he had not heard it from the Holy Prophet, he would not have said that.

Well-Wisher: Is Caliph Umar's statement so compelling that Muslims must follow it? I have not seen a single hadith in your books, in which the Holy Prophet said that Umar Bin Khattab's statement was a confirmed source or that Muslims should follow it. On the other hand your books are filled with reliable hadith saying that we should follow the descendants of the Holy Prophet, particularly Ali. I have referred to some of these hadith on previous nights. The Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet have said that the ordinance of mut'a was not abrogated.

You said that had Caliph Umar not heard about the order of cancellation from the Holy Prophet, he would not have said what he did. But this is easily disproved. First, if Caliph Umar had heard of the cancellation of the order of mut'a from the Holy Prophet, he should have spoken about it during the life of the Holy Prophet up to the period of his own caliphate. This would have been especially important since he saw prominent companions had been practicing it, and it was his duty to tell the people that the practice of mut'a had been annulled. Why did he not perform the duty of prevention of evil?

Second, the practice, which had been current among the community by order of the Holy Prophet, could only be nullified by the Holy Prophet. There should have been no delay in this case. Does it stand to reason

that if an order for the Community had been circulated and was later abrogated, would the Holy Prophet have spoken about it to no one except Umar? And would it have made sense that Umar would not have told anybody about it until late in his own caliphate? During all this period when the community continued to follow this (so-called) abrogated order, did no responsibility lie with Umar?

You say that the prohibition of "nullified and irreligious " practice could not be made known to others and therefore the community continued to follow it. Can anybody else except the Holy Prophet be held responsible for not proclaiming the abrogation of an order, having told only Umar of it? Is it not infidelity to say that the Holy Prophet neglected to perform his mission and that the community because of its ignorance, continued acting upon an abrogated order for a long time?

Third, if the order of mut'a had been annulled during the time of the Holy Prophet and Umar had heard of this from the Holy Prophet, Umar could have said when he prohibited it that he had himself heard the Holy Prophet say that the practice of mut'a had been banned. Obviously, if he had referred to the Holy Prophet's statement, the community would have been much impressed by it. But he said, "During the time of the Holy Prophet, two mut'as were permitted, but I make them unlawful. Now I will stone those who do it." Is it not the duty of the Holy Prophet to declare things lawful or unlawful? Or, can it be the right of a caliph who has been appointed by the people?

I don't understand on what basis Umar declared unlawful what Allah made lawful. How strange it is that the Holy Prophet never said that he made a certain thing lawful or unlawful. Whenever he announced any order, he said that Allah had ordered him to convey it to the people. How bold Umar is when he says: "Two mut'as were permitted in the time of the Holy Prophet. I make both of them unlawful. I will punish those who commit those acts."

COMMAND OF ALLAH OR OF THE HOLY PROPHET MAY NOT BE ABROGATED BY A CALIPH

Sheikh: Certainly you are aware that some of our scholars of high learning believe that since the Holy Prophet was a mujtahid (authority) in the matter of religious orders, another mujtahid, by virtue of his own findings, may set aside the former order. It was on this basis that Umar said, "I make those two things unlawful."

Well-Wisher: In an attempt to set right one wrong, you perpetrate many others. Does ijtiḥād have any significance in contradicting an injunction of the Holy Qur'an. Is not your statement quite absurd and opposed to the Qur'anic verses?

Allah Almighty says in the sura of Jonah: "Say: It is not proper for me that I should change it myself. I follow naught but what is revealed to me." (10:15)

If it is true that the Holy Prophet could not make any changes in religious order unless he was ordered by Allah to do so, how could Umar, who had no knowledge of revelation, have the authority to make unlawful what Allah had made lawful?

In the sura of Najm (The Star) Allah says: "Nor does he speak out of caprice. It is naught but revelation that is revealed." (53:3-4)

In the sura of Ahqaf (The Sand Dunes), Allah says: "Say: I am not the first of the apostles, and I do not know what will be done with me or with you. I do not follow anything but what has been revealed to me." (46:9)

Obedience to the Holy Prophet is obligatory. No one, Umar or anyone else, has the right to interfere with divine orders and make unlawful what Allah made lawful.

EXPEDIENCY NOT GROUNDS FOR ABROGATION

Sheikh: Umar definitely thought it expedient and considered it in the best interest of the people to abrogate that order. We find these days that some people take a woman in mut'a for the sake of pleasure for an hour, a month, or a year. Later, regardless of whether she is pregnant or not, they leave her.

Well-Wisher: This is ridiculous! What does the lawfulness of this Islamic command have to do with people's indulgence in illicit sexual relations? If we followed your reasoning, perhaps permanent wedlock should be made unlawful. After all, people marry noble girls for their money or their beauty and later leave them, without giving them any financial support. Since some people do this, do you think that permanent wedlock should be abrogated?

No. We should encourage people to be honest and give them proper religious instruction. If a righteous man does not find in himself the capacity to shoulder the responsibility of having a permanent wife, and if he wishes to avoid an unlawful action, he would, in compliance with the code of religion, wish to take a woman in mut'a or temporary wedlock. Accordingly, he would like to know the conditions of mut'a because he knows that for every order there are certain conditions. At the time of mutual agreement, he would provide the amount of mehr (dower) for the woman which would be sufficient for her maintenance during her 'idda, which is 45 days, after the term of the period of mut'a.

Second, after the separation, he would look after the woman during the entire period of 'idda. If she were pregnant, he would take proper care of the mother so that he might take his child after it is born. If some people fail to honor these conditions, it does not follow that a valid order of lawfulness has been abrogated.

The welfare of the community was better understood by Allah and the Holy Prophet than by Umar. And they did not prohibit mut'a. If they didn't prohibit it, no caliph or imam, or any other man, even one divinely commissioned, can of his own accord make unlawful what Allah has made lawful. So your claim, that it was in the best interest of the community that people give up mut'a, is untenable.

Mut'a was not the cause of the spread of lawlessness; rather it was the banning of it which spread lewdness. Those young men and women who cannot afford to join in permanent wedlock if they cannot control and restrain their sexual appetite, will indulge in illicit sex. And of

course widespread adultery and fornication destroy the moral character of entire nations.

Imam Tha'labi and Tabari in their Tafsir and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, writing in connection with the verse of mut'a, narrate from Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali that he said: "If Umar had not put a restraint on mut'a, no one, except an unfortunate man, would have committed fornication."

Also Ibn Jarir and Amr Bin Dinar report from Abdullah Ibn Abbas who said: "Mut'a was really a mercy of Allah, which He gave to the community of Muhammad. If Umar had not banned it, no one except an unlucky man would have committed adultery."

So according to the views of the companions of the Holy Prophet, the cause of the prevalence of adultery was the prohibition of mut'a, rather than the practice of it. In fact all the divine commands regarding lawful and unlawful acts which have been transmitted to the community through the Holy Prophet were intended for the welfare of the people. They continue to benefit them today.

ABU TALIB'S FAITH WAS WELL KNOWN DURING THE TIME OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Our topic of discussion was not this, but I wanted to remove your doubt since you said that what was known in the time of the Holy Prophet could be set at naught through forged hadith. Similarly there is no validity in your objection regarding the faith of Abu Talib. His faith during the time of the Holy Prophet was also well known and regarded with respect. But by forging the hadith of Zahza, some people spread just the opposite report. The uninformed people, blindly following their elders accepted this false report.

In short, what I have said amply proves that Ali belonged to such a distinguished family that no one of the eminent companions could match him.

ALI'S BIRTHPLACE WAS THE KA'BA

Another indication of Ali's special merit was his birthplace. No one else, from Adam down through all the prophets, possessed such a distinction. Of all human beings, he alone was born in the sacred precinct of the Ka'ba. At the time of the birth of the Prophet Jesus his illustrious mother was forced to leave the Holy House. A voice said to her: "O Mary! Leave the Baitu'l-Muqaddas, since it is the place of worship and not of childbirth."

But when the time of Ali's birth approached, his mother, Fatima Bint Asad, was asked to enter the Ka'ba. And this was not an accidental affair as if a woman was in the mosque and suddenly she was delivered of a child. She was expressly called to enter the Ka'ba, the door of which was locked. Some uninformed people think that Fatima Bint Asad was in the Holy Mosque when she felt labor pains, could not go out, and gave birth to the child. The fact was otherwise. It was the month of Fatima Bint Asad's confinement. She went to the Masjidu'l-Haram, where she felt labor pains. She prayed to Allah in the precinct of the Ka'ba, saying: "O Allah! I pray to you in the name of your honor and awe, to put me at my ease in this labor." Suddenly, the wall of the Ka'ba, which was locked, opened.

Another report says that a voice was heard saying: "O Fatima! Enter the House." Fatima went into the House of Allah in front of a crowd of people who were sitting round that place and the wall returned to its original condition. The people were greatly astonished. Abbas was also there. When he saw what had happened, he immediately told Abu Talib because he had the key to the door. He instantly came there and tried his best to unlock the door, but the door did not open. For three days Fatima Bint Asad remained inside the Ka'ba, apparently without sustenance of any kind. This unusual event was the talk of the town. At last, on the third day, the passage through which she had entered again opened, and Fatima came out. The people saw that she had in her hands a lovely child. Both sects (Shias and Sunnis) agree that no one else had ever been given such distinction.

Hakim in his *Mustadrak* and Nuru'd-din Bin Sabbagh Maliki in his *Fusulu'l- Muhimma*, Fasl I, p.14, say: "No one before Ali was born in the Ka'ba. This was a distinction given to Ali in order to enhance his honor, rank, and dignity."

THE ORIGIN OF ALI'S NAME WAS THE UNSEEN WORLD

Another indication of Ali's special merit was that his name had its origin in the unseen world.

Sheikh: You have said a novel thing. This means that Abu Talib was a prophet who named Ali through divine inspiration. Your statement is one of those lies which the Shias have invented in their extreme love (ghulu') for Ali. But it is farcical to say that Allah ordered that the child should be named Ali. Ali was an ordinary name which the parents, of their own will, proposed. It had nothing to do with the unseen world.

Well-Wisher: What I said had nothing novel in it. Your astonishment is due to your lack of knowledge about the merits of wilaya (vicegerency).

First, you think that the child was given the name after his birth, though it was not so. In all the heavenly books, the names of Muhammad and Ali have been mentioned. Allah Almighty gave names to them thousands of years prior to their creation. The names were written on the skies, on the gates of heaven and on the arsh (the highest heavens). It had nothing to do with Abu Talib's time.

Sheikh: Surely this statement is an example of excessive love for Ali. You have raised him so high that you claim his name was written long before the creation of the universe. The result of such statements is that your jurists consider pronouncing the name of Ali after the name of the Holy Prophet in the call to prayer.

Well-Wisher: No, sir. My statement has nothing to do with excessive love. And it is not I who have written his name in the heavens. Allah ordered Ali's name to be written along with His own name and the name of His Prophet.

Sheikh: Kindly refer to any of those hadith.

AFTER THE NAMES OF ALLAH AND THE HOLY PROPHET, ALI'S NAME IS WRITTEN ON ARSH

Well-Wisher: Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari in his Tafsir, Ibn Asakir in his Ta'rikh, Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i, in his Kifayatu't-Talib, ch.62, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim, in Hilyatu'l-Auliya, and Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, p.238, ch. 56, hadith 52, narrate from Dhakha'iru'l-Uqba of Imamu'l-Haram Ahmad Bin Abdullah Tabari Shafi'i on the authority of Abu Huraira (with a slight variation in wording) that the Holy Prophet said: "It is written on the arsh that 'There is no god but Allah, the One Who has no associate; and Muhammad is my servant and Prophet, whom I helped through Ali Bin Abi Talib.'"

Also in Jalalu'd-din Suyuti's Khasa'isu'l-Kubra, vol.I, p.10 and Tafsir-e-Durr-e-Mansur, beginning of the chapter of Isra'il, it is reported from Ibn Adi and Ibn Asakir, who narrate from Ana's Ibn Malik, that the Holy Prophet of Allah said that he had seen written on the arsh, "There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah; I have given him support through Ali."

In Yanabiu'l-Mawadda it is narrated from Dhakha'iru'l-Uqba of Imamu'l-Haram Tabari, according to the report of Sirat-e-Mullah, that the Holy Prophet of Allah said: "On the night of the Mi'raj, when I was taken to the highest heaven, I saw written there on the right side of the arsh: 'Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah. I have given him help and support through Ali.'"

It is reported in Yanabi, Hadith 19, from Kitabu's-Sabi'in of Imamu'l-Haram Tabari, quoting from the Manaqib of Faqih Wasti Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i, and also Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i writes in his Mawadda VI from Mawaddatu'l-Qurba two hadith; Khatib Khawarizmi in Manaqib, Ibn Shirwaih in Firdaus, and Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in Manaqib narrating from Jabir Bin Abdullah Ansari that the Holy Prophet said: "It is written on the gate of Paradise that 'There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah, and Ali is the Wali (vicegerent) of Allah and brother of the Holy Prophet of Allah.' This was written 2,000 years before the creation of the skies and the world."

I recall another hadith. Mir Seyyed Ali Faqih Shafi'i writes in Mawadda VIII of Mawaddatu'l-Qurba that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "I have seen your name coupled with mine in four places:

(1) On the night of the Mi'raj (ascension) when I reached the Baitu'l-Muqaddas (The Dome of the Rock), I saw written on the rock: 'There is

no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah whom I gave support through his vizier (deputy) Ali."

(2) When I reached Sidratu'l-Muntaha (the loftiest place), I saw the words: 'Verily I am Allah; There is no god but Me, the One, and Muhammad among all my creation is My loved one. I gave him support through his vizier, Ali.'

(3) When I reached the arsh' (the highest heaven) of Almighty Allah, I saw there written on its pillars: 'Verily, I am Allah, and there is no god except Me.: Of all my creation Muhammad is my loved one. I have supported him through his vizier, Ali.'

(4) When I reached Paradise, I saw written on its gate: "There is no god but Me. Of all my creation Muhammad is my loved one. I gave him help and support through his vizier, Ali."

Imam Tha'labi in his Tafsir Kashfu'l-Bayan and Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, chapter 24, reporting from Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani, Muhammad Bin Jarir in his Tafsir and Ibn Asakir in his Ta'rikh, narrate from Ibn Abbas and Abu Huraira that verse 64 of the sura of Anfal (The Accessions) of the Holy Qur'an, namely: "He it is Who strengthened you with His help and with the believers." (8:62)

Then they say that the Holy Prophet said: "I saw written on the arsh' that There is no god but Allah, the One, Who has no partner, and Muhammad is My servant and Prophet; I strengthened him with Ali Bin Abi Talib."

Then they narrate other hadith of this kind from Kitab-e-Sifa and Manaqib. The source of the names of Muhammad and Ali is Allah Himself.

WORDS USED BY ADAM FOR ACCEPTANCE OF HIS REPENTANCE WERE THE NAMES OF THE FIVE PURE ONES

Also Imam Tha'labi in Tafsir Kashfu'l-Bayan and Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabi, chapter 24, reporting from Faqih Wasti Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i are a commentary on verse 37 of sura 2 of the Holy Qur'an, namely: "Then Adam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful." (2:37)

Sa'id Ibn Jabir reported from Ibn Abbas, who said: "The Holy Prophet was asked about the words which the Prophet Adam had learned and which led to the acceptance of his repentance. The Prophet said: 'He invoked Allah in the names of Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain. So Allah accepted his repentance and forgave him.'

WAHI (REVELATION) AND ILHAM (INTUITION) BESTOWED ON PERSONS OTHER THAN PROPHETS, EVEN ON ANIMALS

In regard to the granting of wahi and prophethood to Abu Talib, you are again mistaken. Wahi and Ilham have stages which are not peculiar to the rank of prophethood alone. These terms refer to a being's ability to understand hidden knowledge directly. This knowledge is granted to special people as well as to animals. Was the bee a prophet to whom Allah sent wahi? A verse of the Holy Qur'an in sura Nahl (The Ants) clearly says: "And your Lord revealed to the bee, saying: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build." (16:68)

Do you think that Nukhabuz (or, according to some commentators, Yukhabuz), the mother of the Prophet Moses was a prophet? In the sura of Qasas (The Narratives) is clearly stated that she had been given two commands, two prohibitory edicts, two pieces of information and two good tidings through wahi, Allah says: "And we revealed to Moses' mother, saying: Give him suck; then when you fear for him, cast him into the river and do not fear nor grieve; surely We will bring him; back to you and make him one of the apostles." (28:7)

Apart from these facts, it is not necessary for the guidance of the people that all instructions and commands of Allah should be communicated through wahi. Sometimes He guides the people through a voice. It has repeatedly happened and the Holy Qur'an bears testimony to this fact. In sura Maryam (Mary), He says how He guided Mary: "Then (a voice) called out to her from beneath her: Grieve not, surely your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you. Shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop for you fresh, ripe dates. So eat and drink and refresh the eye. Then if you see any mortal, say: 'Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God, so I shall not speak to any man today.'" (19:24-26)

Chapter **8**

9th Session - Part 8

ABU TALIB WAS GUIDED BY ALLAH TO NAME HIS SON ALI

In the same way that the bee, the mother of Moses, and the mother of Jesus were instructed by Allah, though none of them was a prophet, Abu Talib was also instructed to give a name to his son.

Moreover, no one has ever said that Abu Talib was a prophet or that wahi (revelation) was granted to him. A heavenly voice and a tablet contained the instruction to name the child. Your own ulema have written this fact in their books.

Sheikh: Where have our ulema stated this?

Well-Wisher: There are many such books.

REVELATION OF LAWH (TABLET) TO ABU TALIB

Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Faqih Shafi'i, in his *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba*, *Mawadda VIII*, from the report of Abbas Ibn Abdu'l-Muttalib, which Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi also quotes in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, chapter 56, and Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib* narrate with slight variation in wording, that when Ali was born, his mother Fatima Bint Asad named him after her father, Asad. Abu Talib did not agree with her and said: "O Fatima! Let us go to the Qubais hills, and invoke Allah (some reporters say that he said they should go to the Masjidu'l-Haram). He may tell us the name of this child." It was night when they reached the Abu Qubais hills (or the Masjidu'l-Haram) and began their invocations. Abu Talib prayed: "O Creator of this dark night and bright moon, let us know Your will regarding this child's name."

At that time a voice came from the sky. When Abu Talib raised his head, he saw a tablet like a green jewel, with four lines written on it. He took the tablet and clasped it to his chest. When he read it, he found these verses written on it: "I have conferred a special honor on you both by giving you a pure, distinguished son. He has been given the name 'Ali' from the side of Allah. It is derived from 'Ali' (The Exalted)."

Ganji Shafi'i writes in *Kifayatu't-Talib* that a voice came in reply to the verses of Abu Talib reciting these two couplets: "O people of the exalted Prophet's House! I have distinguished you with a pure child. Verily, he has been named 'Ali' from the side of Allah Almighty. This name is derived from Allah's own Name, Al-Ali."

Abu Talib was immensely pleased and fell down in prostration before Allah. As a token of thanksgiving for this great event, he sacrificed ten camels. He hung the tablet in the Masjidu'l-Haram. The Bani Hashim used to take pride in it before the Quraish. The tablet remained hanging there until it disappeared in the time of war between Abdullah Ibn Zubair and Hajjaj.

This report also supports the previously mentioned hadith which say that from the very beginning Abu Talib had been a believer. He implored Allah Almighty to name the child. When he saw Allah's merciful bounty, he fell down in prostration before Him. Is this the behavior of an unbeliever?

ALI'S NAME IS NOT A PART OF THE ADHAN AND IQAMA (CALLS FOR PRAYERS)

You have claimed that Shia jurists insist that the name of Ali is considered compulsory in the Adhan and Iqama (calls for prayer). In fact not a single Shia jurist has stated that the name of Ali is an integral part of the Adhan or the Iqama. In all the books of jurisprudence Shia jurists invariably say that bearing witness to the vicegerency of Amiru'l-Mu'minin is not part of the Adhan or Iqama. To say it in the Adhan and the Iqama with that intention is unlawful. If, at the time of beginning prayers, the intention is that the name of the Holy Imam is an integral part of the prayers, the performance becomes void. But of course after mentioning the name of the Holy Prophet, to mention the name of Ali without considering it essential to the purpose, but merely for the sake of grace and blessedness, is desirable. Allah has mentioned his name at every place after the name of the Holy Prophet as I have already said before.

Now we come to our main point: no one among the distinguished companions had as exalted lineage as Ali did.

ALI'S PIETY

As for Ali's piety, no one else compared to him. Both his friends and his foes agree that, after the Holy Prophet, no one was as pious as Ali was.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* and Muhammad Ibn Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, report from Umar Ibn Abdu'l-Aziz that the Holy Imam was superior in piety to all of mankind. He says: "We do not know anyone in the community after the Holy Prophet who was more devout and pious than Ali Bin Abu Talib."

Mullah Ali Qushachi, for all his extreme intolerance, writes that human beings are at a loss to comprehend the merits of Ali. In his *Sharh-e-Tajrid* he says: "Men are astounded when they hear of the practices of Ali's life."

ABDULLAH BIN RAFI'I'S REPORT

Abdullah Bin Rafi'i says that at the end of a fast day, he went to Amiru'l-Mu'minin. He saw that a sealed bag was brought to him. When Ali opened it, it was found to contain unsifted flour. The Imam took three handfuls of flour, ate it, drank a little water, and offered thanks to Allah. Abdullah Bin Rafi'i said: "O Abu'l-Hasan! Why have you sealed the mouth of the bag?" The Imam replied: "It is so that my sons, who love me, may not mix olive oil or sugar with the flour, which would cause Ali's self to relish its taste."

So Ali used to keep himself aloof from delicious foods so that he might not be subdued by them. Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi has also cited this hadith in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, chapter 51, from Ahnaf Bin Qais.

SUWAID BIN GHAFLA'S REPORT

Moreover, the Sheikh, in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-Su'ul, Khatib Khawarizmi in Manaqib, and Tabari in his Ta'rikh have reported from Suwaid Bin Ghafla that he said: "One day I had the honor of visiting Amiru'l-Mu'minin. I saw before him a cup of milk which was so sour that I could smell its foulness. The Imam had dry bread in his hand. It was so dry that it could hardly be broken. The Imam broke it by putting it under his knee and, after making it soft in the sour milk, ate it. He asked me to eat with him. I told him that I was fasting. The Imam said: 'I have heard from my friend, the Prophet of Allah, that if one is observing a fast and has an inclination for some food, but does not eat it for the sake of Allah, then Allah will give him heavenly foods.'"

Suwaid continued: "Seeing the condition of Ali, I was astounded. I asked the Imam's servant, Fizza, who was standing near me, why she did not fear Allah, that is, why had she cooked the barley bread without removing its husk. Fizza said on oath that Ali himself had ordered her not to remove its husk.

The Imam asked me what I was saying to Fizza. I told him that I had asked her why she did not sift the flour. Ali said: 'May my father and mother be sacrificed to the Holy Prophet! The Holy Prophet never removed the husk; he never satisfied his hunger with wheat bread for three consecutive days. I follow the practice of the Holy Prophet.'"

ALI'S ABSTAINING FROM EATING HALWA

Muwaffaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi and Ibn Maghazili Faqih Shafi'i write in their *Manaqib* that one day during the time of Ali's caliphate, some halwa (a sweet dish) was brought to him. He picked up a little of it, smelled it, and said: "How appealing and sweet-smelling it is! But Ali does not know its taste. I have never yet eaten halwa." The narrator said to him: "O Ali! Is halwa unlawful for you?" The Imam said: "What Allah has made lawful can never be unlawful. But can I be content to fill my stomach while there are starving people in the country? Should I sleep with my stomach full when people throughout the Hijaz are dying of hunger? How can I content myself with my name being Amiru'l-Mu'minin? Why should I not be associating myself with the people in their penury and sufferings?"

Also Khawarizmi reports from Abi Bin Thabit that one day 'faluda' (a delicious syrup) was brought before Ali, but he suppressed his desire and did not drink it.

These are some examples of his practice regarding eating and drinking. He ate dry barley bread sometimes with vinegar or salt and sometimes with a little vegetable or milk. There were never two kinds of food on his table cloth.

In the year 40 A.H. on the night of the 19th Ramadhan, when Abdu'r-Rahman Ibn Muljim Muradi inflicted the fatal wound, he was a guest at the house of his daughter, Umme Kulthum, to end his fast. When bread, milk and salt were put on the table cloth, Ali who had great affection for his daughter, Umme Kulthum, angrily said: "I have never seen a girl being so unkind to her father." Umme Kulthum said: "Father! What wrong have I done?" Ali said: "Have you ever seen your father having two kinds of food together on the table cloth?" Then he ordered that the milk be removed. However he ate a few morsels of bread with salt and then said: "We shall have to give account for all the lawful things; for unlawful acts there is chastisement."

ALI'S DRESS

Ali's dress was very simple. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in *Manaqib*, Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in *Musnad*, Sibt Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkira*, and others of your ulema have written that: "His dress was of coarse cloth, purchased for five dirhams." He patched his clothes. The patches were of hide or palm leaves. His shoes were also made of palm leaves. Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* have written that Ali had so many patches on his clothing that when during the time of his caliphate, his cousin, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, saw them and felt sad. Ali said: "I have so many patches on my clothes that now I feel shy of the patcher. What has Ali to do with worldly adornment? How should I be content with the pleasure which is to fade away and the blessing which is not to last?"

Another person objected to Ali's appearance saying: "Why do you patch clothes even during the days of your caliphate and supremacy? It makes the enemy look down upon you." Ali said: "This is the kind of dress which subdues our passions, removes the sense of pride in man, and is adopted by a believer."

Muhammad Bin Talha in his *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, Khawarizmi in his *Manaqib*, Ibn Athir in his *Kamil*, and Sulayman Balkhi in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda* have reported that Ali and his servant had identical clothing. He purchased two pieces of cloth of the same kind and price. One he wore himself and the other he gave to his servant, Qanbar.

These were Ali's customs regarding food and clothing. He himself ate dry barley bread and gave bread made of wheat, sugar, honey and dates to the beggars and orphans. He wore the patched clothes himself but gave fine clothes to orphans and widows.

Chapter **9**

9th Session - Part 9

ZURAR'S CONVERSATION WITH MU'AWIYA CONCERNING ALI

There are many examples of Ali's rejection of the world. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Isfahani in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, vol. I, p.84, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Amir Shabrawi Shafi'i in *Kitabu'l-I'ttihad Bin Hubbi'l-Ashraf*, p.8; Muhammad Bin Talha in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p.33; Nuru'd-din Bin Sabbagh Maliki in *Fusulu'l-Muhimma*, p.128; Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, chapter 51; Sibt Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkira Khawasu'l-Umma* at the end of chapter 5, and many others of your accredited ulema and historians have recorded in detail the conversation between Mu'awiya and Zurar Bin Zumra. At the end of his talk with Mu'awiya, Zurar praised Ali in these words: "On some occasions I have seen Ali at night when the stars were scattered over the sky, holding his beard and writhing like one bitten by a snake, crying as in intense pain, saying: 'O World! Deceive somebody else instead of me. Do you fold me in your arms and are you fond of me? This can't be. I have given you three divorces, after which union is not possible. Your time is short lived, the fear you bring is great, and your pleasure is very insulting. May Allah save us from the paucity of means of travelling, the remoteness of the destination, and the perils of the way!' Then Mu'awiya began to weep and said, 'May Allah be merciful to Abu'l-Hasan. By Allah, he was just like that.' Mu'awiya also said, 'Women are unable to beget a man like Ali Bin Abi Talib.'"

THE PROPHET'S RECOGNITION OF ALI'S PIETY

The Prophet himself recognized Ali's outstanding piety. Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, chapter 46, reports from Ammar Yasir, who said that he heard from the Holy Prophet that he said to Ali: "Verily, Allah Almighty granted you adornment the like of which He has not given to any one else whom He loved. And that is your piety in this world. He has made you such that you neither take benefit from the world, nor can it make you inclined towards it. He bestowed upon you the love for the poor and the needy. So they were pleased with your Imamate, and I was also pleased with them on account of their following you. Blessed is he who befriends you and acknowledges you; and woe be to him who is hostile to you. Those who love you and acknowledge you shall be your neighbors in Paradise and shall be your companions in your palace. Those who have been opposed to you shall be reckoned as liars by Allah on the Day of Judgement and shall be granted their due chastisement."

ALLAH AND THE HOLY PROPHET CALLED ALI IMAMU'L-MUTTAQIN (CHIEF OF THE PIOUS)

He reached such a high stage of piety that friends and enemies alike called him *Imamu'l-Muttaqin* (the Chief of the Pious). In fact the first person to address him with this title was the Holy Prophet himself.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.II, p.450; Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani in *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba* and Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, chapter 54, report from Anas Bin Malik that one day the Holy Prophet asked him to bring water to him for ablution. When he had brought water, the Holy Prophet performed his ablution and then performed two rak'ats of prayer. Then he said to him: "O Anas! the next person to enter this door is the chief of the pious ones, the leader of the Muslims, the sovereign of the believers, and the seal of the successors, who will lead people with bright faces and hands to Paradise."

Anas says: "I prayed within myself to Allah that He might send an Ansar through the door, but I kept my invocation secret. Suddenly, I saw Ali entering the door. The Holy Prophet asked who he was. I replied that he was Ali Bin Abi Talib. Then the Holy Prophet happily got up to greet Ali. He folded him in his arms and wiped the sweat from his face. Ali said, 'O Holy Prophet! You are treating me today as you have never done before!' The Holy Prophet said, 'Why shouldn't I do that when you will convey my prophethood to the community, will make them hear my voice, and will explain to them those things concerning which they have differences of opinion.'"

Also Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.II, and Hafiz Abu Nu'aim in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya* write that one day Ali came to the Prophet. The Prophet said to him: "Welcome, leader of the Muslims and the Chief of the Pious Ones!" Ali said: "I praise Allah for the blessing which He has bestowed upon me, and I implore His munificence to me." Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i also narrates this hadith at the end of section IV, part I, of his *Matalibu's-Su'ul* and through it proves that Ali was the Imam of all the pious ones.

Hakim, in his *Mustadrak*, part III, p.38 and Bukhari and Muslim, each in his *Sahih*, report that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah sent me revelations about Ali concerning three things: (1) he is the master and chief of Muslims; (2) he is the chief of the pious ones; and (3) he is the guide who will lead the people with bright faces and hands (to Paradise)."

Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i reports in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, chapter 45, on the authority of Abdullah Bin Asad Bin Zurara that the Prophet said: "On the night of Mi'raj (ascension), when I was taken to the heavens, I was allowed to enter a palace of pearls, whose floor was of sparkling gold. Then revelation was sent to me, and I was told three things about Ali: (1) that he is certainly the master and chief of the Muslims; (2) that he is the Imam and chief of the pious ones; and (3) that he is the guide who will lead people with bright faces and hands (to Paradise)."

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal writes in his *Musnad* that one day the Holy Prophet addressed Ali thus: "O Ali! to cast a look at your face is worship; verily you are the chief of the pious ones and leader of the believers. He who is a friend of yours is a friend of mine, and he who is a friend of mine is surely a friend of Allah. He who has ill will against you, has ill will against me, and he who has ill will against me, certainly has ill will against Allah."

So it is sufficient for the exalted rank of Ali that the Holy Prophet insisted that Ali surpassed all the companions in piety. He alone had been given the title of *Imamu'l-Muttaqin* (chief of the pious ones) and the Holy Prophet repeatedly referred to him as such.

AS IMAMU'L-MUTTAQIN ALI HAD NO INCLINATION FOR SELF-INDULGENCE OR AUTHORITY

Sheikh: One cannot say too much in praise of Ali. Of course, Mu'awiya said the right thing: the women of the world are unable to give birth to a man like Ali.

Well-Wisher: Now it is clear that among the venerable companions Ali was the chief of the pious ones. An idea has just struck me. If you permit, I will ask you one thing.

Sheikh: Yes, please do.

Well-Wisher: After acknowledging that among the distinguished companions Ali had the exclusive merit of being the chief of the pious ones, would you assume that he had any inclination for self-indulgence or power?

Sheikh: It is impossible to assume such a thing about him. You have pointed out the well known fact that Ali gave three divorces to the world. Having proved his aloofness from the world how could he be inclined to it. Besides this, his rank is so exalted that it is impossible to entertain such a false notion of him.

Well-Wisher: So it follows that all the actions of such an embodiment of piety were definitely for Allah. He never swerved an inch from the right path.

Sheikh: It is obvious that we don't deny these things about Ali.

ALI'S REFUSAL TO PAY ALLEGIANCE TO ABU BAKR PROVES THE METHOD OF HIS APPOINTMENT AS CALIPH WAS NOT RIGHT

Well-Wisher: When the Holy Prophet died, Ali, according to the will of the Holy Prophet, performed the burial rituals. Some people, assembling at Saqifa-e-Bani Sa'ida, swore allegiance to Abu Bakr. Later, when Ali was called, why did he refuse allegiance?

If the manner in which Abu Bakr was elected caliph was right and the question of Ijma' (consensus) was proved to be just, then Ali, being so pious should not have deviated from the truth. You will recall the hadith which I mentioned on previous nights, in which the Holy Prophet said: "Ali is with the truth and truth is with Ali." If the proceedings at the Saqifa were based on justice and the appointment of Abu Bakr as Caliph were valid, the Imam should have welcomed them and acknowledged Abu Bakr as the rightful caliph. But in fact he firmly opposed the election. The opposition of Ali must have been based on one of two things. Either Ali was going against the right path, and he violated the order of the Holy Prophet, or he considered the consensus to be a farce.

As for the first possibility, it is out of the question to assume that Ali could deny the truth. According to the Holy Prophet "Ali is with the truth and the truth revolves around Ali." Moreover, no one has ever claimed that he was interested in worldly power. He divorced the world three times. He had no wish to gain political ascendancy. It was the second condition which prompted him to refuse to acknowledge the caliphate of Abu Bakr. He knew it contradicted the will of Allah and the Holy Prophet.

Sheikh: It is strange of you to say that Ali did not swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. References in your and our books of history prove that Ali did pay allegiance to Caliph Abu Bakr and did not oppose the consensus.

Well-Wisher: Have you forgotten all our previous discussions in which I gave full details of the statements of your prominent ulema? Even Bukhari and Muslim have written each in his Sahih that Ali did not offer allegiance at that time. Your ulema have generally admitted that on the first day, when the Holy Imam was forcibly and insultingly dragged from his house to the mosque (as has been stated earlier) he did not swear allegiance but returned home. Ibrahim Bin Sa'd Saqafi (died 283 A.H.), Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Tabari, and others have written that Ali offered allegiance after six months (that is, after the death of Fatima). Even if we

admit, by way of supposition, that the Imam offered allegiance, why did he wait for six months before doing so?

Sheikh: Certainly there must have been some reason for that. He alone knew it. But why should we worry about the mutual discord of our elders? Why should we pry into their differences after 1300 years? (Loud laughter from the audience.)

Well-Wisher: When you cannot find a reasonable answer to prove your point, you depend upon such a reply. But before all fair minded people, the matter is too clear to require any elucidation or proof.

As for your assertion that we need not interfere in the differences of our predecessors, of course you are right, insofar as their affairs have no bearing on us. But in the present case you are mistaken because it is the duty of every sensible muslim to have faith based on reason, not on blind following. In making inquiries regarding religion, we study the common history of the Muslims. We find that, after the death of the Holy Prophet, two sects appeared. Therefore, we should make thorough inquiries in order to understand which of the two sects is rightly guided. Obviously we should not blindly follow our predecessors.

Sheikh: Certainly your point is that Abu Bakr's caliphate was not just. But if Abu Bakr was not the rightful Caliph, and if it was the right of Ali to occupy that position, why did he not use his special strength and courage to establish justice? He used to attend the prayers also and often gave useful advice to the distinguished caliphs in important matters.

SILENCE OF HOLY PROPHETS

Well-Wisher: First, the Prophets and their successors acted according to the will of Allah Almighty. Accordingly we cannot raise any objection as to why they did not wage war, or why they adopted silence before the enemy, or why they suffered defeat.

If you study the historical facts regarding the lives of the holy prophets and their successors, you will find many similar instances of acquiescence. The Holy Qur'an has narrated some of those events. In the sura of Qamar (The Moon), the Holy Qur'an relates what the Prophet Noah said when his people rejected him: "Verily, I am overcome (by these people), so give help." (54:11)

In the sura of Maryam (Mary), the Qur'an tells us of the silence of Abraham when he sought his uncle Azar's help and received a disappointing reply: "And I will withdraw from you and what you call upon besides Allah, and I will call upon my Lord." (19:48)

So just as Abraham withdrew from the people when he did not receive support from his uncle Azar, Ali also must have withdrawn from the people and gone into seclusion.

Sheikh: I think this isolation signifies withdrawal of the heart. That is, he withdrew and kept aloof from them but did not assume physical seclusion.

Well-Wisher: If you study the commentaries of both sects, you will find that his withdrawal from people was physical, not merely psychological. I recall that Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi says in his Tafsir-e-Kabir, vol.V, p.809: "Isolation from something means keeping aloof from it. What Abraham meant was that he wanted to keep aloof from them, both from the physical and religious point of view."

The chronicles report that after this rejection Abraham migrated from Babylon to Kuhistan in Fars and lived a solitary life in those mountainous surroundings for seven years. He then returned to Babylon and again publicly proclaimed Allah's message and broke the people's idols. At this the people flung him into the fire. Allah Almighty made the fire cool and safe for him, and so his prophethood was firmly established. In the sura of Qasas (The Narratives), the story about Moses running away in fear of his life has been narrated in this way: "So he went forth, fearing, awaiting, (and) he said: My Lord, deliver me from the unjust people."(28:21)

In the sura of A'raf (The Elevated Places), the Holy Qur'an tells us of Aaron's plight when Moses had left him in charge of the Bani Israel. The

people immediately began to worship the golden calf and, because Aaron had no one to support him, he remained silent. The Qur'an says: "And he (Moses) seized his brother by the head, dragging him towards him. He (Aaron) said: Son of my mother! Surely the people reckoned me weak and had well nigh slain me." (7:150)

ALI'S SITUATION SIMILAR TO AARON'S

So according to the Holy Qur'an Aaron did not draw the sword against the people. He assumed silence when they adopted Samiri's Golden Calf as the object of worship because he (Aaron) recognized that he was outnumbered. Similarly, Ali, whom the Holy Prophet pronounced to be the counterpart of Aaron (as we have discussed in detail earlier), was also perfectly justified in assuming patience and forbearance when he had been left alone. The Holy Imam was forcibly brought to the mosque and an open sword was put on his head to force him to swear allegiance. Later he went to the tomb of the Holy Prophet and repeated the same words which Allah Almighty has related through the tongue of Aaron. Aaron had said to Moses: "Surely the people had reckoned me weak and had well nigh slain me."

ACQUIESCENCE OF PROPHETS

The Prophet Muhammad's example regarding this point is of course most instructive. We should consider why he maintained complete silence for thirteen years in the face of hostile activities of the enemy in Mecca until finally he had to abandon his native city in the darkness of the night. The reason was that he had no helpers. In fact, even during the days of his authority, he could not do away with some innovations.

Sheikh: How can it be you say that the Holy Prophet failed to do away with innovations?

THE HOLY PROPHET COULD NOT EFFECT DRASTIC CHANGES FOR FEAR OF PEOPLE

Well-Wisher: It has been reported by Hamidi in his *Jam'i Bainu's-Sahihain* and by Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in *Musnad* from Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha that the Holy Prophet said to her: "Had these people not been near the age of infidelity and ignorance, and had I not the fear that it would destroy their faith, I would have ordered the House of the Ka'ba to be demolished and whatever had been taken out of it to be restored. Having levelled it, I would have erected two doors towards its east and west as it was in the days of the Prophet Abraham, and I would have rebuilt it on the foundations set up by Abraham."

Certainly if the Holy Prophet himself was unable to oppose major innovations, Ali was justified in observing the same principle when he faced a similar challenge.

The great jurist, Wasiti Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i, and Khatib Khawarizmi report in their *Manaqib* that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "The community has a strong grudge against you. Shortly after my death they will deceive you and reveal what they have in their hearts. I order you to be patient and control yourself at that time so that Allah may give you its reward and a good recompense."

Chapter **10**

9th Session - Part 10

AFTER THE DEATH OF THE HOLY PROPHET ALI'S PATIENCE WAS FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

Second, Amiru'l-Mu'minin never looked to himself but was always mindful of Allah. He was completely absorbed in Allah. He resigned himself and his people to the will of Allah. Hence, his patience and forbearance in gaining his right were for Allah's sake so that there might not be discord among the Muslims and that people might not return to their previous infidelity. When Fatima's property was taken from her, she came home, depressed and dismayed. She said to Ali: "You have receded like a foetus. You have retired from the world like an accused person and have broken your hawk-like wings. Now the weak wings of a bird do not support you. This Ibn Qahafa (Abu Bakr) is forcibly snatching away from me my father's gift and my children's means of subsistence. In fact these people abused me with open ill will and railed at me." She spoke for a long time.

The Holy Imam listened to Fatima until she was silent. Then he gave her a short reply which satisfied her. He said: "O Fatima! In the matter of religion and preaching truth, I have never been inactive. Do you wish that this sacred religion remains secure and that your holy father's name is called in mosques until eternity?" She said: "Yes, that is my most ardent desire." Ali said: "Then you should be patient. Your father has given me instructions regarding this situation, and I know that I should be forbearing. Otherwise, I have such strength that I could subdue the enemy and take back your right from them. But you should know that in that case the religion would be destroyed. So, for the sake of Allah and for the security of Allah's religion, be patient. The recompense in the hereafter for you is better than your right which has been usurped."

It was for this reason that Amiru'l-Mu'minin made patience his custom. He assumed forbearance and silence for the safety of Islam. In many of his sermons he has referred to this point.

ALI'S STATEMENTS ON THE EXPEDIENCY OF HIS SILENCE AFTER THE DEMISE OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Ibrahim Bin Muhammad Saqafi, who is one of the trustworthy ulema of the Sunnis, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, and Ali Ibn Muhammad Hamadani report that when Talha and Zubair broke their allegiances and left for Basra, Ali ordered the people to assemble in the mosque. Then after praising Allah Almighty he said: "After the death of the Holy Prophet, we said that we were his Ahle Bait, his successors, and the rightful people to receive his heritage. No one except us could claim the right of rulership after him. But a group of the hypocrites snatched away our Holy Prophet's rulership from us and entrusted it to those who were our opponents. By Allah, our hearts and eyes wept for it. By Allah, we were full of grief and indignation. I swear by Allah that if there were no fear that the Muslim community would be shattered, we would have overturned the caliphate. They occupied the seat of power until they reached their end. Now Allah has returned the caliphate to me. And these two men (Talha and Zubair) also swore allegiance to me. Now they have proceeded to Basra intending to cause dissension among the people."

Among your great scholars, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid and Kalbi, have reported that at the time of his setting out for Basra Ali addressed the people. He said: "When the Holy Prophet of Allah died, the Quraish swooped down upon us and deprived us of the right which we deserved more than anyone else. So I thought that it was better to adopt patience at that time, rather than allow the Muslims to disintegrate and their blood to be spilled, for they had embraced Islam only recently."

Ali's silence and his abstaining from challenging the caliphate of Abu Bakr and Umar was not due to his concurrence with them. It was because he wanted to avoid causing bitter conflict among the people and because he wanted to save the religion from annihilation. So after six months of silence and disapproval, then, as stated by your ulema, he offered allegiance and cooperated with them. In a letter sent to the people of Egypt through Malik Ashtar, he clearly writes that his silence was for the sake of preserving Islam.

The original text of Ali's letter, which Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has recorded in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.IV, p.164, is as follows:

AMIRU'L-MU'MININ'S LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT EXPLAINING HIS SILENCE WHEN DEPRIVED OF THE CALIPHATE

"Allah Almighty sent Muhammad as a witness of the prophets to warn the people. So when the Holy Prophet died the Muslims disputed among themselves as to who should succeed him. I swear by Allah that I never thought or believed, nor were there the least signs of it, that the people of Arabia would take away the right of succession from the Ahle Bait and give it to others after him. It was unimaginable that after the death of the Holy Prophet, in spite of his clear decree, they would deprive me of that right.

I was greatly distressed that the people ran to a certain person (Abu Bakr) and swore allegiance to him. So I withdrew myself until I saw that a group of people diverged from Islam and intended to destroy Islam. Then I feared that if I did not help Islam and the Muslims, Islam would suffer such destruction as would be more painful to me than the snatching away of the caliphate. Of course political power cannot last long. It must dissipate like the clouds. It was under these conditions that I had to rise, so that paganism would become weak and Islam become firm."

AMIRU'L-MU'MININ'S SERMON AFTER MARTYRDOM OF MUHAMMAD BIN ABI BAKR

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.II, p.35, reports from *Kitabu'l-Gharat* of Ibrahim Ibn Sa'd Bin Hilal Saqafi, who reports from Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Jundab, who reports from his father that when the enemy occupied Egypt and Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr was martyred, Amiru'l-Mu'minin gave a sermon in which he expressed his bitter feelings against the attitude the Muslims had adopted after the death of the Holy Prophet. He wrote his remarks in a letter to the people of Egypt. The Holy Imam said: "A man said to me 'O son of Abu Talib! How greedy you are for the caliphate.'"

I said to him: 'You are greedier than I and are far removed from that position. Who is the greedier between us? Is it I, who am demanding my right, for which Allah and His Holy Prophet have made me the most rightful claimant, or you, who have debarred me from that right and have created obstruction between me and my right?'

They were all dumbfounded and could not utter a word. Verily, Allah does not help the oppressors."

This account and other sermons of Imam Ali show that the reason the Holy Imam did not confront the enemy, but assumed silence and (as alleged by your ulema) offered allegiance after six months, was not that he concurred with them in their decision concerning the caliphate. It was because he feared that Islam would perish and that the Muslims would be divided.

If Ali had risen to secure his right, some of the people would certainly have supported him (many had urged him to come forward) and civil war would have started.

The Holy Prophet had only recently died. The Muslims were quite close to the age of infidelity, and the roots of belief had not been securely established. The Jews, the Christians, the idol worshipers, and the hypocrites, who were the worst enemies, would have had an opportunity to destroy the honor of the Muslims. Consequently, Islam would have collapsed.

Amiru'l-Mu'minin understood these matters. Moreover, the Holy Prophet had told him that the basis of Islam would not be destroyed and that religion was like the sun, which could be concealed for some time under the clouds of ignorance and hostility but would eventually come out, shedding its light everywhere.

In short, he claimed his right for six months and proved the righteousness of his cause in a number of congregations and assemblies, but did not swear allegiance. Though he did not resort to fighting, he continued claiming his right through arguments and protests.

SERMON OF SHIQSHIQAYYA ALSO EXPLAINS ALI'S SILENCE

The Holy Imam begins his sermon of Shiqshiqayya with the same point. "By Allah! The son of Abu Qahafa (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (caliphate) though he certainly knew that my relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the mill. The flood water flows down from me, and no one can reach the height of my knowledge. I kept myself detached from the caliphate. Then I began to consider whether I should take my right by force or calmly endure the darkness, wherein the mature are enfeebled, the young grow old, and the true believer acts under strain until he meets Allah (at death). I found that endurance was a wiser course to adopt. So I was patient although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance until the first one went his way. But he handed over the caliphate to Ibn Khattab (Umar) after himself."

This sermon is filled with the powerful emotions of Ali. But this much is sufficient to prove our point.

DOUBT ABOUT THE SERMON OF SHIQSHIQAYYA

Sheikh: In the first place this sermon does not prove the displeasure of the Imam. Second, this sermon does not concern Ali. In fact, it is the work of Seyyed Sharif Razi, who has included it in the sermons of Ali. In fact, Ali has no complaint against the caliphs. Rather, he was quite pleased with them.

Well-Wisher: This statement of yours is based on extreme prejudice. What Ali stated and complained of has already been narrated earlier. The Holy Imam's grievances are not confined to this sermon. Your allegation that the author of this sermon was the pious and distinguished scholar, Seyyed Raziu'd-din, is inaccurate. Your eminent scholars, like Izzu'd-din Abdu'l-Hamid Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, Mufti of Egypt, and Sheikh Muhammad Khizari (in *Muhazirat-e-Ta'rikhu'l-Uma'imu'l-Islamiyya*, page 127, have declared that this sermon is Ali's. Your own scholars have written commentaries on it. Some of your fanatical ulema of the later age made passionate efforts to create doubts about its authenticity, but none of the more than forty prominent Sunni and Shia ulema, who have written commentaries on *Nahju'l-Balagha*, has said such a fantastic thing.

SEYYED RAZI

Of course the piety of the great scholar, Seyyed Raziu'd-din, would preclude his attributing one of his own sermon's to Ali. Moreover, experts in the Arabic language and its literature, who have studied the sermons of Nahju'l-Balagha, have decided that, in view of the excellent style and profound thoughts, the work is inimitable.

Your distinguished ulema, like Izzu'd-din Abdu'l-Hamid Bin Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali and Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, have admitted that the beauty and deep knowledge of the sermons of Ali prove that this work is inferior in merit only to the words of Allah and the Holy Prophet.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid reports Musaddiq Bin Shabbib as saying that the famous Ibn Khashshab said: "It is impossible for Razi or for anyone else to produce such a composition. We have gone through Razi's works; they stand no comparison to these writings and holy sermons."

SERMON OF SHIQSHIQAYYA RECORDED LONG BEFORE THE BIRTH OF SEYYED RAZI

Ignoring all other aspects of the question, many scholars, traditionists, and historians (both Shias and Sunnis) have recorded the existence of this sermon before the births of the great scholar Seyyed Razi and his father Abu Ahmad Naqibu't-Talibin.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* writes that he found this sermon in the books of his Sheikh, Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi Imam-e-Mu'tazila, who lived in the time of Muqtadir B'illah Abbasi. Obviously, Seyyed Razi was born long after him. He also writes that he has seen this sermon in the *Kitabu'l-Insaf*, of the well known preacher, Abu Ja'far Bin Qubba, who was one of the pupils of Sheikh Abu'l-Qasim Balkhi, and who died before the birth of Seyyed Razi.

Also Sheikh Abu Abdullah Bin Ahmad, commonly known as Ibn Khashshab, is reported to have said: " I have seen this sermon in books written 200 years before Seyyed Razi was born. I have also seen this sermon in the works of literary scholars who wrote them before the birth of Seyyed Razi's father, Ahmad Naqibu't-Talibin."

As for your claim that Ali was pleased with his opponents. This of course ignores countless statements to the contrary made by your ulema, which I have cited previously. I will cite still another example.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.II, p.561, records Ali as having said: "I remained with the Holy Prophet from the beginning until his death. The Holy Prophet breathed his last on my chest. It was I who washed his body with the help of the angels, performed his funeral prayers, and buried him. So there was no one nearer, or a more rightful successor, to him than I."

Towards the end of his sermon he refers to his opponents in these words: "I swear by Allah, the One, that I am on the right path and that my opponents are on the wrong path."

But you claim that Ali considered his opponents on the right path. I wish you could seriously look into the verse of the Holy Qur'an, which says: "They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and Allah will not permit aught but the perfection of His light, though the unbelievers are averse." (9:32)

Part 2
TENTH SESSION, Saturday night, 3rd
Sha'ban, 1345 A.H.

Chapter **1 1**

10th Session - Part 1

ASSESSMENT OF UMAR'S KNOWLEDGE OF ISLAMIC LAW

Nawab: This morning my son, Abdu'l-Aziz, who is a student at the Islamiyya College, reported to us that his teacher told the class that Caliph Umar Bin Khattab was the greatest jurist of his time in Medina. He had complete knowledge of the Qur'anic verses and their meanings. He was superior to all other prominent jurists, like Ali Bin Abi Talib, Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Akrama, and Zaid Bin Thabit. Even Ali Bin Abi Talib, whose understanding of fiqh (jurisprudence) was extensive, when he was faced with a difficult problem, consulted Umar concerning the rights of Muslims. The caliph always solved the difficult problems of Ali. All of us acknowledged this fact because our ulema say that Caliph Umar held a unique position in learning and knowledge. I ask you to explain this point so that all of us, including my son, may understand the facts.

Well-Wisher: It is strange that the teacher said those things. Even your ulema have never claimed that. If some fanatical people, like Ibn Hazm Zahiri, said that, they were bitterly opposed by your ulema. Moreover, this attribute was not claimed by Caliph Umar himself. None of your ulema has recorded this fact in any of their books.

The traditionists or historians who have written anything of the life of Caliph Umar Bin Khattab have remarked upon his cunning nature, his hard-heartedness, and political contrivances, but they have not dwelt upon his learning.

UMAR'S KNOWLEDGE OF ISLAMIC LAW WAS WEAK

In fact, the books of both sects are replete with instances which clearly show that Umar was not well versed in problems of learning and jurisprudence. Whenever he was faced with such issues he used to consult with Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali, Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, and other jurists of Medina.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid mentions the name of Abdullah Bin Mas'ud in particular, among the jurists of Medina, and says that Umar insisted that Abdullah should always remain with him so that whenever an occasion arose, he could be consulted on matters of jurisprudence.

Sheikh: (In anger) Where is it written that Umar was ignorant of religious problems and the knowledge of jurisprudence?

Well-Wisher: I did not say that Caliph Umar was completely ignorant. I said that he was not well versed in problems of jurisprudence and learning. I can prove what I say.

Sheikh: How would you prove that Caliph Umar had weak knowledge in matters relating to jurisprudence and religious ordinances?

Well-Wisher: There are many hadith in your authentic books. Apart from this, there is Umar's own admission, which he made on several occasions.

A WOMAN SILENCES UMAR ON A POINT OF LAW

Jalalu'd-din Suyuti in his *Tafsir-e-Durru'l-Mansur*, vol. II, p.133; Ibn Kathir in his *Commentary*, vol.I, p.468; Jarullah Zamakhshari in his *Tafsir-e-Kashshaf*, vol.I, p.357; Fazil Nishapuri in his *Tafsir-Gharibu'l Qur'an*, vol.I, in connection with the sura Nisa (The Women) of the Holy Qur'an; Qartabi in his *Tafsir*, vol.V, p.99; Ibn Maja' Qazwini in his *Sunan*, vol.I; Asadi in *Hashiyya-e-Sunan*, vol.I, p.583; Baihaqi in his *Sunan*, vol.VII, p.233; Qastalani in his *Irshadu's-Sari-Sharh-e-Sahih Bukhari*, vol.VIII, p.57; Muttaqi Hindi in his *Kanzu'l-'Ummal*, vol.VIII, p. 298; Hakim Nishapuri in his *Mustadrak*, vol.II, p.177; Abu Bakr Baglani in his *Tamhid*, p.199; Ajluni in his *Kashfu'l-Khufa'*, vol.I, p.270; Qazi Shukani in *Futuhu'l-Qadir*, vol.I,P.407; Dhahabi in his *Takhlis-e-Mustadrak*; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, vol.I, p.61 and vol.VII, p.96; Hamidi in his *Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain*; Faqih Wasiti Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in his *Manaqib*; Ibn Athir in his *Nihaya*, and others have authentically narrated with slight difference in wording that one day Caliph Umar during the course of his sermon to the people, said: "If any one marries and fixes a mehr (dowry) for more than 400 dirhams for his wife, I will inflict the prescribed punishment on him and will deposit the excess amount in the Baitu'l-Mal (Public Treasury)."

A woman from the audience called out: "Umar! Is what you say more acceptable or Allah's ordinance? Does not Allah Almighty say: 'And if you wish to have (one) wife in place of another and you have given one of them a heap of gold, then take not from it anything.'" (4:20)

Having heard this verse and the retort of the woman, Umar said: "You have better knowledge of fiqh and problems than Umar, all of you, including even the women observing purdah sitting in their homes."

Then Umar again mounted the pulpit and said: "Although I have forbidden you to give more than 400 dirhams as dowry to your wives, I now permit you to give as much as you like beyond the appointed limit. There is no harm in it."

This hadith shows that Caliph Umar was not well versed in the Qur'an and jurisprudence. Otherwise, he would not have said something so obviously incorrect that he could be silenced by an informed woman.

Sheikh: No, it is not so. The fact is that the Caliph wanted to force people to decrease the amount of dowry in compliance with the sunna. Although Islam allows us to give a large amount, it is better if we refrain from it so that the poor may not have to suffer. It is for this reason that

he said that the amount of mehr should not exceed the amount fixed for the wives of the Holy Prophet.

CONFISCATION OF ANY PORTION OF MEHR IS UNLAWFUL

Well-Wisher: This is such a lame excuse that even Umar had no idea of it. Otherwise he would not have admitted his own fault and would not have said: "You are better jurists than Umar, all of you, including the housewives." Otherwise he also would have said what you are saying.

Besides this, everybody knows that an unlawful act cannot be condoned as a means to accomplish a desirable and lawful result. Obviously the property of the woman, which she has owned, according to the Qur'anic injunction, could not lawfully be snatched away from her and deposited in the Baitu'l-Mal!

Apart from all these considerations, it is unlawful to inflict corporal punishment on a person who has not committed a sin. At least I have not seen any such decision made according to any penal code. Let me know if you can cite such an example. If there is no such ordinance in the penal laws, you will have to admit that the claim of the teacher was false.

UMAR DENYING THE PROPHET'S DEATH PROVES THAT HE WAS IGNORANT OF SEVERAL VERSES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Unfortunately, Umar had developed the habit of losing his temper, and in order to frighten others he said: "I will punish you!"

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad; Hamidi in his Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain; Tabari in his Ta'rikh, and other ulema have reported that when the Holy Prophet died, Umar went to Abu Bakr and told him that he feared that it was possible Muhammad had not died. Perhaps he had only pretended to be dead so that he might recognize his friends and foes, or perhaps he had disappeared, like Moses and would come again and punish those, who were disloyal and disobedient to him.

Umar continued to say: "So if anyone says that the Holy Prophet is dead, I will punish him." When Abu Bakr heard this, he was also uncertain about it, and the people also were confused and differences arose among them. When Ali learned of it, he appeared before the crowd of people and said: "People! Why are you making such a foolish commotion? Have you forgotten the holy verse, in which Allah said to the Holy Prophet: 'Verily you shall die and so also the people of your community'? (39:30) So according to this verse the Holy Prophet has left this world." This argument of Ali convinced the people and they believed that the Holy Prophet had really died. Then Umar said: "It was as if I had never heard this verse."

Ibn Athir in his Kamil and Nihaya; Zamakhshari in Asasu'l-Balagha; Shahrastani in Milal wa'n-Nihal, (Muqaddama IV), and many others of your ulema have written that Umar was shouting: "The Holy Prophet has not died," when Abu Bakr reached him and said: "Does Allah Almighty not say: 'Verily you shall die and so also the people of your community.'" Also He says: "If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels?" (3:144) Umar then became silent and said: "It was as though I had never heard this verse. Now I believe that the Holy Prophet is dead."

UMAR'S ORDER TO STONE FIVE PEOPLE AND ALI'S INTERVENTION

Hamidi reports in his *Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain* that during the caliphate of Umar, five people were arrested on the charge of fornication and brought before Umar. It was proved that the five men had committed fornication with a certain woman. Umar at once ordered them to be stoned to death. At that time Ali entered the mosque and having heard what Umar had ordered said to him: "Here your order is contrary to Allah's ordinance."

Umar said: "Ali! Fornication has been proved. Death by stoning is the prescribed punishment for this sin."

Ali said: "In the matter of fornication, there are different orders in different cases. Accordingly, in the present cases different orders should be passed."

Umar asked him to detail what the orders of Allah and His Holy Prophet were in those cases, for Umar had heard the Holy Prophet say on a number of occasions: "Ali is the most learned man and the best judge."

Ali ordered the five men to be brought to him. He ordered the first man to be beheaded. He ordered the second man to be stoned to death. He ordered the third man be given 100 lashes. The fourth man was given 50 lashes. The fifth man was given 25 lashes.

Umar, surprised and puzzled, said: "Abu'l-Hasan, how did you decide these cases in five different ways?"

The Holy Imam said: "The first man was an infidel under the protection of Islam. He committed fornication with a Muslim woman. Since he lost the protection of Islam he was liable to be killed. The second man had a wife, so he was stoned to death. The third man was unmarried; hence, he was ordered to be given 100 lashes. The fourth man was a slave who deserves a sentence half that of a free man, that is, 50 lashes. And the fifth man was an imbecile, so he was given a mild punishment, that is, 25 lashes."

Then Umar said: "If Ali had not been there, Umar would have been ruined O Abu'l-Hasan,! I hope I am not alive when you are not among us."

UMAR'S ORDERING A PREGNANT WOMAN TO BE STONED TO DEATH AND ALI'S INTERVENTION

Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib Fi Manaqib-e-Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali Bin Abi Talib*; Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*; Bukhari in his *Sahih*; Hamidi in *Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain*; Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, chapter IV, p.75, from Khawarizmi's *Manaqib*; Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in *Arba'in*, p.466; Muhibu'd-din Tabari in *Riyazu'n-Nazara*, vol.II, p.196; Khatib Khawarizmi in *Manaqib*, p.48; Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p.113; and Imamu'l-Haram in *Dhakha'iru'l-Uqba*, p.80, quote the following report.

A pregnant woman was brought before Umar Bin Khattab. On being questioned, she admitted that she was guilty of illicit sexual intercourse, and so the Caliph ordered her to be stoned. Then Ali said: "Your order is applicable to this woman, but you have no authority over her child."

Umar acquitted the woman and said: "Women are incapable of giving birth to a man like Ali: If Ali had not been there, Umar would have been ruined." He continued, saying: "May Allah not let me live so long as to face a difficult problem which Ali is not present to solve."

UMAR ORDERING AN INSANE WOMAN TO BE STONED AND ALI'S INTERVENTION

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad; Imamu'l-Haram Ahmad Bin Abdullah Shafi'i in Dhakha'iru'l-Mawadda, chapter II, p.75, from Hasan Basri; Ibn Hajar in Fathu'l-Bari, vol.XII, P.101; Abu Dawud in Sunan, vol. II, p.227; Munadi in Faizu'l-Qadir, vol. IV, p. 257; Hakim Nishapuri in Mustadrak, vol.II, p.59; Qastalani in Irshadu's-Sari, vol.X, p. 9; Baihaqi in Sunan, vol.VIII, p. 164; Muhibu'd-din Tabari in Riyazu'n-Nazara, v.II, p.196; Khatib Khawarizmi in his Munaqab, p.48; Muhammad Ibn Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-Su'ul; Imamu'l-Haram in Dhakha'iru'l-'Uqba, p.80; Ibn Maja in his Sunan, v.II, p.227; Bukhari in his Sahih, chapter la yarjumu'l-majnun wa'l-majnuna and most of your other ulema have reported the following incident:

One day an insane woman was brought before Caliph Umar Bin Khat-tab. She had committed fornication and admitted her fault. Umar ordered her to be stoned. Amiru'l-Mu'minin was there. He said to Umar: "What are you doing? I have heard the Holy Prophet saying that three kinds of people are free from the hold of law: a sleeping man until he wakes; a lunatic until he recovers himself and regains consciousness; and the child until he comes of age." Hearing this, Umar acquitted the woman.

Ibnu's-Saman in his Kitabu'l-Muwafiqah has recorded many such cases. There are some accounts which record about 100 erroneous and fallacious findings of Umar.

ALI'S KNOWLEDGE AND MERIT

Nuru'd-din Bin Sabbagh Malaki in his *Fusulu'l-Muhimma*, chapter 3, p. 17, writing about Ali said: " This chapter contains matter relating to the knowledge of Ali. One of those aspects is the knowledge of fiqh (jurisprudence) on which is based the lawful and unlawful acts of man. Ali understood the intricacies of law. Its complex problems were easy for him, and he fully understood their interpretations. It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet said that Ali was the most worthy man of the community to interpret questions of law."

Imam Abu Muhammad Husain Bin Mas'ud Baghawi in his *Masabih* reports from Anas that when the Holy Prophet appointed each one of the Companions to a particular position, he appointed Ali to the rank of judge and said: "Ali is the best judge among all of you (companions and community)."

Surely when you compare the words of this ignorant college teacher with the hadith of your own eminent scholars, you will confirm that his assertion is baseless. This teacher is claiming more than his leader did. Umar himself always expressed his inferiority to Ali.

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his *Musnad*, Imamul-Haram Ahmad Makki Shafi'i in *Dhakha'iru'l-Uqba*, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, chapter 56, and Muhibu'd-din Tabari in his *Riyazu'n-Nazara*, vol.II, p.195, quote Mu'awiya as saying: "Whenever Umar Bin Khattab faced a difficult problem, he sought the assistance of Ali." Abu'l-Hajjaj Balawi in his *Alif-Ba*, vol.I, p.222, writes that when Mu'awiya heard the news of Ali's martyrdom, he said: "With the death of Ali, jurisprudence and knowledge have collapsed."

He also quotes Sa'id Bin Musayyab as saying that Mu'awiya said: "Umar always sought shelter from difficulties for which Ali was not there to help him."

Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ali al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi in his commentary on *Risalat-e-Fathu'l-Mubin* writes: "The companions of the Holy Prophet consulted Ali in matters relating to ordinances of the Holy Qur'an and accepted his verdicts. Umar Bin Khattab has said on various occasions: "If Ali had not been there, Umar would have been ruined." The Holy Prophet of Allah also said: "The most highly learned man among my community is Ali Bin Abi Talib."

What is recorded in hadith and historical accounts proves that Umar was so devoid of common knowledge and knowledge of jurisprudence

that he was mistaken even regarding ordinary problems. Companions who were his contemporaries warned him about this weakness.

Sheikh: You are very unkind to impute such things to Umar. Is it possible for the caliph to be mistaken in religious matters?

Well-Wisher: This unkindness is not from my side. Your own ulema have revealed the truth about it.

Sheikh: If you can, please let us know these things with proper sources so that truth may be clearly revealed.

Well-Wisher: There are many such instances. About 100 of them are in your books, but I will submit one of them by way of example.

UMAR'S IGNORANCE CONCERNING TAYAMMUM (SUBSTITUTE FOR ABLUTION)

Muslim Ibn Hajjaj in his Sahih, chapter Tayammum; Hamidi in Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad, vol.IV, p.265,319; Baihaqi in Sunan, vol.I, p.209; Abi Dawud in Sunan , vol.I, p.53; Ibn Maja in Sunan, vol.I, p.200; Imam Nisa'i in his Sunan, vol.I, pp. 59-61, and others of your eminent ulema have in different ways and words, reported that during the caliphate of Umar a man came to him and said: "It is necessary for me to perform ghusl (the bath of ritual purification) but no water is available. What should I do in this circumstance?"

Umar said: "Unless you can obtain water and perform ghusl, you should not offer prayers."

At that time Ammar-e-Yasir, a companion of the Holy Prophet was present. He said: "Umar! Have you forgotten that on one of the journeys you and I happened to be in need of performing ghusl. Since water was not available you did not offer prayers, but I thought the method of tayammum in place of ghusl was that dust should be rubbed on my whole body. So I rubbed dust on my body and offered prayers. When we went to the Holy Prophet, he said, smiling: 'For tayammum this much is sufficient that the palms of both hands be tapped on the ground simultaneously and the palms be rubbed on the forehead; then the back of the right hand be rubbed with the left palm and then the back of the left hand be rubbed with the right palm.' Now why are you telling the man not to offer prayers?"

When Umar could make no reply he said: "Ammar, fear Allah."

Then Ammar said: "Do you permit me to narrate this hadith?" Umar said: "I leave it to you to do what you like."

In light of this reliable hadith which your own ulema have narrated, you will surely acknowledge that the teacher's claim was utterly false. Could a man well versed in jurisprudence and who had frequently been in the company of the Holy Prophet and had heard from the Prophet how 'tayammum' should be performed when water was not available tell a Muslim that if he does not find water he should abstain from offering his prayers? This is particularly strange since the Holy Qur'an tells us that in such a case we should perform 'tayammum.'

The practice of tayammum among the Muslims is so commonly known that even an illiterate Muslim knows that, under certain conditions it takes the place of ritual ablution and the ritual bath. Now what

should we say about a companion of the Holy Prophet and caliph? Shouldn't he be knowledgeable about this matter?

I do not claim in this case that Caliph Umar deliberately changed Allah's ordinances. But this much is certainly possible: he was weak in his ability to retain information and it was difficult for him to remember ordinances. And this was the reason, as your ulema have written, he used to say to an accomplished jurist Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud: "You should always remain with me so that whenever somebody asks me a question, you may answer him."

Now, gentlemen! You should decide what a difference there is between a man whose knowledge is so meager that he is unable to understand simple problems and one who immediately understands difficult problems.

Sheikh: Who else can that man be except the Holy Prophet?

Well-Wisher: Obviously, after the Holy Prophet no one among the Companions had such knowledge except the Holy Prophet's "gate of knowledge", Ali, about whom the Holy Prophet himself said: "Ali is the most learned of all of you."

Chapter **12**

10th Session - Part 2

ALL KNOWLEDGE WAS CLEARLY VISIBLE TO ALI

Abu'l-Mu'ayyid Mu'affaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi says in his *Manaqib* that one day Umar said to Ali Bin Abi Talib with some surprise: "How is it that if any question is asked of you, you give its answer without the least hesitation.?"

The Holy Imam opened his hand before him and said: "How many fingers do you see?"

Umar immediately said: "Five."

Ali said: "Why did you not ponder over it?"

Umar said: "There was no need to ponder since all five fingers were before my eyes."

Then Ali said: "Similarly, all the problems and issues of knowledge are clearly visible to me. I give their answers without pondering."

Now, gentlemen! Is it not due to prejudice that the teacher speaks such nonsense and misleads the uninformed youth. Does it seem likely that the man who possessed the deepest knowledge of all sciences and was the "gate of knowledge" of the Holy Prophet, would consult with Umar in order to solve his difficulties?

MU'AWIYA DEFENDING THE POSITION OF ALI

A hadith has just struck me. I put it before you as a further proof of my point. Ibn Hajar Makki, a scholar known for his intolerance writes in his *Sawa'iq-e-Muhriqa*, ch. II, Maqsad V, p. 110, under verse 14, that Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal has reported and also Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani in *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba* and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* have recorded that a man asked Mu'awiya a question. Mu'awiya said: "Ask Ali about it since he is the most learned man." The Arab said: "I prefer your answer to Ali's answer."

Mu'awiya said: "You have uttered a very bad thing: you have rejected the man whom the Holy Prophet himself trained and to whom he said: 'You have the same relation to me as Aaron had to Moses, except that there shall be no prophet after me. Moreover, whenever Umar was entangled in some difficult matter, he asked Ali about it and sought his opinion.'"

This brings to mind the saying: "Virtue is that to which even the enemy bears witness."

UMAR'S ADMISSION OF HIS IGNORANCE CONCERNING DIFFICULT PROBLEMS AND HIS DECLARATION THAT IF ALI HAD NOT HELPED HIM, HIS DIFFICULTIES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SOLVED

In order to further support Ali's superiority to Umar, we quote what your prominent ulema have said. Nuru'd-din Bin Sabbagh Maliki in *Fusulu'l-Muhimma*; Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*; Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in *Musnad*; Khatib Khawarizmi in *Manaqib*; Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, and many others have written that on seventy occasions Umar said "If Ali had not been there Umar would have been ruined."

Nuru'd-din Maliki in his *Fusulu'l-Muhimma* reports that once a man was brought to Umar. He was asked before the assembly of people: "How did you begin your morning?" He said: "I got up in the morning in this condition: I loved temptation and was averse to the right truth. I testified to the truth of the Jews and the Christians, believed in what I had not seen and in what had not yet been created."

Umar ordered that Ali be brought to him. When the matter was put before Amiru'l-Mu'minin, he said, "What the man has said is right. He says he loves temptation. He means by this wealth and children. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: 'And you know that your wealth and your children are a temptation.' (8:28) By aversion to the right he means death. The Qur'an says, 'And the stupor of death will come in truth.' (50:19)

By testifying to the truth of the Jews and Christians, he means what Allah says: 'The Jews said that the Christians were not on the right path and the Christians said that the Jews were not on the right path.' (2:113) That is, both the sects belie each other. So the Arab says that he agrees with them both, or that he rejects both of them.

He says that he believes in what he has not seen, meaning that he believes in Allah Almighty.

When he says that he believes in what has not yet been created, that is, not present, he refers to the Day of Judgement, which has not yet come into existence."

Then Umar said: "I seek Allah's shelter from the difficult situation in which Ali is not there to help me."

This anecdote has been narrated in a more elaborate and different form, by others like Muhammad Bin Ganji Shafi'i in *Kifayatu't-Talib*, ch.57, from Hudhaifa Bin Al-Yaman, who quoted it from Caliph Umar.

A number of similar incidents during the caliphate of Abu Bakr and Umar, both of whom were incapable of giving a correct answer. It was Ali who gave the reply. Particularly when the Jewish, Christian, and natural scientists scholars came and discussed difficult problems, it was only Ali who solved them.

According to your own ulema, like Bukhari and Muslim, each in his Sahih; Nishapuri in his Tafsir; Ibn Maghazili Faqih Shafi'i in Manaqib; Muhammad Bin Talha in Matalibu's-Su'ul, ch.4, pp. 13 and 18; Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani (d.852 A.H.) in Tahdhibu't-Tahdhib (printed in Hyderabad Daccan), p.338; Qazi Fazlullah Ruzbahan Shirazi in Ibtalu'l-Batil; Muhibu'd-din Tabari in Riyazu'n-Nazara, vol.II, p.39; Ibn Kathir in his Ta'rikh, vol. VII, p.369; Ibn Qutayba Dinawari (d.276 A.H.) in Ta'wil-e-Mukhtalafu'l-Hadith (printed in Egypt), pp.201-202; Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i (d. 658 A.H.) in Kifayatu't-Talib, ch. 57; Jalalu'd-din Suyuti in Ta'rikhu'l-Khulafa, p.66; Seyyed Mu'min Shablanji in Nuru'l-Absar, p.73; Nuru'd-din Ali Bin Abdullah Samhudi (d.911 A.H.) in Jawahiru'l-Iqdain; Al-Hajj Ahmad Afindi in Hidayatu'l-Murtab, pp.146 and 153; Muhammad Bin Ali As-Sabban in Ishafu'r-Raghibin, p.52; Yusuf Sibt Ibn Jauzi in Tadhkira Khawasu'l-Ummal, ch.6, p.37; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid (d.655 A.H.) in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, vol.I; Mulla Ali Qushachi in Sharh-e-Tajrid, p.407; Akhtabu'l-Khutaba Khawarizmi in Manaqib, pp.48 and 60; even the intolerant Ibn Hajar Makki (d.973 A.H.) in Sawa'iq Muhriqa, p.78; Ibn Hajar Asqalani in Isaba, vol.II, p. 509 and Allama Ibn Qayyim Jauzia in Turuqu'l-Hikmiyya, pp.47 and 53 have recorded numerous cases showing that Umar referred intricate and complex problems, particularly the difficult problems of the King of Rome, to Amiru'l-Mu'minin.

Umar time and again referred cases to Ali for solution, and when he heard the decision, he repeatedly said: "I seek Allah's protection from that difficult situation in which Ali is not there to help me." Sometimes he said: "If Ali had not been there, Umar would have been ruined."

Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in his Manaqib and Hamidi in his Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sahihain write that the caliphs took counsel with Ali in all matters and that he was the central figure who decided difficult religious and worldly questions. The caliphs carefully listened to his remarks and instructions and acted upon them.

ALI WAS MOST SUITABLE FOR THE OFFICE OF CALIPHATE

Knowledge is the best criterion for preference. The Holy Qur'an clearly states: "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?" (10:35)

That is, one who possesses the best qualities of guidance must be the supreme leader of the people, not the one who is ignorant of the way of guidance and himself seeks guidance from others.

This verse is the most valid proof that a superior man cannot be made subordinate to the inferior one. The question of the caliphate, imamate, and the succession to the Holy Prophet come under the same principle. This is borne out by another verse which says: "Say: Are those who know and those who do not know alike?" (39:9)

BY ALL STANDARDS ALI WAS THE FITTEST MAN FOR THE CALIPHATE

Sheikh: We certainly agree that Ali possessed all the outstanding qualities you have mentioned. No one except the fanatical Kharijis has ever denied this fact. But this much also is acknowledged: Seyyed Ali himself voluntarily and gladly accepted the caliphate of the (first three) caliphs and admitted their superiority and their right to precede him. So what is the use of our worrying, after 1300 years, about their decision and fighting among ourselves as to why the community elected Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman.

So what is the harm if we are at peace and friendly with one another and admit what history has recorded and what your own ulema have also generally accepted: after the Holy Prophet, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman successively occupied the caliphate. We should live together as brothers and jointly acknowledge Ali's superiority in knowledge and actions and his special relationship with the Holy Prophet. In the same way that our four schools of law are united, the Shias too should cooperate with us.

We never deny the excellence of Ali's knowledge and character, but you should admit that in regard to the questions of age, political astuteness, patience and calm, in the face of the enemy Abu Bakr was definitely superior to Ali. It was for this reason that, through the unanimous verdict of the community, he occupied the seat of the caliphate. Ali was young at that time and had not the capacity to shoulder the responsibilities of the caliphate. Even 25 years later, when he assumed the caliphate, many disturbances took place only because he was not an able politician.

ALI'S "ALLEGIANCE" TO CALIPHS WAS FORCED

Well-Wisher: First, you have said that Amiru'l-Mu'minin voluntarily offered allegiance to the three caliphs. A story comes to mind which is appropriate for this discussion. In the old days the highways of Iran were hazardous, and pilgrims to the holy shrines faced hardships during their journeys. A certain caravan fell into the clutches of robbers, who stole the people's property. When they were dividing the booty among themselves, the shroud of a pilgrim fell into the hands of an old robber. He said: "Gentlemen pilgrims! Whose shroud is this?" A pilgrim said: "It is mine." The robber said: "I have no shroud with me, so please give it to me so that it may be lawful to me." The pilgrim said: "All my property is yours, but return this shroud to me, since I am at the last stage of my life and have taken great pains for the preparation of this dress for me for the Hereafter. This is my cherished wealth."

The robber emphatically insisted on his demand, but the pilgrim repeated the same thing, that he would not give up that right of his to anyone. The robber, drawing his sword, began to strike the pilgrim about his head and face and said that he would go on hitting him until he surrendered the shroud to him and said: "It is lawful."

The poor old pilgrim was so beaten that he began shouting: "Sir! Lawful! Lawful! Lawful! more lawful than one's mother's milk!"

I hope you will forgive me. But I wanted to draw your attention to what I wish to explain. Perhaps you have forgotten what I have proved on previous nights. I cited authentic historical records, which Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Jauhari, Tabari, Baladhuri, Ibn Qutayba, Mas'udi, and others of your ulema have verified, that they threatened to burn down Ali's House, he was dragged to the mosque and was ordered with a sword at his throat: "Swear allegiance, otherwise you will be beheaded."

Is this an example of voluntary allegiance?

THERE SHOULD BE NO "BLIND FAITH" IN RELIGION

Second, I have said earlier that we should not have "blind faith" in the fundamentals of religion. You say that since history tells us that the four caliphs became rulers, we should follow our elders and have faith in them. But common sense and hadith tell us that faith in principle should be based on reason.

I repeat again that your and our historians have written that after the death of the Holy Prophet, the community was divided into two sects. One sect said that Abu Bakr should be followed and the other sect believed that Ali should be followed. The Holy Prophet said: "To obey Ali is to obey me; and to disobey Ali is to disobey me." Therefore obedience to Ali was, according to the order of the Holy Prophet, compulsory. So it was the duty of every individual of our two sects to listen to the arguments of the two sides and to choose the right course.

FAITH SHOULD BE BASED ON REASON AND HONEST INQUIRY

My faith in Allah is based on wisdom. I have studied books of various sects and religions. I accept the fact that Muhammad was the last Prophet based on reasoning and not on blindly following my elders. Similarly, I have deeply studied hundreds of books of both the sects, particularly those of the Sunni sect in which there are clear arguments to prove the Imamate and Caliphate of Amiru'l-Mu'minin. You people cast only a cursory glance at the verses and hadith in praise of Ali and then make ridiculous interpretations of them.

Third, you say that we should accept the historical order of the caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Hazrat Ali. But this is absurd. Man's superiority to animals is due to his knowledge and wisdom. So we cannot blindly follow our elders.

According to your own prominent ulema, Ali's superiority in knowledge has been fully established. Therefore, the right of his priority as caliph must also be acknowledged. Since he was the "Gate of Knowledge" of the Holy Prophet, deviation from his is deviation from guidance.

We admit that after the death of the Holy Prophet, Abu Bakr was caliph for two years and three months, followed by Umar for ten years, and Uthman for twelve years. But these facts do not eliminate the proper place of reason and hadith. History cannot deprive the "Gate of Knowledge" of the Holy Prophet of his right.

Firdaus Dailami, Abu Nu'aim Ispahani, Muhammad Bin Ishaq Mutalabi, author of the book Maghazi, Hakim, Hamwaini, Khatib Khawarizmi and Ibn Maghazili report either from Ibn Abbas, or Sa'id Khadiri, or Ibn Mas'ud, all of whom quote the Holy Prophet as saying: "They shall be questioned about the wilaya (vicegerency) of Ali Bin Abi Talib."

Chapter 13

10th Session - Part 3

PROPHET'S ORDER TO OBEY ALI

"And whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back." (59:7)

Therefore, we must obey the command of the Holy Prophet.

When we look to the instructions of the Holy Prophet we find (as is recorded in your reliable books) that among the whole of his community the Holy Prophet has called only Ali his gate of knowledge and has ordered us to obey him. In fact, he said that obedience to Ali was the same as obedience to him.

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, Imamu'l-Haram in Dhakha'iru'l-'Uquba; Khawarizmi in Manaqib; Sulayman Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda; Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in Kifayatu't-Talib and other ulema have reported that the Holy Prophet of Allah said: "Ansars! Shall I show you the person to whom you should adhere and who will never lead you astray?" The people said: "Yes, let us know him." The Holy Prophet said: "He is Ali. Be his friend, respect him, and follow him. Verily, he is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with him. Surely he will lead you to the right path and will not let you be ruined. Whatever I have told you has been told to me by Gabriel."

Also, as recorded by your ulema, the Holy Prophet said to Ammar-e-Yasir: "If all of mankind is on one side, and Ali on the other, you should adopt the way of Ali and leave the others."

Also, on different occasions and in different places, the Holy Prophet repeatedly said: "He who obeys Ali, really obeys me. He who obeys me, really obeys Allah."

NO HADITH EXISTS DESIGNATING OTHER CALIPHS AS THE "GUIDES OF THE COMMUNITY" OR "GATES OF KNOWLEDGE"

There is not a single hadith in your books in which the Holy Prophet says: "After me the guide to the right path, or 'my gate of knowledge' or 'my successor and caliph' is Abu Bakr, Umar, or Uthman." Can you cite such a hadith which is not fabricated by the Bakari or Amawi groups?

But you ask us to give the fourth place to the Holy Prophet's "Gate of knowledge," the Holy Prophet's "successor and caliph," to quote the Holy Prophet's own words, and follow those about whom there are no instructions whatsoever. If we follow your advice, shall we not be disobeying Allah and His Holy Prophet?

SUNNI ULEMA DO NOT WANT COOPERATION WITH US

Fourth, you say that like the four schools of law (Hanafis, Malikis, Hanbalis and Shafi'is), we should also be united with you. But you people call the Shias Rafizis, polytheists, and infidels. Obviously, polytheists and believers cannot be united. We are, however fully prepared to cooperate with our Sunni brothers. Of course the condition is that you and we should be equally free to advocate our religious beliefs.

Just as followers of the four schools of law are free in their actions, the followers of the progeny of the Holy Prophet should also be free in their actions. We see that among your four schools of law there are such serious differences that some of them call the others infidels and sinners. Yet you consider them Muslims and allow them freedom of actions. But, calling the poor Shias polytheists and infidels, you turn them out of the Muslim fold and deprive them of their freedom to practice their religion. How can we hope for unity and cooperation?

PROSTRATION ON DUST BY SHIA'S OBJECTED TO BY OTHERS WITHOUT REASON

Take the example of our prostration on dust. What a fuss you make about the dust and turba, a small block of clay of the holy land of Karbala, on which we put our forehead while prostrating! You insist that it is an idol and call us idol worshipers, though we prostrate on the dust with permission of Allah and His Holy Prophet. The Qur'anic verses enjoin us to perform prostration, and prostration means to put the forehead on the ground. Of course there is a difference of opinion between you and us as to the things on which we prostrate.

Sheikh: Then why do you not perform the prostration as all other Muslims do so that there may be no difference and this misunderstanding may disappear.

Well-Wisher: First, please let us know why you Shafi'is differ so much with the Malikis and Hanbalis, regarding both the articles of practice and the fundamentals of your belief. Sometimes they go so far as to call each other "sinner" and "infidel." It would be better if all of them sat together and develop a common belief, so that there may be no difference.

Sheikh: There is a difference of opinion among the jurists, but whoever among us follows any of the jurists - Imam Shafi'i, Imam A'zam, Imam Malik, or Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal - will be rewarded by Allah.

DIFFERENCES AMONG THE FOUR SCHOOLS ARE IGNORED BUT SHIAS' ARE NOT TOLERATED

Well-Wisher: For Allah's sake be fair. You have no reason to follow the four jurists except that some of them were learned men. You blindly follow them. You are led by the nose, and still you claim that your actions will be rewarded even though there are differences in fundamentals as well as in articles of practice among them. We follow the orders of the family of the Holy Prophet, who were, according to the Prophet himself and to your own eminent ulema, most learned and you say we are infidels. You should admit that these hostilities are not due to differences in views. Their cause is that we love the family of the Prophet, and our opponents nurse a grudge against them.

So far as the differences in fundamentals and articles of practice are concerned there are many - among your four schools. Most of the verdicts of your Imams and jurists are contrary to the clear injunctions contained in the Holy Qur'an. But you never utter a word against those who pronounce such verdicts and those who act upon them. Yet when the Shias prostrate on pure dust, according to the ordinance of the Holy Qur'an, you call them infidels!

VERDICTS BY SUNNI SCHOLARS IN CONTRADICTION TO QUR'ANIC INJUNCTIONS

Sheikh: Where have the Sunni scholars of jurisprudence and the four imams given verdicts in contradiction to the Holy Qur'an?

Well-Wisher: They have often given orders in contradiction to ordinances of the Holy Qur'an and against the unanimous view of the community. Your own ulema have written a number of books on the differences among the four schools of law. I advise you to read the illustrious book *Masa'ilu'l-Khalif fi'l-fiqh* by Sheikhu't-Ta'ifa Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali Tusi, who has recorded all the differences of the jurists of Islam from the chapter Tahira (Cleanliness) to the chapter on Diyat (reprisals).

I will point out one of many examples of legal injunctions passed in contradiction to the Holy Qur'an.

Sheikh: Yes, give us an example of this.

IN ABSENCE OF WATER GHUSL AND WUZU' ONE SHOULD PERFORM TAYAMMUM

You gentlemen are aware that ceremonial washing is an essential ritual of Islam. Depending on circumstances, one washes the entire body (ghusl) or part of it (wuzu').

"When you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and hands as far as the elbows." (5:6)

Accordingly, we should perform the ablution with pure water. When we do not have water, we should perform tayammum, according to the verse: "And (if) you find not water then betake yourself to (pure) earth and wipe your faces and your hands." (4:43)

We should perform tayammum with pure earth. In the first case water for ablution is necessary. In the second case, water is not available, or if there is some other extenuating circumstance then, whether we are on a journey or at home, we should perform tayammum, wiping the hands and face with pure dust, in place of wuzu'. On this point all jurists of Islam are unanimous, whether they are Shia Ithna Asharis, Malikis, Shafi'is or Hanbalis.

ABU HANIFA'S VERDICT THAT IF WATER IS NOT AVAILABLE WE CAN PERFORM GHUSL AND WUZU' WITH NABIZ (SYRUP OF DATE)

But your greatest Imam, Abu Hanifa (most of whose verdicts are based on speculation) insists that while we are on a journey and if we cannot find water, we should perform ghusl and wuzu' with nabiz (date syrup). But everybody knows that nabiz is the juice of dates and it is not lawful to perform ablution with adulterated water.

The Holy Qur'an ordains that it is necessary for us to perform the ablution for ritual prayer with pure water. If water is not available, we should perform tayammum. Imam A'zam Abu Hanifa says that we may perform ghusl or wuzu' using nabiz. This is a clear violation of the Qur'anic ordinance. On the other hand, Bukhari in his Sahih has written "It is not lawful to perform ablution with nabiz or an intoxicant."

Hafiz: I follow the Shafi'i school of law and fully agree with you on this point. If there is no water, we should perform tayammum, and it is not permissible to perform ablution with nabiz. This verdict has been ascribed to Imam Abu Hanifa on the basis of its general popularity.

Well-Wisher: Knowing the real fact you make this excuse. This verdict of Abu Hanifa has been consecutively narrated. I quote Fakhru'd-din Razi, who says in his commentary *Mafatihul-Ghaib*, vol.III, p.553, regarding the verse of tayammum, problem V, Shafi'i says that "Wuzu' using Nabiz (date juice) is not lawful, and Abu Hanifa says that it is lawful while one is on a journey." Also Ibn Rushd has recorded this verdict of Abu Hanifa in his book *Hidayatu'l-Mujtahid*.

Sheikh: How can you say that this verdict is contrary to the ordinance of the Qur'an? Some Hadith clearly prove it from the action of the Holy Prophet.

Well-Wisher: Can you cite any hadith supporting your point?

Sheikh: In a hadith which Abu Zaid, slave of Amr Bin Harith, reports from Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, the Holy Prophet said to him, on the night of the jinns (Lailatu'j-Jinn - the night when the Prophet took the oath of allegiance from the jinns-tr.): "Do you have some water?" He (Abu Zaid) said: "No, there is only a little nabiz." The Holy Prophet said: "The date is clean, and water is also clean." Saying this he performed the ablution.

There is another hadith which Abbas Bin Walid Bin Sabihu'l-Halal Damishqi reported from Marwan Bin Muhammad Tahiri Damishqi who reported it from Abdullah Bin Lahi'a, who reported it from Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, who said: "The Holy Prophet said to me on Lailatu'j-Jinn: "Do

you have water with you?" I said: "No, but there is nabiz in the pail." Then the Holy Prophet said: "The date is clean, and the water is clean. Pour it on me." So I poured it on him, and he performed the ablution with it."

Obviously, the action of the Holy Prophet is an example for us to follow. No doctrine or argument is superior to his actions. It is for that reason that our Imam-e-A'zam has approved its lawfulness.

Well-Wisher: Perhaps it would have been better, if you had remained silent. Now our Sunni brothers will know that their leaders were mistaken. They passed verdicts only on the basis of speculation.

First of all, let us examine who the narrators of this hadith were.

First, Abu Zaid, slave of Amr Bin Harith, is not a known figure, and according to the traditionists, he is a rejected man as reported by Tirmidhi and others. Dhahabi in his *Mizanu'l-I'tidal* says: "This man is not known to us and this hadith, which is narrated from Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, is not correct." Hakim says: "No other hadith is narrated by this unknown man."

Bukhari also designated him as an unreliable narrator of hadith. For this reason distinguished ulema, like Qastalani and Sheikh Zakariyya Ansari, wrote in their commentaries on *Sahih Bukhari* that "wuzu' (ritual ablution) is not lawful with nabiz or intoxicants." They point out that the hadith referred to above is weak.

The second hadith is also unacceptable. First, no scholar, except Ibn Maja, narrated it in this way.

Second, prominent ulema have not included it in their sunan because the chain of its reporters is faulty.

Dhahabi in his *Mizanu'l-I'tiqad* has quoted a number of statements showing that Abbas Bin Walid is not reliable. Hence, critics and commentators have rejected him altogether. As for Marwan Bin Muhammad Tahiri, he belonged to the misguided group of Marhaba. Ibn Hazm and Dhahabi have proved that he was an unreliable narrator of hadith.

Similarly, Abdullah Bin Lahi'a has also been discredited by distinguished ulema and commentators.

Therefore, when the chain of narrators of a hadith is of such a dubious nature that your own ulema reject it, the hadith loses its value.

Third, on the basis of a hadith, which your ulema have narrated from Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, there was no one with the Holy Prophet on Lailatu'l-Jinn. Abu Dawud in his *Sunan*, chapter on Wuzu' and Tirmidhi in his *Sahih*, report from Al-Qama that Abdullah Bin Mas'ud was asked:

"Who among you was with the Holy Prophet on Lailatu'j-Jinn?" He said: "No one from among us was with him."

Fourth, Lailatu'j-Jinn occurred in Mecca prior to the Hijra (migration), while all the commentators say that the verse of tayammum was revealed in Medina. So this ordinance certainly annuls the previous order. It was for this reason that your great jurists, like Imam Shafi'i, Imam Malik, and others have declared it unlawful.

It is strange that the Sheikh puts forward a weak hadith as authoritative in the face of the Holy Qur'an and tries to prove Abu Hanifa's pronouncement correct.

WASHING OF THE FEET IN WUZU' IS AGAINST THE QUR'ANIC ORDINANCE

Apart from the accepted rules of wuzu' mentioned in the above verse, after washing the face and hands, a part of the head and the feet up to the ankles are to be wiped. The holy verse clearly says: "And wipe a part of your heads and a part of your feet up to the ankles." But all your scholars of jurisprudence insist that the feet be washed, contradicting the clear ordinance of the Qur'an. There is a difference between washing and wiping.

Sheikh: There are a number of hadith which indicate that the feet are to be washed.

Well-Wisher: First, only hadith which conform with Qur'anic ordinances are acceptable.

Obviously, the revoking of an explicit Qur'anic verse by a lone report can never be lawful. The holy verse clearly enjoins the wiping, not washing, of the feet. If you think a little more carefully you will find that the whole verse leads to the same point. It begins with the order "Wash your face and your hands." The conjunction "and" denotes that after washing the face, we should also wash the hands. Similarly, in the second order: "and wipe a part of your head and a part of your feet", the wiping of the head and of the feet are joined by the conjunction "and." This clearly shows that after wiping of the head the feet must also be wiped. It goes without saying that washing cannot be substituted by wiping. So just as the washing of the face and hands is necessary, the wiping of the head and feet is also necessary. It is inadmissible that one be wiped and the other washed. Otherwise, the conjunction and would be meaningless.

Moreover, apart from these clear meanings, Islamic law does not contain harsh and austere orders. Washing the feet is more difficult than wiping them. The religious order is intended to make the performance of wuzu' easy, as the tone of the verse also suggests.

Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi, an eminent Sunni commentator, makes a detailed argument concerning the compulsory nature of wiping the feet in wuzu'. You would benefit from studying it.

WIPING OVER THE SOCKS AGAINST THE EXPLICIT ORDINANCE OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Even more strange than washing the feet is the wiping over stockings. There are differences among the Sunni jurists whether it may be done while on a journey or at home.

This order is contrary to the Qur'anic injunction which stipulates that we are to wipe the feet and not the socks. This order is also opposed to the former order of washing the feet. If wiping the feet is not lawful, why have they made wiping over the socks lawful?

Sheikh: There are many hadith which show that the Prophet wiped the socks. Accordingly, the jurists considered it as proof of the lawfulness of this act.

Well-Wisher: I have repeatedly submitted that, according to the order of the Prophet a hadith alleged to have been reported from him which does not conform to the Holy Qur'an is to be rejected. The forgers and political jugglers have fabricated many hadith. Accordingly, your own prominent ulema have rejected such hadith.

Besides the fact that these hadith are incompatible with the clear ordinance of the Holy Qur'an, they are also mutually contradictory. Your own great ulema have accepted this fact. For instance, the great sage, Ibn Rushd Andalusi, in his *Badayatu'l-Mujtahid wa Nihayatu'l-Muqtasid*, vol. I, pp.15 and 16, says about this difference: "The reason that they differ is that the reports about them are opposed to each other." In another place he says: "The reason that they differ is that the reports about them are inconsistent."

Hence, to base an argument on reports and hadith which are mutually contradictory and also clearly opposed to Qur'anic injunctions is quite absurd. You know that among the hadith which are contradictory to each other, only those which are compatible with the Holy Qur'an are acceptable. If any hadith is opposed to the Holy Qur'an it is to be rejected outright.

Chapter **14**

10th Session - Part 4

THE WIPING OVER THE TURBAN IS AGAINST THE QURANIC ORDINANCE

The verse clearly states "And wipe part of your heads" (after the washing of the face and the hands). On the basis of this Qur'anic injunction, the Shia jurists, following their Imams, insist that the head itself is to be wiped in performing 'wuzu'. The Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanafi jurists concur. But Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal, Ishaq, Thawri, and Quza'i have said that wiping over the turban is lawful. This has been reported by Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in his Tafsir-e-Kabir. Every sensible person knows that wiping the turban and wiping the head are quite different.

SHIAS ALONE BLAMED FOR SUCH DIFFERENCES

There are other serious differences among your jurists and among the four schools of law. Although most of them are clearly inconsistent with Qur'anic injunctions, you do not find fault with one another. Everyone of them is free to maintain his point of view.

You do not call Abu Hanifa and the Hanafis polytheists, when they allow wuzu to be performed with nabiz (fermented date liquor), nor do you condemn self-contradictory interpretation of laws which violate Qur'anic ordinances. But you object to Shias, who follow the progeny of the Holy Prophet. In fact, you call the followers of the exalted family, Rafizis and infidels! You have repeatedly said on previous nights that the practices of the Shias prove that they are polytheists.

You asked why we do not offer prayers like Muslims. We offer the same prayers that you and all other Muslims do: two units (rak'ats) of fajr (the morning prayer), four rak'ats of zuhr (the noon prayer), four rak'ats of asr (the afternoon prayer), three rak'ats of maghrib (the sunset prayer), and four rak'ats of 'isha (the evening prayer).

As for the differences in the articles of practice, they are present in abundance in all the sects of Islam. For example, there is a clear difference between Abu'l-Hasan Ash'ari and Wasil Bin Ata in the fundamentals and articles of practice. Also your four imams (Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafi'i, and Ahmad Hanbal) and other great jurists like Hasan, Dawud, Kathir, Abu Sur, Quza'i, Sufyan Thawri, Hasan Basri and Qasim Bin Salam, etc. have differences among them. In the same way, the orders of the holy Imams of the Ahle Bait differ from the statements of your jurists. If the legal interpretations of the jurists and their different opinions can be criticized, why should the same criticism not be made against the different sects of Sunnis?

ACCORDING TO SUNNI ULEMA PROSTRATION ON DRY EXCREMENT AND DUNG IS LAWFUL

Many Sunni ulema accept legal interpretations which contradict the explicit ordinance of the Holy Qur'an, and yet they offer lame interpretations to clear ordinances. Other jurists give an opposite opinion. Still, you do not regard their interpretation or practice as infidelity. But in regard to our performance of sajda (prostration), you raise loud objections, saying that the Shias are idol worshipers, while you ignore the pronouncement of your own ulema that prostration on dry excrement is lawful.

PROSTRATION ON FLOOR COVERINGS INSTEAD OF THE GROUND IS AGAINST QUR'ANIC INJUNCTION

The legal decisions of the Shia jurists, following the holy Imams, are clearly in accordance with the ordinances of the Holy Qur'an. For instance, your jurists consider wool, cotton, silk, and other floor coverings the same as earth. But it is obvious that these coverings are not the earth.

But the Shia, in obedience to their Imams of the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet say: "Prostration is not lawful on any thing except the earth or those things which grow from the earth and are not used for eating or wearing." For this you assail them and call them polytheists. On the other hand, you do not call prostration on dry excrement polytheism. It is quite evident that prostrating on the earth (as ordained by Allah) and prostrating on floor coverings are quite different things.

Sheikh: You people perform the sajda (prostration) on pieces of earth from Karbala. You keep the small blocks of earth from that land. They are like idols, and you consider prostration on them compulsory. Of course, this performance is against the principles and practices of Muslims.

Well-Wisher: It has become your second nature to follow your elders blindly, though it does not befit a just man like you to say that the pure dust of Karbala is like an idol.

Respected friend! Criticism of any belief must be based on proof. If you would consult the Shia books of theology, you would find the answer to your criticism, and you would not mislead our Sunni brothers with false objections.

SHIAS DO NOT CONSIDER PROSTRATION ON DUST OF KARBALA COMPULSORY

If you can show us in any of our commentaries a single hadith or pronouncement that indicates prostration on the dust of Karbala is compulsory, we shall accept all your statements as correct. In fact, in all our books of religious practices, there are clear instructions that, according to the Qur'anic ordinance, prostration must be performed on pure earth. This includes dust, stone, sand and grass, provided that it is not a mineral. Moreover, prostration may be performed on those things which grow from the earth, provided that they are not used for food or worn.

Sheikh: Then why do you regularly keep small blocks of dust from Karbala with you and perform prostration on them at the time of the ritual prayer?

SHIAS KEEP SAJDAGAHS (TABLETS OF EARTH) FOR PROSTRATION DURING PRAYERS

Well-Wisher: Prostration on clean earth is compulsory. The ritual prayer is generally offered in houses furnished with carpets. Even if the carpets are removed, the earth under them generally contains lime and other substances on which prostration is not permitted. Therefore, we keep a piece of earth with us so that we may prostrate on it. (Many Shia Mujtahids consider chalk, plaster, lime and mined stones such as agate to be permissible, in the absence of the preferable substances, but nevertheless they exclude actual ores and refined minerals. tr.)

Sheikh: What we notice is that all the Shias have tablets of the soil of Karbala and consider performance of sajda compulsory on it.

WHY WE PROSTRATE ON THE SOIL OF KARBALA

Well-Wisher: It is true that we perform the sajda on the dust of Karbala, but we do not consider it compulsory. In accordance with the instructions given in our books of jurisprudence, we consider sajda compulsory on clean earth. However, according to the Ahle Bait, prostration on the pure earth of Husain's burial place (Karbala) is preferable.

It is a pity that some people maliciously insist that the Shias worship Husain. They support their view by pointing out that Shias perform their prostrations on soil taken from Karbala. In fact we never worship Husain, Ali, or Muhammad. We worship only Allah, and it is in accordance with Allah's order that we perform sajda only on pure earth. Our prostration is not for Husain. But according to the instructions of the infallible Imams of the progeny of the Holy Prophet, prostration on the clean soil of Karbala leads to greater recompense for us, but it is not compulsory.

Sheikh: How can you claim that the earth of Karbala is possessed of special properties so that it deserves preference to other soil.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOIL OF KARBALA

Well-Wisher: First, it is a fact that different places have different properties. Every piece of earth has special properties which only expert geologists know. Nonspecialists don't understand these things.

Second, the special characteristics of the soil of Karbala were known before the time of the Holy Imams. It was an object of special attention during the time of the Holy Prophet also, as had been recorded in authentic books of your own ulema.

In *Khasa'isu'l-Kubra*, by Jalalu'd-din Suyuti, a number of hadith of Ummu'l-Mu'minin Ummi Salma, Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha, Ummu'l-Fazl, Ibn Abbas, and Anas Bin Malik, etc. about the soil of Karbala have been narrated by your prominent ulema and reliable reporters, like Abu Nu'aim Ispahani, Baihaqi, and Hakim.

A report says: I saw Husain sitting in the lap of his grandfather, the Holy Prophet, who had a red block of soil in his hand. The Holy Prophet was kissing the dust and weeping. I asked him what that soil was. The Holy Prophet said: "Gabriel has informed me that my son, this Husain, will be murdered in Iraq. He has brought this earth for me from that land. I am weeping for the suffering that will befall my Husain."

Then the Holy Prophet handed the dust to Umme Salma and said to her: "When you see this soil turn into blood, you will know that my Husain has been slaughtered."

Umme Salma kept the soil in a bottle and kept watch over it until she saw on the Day of Ashura, 61 A.H., that it turned to blood. Then she knew that Husain bin Ali had been martyred.

It is recorded by your prominent ulema and by Shia jurists that the Prophet and the Imams paid special attention to the pure soil of Karbala. After the martyrdom of Imam Husain, Imam Seyyedu's-Sajidin Zainu'l-Abidin Ali Bin Husain picked some up, declared it to be sacred dust, and kept it in a bag. The Holy Imam used to perform his prostrations on it and made a tasbih out of it, and recited Allah's praises on it.

After him all the succeeding Imams considered that soil sacred and made tasbihs out of it and a small block to prostrate on. They persuaded the Shias to perform prostrations on them, with the understanding that it was not compulsory, but with a view to achieving greater recompense. The Holy Imams insisted that prostration before Allah must be on clean earth only and that it was preferable if it was performed on that earth of Karbala.

The great scholar, Abu Ja'far Muhammad Bin Hasan Tusi, reports in his *Misbahu'l-Mutahajjid* that Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq kept a little soil from Imam Husain's tomb in a yellow cloth which he opened at the time of prayers and performed his prostrations on it.

Shias for a long time have kept this earth with them. Then, fearing it might be desecrated, they kneaded it into small tablets or pieces, which are now called *mohr*. We consider it sacred and during prayers we prostrate on it not as a compulsory act but in view of its special nature. Otherwise, when we have no pure soil with us, we prostrate on clean earth, or clean rock. In this way our compulsory act is performed.

We are astonished at the behavior of your ulema, who do not find fault with the legal pronouncements of the four schools of Sunni law. That is, if Imam A'zam says that in the absence of water ablution should be performed with *nabiz*, the Shafi'is, Malikis and Hanbalis do not object to it. If Imam Ahmad Hanbal believes in the visibility of Allah or considers it lawful to wipe water over the turban in the ritual ablution, the ulema of the other sects do not criticize him. Similarly, they do not condemn other unique pronouncements like that of joining in wedlock with young boys while on a journey, prostration on dung or any polluted object, or copulation with mothers using a cloth wrapper.

But when we say that the progeny of the Holy Prophet have said that prostrating on the earth of Karbala is praiseworthy, you say that Shias are polytheists.

OLD AGE IS NO CRITERION FOR THE CALIPHATE

Now I will reply to your point. Talking about advanced age and consensus, you said that because of his age, Abu Bakr was entitled to preference. Even after ten nights, during which I have disproven your argument regarding "consensus" and preference based on age, you raise the issues again as if nothing has been said. Nevertheless, I will not leave you unanswered.

ALI APPOINTED FOR CONVEYANCE OF VERSES OF SURA BARA'A (THE IMMUNITY) OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

You have argued that Abu Bakr deserved priority because of his age and political astuteness. But how is it that some people decided that for a great cause it was necessary for a man to be old and politically astute, but Allah and His Prophet did not understand this. For conveying the first forty verses of Bara'a to the people, the Holy Prophet deposed Abu Bakr and sent the young Ali in his place.

Nawab: Respected Sir! Please don't leave this point vague. Let us know for what purpose Abu Bakr was deposed and Ali appointed in his place. When I asked these people (pointing to his ulema) about it, they gave only a vague answer, saying that it was an unimportant matter. Please explain this matter.

Well-Wisher: The Muslim community, including the ulema and historians of both sects (Shias and Sunnis), acknowledge the fact that when the initial verses of the Sura of Bara'a (The Immunity) were revealed in condemnation of the idol worshipers, the Holy Prophet called Abu Bakr and gave him the verses, ordering him to take them to Mecca and to recite them to the people of Mecca during the hajj.

Abu Bakr had gone only a short distance when Gabriel appeared and said: "Prophet of Allah! Allah sends His compliments to you and says that the matter of the Holy Qur'an should be conveyed either by the Holy Prophet himself or by one who is of him."

Accordingly, the Holy Prophet called Ali and said to him: "Overtake Abu Bakr and take the verses of Bara'a from him and read them to the idol worshipers of Mecca."

Ali set out immediately. He met Abu Bakr at Dhu'l-Halifa and conveyed the message of the Holy Prophet. He took the verses from Abu Bakr and, reaching Mecca, read them to the assembly of the people.

Nawab: Has this affair been recorded in our authentic books?

Well-Wisher: I have just told you that the whole community is unanimous on this point. I will give you some references at present so that when you think over the matter, you may know that it was a very significant affair.

The following eminent writers have reported this matter in their books and generally testified to its veracity:

Bukhari in Sahih, parts IV and V; Abdi in Jam'-e-Bainu's-Sihahi's-Sitta, part II; Baihaqi in Sunan, pp.9 and 224; Tirmidhi in Jam'i, vol.II, p.135; Abu Dawud in Sunan; Khawarizmi in Manaqib; Shukani in Tafsir, vol.II,

p.319; Ibn Maghazili in Faqih-e-Shafi'i in his Faza'il; Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-Su'ul, p.17; Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, ch.18; Muhibu'd-din Tabari in Riyazu'n-Nazara, p.147 and Dhakha'iru'l-Uquba, p.69; Sibt Ibn Jauzi in Tadhkira Khawasu'l-Umma, p.22, Imam Abdu'r-Rahman Nisa'i (one of the Imams of Siha) in Khasa'isu'l-Alawi, p.14 (has reported six hadith relating to this point); Ibn Kathir in Ta'rikh-e-Kabir, vol.V, p.38 and vol.VII, p.357; Ibn Hajar Asqalani in Isanaba, vol.II, p.509; Jalalu'd-din Suyuti in Durru'l-Mansur, vol.III, p.208 (in commentary on the first verse of Bara'a); Tabari in Jam'u'l-Bayan, vol.X, p.41, (in commentary on Bara'a); Imam Tha'labi in Tafsir-e-Kashfu'l-bayan; Ibn Kathir in Tafsir, vol.II, p.333; Alusi in Ruha'l-Ma'ani, v. III, p.268; the fanatic, Ibn Hajar Makki in Sawa'iq, p.19; Haithami in Majma'u'z-Zawa'id, v.VII, p.29; Muhammad Bin Ganji Shafi'i in Kifayatu't-Talib, p.125, ch.62 (reporting from Abi Bakr and Hafiz Abi Nu'aim and from Musnad of Hafiz Damishqi as reported by Abi Nu'aim in different ways); Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad, v.I, pp.3 and 151, v.III, p.283, and v.IV, pp.164-165; Hakim in Mustadrak, v.II, Kitab Maghazi, p.51 and in v.II of the same book, p.331; Mulla Ali Muttaqi in Kanzu'l-'Ummal, v.I, pp.246 to 249 and Faza'il-i-Ali v.VI, p.154.

REASON FOR ALI'S APPOINTMENT

Seyyed Abdu'l-Hayy: Why didn't the Holy Prophet, whose actions were from Allah, entrust this mission to Ali in the beginning?

Well-Wisher: Since no reason for this fact has been recorded, we do not know. But my impression is that this change was intended to show the superiority of Ali. At any rate, it certainly disproves the claim that age or political experience were reasons for excluding Ali from the caliphate.

If Ali had been appointed to this post in the beginning, it would have appeared an ordinary matter, and would not have been possible for us to prove to you Ali's superiority. If Abu Bakr's age and political ability proved his superiority, he should not have been recalled from such a mission. But the fact is that to convey the message of prophethood is the work of the Prophet or his caliph.

ACCOMPANYING REPORT OF ABU BAKR

Seyyed: According to some reports, Abu Huraira says that Ali had been ordered to go to Mecca along with Abu Bakr to teach the people the rituals of Hajj. Ali was to read the verses of Bara'a to the people. Conveying the message of prophethood in this way indicated that they were of equal rank.

Well-Wisher: First, this is a forged report of the followers of Abu Bakr. Others have not narrated it. Second, the whole community agreed that Abu Bakr was called back and replaced by Ali. This fact has been consecutively reported in the authentic books of both sects.

Obviously, the consensus of the whole community is that we should rely on the frequently reported, and authentic hadith. If there is a single report at variance with authentic hadith, we should reject it. This view is held by all men of principles and by the traditionists. Ali's appointment, Abu Bakr's return in a sad and desperate state, the Holy Prophet's consoling him and satisfying him that it was Allah's will - all these are generally acknowledged facts.

ANOTHER PROOF THAT AGE IS NO CRITERION FOR THE CALIPHATE

There is another proof that the right of priority has no relation to age. The right of preference is achieved through wisdom and piety. Whoever excels in knowledge and piety shall deserve preference. The Holy Prophet said: "All men are dead, but the men of learning are alive."

Accordingly, the Holy Prophet gave Ali first place among the Companions and said: "Ali is the gate of knowledge." Evidently the Holy Prophet's gate of knowledge must supersede others.

Of course the other companions of the Holy Prophet who remained obedient to him were all virtuous people. We never deny the virtuous position of the companions, but their merits can bear no comparison to the merits of the Holy Prophet's gate of knowledge.

HOLY PROPHET SENT ALI TO YEMEN

Your prominent ulema have written in detail about Ali being sent to Yemen to guide its people. Imam Abdu'r-Rahman Nisa'i has recorded six hadith concerning this point, in his *Khasa'isu'l-Alawi*.

Also Abu'l-Qasim Husain Bin Muhammad Raghil Ispahani, in his *Mahadhiratu'l-Udaba*, v.II, p.212 and others, have reported that when the Holy Prophet commissioned Ali to go to Yemen, Ali pleaded that he was young and felt some reluctance in being placed over old men of the tribe. The Holy Prophet replied: "Certainly Allah will guide your heart and give strength to your tongue."

If age was a requirement for preferment, why then did the Holy Prophet in the presence of older distinguished companions, like Abu Bakr, send Hazrat Ali to Yemen to guide the people there?

Chapter **15**

10th Session - Part 5

AFTER THE HOLY PROPHET ALI WAS THE GUIDE OF THE COMMUNITY

Addressing the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "You are only a warner and (there is) a guide for every people." (13:7)

Imam Tha'labi, in his Tafsir-e-Kashfu'l-Bayan; Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari in his Tafsir; Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i, in Kifayatu't-Talib, ch.62, from Ta'rikh-e-Ibn Asakir; Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda end of ch. 26 from Tha'labi, Hamwaini, Hakim, Abu'l-Qasim Haskani, Ibn Sabbagh Maliki, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamdani and the Manaqib of Khawarizmi, reporting on the authority of Ibn Abbas, Amiru'l-Mu'minin and Abu Buraid Aslami in different words, have narrated eleven hadith whose main point is that, when the above verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet, putting his hand on his own chest, said: "I am the warner." Then, putting his hand on Ali's chest, he said: "After me you are the guide of the community. Those who receive guidance from you will be the guided ones."

CONSPIRACIES OF ENEMIES

You also said that even after 25 years, when he was caliph, it was due to his lack of experience in politics that disturbances and bloodshed resulted. I'm not sure what you mean by politics. If politics means deceitfulness, conspiring, and intermingling right and wrong (as the people in all ages have done in order to secure power), I would acknowledge that Ali was far removed from such politics. To me politics means justice and the exercise of rightful authority.

ALI HATED CORRUPT POLITICS

Ali who was an embodiment of justice, kept aloof from corrupt politics. As I said earlier, when Amiru'l-Mu'minin assumed the apparent caliphate, he immediately deposed all former officials and servants. Abdullah Ibn Abbas (his cousin) and others said: "It would be better if you would postpone this order for a few days, so that the officials and governors of the regions accept your caliphate. Then you might dismiss them."

The Holy Imam said: "You have given me counsel regarding the politics of this matter. But you do not understand that if I am swayed by what is called 'politics' and allow oppressive rulers to remain at their posts, even though it would be for a short time, I would be answerable to Allah for that period. At the time of questioning, I would be accountable for that. This cannot be expected of Ali."

In order to restore justice Ali immediately ordered the dismissal of the oppressive rulers. This measure led to the opposition of Mu'awiya, Talha, Zubair, and others who staged a revolt and caused great tumult and bloodshed in the country.

Respected gentlemen! You misunderstand the issue. Since you have not inquired into the matter, you are misled by propagandists who claim that the rebellion during Ali's caliphate was due to his lack of knowledge of politics. No. There were other factors at work.

REBELLION DURING AMIRU'L-MU'MININ'S CALIPHATE WAS DUE TO ENMITY AGAINST HIM

First, for 25 years people had been encouraged to oppose Ali. It was therefore difficult for them to accept his vicegerency and caliphate or to acknowledge his exalted rank. An example of this opposition occurred on the first day of the caliphate. A nobleman entered the gate of the mosque and, seeing the Imam on the pulpit, shouted: "May that eye be blinded which sees Ali on the pulpit instead of Caliph Umar!"

Second, it was not possible for worldly men to accept Ali's justice, particularly since their self-indulgence had been given a free rein during the caliphate of Uthman. Hence, they rose against him, so that somebody who could satisfy their desires might assume power. Their wishes were fulfilled during the caliphate of Mu'awiya. Accordingly, Talha and Zubair at first swore allegiance to Ali, but when their demands for authority were not satisfied, they broke their allegiance and openly opposed him in the Battle of the Camel.

A'YESHA WAS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REVOLT AGAINST ALI

Third, history tells us who the real instigator was of the disturbances from the beginning of the caliphate. Was it any other than Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'yesha? Was it not A'yesha who, according to the statements of both Sunni and Shia traditionists, mounted on a camel (against the express ordinance of Allah and His Holy Prophet that she should stay in her house) reached Basra and provoked a large battle?

You claim that internecine battles were due to Ali's lack of political insight. This is a highly misleading statement. If A'yesha had not revolted against him, no one would have had the courage to oppose Ali, after the Holy Prophet had clearly declared: "To fight against Ali is to fight against me." A'yesha incited the people to fight against Ali.

ALI'S BATTLES OF JAMAL, SIFFIN, AND NAHRWAN WERE LIKE THE BATTLES OF THE HOLY PROPHET AGAINST THE INFIDELS

Ali's battles against the enemies and hypocrites at Basra, Siffin, and Nahrwan were like the battles of the Holy Prophet against the infidels.

Sheikh: How were the battles against the Muslims like the battles against the infidels?

Well-Wisher: Your illustrious ulema, like Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his *Musnad*; Sibt Ibn Jauzi in *Tadhkira*; Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*; Imam Abdu'r-Rahman Nisa'i in *Khasa'isu'l-Alawi*; Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*; Muhammad Bin Talha Ganji Shafi'i in *Kifayatu't-Talib*, ch. 37, and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.I, p.67, have reported that the Holy Prophet prophesied Ali's battles against the "Nakisin", "Qasitin", and "Mariqin", among whom the "Nakisin" meant Talha, Zubair and their companions; "Qasitin" meant Mu'awiya and his followers; and "Mariqin" meant the Kharijis (Secessionists) of Nahrwan. All of them were rebels whose slaughter was permissible and the Holy Prophet ordered the same punishment for them when he foretold the fighting of those battles.

Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in his *Kifayatu't-Talib*, ch.37, has reported a hadith from Sa'id Bin Jabir, who reported it from Ibn Abbas, that the Prophet said to Umm Salma: "This is Ali Bin Abi Talib. His flesh is my flesh, his blood is my blood, and he is to me what Aaron was to Moses except that there will be no prophet after me. Umm Salma, this Ali is the chief of the believers, the chief of the Muslims, the repository of my knowledge, my successor, and the gate of knowledge. He is my brother in this world and in the hereafter; he is with me in the most exalted place; he will fight against the 'Nakisin,' 'Qasitin,' and 'Mariqin.'"

After citing this hadith Muhammad Bin Yusuf says that this hadith proves that the Holy Prophet had informed Ali about the battles against those three groups and that he had ordered Ali to fight against the three groups.

Makhnaf Bin Salim is reported to have said that when Abu Ayyub Ansari (who was a distinguished companion of the Holy Prophet) was going with an army to fight in the battle, he said: "Abu Ayyub! How strange of you! You are the same man who fought against the polytheists on the side of the Holy Prophet, but now you are bent upon fighting against Muslims!" Then Abu Ayyub said: "The Holy Prophet ordered me

to fight against the three groups: they are the Nakisin, the Qasitin, and the Mariqin."

Imam Abu Abdu'r-Rahman Nisa'i in *Khasa'isu'l-Alawi*, Hadith 155, reporting from Abu Sa'id Khadiri and Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his *Yanabi*, p.59,(ch.II) from *Jam'u'l-Fawa'id* says that Abu Sa'id said: "We were sitting with the companions, waiting for the Holy Prophet. When the Holy Prophet came towards us, we saw that his shoe buckle was broken. He tossed his shoe to Ali, who began mending it. Then the Holy Prophet said: 'Verily, there is one among you who shall fight in defense of the proper interpretation of the Holy Qur'an as I have fought (against the infidels).'

Then Abu Bakr said: 'I am that man?'

The Holy Prophet said, 'No!'

Then Umar said: 'Is it I?'

The Holy Prophet said: 'No! It is the man who is mending my shoes.' "

This hadith shows that Ali's battles were fought for the proper interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. It follows, therefore, that the civil disruptions of Ali's caliphate were not due to political weakness of Amiru'l-Mu'minin but were due to the enmity of the opponents.

AFTER THE HOLY PROPHET, ALI WAS THE GREATEST STATESMAN

You gentlemen might find it enlightening to study the instructions Ali sent to his governors and military and civil officers. For instance, the orders and instructions which he sent to Malik Ashtar and Muhammad Bin Abu Bakr for the governance of Egypt, to Uthman Bin Hunaif and Abdullah Bin Abbas of Basra, and to Qutham Bin Abbas for the administration of Mecca are models of excellent public administration as well as social justice. These documents are part of the Nahju'l-Balagha.

ALI POSSESSED KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN WORLD

This fact has been acknowledged by both followers of Ali and enemies. The Holy Imam was Imamu'l-Muttaqin (chief of the pious). He had complete knowledge of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an. Moreover, he possessed knowledge of the unseen world.

Sheikh: I have not followed your vague sentence that Ali possessed knowledge of the unseen world. Kindly explain it.

Well-Wisher: There is nothing vague in it. To be aware of the unseen means to know the secrets of the universe, which were known through divine favor by all the prophets and their vicegerents. Each was given as much knowledge of the unseen as Allah considered necessary for them to deliver his message. After the Holy Prophet, Amiru'l-Mu'minin was endowed with such knowledge.

Sheikh: I never expected that you would uphold the views of the fanatic Shias. This praise is so excessive that even the praised one would not accept it. To have knowledge of the unseen is an attribute peculiar to Allah alone, none of His creatures can have any concern with it.

Well-Wisher: Believing that the great prophets, their vicegerents, and other exalted servants of Allah possessed knowledge of the unseen has nothing to do with fanaticism. Rather, it was one of their merits, which showed their submission to Allah. We have clear proof of this fact from hadith and the Holy Qur'an.

IS KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN RESTRICTED TO ALLAH?

Sheikh: The Holy Qur'an contradicts your statement.

Well-Wisher: Can you recite those verses which contradict my statement?

Sheikh: There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an, which support my view. For instance, the Holy Qur'an says: "And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures - none knows them but He; and He knows what is in the land and the sea; and there falls not a leaf but He knows it, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green nor dry but (it is all) in a clear book." (6:59)

This is the most convincing evidence that no one except Allah has knowledge of the unseen. If somebody believes in any one else having knowledge of the unseen, he has made one of His creatures an associate in the attributes of Allah.

You claim that Ali was aware of the unseen. This means that apart from your making him an associate in the attributes of Allah, you have made his rank higher than that of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet repeatedly said: "I am a man like you. Allah alone knows the unseen." The Holy Prophet clearly expressed his lack of knowledge of the unseen.

Have you read the verse of the Holy Qur'an, which says: "Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your God is one God." (18:110)

That is, the only difference between you and me is that revelation from Allah comes to me.

At another place Allah says: "Say: I do not control any benefit or harm for my own soul except as Allah please; and had I known the unseen I would have had much of good and no evil would have touched me; I am nothing but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe." (7:188)

And again: "And I say not to you that with me are the treasures of Allah and I know not the unseen." (11:31)

Allah says again: "Say: No one in the heavens or in the earth know the unseen but Allah: And they know not when they shall be raised." (2:65)

The Holy Prophet himself admitted that he did not know the unseen and that its knowledge was peculiar to Allah. How can you claim that Ali had such knowledge?

Your belief is an attempt to assert Ali's superiority to the Holy Prophet. Doesn't the Holy Qur'an say: "Nor is Allah going to make you

acquainted with the unseen... ." (3:179) On what principle do you believe that anyone but Allah has knowledge of the unseen?

Well-Wisher: The preface to your statement is correct. But the conclusion you have drawn is faulty. You have said that the Knower of the unseen is Allah; that the keys of the unseen are with Allah Almighty; and that according to the last verse of the Sura al-Kahf (The Cave), the last of the Prophets, all other prophets, the vicegerents, and the holy Imams were similar to other human beings. In their physical structure they were created like all others. All these things are true, and the Shia sect accepts them all. Also, the verses you have recited are perfectly true in their proper context.

But the words "the Holy Prophet" from the sura Hud refer to the Prophet Noah. Verse 50 of the sura of al-An'am (The Cattle) refers to our exalted Prophet. When the infidels asked him why there were no signs of his having treasures of God or Knowledge of the unseen, this was revealed: "Say I do not say to you 'I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel; I do not follow aught save what is revealed to me.'" (6:50)

This verse was in response to the ignorant assumption that the Prophet's actions could be influenced by worldly considerations. As for the knowledge of the unseen, we believe that the prophets and their vicegerents possessed it. I do not associate them with Allah's attributes. But this gift is part of wahi and ilham (revelation and inspiration from Allah) which removed the curtains of ignorance from their sight and disclosed realities to them. I shall explain this in detail.

KNOWLEDGE IS OF TWO KINDS DHATI (SELF-EXISTENT) AND ARZI (ACQUIRED)

We Shias of the Imamiyya sect believe that knowledge is of two kinds: Dhati and Arzi.

Dhati, or self-existent knowledge, is peculiar to Allah. We can acknowledge it but cannot comprehend its reality. In whatever way we might try to explain it, self-existent knowledge is beyond the comprehension of human beings.

Arzi, or acquired knowledge, is that which is not intrinsically present in man, whether he is a prophet or not. He is benefited by it later. This knowledge too is of two kinds: tahsili and ladunni. Tahsili is the knowledge acquired through study and experience. If a student pursues the normal course of education, for instance, he goes to school and learns from his teacher. If Allah wills, he will acquire knowledge according to his labor and the time that he spends in learning.

Ladunni refers to that knowledge which man receives directly from Allah. He does not learn it through letters and words but receives it directly from the All-Beneficent. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: "And whom we had taught knowledge from ourselves." (18:65)

Shias do not claim that knowledge of the unseen was self-existent in the Holy Prophet or the Imams or that they understood the unseen as Allah Almighty does. What we say is that Allah is not confined or limited. He can give knowledge and power to anyone He likes. Sometimes He gives knowledge to man by means of a teacher and sometimes directly from Himself. This directly-bestowed knowledge is called the knowledge of the unseen.

Sheikh: Your first statement is correct, but the divine will does not allow such unnatural things as granting a man the knowledge of the unseen directly, that is, without the agency of a teacher.

Well-Wisher: No, you and your friends are mistaken. In fact, you often unknowingly contradict most of your own eminent scholars. Allah bestowed upon all His prophets and their successors knowledge of the unseen. Whatever was required for them to perform their mission.

Sheikh: In the face of these verses of the Holy Qur'an, which explicitly reject the idea of man's knowledge of the unseen, what evidence do you have to support your point?

Well-Wisher: We are not opposed to the verses of the Holy Qur'an. Every verse of the Holy Qur'an was revealed for some particular purpose, which was, according to the circumstances, sometimes negative

and sometimes positive. That is why it is said that among the verses of the Holy Qur'an one verse strengthens another. Because the unbelievers often demanded miracles from the Holy Prophet, the negative verses cited above were revealed. In order to prove the real objective, positive verses were also revealed so that the position might be clear.

QUR'ANIC EVIDENCE THAT PROPHETS POSSESSED KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN

Sheikh: This is very strange. You say that there are positive evidences in the Holy Qur'an that the prophets possessed knowledge of the unseen. Kindly recite these verses.

Well-Wisher: Do not feel astonished. You know them.

Allah Almighty says: "The Knower of the unseen! So He does not reveal His secrets to any except to him whom He chooses as an apostle; for surely he makes a guard to march before him and after him, so that He may know that they have truly delivered the message of their Lord, and He encompasses what is with them, and He records the number of all things." (72:26-28)

This verse shows that the exalted messengers of Allah who are endowed with the knowledge of the unseen are an exception.

Second, the verse of the sura of the Family of Imran, part of which you recited, proves my point. The whole verse reads as follows: "Nor is Allah going to acquaint you with the unseen, but Allah chooses of His apostles whom He pleases; therefore believe in Allah and His apostles; and if you believe and guard (against evil), then you shall have a great reward." (3:179)

Both these verses clearly show that the messengers of Allah were given knowledge of the unseen. If no one except Allah possessed knowledge of the unseen, the clause "chooses of His apostles whom He pleases" would be meaningless.

Allah says in the sura of Hud: "These are announcements relating to the unseen which We reveal to you; you did not know them - (neither) you nor your people - before this; therefore be patient; surely the end is for those who guard (against evil)." (11:49)

In the sura of The Counsel He says: "And thus did We reveal to you an inspired book by Our command. You did not know what the Book was, nor (what) the faith (was), but We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants." (42:52)

If knowledge of the unseen did not exist in the world, how did the prophets disclose unknown things and tell people about their (the People's) private lives? Is it not in the Holy Qur'an what Jesus said to the Bani Israel? "And I will declare to you what you eat and what you store up in your houses."(3:49)

If I cite all the verses of the Holy Qur'an, which support this fact, it would take a long time. This much seems sufficient.

Sheikh: Such statements encourage the soothsayers, diviners, palmists, astrologers, and other cheats who deceive the people and fill their own pockets with money.

CLAIMS FOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN THROUGH OTHER MEANS ARE FALSE

Well-Wisher: Belief in truth does not lead to bad results. It is people's ignorance which victimizes them. If Muslims followed the possessor of knowledge, according to the instructions of the Holy Prophet, in particular, if they had not forsaken the gate of knowledge from the very beginning, they would not have fallen victim to wicked people. The Holy Qur'an clearly says "Whomsoever He chooseth from the Prophets." The word "prophet" clearly indicates that there are chosen servants of Allah who receive knowledge of the unseen directly from Him, without having to learn it through the usual means.

If any man who is not a prophet or Imam claims that he can predict the unseen through astrology, palmistry, or casting lots to tell fortunes, he is a liar. The true Muslims, who follow the Holy Qur'an never believe in such people, nor do they fall prey to their deceit because they know that they should not follow any but the Holy Qur'an and the bearers and commentators of the Holy Qur'an that is, the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his progeny, who are analogous to the Qur'an.

In short, if anyone except the Holy Prophet and his pure successors claims that he has knowledge of the unseen and says that he can foretell future events he is decidedly an imposter, whatever way he may adopt.

VICEGERENTS OF PROPHETS ALSO HAD KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN

Sheikh: Since the prophets received divine revelations, they had, according to your statement, knowledge of the unseen. But was Ali also a prophet? Or was he associated in the affairs of prophethood through which he knew the unseen?

Well-Wisher: First, why are you misleading us by using the words "according to your statement"? Instead of it why do you not use the words "according to the statement of Allah"? I am not saying anything of my own accord. I cite the ordinance of the Holy Qur'an, and on the basis of the statements of the interpreter of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet, I am disclosing its real meaning.

I have submitted to you, on the basis of the evidences of the Qur'anic verses, that the prophets and messengers of Allah were exalted men and had the knowledge of the unseen. Your own eminent ulema have admitted this fact and have been inclined to report the instances of the Holy Prophet possessing knowledge of the unseen.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.I, p.67 (printed Egypt), reports a hadith from the Holy Prophet that he said to Ali: "After me, you will fight against the Nakisin, the Qasitin and the Mariqin." He says that this is one of the proofs of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet because it clearly predicts the unknown future. The predicted events occurred approximately 30 years later, exactly as they had been foretold.

Second, the Shias do not claim that Amiru'l-Mu'minin or the holy Imams were prophets. We believe that Muhammad was the last prophet of Allah. No one was associated with him in the prophethood. We believe that if anyone had a belief contrary to this, he is an unbeliever. Of course we believe in the divinely commissioned imamate of Ali and regard eleven of his descendants as our Holy Imams and the rightful successors and caliphs of the Holy Prophet. We believe that Allah Almighty had endowed them with knowledge of the unseen through the Holy Prophet.

We believe that ordinary people's perception is veiled so that they can see only visible things. The same was true for the prophets and vicegerents except that, according to the time and circumstance, Allah, the All-Knowing, removed the veil and disclosed necessary information to them from the unseen world. And when knowledge of the unseen was not necessary, the veil separated them too from the other world.

Hence, the Holy Prophet once said: "If I knew the unseen, indeed, I would have had much of good." That is, intrinsically, he possessed no knowledge of the unseen. He knew it only when, with Allah's blessings, the veil was lifted.

Sheikh: How and where did the Holy Prophet give people information about the unseen?

Well-Wisher: In the light of the verse of the Holy Qur'an, to which I have already referred, do you consider Muhammad the seal of the prophets, the Murtaza (the chosen one), and the true Prophet of Allah?

Sheikh: It is a strange question. Obviously the Holy Prophet was the Murtaza and the last of the prophets.

Well-Wisher: Then according to the holy verse: "The knower of the unseen! So He does not reveal His secrets to any except to him whom He chooses as an apostle," (72:26) the Holy Prophet possessed knowledge of the unseen. This verse clearly says that Allah gives His knowledge of the unseen to His chosen prophet.

Sheikh: Assuming that the Holy Prophet possessed knowledge of the unseen, how does this relate to your claim that Ali possessed this knowledge also?

Well-Wisher: Again, if you people would objectively examine the authentic hadith and sunna of the Holy Prophet, you would soon understand the facts relating to this and many other issues.

Sheikh: If our wisdom is limited, you have, by the grace of Allah, a broad mind and an eloquent tongue. Kindly relate the hadith which proves that Ali possessed knowledge of the unseen. If knowledge of the unseen is necessary for the successors of the Holy Prophets, there should be no exception to this condition. All the successors, particularly the great caliphs, should have possessed knowledge of the unseen, though we see that none of the caliphs ever claimed to possess it. Rather, like the Holy Prophet, they expressed their inability to know it. Why then do you make Ali an exception?

Well-Wisher: First, I have already told you that the Holy Prophet did not possess the inherent power of knowing the unseen. When he said: "If I knew the unseen, indeed I would have had much good," he meant that knowledge of the unseen was not inherent in him, as it was in Allah. When Allah removed the veil from the Holy Prophet, he came to know the hidden realities.

Chapter **16**

10th Session - Part 6

HOLY IMAMS WERE TRUE CALIPHS AND HAD THE KNOWLEDGE OF UNSEEN

Second, you say that if Ali possessed knowledge of the unseen, the other caliphs should have possessed it as well. We agree with you. We also say that the caliphs of the Prophet should possess knowledge of both apparent and unseen things. In fact the caliphs' capacities and characteristics should resemble exactly those of the Holy Prophet in all matters, except the role of prophethood itself, and messengership, as well as the special conditions of prophethood, which include the capacity to receive direct revelation (wali). Of course, you call those people caliphs of the Holy Prophet who were merely appointed as such by a few men, though the Holy Prophet had cursed them, e.g., Mu'awiya.

But we say that the caliphs and successors of the Holy Prophet are those who had been ordained as caliphs by the Holy Prophet himself, just as past prophets had ordained their own successors. So the caliphs and successors ordained by the Holy Prophet by the command of Allah perfectly represented his qualities, and for that reason they possessed knowledge of the unseen. Those true caliphs were twelve persons whose names are recorded in your own hadith. They are the family of the Holy Prophet and include Ali and his eleven descendants. And the fact that the other people were not ordained caliphs is indicated by your own statement, which is confirmed by your great ulema, that they frequently expressed their ignorance of even ordinary things, not to mention knowledge of the unseen.

GATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Third, you ask what hadith proves that Amiru'l-Mu'minin, Ali possessed knowledge of the unseen. In fact, there are many hadith which support this fact. One is called the "Hadith of Medina." It is nearly consecutively narrated by both the sects (Shias and Sunnis) that the Holy Prophet said on many occasions concerning Ali that he was the "Gate of his knowledge." These were his words: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate. So whoever wishes to seek knowledge must come to the gate."

Sheikh: This hadith is not authentic according to our ulema. Even if there is such a hadith, it must be a lone report one of the weak hadith.

Well-Wisher: It is a pity that you call this strong hadith a solitary report, or one of the weak hadith. Your prominent ulema have confirmed it. You should consult Jam'u'l-Jawami'y by Suyuti; Tahdhibu'l-Ansar by Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari; Tadhkiratu'l-Abrar by Seyyed Muhammad Bukhari; Mustadrak by Hakim Nishapuri; Naqdu's-Sahili by Firuzabadi; Kanzu'l-'Ummal by Ali Muttaqi Hindi, Kifayatu't-Talib by Ganji Shafi'i; and Tadhkiratu'l-Muzu'a by Jamalud-din Hindi. They write:

"If somebody rejects this hadith, he is certainly mistaken." Also in Rauzatu'l-Nadiya by Amir Muhammad Yamani, Bahru'l-Asanid by Hafiz Abu Muhammad Samarqandi, and Matalibu's-Su'ul by Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i, they have generally confirmed the veracity of this hadith.

This hadith has been narrated in different ways and from various sources. Most of the companions and followers have narrated it, including Ali, Abu Muhammad Hasan Bin Ali, the eldest grandson of the Prophet, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, Hudhaifa Bin al-Yaman, Abdullah Ibn Umar, Anas Bin Malik, and Amr Bin As.

Among the tabi'in (second generation after the Companions) the following have reported this hadith: Imam Zainu'l-Abidin, Imam Muhammad Baqir, Asbagh Bin Nabuta, Jarir Azzabi, Harith Bin Abdullah Hamdani Kufi, Sa'd Bin Ta'rifu'l-Hanzali Kufi, Sa'id Bin Jabir Asadi Kufi, Salma Bin Kuhail Hazarmi Kufi, Sulayman Bin Mihran A'mash Kufi, Asim Bin Hamza Saluli Kufi, Abdullah Bin Uthman Bin Khisam al-Qari al-Makki, Abdu'r-Rahman Bin Uthman, Abdullah Bin Asila al-Muradi, Abu Abdullah Sanabahi, and Mujahid Bin Jabir Abu'l Hajjaj al-Makhzumi al-Makki.

Besides the Shia ulema, who unanimously uphold this hadith, many of your own eminent traditionists and historians have reported it. I have

seen about 200 references from your ulema who have reported this holy hadith. I will point out some of those illustrious ulema and their books:

SUNNI ULEMA WHO HAVE NARRATED THE HADITH OF "CITY OF KNOWLEDGE"

- (1) Third-century commentator and historian Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari (d. 310 A.H.): Tahdhibu'l-Athar.
- (2) Hakim Nishapuri (d. 405 A.H.): Mustadrak, v.III, pp. 126,128,226.
- (3) Abu 'Isa Muhammad Bin Tirmidhi (d. 289 A.H.): Sahih
- (4) Jalalu'd-din Suyuti (d. 911 A.H.): Jam'u'l-Jawami'y and Jam'u's-Saghir, v.I, p. 374.
- (5) Abu'l-Qasim Sulayman Bin Ahmad Tabrani (d. 491 A.H.): Kabir and Ausat.
- (6) Hafiz Abu Muhammad Hasan Samarqandi (d. 491 A.H.): Bahru'l-Asanid.
- (7) Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ahmad Bin Abdullah Ispahani (d.410 A.H.): Ma'rifatu'l-Sahaba.
- (8) Hafiz Abu Amr Yusuf Bin Abdullah Bin Abdu'l-Bar Qartabi (d. 463 A.H.): Isti'ab, v.II, p. 461.
- (9) Abu'l-Hasan Faqih Shafi'i Ali Bin Muhammad Bin Tayyib al-Jalabi Ibn Maghazili (d. 483 A.H.): Manaqib.
- (10) Abu Shuja' Shirwaih Hamadani Dailami (d. 509 A.H.): Firdausu'l-Akhbar.
- (11) Abu'l-Mu'ayyid Khatib Khawarizmi (d. 568 A.H.): Manaqib, p.49 and Maqtalu'l-Husain, v.I, p.43.
- (12) Abu'l-Qasim Bin Asakir Ali Bin Hasan Damishqi (d. 572 A.H.): Ta'rikh-e-Kabir.
- (13) Abu'l-Hujjaj Yusuf Bin Muhammad Andalusii (d.605 A.H.): Alif-Bas, v.I, p. 222.
- (14) Abu'l-Hasan Ali Bin Muhammad Bin Athir Jazari (d. 630 A.H.): Asadu'l-Ghaiba, v. IV, p.22.
- (15) Muhibu'd-din Ahmad Bin Abdullah Tabari Shafi'i (d. 694 A.H.): Riyazu'l-Nuzra, v.I, p.129 and hakha'iru'l-Uquba, p.77.
- (16) Shamsu'D-Din Muhammad Bin Ahmad Dhahabi Shafi'i (died 748 A.H.): Tadhkiratu'l-Huffaz, vol.IV, p.28.
- (17) Badru'd-Din Muhammad Zarkashi Misri (died 749 A.H.): Faizu'l-Qadir, vol.III, p.47.
- (18) Hafiz Ali Bin Abi Bakr Haithami (died 807 A.H.): Majma'u'z-Zawa'id, Vol.IX, p.114.
- (19) Kamalu'd-Din Muhammad Bin Musa Damiri (died 808 A.H.): Hayatu'l-Haiwan, vol. I, p.55.

- (20) Shamsu'd-Din Muhammad Bin Muhammad Jazari (died 833 A.H.): *Asnu'l-Matalib*, p.14.
- (21) Shahabu'd-Din Bin Hajar Ahmad Bin Ali Asqalani (died 852 A.H.): *Tahdhibu'l-Tahdhib*, vol.vii, p.337.
- (22) Badru'd-Din Mahmud Bin Ahmad Aini Hanafi (died 855 A.H.): *Umdatul-Qari*, vol vii, p.631.
- (23) Ali Bin Hisamu'd-Din Muttaqi Hindi (died 975 A.H.): *Kanzu'l-Ummal*, vol. vi, p.156.
- (24) Abu'r-Ra'uf Al-Munawi Shafi'i (died 1031 A.H.): *Faizu'l-Qadir*, *Sharh-e-Jami'u'l-Saghir*, vol. iv, p.46.
- (25) Hafiz Ali Bin Ahmad Azizi Shafi'i (died 1070): *Siraju'l-Munir Jam'u's-Saghir*, vol. III, p.63.
- (26) Muhammad Bin Yusuf Shami (died 942 A.H.): *Subulu'l-Huda wa'l-Rishad fi Asma'i Khairu'l-Ibad*.
- (27) Muhammad Bin Yaqub Firuzabadi (died 817 A.H.): *Naqdu's-Sahih*.
- (28) Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal (died 241 A.H.): *Mujaladab-e-Munaqab*, *Musnad*.
- (29) Abu Salim Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i (died 652 A.H.): *Matalibu-s-Su'ul*, p.22.
- (30) Sheikhu'l-Islam Ibrahim Bin Muhammad Hamwaini (died 722 A.H.): *Fara'idu's-Simtain*.
- (31) Shahabu'd-Din Dowlat Abadi (died 849 A.H.): *Hidayatu's-Su'ada*.
- (32) Allama Samhudi Seyyed Nuru'd-Din Shafi'i (died 911 A.H.): *Jawahiru'l-Iqdain*.
- (33) Qazi Fazl Bin Ruzbahan Shirazi: *Ibta'lu'l-Batil*.
- (34) Nuru'd-Din Bin Sabbagh Maliki (died 855 A.H.): *Fusulu'l-Muhimma*, p.18.
- (35) Shahabu'd-Din Bin Hajar Makki (a bitter enemy and fanatic, died 974 A.H.): *Sawa'iq-e-Muhriqa*.
- (36) Jamalu'd-Din Ata'ullah Muhadith-e-Shirazi (died 1000 A.H.): *Arba'in*.
- (37) Ali Qari Harawi (died 1014 A.H.): *Mirqat Sharh-e-Mishkat*.
- (38) Muhammad Bin Ali as-Subban (died 1205 A.H.): *Is'afu'l-Raghibin*, p.156.
- (39) Qazi Muhammad Bin Sukani (died 1250 A.H.): *Fawa'idu'l-Majmu'a fi'l-AHadithi'l-Muzu'a*.
- (40) Shahabu'd-din Seyyed Mahmud Alusi Baghdadi (died 1270 A.H.): *Tafsir-e-Ruhu'l-Ma'ani*.
- (41) Imam Al-Ghazali: *'Thya'u'l-Ulum*.

- (42) Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Faqih-e-Shafi'i: Mawaddatu'l-Qurba.
- (43) Abu Muhammad Ahmad Bin Muhammad Asimi: Zainu'l-Fata (Commentary on Sura 'Hal Ata').
- (44) Shamsu'd-Din Muhammad Bin abdu'r-Rahman Sakhawi (died 902 A.H.): Maqasidu'l-Hasana.
- (45) Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi (died 1293 A.H.): Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Ch. xiv.
- (46) Yusuf Sibt Ibn Jauzi: Tadhkirat-e-Khawasu'l-Umma.
- (47) Sadru'd-Din Seyyed Husain Fuzi Harawi: Nuzahatu'l-Arwah.
- (48) Kamalu'd-Din Husain Meibudi: Sharh-e-Diwan.
- (49) Haiz Abu Bakr Ahmad Bin Ali Khatib Baghdadi (died 463 A.H.): Ta'rikh, vol. II, p.377, vol. iv, p. 348, and vol. vii, p.173.
- (50) Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i (died 658 A.H.): Kifayatu't-Talib, end of ch. 58. After quoting three authentic hadith from the Holy Prophet, he says: "In short, the highly learned Companions, the next generation after them, and the progeny of the Prophet have all acknowledged the virtues, vast knowledge, and judgment of Ali. To be sure, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman and other learned Companions used to consult with him regarding matters of religion and followed his advice in administrative affairs. They admitted that he was unexcelled in knowledge and wisdom. And this hadith does not over estimate him since his rank before Allah, the Holy Prophet, and the believers is much higher than that., Imam Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Al-Siddiqi Maghribi in confirmation of this holy hadith has written a book, Fathu'l-Mulku'l-Ali bi Sihah-e-Hadith-e-Bab-e-Madinatu'l-Ilm, (printed by the Ilamiyyah Press, Egypt, 1354 A.H.). If you are not satisfied even now, I can give you more references.

TO NARRATE ALI'S MERITS IS WORSHIP

Seyyed Adi'l -Akhtar: (A scholar, literary man, and leader of the Sunnis)
I have often seen in hadith that the Holy Prophet has said that to relate Ali's virtues is worship. The great scholar, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamadani Shafi'i, writes in his *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba* that the Holy Prophet said that the angels look with special attention upon the gathering in which the virtues and merits of Ali are narrated. They invoke Allah's blessings for those people. Moreover, to narrate the Holy Prophet's hadith is in itself worship. So I request that you relate more detailed hadith so that this gathering may be the center of more perfect worship.

HADITH "I AM THE HOUSE OF WISDOM"

Well-Wisher: There is a hadith which has probably been consecutively narrated. The traditionists of both sects have narrated it. Among your ulema who have reported it are Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal (Manaqib, Musnad, Hakim (Mustadrak, Mulla Ali Muttaqi (Kanzu'l-Ummal, part VI, p.401, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Isfahani (Hilyatu'l-Auliya, v.I, p.64, Muhammad Bin Sabban Misri (Is'afu'r-Raghibin, Ibn Maghazili Faqih Shafi'i (Manaqib), Jalalu'd-Din Suyuti (Jam'u-s-Saghir, Jam'u'l-Jawami'y and La'aliu'l-Masnu'a, Abu 'Isa Tirmidhi (Sahih, v.II, p.214, Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i (Matalibu's-Su'ul, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi (Yanabiu'l-Mawadda), Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i (Kifayatu't-Talib, Sibt Ibn Jauzi (Tadhkirat-e-Khawasu'l-Umma), Ibn Hajar Makki (Sawa'iq Muhriqa, ch.9, Fasl 2, p.75, Muhibu'd-Din Tabari (Riyazu'n-Nuzra), Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini (Fara'idu's-Simtain), Ibn Sabbagh Maliki (Fusulu'l-Muhimma), Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali (Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha), and a host of others. They confirm the authenticity of this hadith and have quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "I am the house of wisdom and Ali is its gate; so if somebody is desirous of gaining knowledge, he should come to the gate."

Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i has devoted Chapter 21 to this hadith. After giving its sources and references, he gives his own comment on it. He says this hadith is highly exalted. That is, Allah Almighty, Who is the source of wisdom and knowledge of all things, and Who taught the enjoining of good and the prevention of evil acts to the Holy Prophet, who also bestowed these gifts upon Ali. Hence, the Holy Prophet said: "Ali is the door of my wisdom. That is, if you wish to benefit by my wisdom, you should turn to Ali, so that realities may be revealed to you."

Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in Manaqib, Ibn Asakir in his Ta'rikh (writing from his own Sheikhs), Khatib Khawarizmi in his Manaqib, Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini in Fara'id, Dailami in Firdaus, Muhammad Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in Kifayatu't-Talib, ch.58, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, ch.XIV, and others of your prominent ulema have reported from Ibn Abbas and Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari that the Holy Prophet, holding Ali by the hand, said: "This is Ali - the master and chief of the virtuous and the slayer of the unbelievers. He who helps him is the supported one, and he who deserts him shall himself be deserted." Then the Holy Prophet raising his voice, said: "I am the city of

knowledge, and Ali is its gate. So if somebody wishes to obtain knowledge, he should come to the gate."

Also, Shafi'i reports that the Holy Prophet said: "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate. Nobody enters the house except through the gate."

The author of *Manaqib-e-Fakhira* reports from Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said: I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate. So he who wants to gain knowledge of religion should come to the gate." Then he said: "I am the city of knowledge and you, Ali, are its gate. He lies who thinks that he can reach me through other means than through you."

Ibn 'Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, Abu Ishaq Ibrahim Bin Sa'da'd-din Muhammad Hamwaini in *Fara'idu's-Simtain* from Ibn Abbas, the great Khatib Khawarizmi in *Manaqib* from Amr Bin As, Imamu'l-Haram Ahmad Bin Abdullah Shafi'i in *Dhakha'iru'l-Uquba*, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in *Musnad*, Mir Seyyed Ali Hamdani in *Mawaddatu'l-Qurba*, and even the great fanatic, Ibn Hajar in *Sawa'iq-e-Muhriqa*, ch.IX, Fasl 11, p.75, Hadith 9 from Bazaz out of the forty hadith that he has recorded concerning the merits of Ali, Tabrani in his *Ausat* from Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari, Ibn Adi from Abdullah Ibn Umar Hakim and Tirmidhi from Ali have reported that the Holy Prophet of Allah said: "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate. So anyone who seeks knowledge should come through the gate."

Then they say about the same hadith: The ignorant people have hesitated to accept this hadith and some of them have said that this is a forged hadith. But when Hakim (the author of *Mustadrak*), whose statement you regard as authoritative, heard these things he said: "Verily, this is a true hadith."

ELUCIDATION OF THE HADITH OF "GATE OF KNOWLEDGE"

The author of *Abaqatu'l-Anwar*, Allama Seyyed Hamid Husain Dihlawi Sahib, has compiled two volumes showing the sources and veracity of this hadith. Each of these volumes is as large as any volume of the *Sahih of Bukhari*.

I do not recall how many sources he has cited from eminent Sunni ulema to prove that the narrators of this hadith form an unbroken sequence of transmission, but this much I remember: When I was reading it, I prayed for that distinguished man, who was so erudite and who had taken so much care in compiling the book. The book proves that Ali had a unique position among the companions of the Holy Prophet.

Now for Allah's sake, be fair. Was it proper to close the door of knowledge which the Holy Prophet had opened for the community? Were the people justified in opening the door to a man of their own choice, who had no relations with Ali's level of knowledge?

Sheikh: We have sufficiently discussed the fact that this hadith is generally accepted by our ulema. No doubt, some of the reporters have said that it is a weak, lone hadith, while others have pronounced it to have been consecutively narrated. But what has this to do with the "knowledge of the unseen" which Ali is supposed to have possessed?

ALI HAD KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNSEEN

Well-Wisher: Haven't you admitted earlier that the last of the prophets was the best man of all created beings? And doesn't the Qur'an say that Allah reveals his secrets to none "Save to that one of the Prophets whom He chooses?" Allah removed the veil from him, and bestowed upon him the knowledge of the unseen. So, apart from other kinds of knowledge he possessed, he possessed knowledge of the unseen.

When the Holy Prophet said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate", all of the knowledge of the city could be obtained through the "gate of knowledge." Such knowledge included the knowledge of the unseen.

ALI KNEW OUTER AND CONCEALED MEANINGS OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Among others, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, v.I, p.65, Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in *Kifayatu't-Talib*, ch.74, and Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch 14, p.74, from *Faslu'l-Khitab* quote Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, the writer of *Wahi* as saying: "Verily, the Qur'an was revealed on seven letters, each letter of which has an apparent and a hidden meaning. Verily, Ali understands both the apparent and the hidden meaning of the Qur'an."

HOLY PROPHET OPENED 1,000 CHAPTERS OF KNOWLEDGE IN ALI'S HEART

Your great ulema have acknowledged in their authentic books that Ali possessed knowledge of the unseen. After the Holy Prophet he was mur-taza (the chosen one) among the whole Community.

Abu Hamid Ghazali, in his *Bayan-e-Ilmu'l-Ladunni*, has reported Ali as saying: "The Holy Prophet put his tongue in my mouth. From the saliva of the Holy Prophet, 1,000 chapters of knowledge were revealed to me, and from each chapter another 1,000 chapters were revealed to me."

Your illustrious leader, Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi, in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.XIV, p.77 reports from Asbagh Ibn Nabuta, who quoted Amiru'l-Mu'minin as saying: "Verily, the Holy Prophet taught me 1,000 chapters of knowledge, each chapter of which opened another 1,000 chapters, making one million. Thus I know what has already happened and what is to happen up to the Day of Judgement."

In the same chapter he reports from Ibn Maghazili on the latter's own authority from Abu's-Sabba, who reported from Ibn Abbas, who quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "On the night of the mi'raj (ascension), when I was in the presence of Allah, He talked with me in confidence. Whatever I learned, I taught to Ali. He is the gate of my knowledge."

The great writer, Mu'affaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi, narrated the same from the Holy Prophet in this way: "Gabriel brought me a carpet from Paradise. I sat on it until I was brought near my Lord. Then He talked with me and told me secret things. Whatever I learned was communicated by me to Ali. He is the gate of my knowledge." Then the Holy Prophet called Ali and said, "Ali! To be in accord with you is to be in accord with me; to oppose you is to oppose me. You are the knowledge that links me and my Community."

Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, Mulla Ali Muttaqi in *Kanzu'l-Ummal*, v.VI, p.392, and Abu Ya'la report from Ibn Lahi'a, who reported from Hayy Bin Abd Maghafiri, who reported from Abdu'r-Rahman, who reported from Abdullah Bin Umar, who reported that the Holy Prophet while on his deathbed said: "Bring my brother to me."

When Abu Bakr came to him, the Holy Prophet turned his face from him. Again he said, "Bring my brother to me." Then Uthman came, and the Holy Prophet turned his face from him also. Some others report that after Abu Bakr, Umar came and then Uthman.

After that, however, Ali was called in. The Holy Prophet covered him with his blanket and rested his head upon him.

When Ali came out, people asked him: "Ali! What did the Holy Prophet tell you?"

The Imam said, "The holy prophet has taught me 1,000 chapters of knowledge and each of those chapters consists of 1,000 chapters."

Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ahmad Bin Abdullah Ispahani (d.430 A.H.) in his *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, v.I, p.65, writing about Ali's merits, Muhammad Jazari in *Asnu'l-Matalib*, p.14, and Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in *Kifayatu't-Talib*, ch. 48, have reported with reliable sources from Ahmad Bin Imran Bin Salma Bin Abdullah that he said: "We were in the company of the Holy Prophet when he asked about Ali Bin Abi Talib. The Holy Prophet said: "Wisdom was divided into ten parts, of which nine were given to Ali and one was given to all of humanity."

Also Mu'affaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi in *Manaqib*, Mullah Ali Muttaqi in *Kanzu'l-Ummal*, v. VI, pp. 156 and 401 from many prominent scholars, Ibn Maghazili Faqih Shafi'i in *Faza'il* and Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda* with the same authorities from the writer of *Wahi*, Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p. 14, and many others report from Hulays Bin 'alqama that when the Prophet was asked about Ali he said: "Wisdom has been divided into ten parts, of which nine were given to Ali, and all of humanity received one part. Of that one part Ali's share was also the greatest."

Also in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.14, it is reported from *Sharh-e-Risala Fathu'l-Mubin* of Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ali al-Hakim Tirmidhi that Abdullah Bin Abbas related the following hadith: "Knowledge has ten parts. Nine parts are exclusively for Ali, and the remaining tenth part is for all of mankind. Of that one part, too, Ali was granted the greatest share."

Also Muttaqi Hindi in *Kanzu'l-Ummal*, v.VI, p.153, Khatib Khawarizmi in *Manaqib*, p. 49 and *Maqtalu'l-Husain*, v.I, p.43, Dailami in *Firdausu'l-Akhbar*, and Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.III, report the Holy Prophet as saying: "After me among my whole Community the most learned and the wisest person is Ali Bin Abi Talib."

ENTRUSTING THE PROPHET'S KNOWLEDGE TO ALI

We do not say that Ali Bin Abi Talib and his eleven descendants, the Imams, received knowledge directly from Allah through wahi (revelation) as the Holy Prophet did. But we do believe that the last of the Prophets of Allah was the center of Allah's blessing. Whatever benefit is granted to creation comes from Allah Almighty through the Holy Prophet.

So all knowledge, including the important events of past and future ages, was made known to them during the life of the Holy Prophet. Some knowledge was entrusted to them by the Holy Prophet when he was about to leave this world.

Your own ulema have cited a hadith from Ummu'l-Mu'minin A'ysha regarding this point. At the end of it she said: "The Holy Prophet called Ali and embraced him and covered his head with a mantle. I put my head forward and tried hard to listen to them, but I could not understand anything. When Ali raised his head, his forehead was covered with perspiration. The people said to him, 'Ali! what did the Holy Prophet tell you during this long time?'

Then Ali said: 'Verily, the Holy Prophet taught me 1,000 chapters of knowledge, each of which opened 1,000 other chapters.'

During the early days of his Prophethood (as I have mentioned during previous nights), the Holy Prophet gave a feast to forty of his near relatives at the house of Abu Talib. After he announced his prophethood, Ali was the first to proclaim his belief. The Holy Prophet held him in his arms and put his saliva into his mouth. Ali later said of this event, "Immediately after this, fountains of water sprang up in my chest." Your own eminent ulema have reported that while delivering a sermon, the Imam pointed to the same meaning. He said, "Ask me about what you do not understand before I die. My chest is the repository of unlimited knowledge."

Then pointing to his stomach he said, "This is the storehouse of knowledge; this is the saliva of the Holy Prophet; this is what the Holy Prophet has fed me like grain."

Throughout his adult life the Holy Prophet imparted knowledge and blessings to Ali in different ways. Whatever knowledge Allah granted the Prophet, the Prophet placed in Ali's chest.

JAFR-E-JAMI'A AND ITS NATURE

One of the sources of the divine blessings which Ali received from the Holy Prophet came through the Jafr-e-Jami'a, a book which contained secrets of the universe. Your own distinguished ulema acknowledge that this book and special knowledge are among the blessings peculiar to Ali and the Holy Imams.

Hujjatu'l-Islam Abu Hamid Ghazali writes that "there is a book from the lord and chief of the pious, Ali Bin Abi Talib. Its name is Jafr-e-Jam'u'd-Dunya wa'l-Akhira. It contains all the sciences, realities, obscurities, matters of the unseen, the essence of things and their effects, the essence of names and letters, which no one knows except Ali and his eleven descendants. The fact is that they have inherited this from their fathers."

Similarly, Sulayman Balkhi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, p.403, gives a detailed commentary about it from Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i's Durru'l-Munazzam. He says that Jafr-e-Jami'a, contains keys to knowledge, is comprised of 1,700 pages, and exclusively belongs to Imam Ali Bin Abi Talib.

Also it is reported in Ta'rikh-e-Nigaristan from Sharh-e-Mawaqif that Jafr and Jami'a are two books which exclusively belong to Ali. They tell, through the knowledge of letters, all the events until the end of the world. His descendants, too, prophesy on the basis of those books.

Nawab: Kindly give us more information about the Book of Jafr.

Well-Wisher: In the tenth year of the Hijra, when the Holy Prophet returned from his last Hajj, Gabriel came to him and informed him of his death. Then the Holy Prophet raised his hands and said, "O, Lord! You have promised me and you never go back on your word."

The reply from Allah came: "Take Ali with you and, sitting in the Uhud mountains with your back to the Qibla, call to the wild animals. They will respond to your call. Among them will be a red goat, with large horns. Order Ali to slaughter it and to remove its hide and turn it inside out. It will be found to be tanned. Then Gabriel will come with pen and ink, which will be different from the ink of the world. Tell Ali to write what Gabriel dictates. That writing and the hide will remain exactly in the same condition and will never decay. It will always remain safe. Whenever it will be opened, it will be found fresh.

The Holy Prophet went to the Uhud hills and complied with the divine instructions. Gabriel came and placed the pen and ink before the Holy Prophet, who ordered Ali to prepare himself to write.

Gabriel narrated all important world affairs to the Holy Prophet and he instructed Ali to record them on the hide. He wrote even on the skin of the hands and feet.

He wrote down everything that had happened or was to happen up to the Day of Judgement. He wrote down the names of his unborn children and their descendants and the names of their friends and enemies. He also recorded whatever was to happen to each one of them until the Day of Judgement. Then the Prophet gave that book and the knowledge of Jafr to Ali and made it part of the legacy of the Imamate. Each of the Imams in turn handed it down to his successor.

This is the same book about which Abu Hamid Ghazali says: "Jafr-e-Jami'a is a book which belongs exclusively to Ali and his eleven descendants. It contains everything."

Nawab: How is it possible that all the affairs of the world are to be recorded on the hide of a goat?

Well-Wisher: First, the hadith suggests that it was not an ordinary goat. It was a huge goat which had been created for this purpose.

Second, what was written was not the writing in common books. It was written in secret letters and signs.

I have already told you that the author of Ta'rikh-e-Nigaristan has reported from Sharh-e-Mawaqif that Jafr and Jami'a contains alphabetical letters through which information is revealed.

Then the Holy Prophet of Allah handed over the key of this secret to Ali who, by order of the Holy Prophet, handed it down to his successors, the Holy Imams.

Only he who possesses that key can read the secrets from that book. Otherwise, one is unable to know anything of the unseen. Suppose a king gives a secret code to his minister, or administrators, whom he sends to the provinces. If the key to understanding the code remain with the king or the ministers, then nobody could make out what that writing meant. In the same way, no one except Ali and his eleven descendants could understand the book Jafr-e-Jami'a.

One day Amiru'l Mu'minin gave that book to his son Muhammad Hanifiyya in the presence of all his other sons, but he could not understand anything in it although he was a highly learned and intelligent man.

Most of the orders that the infallible Imams gave, or the information that they disclosed, were from this same book. These holy men understood the secrets of all things and could tell what sufferings were to

befall them, their descendants and their Shia, from the same book. This fact has been recorded in detail in books of hadith.

IMAM REZA PROPHESED HIS DEATH

The details of the covenant between Caliph Mamun ar-Rashid Abbasi and Imam Reza are recorded in Sharh-e-Mawaqif. After correspondence for six months with and intimidation by Mamun, Imam Reza was forced to accept being heir of the Caliph. A covenant was written and Mamun signed it, stipulating that, after Mamun's death, the caliphate would be transferred to Imam Reza.

When the document was put before Imam Reza he wrote the following remark about it: " I, Ali Bin Musa Bin Ja'far, do hereby declare that the servant of the believers (Mamun ar-Rashid), (May he stand firm to Truth and may Allah guide him to the Right Path), has recognized our right, which others did not do; so he joined those relations which had been detached; he provided peace and satisfaction to those persons who had been stricken with terror, rather, he reanimated them when they had almost been reduced to destruction; he made them prosperous and contented when they were leading miserable lives, so that he might achieve Allah's Blessings and verily Allah will soon give him a good recompense to those, who offer thanks to Him and He does not nullify the reward of the upright. Verily, he has made me his heir and has entrusted me with a great emirate provided that I live after him."

At the end of it, the Holy Imam wrote: "But Jafr wa Jami'a says otherwise, (that is, I shall not survive him) and I myself do not know how you and I will be treated. It is only Allah, who commands, whose command is quite true, and Who is the best judge."

Sa'd Bin Mas'ud Bin Umar Taftazani in his book Sharh-e-Maqasidu't-Talibin fi-ilm-e-Usulu'd-din, referring to the Holy Imam's handwritten words "Jafr wa Jami'a" in the covenant, comments in detail that the Imams meant that according to Jafr and Jami'a, Mamun would not keep his promise and the world saw what happened. That dearly beloved descendant of the Holy Prophet was martyred through poisoning. Thus, the truth and veracity of the Holy Imam's knowledge was proved, and it was known to every one that this exalted family was aware of all known and unknown things.

Chapter **17**

10th Session - Part 7

GABRIEL BROUGHT A SEALED BOOK FOR WASI (SUCCESSOR) OF THE HOLY PROPHET

One of the divine gifts received by Ali through the Holy Prophet was a sealed book brought by Gabriel. The great scholar and historian, Allama Abu'l-Hasan Ali Bin al-Husain Mas'ud, who is respected by both sects, writes in his *Isbatu'l-Wasiyya*: "Gabriel and the trusted angels brought from Allah Almighty a sealed book to the Holy Prophet and said to him: 'All those present there with you except your wasi (successor) should leave so that I may give you the *Kitab-e-Wasiyya* (the book of the last testament).'

Then the Holy Prophet ordered all those present there to leave except Amiru'l-Mu'minin, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain. Gabriel said: 'O Prophet! Allah sends His salaam to you and says that this is the document in which He has made you a promise and has made His angels witnesses to it and that He Himself is witness to it.'

Then the Holy Prophet began to tremble and said: 'Salaam (salutation) is He, and salutation is from Him, and salutation returns to Him.'

Taking the book from Gabriel he read it and gave it to Ali. The Holy Prophet said: 'This is a promise and trust from my Lord to me. Verily, I have performed my duty and have delivered Allah's message.'

Amiru'l-Mu'minin said: 'May my mother and father sacrifice their lives for you! I also bear witness to the truth of this message. My ears, eyes, flesh, and blood bear testimony to it.'

The Holy Prophet said to Ali: 'Here is my will from the side of Allah. Accept it and be a guarantor for it before Allah. It is for me to fulfill my duty.' Ali said: 'I shall be a guarantor for it, and it is for Allah to help me.'

In this book Amiru'l-Mu'minin has been asked to fulfill the following promises:

'To be friendly with Allah's friends; to be hostile to Allah's enemies. To have patience with oppression; to patiently endure and pacify anger when his rights are usurped, when he is abused, and when he is unjustly attacked.'

The Amiru'l-Mu'minin said: 'I accept it, and I am content with it. If indignity is shown to me, if hadith are rejected, if the ordinances of the Holy Qur'an are set at naught, if the Ka'ba is razed to the ground, and if my beard is colored with the blood of my head, even then I will endure and be patient.'

After that Gabriel, Michael, and the other close angels were declared witnesses of Amiru'l-Mu'minin. Similarly, Hasan, Husain, and Fatima

were also entrusted with the same responsibility. The problems and conditions that they had to face were told to each in detail. After that the testament was sealed with a raw gold stamp and given to Ali. The testament contains hadith of Allah Almighty, the hadith of the Holy Prophet, the opposition of those who oppose and change divine ordinances and all the events and calamities that occurred after the Holy Prophet.

And this is what Allah says: 'And everything have We secured in a Manifest Imam (Guide, i.e. Ali).' (36:12)"

In short, the Holy Prophet transmitted his knowledge to Ali and Ali's descendants, the infallible Imams. Had it been otherwise the Holy Prophet would not have called Ali the "gate of knowledge" and would not have said: "If you want to take advantage of my knowledge, go to Ali's door."

If the Holy Imam had not possessed all of the Holy Prophet's knowledge, he would not have declared before all friends and enemies: " Ask me whatever you like before I die and leave you."

No one else except Ali ever claimed this merit for himself. When others who claimed to possess knowledge were questioned about known and unknown facts, they were put to shame.

Hafiz Ibn Abdu'l-Barr Maghribi Andalusi in his *Isti'ab fi Ma'rifati'l-Ashab* said, "Whoever uttered the words 'Ask me before I die and leave you' was a liar, except Ali Bin Abi Talib." Abdu'l-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Khallikan Shafi'i in his *Wafaya* and Katib-e-Baghdadi in his *Ta'rikh*, v. 13, p.163, report that one day Maqatil Bin Sulayman, who was one of the distinguished ulema, renowned for his ability to answer difficult questions quickly, declared before a public gathering: "Ask me about anything below the firmament."

A man put this question to him: "When did the Prophet Adam perform Hajj? Who cut his hair when he finished it?" Maqatil was perplexed and remained silent.

Another man said to him: "Does the ant absorb food through the stomach or through another channel? If it is through the stomach, where are its stomach and intestines?"

Maqatil was again dumbfounded. He said: "Allah has put this question into your heart, so that my pride in my knowledge might be put to shame."

Only one who is perfectly competent to answer all questions can make such a claim. In the whole Community no one except Ali Bin Abi Talib possessed such rank.

Since he was the "gate of knowledge" of the Holy Prophet, he had full knowledge of all known and unknown matters just as the Holy Prophet did. Therefore, he was able to say, 'ask me' and gave prompt and satisfactory answers to all questions. Among the Companions, too, there was not a single person except Ali, who made such a claim.

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad, Muwaffaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi in Manaqib, the great Khwaja Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Baghawi in Mu'jim, Muhibu'd-din Tabari in Riyazu'n-Nuzra, v. II, p.198, and Ibn Hajar in Sawa'iq, p.76 have quoted Sa'id Bin Musayya as saying that no one of the Companions, except Ali Bin Abi Talib, ever said: "Ask me whatever you like."

ALI'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALUNI (ASK ME) AND THE REPORTS OF THE SUNNIS

A large number of your prominent ulema, like Ibn Kathir in his Tafsir, v.IV, Ibn Abdu'l-Barr in Isti'ab, Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Muhyi'd-din Khawarizmi in Manaqib, Imam Ahmad in Musnad, Hamwaini in Fara'id, Ibn Talha in Durru'l-Manzum, Mir Seyyed Ali Shafi'i in Mawaddatu'l-Qurba, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in Hilyatu'l-Auliya, Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-Su'ul, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, and several other eminent Sunni scholars have reported with slight variation of wording from Amir Bin Wathila, Ibn Abbas, Abi Sa'id al-Buhturi, Anas Bin Malik, and Abdullah Bin Mas'ud that Amiru'l Mu'minin announced from the pulpit: "O people! Ask me anything you like, before I die. Verily, my heart is the storehouse of all knowledge. Ask me, because I have the knowledge of all that has passed and all that is to come."

Abi Dawud in his Sunan, p.356, Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in his Musnad, v.I, p.278, Bukhari in his Sahih, v.I, p.46 and v.X, p.241, have reported authoritatively that Ali said: "You may ask me about whatever you like; I understand the nature of any matter which you might ask about."

ALI'S CLAIM THAT HE COULD JUDGE CASES ACCORDING TO THE TORAH AS WELL AS THE GOSPELS

Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi, in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, ch.XIV, p.74 reports from Mu'affaq Bin Ahmad Khawarizmi and Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini reports from Abu Sa'id Buhturi that he (Abu Sa'id) said: "I saw Ali on the pulpit while he was putting on the Holy Prophet's mantle, sword and the turban. He uncovered his chest and said: 'Ask me anything you like, before I die, because my breast contains great wisdom. This is my stomach which is a storehouse of knowledge. This is the saliva of the Holy Prophet; this is what the Holy Prophet has fed me as grain. I swear by Allah that if a carpet is spread and I sit on it, verily, I will instruct the follower of the Torah, according to the Torah. I will instruct the followers of the Gospels according to the Gospels, until both the Torah and the Gospels are made to speak and bear witness to the following: Ali has spoken the truth and the verdict that he has given is according to what has been revealed in us. When you recite the Book you don't understand this much.'"

ALI'S KNOWLEDGE ABOUT VERSES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini in his *Fara'id* and Mu'ayyidu'd-din Khawarizmi in his *Manaqib* report that the Holy Imam spoke these words from the pulpit: "Ask me about what you do not understand before I die. I swear by Allah who split the grain and created man that if you ask me about any verse of the Holy Book of Allah, I will tell you about it - when it was revealed, during the day or at night, at a halting place or on the way, on the plain or in the hills, about whom it was revealed, a believer or against a hypocrite, what Allah meant by it, and whether the verse is general or particular."

Thereupon Ibn Kawwa, the Khariji, stood up and said: Let me know what

Allah means by saying, "Those who acknowledged belief and performed good actions are the best of men."

The Holy Imam said: "The verse refers to us and our followers, whose faces, hands and feet will be glittering on the Day of Judgement. They will be recognized by their foreheads."

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in *Musnad* and Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.XIV, p.74, report from Ibn Abbas that Ali spoke these words from the pulpit: "Ask me about what you do not understand before I die. There is no verse about which I do not know more than anyone else does. I know how and when it was revealed. Ask me about any disturbances, for there is no disturbance about which I do not know who caused it and who was killed in it."

Ibn Sa'd in *Tabaqa*, Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ganji Shafi'i in

Kifayatu't-Talib, ch.52, and Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, v.I, p.68, report with authentic references that Amiru'l-Mu'minin said: "By my Lord, no verse was revealed, but I know definitely about whom it was revealed, and where it was revealed. Verily, Allah has bestowed upon me a wise heart and an eloquent tongue."

In the same books it is reported that Amiru'l-Mu'minin said: "Ask me about the Book of Allah. There is not a single verse about which I do not know whether it was revealed in the hills or on the plains."

ALI'S KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO GUIDE OR MISGUIDE

Khawarizmi reports in his *Manaqib* from A'mash, who reported that Ubaya Bin Raba'i said: "Ali frequently used to say: 'Ask me about what you do not understand before I die. I swear by my Lord that there is not a green field, or a desert land, or a group of people who misguide a hundred men or guide a hundred men, but I know them. I know better than anyone else those who lead the people or incite them to evil until the Day of Judgement.'"

Jalalu'd-din Suyuti in *Ta'rikhu'l-Khulafa*, p.124, Badru'd-din Hanafi in *Umdatul-Qari*, Muhibu'd-din Tabari in *Riyazu'n-Nuzra*, v.II, p.198, Suyuti in *Tafsir-e-Itqan*, v.II, p.319, and Ibn Hajar Asqalani in *Fathu'l-Bari*, v.VIII, p.485 and also in *Tahdhibu't-Tahdhib*, v.VII, p.338, report that Ali said: "Ask me anything you like, and I swear by Allah that I will tell you of all things that will happen up to the Day of Judgement. If you ask me about the Book of Allah, I swear by my Lord that there is not a single verse which I do not understand well. I know if a verse was revealed during the night or in the day, on the plains or in the hills."

Can anybody except one who has knowledge of the unseen make such claims before both friends and foes?

PROPHESYING THAT SINAN BIN ANAS WAS THE MURDERER OF IMAM HUSAIN

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali has recorded the same reports in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.I, p.208 from Ibn Hilal Saqafi's *Gharat*. He says that a man stood up and said: "Let me know about the hair of my head and beard."

The Holy Imam said: "My friend, the Holy Prophet has informed me that there is an angel in the root of each hair of your head who curses you. There is a devil in the root of each of the hairs of your beard who misleads you. There is a calf in your house who will kill the son of the Holy Prophet."

This man was Anas Nakh'iy, whose son, Sinan, was a small child at the time of Ali's prophesy. In 61 A.H. Sinan reached Karbala and was one of the murderers of Imam Husain.

Some reporters say that the man who had asked the question was Sa'd Bin Abi Waqas and that his son ("calf") was the accursed Umar Bin Sa'd, who was the chief of Yazid's army, a central figure in the tragedy of Karbala. It is also possible that both of them had asked the question in two different meetings.

These reports, however, show that the Holy Imam drew attention to the fact that he was aware of the unseen.

FORETELLING THE STANDARD BEARING OF HABIB BIN AMMAR

Your eminent ulema, like Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, v.I, p.208 have reported that during the days of his apparent caliphate, Amiru'l-Mu'minin was sitting in the Kufa mosque with his companions when a man said that Khalid Ibn Uwaita had died in Wadiyu'l-Qurba. The Holy Imam said: "He is not dead, nor will he die, until he becomes the leader of the misguided army. His standard bearer will be Habib Bin Ammar."

A young man stood up from the assembly and said: "I am Habib Ibn Ammar and am one of your true and sincere friends."

Ali said, "I have never told a lie and never will. I am, as it were, seeing Khalid, the chief of the misguided army, and you are his standard bearer. You people will enter the mosque there (pointing to the Babu'l-Fil), and the flag of the standard will be torn by the gate of the mosque."

Years passed. During the caliphate of the wicked Yazid, Ubaidullah Bin Ziyad became the governor of Kufa and sent formidable forces to fight Imam Husain. One day many of those who had heard Amiru'l-Mu'minin's prophecy about them concerning Khalid and Habib Ibn Ammar, were sitting in the mosque when the noise of the soldiers and their slogans was heard. The people saw that Khalid Ibn Uwaita, the chief of the misguided army going to Karbala to fight against the son of the Holy Prophet, entered the mosque through the same Babu'l-Fil to stage a demonstration. Habib Ibn Ammar was carrying his standard. When Habib entered the mosque, the flag of his standard was torn by the gate of the mosque. The hypocrites were shown how deep Ali's knowledge was and how true his prophecies were.

Don't these signs and predictions prove that Ali had knowledge of the unseen?

If you carefully study the Nahju'l-Balagha, which is a compilation of Ali's sermons and pronouncements, you will find that there are clear prophecies about calamities and disturbances, affairs concerning the great kings, the revolts of the Zanj people, the domination of the Mongols, Genghis Khan's reign, the accounts of the oppressive caliphs, and their treatment of the Shias.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid discussed these facts in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, v.I, p.208-211. The great scholar, Balkhi Hanafi, in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, also discusses how Ali frequently displayed his deep knowledge in his sermons and predictions.

FORETELLING MU'AWIYA'S OPPRESSION

The Holy Imam also foretold that Mu'awiya would subdue the Kufans and order them to reject him (Ali). For instance, the Holy Imam said: "Shortly after me a man with a large throat and a fat stomach will dominate you. He will eat whatever he gets; if he does not get it, he will demand it. So you should kill him. But you will never kill him. Verily, he will soon order you to call me by ill names and to keep aloof from me. So I permit you to abuse me because it is a verbal thing, which for me is a source of purity and for you security against the harm of this man. But since aloofness and hatred are from the heart, you should not acquire hatred for me. I was born in the nature of Islam and unity of Allah and I have taken the lead in matters of belief and Hijra (migration)."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, and your other high-rankingulema confirm the fact that the man referred to above was Mu'awiya Bin Abu Sufyan. When his domination was firm he ordered the people to abuse and revile Ali. This wicked practice continued for eighty years, and the Holy Imam was abused in the mosques, and in the sermons of the Jum'a prayers.

While Umar Bin Abdu'l-Aziz Amawi was caliph, however, he forbade this hateful practice.

Ali's foretelling this evil practice is another proof of his possessing knowledge of the unseen. Ali foretold many events which were confirmed after many years.

FORETELLING OF DHU'TH-THADIYYA'S MURDER

Before the battle of Nahrwan, the Holy Imam prophesied the killing of the Kharijis and specifically of Tazmala, known as "Dhu'th-Thadiyya". He predicted also that of the Kharijis not even ten persons would survive and that of the Muslims not more than ten persons would be killed. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid and the great scholar, Balkhi, and others have reported that what the Imam said came true. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.I, p.425 writes, "This is one of those reports, which have been almost consecutively narrated. It is quite well known and has been reported widely. It is regarded one of the miracles of the Holy Imam."

You see, therefore, the vast difference between Ali and other "caliphs." If he did not possess knowledge of the unseen, how could he prophesy events which occurred years later?

For instance, he prophesied Mitham Tammar's murder at the hands of Ubaidullah Bin Ziyad, Juwairiyya's and Rashid Hajari's murder by Ziyad, and Amr Bin Humuq's murder at the hands of Mu'awiya's friends. He foretold the martyrdom of his son, Imam Husain to many people as well.

Chapter **18**

10th Session - Part 8

PROPHECY ABOUT HIS OWN MARTYRDOM AND ABOUT IBN MULJIM

He also predicted his own martyrdom. He said that his murderer was Abdu'r-Rahman Ibn Muljim Muradi, though that accursed man claimed to be loyal and a supporter.

Ibn Kathir writes in *Usudu'l-Ghaiba*, c.IV, p.25 and others also have reported that Ibn Muljim came to the Holy Imam, he recited some verses in praise of Amiru'l Mu'minin in the presence of the companions. He said: "You are the true guide, free from all faults and doubts. You are generous and kind and are the son of those lion-hearted and gallant ancestors, who were so distinguished in bravery from the very beginning. O, successor of the Prophet! Allah has given you this rank and bestowed upon you that virtue and greatness present in the Holy Qur'an."

The companions were very surprised at his eloquence and ardent love. Then the Holy Imam replied in verse: "I advise you to love me openheartedly, even though I know that you are one of my enemies."

Ibn Hajar says in his *Sawa'iq-e-Muhriqa*, p.82, that the Holy Imam, replying in verse to Ibn Muljim, said: "I wish him to live, but he wants to kill me. This outward friend belongs to the Murad clan."

Abdu'r-Rahman said: "Perhaps you have heard my name and you dislike my name."

The Holy Imam said: "No, it is not so; I know without the least doubt that you are a murderer, and it will not be long before you will stain my white beard with the blood of my head."

Ibn Muljim said, "If it is so, you may have me killed." The companions also insisted that he should be killed.

But the Holy Imam said: "It can never be. My religion does not allow retaliation before the commission of the sin. I know for certain that you are my murderer, but religious orders concern manifest acts. Since you have not yet committed an unjust action, I cannot inflict any penalty on you."

Thomas Carlyle of England writes in his series of lectures, "On Heroes," that Ali Bin Abi Talib was murdered because of his justice. That is, if he had retaliated before the commission of the sin, he would have surely remained safe. This was often the case with kings of the world who immediately killed anyone - even a near relative - whom they suspected to be their enemy.

This event is another proof of the fact that no one has a knowledge of the unseen except a Prophet or Imam who is ma'sum (innocent in the

sense of preserved from error). If he were merely infallible, he might, on account of his being aware of the realities, cause a disturbance. But a Prophet or Imam, who is also infallible, even after recognizing his murderer, does not make reprisals before the actual commission of the sin. Are these examples not sufficient to prove that the Holy Imam was fully aware of future events?

ALI'S SUPERIORITY

Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi reports in the beginning of Yanabiu'l-Mawadda the verses of Amiru'l-Mu'minin which have been taken from Ibn Talha Shafi'i's Durru'l-Munazzam. The Holy Imam said: "Verily, I have complete knowledge of all beginnings, and I am accused of hiding the knowledge of the ends. I am the discloser of all hidden and inexplicable matters. I have before me the record of all the past and the present. Truly, I have dominion over all things, great and small, and my knowledge encompasses the whole universe."

The Holy Imam also said: "I could load seventy camels with commentary on the sura of al-Fatiha (of the Holy Qur'an)."

The Holy Prophet has said: "I am the city of Knowledge and Ali its gate. Also Allah Almighty says that we should enter the house through the gates. So whoever wishes to seek knowledge should come through the door."

Apart from other facts, these two instances are sufficient to prove the superiority of Ali to others. He should have directly succeeded the Holy Prophet as the leader of the Muslims. When it is an admitted fact that Ali was the most learned of all, it is absurd to assume that an ignorant man had the right to supersede him.

ALLAH COULD NOT HAVE WILLED THAT THE SUPERIOR BE SUPERSEDED BY THE INFERIOR

Even Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his book about the first sermon says: "A man of low order was given priority over the man of the most exalted rank." This remark is an acknowledgement of the Holy Imam's superiority, but his fanaticism compels him to add, "Allah willed that the inferior supersede the superior man."

This statement is unfortunate, coming as it does from a man like Ibn Abi'l-Hadid. All sensible people would object to it. His claim contradicts Allah's justice. But surely Allah is All-Just and All-Wise. He does not give preference to an inferior man and let him supersede a more deserving person.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, "Say: Are those who know and those who do not know alike?" (39:9)

Again He says: "Is then he who guides to truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself goes not aright, unless he is guided."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid clearly admits that Ali was the man who most deserved the caliphate. He says in his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, v.I. p.4: "Verily, Ali was superior to all mankind after the Holy Prophet of Allah. Regarding the matter of the caliphate, he was the most deserving of all the Muslims."

"CITY OF KNOWLEDGE" PROVES ALI'S RIGHT TO BE THE FIRST CALIPH

Moreover, the Holy Prophet's explicit statement at the conclusion of this hadith confirms Ali's superiority: "He who is desirous of seeking knowledge must come to the door." The "door" here is of course Ali.

So is this portal of guidance whom the Prophet has ordered us to seek more worthy or he whom the people have chosen? The answer is obvious. The Holy Prophet's order must be obeyed. Second, the Holy Prophet also established the criterion for priority and preference, which is the possession of the highest knowledge.

Sheikh: If, Ali had the right of priority because of his superior knowledge, the Holy Prophet of Allah should have specifically stated it so the Community might know that obedience to him was compulsory. But no such categorical statement is to be found.

Well-Wisher: I am greatly pained to hear such statements from you. You have an unfortunate tendency to reject anything - even the obvious truth - when it contradicts your view. My respected brother, I have been citing those statements for the last ten nights. The audience and several local newspapers will bear testimony to this fact. But still you say that you have not seen any explicit statement of the Holy Prophet. Even your own authentic books are replete with clear declarations on this issue.

Let me ask you this: Does the Community need the Holy Prophet's knowledge and sirat (traditions and customs)?

Sheikh: It is an obvious fact. All the Companions and the Community need the guidance, knowledge, and customs of the Holy Prophet until the Day of Judgement.

Well-Wisher: May Allah bless you! If there were no other specific hadith except the Hadith of Medina, even this would have been sufficient to prove my point. The Prophet explicitly says: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate; he who wishes to seek knowledge should come to the door."

ACCORDING TO THE HOLY PROPHET ALI EXCELLED ALL OTHERS IN KNOWLEDGE

What declaration can be more explicit than this hadith in which the Holy Prophet says that "Anyone who desires to have the benefit of my knowledge should come to the door of Ali because he is the gate of knowledge!" Now dawn is approaching. For the whole night I have been ardently discussing this topic and have taken all of your time. But at this moment you have cooled my ardor. Like your predecessors, you refuse to listen, and consequently, disregarding all my cogent reasoning, you are denying the obvious truth.

What declaration can be superior to the declaration about knowledge? Would any sane person advocate rejecting a wise man in favor of an ignorant one? Of course not. Therefore, you must accept my point, which is not only my point but an accepted principle of all knowledgeable people: since Ali was superior in knowledge and wisdom among the entire Community, obedience to him is obligatory. Accordingly, as I have already mentioned, your own prominent ulema, like Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal (Musnad), Khawarizmi (munaqab), and even the fanatic Ibn Hajar Makki in Sawa'iq have quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "In my Community Ali Bin Abi Talib excelled all others in knowledge."

There was not a single person among the Companions who compared to Ali in knowledge. Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i in Munaqab, Muhammad Bin Talha in Matalibu's-Su'ul, Hamwaini in Fara'id and Sheikh Sulayman Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, ch.XIV, report from Kalbi that the great scholar of the Community, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, said: "The knowledge of the Holy Prophet is from Allah's knowledge; the knowledge of Ali is from the Holy Prophet's knowledge. My knowledge and all the Companion's knowledge, compared to Ali's, is like a drop of water before the seven seas."

In Nahju'l-Balagha, sermon 108, Ali says: "We (the infallible Imams) are the Tree of Prophethood, the secure abode of the divine message, the descending place of angels, the mines of knowledge, and the sources of wisdom."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in his Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, v.II, p.236 commenting on this sermon, says: "This attribute was clearly possessed by the Holy Imam since the Prophet of Allah has said: 'I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate; whoever wishes to seek knowledge should come to the gate.'

Also the Holy Prophet said: 'Ali is the best judge among you.'"

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid goes on to say: "The faculty of judgement requires many kinds of knowledge: The standard of his knowledge was so high that no one could equal him. In fact no one approached him. So he was entitled to claim: 'We are the mines of knowledge and the sources of wisdom.' Hence, after the Holy Prophet no one had better right to claim these things for himself."

Ibn Abdu'l-Barr in *Isti'ab*, v.III, p.38, Muhammad Bin Talha in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, p.23, and Qazi Aiji in *Mawaqif*, p.276 have quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "Ali is the best judge among you all."

Suyuti in *Ta'rikhu'l-Khulafa*, p.115, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya*, v.I. p.65, Muhammad Jazari in *Asniu'l-Matalib*, p.14, Muhammad Bin Sa'd in *Tabaqa*, p.459, Ibn Kathir in *Ta'rikh-e-Kabir*, v. VII, p. 359, and Ibn Abdu'l-Barr in *Isti'ab*, v.IV, p.38, quote Umar Ibn Khattab as saying: "Ali is the best judge among us."

It is reported in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda* that Ibn Talha, author of *Durru'l-Munazzam* says: "You should know that all the secrets and mysteries of the divine books are contained in the Holy Qur'an. Whatever is in the Holy Qur'an is contained in the sura al-Fatiha. Whatever is in the sura of al-Fatiha is contained in the verse 'Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim.' (In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful). Whatever is in the verse, 'Bismillah ar-Rahman, ar-Rahim,' is in the Ba (B) of 'Bismillah.' Whatever is in the Ba of 'Bismillah,' is contained in the dot below the letter Ba of 'Bismillah.' Ali said: 'I am that dot which is below the letter Ba of Bismillah.'"

Also Sulayman Balkhi in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, reports Ibn Abbas as saying: "Once on a moonlit night after the Isha prayer, Ali, taking me by the hand led me to the graveyard of Baqi and said: 'Abdullah! Recite.' I recited the verse 'Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim.' The Holy Imam continued telling me the secrets and mysteries of the Ba of 'Bismillah' until dawn."

Both sects unanimously agree that regarding his knowledge of the unseen and his being the heir of the knowledge of the prophets, Ali holds a unique position among all the Companions.

Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in *Matalibu's-Su'ul*, Khatib-e-Khawarizmi in *Manaqib*, and Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda* have recorded from Ibn Talha Halbi's *Durru'l-Munazzam* that Ali said: "Ask me about the unseen and unknown mysteries, because truly I am the heir of the knowledge of the holy prophets and messengers of Allah."

Also Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in *Musnad*, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*, and Sulayman Balkhi in *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda* report

that Ali declared from the pulpit: "Ask me about what you do not understand before I die. Inquire of me about the paths of the skies because, verily, I know more about those paths than the paths of the earth."

Ali made this long before the invention of the telescope. People often asked him about the heavenly bodies and he answered their questions.

DESCRIPTION OF ZONES OF SPACE IN AGREEMENT WITH THE MODERN SCIENCE OF ASTRONOMY

The great scholar and traditionist, Sheikh Ali Ibn Ibrahim Qummi of the 3rd century A.H. in his commentary on the sura Saffat (No. 37), the eminent scholar, Sheikh Fakhru'd-Din Ibn Tarih Najafi, known for his piety, in his Kitabu'l-Lughat Ma'rafat-e-Majma'u'l-Bahrain, which was compiled about 300 years ago, and Allama Mullah Muhammad Baqir Majlisi, in his Biharul-Anwar, v.XIV, report that Ali said: "The stars in the skies are populated with cities as the earth is." Now for Allah's sake, be fair. At that time there was no conception of modern astronomy. The world accepted the Ptolemaic theory that the earth was the center of the universe. If a man disclosed something new about the stellar regions and that was proved to be true a thousand years later, wouldn't you say that he had knowledge of the unseen?

ALI MASTERED ALL SCIENCES

The fact is that, after the Holy Prophet, Ali was the most knowledgeable man in philosophy, grammar, fiqh (jurisprudence), astronomy, astrology, jafr (divination), mathematics, poetry, rhetoric, and lexicography. In all the sciences he made significant contributions which the experts in that field have adopted as a basis for further development.

For example, he told Abu'l-Aswadu'd-Du'ali (a writer who is generally credited with having invented the vowel marks of written Arabic) that there were three parts of speech: the noun, the verb, and the preposition. Also, he laid down the principles of grammar and syntax of the Arabic language as well as details of pronunciation and vocabulary. By fixing correct pronunciation in writing, he protected the Qur'an from future misinterpretation.

IBN ABI'L-HADID'S ADMISSION OF ALI'S SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE

In the preface of *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha* by Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazali, you will find how this scholar admitted and praised the merits of Ali in all fields of knowledge.

He says: "What can I say about the man to whom all the merits are attributed, who is a perfect model for every nation to follow, and with whom all wish to identify themselves? He is of course the fountain head of all merits. After him, whoever achieved prominence received benefit from him, for he followed in his footsteps."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says that the knowledge of the four great jurists, Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i, and Imam Hanbal, derived from Ali's knowledge. He says: "Those companions who were well versed in jurisprudence learned it from Ali."

I do not want to take more of your time by quoting further from this great scholar. But I urge you to read his preface to his *Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha*. You would learn how the illustrious historian and scholar has acknowledged the merits of Ali. He says, "Ali's case is strange. Throughout his life he never uttered the words: 'I do not know.' He possessed knowledge of everything."

At the end, the author says: "This fact can be counted as one of the miracles of the Holy Imam. Such knowledge is beyond the reach of human power and understanding."

IMAM HUSAIN'S BIRTH AND THE ANGELS' CONGRATULATIONS

People came to the Holy Prophet and congratulated him on the birth of Imam Husain. One of the men said: "O Holy Prophet! we have observed something strange in Ali." The Holy Prophet asked, "What did you see?" The man said: "When we came to offer congratulations, we were stopped and told that 120,000 angels had come from heaven and were with you. We were astonished as to how Ali could know this and how he could count them."

The Holy Prophet smiled and asked Ali how he could know that so many angels had come to him. The Holy Imam said: "May my father and mother sacrifice their lives for you! Each of the angels who came to you and saluted you spoke in a different language. On calculation, I found that they had spoken in 120,000 languages, so I knew that 120,000 angels had come to you."

The Holy Prophet said: "O, Abu'l-Hasan! May Allah increase your knowledge and modesty." Then turning to the people the Holy Prophet said: "I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate. There is no greater event and no greater sign than he is. He is the Imam of the people, the best of mankind, trustee of Allah and repository of His knowledge. He is the 'people of Dhikr', among those referred to by the words of Allah: 'So ask you the people of Dhikr if you know not.'(16:43) I am the treasury of knowledge and Ali is its key. So whoever wishes to obtain the treasure must come to the key."

If you can point to a single companion or relation of the Holy Prophet who could rival Ali's merits, I would certainly bow my head before him. But if you cannot, then it would be your religious duty to attach yourselves to the truth without caring what the world might think. (Then he raised his hands towards the sky and prayed to Allah:) "O, Allah! Be my witness that I have clearly indicated the way to truth and have discharged my religious obligation."

NAWAB SAHIB'S ACCEPTANCE OF SHIA'ISM

Nawab: Holy sir, for the last several nights, we have heard many discussions in these sessions. Some of us used to discuss the points of arguments among ourselves each day. I thank Allah Almighty that He has shown us the way. The utterly false information of the opponents misled us. Now it is clear that the Shia Ithna Asharis are rightly guided.

Both those of us who have attended these meetings and many people of the city who have read the accounts of these debates in the newspapers have been shown the truth about Islam. Of course they all cannot publicly declare their faith because of their personal dealings with the opponents, but they have told us in private that they have accepted Shia'ism.

But some of us are not afraid of anyone and are prepared to announce that during these nights we wanted to reveal our change of allegiance. There was no opportunity to do so. We have heard your convincing arguments, and now our belief is quite firm.

Permit us now to draw the curtain aside. Let our names be recorded as Shias of our master, Amiru'l-Mu'minin and the twelve Imams. Kindly announce to the people of the Shia sect that we are one with them. Bear witness on the Day of Judgement before the Divine Court of Justice and before your exalted grandfather that we have complete faith in the twelve Imams as the successors and vicegerents of the Holy Prophet of Allah.

Well-Wisher: I am glad that some of you have recognized the truth. According to a hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal in Musnad Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, by Muhammad Bin Talha Shafi'i in Matalibu's-su'ul, by Ibn Maghazili in Faza'il, by Khawarizmi in Manaqib, by Sulayman Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, and by many others, the Holy Prophet has guided us to this path. He said, "Ali's path is the path to truth." I hope that my other brothers in Islam will also give up their intolerance.

Nawab: We are extremely grateful for your kind and learned interpretation of facts. There is still one point which disturbs us. It concerns the imamate of the twelve Imams and their names. In the past ten nights Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali was the focus of our discussion. First tell us the verse of the Holy Qur'an which proves the imamate of the twelve Imams. Second, are the names of the twelve Imams recorded in our books?

Well-Wisher: It is an appropriate question and I would be happy to respond. But it is now nearly dawn, and my answer cannot be brief.

Tomorrow is the birthday of the grandson of the Holy Prophet Imam Husain and the Qizilbash family has arranged a celebration in the Risaldar Imambara. Perhaps I will reply to your question on that occasion.

Nawab: I quite agree with you.

Part 3
LAST SESSION, Sunday, 3rd Sha'ban,
1345 A.H.

BIRTHDAY OF IMAM HUSAIN

A large celebration was held to commemorate the birthday of Imam Husain. The author, Seyyed Muhammad Sultanu'l-Wa'izin Shirazi, addressed the gathering. It was his final speech, and as he promised on the previous night, he answered the question about the imamate, the number and names of the Imams in the Holy Qur'an and the hadith. He began his speech with the following ayat: "O You who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is better and very good in the end." (4:59)

GENUINE LIBERTY

Well-Wisher: The idea of liberty, that people should be free, has long been a popular idea. The superficial notion about freedom is that it means doing as one likes, a notion which has resulted in the rejection of divine law. But of course real freedom is submission to Allah, the Creator of all things.

The Holy Qur'an frequently commands the believers to obey Allah and those fit to be followed from among ourselves. The holy verse which I have recited as the theme of my discourse is one such verse which indicates whom we should obey. It commands us to obey Allah, the Holy Prophet, and those vested with authority. There is no difference of opinion among Muslims concerning the obedience due to the Holy Prophet. However, there is difference of opinion about the meaning of the words "those vested with authority among you."

SUNNIS BELIEF CONCERNING THE MEANING OF "THOSE VESTED WITH AUTHORITY"

Our brothers, the Sunnis, believe that in the above verse the words 'those vested with authority' (uli'l-amr) refer to state officials. Accordingly, they consider obedience to kings and governors compulsory even though these officials may be evil. In fact this belief is wrong. Shortage of time does not permit me to make a lengthy argument in support of my point, so I will trouble you with only a short discussion.

THREE WAYS OF APPOINTMENT OF 'ULI'L-AMR' (THOSE VESTED WITH AUTHORITY)

Obviously rulers obtain their authority in one of these ways:

1. They are appointed by ijma (consensus)
2. They gain power by force.
3. They are divinely commissioned.

If a leader gains authority by consensus of the community, it is not compulsory to obey him as one obeys Allah or the Prophet. It is not possible for all Muslims to appoint a just ruler since, however wise or conscientious they may be, they can only judge a man by appearance. They cannot read his heart or know the degree of his faith.

LEADERS OF ISRAEL SELECTED BY MOSES WERE CONSIDERED WORTHLESS

Obviously Muslims cannot claim to possess better understanding than the Prophet Moses. He selected seventy men out of several thousand for their apparent integrity and took them with him to Mount Sinai. But all of them, on examination, proved worthless because their faith was not firm. This fact has been referred to in the Holy Qur'an, verse 154 of sura 7.

If those selected by Moses proved to be unbelievers at heart, it is obvious that common people would be less competent to choose able rulers for themselves. It is quite possible that those selected for their apparent piety may eventually turn out to be unbelievers. Surely obedience to such rulers would weaken religion.

THE WORDS 'ULI'L-AMR' DO NOT REFER TO RULERS

Certainly Allah would not require his servants to obey a sinner as they would obey Him or His Prophet. Moreover, if the appointment of the 'uli'l-amr' were made through a true consensus, an election would have to be held for each new appointment. All citizens of all Muslim nations would have to agree on the choice in every election.

During 1300 years of Islam we find that, after the Holy Prophet, no such consensus ever occurred. At present it is impossible to secure such a consensus because the Muslim world has been split up into numerous countries, each with a ruler of its own.

Moreover, if every country should elect an 'uli'l-amr' for itself, there would be numerous 'uli'l-amr,' each to be obeyed within his own country, and the people of one country would not obey the 'uli'l-amr' of other countries. Of course then there is the question of allegiance when differences arise - as they often have in the last 1300 years - between two 'authorities.' We then have Muslims killing other Muslims in the name of Islam.

But true Islam does not require such absurd behavior which would lead to mutual strife among Muslims. It follows, therefore, that the 'uli'l-amr' whom we are commanded to obey has gained his authority by consensus.

A RULER WHO TAKES POWER BY FORCE CANNOT BE CALLED ULI'L-AMR'

It is equally absurd to suggest that obedience to a tyrant is compulsory. If it were, why do the Sunni ulema condemn the oppressive rulers and caliphs, like Mu'awiya, Yazid, the wicked Ziyad Ibn Abib, Ubaidullah, Hajjaj, Abu Salma, and Muslim.

If anyone claims that obedience to wicked rulers is compulsory (and some ulema have really said that), it would be quite contrary to the Qur'anic injunctions. Allah has frequently cursed sinners in the Holy Qur'an and has forbidden Muslims to obey them. So how is it possible that in this verse He would order us to obey sinners? Obviously, we cannot attribute two divergent orders to Allah Almighty. Hence, Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi clearly says regarding this holy verse that the 'uli'l-amr' must possess perfect integrity. Otherwise, Allah would not have linked our duty to obey them with our duty to obey Allah Himself and the Holy Prophet.

'ULI'L-AMR' MUST BE ORDAINED AND APPOINTED BY ALLAH

According to the Shias, the 'uli'l-amr' must be free from sin and infallible. And since no one except Allah can know the deep reality of the heart, the 'uli'l-amr' must be appointed by Allah. Thus Allah, Who ordains the prophets, also ordains the 'uli'l-amr:' An 'uli'l-amr' obviously must have the same attributes the Holy Prophet had.

In this holy verse the word *ati'u* (obey) has been used twice: He says, "Obey Allah and obey the Apostle." When He speaks of 'uli'l-amr,' He does not use the word '*ati'u*' again but uses the conjunction 'and' with 'uli'l-amr.' Linking the words in this way it means that 'uli'l-amr' possess the same merit as the Holy Prophet possesses, except those which are peculiar to the Prophet alone, e.g. 'Wahi' (revelation), prophethood, etc. In short, the qualities of the Holy Prophet should be possessed by the 'uli'l-amr' except of course the rank of prophethood.

Accordingly, Shias believe that the words 'uli'l-amr' refer to the twelve Imams, that is Amiru'l-Mu'minin and his eleven descendants, the progeny of the Holy Prophet. This verse is one of the proofs of the Imamate of the twelve Imams.

Apart from this, there are many other verses supporting our point of view.

(1) For instance, the Holy Qur'an says: "He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men." Abraham said: And of my offspring? My covenant includes not the unjust, said He." (2:124)

(2) "The Prophet has a greater claim on the believers than they have on themselves and his wives are (as) their mothers; and blood relations have the better claim in respect of one to the other, according to the book of Allah than (other) believers or the emigrants." (33:6)

(3) "O you who believe! Fear Allah and be (always) with the truthful ones." (9:119)

(4) "You are only a warner and (there is) a guide for every people." (13:7)

(5) "And (know) that this is My path, the right one. Therefore follow it, and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way." (6:153)

(6) "And of those whom we have created are a people who guide with the truth and thereby they do justice." (7:181)

(7) "And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not dis-united." (3:103)

(8) "So ask the followers of the Reminder if you do not know." (16:43)

(9) "Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O people of the House! And to purify you with a complete purification." (33:33)

(10) "Surely Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Imran above the nations. Offspring, one of the other."(3:33)

(11) "Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants." (35:32)

(12) "Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth; a likeness of His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp in a glass, (and) the glass is, as it were, a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive tree, of neither the east or the West, the oil whereof nearly gives light, though fire touch it not." (24:35)

There are many other verses which could be quoted. Many of your prominent ulema have reported that the Holy Prophet said, "One fourth of the Holy Qur'an is in praise of the Ahle Bait."

Ibn Abbas is reported to have said, "More than 300 verses were revealed in praise of Ali."

Now, I come to my original point that the 'uli'l-amr' must be infallible because obedience to them is linked with obedience to Allah and the Holy Prophet.

Imam Fakhru'd-din Razi in his Tafsir admits that if we do not regard the 'uli'l-amr' as infallible, it would be, in effect, affirming two contradictions as being true. Your own ulema have confirmed that these qualities were possessed exclusively by the twelve Imams. The Holy verse of Purification (33:33) also confirms this fact.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE HOLY IMAMS GENERALLY REPORTED

Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, ch.77, p.445 and Hamwaini in Fara'idu's-Simtain report that Ibn Abbas said: "I heard the Holy Prophet saying: ' I and Ali, Hasan, Husain and nine of the descendants of Husain are completely pure and infallible.'"

Salman Farsi says that the Holy Prophet, putting his hand on the shoulder of Husain, said: "He is the Imam and the son of the Imam, and of his descendants there will be nine Imams who will all be virtuous trustees of Allah."

Zaid Ibn Thabit reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Verily, of Husain's descendants will be born Imams who will be virtuous trustees, infallible judges."

Imran Ibn Hasin reports that the Holy Prophet said to Ali: "You are heir to my knowledge. You are the Imam and Caliph after me. You will tell the people what they do not know. You are the father of my grandson and husband of my daughter. Of your descendants there will be infallible Imams."

KNOWLEDGE OF THE AHLE BAIT

Abu Ishaq Hamwaini in Fara'idu's-Simtain, Hafiz Abu Nu'aim Ispahani in Hilyatu'l-Auliya, and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha report from Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said: "My progeny have been created from the same seed from which I have been created. Allah Almighty has bestowed upon them knowledge and wisdom. Woe be to him who rejects them."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh-e-Nahju'l-Balagha, and the author of Siratu's-Sahaba, report from Hudhaifa Bin Asaid that the Holy Prophet said: "I leave behind for you two weighty things: the book of Allah and my 'Ahle Bait.' If you attach yourselves to these two you will be rescued." Tabrani reports an addition: "Do not reject their authority; otherwise you shall be ruined. Do not show any disrespect toward them or ignore them, or else you shall be destroyed. Do not try to teach them because verily they know better than you do."

In other reports Hudhaifa Bin Asaid quotes the Holy Prophet as saying: "After me there will be Imams from my progeny. Their number will be equal to the number of Bani Isra'il's heralds, that is, twelve, of whom nine will be Husain's descendants. Allah has bestowed upon all of them my knowledge and wisdom. So do not teach them because surely they know better than you do. Follow them since they are definitely with truth, and truth is with them."

WHY THE NAMES OF THE IMAMS DO NOT APPEAR IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

First, this divine book is concise. It contains many general principles but few details, which have been left for the chief commentator, the Holy Prophet, to explain. Allah says: "And whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it; and from whatever he forbids you, keep back." (59:7)

Because the names and numbers of the twelve Imams are not mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, some people do not accept them. But on that basis they should reject their own caliphs since no verse of the Holy Qur'an makes any mention of their caliphs, except Ali Bin Abi Talib, or of the Umayyad or Abbasid caliphs, or of the authority vested in the Community to elect a caliph by consensus.

Second, if it is necessary to reject anything which is not clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an, then you should reject many of the methods of our worship since there is no mention of their details in the Holy Qur'an.

THERE IS NO MENTION OF UNITS (RAK'ATS) OF PRAYERS IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

The ritual prayer is perhaps the central act of worship in a Muslim's life. The Holy Prophet emphasized its performance. He said: "The ritual prayer is the pillar and protector of religion. If the ritual prayer is accepted, all other religious performances will be accepted. If it is rejected, all other religious performances will also be rejected."

Of course, there is no mention in the Holy Qur'an of the number of units (rak'ats) to be performed for each prayer or any of the other specific details regarding how the prayers are to be performed. Does this mean that we should abandon the prayers? The Holy Qur'an simply says: "Establish salat (prayer). There are no details distinguishing required from optional acts. These were explained by the Holy Prophet.

In the same way other commands have been stated in the Holy Qur'an in principle only. Their details, conditions and relevant instructions were explained by the Holy Prophet. Similarly, concerning the Imamate and caliphate, the Holy Qur'an says only: "Obey Allah and obey the Prophet and those in authority among you." And we are bound to follow the Holy Prophet's order in this regard in the same way we follow his instructions with regard to the details of the ritual prayers.

Muslim commentators, whether Sunni or Shia, cannot make their own interpretations of the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Prophet said: "If someone gives his own interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, his place is Hell."

Accordingly, every sensible Muslim turns to the real interpreter of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet. For many years I have studied both Sunni and Shia Qur'anic commentary and hadith but have never come across a single hadith in which the Holy Prophet said that 'uli'l-amr' refers to political rulers. On the other hand, the books of both the Sunnis and Shias contain numerous reports that the Holy Prophet was asked to indicate the meaning of 'uli'l-amr' and he replied that 'uli'l-amr' referred to Ali and his eleven descendants. I will present only a few of these numerous hadith which have been narrated through sources accepted by Sunnis.

ULI'L-AMR REFERS TO ALI AND THE IMAMS OF THE AHLE BAIT

(1) Abu Ishaq Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini Ibrahim Bin Muhammad writes in his Fara'idu's-Simtain: "The Prophet told us that 'uli'l-amr' refers to Ali Bin Abi Talib and the Ahle Bait of the Holy Prophet."

(2) 'Isa Bin Yusuf Hamadani reports from Abu'l-Hasan and Salim Bin Qais, who report from Amiru'l-Mu'minin Ali that the Holy Prophet said: "My associates are those whose obedience has been linked by Almighty Allah with His own obedience. It is they to whom He refers when He says 'Those in authority from among you.' It is necessary that you not oppose what they say. You should obey them and follow their orders." Amiru'l-Mu'minin goes on to say, "When I heard this, I said: "O Prophet, let me know who the 'uli'l-amr' are." The Prophet said: "O Ali! You are the first of them."

(3) Muhammad Bin Mu'min Shirazi, one of the most eminent Sunni religious scholars, writes in his Risala-e-I'tiqadat that when the Holy Prophet appointed Amiru'l-Mu'minin his representative in Medina, the verse "uli'l-amr-e-Minkum" (And those in authority from among you) was revealed in reference to Ali Bin Abi Talib.

(4) Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his Yanabiu'l-Mawadda, Ch.38, reports from Manaqib that it is stated in Tafsir-e-Mujahid that this verse was revealed in reference to Amiru'l-Mu'minin when the Prophet appointed him as his representative in Medina. The Holy Imam said: "O Holy Prophet of Allah! Have you appointed me Caliph over women and children?" Then the Holy Prophet said: "Are you not content that you have the same relation to me as Aaron had to Moses?"

(5) Sheikhu'l-Islam Hamwaini reports Salim Bin Qais Hilali as saying the following: During Uthman's caliphate, I saw some Muhajirs and Ansars sitting together praising themselves. Ali was silent among them. The people asked Ali to speak. He said: "Do you not know that the Holy Prophet said: 'I and my Ahle Bait were one light, which existed in His creation 14,000 years before the creation of Adam? When He created Adam, He placed that light in his spine when he came down to the earth. Then He placed it in Noah in his ark; then in Abraham's spine while he was in the fire; similarly in the pure spines of fathers and in the pure wombs of mothers, none of whom were born unlawfully.'" Those in the group who were foremost in the battles of Badr and Hunain said: "Yes, we have heard these words." Then Ali said, "Tell me on oath whether

you know that in the Holy Qur'an Allah has given preference to the foremost ones,

and that in Islam no one equals me in merit." They said, "Yes, we acknowledge this."

Then Ali recited from the Holy Qur'an: "And the foremost are the foremost; these are they who are drawn nigh (to Allah)." (56:10-11) He said: "When this verse was revealed, the people asked the Holy Prophet who were the foremost ones, and about whom the verse was revealed. Now tell me on oath if you know that the Holy Prophet told them that Allah Almighty revealed this verse about the prophets and their vicegerents. I am foremost among all the prophets and Ali, my wasi (vicegerent) is foremost among all the vicegerents?"

Then Ali said: "The Holy Qur'an tells us, 'Obey Allah and obey the Prophet and those vested with authority from among you' (4:59) and the verse 'Verily, verily your guardian is (none else but) Allah and His Prophet (Muhammad) and those who believe, those who establish prayer and pay the poor-rate, while bowing down (in prayer).' (5:55) and the verse 'have not taken anyone as an adherent besides Allah and His Apostle and the believers.' (9:16) Allah subsequently ordered His Holy Prophet to identify who was meant by the words 'uli'l-amr' (those vested with authority) in the same way as the ritual prayer, fasting and the Hajj had been clarified. Accordingly, at Ghadir-e-Khum the Holy Prophet appointed me over the people and declared: 'O people when Almighty Allah commissioned me to prophethood I felt apprehension that people would oppose me.'

Then the Holy Prophet continued: 'O people, do you know that Allah Most High is my Master? I enjoy more mastery over the selves of the believers than they have over themselves?'

When all confirmed that it was so, the Holy Prophet announced: 'Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master; O Allah be a friend of him who is a friend of Ali and be an enemy of him who is an enemy of Ali.'

Then Salman stood up and asked: 'O Holy Prophet what is the significance of Ali's mastery?' The Holy Prophet replied: 'Ali's mastery is like my own mastery. Of whomsoever I am the master Ali is also his master.'

Then the verse was revealed: 'This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.' (5:3) Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: 'Allah is Great, Who has perfected the religion, completed His favor upon me, and is satisfied

with my prophethood and is satisfied with Ali being the vicegerent after me."

This hadith confirms those hadith which I related during past nights to show that 'master' connotes complete mastery over more than one's own.

"The people then said: 'O Holy Prophet tell us the names of your vicegerents.' The Holy Prophet said: 'They are Ali, who is my brother, my successor, and my vicegerent and the master of every believer after me; then his son, Hasan, then Husain, then nine successive sons of Husain. The Holy Qur'an is with them and they are with the Holy Qur'an. They will not separate from it, and it will not separate from them until they reach me at the Pool of Kauthar.'"

After recording the full report, he has recorded three other reports from Manaqib narrated by Salim Bin Qais, Isa Bin Sirri, and Ibn Mu'awiya showing that the words 'uli'l-amr' refer to the twelve Imams of the 'Ahle Bait.'

I believe that the above reports are enough to clarify the real meaning of 'uli'l-amr.' As for the number and names of the Holy Imams, I will relate hadith narrated by eminent Sunni scholars, without referring, as has been my practice, to the many reports by Shia scholars.

NAMES OF THE TWELVE IMAMS AND THEIR NUMBER

(1) Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi Hanafi in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch.76, reports from Fara'idu's-Simtain of Hamwaini, who reports from Mujahid, who reports from Ibn Abbas, that a Jew named Na'thal came to the Holy Prophet and asked him questions about Tawhid (Unity of Allah). The Holy Prophet answered his questions and the Jew embraced Islam. Then he said: "O Holy Prophet, every prophet had a wasi (vicegerent). Our Prophet, Moses Bin Imran, made a will for Yusha Bin Nun. Please tell me who is your wasi?" The Holy Prophet said: "My vicegerent is Ali Bin Abi Talib; after him are Hasan, and Husain and after them are nine Imams, who are the successive descendants of Husain."

Na'thal asked the Holy Prophet the names of those Imams. The Holy Prophet said: "After Husain, his son, Ali, will be the Imam; after him his son, Muhammad; after him his son, Ja'far; after him his son Musa; after him his son, Ali; after him his son, Muhammad; after him his son, Hasan; after him his son, Muhammad Mahdi will be the last Imam. There will be twelve Imams."

In addition to the names of the nine Imams, this hadith further states that each would succeed as Imam after his father. Na'thal made further inquiries, and the Holy Prophet described the manner of death of each Imam.

Then Na'thal said, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that you are His Holy Prophet. I bear witness that these twelve holy Imams are your vicegerents after you. What you have said is exactly what is recorded in our books and in the will of Moses."

Then the Holy Prophet said: "Paradise is for him who loves them and obeys them, and Hell is for him who is hostile to them and opposes them."

Na'thal then recited some couplets to the effect that "May Allah, the Exalted, shower His blessings upon you, chosen Prophet and pride of the Bani Hashim. Allah has guided us by means of you and the twelve holy men whom you have named. Certainly Allah has purified them and preserved them from impurity. He who loves them is successful. He who hates them is the loser. The last of the Imams will quench the thirst of the thirsty. He is the one the people will wait for. Prophet of Allah, your progeny is a blessing for me and for all the believers. Those who turn away from them will soon be thrown into Hell."

(2) The great scholar, Sheikh Sulayman Balkhi, in his *Yanabiu'l-Mawadda*, ch. 76 reports from Manaqib of Khawarizmi, who reports

from Wathila Bin Asqa' Bin Qarkhab, who reports Jabir Bin Abdullah Ansari; and also Abu'l-Fazl Shaibani and he from Muhammad Bin Abdullah Bin Ibrahim Shafi'i, who reports Jabir Ansari (one of the chief companions of the Prophet) as saying: "Jundal Bin Junadab Bin Jubair, a Jew, came to the Holy Prophet and asked him about Tawhid. After hearing his reply, the man became a Muslim. He said that on the previous night he had seen Moses in a dream telling him: 'Embrace Islam at the hands of the last of the prophets, Muhammad, and attach yourself to the vicegerents after him.' He thanked Allah for the blessing of Islam. He then asked the Holy Prophet to tell him the names of his vicegerents. The Holy Prophet began by saying: 'My vicegerents are twelve in number.'

The man said that he had seen this fact in the Torah. He asked the Prophet to tell him their names, and the Prophet said: 'The first of them is the chief of the vicegerents, the father of the Imams, Ali. Then follow his two sons - Hasan and Husain. You shall see these three. When you reach the last stage of your life, Imam Zainu'l-Abidin will be born, and the last thing that you have of this world shall be milk. So cling to them so that ignorance may not mislead you.'

The man said that he had seen in the Torah and in other scriptures the names of Ali, Hasan, and Husain as Elias, Shabbar, and Shabbir. He asked the Holy Prophet to tell him the names of the other Imams.

Then the Holy Prophet named the remaining nine Imams with their epithets and added: 'The last of them, Muhammad Mahdi, will live, but disappear. He will appear later and will fill the world with justice and equity, since it will have degenerated into injustice and tyranny. Verily, Paradise is for those who show patience during the time of his occultation. Paradise is for those who are firm in their love for him. These are they whom Allah Almighty has praised in the Holy Qur'an and for whom the Holy Qur'an is a 'guide for those who guard (against evil). Those who believe in the unseen.' Also He says 'These are Allah's party: now surely the party of Allah are the successful ones.'" (58:22)

THE NUMBER OF CALIPHS AFTER THE HOLY PROPHET IS TWELVE

Mir Seyyed Ali Shafi'i Hamadani in his *Mawaddatu'l Qurba*, (Mawadda XIII), reports that Umar Bin Qais said: "We were sitting in a group in which Abdullah Bin Mas'ud was also present. Suddenly an Arab came and said: "Who among you is Abdullah? Abdullah said: "I am." He said: "Abdullah! Did the Holy Prophet tell you about the caliphs after him?"

Abdullah Bin Mas'ud said, "Yes, the Prophet said: 'After me there will be twelve caliphs, corresponding to the number of the Imams of the Bani Isra'il.'"

The same hadith has also been reported from Sha'bi, who reported it from Masruq, who reported it from Abdullah Shiba.

Also Jurair, Ash'ath, Abdullah Bin Mas'ud, Abdullah Bin Umar, and Jubair Bin Samra all report the Holy Prophet as saying: "There will be twelve caliphs after me. Their number will correspond to the number of the caliphs of the Bani Isra'il." According to Abdu'l-Malik's report, the Holy Prophet added: "And all of them will be from the Bani Hashim."

Most Sunni ulema, including Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Muslim, Sha'bi have reported the same thing.

Yahya Bin Hasan, a great scholar of jurisprudence, has reported in his *Kitab-e-Umda* from twenty different sources, that "Verily, there are twelve caliphs after the Holy Prophet, and all of them belong to the Quraish." Bukhari has reported from three sources, Muslim from nine sources, Ali Dawud from three sources, Tirmidhi from one source, and Hamid from three sources that the Holy Prophet said: "The caliphs and Imams after me are twelve, and all of them are from the Quraish." According to some reports, the Holy Prophet said: "All of them are from the Bani Hashim."

On page 446 Yahya Bin Hasan says: "Some of the scholars have said that hadith in support of the view that the number of the caliphs and Imams after the Holy Prophet is twelve are commonly known. Everyone knows that when the Holy Prophet specified the number of his caliphs to be twelve, he meant that they would belong to his 'Ahle Bait,' To say that he meant the caliphs who were his companions would be incompatible with the facts (since there were only four).

Nor can it be said that he meant the Umayyad kings, of whom there were thirteen. Moreover, they were all tyrants except Umar Bin Abdu'l-Aziz, (although even he usurped the caliphate and forced the Imam of the time to remain confined in his house). Since the Holy Prophet had

said: "They are all from the Bani Hashim," the Bani Umayyads are not to be included.

So it is clear that the rightful caliphs of the Holy Prophet were the twelve Imams who were descendants of the Holy Prophet and who excelled all others in knowledge and piety. This fact is confirmed by this consecutively narrated hadith of the Holy Prophet. "I leave behind me two great things, the Holy Book of Allah (the Holy Qur'an) and my 'Ahle Bait.' If you are attached to these two, never, never, shall you go astray after me. Verily, these two shall never be separated from one another until they meet me at the Pool of Kauthar. If you are attached to these two, you will never be misled."

The Holy Prophet said: "Seek knowledge even in China." We have spent ten long nights discussing issues concerning a precious knowledge - the way of Islam. We have seen many differences between the Sunni and Shia sects, and we hope that historical fact and reason have clarified the nature of the differences. If Allah wills, these discussions will convince sincere seekers of knowledge that "Whom Allah guides, no one can lead astray."

The End

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IN THE AGE OF INFORMATION

IGNORANCE IS A CHOICE

*"Wisdom is the lost property of the Believer,
let him claim it wherever he finds it"*

Imam Ali (as)