

Triumph of the Truth

**A Historic Debate between the
Ahlus-Sunnah and the Shias**

Majdi Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. And peace,
blessings and salutations be upon his Prophet,
Nabi Muhammad ﷺ.

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Triumph of the Truth

A Historic Debate between the
Ahlus-Sunnah and the Shias

Towards true Islamic unity based upon the
Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His
Messenger ﷺ

By:

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Foreword

Correct Beliefs - Foundation of the Islamic Faith

The superstructure of Islam, with all its pillars of Faith, rests on a rock-solid foundation of correct beliefs that are explicitly established from the Qur'aan and Authentic Traditions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Generally our focus is on the visible structure of a building above the ground and we admire its design and architecture. Yet the architects and engineers have to ensure that their foundation is rock-solid else the entire structure will collapse into a heap of worthless rubble. Such is the case with faith in Islam.

A person can strive to be a devoted worshipper and have mountains of good deeds, but if his/her beliefs are contrary to that taught by the Qur'aan and Prophetic Traditions, then alas, those good deeds are as useless as ashes!

The first source of Shariah Law is the Glorious Qur'aan, with the authentic Prophetic Traditions being the second source. It follows then, that any belief or practice adhered to by a Muslim as part of Islam, must be established either from the Qur'aan or from the authentic Prophetic Traditions to be valid and accepted in Shariah. Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is considered the ideal role-model to be followed in all aspects pertaining to beliefs, practices and behaviour:

“Most certainly for you, in the Messenger of Allah, is an excellent model for the one who hopes (to meet) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah frequently” (S.: 33; V. 21).

In the Majestic Qur'aan we find the second chapter, Surah Baqara begins with the description of the Muttaqeen (God-fearing) with these opening remarks:

“Alif, Laam, Meem! That Book, in it is no doubt. A means of guidance for the God-fearing! Who believe in the unseen...”

The key quality of the God-fearing is to believe in the unseen, which is elaborated in a later verse:

“The Messenger has faith (believed) in whatever has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the Believers; each one believes in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers;....” (S.2; V. 285)

The following verse makes it explicitly clear that good deeds will have no value if they are not based on correct beliefs as determined by the Qur'aan and Prophetic Traditions:

“Say: Shall We inform you of those who are the greatest losers in terms of their Deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds. They are those who deny the Aayaat (proofs, verses, signs) of their Lord and the Meeting with Him (in the Hereafter). So their deeds are in vain, and on the Day of Resurrection, We shall assign no weight for them. That shall be their recompense: Hell, because they disbelieved and took my signs and my Messengers as means of jest and mockery.” (S.18; V. 103 to 106)

Furthermore, in the next verse, the Glorious Qur'aan makes it abundantly clear that the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ are the standard bearers of correct beliefs of Islam since they were the direct students of the Messenger Muhammad ﷺ and were present during the period of revelation. This meant that their knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the Revelations and Prophetic Traditions would be the most accurate and reliable:

“So if they believe as you (the Companions of Prophet Muhammad) believe, then they (the non-believers) indeed are guided.” (S.2; V 137)

There cannot be a trace of doubt regarding the fundamental importance of correct beliefs when one reads this verse:

“The likeness of those who reject faith in their Lord is that their (good) deeds are as (worthless) as dust, on which the wind blows furiously on a stormy day; they shall acquire naught of what they have earned. That is the straying, far away (from the Right Path).” (S.14; V-18)

Finally, he who holds the highest position among creation, and is the most beloved in the sight of Almighty Allah, is severely warned with regard to false beliefs as a lesson to the rest of mankind:

“And most certainly it has been revealed to you(O Muhammad) as it was (revealed) to those(Prophets) before you, that 'If you ascribe (any) partners with Allah in worship, (then) surely all your deeds will be nullified, and you will certainly be among the losers.” (S. 39; V. 65)

Present Context

We have to bear in mind that as Islam continues to flourish among people in the West, the anti-Islamic forces grow ever more desperate to destroy Islam. The Wise Qur'aan reminds us in the following two verses:

“The Jews and Christians will never be satisfied with you unless you follow their way (system)”; (Surah 2; Verse 120)

“They (the disbelievers) desire to extinguish the Light of Allah with their mouths and Allah will complete His Light even though the disbelievers detest it.” (Surah 61; Verse 8)

The allocation of billions of dollars to global media cartels together with dedicated efforts to mount a sophisticated ideological war to demonize Islam and win the battle for the hearts and minds of the masses has failed miserably. As a result we see an increase in False-Flag Operations (covert military or paramilitary operations designed to deceive in such a way that the operations appear to be carried out by other entities, groups or nations besides those who actually planned and executed them). Also an age-old strategy employed by the Imperialist powers, which never seems to fail is simply stated as: “DIVIDED-WE RULE”.

This means that in order to keep control over the masses, the easiest method is to divert the population with internal conflict by sowing seeds of dissent and division. In this regard, imperialist Zionist-linked forces have spawned many deviated sects under the banner of Islam to mislead Muslims. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had warned the Ummah in this famous tradition:

“The Prophet ﷺ said: “My community will experience everything that the Children of Israel had experienced, following in their footsteps exactly, so much so that if one of their number had approached his mother publicly for sex, one of my community will do the same. The Children of Israel were divided into 72 sects. My community will divide into 73 sects, and all of them will be in the Hellfire save one.”

The people asked him: “And which one will that be?” He ﷺ replied: **“The one that follows what I and my Companions are upon.”** (Tirmizi, Hadith 2641)

The Hadith can be found in the four Sunan works and in Musnad Ahmad with different chains of transmission and has been declared authentic by al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Dhahabi, Ibn Taymiyah, and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalaani.

The early history of Islam records various deviant sects like the Khawaarij, Mu'tazilites, Murj'ias, and Shias. In recent times we had Ahmadis, Bahais, Qadiani's who have tried under the British Empire's influence to create divisions and weaken the Muslim nation. With the rise of Iran under the late Ayatollah Khomeini, Shiasm has again revived its deceptive head, particularly the 'Ithna Ashari' sect of Shiasm.

This sect is most aggressive and focuses on Da'wah largely among 'Sunni' Muslims while they deceptively sloganize: "There is no difference between Sunnis and Shias, we are all brothers."

Yet their literature continues to pass negative remarks against the Companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ especially the first three Khalifas, Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ, Hazrat Umar ؓ and Hazrat Uthman ؓ, as well as Hazrat Muaawiya ؓ and Sayyidatuna Ayesha ؓ. Their slogans ring hollow when one observes that their main focus is to convert 'Sunni' Muslims so that they also despise the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ؓ. Such betrayal undermines the foundation of Islam since the Prophetic Companions ؓ are the main link in the chain of transmission of this valuable Deen to us all. This main link of the Prophetic Companions to the generations that came after has always been accepted by the overwhelming majority. The deviant minority Shia sect rejects the fundamental position and role of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ؓ except for a very few of them such as Sayyiduna Ali ؓ and Salman Farsi ؓ. Instead they hold on to an contrived belief of Twelve Imaams which has no basis in the Qur'aan nor Hadeeth and is at odds with the mainstream Sunni position. In this regard the following Quraanic verse should suffice for the Muttaqeen (God-fearing):

"And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the Guidance (right path) has become manifestly clear to him, and he follows a path other than that of the believers(mainstream majority), We will leave him to that which he turns and We will enter him into Hell-what an evil destination!"
(Surah 4; Verse 115)

Sympathizers

Regrettably it has been noticed that due to lack of sound knowledge with regards to correct Islamic beliefs, people are impressed with the political theatrics and rhetoric of Iran. The Muslim world, understandably, is earnestly searching for a Muslim power to take on the West and champion the cause of Islam. It is the natural desire of every true believer. So when we see the technological progress and military muscle displayed by Iran and its confrontational posturing against the superpowers, as well as its inflammatory rhetoric against the vile enemy of Muslims, Israel, naturally Muslims are inspired and encouraged. Furthermore, when Muslims see the corrupt, oppressive and divided Arab world, they feel weak and hopeless. As Muslims, we identify with and understand these sentiments. But alas, we are in an era of great deception and therefore cannot even be sympathizers of the Shias as this certainly places a big question mark on one's Imaan!! This is an era perhaps heralding the Great Deceiver, Dajjaal. If one studies objectively and scholarly, the beliefs of the Shias in general, and particularly the dominant Ithna Ashari sect of the Shias of Iran from their own original sources, the conclusion will be unavoidable. The Shias come to us in the form of Islam, but in fact, they are the farthest away from the True Path and original teachings of Islam.

In regards to sympathizers the Majestic Qur'aan states unequivocally:

“And do not incline towards those who perpetrate zulm (wrongdoing) or the Fire will seize you!” (Surah 11; Verse 113)

And our duty is only to clearly convey (the message).

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Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him; we seek His help, forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our own souls and misdeeds. None can mislead whomsoever Allah guides, and none can guide whomsoever Allah causes to go astray.

I testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshiped except Allah. He is One and He has no partner. I equally testify that Muhammad ﷺ is the servant of Allah and His Messenger.

It is authentically reported that the Prophet, ﷺ said, **“This Ummah shall be divided into seventy three factions; all save one of them shall be in Hell.”** (Tirmizi)

The saved group is the one that upholds the path of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and that of his noble and righteous Companions ﷺ, who are the best of mankind after the Prophets and the best community ever evolved for mankind. Allah says,

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
نُؤَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا (١١٥)

“And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) after the right path has become manifestly clear and follows other than the believers' way. We shall leave him on the path he has chosen, and enter him in Hell - what an evil destination!”

(An-Nisaa 4:115)

Adhering to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and following the path of the believers in belief and practice are the distinct characteristics of the victorious and the saved group known as 'Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah'.

In the course of studying the erroneous fundamentals of the seventy-two misguided groups, the scholars of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah unanimously agreed that the most erroneous of the deviated groups is the Shi'ite sect. That is why this misguided sect is sometimes called, 'Shi'ites of falsehood' or

'Shi'ites of desire'.

However, Allah so wished that I should contribute somewhat in challenging these people and their falsehood that He brought to me a confused young man from among *Ahlu-Sunnah*. The cause of his confusion was that the Shi'ites had seized him as a result of his ignorance and inadequate knowledge about the belief of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and the reality of the erroneous ideology of the Shi'ites. Therefore, they were able – through deception, demonstration of false love, fake generosity and claims of bogus love for members of the Prophet's ﷺ household – to attack his pure and untainted correct belief. These deceptions worked on this poor youth to such an extent that he believed that these Shi'ites were angels and advocates of truth.

The following is an account of his story and the subsequent debates that took place in establishing the truth.

I beseech Allah to make it useful for the Muslims and to regard it as a humble and accurate contribution towards acquainting the Muslims with the reality of their enemies. I hope for my reward from Allah alone. He is Sufficient for us and Excellent is He as a Protector! All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

(Abridged)

Majdi Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad

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Chapter One:

The First Debate

Prologue:

The following pages are an account of the debate that took place between myself and the leaders of the 'Al-Ithnaa 'Ashariyyah' Shi'ites. I did not prepare for it. It was rather pre-ordained by Allah in order to show the truth to the deceived members of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* who are carried away by the vicious dawah activities of the bigot Shi'ite establishments, whose apparent goal is to unite the ranks of all those who call themselves Muslims, but whose real hidden agenda, is to spread the Shi'ite ideology among the youth of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* who are not firm-rooted in their knowledge of the truth.

They aim to mislead the youth into doubting the Qur'aan and the Sunnah; to mislead them from their belief in the righteousness of the Companions ﷺ into insulting, cursing and regarding them as apostates as well as from having a good opinion of every Muslim who believes in the oneness of Allah into regarding the life, property and honour of such a Muslim as violable.

They want to mislead them from truth to falsehood and from guidance to error through mischievous and deceptive means; but never shall falsehood prevail over the truth for Allah says,

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا (٨١)

“And say: 'Truth (i.e. Islamic Monotheism or this Qur'aan) has come and Bâtil (falsehood, i.e. Satan or polytheism) has perished. Surely! Bâtil is ever bound to perish.” (Al-Israa 17:81)

Reasons for the debate:

I am strongly convinced that engaging in any debate with the Shi'ites is futile because their reputation in lying precedes them. They regard lying as an act of worship and an integral part of their religion. Therefore, argument with such people is a waste of time.

There was a young man from among *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* who had good manners but little knowledge. As a result of his limited knowledge about the books of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, he fell into the hands of the Shi'ites who were able to penetrate his heart and mind and attack his pure belief through their deceptions and shrewdness. They pretended to love him and they showered him with their artificial generosity to the extent that he was driven into believing that they were the best of all people in religion and manners.

After they had won his confidence, they told him about the pure and righteous members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. The Shias convinced him that they were the supporters of Ali ؑ the Prophet's ﷺ cousin and son-in-law, whom he appointed as his brother and placed him in relation to himself as Prophet Haroon was to Prophet Moosa – peace be upon them. They added that it was this same Ali ؑ about whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, **“O Allah, be a friend to him who befriends him (Ali) and be an enemy to him who shows enmity to him.”**

They also convinced the young man that they – the Shi'ites – alone are the lovers of al-Hasan ؑ and al-Husayn ؑ, the chiefs of the youth of Paradise and their mother ؑ, the leader of the women of Paradise.

All the above left our young man in little doubt that the Shi'ites were the angels of truth that Allah had sent down to guide him.

The cause of the youth's confusion

In my first meeting with him, the well-mannered young man addressed me in this way:

“I am seriously confused and I wish that I was not born into this world!”

I told him: “Take it easy. For, Allah's mercy encompasses all things. He commanded us not to lose hope in His mercy.” I kept on allaying his fears though I knew that he was suffering from a great depression that I had not yet uncovered.

He said: “I have heard good things about you and I come to you that I may find relief by you. I think well of you, though only Allah truly knows what resides in the heart.”

I said: “Allah willing, I am ready to listen to whatever you have to say. Please, feel free to share your feelings with me. Perhaps, you will find the solution for your confusion, *Insha Allah*. It is He Whom we seek for help.”

He said: “For some time now, I have come to know a young Shi'ite man, whom I have been associating and working with. We have come to trust each other. He would often tell me about members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. In fact, I have been overwhelmed by his fervent love for them. Why shouldn't it be so, since every Muslim is required to love them? This in accordance with Allah's injunction,

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“Say (O Muhammad (peace be upon him)) 'No reward do I ask of you for this except to be kind to me for my kinship with you.'”

(Ash-Shooraa 42:23)

And The Messenger's ﷺ saying, '**None of you believes until I am dearer to him than his father, children and all people.**'

It follows then that the Prophet's ﷺ family should be dearer to a Muslim than his own family. So, I became more attached to this Shi'ite youth, in spite of all that I know about the Shi'ites and the error of their way. His love for me increased so much so that he would come to me and put himself at my service with his car. He has really won me over with his generosity.

In the beginning, he would often tell me about good things that I thought the Shi'ites did not believe in. He would tell me about his passionate love and that of the entire Shi'ites for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and members of his household. He would inform me about the Shi'ites' love for Faatimah ؑ, the

Prophet's ﷺ daughter and the leader of the women of Paradise about whom he said, 'Behold! Faatimah is part of me. He who hurts her hurts me and he who hurts me hurts Allah.'*

He would tell me about his passionate love for al-Hasan and al-Husayn ؑ, the chiefs of the youths of Paradise. He would make me understand how deep the love he and all the Shi'ites have for Imaam Ali ؑ, the Prophet's ﷺ brother, friend and son-in-law is.

I would have no objection to all this because, deep in my heart, I love all the above-mentioned personalities and I told my friend: "We also love all these personalities." He would keep quiet, though grudgingly.

The relationship between us grew stronger and stronger; and he would take me to his friends who were similar minded, extremely well-mannered, enormously accommodating and hospitable. I was enthralled by their manners that I had a feeling that these individuals should not have been humans. They should have been angels walking on the surface of the earth! If I requested anything, I would find it next morning in my house; if I wanted to go anywhere, they would all offer to take me in their cars.

Meanwhile, they gave me a beautiful book in which I hardly found anything of the falsehoods of which the Shi'ites are accused of. I can still recollect that book that made me start considering becoming a Shi'ite. It is the book titled: '*Ahlul-Bayt.. Maqamuhum, Manhajuhum, Masaaruhum*'.

The book is full of Ahadith classified as authentic by the scholars of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*. It calls for loving, befriending and praising members of the Prophet's household. But it took me little by little towards the belief the Shi'ites hold. It sometimes raises doubts and then removes them. According to that book, the Shi'ites believes in the Qur'aan and in the Hadith and they honour and respect members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. This is what is naturally expected from every Muslim who believes in the oneness of Allah.

*This version is unauthentic as would be explained on page 66.

I asked my friend: 'Please tell me more about the Shi'ite sect. I have heard that it is an erroneous and perverted sect founded upon insulting and cursing the Prophet's ﷺ Companions and regarding them as disbelievers, upon hating the *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and upon a belief that the Qur'aan had been altered. But now, I could see that your books refute all these allegations. Please tell me about Shiasm, may Allah have mercy on you!'

My friend then gave me a book titled, '*Al-Muraaja'aat*'. I dedicated all my time to reading and rereading it. In the book, I was astonished at the confirmation of the great scholar Shaikh al-Azhar to all the proofs presented by this young Shi'ite man: Abdul-Husayn Sharafud-deen al-Musawi!

I was extremely happy about this book and I wondered when the *Ahlu-Sunnah* would be able to produce a book like this. I could sense that the elusive but much needed unity between the Shi'ites and Sunnis could easily be achieved if only our scholars could get rid of their ignorance of the reality of the Shi'ite religion. With the help of my friend, my understanding of unity among the Muslims narrowed into a belief that all the *Ahlu-Sunnah* must become Shi'ites so that all of us will be in the ark of safety: the ark of the Prophet ﷺ and the pure members of his blessed household.

I was in this situation for about four months during which time my relationship with my Shi'ite brother became stronger and stronger. And I would follow him to all their religious symposia and gatherings. I wish I did not go!

You might be surprised at this last sentence: I wish I did not go! Yes!

It was my habit that whenever I heard the names of Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Umar ؓ, to say: '*Radiyallaahu Anhuma*' (may Allah be pleased with them). This is because Abu Bakr ؓ is the Truthful one, the Prophet's ﷺ companion in the cave and the second most important personality in Islam. He is the father of 'Aaishah ؓ, the Prophet's ﷺ wife and mother of the faithful. And above all, he was the Khalif of the Muslims.

As for 'Umar ؓ, he was the second Khalif in Islam. With him, Allah made distinction between truth and falsehood. Through him, Allah strengthened Islam and many lands were conquered. He was famous for his uncompromising support for justice (and his sternness against any kind of

injustice).

That was my belief concerning these two righteous men.

But these Shi'ites had been very careful with me in the beginning. My friend would often tell me about injustices done to Imaam Ali عليه السلام and how he was deprived of his right to succession and rulership. But he would sense that I was not enthusiastic about that story until this fateful day:

I was in one of their gatherings and the name of 'Umar al-Farooq عليه السلام was mentioned and I said: '*Radiyallaahu Anhu.*' One of them scolded me: 'This (referring to 'Umar) is a disbeliever and an accursed apostate! Do not invoke Allah's pleasure upon him.'

This statement hit me like a thunderbolt! I wondered how this statement tied up with the books they showed me and which did not say anything unpleasant about the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Companions رضي الله عنهم. I concluded that perhaps this man was only a bigoted extremist. But I was surprised to find out that all of them shared the same viewpoint on 'Umar عليه السلام!

My friend then told me bluntly: 'Our creed is based upon allegiance and renunciation: to love the pure members of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم household and to renounce and hate all those who attacked them and usurped their rights.'

He went on lecturing me on how Abu Bakr عليه السلام and 'Umar عليه السلام jointly wronged members of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم household; how they humiliated Ali عليه السلام, set his apartment on fire and struck his wife, Faatimah عليها السلام on her belly so hard that it led to miscarriage of her unborn baby and she herself later died from the pain of that attack. He continued telling stories of shameless deeds that even the meanest people would not think of committing let alone eminent men like Abu Bakr عليه السلام and 'Umar عليه السلام.

To be sincere, my Sunni power of resistance – by this time – had already completely vanished. I believed all the tales they narrated about Abu Bakr عليه السلام and 'Umar عليه السلام, that I started hating them, especially the story about the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم purported attempt to write a will of succession for Ali عليه السلام and how 'Umar عليه السلام prevailed upon him not to do so.

With time and through often repeated stories about the Companions' رضي الله عنهم alleged injustice against Imaam Ali عليه السلام and members of his family, it became

easy for me to hold bad opinion of them; and with repeated stories about the injustice wrought against other members of the Prophet's ﷺ household, especially Ali's ﷺ family that later culminated in the murder of Husayn ﷺ, I could not help hating all those who are not Shi'ites.

That was how I became a Shi'ite wholeheartedly, believing things that would previously be impossible for me to believe: the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ were all infidels with the exception of few such as: Al-Miqdad, Abu Dharr and 'Ammar ﷺ who were Ali's ﷺ supporters. Therefore, the basis of the Shi'ite religion is to renounce all the Companions ﷺ except these few ones. Why shouldn't this be so since they deprived the members of the Prophet's ﷺ household of their rights? It is therefore a fundamental of the Shi'ite religion to insult and curse the Companions ﷺ.

However, I was not comfortable with this 'concept' of cursing the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ. Whenever I was with them, I would be impacted by their talks that were emotional and sentimental stories that revolved around the alleged injustice done to Ali ﷺ and the murder of Husayn ﷺ. They are nothing but repeated stories whose objective is to rouse your anger and hatred against those who perpetrated injustice against members of the Prophet's ﷺ household and usurped their rights.

But whenever I was alone, I would tell myself: 'How dare you curse Abu Bakr ﷺ who was the Prophet's ﷺ inseparable companion?! How could you insult 'Umar ﷺ, on whose tongue truth was pronounced?! How could you have the audacity to insult 'Uthmaan ﷺ, who compiled the Qur'aan and protected it against anomalies and discrepancy?! How could you dare curse all the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ?! Can you still remain a Muslim after cursing all these eminent people?!'

I am really in a state of confusion the extent of which is known to Allah alone. I am telling you this while wishing that I was never born or that I was long dead and forgotten!

I am really in a dilemma! I could be counted neither among the Shi'ites nor among the Sunnis. I am haunted by the belief of *Ahlu-Sunnah* that I have held throughout my life, and by the Shi'ite religion in which I am living now! If I am in the company of these Shi'ites, I am inclined to the Shi'ite religion regardless of insults and curses that this creed demands against those who

never deserved to be cursed. And when I am alone, I would prefer the path of *Ahlu-Sunnah* and the path of safety that demands loving all members of the Prophet's ﷺ household and his noble Companions ﷺ and invoking Allah to be pleased with all of them.

Do you then have remedy for this confusion of mine? Can you please clarify the incontestable truth for me? If you decide to engage me in a debate, kindly permit me to speak purely from the Shi'ites' perspective; and please, do not have any misgiving towards me for that. For, I am looking for the truth from any source."

Remedy for the Confusion

My guest spoke while I listened with rapt attention. It was clear that he had fallen victim to a campaign orchestrated by well-funded Shi'ite organizations with the purpose of converting our youth to the Shi'ite religion and creating in them doubts about their beliefs. But we take solace in Allah's words,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ
تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ (٣٦)

“Certainly, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend it; but in the end it will become an anguish for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell.” (Al-Anfaal 8:36)

Before I responded, I asked my guest if there were others from among *Ahlu-Sunnah* who were in the same situation as he is and who attend Shi'ite gatherings. He answered that there were three other young men and that they had all embraced the Shi'ite religion.

This confirmed my suspicion that the Shi'ite propaganda machine had advanced greatly in their efforts. I was very sad with this phenomenon. For, how could falsehood be allowed to be freely spread?! I then reminded myself that it was during the slumber of the truth and its supporters that falsehood reigns. I pitied some of our deluded scholars who did not know the reality of the Shi'ite religion and its dubious activities.

I realized that the uncertainties and misconceptions with which my guest was living could not be removed with a brief explanation.

I thus asked him: “My brother, have you ever read any book of Beliefs written by our eminent scholars of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*?”

He said: “Frankly, I have not read anything of such. But I know the belief of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*.”

I said: “From where did you learn it?”

He said: “I have lived all my life among *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and listened to them. I also know about belief in Allah, and in His Angels, Books, and Messengers. I also know about belief in destiny, its good and bad.”

I told him: “These are pillars of faith and they are the foundations of a Muslim's belief. But do you think that your knowledge of these pillars is sufficient for you to decide which is correct between the way of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and that of the Shi'ites?”

He kept silent for a while and then said: “You are right. This information is not sufficient to know which of the two ways is correct.”

I then moved closer to my guest and told him: “The remedy of your confusion is easy with the permission of Allah.”

He said: “How?” I asked him whether he reads the Qur'aan and he answered in the affirmative. I then said: “Have you read Allah's word:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

“You are the best of nations ever raised for mankind.”
(Aal 'Imraan 3:110)?”

He replied in the affirmative.

I then said: “What did you understand from this verse?”

He said: “What I understood there is that the Muslims are the best nation ever raised up for mankind.”

I said: “May Allah reward you with good. The followers of Muhammad ﷺ are

the best of all nations. They are the best of all people because they enjoy all that is good and prevent all that is evil. They believe in Allah and they guide people to the way of Imaan.”

I then added: “The ones who have greatest right to this description are the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ. They were the ones who bore the message of Islam with the Prophet ﷺ and fought on his side with their lives and wealth so that this religion could be spread and that people could be guided to the right path and believe in Allah.”

My friend agreed.

I went on saying: “But the Shi'ites claim that after the death of the Prophet ﷺ all his Companions apostatized except five* who are: al-Miqdaad, Hudhayfah, Abu Dharr and 'Ammar who remained with Ali ﷺ. Is it then reasonable that of about hundred thousand Companions ﷺ who were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the farewell pilgrimage ﷺ only six men or thereabouts remained upon Islam after his death?! Is it then reasonable that this is the best nation ever raised up for mankind?! If these Companions ﷺ were as described by the Imamite Shi'ites who are the rejecters of truth, it should then follow that they are the worst generation ever raised up for mankind; for, they apostatized and bargained away their faith!!!”

“Do you know, my dear friend, how the Shi'ites read this verse? They read it as: ‘You are the best Imaams ever raised up for mankind!’ Since they could not agree to the message of this verse, they resorted to this malicious distortion in order to be able to interpret the 'imams' as 'Shi'ite imams'.”

My friend said: “But the Shi'ites believe in the Qur'aan as it was revealed and in its present form without any addition or omission. This is, at least, what they told me.”

**Some Shi'ites claim that all the Companions apostatised with the exception of only twelve who are: Ali and some members of his family, Salmaan, Abu Dharr, 'Ammar, al-Miqdaad, Hudhayfah, Abu Haytham ibn Tayhaan, Sahl ibn Haneef, 'Ubaadah ibn Saamit, Abu Ayyub al-Ansaaree, Khuzaymah ibn Thaabit and Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri ﷺ. But most of the Imamite Shi'ites believe that their number is much less than that.*

I said: "Wait a minute. It is not yet time for this. They only told you this in line with their concept of Holy Hypocrisy (*Taqiyyah*). This concept is one of the basics of their religion. The one who does not practise it, his religion is null and void. In their corrupt belief, the more you practise Holy Hypocrisy the greater your piety and religiosity. But this concept, according to the *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, is nothing but deception and hypocrisy. They deceive you so that you and others like you would not slip away from their hands. Their situation is as described by Allah in His saying:

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ
 إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ (١٤)

'And when they meet those who believe, they say: 'We believe,' but when they are alone with their Shayâtin (devils - polytheists, hypocrites), they say: 'Truly, we are with you; verily, we were but mocking.'

(Al-Baqarah 2:14)

My brother, it is not yet time for discussing '*taqiyyah*' and whether they believe in the Qur'aan or not. We are now talking about their stand in respect to the Companions ﷺ."

I then told my friend: "Have you read Allah's saying,

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا
 سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ
 ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ
 فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ
 الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٢٩)

'Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them

(i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Taurât (Torah). But their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, and then becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e. Paradise).' (Al-Fath 48:29)?

This verse is one of the greatest proofs of the Companions' ﷺ uprightness and sound Imaan. For, here, Allah describes them: 'and those who are with him (i.e. the Prophet ﷺ)'. His statement, 'severe against disbelievers' is a reference to their strong and certain belief in Allah. His saying, 'merciful among themselves' is a commendation for them from Allah. His saying, 'you see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer)' is an allusion to their worship. And His saying, 'seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure' indicates that they were sincere in their acts of worship and they did not expect reward except from Allah alone. These are the qualities of the Companions ﷺ, as mentioned in the Qur'aan.

My friend, do you know those who are enraged when the Companions ﷺ are mentioned? They are the disbelievers as Allah describes them in the Qur'aan: 'that He may enrage the disbelievers with them'. Therefore, it is only disbelievers and the apostates who are enraged whenever the Prophet's Companions ﷺ are mentioned!

Now, which of the two should be regarded as disbelievers: the Companions ﷺ or those who are enraged when the Companions ﷺ are mentioned? You have a decisive verse from the Qur'aan before you. It is now up to you to decide!"

My friend said: "Why did Allah add in the same verse, 'and do righteous good deeds (among them)? His saying, 'among them' is a proof that there are some from among the Companions ﷺ who did not believe and who did not do righteous deeds."

I said: "May Allah guide you! All the Companions ﷺ were indeed noble and righteous people. They were all believers and pious. We all know that most of those who were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were sincere and righteous Companions ﷺ who fought along with him. There were also hypocrites

known for their hypocrisy such as Abdullaah ibn Ubayy ibn Salool and his cohorts. So, the verse clarified that those who deserve Allah's praise are the Companions ﷺ who were sincere and righteous, those who raced to obey Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

It should also be realized that the preposition 'من' in the verse, which is interpreted as 'from among', does not, in the correct interpretation of the verse, apply to only a section of the Companions ﷺ. It is rather used to describe them as a class of people to the exclusion of others who are not Companions ﷺ.

Here is what the scholars of Tafseer have to say on this preposition:

“The preposition 'من' here is not to distinguish some Companions ﷺ from others. It is rather used to describe them all as a class of people. An example of this is Allah's command:

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ (٣٠)

'So shun the abomination (worshipping) of idols, and shun lying speech (false statements).' (Al-Hajj 22:30)

So, the word 'من' in this verse could not mean that only a part of idol worshipping is abominable and therefore, should be shunned. The meaning rather is: idol worshipping is a class of abomination that should be shunned. However, some scholars said that the word ‘from among them’ in the verse refers to the shoot which the sown seed sends forth and they are those who enter Islam. The shoot is, therefore, referred to in plural form ‘from among them’ to allude to those who will enter into the religion of Islam till the Day of Resurrection.”*

I proceeded: “Haven't you read Allah's saying:

*Tafseer Tabaree 26/115-166; Tafseer Qurtubee 16/295-296 and Tafseer Ibn Katheer 7/344

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ
 اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
 أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (١٠٠)

'And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhâjirûn (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansâr (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhâjirûn) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.' (At-Tawbah 9:100)

Then who are 'the foremost to embrace Islam' if they are not Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan, az-Zubair, Talhah, Sa'd, Sa'eed and Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ who are those given the glad tidings of Paradise?! Who are they if not the participants in the Battle of Badr and whose faith is attested to?!

The foremost men to embrace Islam who are the Emigrants (Muhaajiroon) and the Helpers (Ansaar), and then those who followed them in righteousness are the ones who have attained Allah's pleasure. He has prepared for them Gardens beneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever.

With this verse, is it then logical to think that the Companions ﷺ, who were praised in such glowing tributes, would apostatize with the exception of only three, four or five?!

Haven't you listened to Allah's saying:

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ
 اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا
 الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ
 حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحًّا

نَفْسِهِ فَأَوْلَيْكَ هُمْ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٩) وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
 اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا
 لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٠)

'(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him, and helping Allah (i.e. helping His religion) and His Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) Such are indeed the truthful (to what they say).

And (it is also for) those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banî An-Nadîr), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.

And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.' (Al-Hashr 59:8-10)

These above three verses exemplify the perfect and complete way of refuting the allegations of the Shi'ites and the rejecters of the truth against the Companions ﷺ.

The first verse praises the Emigrants (Muhaajiroon), describes them as truthful and sincere and shows Allah's support for them.

The second verse praises the Helpers (Ansaar) and describes them as selfless and successful. The two verses, therefore, commend the Companions ﷺ.

As for the third verse, it refused and repudiated the belief of the rejecters of the truth (the Shi'ites). For, in it, Allah emphasized that the believers who would come after the Companions ﷺ shall invoke Allah's forgiveness for themselves and for the believers who preceded them in faith and that they

would ask Allah not to put in their hearts any hatred against those who have believed.

Since the Shi'ites revile the Companions ﷺ and declare them as disbelievers, they have practically excluded themselves from any of the three categories of believers mentioned previously: the truthful Emigrants, the successful Helpers and the forgiveness seekers who came after them and who have no hatred in their hearts against those who preceded them in faith."

I further made it clear to my friend that the third verse indicates Allah's praise for the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ who accepted Islam before and after the Conquest of Makkah and that Allah promised both groups great reward.

I then asked him: "Now tell me, how could the Shi'ites regard it a religious obligation to revile, curse and declare as disbelievers the Prophet's ﷺ earlier and latter Companions ﷺ whom Allah has promised great reward?!!

Haven't you listened to Allah's saying,

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

***'Thus We have made you a just (and the best) nation that you be witnesses over mankind.'* (Al-Baqarah 2:143)**

The Qur'aan was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that he may read it to his Companions ﷺ and to inform them they were the witnesses over mankind. Then tell me, how could these witnesses be apostates?! This is, indeed, the greatest absurdity!"

I said further: "In the Qur'aan, there are many verses, preceded by the phrase: 'O you who have believed.'" And I asked my friend, "Who were the ones the Prophet ﷺ was reading these verses to?" He said, "To those who were around him." I then said, "Yes. Those who were around him were his Companions ﷺ. Then how could Allah address them as believers? Who knows better about the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ: Allah or the Shi'ites?" I then said, "My friend, may Allah give you happiness in invoking Allah's pleasure on the noble Companions ﷺ who conveyed the Qur'aan, the Sunnah and the laws of Islam to us. They were the ones who sacrificed their lives and their wealth that this religion might spread and prevail.

Dear Friend! But for the Companions ﷺ – after Allah's mercy – we would not have become Muslims today and our countries would not have practised Islam. Should the compensation for these great deeds then be insults, curse and accusation of apostasy?!! No Muslim would ever do this!”

My friend said: “No one can deny that the Qur'aan praised the Companions ﷺ. But after the Prophet's ﷺ death they changed, and they deprived Imaam Ali ﷺ of his right. They wronged him, set his house ablaze and struck his wife Faatimah ﷺ, the daughter of Allah's Messenger ﷺ in her belly. This resulted in her having miscarriage and eventually led to her death.”

I told my friend: “Wait a minute! Where did you get these spurious and false narrations from? The recognized scholars of *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* regard these stories as false. The authentic narrations are those that reported the mutual love and affection that were between the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ and Ali ﷺ and members of the Prophet's ﷺ household.”

Then I would like to ask you: “What are the names of Ali's ﷺ sons? Do you know that it was out of his love for his fellow Companions ﷺ, especially, the rightly-guided caliphs, that he named some of his sons after Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan ﷺ? Do you know whom Ali ﷺ married his daughter, Umm Kulthoom to? He married her to the dearest person to him, 'Umar ﷺ!

Do you know that Ali ﷺ was the Judge of al-Madeenah during the caliphate of 'Umar ﷺ? Do you know that he was keenest to give him sincere advice? When 'Umar ﷺ wanted to lead the battle against the Persians by himself, it was Ali ﷺ who advised him to stay at al-Madeenah because he was the pillar unto whom the Muslims would return; and that he should instead send someone he trusted to lead the army.

Do you know that Uthmaan ﷺ played an important role in Faatimah's ﷺ marriage to Ali ﷺ?

Indeed, the mutual love that existed among the Companions ﷺ was so legendary that Allah described them with such in His glorious Book:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

'Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah. And those

who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves.' (Al-Fath 48:29)

A Muslim should, therefore, believe in the purity of the minds of all the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ. For, it was the Prophet ﷺ who nurtured and trained them under Allah's protection. Could it then be acceptable that the Prophet of mercy and wisdom, who was sent to purify the entire mankind, would be unable to purify those who were around him?

Allah says about him,

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

'He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (Qur'aan) and Al-Hikmah (The Sunnah) although they had been before, in manifest error.' (Al-Jumu'ah 62:2)

My friend said: "I agree with you concerning the Companions ﷺ. But there is a more important issue which is very fundamental in regard to the Companions ﷺ. It is the issue of 'Imaamah' (leadership) and the explicit proof that indicated that Ali ﷺ is the leader and the Khalif (after the Prophet ﷺ). If this is proved correct, then we must agree that the Companions ﷺ deprived Ali ﷺ of his right; but if it is proved incorrect, then I will have to accept that you are right."

I told him: "This issue is much easier than the earlier one. But I think we should study it through knowledge so that all the ambiguities related to it could be totally dispelled. I would like to acquaint you with what our scholars said about these misconceptions. After that, we can discuss whatever you like."

He said: "How is it possible to study the issue of contention between the Shi'ites and the *Ahlu-Sunnah* through knowledge as you claim?"

I got up and brought three books and then told him: "These are books I would like us to read together. After that, we can discuss the

misconceptions.”

He said: “I would like to ask for permission to leave because it is already late. Tomorrow – insha Allah – I will be here with you until we arrive at the clear truth. But what are the three books?”

I said: “*Al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, by Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, *As-Sunnah wa ash-Shee'ah*, by Ihsaan Ilahi Zaheer; and *Ash-Shee'ah wa Ahlul-Bayt*, also by Ihsaan Ilahi Zaheer.”

On the following day, my friend came with a small bag and told me: “I know that you live alone these days. So, I have taken leave from my workplace so that I can devote my time to searching for the truth. Therefore, I am going to be your guest until I come out of doubt into certainty. With all praise due to Allah, last night was the first time I would have a good night sleep for the past three months. This is largely due to the restored confidence I have in the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ and the restored confidence I have in my faith and religion.”

I told him: “You are warmly welcome – not as a guest – but as the owner of the house. Have a rest for a while. After that, we can resume our study.”

He said: “I have already had enough rest. Let us start our study with Allah's permission.”

I gave him the book *'Al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, by Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi and told him: “You can read the book while I stay beside you. If anything is unclear to you, we can then read it together.” And I watched him reading the book with total concentration.

The book deals with the allegations of the Shi'ites concerning the Companions' ﷺ stand after the Prophet's ﷺ death and the articulate and convincing responses to these allegations.

My friend continued reading the book and occasionally shared his feelings with me about what he read. He would say: “Where was I in relation to this knowledge? Ibn al-'Arabi has really restored my life with this knowledge.”

He then enthusiastically turned to me and said: “I have finished the first book. Where is the second one?”

I said: “No! That will be too much on you. Take a rest for today, and tomorrow, insha Allah, you can read the second book.” But upon his insistence on having the second book, I gave it to him and said: “Now, your mind is at peace concerning the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. The first book alone was enough to destroy the false Shi'ite ideology. This second book will reveal to you the reality of the Shi'ite religion and the reality of its stand on the Qur'aan, the Sunnah, the Companions ﷺ and the entire Muslim nation. After realizing the truth about these Shi'ites, you will not help cursing them* and denouncing their religion which explicitly goes against the religion of Islam in every aspect.”

My friend started reading the pages of the second book *Ash-Shee'ah was-Sunnah* by Ihsaan Ilahi Zaheer, striking his hands together in amazement when he realized the gravity of the beliefs of the Shi'ites and what they had been hiding from him over these past months.

He was totally absorbed in reading for the next two consecutive days. Nothing would stop him except the obligatory prayers and short naps. During these two days, he finished reading the three books.

After finishing the books, his mind changed towards his friends of yesterday. He now realized that he was only being honored by the Shi'ites as a hunter would honour his prey. He realized the havoc that the Shi'ite concept of Holy Hypocrisy wreaks on simple-minded Muslims. He then started renouncing and cursing them. And he would say: “It is safer for me to curse these Shi'ites than to curse and insult Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and the rest of the noble Companions ﷺ! And far are the Companions ﷺ from deserving curse!”

My friend then got ready to leave. He hugged me, thanked me and asked me for advice. I advised him to hold unto the teachings of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, and to concentrate on the books of beliefs written by our recognized erudite scholars.

I also warned him that these Imamite Shi'ites are sinful liars who should preferably be avoided, for they are hypocrites. Their hearts are distorted. They neither listen to the truth nor reason with it. They are as Allah says:

*The Shi'ites referred to here are the 'Al-Imamiyyah Al-Ithnaa 'Ashariyyah'. They are the most erroneous of the Shi'ite sects.

صُمُّكُمْ عُمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَرِجُونَ (١٨)

'They are deaf, dumb, and blind, so they return not (to the Right Path).'
(Al-Baqarah 2:18)

A debate comes unexpectedly

After two days, my friend unexpectedly came to tell me that one of the Shi'ite scholars was expecting me for a debate concerning *Ahlu-Sunnah* and the Shi'ites regarding which of the two is on the correct path. I could see that he was in a hurry. I wanted to confirm the matter and I asked him to tell me about what had happened. But he said: "Right now, there is a young man from the side of the Shi'ite scholar in front of the house, waiting for us. There is no time for discussion now."

I told him: "This is not what we agreed upon. My admonition for you was that you should keep away from them. We did not agree that you would take me to them."

He replied: "But you have to proclaim the truth! You need to expose their falsehood!"

I told him: "These people have perverted hearts. I surely know that they neither desire truth nor will they follow it if it is shown to them. Arguing with them is mere waste of time."

But my friend insisted that I go with him saying that my debate with them would benefit him. So, I got dressed and went with them to the place of debate.

We arrived there and I found myself in a large open square filled with people. It was like an academic symposium. At the front row of this courtyard was a man wearing a black turban and black robe. He was sitting on a sofa large enough to sit three persons. Other people were sitting on the floor beneath him. I then realized that he was their leader who wanted to debate with me.

The man stood up, welcomed me and made me sit beside him. He then

started his speech thus:

“We were discussing about the ‘*Imaamah*’ (right to leadership) and how it is a fundamental aspect of the religion that even the Prophets should not be indifferent to. It is a principle that should not be left for the generality of the people to avoid differences in religion that can lead to mischief and corruption in the land.”

He then turned to me and said: “Is it then reasonable that the Prophet ﷺ should die and leave his Ummah just like that without appointing for them a leader who would succeed the Prophet ﷺ, manage the affairs of the Ummah and lead them to the land of safety?!

Let me give you an example: Assume that a driver of a large bus that is full of people drove the bus from the beginning of a journey. He exerted all his energy to drive the bus throughout the desert until he arrived at the safe road. Then he was tired and wanted to take a rest. Is it then reasonable that he should leave the bus there without appointing a skilled driver who would drive the bus to the land of safety? The answer is, definitely, no!

This then shows us that the matter of ‘*Imaamah*’ is a fundamental one that no Messenger should be indifferent to or leave for the masses to decide, thereby causing differences of opinions. Hence, there is no issue more important in the religion than ‘the leadership’ through which this religion can be preserved, differences can be averted and stability can be achieved.”

My response was in the following Points:

One: “All praise is due to Allah. Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger, his household and Companions. It is really shocking that in these days when people from all over the world are speaking and boasting about political, social and ideological freedoms they have achieved through principles such as: ‘the right to elect their representatives in government’, we still see some of us citing logical reasons for necessity of ‘stipulating (and imposing) a leader’. I wonder how this argument can be logically supported, since it is fundamentally inimical to common sense?!

The Muslim Ummah is not a flock of sheep on which a shepherd must be imposed. This Ummah is rather, by Allah's blessing, the best of all nations. Allah honoured its sincere and believing members and made their affairs

subject to mutual consultation among them. This is the perfect honour to the intellect with which Allah blessed the upright man who knows Allah, knows his religion and is aware of the welfare of his Ummah.

When Allah describes the believers, He says,

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ

'And they (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation.' (Shura 42:38)

He rather emphasized His honour for them by commanding His Prophet ﷺ to consult his followers. He says,

وَشَاوَرَهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ

'And consult them in the affairs.' (Aal 'Imraan 3:159)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is the keenest person when it comes to respecting the Ummah's right to choose whoever it deems suitable to lead it in matters of religious and worldly affairs, and whoever it sees suitable to lead it to safety.

That is why we find the Prophet ﷺ leaving them without imposing any particular person on them because he trusted their ability in exercising their God-given right to choose the most suitable person to lead them. However, he taught his Companions ﷺ qualities that must be found in a suitable leader, and he alluded that these qualities are found in Abu Bakr ﷺ, though he did not leave any specific instruction as regards appointing him as the leader after him.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not a dictator who issued orders, imposed restrictions and rescinded people's rights, abilities and their social, intellectual and political freedoms. He had great respect for the people and their rights. Allah describes him as follows:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ (١٢٨)

***'Certainly, there has come unto you a Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) from among yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you; for the believers he is full of pity, kind, and merciful.'* (At-Tawbah 9:128)**

The keen observer of the Prophet's ﷺ character will realize that, in most cases, his instructions in matters affecting the Ummah are based upon divine revelations. In the absence of divine revelations, he would resort to consulting his Companions ﷺ. Since there is no explicit evidence on succession in the Qur'aan that would necessitate appointing a successor, the kind and compassionate Prophet ﷺ respected the right and intellectual capability of the Ummah without interfering in this matter as the emperors and monarchs would do.

Two: The example cited by the lecturer concerning the driver and the bus is a distorted example. It suggests that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left his followers as a flock of sheep who were incapable of understanding hence they required a shepherd to guide them.

The fact is that, the Prophet ﷺ left his Ummah in the state of being the best nation in terms of knowledge, understanding and morality. He left them with total knowledge that there were among them hundreds of potentially qualified and unique leaders who could lead them to safety. He left them, having confidence in their ability to select their own representative who would lead them in upholding Allah's law, perpetuating His religion and managing their own worldly affairs. And he was proved absolutely right.

The Muslims were unanimous in selecting the best one among them: Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ؓ to lead them. He took a decisive stand against the apostates and defeated them. No other person would have done what Abu Bakr ؓ did. If not for him – after Allah, of course – only Allah knows about the effect the crisis of apostasy would have had on Islam and the Ummah.

Three: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ could have made a specific stipulation on Abu Bakr ؓ and had he done so, the entire Ummah would have agreed to his selection. But after the selection of Abu Bakr ؓ, who would qualify to exercise this prerogative till the Last Hour?

Emphasizing the necessity of stipulating a successor tantamounts to calling

for changing the Islamic caliphate to the rule of fatalism in which the Ummah will be deprived of its rights under a religious disguise akin to the Christians during the dark ages.

But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, through Allah's blessing, left the Ummah's rights untouched and made the concept of *Shura* (consultation) the basis for selecting the Muslims' leader. That is how the religion of Islam, right from its origin – and through Allah's injunctions and prophetic teachings – affirmed these political, intellectual and social rights that became known to Western nations only after seas of blood were shed and after ages of darkness and oppression. Westerners today are bragging about these rights. If they had returned to the guidance of Islam, they would have found greater and more authentic freedoms and greater honour that confirmed Allah's saying,

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

'And indeed We have honored the Children of Adam.' (Al-Israa 17:70)

Four: If 'Imaamah' was a fundamental of religion, whose occupier must be stipulated – and we certainly know that Islam is an everlasting religion that will abide till the Last Hour – is it then reasonable that the Prophet ﷺ would leave unmentioned the names of those who would be the leaders of the Muslims till the Last Hour?! If we assume that he had mentioned their names, is it then logical that such all-important information might have escaped us?!

Then if the Prophet ﷺ had mentioned a particular person as his successor, will those who come after him also have the right to appoint their successors?! This would have caused unthinkable corruption. For, then the Ummah would become coercively ruled like a flock of sheep.

Therefore, however much the rejecters of the truth try to support their argument logically, they would never be able to convince anyone but fools.

If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had – as you claim – explicitly mentioned his successor, could it be reasonable that all his Companions ﷺ would disobey him and hold a meeting after his death to select their leader?! We certainly deem the Companions ﷺ far above being disobedient to the Prophet's ﷺ clear command. For, they are the ones whom Allah is pleased with. Allah described them as believers, righteous, truthful and sincere. He made them

the best community ever raised up for mankind and made them the best companions any Prophet ﷺ could have. Our belief is that they are too righteous to disobey the Prophet ﷺ for, in their desire to please Allah and His Messenger ﷺ; they fought against their fathers, brothers and sons for the cause of Islam. They abandoned the material pursuits of this world for the hereafter and dedicated their souls to Allah's pleasure.

All evidence indicates that the matter of '*Imamah*' is not a fundamental of religion. It is rather a welfare issue. Allah has given the Ummah the right to appoint whoever they deem fit to represent them in upholding the religion, caring for the interests of the Muslims and directing their political affairs.

The foundations of the religion are things that are successively and indisputably well-known. They are clearly defined in the Qur'aan, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ noticeably focused on them in the Sunnah. These fundamentals can be summed up as follows:

- ✦ Belief in the Oneness of Allah, His exclusive right to be worshipped and actualization of the meanings of '*Laa ilaaha illallaah*' (There is no deity worthy of worshipped except Allah).
- ✦ Exclusive obedience to the Prophet ﷺ and actualization of the meanings '*Muhammad Rasoolullaah*' (that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah).
- ✦ Belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and in the Last Day; and belief in Pre-decree – its good and the bad. These are the pillars of faith, without which one's belief is not be valid.
- ✦ Performing of prayer, giving Zakaah, observing fasting in the month of Ramadaan and performing Hajj (Pilgrimage) if one is able of doing so. These are the practical pillars of Islam.

One will realize that Islam lays great emphasis and strongly focuses on these foundations. As for the issue of '*Imamah*' I could hardly find any text that explicitly mentioned that it is one of the pillars of the religion."

Their leader responded: "The doctor – referring to me – has spoken extensively to establish his belief. The summary of his argument is: The Prophet ﷺ left the responsibility of appointing the leader after his death to his Ummah and in order to actualize the concept of *Shura*.

But this is not true. For, the Prophet ﷺ did stipulate that Ali ؑ should become the successor after him. There is ample proof for this. Before I mention these proofs, I would like to call the attention of the doctor to an important matter: Why is it that whenever you mention the Prophet ﷺ you always say ‘blessings and peace of Allah be upon him’ without including his family in the invocation? This is undoubtedly an incomplete invocation. For the Prophet ﷺ had taught us to invoke blessing upon him and upon pure members of his household.”

The square was filled with a loud roar when their sheikh said this and the audience said in unison: ‘O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and on the family of Muhammad!’

I said smilingly: “O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and the Companions of Muhammad!”

Their leader angrily said: “Where did you get the addition ‘and the Companions of Muhammad’ from. The invocation on the Prophet ﷺ, as he had himself taught us is: ‘O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and on the family of Muhammad.’

(A loud roar once again rented the air and the audience repeated in unison): ‘O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and on the family of Muhammad!’

I proceeded: “The matter does not deserve this fanaticism and unreasonableness. It is true that Allah commanded us to invoke blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ through His injunction:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا (٥٦)

“Allah sends His Salât (Graces, Honors, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) as well as His angels. O you who believe! Send your Salât on (ask Allah to bless) him (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) and send him Salaam (invocations of peace).
(Al-Ahzaab 33:56)

The *Ahlus-Sunnah* believe that the most complete invocation for the

Prophet ﷺ is:

Allahumma salli Alaa Muhammad, wa-ala aali Muhammad, kamaa sallayta alaa Ibraaheema wa-ala ali Ibraheema, innaka Hameedun Majeed, allahumma baarik alaa Muhammad, wa-alaa aali Muhammad, kamaa baarakta alaa Ibraheema wa-alaa aali Ibraheema, innaka Hameedun Majeed.

‘O Allah, shower mercy upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, just as You have showered mercy upon Ibrahim and upon the family of Ibrahim. Verily, You are full of praise and majesty. O Allah, send blessings upon Mohammad and upon the family of Muhammad, just as You sent blessings upon Ibrahim and upon the family of Ibrahim. Verily, You are full of praise and majesty.’

It is regarded an obligatory part of salaah (prayer).

Our love for our Prophet ﷺ and members of his household is undeniable, and only those whose vision is obscured can deny it.”

Their leader cuts in: “Where then have you got the addition ‘and his Companions’? This invocation is a religious matter. We should not add to it from our opinions and desires.”

I said: “May Allah guide you! Allah commanded His Messenger ﷺ to invoke blessing upon his Companions ﷺ and we are emulating him in doing so. Haven't you heard the saying of Allah,

وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ

***'And invoke blessings of Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of comfort for them.'* (At-Tawbah 9:103)**

If, therefore, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had been commanded to invoke blessing upon his Companions ﷺ, we – his followers – have greater reason to emulate him in that!”

There was some consternation in the audience. They could not agree that the Companions ﷺ deserved invocation of blessings. For, in the creed of the Shi'ites, the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ were apostates!

I calmed the situation with this statement: “The lecturer had promised that he would bring various proofs that indicate that the Prophet ﷺ specifically mentioned Ali ؑ as his successor. I hope that he would kindly mention the most prominent of these proofs and their sources.

I would also like to call the attention of the lecturer to rules of debate that demand that proofs presented should be authentic, clear, straight to the point and decisive. They should be evidence that explicitly supports your assertion that ‘*Imaamah*’ is a fundamental of the religion. And a fundamental does not need any exercising of personal judgment or deduction to be clarified. It should rather be as clear as the sun – in the light of its proofs.”

Their leader: “The first evidence is the Hadith of ‘*Ghadeer Khum*’. This Hadith is mentioned in your authorized books. This evidence alone is enough to establish the fact that the Prophet ﷺ explicitly appointed Ali ؑ as his successor.”

At this point, I requested him to let me comment on the Hadith after he finished quoting it.

He continued: “When the Messenger ﷺ was coming back from his farewell pilgrimage, the following verse was revealed to him on the 18th of Dhul-Hijjah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ
رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

‘O Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him))! Proclaim (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind.’ (Al-Maaidah 5:67)

The Prophet ﷺ then halted at a place called *Ghadeer Khum* that lies between Makkah and al-Madeenah. He stopped there until those who were behind him caught up with him and those who had went ahead of him were called back. He then announced a congregational prayer. After he led them in Zuhr prayer, he addressed them. He said among other things: ‘Don't you know that I am closer to the believers than their own selves?’ They said: ‘Yes.’ He said:

'Don't you know that I am closer to every believer than his own self?' They said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah.' He then held up Ali's ﷺ hand and said: 'O people! Allah is my friend and I am your friend. And whoever I am his friend, Ali is also his friend. O Allah, be a friend to he who is a friend of Ali and be an enemy to he who is his enemy. Support whoever supports him and forsake whoever forsakes him. Love whoever loves him and hate whoever hates him.' He then said: 'O Allah, be the Witness!' And they did not depart from that place before Allah revealed the verse:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ
دِينًا

***'This day, I have perfected for you your religion, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.'* (Maaidah 5:3)**

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said: 'Allahu Akbar for perfecting the religion, completing the favour, and for being pleased with my messengership and for Ali being the Wali.'

This event of *Ghadeer Khum* is, therefore, a sufficient proof that the Prophet ﷺ did stipulate that Ali ﷺ should be the leader after his death. For he said: 'And whoever I am his Wali, Ali is also his Wali.' And 'Wali' here means leader.

The Prophet ﷺ would not have stopped his Companions ﷺ and gathered them at *Ghadeer* if not to clearly announce to them that Ali ﷺ is the leader after him. It should also be noted that it was only after this announcement that Allah revealed the verse:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ
دِينًا

***'This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.'* (Maaidah 5:3)**

I commented: "Our lecturer, in his presentation of his proof, insisted on merging different narrations that the listener would think that they are all

part of single Hadith and not different narrations that came at different occasions.

This merging actually contradicts the reality. It is nothing but a product of some people's fantasy in order to satiate their desire. It can be disproved in the following points:

One: Regarding the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ
رِسَالَاتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

***'O Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him))! Proclaim (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind.'* (Al-Maaidah 5:67)**

The authentic narration concerning the reason for its revelation is that, it was a habit of Allah's Messenger ﷺ that whenever he set out for any of his battles, he would assign some of his Companions ؓ to guard him against the enemy. This situation continued this way until, one night, Allah revealed this verse to him. He then stuck out his head from his tent and addressed his guards: 'O people, you can go. For, Allah is protecting me.' After the revelation of this verse, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never took a personal guard and relied on Allah alone for his protection.

It happened that, one day, a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and told me: 'Give me your sword so that I can inspect it.' The Prophet ﷺ gave the sword to him. The man wanted to kill the Prophet ﷺ with the sword but his hand started shuddering and he dropped the sword. That was how Allah prevented him from carrying out his evil plan – in order to protect His Messenger ﷺ.

So what is clear from the above is that the verse was revealed in the night unto the Prophet ﷺ while he was in his tent and on his bed. That is why Imaam as-Suyootee referred to the verse as 'this is a nightly and bed-time verse', inferring that it was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ in the night and while he was on his bed.

If the scholars could be so accurate in pinpointing times of revelation of the verses, would it then be logical to think that they would forget to link it to the event of *Ghadeer* – in spite of their close connection – as claimed by the lecturer? This is one.

Two: Regarding verse 3 of Surah al-Maaidah, the authentic report concerning its revelation is that it was revealed on the Day of 'Arafah during the Prophet ﷺ's farewell pilgrimage. It was on Friday. This is the incontestable truth that all recognized scholars of the Ummah agreed upon. It is supported by authentic narrations from collections of al-Bukhari, Muslim and others. Taariq ibn Shihaab narrated: The Jews said to 'Umar ؓ, 'You (i.e. Muslims) recite a verse, and had it been revealed to us, we would have taken the day of its revelation as a day of celebration.' 'Umar said, 'I know very well when and where it was revealed, and where Allah's Messenger was when it was revealed. (It was revealed on) the day of 'Arafaat, and by Allah, I was at 'Arafaat.'

These narrations indicate that the verse was revealed on the day of 'Arafaat. It was also known that this took place days before the event of *Ghadeer*. How could some people then claim that it was revealed at *Ghadeer* while all authentic narrations and all recognized scholars agreed that it was revealed days before the Prophet ﷺ arrived at *Ghadeer*?!

The most astonishing part of the lecturer's merging of narrations is the assertion that it was revealed immediately after the Prophet ﷺ had specifically mentioned Ali ؓ as his successor!! By Allah! He never did so and neither was the verse revealed at *Ghadeer Khum*!!

Three: What really happened at *Ghadeer Khum* – according to the authentic narration – is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after leading the people of al-Madeenah to their way, passed by a water well called '*Khum*'. It was located at a place between Makkah and al-Madeenah. According to his habit whenever he traveled, he would halt for rest at various places and wait for his Companions ؓ who lagged behind. It was there that some people complained about Ali's ؓ austerity, though he was strict upon the truth.

The story about this complaint runs thus: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was going to Makkah for his farewell pilgrimage, he sent Ali ؓ to Yemen to collect the Zakaah. When he finished the collection of the Zakaah, he came to

Makkah to join the Prophet ﷺ in the pilgrimage while the Zakaah he collected was still with him. Along the way, the people who were with him wanted to avail themselves of some of the Zakaah but he refused to give them because it was the property of the Muslim treasury. This firmness of his made things difficult for his Companions ﷺ. When they had the opportunity to meet the Prophet ﷺ they complained to him.

The Prophet ﷺ saw that Ali ؑ was right, so he commended his action. In order to show the people that Ali ؑ was right to take the stand he took, he reminded people of Allah and admonished them on the necessity of adhering to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. He then commanded them to treat members of his household – including Ali ؑ – with kindness.

In order to absolve Ali ؑ of any blame he said: 'He, to whom I am a friend, Ali is also his friend.' To emphasize his praise for Ali ؑ he said: 'O Allah, be a friend to whoever befriends him and be an enemy to whoever takes him as an enemy.'

This is what happened at Ghadeer Khum. Ali ؑ was the Prophet's ﷺ appointee on the one-fifth of what is collected (*khumus*) and he appropriated it duly and justly. So, the Prophet ﷺ saw that he should be commended and supplicated for, for his firmness.

As for the additions and exaggerations which some people spuriously added to the Prophet's ﷺ statement such as: 'O Allah, help those who help him, forsake those who forsake him and let the truth move with him wherever he moves', they are fabricated additions that the scholars have not paid even the least attention to.

Four: The last part of the Hadith quoted by the lecturer is totally fabricated. Nothing of it is authentic. It is not true that the Prophet ﷺ held up Ali's ؑ hand neither is it true that verse 3 of Surah al-Maaidah was revealed on that occasion. Nor is the statement: 'Allahu Akbar for perfecting the religion...' authentic. These additions are lies and darkness upon darkness.

Five: In spite of the distortion of facts perpetrated by the lecturer, his drawing inference from the Prophet's ﷺ statement, 'He, unto whom I am the friend, Ali is also his friend', as an indication of appointing Ali as the successor is totally incorrect.

This inference contradicts the Arabic language and contradicts the understanding of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ who are well-versed in the language. For, none of them or any of the recognized authorities in Arabic language made such an inference. According to the Sunnah and the proper understanding of Arabic language, the word '*maula*' means friend and supporter.

Six: Even if we have to agree – for the sake of argument – that the word '*maula*' in the narration means 'leader', as the lecturer would have us believe, yet it does not constitute an explicit proof that Ali ﷺ should be appointed the ruler after the Prophet ﷺ. For, an explicit proof is such as: 'Ali is the Imaam after me', 'Ali is the Khalif after me' or 'none except Ali should be my successor' or any similar direct remark.

Since you have mentioned earlier that '*Imaamah*' is a fundamental rule of your religion and fundamental rules of the religion can only be established through explicit proofs, this Hadith cannot then be cited as the proof to back your claim, for it is not explicit or tested.

The most we can infer from the Hadith is that Ali ﷺ should be loved and regarded a friend. And this is what *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* do. They love Ali ﷺ, invoke Allah's pleasure upon him and regard him as the fourth of the rightly-guided caliphs."

Their leader: "You can leave that one. There is another textual proof on explicit appointment of Imaam Ali ﷺ as the successor after the Prophet ﷺ. This proof is the 'verse of *Wilaayah*'. Allah says,

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ (٥٥) وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ
الْغَالِبُونَ (٥٦)

'Verily, your Wali is none other than Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, - those who perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give Zakât, and they are Râki'ûn (those who bow down or submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer). And whosoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party

of Allah will be the victorious.' (Al-Maaidah 5:55-56)

The scholars of Tafseer all agreed that this verse is revealed in respect to Ali ؑ who, while praying, a beggar asked him for alms while he was in the bowing position. He removed his ring and threw it at him. So these verses were revealed on this occasion. In other words, the '*Wilaayah*' is exclusively meant for Ali ؑ after the Prophet ﷺ because the verse was revealed in reference to his action."

I responded: "This evidence is much weaker than the one before it. If we agree – for the sake of argument – that it is authentic, there is absolutely nothing in it that suggests that Ali ؑ was explicitly chosen as the Prophet's successor. The verse and the narration concerning its revelation would rather apply to all believers.

'*Wilaayah*' here means love and support, and did not, in any way, refer to who should be the Khalif and ruler. Even if we agree that it means rulership – which is, of course, an outrageous interpretation as far as the language is concerned – the words of the verse came in plural form. And this means that it is applicable to Ali ؑ and all other sincere believers.

Another point is that the story in itself, is questionable as far as chains of its narrators are concerned.

One other important point is that excessive external actions while one is in prayer, invalidates the prayer. Prayer, in itself, is an act of worship that needs total concentration. One engaged in prayer should not preoccupy oneself with other deeds, even if they are righteous. Since Ali ؑ is known as one of the leaders of the sincere, devoted and focused worshippers, his removing and tossing of the ring, while in prayer, are utterly unimaginable, given his status.

If we agree that the story was true, where then, in the verse, is the explicit mention of Ali's ؑ right to rulership after the Prophet ﷺ?!

As you can see, there are different interpretations on the verse. There are some scholars – and they are in the majority – who are of the opinion that '*Wilaayah*' here, means: love, friendship and support. And you interpreted it as 'leadership'.

Also, the fact that a verse was revealed on a particular occasion does not prevent it being general in its application. Therefore, the verse is applicable to all Muslims who observe the things mentioned in the verse such as performing prayers and giving alms.

The truth is very clear and as such, this evidence is not suitable, implicitly or explicitly, to establish your claim that the Prophet ﷺ appointed Ali ؑ as his immediate successor.”

Their leader: Your scholars of Tafseer opined that the verses were revealed in reference to Ali ؑ. And we did not know anyone who gave alms while in the state of bowing in prayer except him. The verses did support his action and explicitly stipulated his leadership. The verses only came in plural form – though it was revealed in reference to the action of a single person – in order to encourage people to do righteous deeds to emulate their leader, Ali ؑ, whose prayer did not prevent him from giving to the poor and the destitute.”

I responded: “The Hadith that mentioned that Ali ؑ gave away his ring as *Sadaqah* while he was praying is fabricated according to the consensus of the erudite scholars*, regardless of those who negligently mention it or write it in their books. Hence, you should not support what you regard as a fundamental aspect of your religion which you give preference over prayer, fasting, Zakaah and Hajj with a contrived and fabricated Hadith!

The difference between me and you is the exact text of the verse. And the verse, in its text, contains nothing about Ali ؑ neither does it contain any allusion to his purported right to rulership after the Prophet ﷺ. The message of the verse is that friendship, alliance and support should be given only to Allah, His Messenger and to those who sincerely believe in him, perform prayer, give Zakaah and worship Him with humility.”

Their leader: “You can ignore that one. There is another proof that explicitly stipulated that Ali's ؑ right to leadership. It is the Hadith of ‘*Manzilah*’ (Position) in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to Ali ؑ, ‘Are you not pleased that you are to me as Haroon was to Moosa? It is only that there is no Prophet after me. And I must not go without you being my successor.’

*Ibn Taymiyyah declared this in his book '*Daqaaiq at-Tafseer*' 1/104

This Hadith is authentic according to the opinion of your scholars. And the explicit mentioning of Ali عليه السلام as the successor is clear to every one. The Hadith affirmed that Ali عليه السلام occupied all positions that Prophet Haroon عليه السلام occupied in relationship to Prophet Moosa عليه السلام with the only exception of Prophethood.

Haroon عليه السلام was Moosa's عليه السلام minister and companion. And he was his deputy when he was away. This is clearly supported by the text of the Qur'aan that tells us that Moosa عليه السلام said:

وَأَجْعَلْ لِي وَزِيرًا مِنْ أَهْلِي (٢٩) هَارُونَ أَخِي (٣٠) اشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي (٣١) وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي (٣٢)

'And appoint for me a helper from my family, Hârûn , my brother. Increase my strength with him, and let him share my task (of conveying Allah's Message and Prophethood).' (Taa Haa 20:29-32)

And Allah answered his supplication with His words:

قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَا مُوسَى (٣٦)

'Allah said: You are granted your request, O Moosa!' (Taa Haa 20:36)

The Prophet's ﷺ statement, 'And I must not go without you being my successor.' is therefore, the greatest proof on explicit appointment of Ali عليه السلام as the Prophet's ﷺ successor."

My response: "The version of the above narration that is regarded as authentic by our scholars is the Prophet's ﷺ statement, 'Are you not pleased that you are to me as Haroon is to Moosa? It is only that there is no Prophet after me.'*

But your statement, 'And I must not go without you being my successor', it is falsely attributed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is not at all authentic neither should it be cited as proof.

*This hadeeth is narrated by Al-Bukhari (3706); and Muslim (2404)

The Hadith in all its authentic narrations is connected to a famous story: The Prophet ﷺ was heading to Tabuk to fight in the way of Allah and he commanded all the people to go out with him. He assigned Ali ibn Abi Talib ؑ to stay behind and take care of women and children. And no one else among the men stayed behind but the hypocrites, those with excuse and the infirm.

Ali ؑ – out of his love for Jihad and the Prophet's ﷺ company – was crying and complaining for being assigned to care for women and children. The Prophet ﷺ then said those words in order to comfort him and to show him that his requesting him to stay behind was not because he did not want to keep his company – as the hypocrites claimed – but out of his strong confidence in him. This is the story about the Hadith of '*Manzilah*' (Position). And it does not entail any stipulation of Ali's ؑ leadership.

As for your statement that this Hadith conferred on Ali ؑ all the positions of Haroon ؑ except the prophethood and your claim that the Hadith implies that Ali ؑ should be the Prophet's ﷺ successor and the most qualified person to be the leader after him, the Hadith indicates none of these claims because of the following reasons:

One: Haroon ؑ died during the lifetime of Prophet Moosa ؑ, so he did not succeed him in leadership. It was Yusha' ibn Noon ؑ who succeeded him. This is indisputable.

Two: Prophet Moosa ؑ only appointed Prophet Haroon ؑ to stand in for him as the leader of the Jewish nation when he, alone, went in to seclusion for the worship of his Lord. As for the case of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ he went in the company of all his Companions ؓ and he only appointed Ali ؑ to take care of the women and children.

Three: The Prophet ﷺ had on different occasions assigned a number of his Companions ؓ to manage the affairs of al-Madeenah when he was absent. This indicates that he did not assign Ali ؑ each time he was out of al-Madeenah, and as such, the Hadith cannot be cited as an explicit proof that Ali ؑ should obligatorily be regarded as the Prophet's ﷺ successor during his lifetime and after his death.

Four: The Prophet's ﷺ statement to Ali ؑ for a specific reason, which is to soothe the heart of Ali ؑ for being left behind to take care of women and

children.

An important observation:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would, on some occasions, liken some of his Companions ﷺ to some Prophets. Would that mean that such Companions ﷺ are like those Prophets in all aspects?!

It is authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ likened Abu Bakr ؓ to Prophets Ibrahim ؑ and Esa ؑ. He also likened 'Umar ؓ to Prophets Nooh ؑ and Moosa ؑ. And it is known that Prophets Ibrahim ؑ, Esa ؑ and Nooh ؑ are all higher in status than Prophet Haroon ؑ, for they are Prophets of Resoluteness (*Ulul-'Azm*).

It follows then that this Hadith indicated a merit of Ali ؓ just as other Ahadith mentioned the merits of other Companions ﷺ, and not any allusion to his right to succession.

The explicit text would be if the Prophet ﷺ made a declaration such as: 'Ali is the ruler after me', 'Ali is your Imaam (leader) after me' or 'I have appointed Ali as my successor over you'. This is an example of an explicit text. As for the Hadith of '*Manzilah*' (Position), it cannot be regarded as explicit text."

Their leader (already wet with perspiration): "I have already told you the clear-cut evidence at the end of the Hadith which your scholars recorded in your recognized books. Your Bukhari recorded it in his '*Saheeh*' which, according to your belief, is like the Qur'aan. The text is what the Prophet ﷺ told Ali ؓ: 'And I should not go without appointing you as my successor.'"

I said: "The text reported by al-Bukhari and others does not include this trumped up addition that is falsely attributed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This fabricated addition also contradicts the Prophet's ﷺ deeds. For, he had assigned other people besides Ali ؓ to manage the affairs of al-Madeenah in his absence. On one occasion, he sent Ali ؓ to Yemen and he himself remained in al-Madeenah. When he was going on his farewell pilgrimage, he took Ali ؓ along with him and assigned another companion to manage the affairs of al-Madeenah in his absence. How could he then say, 'I should not leave without appointing you as my successor.'?! This is indeed a clear contradiction!

As for your claim that we treat Saheeh al-Bukhari as equal to the Qur'aan, I need to tell you very clearly that we – the *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* – never liken anything to the Qur'aan. Our only belief is that the Ahadith of Saheeh al-Bukhari are all accepted in view of the exceptionally painstaking and meticulous conditions that Imaam al-Bukhari followed in verifying each and every Hadith of his collection.”

Their Leader: “But there are certainly some Ahadith in Saheeh al-Bukhari whose fabrication is clear. Yet, you claim that all the Ahadith of the collection are authentic!”

My response: “We need to be focused in our discussion. What we are discussing is the clear-cut and explicit proofs on the right of Ali ؑ to leadership immediately after the Prophet's ﷺ death. You claimed that there are so many proofs to support this but yet, you have not given a single one.

As for your claim concerning Ahadith of Saheeh al-Bukhari, this will be discussed later – if Allah wills. Then you will know the extent of the authenticity of the Ahadith of his collection, their exceptional accuracy and the extent to which we – the *Ahlu-Sunnah* – are proud of the sciences of Hadith, knowledge of the chain of transmitters and the sciences of *al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel* through which Allah preserved and guarded the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ throughout the centuries, against the liars and forgers.”

There was an uproar in the gathering and their leader motioned to them with his hand that they should be quiet. He also signaled to the person in charge of recording the proceedings of the symposium to stop and that the microphones should be switched off.

He then suddenly changed his approach that had been hitherto characterized with courtesy into aggressiveness. He might have discovered that practising Holy Hypocrisy is not workable with people like me.

Their leader: “It seems the doctor – referring to me – is an expert in twisting the proofs. He insisted on twisting clear proofs on the right of Imaam Ali ؑ to leadership after the Prophet ﷺ and persisted on denying him the right that Allah gave him and which the Prophet ﷺ commanded that he should be given. But this is not the first time an injustice would be done to Imaam Ali ؑ. Before he was deprived of his right, his wife (Faatimah) az-Zahraa ؑ was

beaten so cruelly that she had a miscarriage and later died and her sons were killed and al-Husayn ؑ was slaughtered like a goat....”

He was saying all this in a sad tone. When I noticed that he no longer had interest in debating with me and I felt that his interest had shifted into talking to his Shi'ite audience, I did not want the debate to end like that.

I interrupted: “Excuse me. I think the search for the truth should be through proofs and evidence and not through emotions and tales.”

Someone from the audience: “Can't you see that we have been enduring you for a while? Can't you see that we have been magnanimous with you? Can't you see that we have been good hosts to you?!”

I said: “I did not come to you as a guest. You invited me for a debate and my presence here was only in response to your invitation.”

Their leader (to me): “Do not be incensed by what our friend said. He did not mean to hurt your feeling.”

I said: “No problem – all praise is due to Allah. Please go on giving me the rest of the proofs that explicitly mention the rights of Ali ؑ to rulership immediately after the Prophet's ﷺ death.”

Their leader: “The proofs are many. But I am going to give you one more evidence, perhaps Allah will open your heart for the love of Imaam Ali ؑ and other members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. The evidence is 'Aayatut-Tatheer' and Hadith of 'al-Kisaa'.

The Aayah is Allah's saying:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا (٣٣)

'Allah wishes only to remove Ar-Rijs (evil deeds and sins) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet (peace be upon him)) and to purify you with a thorough purification.' (Al-Ahzaab 33:33)

All scholars of Tafseer agreed that those who are meant by members of the family are: Ali, Faatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn ؑ. This is also agreed to by your authorized narrations.

Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها, the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wife narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded Faatimah رضي الله عنها (his daughter): 'Bring your husband and your sons to me.' When she brought them, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then threw on them a Fadak-made garment and then placed his hand upon them and said: 'O Allah, these are members of Muhammad's family. Bestow Your blessings upon the family of Muhammad as You had done upon the family of Ibraaheem. You are indeed Full of Praise, Mighty.' Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها said that she raised the garment to join them but the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pulled her by her hand and said: 'You are already blessed.'

The verse indicates that evil deeds and sins had been removed from members of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم family. And the Hadith indicated that members of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم family are: Ali, Faatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn رضي الله عنهم. Since Allah has removed evil deeds from them, this means that they are infallible and, by virtue of their infallibility, they have more right to rulership than others."

My response: "It seems you have run out of your 'countless' proofs. That is why you are now citing as evidence, texts that are absolutely irrelevant to the point in discussion.

What is the relationship between the verse and the Hadith that you have just quoted and the explicit mentioning of Ali رضي الله عنه as the leader after the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, whereby the one who opposes it would be regarded as being unjust to Ali رضي الله عنه and, as a result, deserve to be condemned as an apostate?!

Undoubtedly, the verse you quoted was revealed in exclusive reference to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, who are pure women – may Allah be pleased with them. Let us have a keen look at these verses and study them closely.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ إِن كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا (٢٨) وَإِن كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالذَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَاتِ مِنْكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٢٩) يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ مَنْ يَأْتِ مِنْكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبِينَةٍ يُصَاعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا (٣٠) وَمَنْ يَقْنُتْ مِنْكُنَّ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعَمَلْ صَالِحًا نُوتِهَا أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ

وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيمًا (٣١) يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنَّ
 اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا
 (٣٢) وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ
 وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ
 الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا (٣٣) وَادْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَى فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ
 وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا (٣٤)

***'O Prophet (Muhammad (ﷺ))! Say to your wives: If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, Then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (divorce).But if you desire Allah and His Messenger, and the home of the Hereafter, then verily, Allah has prepared for Al-Muhsinât (good-doers) amongst you an enormous reward. O wives of the Prophet! Whoever of you commits an open illegal sexual intercourse, the torment for her will be doubled, and that is ever easy for Allah. And whosoever of you is obedient to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and does righteous good deeds, We shall give her, her reward twice over, and We have prepared for her Rizq Karim (a noble provision - Paradise).O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you keep your duty (to Allah), then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy, or evil desire for adultery) should be moved with desire, but speak in an honorable manner. And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance, and perform As-Salât (Iqamât-as-Salât), and give Zakât and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah wishes only to remove Ar-Rijs (evil deeds and sins) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet (peace be upon him)) and to purify you with a thorough purification. And remember (O you the members of the Prophet's family, the Graces of your Lord), that which is recited in your houses of the Verses of Allah and Al-Hikmah (i.e. Prophet's Sunnah - legal ways, so give your thanks to Allah and glorify His Praises for this Qur'aan and the Sunnah). Verily, Allah is Ever Most Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things.'* (Al-Ahzaab 33:28-34)**

If we study the above verses deeply, we will realize that Allah's saying, 'Allah wishes only to remove *Ar-Rijs* (evil deeds and sins) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet)', does not constitute an independent verse but a part of a verse that speaks about mothers of the faithful, the Prophet's ﷺ wives. Then the succeeding verses continue speaking about them. This is the clearest evidence that the verse was revealed exclusively in reference to the Prophet's ﷺ wives.

All praise is due to Allah that this statement is only a part of a verse, and not a separate one, thereby denying the liars the opportunity to fabricate their lies.

This is the opinion of the Muslim scholars.

As regards the Hadith of *Kisaa*, the most that can be inferred from it, is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ included Ali, Faatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn ؑ among members of his family so that they could also be covered by the divine blessing manifested in the removal of evil deeds and thorough purification.

That is why when Umm Salamah ؓ wanted to enter under the garment he told her, 'You are already blessed.'

As for the claim of some people that the Prophet's ﷺ wives, may Allah be pleased with them, are not members of the Prophet's household, nothing could be further from the truth. What is understood directly from the words of the above verses clearly refute this claim. And the Qur'aan is the authority over every Muslim.

There is also another verse that indicates that the wives are indeed among members of one's family. Consider Allah's saying concerning Prophet Ibrahim ؑ and his family, though the only member of the family he had then was his wife:

رَحِمْتُ اللَّهَ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ

'The Mercy of Allah and His Blessings be on you, O the family (of Ibrahim). (Hood 11:73)

Allah also said about Prophet Moosa ؑ:

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ

'Then, when Moosa had fulfilled the term, and travelled with his family.'
(Al-Qasas 28:29)

Though the only person with whom he travelled was his wife.

Observation:

There are authentic Ahadith in which families of al-'Abbaas, 'Aqeel and Ja'far are regarded as part of the Prophet's household. All these families are forbidden from taking charities after the death of the Prophet ﷺ until the Last Hour.

In order not to have any misconception about the '*Aayatut-Tatheer*', we need to note an important point:

If we agree, for the sake of argument, that Ali, Faatimah, Hasan and Husayn ﷺ are the only members of the Prophet's family, though this is incorrect, nothing in the Hadith explicitly indicated that Ali ﷺ should be the leader after the Prophet ﷺ. If this had been true, then the rulership would need to be shared by the four: Ali, Faatimah, Hasan and Husayn ﷺ. But not even a foolish person would agree to this.

There is also nothing in the verse or in the Hadith that indicates the infallibility of these four people. The utmost indication is that they are purified from sins and evil deeds. Though, this does not mean that they could not be affected by forgetfulness, mistakes and misjudgments. Therefore, infallibility is one thing and purification from evil deeds is something else.

Another point of correction:

The lecturer, while presenting his proofs, falsely alluded that I do not love Ali ﷺ and members of his household by saying: 'Perhaps Allah will open your heart for the love of Imaam Ali ﷺ.'

I would like to say that we – the *Ahlu-Sunnah* – love Ali ﷺ, invoke Allah's pleasure upon him, greatly respect him and regard him as the fourth of the righteously guided and guiding caliphs whose paths and practices we tenaciously hold onto. Whenever we mention his name, we do so with great

reverence and love. We also invoke Allah's pleasure on all members of the Prophet's household – in the wider sense of the word. We invoke Allah's pleasure upon the Prophet's ﷺ wives, the righteous ones from the families of Ali, Ja'far, 'Aqeel and 'Abbaas who are all members of the Prophet's household ﷺ.

However, what we regard as calamitous is to exaggerate our love for them as the Christians do in respect to Prophet Eesa (Jesus) ﷺ to the extent that this lead them to ascribing partners to Allah in His Lordship and His exclusive right to be worshipped. Two groups have indeed missed the way in this aspect:

One: The *Nawaasib*: They are those who hated Ali ﷺ, regarded him as apostate, believed in violability of his blood and hated the noble members of his household. The *Ahlus-Sunnah* renounced this group. A cursory reading of the books of *Ahlus-Sunnah* would attest to the fact that they love Ali ﷺ and invoke Allah's pleasure on him.

Two: The *Rawaafidh* (The Imamite Shi'ites): These are a people whose exaggerated love for Ali ﷺ led them to raise him above his God-given status; a situation which he, himself, would not like.

This exaggeration led them to hate the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ whom Allah selected for him and to convey his message and support him. It led them to accuse the Companions ﷺ of preferring the life of this world to the Hereafter and of depriving Ali ﷺ of his right and committing injustice against him!!!

The situation of these people really surprised me. Who would be just if Abu Bakr and 'Umar – may Allah be pleased with them – were not just? Who would be just if Uthmaan – may Allah be pleased with him – was not just?!"

There was a loud cry in the courtyard.

A man from the audience stood up and pointed to me, yelling: "Are you saying 'may Allah be pleased with them' for these people who are apostates and changed the religion of Muhammad?!" He then turned to the audience and said: 'How can you leave this man invoking Allah's pleasure upon these people without doing anything?'"

Their leader tried to appease him and he requested him to sit down.

The man yelled again: “Sayyid, did you hear him insulting us? No, we cannot endure this!”

Their leader – who was already very annoyed – got up and complained that it was too late and that he needed to go. I also said that I was already late and needed to go as well. But one of them requested that they wanted to continue the debate. Their leader then told me that the gathering would like to continue with the debate with me and that he had to go. He promised that there was going to be another session of debate between us and he went away.

After their leader departed, most of the audience also left but around fifteen of their young men stayed back.

One of them said: “Doctor, Let us set aside the proofs mentioned by the Sayyid which you have adequately responded to. I want to ask you some questions:

I said: “Go on.”

The questioner: “Who is the most knowledgeable of the Companions ﷺ?”

I answered: “Abu Bakr ﷺ is the most knowledgeable of the Companions ﷺ.”

The questioner: “What is your evidence?”

I answered: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ presented him to lead people in the prayer when he was in his last illness. And it is known that the most knowledgeable of the people should lead them in prayers. Therefore, presenting Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ﷺ to lead the Muslims in prayer is the greatest testimony from the Infallible Prophet ﷺ that he was the most knowledgeable and the best of all the people.”

The questioner: “Did the Messenger ﷺ not say, ‘I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its door’? This is strongest evidence that Ali ﷺ is the most knowledgeable of all the Companions ﷺ.”

I responded: “This Hadith is not authentic*, as far as we are concerned. It can therefore not stand as a proof.”

**It is rather a fabricated Hadith (Mawdoo'). When I returned home, I searched for the Hadith and found that Ibn al-Jawzi included it in his book, 'Al-Mawdoo'aat' (Fabricated Narrations).*

The Questioner: “But this Hadith is in your recognized books.”

I answered: “According to the *Ahlu-Sunnah*, the science of Hadith is not a superficial science. It is rather a wide science on which innumerable books and works were written. Many of our scholars dedicated their lives to collecting Ahadith and worked meticulously to distinguish the authentic from the spurious.

The books of Hadith, according to our scholars, are of different categories as far as authenticity is concerned. The most authentic collections are those of al-Bukhari and Muslim. Mere mentioning of a Hadith from any of these two great collections is enough for a Muslim to accept it.

They are followed by the four Sunan collections: At-Tirmidhee, Abu Daawood, An-Nasaaee and Ibn Maajah. Mere quoting a Hadith from any of these collections is not enough to guarantee its authenticity until it is subjected to the rules of the science of Hadith and decisions of the scholars of *Al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel*.

The next category is collections such as: Sunan ad-Daarimee, Saheeh Ibn Khuzaimah, Saheeh Ibn Hibbaan and Mustadrak of al-Haakim. However, mere quoting of a Hadith from any of these collections is not enough to establish its authenticity until the degree of the same is explicitly declared.

Then we have Masaaneed (Hadith Encyclopaedias) that include the authentic, the weak and the fabricated Ahadith. When any of the Ahadith of these collections is quoted, the degree of its authenticity should be mentioned.

In short, not all Ahadith recorded in our books could be cited as proofs. It is only the authentic ones that could be cited as proofs. The only Ahadith that could be quoted without mentioning the degree of their authenticity are those found in the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim because the entire Ummah accepts all the Ahadith of the two collections as authentic.

In view of the above, the Hadith you cited is not authentic. Even if I agreed with you that the Hadith is authentic, it does not necessarily mean that Ali رضي الله عنه is the most knowledgeable of all the Companions رضي الله عنهم.

The most that could be inferred from the Hadith is that Ali رضي الله عنه is one of the

gates of knowledge, and not the only gate. For, as it is known to all, every city has a number of gates and entrances, otherwise it could not have been rightly called a city. So Ali ؑ is only one of the doors of the city of knowledge. There are indisputably other gates, the greatest of which is Abu Bakr ؓ and the rest of the Prophet's Companions ؓ.

I have earlier told you that the most knowledgeable of people has the greatest right to lead them in prayer, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded Abu Bakr ؓ to lead people in prayer in his last illness.”

The questioner: “The Prophet's ﷺ command for Abu Bakr ؓ to lead the prayer is mentioned only in your book. We are not obliged to accept it.”

I answered: “*Subhaanallah!!* You cited a Hadith and I agreed to discuss it with you though it is not authentic and I am now quoting an authentic Hadith that is in al-Bukhari and you are rejecting it?! Now tell me: what is the criterion for knowing an authentic Hadith, according to you Shi'ites?!”

The questioner: “We are not obliged to accept any of your Ahadith and we do not recognize them at all. I only cited it to you because I know you accept it as an authority.”

I said: “*Laa hawla wala quwata illaa billaah!!* Are you dismissing, with such casualness, the Prophet's ﷺ Hadith, a wisdom that emanated from the light of Prophethood meant to complement the Qur'aan and elucidate on its meanings, and the Sunnah for which our erudite scholars dedicated their lives to preserve?!”

I definitely know that we are *Ahlu-Sunnah* because of our belief in the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah and I certainly know that you are 'the *Raafidah*' (Rejecters) because of your rejection and denial of the Sunnah. Now, my knowledge in this fact is strongly confirmed.”

The questioner: “We (the Shi'ites) have our own Ahadith; and they are all from members of the Prophet's ﷺ family, who are the rightful heirs to all knowledge. They are infallible and their knowledge is purely divine.”

I responded: “Your goods, as far as the knowledge of Hadith is concerned, is poor in quality. You are the farthest, of all people, from Hadith and its sciences. You know absolutely nothing about sciences of Ahadith.

This is not my statement. It is rather a testimony from your own leaders and imams. They mentioned that your Ahadith are full of serious discrepancies that you hardly find a Hadith without finding another one that is diametrically contradicting it. One of your muftis would declare the same thing as obligatory, forbidden, lawful, and disliked at the same time without any justification. These bizarre contradictions are the clearest proof that your Ahadith are spurious and falsely attributed to members of the Prophet's ﷺ household who are rightly guided and are guides. For, discrepancy is a sign of falsehood. Allah says,

وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا (٨٢)

***'Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much contradiction.'* (An-Nisaa 4:82)**

My brother! The difference between the knowledge of *Ahlu-Sunnah* about the Hadith and your knowledge about it is as wide as the gap that is between the heaven and the earth. We are very proud – with all praise due to Allah – that our Ahadith were reported from Allah's Messenger ﷺ by about four thousand of his noble Companions ﷺ who kept his company for more than twenty years and conveyed all his sayings, deeds, decisions, manners and his interactions with members of his household and the people to us. They also conveyed to us the stories of his wars and dealings with non-Muslims, and every other minute and great aspect of his meritorious life.

It is from these four thousand Companions ﷺ that thousands of the Taabi'een (the generation that immediately came after the Companions) learned the Ahadith and they, in turn, conveyed them to the erudite scholars who came after them until the entire Sunnah became documented in an exceptionally meticulous way that became, for us, a source of pride and superiority over all nations and over all deviant and erroneous groups.

As for you Shi'ites, your Hadith is an unequalled comedy; for you take sayings of your Imams as equal to those of the infallible Prophet ﷺ who never spoke out of desire but only what was inspired to him. This is, certainly enormous misguidance. This is the source of great contradictions that abound in your religion. For, each Imaam has his independent sayings and decisions.

It is ironically saddening and amusing at the same time that you take the largest part of your knowledge from a two-year old boy, Muhammad ibn Hasan al-'Askari, whose very existence is seriously doubtful, even according to your own scholars!

Tell me, how can a reasonable person accept that your knowledge of Hadith is learnt from a mythical two-year old boy?! How I wish the Shi'ites had taken their knowledge directly and verbally from the scholars! Rather they took it from tattered materials and papers hidden in a tree during the night and removed during the day!!

Can these fables that even small children would not believe, stand as a viable chain of transmitters of Ahadith used in performing acts of worship to Allah?!

Do you know why we are called '*Ahlu-Sunnah*'? It is because of our tenacious adherence to the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ and his Sunnah. We are – without being pompous – the adherents and preservers of the Hadith. We know its texts and chains; and we dwarfed all other people in this regard.

It is enough a pride for us that all our Ahadith are narrated from the noble Companions ؓ whose main preoccupation was to memorize the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. And they did not leave anything of his Sunnah unrecorded."

The questioner (interrupted): "The knowledge of Imaam Ali ؑ is greater than the knowledge of all these (Companions). And we possess the knowledge of Imaam Ali ؑ."

I said: "We want to be reasonable and logical. Is the knowledge of one Companion greater than the knowledge of four thousand Companions?! In addition, Ali ؑ did not accompany the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at all times. It is known that the Prophet ﷺ would sometimes be alone with his wives who knew things about him that Ali ؑ did not know. It is also known that he sent Ali ؑ to Yemen, and when he was going to Tabuk, assigned him to stay behind and take care of the women and children. During this period, he was definitely not in the Prophet's ﷺ company. How then, could he be more knowledgeable than the four thousand Companions who were with the Prophet ﷺ at all times?!"

The questioner: "But the Prophet ﷺ gave Ali ؑ knowledge that he did not

give to anyone among them!”

I responded: “This claim that the Prophet ﷺ concealed some knowledge from his Companions ﷺ – though it is unlawful to conceal knowledge – is an insult to him. How could he have done so since it was to him that the following words were revealed:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ
مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٧٤)

Verily, those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book, and purchase a small gain therewith, they eat into their bellies nothing but fire. Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor purify them, and theirs will be a painful torment, (Al-Baqarah 2:174)?!

The questioner: “Yes, Imaam Ali ﷺ has mystic knowledge directly imparted from Allah. He has infinite knowledge.”

I said: “You see. You have contradicted yourself. This is an exaggeration you Shi'ites commit concerning the person of Ali ﷺ, an eminent companion and one of the most knowledgeable of the Companions. This does not, however, mean that he had an exclusive knowledge that other Companions ﷺ did not have. This is indisputably attested to by all those who know his history.

Had he had knowledge of the unseen – as your scholars claim – what happened in the Battle of Siffeen would not have happened. The Khawaarij would not have been able to give him troubles and one of them would not have been able to assassinate him.

Then the *Ahlu-Sunnah* have Ali's ﷺ knowledge and that of the other Companions ﷺ. As for you, you have missed the knowledge of all the Companions ﷺ. Even as far as Ali's ﷺ knowledge is concerned which you claim to possess, the fact is that you have missed most of his knowledge that are narrated by the sagacious scholars of Hadith among the *Ahlu-Sunnah*.”

The questioner: “We have strayed out of our topic. My question is about the most knowledgeable one among the Companions ﷺ.”

I said: “I have answered your question that the most knowledgeable companion is certainly Abu Bakr ؓ in view of his being appointed by the Prophet ﷺ to lead the other Companions ؓ in prayer in his last illness.”

The questioner: “Another question: Who is the bravest companion ؓ?”

I answered: “The Companions ؓ are all brave. Bravery is a prominent attribute of the vast majority of them. Among the brave Companions ؓ are Hamzah ؓ the Prophet's uncle, 'Umar al-Faruq ؓ, Ali ؓ and Khaalid ibn Al-Waleed ؓ.”

When he insisted that I mention the bravest of them all, I asked him about the benefit he wanted to derive from that.

He kept quiet as if he was thinking and then said: “The bravest of all brave people is Imaam Ali ؓ.”

I responded: “If we assume – for the sake of argument – that Ali ؓ is the bravest companion, what does that have to do with our topic?”

The questioner: “If follows then that he has the greatest right to being the leader. For, leadership necessitates bravery and courage.”

I said: “We are talking about matters governed by Islamic rules. We are not talking about bravery in isolation. If not, we should leave the religion and talk about 'Antarah ibn Shadaaad, who was the bravest man among the Arabs. Brother, leadership needs knowledge, astuteness, experience, wisdom, gentleness, bravery and courage.”

The questioner interrupted: “But Imaam Ali ؓ had all these attributes!”

I said: “Yes; he had even more! He deserves to be qualified with all good qualities. But there are some people who excelled him in them, and they are three. He is the fourth rightly guided Khalif. We invoke Allah to be pleased with him. We love and respect him more than you. But we do so within the framework of Sharee'ah without exaggeration or negligence. The consensus among *Ahlu-Sunnah*, including all the Companions ؓ, is that the leaders who are rightly guided and the guides are the four caliphs in the following order: Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ؓ, 'Umar al-Faarooq ؓ, Uthmaan Dhun-Noorain ؓ and Abu Sibtayn Ali ؓ.

Someone from among the audience screamed: “Are you going to leave this man to invoke Allah's pleasure on the Companions who are apostates and committed injustice against Imaam Ali ؑ and wanted to kill him and set his house aflame?! Are you leaving this wolf to drag you into his path, and debating with him incontestable facts? Are you abandoning Faatimah ؑ the Prophet's ؑ daughter while this man invokes Allah's pleasure on those who harmed her and beat her up so cruelly that she had a miscarriage and they set her house ablaze and wanted to kill her husband who is the Prophet's brother, cousin and successor?!”

He then faced me and said: “Tell me. Are there not narrations from your books confirming this? You are all debating incontestable matters.”

I responded: “The brother's statement includes a number of things that needs to be explained in some detail.

One: All narrations about threatening Ali ؑ and beating up his wife are false. They should not at all be mentioned let alone cited as proofs for anything. These narrations are fabricated by the crisis-mongers and liars in order to depict the Prophet's ؑ Companions ؑ as primitive barbarians whose only concern was worldly materials, though they are actually too honorable to do that.

What is undoubtedly correct is the mutual love and affection that existed among all the Companions, including Ali ؑ. It is also a clear and authentic fact that Ali ؑ loved Abu Bakr ؑ and 'Umar ؑ and he would praise them and ask Allah to be pleased with them. Nothing testifies to this more glaringly than his naming of three of sons after Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan ؑ.

Another glaring evidence of this is that he was the judge of the city of Al-Madeenah during the caliphate of 'Umar ؑ and his daughter, Umm Kulthoom from his wife Faatimah ؑ was married to 'Umar ؑ.

It is an evident fact that Ali ؑ loved 'Uthmaan ؑ and greatly respected him. Indeed, Uthmaan's ؑ major contribution in paying the bridal gift of Faatimah ؑ is one of the most obvious signs of mutual love that existed between these two great caliphs. Ali ؑ would often recall this favor and he would ask Allah to be pleased with 'Uthmaan ؑ.

Ali ؑ also loved the Emigrants (*Muhaajiroon*) and the Helpers (*Ansaar*) and

he would praise them. This is evident in '*Nahj al-Balaaghah*', a book that you reckon with, where Ali ؑ is reported to have said: 'The *Shura* (Consultation) belongs to the Emigrants and the Helpers. Whoever they choose for the Muslims should be their leader and Allah will be pleased with their choice.'

It is also mentioned in the same book that Ali ؑ would criticize his followers that they did not emulate the Companions ؓ in their worship, piety, honesty and sincerity.

Therefore, all these facts unquestionably affirm that Ali ؑ respected and loved all the Prophet's ؓ Companions ؓ and they also loved and honored him. Whatever is narrated in contrast to this is absolutely false and fabricated by the evil crisis-mongers.

The Prophet's ؓ Companions ؓ whom he trained with the guidance of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and upon wisdom and excellent example are too great to engage in those horrible things.

A man from the audience interrupted: "Do you regard '*Nahjul-Balaaghah*' by Imaam Ali ؑ as authentic?"

I responded: '*Nahjul-Balaaghah*' is a book authored more than three centuries after the death of Ali ؑ by Ash-Shareef ar-Radiyy without any known chain of transmitters. Its attribution to Ali ؑ is greatly doubtful. The known fact is that more than a third of the book is falsely attributed to Ali ؑ and it is this part in which Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Umar ؓ were insulted and disparaging remarks were made against.

We can decisively conclude that this part was forged especially since it contradicted texts of the Qur'aan that praised the Prophet's noble Companions."*

Another questioner: "When did Ali ؑ pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr ؓ?"

I answered: "After six months of assuming caliphate."

The same questioner: "Then why did Imaam Ali ؑ delay his pledge of allegiance if it is true that there was love between them?"

**This questioner might have intended to use false narrations that are in this book against me. But when he discovered that more than a third of the book is fabricated he kept quiet.*

I responded: “The fact of the matter is that Ali ؑ was busy, along with 'Abbaas ؑ and Zubayr ibn 'Awwaam ؑ, preparing the Prophet ﷺ for burial while the Emigrants and the Helpers convened and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr ؑ as the Khalif. So, Ali ؑ was not pleased with that because he felt that he was left out and not consulted.”

The questioner: “This means they conspired against Imaam Ali ؑ and denied him his right. It shows that they were after leadership at all costs!”

I said: “Take it easy!! This conclusion is uncalled for. If you study the matter carefully, you will realize that the truth in Abu Bakr’s ؑ favour.

When the Companions ؓ heard of the Prophet's ﷺ death, they convened a meeting at Saqeefah Bani Saa'idah to appoint a new leader for the Muslims. They knew that Islam could not be established without leadership. When Abu Bakr ؑ and 'Umar ؑ heard of that, they quickly went to the Saqeefah. On their way, they met Abu 'Ubaidah ibn al-Jarraah ؑ, the Trustee of this Ummah, and the three of them went to the Saqeefah.

When they arrived there, Abu Bakr ؑ reminded the Ansaar of the Prophet's ﷺ Hadith, “The leaders shall be from Quraish”. He also reminded them that Allah described the Emigrants as truthful and the Helpers as successful, and reminded them that Allah commanded the people to be with the truthful by His saying,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ (١١٩)

***'O you who believe! Be concious of Allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds).'* (At-Tawbah 9:119)**

The Helpers agreed with Abu Bakr ؑ who, in a quick attempt at killing a potential controversy in its cradle, suggested that either of 'Umar ؑ or Abu 'Ubaidah ؑ should be appointed as the new leader. But 'Umar ؑ answered him: “As long as you exist among us, none of us would agree to be appointed the leader. Give me your hand and let me pledge allegiance to you.” That was how 'Umar ؑ and other Companions ؓ who were present there pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr ؑ as the new leader.

The following day, all the Emigrants and the Helpers pledged their allegiance

with the exception of Ali ؑ and some members of the Prophet's ﷺ household such as 'Abbaas ؑ.

Ali ؑ was displeased that the decision was taken in his absence. But Abu Bakr ؑ was right. For, the matter of appointing a new leader was so important that it could not be delayed lest there would be a crisis whose extent would be known only to Allah.

After six months, Ali's ؑ anger died down, so he sent to Abu Bakr ؑ informing him of his intention to pledge allegiance, and thereafter Ali ؑ pledged his allegiance to Abu Bakr ؑ in Masjidun Nabawi ﷺ. That was how their differences came to an end.

Is it then reasonable that we should be waging war against one another on behalf of two persons who had already settled their differences?!! This is strange indeed!!”

The questioner: “Did Faatimah ؑ pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr?”

I responded: “Take it easy! This is certainly a manifestation of serious ignorance on your part, which I least expected. Women are excused from personally pledging allegiance. However highly we respect Faatimah az-Zahraa ؑ, it should be made clear that she had nothing to do with the matter of leadership and caliphate.

Caliphate is a matter that needs intelligence, wisdom and courage. It is the responsibility of the wise and knowledgeable leaders of the community who know the right person for this position.

Women naturally give in to the dictates of their emotions, so they are not allowed to have a say in such an important matter. This does not, however, diminish the status of Faatimah ؑ. For, she remains the best woman in this world and the chief of the women of Paradise, in the Hereafter.”

The questioner: “What then is the cause of disagreement between Faatimah ؑ and Abu Bakr ؑ?”

I responded: “The disagreement was not as you perceived it to be. For, you take that disagreement as a means of maligning and cursing the Prophet's noble Companions ؓ. A disagreement could be due to different points of view in which each of the disagreeing persons would see that they are upon

the truth.

The basis of disagreement between Faatimah رضي الله عنها and Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه was the issue of Fadak, which was a simple issue that should not have warranted disagreement in the first place.”

The questioner: “No, it was not a simple matter. What Abu Bakr did was that he deprived her of her right and harmed her, in spite of the Prophet's ﷺ saying, ‘Faatimah is of me and I am of her. He who bothers her in fact bothers me and he who bothers me indeed bothers Allah.’ It is not a simple matter. It is a fundamental of religion and faith!”

I said: “Is this disagreement a fundamental of religion on the basis of which you call the Prophet's ﷺ Companions رضي الله عنهم apostates?! This is undoubtedly an absurd, excessive transgression that could remove one from the fold of Islam!

Then do you know when the Prophet ﷺ uttered this statement that you are citing as evidence? Do you know that he addressed it to Ali رضي الله عنه and not to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه? You will come to realize this soon. Let us go back to the disagreement which you claim to be a fundamental of religion.

It was about a piece of land known as Fadak that the Prophet ﷺ earned as his share of the booty during the campaign of Khaybar. When the Prophet ﷺ died, Faatimah رضي الله عنها came to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه asking for her share of her father's property. But Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه told her that the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Our property will not be inherited, whatever we (i.e. Prophets) leave is Sadaqah (to be used for charity).’*

While telling her this, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه swore to her that the members of the Prophet's ﷺ household are dearer to him than members of his own family, and that he only needed to carry out the Prophet's ﷺ instructions.

When she heard that, she was pleased. And there are authentic reports that he visited her before her death. Where then is the disagreement that the brother claimed to be a fundamental of religion?!

*Reported by Al-Bukhari 3092 and Muslim 1759

What then is Abu Bakr's ﷺ sin in all this? Also if we thought over the matter deeply we would realise that Abu Bakr ﷺ was also a stakeholder in the Fadak property because of the share of his daughter, 'Aishah رضي الله عنها , who is the Prophet's ﷺ wife. But implementing the Prophet's ﷺ instruction is greater than this world and its materials.

Then I need to ask you a question: Why did Ali ﷺ not return the Fadak property to Faatimah's children, Hasan, Husayn and Umm Kulthoom ﷺ when he became the Khalif if he was not convinced that Abu Bakr ﷺ was right in his decision?!

Therefore, the matter which you depict as fundamental of religion was no more than a difference in points of view that ended with the dissenting party giving in to the truth. The first person to disprove your lie is Ali ﷺ when he approved Abu Bakr's ﷺ decision. For, Ali ﷺ is the farthest person from sycophancy, hypocrisy and weakness when it comes to the truth.

As regards your claim that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Faatimah is of me and I am of her. He who bothers her in fact bothers me and he who bothers me indeed bothers Allah.' I do not know this Hadith in this version.

The version I know is: 'Faatimah is part of me. He who disturbs her in fact disturbs me and he who offends her offends me.'*

As for the statement, 'he who bothers me indeed bothers Allah'. I think it is a dubious addition. And I think it is falsely attributed to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him. And Allah knows best.

This Hadith is a proof against the questioner. For, the Prophet ﷺ did not address the statement to Abu Bakr ﷺ but to Ali ﷺ who wanted to marry the daughter of Abu Jahl as a second wife. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, 'Faatimah is from me, and I am afraid she will be subjected to trials in her religion (because of jealousy).' The Prophet then mentioned one of his sons-in-law who was from the tribe of 'Abd Shams, and he praised him as a good son-in-law, saying, 'Whatever he said was the truth, and he promised me and fulfilled his promise.

*Reported by Muslim (2449)

I do not make a legal thing illegal, nor do I make an illegal thing legal, but by Allah, the daughter of Allah's Messenger and the daughter of the enemy of Allah, (i.e. Abu Jahl) can never get together (as the wives of one man).*

What then does the Hadith has to do with Abu Bakr ﷺ?!"

One of them: "Do you know the story of Faatimah's ﷺ death and who performed the funeral prayer on her?"

I answered: "She died like any other human being and her husband performed funeral prayer on her."

The questioner: "Why did Abu Bakr not perform the funeral prayer on her?"

I responded: "This is not a Jumu'ah prayer. It is funeral prayer. And in such a prayer, the strong opinion of the jurists is that the nearest relative of the dead has the greater right to lead the funeral prayer on him or her – if he is knowledgeable. This is because; he is the most sympathetic with the dead person and he is likely to be most sincere in supplicating and seeking forgiveness for him or her. This is the view of many of our jurists."

The questioner: "That was not what happened. You are just being evasive!"

I said: "*Subhaanallaah!* Anyway, evasiveness is better than insulting and cursing (the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ). Now tell me what happened."

The questioner: "What happened is that when Faatimah ﷺ knew that the time of her death was near, she had a bath and put on her shrouds and then laid down on her bed.

She instructed her husband to secretly perform funeral prayer on her and to bury her in the night so that Abu Bakr would not have the chance to perform funeral prayer on her. For, she hated the prayers of this hypocrite."

I said: "I wonder how you people could be so ensnared, blinded and infatuated by every superstitious and fabled story, supportive of every exaggeration and looking for every means of disagreement as sincere people would pursue the truth and harmony!!"

Then I asked him: "Is it permissible to perform Fajr prayer before its time?"

*Reported by Al-Bukhari (3110)

He said: “No.”

I said: “Because its time has not yet come.”

I asked him further: “Is it permissible to perform ablution for Fajr prayer after Isha and then go to bed and wake up in the morning and perform Fajr prayer with that ablution?”

(All those who were present laughed) and the questioner laughingly said: “No. But what does this have to do with our topic?”

I said: “Why is it not permissible to perform ablution for Fajr prayer in the night though it would make you ready for the prayer upon waking up?”

He said: “Because sleeping would nullify the ablution. So it is useless.”

I said: “This is the link. It is also not permissible to bath a person before he dies. For, death will nullify that bath and another bath would become necessary after death. This is what your statement implies. You have nailed your own coffin. This is the first proof on the spuriousness of your Hadith. Another proof is...”

(The man who had earlier abused me and threatened me then suddenly stood up and started shouting): “This is a hypocrite! Didn't I warn that you should not engage in any debate with him? He is evasive like a wolf, twisting around, rationalising and playing on you. He does not want the truth neither does he love members of the Prophet's ﷺ family!! (Allah then made him to utter these supplications:) O Allah, raise him up in the company of Abu Bakr and 'Umar! O Allah, raise him in the company of these apostates and hypocrites!!”

I said (smilingly): “Ameen! O Allah, raise me up in the company of these pure and righteous people who are the leaders of the faithful, the best of all mankind after the Prophets and the leaders of the truthful, the martyrs and the pious!”

Then the call was made for Fajr prayer. Thus did the debate that took nearly six hours end.

I then said: “It is time to go for Fajr prayer. But I would like to call your attention to an injustice which this man (I pointed to the man who insulted

me) had done to me. He wrongly accused me that I did not want the truth and accused me of hypocrisy – and I seek refuge with Allah from hypocrisy and the hypocrites.

Allah knows that I did not come here but only to show the truth and defend it. Had I been hypocritical, I would not have debated with you with all this sincerity, clarity and frankness. I would also like to tell you that, up till now, I have not had the opportunity to show you the truth which I believe. For, I had been answering your questions and dispelling misconceptions. I have not yet said what I wanted to say. Had I had the opportunity to say what I wanted to say, I would have shown you – with Allah's permission – the clear truth.”

My friend who had come to my house in the first place: “Talk, Shaykh. Say whatever you like and we will all listen.”

I said: “There is not sufficient time. It is already time for Fajr. I have to take permission to go and perform the prayer.”

My friend: “Then suggest a time for continuation of the debate.”

I said: “As you like, though I do not think the brothers are very enthusiastic about another meeting.”

(But most of them declared that they were enthusiastically awaiting the next meeting).

We agreed that the next meeting should take place in the evening after Isha prayer and I stipulated that their leader who was with us before should be present. They assured me that he would be glad to come.



Chapter Two

The Second Debate and the Triumph of the Truth

I performed Fajr prayer and went to work. I came back after Zuhr and slept until the time of 'Asr prayer. For, I was fatigued by the wakefulness of the last night. I performed 'Asr prayer and slept again until the Maghrib prayer. I then performed the Maghrib and 'Ishaa prayers and expected my friend who failed to turn up. I concluded that they had decided to cancel the debate.

On the following night after coming back from Ishaa prayer, my friend came and told me that the Shi'ites were waiting for me.

I got up and went with him to their gathering. When we arrived there, I realised that those who were present were almost the same people who were there two nights before. When I noticed that their leader was not there, I inquired about him and I was told that he asked to be excused and requested them to go on with the debate promising that he would meet me soon. So we started the debate.

I said: "All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds. Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, and upon members of his household and his Companions.

To proceed, the last discussion was characterised by you asking while I answered the questions. I would like you to allow me, in this session, to ask questions while you answer. I hope that the answers you are going to give will be frank and clear and not based on *Taqiyyah* (Holy Hypocrisy), so that the debate can be fruitful."

One of them: "We have been frank with you from the beginning in order to let the truth manifest."

I said: "What is your belief concerning the Qur'aan?"

One of them: "It is the Book of Allah."

I said: "I know that. Do you believe that there are alterations in the Qur'aan?"

The speaker: "The Qur'aan is divinely protected against any alteration."

I said: “Is there any addition or omission in the Qur'aan.”

The speaker: “There is no any addition or omission in the Qur'aan.”

I said: “Is this the standard belief of all the '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*' (a prominent sect of Shi'ite)?”

The speaker: “Yes, that is the consensus among us.”

I said: “What then is the rule concerning a person who claims that there is alteration in the Qur'aan, or that there are additions or omissions in it or that a verse thereof is written in contradiction to what was revealed?”

The speaker: “Such a person is a disbeliever.”

I said (pointing to all those who were there): “Do you all concur with the brother in what he said?”

The audience: “Yes, we and all the '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*' concur with him. All that is attributed to us that we believe that the Qur'aan is altered is untrue and false.”

I said: “Then, let us keep this testimony in our minds. For, we will need it later. Now, tell me, what is your view about a Shi'ite Imaam who authored a book in which he quoted hundreds of narrations that support a claim the Qur'aan was altered. The book's name is '*Faslal-Khitaab fee Ithbaat Tahreef Kitaab Rabbil-Arbaab*'. What is your view about this book and its author?”

The speaker: “The book is fake. It was rejected by the scholars of the Imamite Shi'ites.”

I said: “What about the author?”

The speaker: “I do not know that. You can ask the Sayyid (their leader) when you meet him.”

I said: “The matter is clear! The man claims that the Qur'aan is altered. And to support this claim, he wrote a book in which he tried – albeit unsuccessfully – to establish this claim. Moments earlier, all of you agreed that whoever claims that the Qur'aan is altered or that there is an addition or omission in it is a 'kaafir' (disbeliever). Therefore, this man must be a disbeliever.”

The speaker and the entire audience: “This question can only be answered

by the Sayyid.”

I said: “Do you know who this scholar is? He is Mirza Husayn ibn Muhammad an-Nuri at-Tabarsi. Do you know the reward he got for authoring this book? He got buried when he died, in your holiest site on the earth: Najaf.

This deed clearly indicates that the belief that the Qur'aan was altered is inherently rooted in your religion. If not, you would have declared him an apostate who should be executed and who did not deserve to be buried in Muslim cemeteries.”

A man from the audience: “We told you in no uncertain terms that the Qur'aan is protected against any alteration. This should be sufficient for you. The man died a long time ago and was buried. We do not need to revive issues that are not in the interest of the Muslims.”

I said: “We are not talking about political matters. We are rather seeking for the truth within the framework of the Sharee'ah. And as long as all of us adhere to the truth, our search will definitely be fruitful.

I would therefore return to the issue of the Qur'aan and say: the problem is not in a book that Tabarsi authored. It lies in the fact that the book contains narrations directly quoted from your most authentic books such as *al-Kaafi* by al-Kulaini, which is your best, most ancient, and most authentic book, whose author you greatly revere and call '*Thiqatul-Islam*' and whom you regard as the reformer of the '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*' in the third century.

This Kulaini filled his above-mentioned book with narrations that claim that alterations, additions and omissions had occurred in the Qur'aan, that the Companions ﷺ removed a third of the Qur'aan revealed in reference to members of the Prophet's ﷺ family, that there is what is called '*Mushaf Faatimah*' and that the real Qur'aan which includes not even a single word from the present Qur'aan will be brought by the 'Hidden Imaam'.

It is very clear that al-Kulaini would not quote narrations he did not believe in. Can you then reject al-Kulaini's book '*al-Kaafi*', which is your most essential reference book, as you have rejected '*Faslal-Khitaab*' by Tabarsi? Can you dare call him an apostate in line with your claim that whoever says that the Qur'aan is altered is an apostate?!”

Someone from the audience (angrily): “All these narrations are weak and unreliable. We are here in front of you declaring that the Qur'aan is not altered. What then is the problem?”

I said: “We – who are present here – are not the problem. We are here searching for the truth. I am going to show you the stand of the scholars of '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*' regarding the Qur'aan. The opinion of a sect is represented only by the declarations of its leaders and recognised scholars, and not by the view of ordinary members like me and you.

Let us leave aside al-Kulaini and his book, *al-Kaafi* which is the greatest Shi'ite work. Let us look at al-Qummi and his famous Tafseer.

Al-Qummi does not need any introduction. He was your most prominent sheikh in Tafseer and Hadith, and his Tafseer is the most recognised Shi'ite Tafseer. In the introduction of this Tafseer, he claims that the Qur'aan was altered. He said: “There are in the Qur'aan things that are contrary to what Allah had revealed.”

He then filled the book with narrations that claim that the Qur'aan was altered. An example of this – though there are many others – is that when he was commenting on the verse 110 of Surah Aal 'Imraan where Allah says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

“You are the best of nations ever raised for mankind.”

Aal-Qummi quoted some of your 'infallible' imams as saying: “How could they be the best people since they had killed the leader of the faithful Ali ؑ and his son Husayn ؑ? The correct version of the verse rather is: 'You are the best 'imams' – meaning the twelve imams of '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*' – ever raised up for mankind.” Therefore, the verse is one of the verses altered in the Qur'aan.'

Can you then reject al-Qummi and his Tafseer, as you have rejected '*Faslal-Khitaab*' by Tabarsi? And if you reject *al-Kaafi* and you reject al-Qummi and his Tafseer, you will then not have any book to cite as your authority, for these are the men who are the authorities in the *madh-hab* of '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*'.

Hence, you have two options: to follow these scholars in their opinion and agree with them that the Qur'aan has been altered or to renounce the entire *madh-hab* of '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*', because their scholars claim that the Qur'aan had been altered."

One of them: "Look, debate is not done in this manner! We are telling you that our belief is that the Qur'aan is not altered and you are insisting that our belief is the opposite. I will bring you a book that will clarify our belief to you.

(He then asked the youngest person in the gathering to bring a book from the library. When the book was brought, he turned to me). This is the book of 'Creeds' by Ibn Babawayh al-Qummi.* It confirms our opinion that the Qur'aan was not altered.

(He then opened a page and started reading), 'Our belief is that the Qur'aan which Allah revealed to our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and which is in the hands of the people is as it was revealed... Whoever claims that we have a belief that is contrary to this is a liar.'

This is the belief of all of us. Why then do we need to stir up controversies and arguments that are detrimental to Islam?"

I responded: "No. These arguments are detrimental to the *Imamite Shi'ites* alone. For, they are the ones who claim that there are alterations, omissions and additions in the Qur'aan."

Another person from the audience: "After we have read our belief to you, you are still saying this?! You are definitely interested only in argument and not in the truth."

I said: "The matter is not that simple. The belief that the Qur'aan was altered is the fundamental principle according to the '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*'. All your scholars of Tafseer quote sayings from your 'infallible imams' that the Qur'aan was indeed altered. Your erudite scholar, al-Jazaairi also affirmed this in his book, '*Al-Anwaar*' that there are abundant and successive reports that there are alterations in the Qur'aan.

*This Qummi is different from the Qummi earlier mentioned.

Do you know what 'successive' and 'abundant' mean? They mean: 'beyond any doubts'. Al-Jazaairi claimed that there are more than two thousand narrations and authentic reports indicating that there are alterations in the Qur'aan. Another of your eminent scholars, al-Majlisi also made the same claim, asserting that rejection of these narrations would necessitate the rejection of all narrations about 'Imamah'.

And it is quite clear to every one that rejection of all narrations about '*Imamah*' is tantamount to rejection of the Shi'ite religion in its entirety, especially the '*Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah*'. I am not cooking all this up. It is there in your books. I can show it to you if you like.

Now tell me, is it possible to reject all these more than two thousand 'successive' and 'abundant' narrations reported by your 'reliable and infallible imams'?

Is it possible to abandon these narrations for the opinion of some 'fallible' scholars as Ibn Babawayh? Indeed, what Ibn Babawayh wrote is nothing more than another method of Holy Hypocrisy invented to deceive the *Ahlu-Sunnah*. And according to your belief, Holy Hypocrisy is a principle that represents nine-tenth of your religion.

Therefore, we can never abandon the saying of your 'infallible imams' for the opinion of a scholar who is vulnerable to errors. This word is not from me. It is rather from the seal of your erudite scholars, buried in your 'holiest' Najaf: An-Nuri at-Tabarsi.

At-Tabarsi had rejected Ibn Babwayh's claim and asserted that rejection of his opinion is easier than the rejection of the sayings of the 'infallible imams'. He then added that Ibn Babawayh and others made this claim as a way of practicing taqiyyah (Holy Hypocrisy) to deceive the common people. Al-Jazaairi also concurred with at-Tabarsi.*

By Allah, I wish I could believe that you do not claim that the Qur'aan was altered. For, doubting the authenticity of a single word from the Qur'aan removes one from the fold of Islam.

**Fasl al-Khitaab by Tabarsi; and Al-Anwaar an-Nu'maaniyyah by Al-Jazaairi 2/357,358*

But, believe me. There are many factors that convince our scholars that you – the *Imamite Shi'ites* – certainly believe that there are alterations in the Qur'aan, however much you try to hide this belief. Some of these factors are:

The many texts from your books that clearly state that there are alterations in the Qur'aan.

Your ill opinion of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ, though they are the ones who compiled the Qur'aan and whom Allah praised in the Qur'aan. How could you then claim that you believe in the intactness of the Qur'aan and yet assert that the Companions ﷺ, who compiled the Qur'aan and conveyed it to us had apostatized?!

You must either believe in the trustworthiness and praiseworthiness of the Companions ﷺ and the intactness of the Qur'aan or disbelieve in both. For, it is unacceptable to distinguish between the two intertwined issues.”

(There was a loud uproar in the gathering, and most of those present disagreed with this statement.)

One of them volunteered to speak: “We (the Shi'ites) are not the only ones to claim that the Qur'aan was altered, there are also some among you (*Ahlu-Sunnah*) who believe that there are alterations in the Qur'aan. Your books confirm this.”

I said: “*Subhaanallaah!* At the beginning of this debate, all of you unanimously claimed that you did not believe that the Qur'aan was altered. But after I had showed you quotations from your books that contradict your claim, you are now alleging that we also believe in the alteration?!!

For your information, you will never find in the books of *Ahlu-Sunnah*, in their vast multitude, the least indication that there is any alteration in the Qur'aan. This is because, the *Ahlu-Sunnah* are the custodians of the Qur'aan. They harmonize with the Qur'aan and the Qur'aan also harmonizes with them. The Qur'aan praises the Companions ﷺ and they also praise it; the Qur'aan commands them to love the Prophet ﷺ and the members of his household and they carry out this commandment; the Qur'aan praises the mothers of the faithful and they also ask Allah to be pleased with them. So they are with the Qur'aan wherever they are.”

The speaker: “There are reports in your authorized books that 'Umar ؓ used to erase Surah al-Falaq and Surah an-Naas from the Qur'aan saying that they were not part of the Qur'aan.”

(The audience applauded and breathed a sigh of relief.)

A pretentious speaker among them: “We have earlier on warned you that we should not delve into this matter that is harmful to you and us and detrimental to Islam. But you insisted on delving into it.”

(He then ostentatiously said): “I suggest that we close this chapter completely and take up more important issues that can benefit us all.”

I said: “No, by Allah, I am not going to leave this issue until it is clearly clarified. When you failed to free yourselves from the belief that the Qur'aan was altered – a belief that most of your scholars hold – you now want to attribute the same belief to us so that we could have a share in that insult. How preposterous!

All the Muslims who are the followers of the Sunnah unanimously agree that all that is in the Qur'aan is Allah's word with no addition or omission. They hold that anyone – whoever he or she may be – who claims that there is any alteration, addition or omission in the Qur'aan, even if it is a single letter, is an apostate who has removed himself or herself from the fold of Islam.

You have access to books of belief written by our unique and sagacious scholars that do not, in any way, contradict this belief.

Then what would make us claim that the Qur'aan is altered?! It was our Khalif, Abu Bakr ؓ who compiled the Qur'aan in consultation with 'Umar ؓ. It was our Khalif 'Uthmaan ؓ who produced copies therefrom (and sent them to the regions). All these men are our guides and the rightly guided leaders. What would then make us claim that there are alterations in the Qur'aan?!

As for you, you have every reason to hold a belief that there are alterations in the Qur'aan because you regard Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Uthmaan ؓ who compiled the Qur'aan as apostates; and your religion is based upon cursing and denouncing them.

We – the *Ahlu-Sunnah* – on the other hand, regard the Qur'aan as ours. It is our Book. So, it is impossible for us to claim that there is any alteration in it.

Let me go back to the claim of the brother that 'Umar رضي الله عنه used to rub out Surah al-Falaq and Surah an-Naas from the Qur'aan script. I would like to give him correct information in this regard. The narration he referred to did not mention 'Umar رضي الله عنه – for 'Umar رضي الله عنه is too great not to know that the two Surahs were part of the Qur'aan. It is rather narrated from Ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه. And this refutation from him was an individual judgment that no other companion concurred with him in.

The reason for this is that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to recite supplications for protection against evil eyes and other harmful things. But when the two Surahs were revealed, he abandoned all other supplications and recited them only. So Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه thought that the two Surahs were part of those supplications and not part of the Qur'aan.

This assumption was strengthened by the fact that he did not have an opportunity to hear the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recite any of these two Surahs in prayer.

Above all, there are authentic reports that Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه later abandoned his opinion for that of the rest of the Companions رضي الله عنهم.

Therefore, it is the consensus of all the Muslims – with the exception of the Imamite Shi'ites – that the entire Qur'aan, including Surahs al-Falaq and an-Naas, is intact and that it is divinely protected against any alteration, addition or omission. Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه only disputed their being part of the Qur'aan for the reasons given above, and he had abandoned his previous opinion when the truth became clear to him. For, there are occasions in which a companion would act contrary to the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم injunction because he was unaware of that injunction. When he was informed of it, he would immediately abide by it.

(At this point, members of the audience started talking among themselves, then one of them addressed me): “Doctor, engaging in debate with you is fruitless. You are not seeking for the truth. You only came here to impose your opinion. Therefore, we need to bring this discussion to end. Thank you for your visit. We ask Allah to guide us all to the truth and to the love of and respect for members of the Prophet's household.”

I responded: “You are rather the ones who do not want to accept the truth. Engaging in debate with you is fruitless. For, you do not want the truth. You

only want people to embrace your wrong belief blindly.

As for me, I praise Allah for guiding me to the love of the Prophet ﷺ and the entire members of his household starting with his pure wives, mothers of the faithful, and ending with families of 'Abbaas, 'Aqeel, Ja'far and Ali ؑ.

I ask Allah to guide us and you to the love of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ؓ, starting with the four rightly guided caliphs, the ten who were given glad tidings of Paradise, veterans of the Battle of Badr, participants in the Pledge of Pleasure (Bay'ah ar-Ridwaan), all the Emigrants and the Helpers ؓ and all those who follow them in righteousness till the Day of Resurrection.

I thought you were looking for the truth, and I had many truths to tell you but you do not want to listen.”

My friend who came with me: “No, by Allah! You cannot go until after saying all that you want to say. They are obliged to listen to you as you had listened to them and they have right to criticize you if they have knowledge. If not, they should admit their ignorance and leave the religion alone for those who are knowledgeable.”

I said: “They are not interested in debate.”

One of them: “It is not that we do not want debate. The problem is that we keep telling you that we believe in the intactness of the Qur'aan but you insist on forcing a contradicting view on us.”

I responded: “No, I am not forcing any view on you. I am only showing you the sayings of your scholars, who are your indisputable authority whom you trust. Anyway, I am not going to attribute to you what you reject. Allah knows all that is concealed, and your reckoning is with Him.”

One of them: “Since we have reached this agreement, we can now go on with the debate.”

Another one (attempting to calm the tense atmosphere): “My brother, issues concerning the Qur'aan are very expansive and the scholars have many opinions about that. You can only discuss these sensitive matters with the Sayyid because he alone has the knowledge and he certainly has responses that we do not have.”

(After we had decided to continue with the debate) I said: “All praise is due to Allah. Peace and blessings be upon the Prophet ﷺ, members of his family and his Companions ﷺ.”

One of them: “You had better not add 'and his Companions'. By the way, where did you get this addition from?”

I said: “This is what we are going to discuss now. But before we start, I would like to mention the result of our discussion concerning the Qur'aan in summary.”

One of them: “Concerning the Qur'aan again?”

I responded: “In line with our agreement, I will not go back to the topic. But there is something in my mind that I must say, and it is going to be brief, insha Allah.

We concluded that many – if not most – of the Shi'ites scholars, the earlier and the latter ones, are of the opinion that there are alterations in the Qur'aan and there are thousands of texts from your authorized books that support this belief. There are however some of your scholars who rejected these texts and affirmed that the Qur'aan is intact, though we do not know whether they did so in line with your principle of Holy Hypocrisy.

Nevertheless, my personal view is that your claim that there is no alteration in the Qur'aan disagrees with the fundamental principle of the Imamite Shi'ite. For, according to this fundamental principle, the Prophet's Companions who compiled the Qur'aan were apostates. The implication is: how could apostates be trusted in any matter, let alone in compilation of the Qur'aan?”

Anyway, all of us here agreed that there is no alteration, addition or omission in the Qur'aan and that anyone who makes any contrary claim is a disbeliever and apostate. Is there any opposition to this conclusion?”

The audience: “No opposition.”

I continued: Allah says in His glorious Book:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

'You are the best of nations ever raised for mankind.'

Concerning the above verse, al-Qummi quoted one of your 'infallible' imams as saying: "How could they be the best people since they had killed the leader of the faithful Ali and his son Husayn? The correct version of the verse rather is: 'You are the best 'imams' – meaning the twelve imams of *'Imamiyah al-Ithna 'Ashariyyah'* – ever raised up for mankind.'

Since you do not concur with him in the authenticity of this narration, what then is your view?"

One of them: "But we have told you that only the Sayyid could answer this question. By Allah, engaging in debate with you is useless!"

I said: "I do not want to go back to the issue of the Qur'aan. We all agreed on its intactness. Therefore, we should reject all those fake narrations. Do we all agree on this?"

(There was silence)

I said: "We all agreed that the verse (3:110) is intact as it has been revealed?"

(Silence)

I continued: "Haven't we agreed on the intactness of the Qur'aan without any alteration, addition or omission?!"

One of them: "Yes. We said that."

I said: "*Alhamdulillah!* Then, is this verse not the greatest proof of the merit of the Companions ﷺ and Allah's praise for them, describing them as the best people ever raised up for the entire mankind?!"

Is it reasonable to believe that a people praised in such glowing terms would, all of a sudden, apostatize with the exception of only some ten persons, according to the best estimate?!

Is it reasonable to believe that an entire community that numbered 100,000 during the farewell pilgrimage and among whom were more than two thousand eminent Companions from among the Emigrants and the Helpers that they would not stand by the truth but only few men who could be counted on fingers? Does a community such as this then deserve to be called

'the best people ever raised up for mankind'?)!

Therefore, dear brothers, you should either agree with al-Qummi in his interpretation of the above verse, in which case we will be upon a religion and you upon another and not share the religion of Islam that is based upon the Qur'aan with us. Or, according to your claim that the Qur'aan is free from any alteration, agree with the verse as it is: "You are the best of all people", which refers to the Prophet's ﷺ noble Companions ﷺ unto whom he recited the verse when it was revealed to him.

The Companions ﷺ are rightly and deservedly called the best of all people; for, all those who came after them are indebted to them. Allah says,

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا
بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

"And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.'" (Al-Hashr 59:10)

The Companions ﷺ indeed were the foremost in righteousness, intelligence and faith. They are the best of the best in the light of Allah's word,

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

'You are the best of nations ever raised for mankind.'

Therefore, you should either agree with al-Qummi and become disbelievers or agree with me that the verse is intact and refers to the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ and be saved."

One of them: "Maybe, the Companions were the best of mankind when the verse was revealed and later they apostatized, changed the Prophet's ﷺ instructions, denied Ali ﷺ his right and attempted to kill him and harm members of his household after the Prophet's ﷺ death.

There are Ahadith reported by al-Bukhari – and according to you, all the

Ahadith of al-Bukhari are authentic – in which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that the Companions would apostatize after his death and that they would be prevented from coming to his *Hawdh* (Pond) on the Day of Resurrection. The Prophet ﷺ will then say: ‘O Lord, my Companions!’ It will be said, ‘You do not know what they did after you had left. They had turned back on their heels.’ The Prophet ﷺ will then say: ‘Far removed, far removed (from mercy), those who changed (their religion) after me.’ The Prophet ﷺ then added: ‘So I did not see anyone of them escaping except a few who were like camels without a shepherd.’

The above Hadith indicated that the Companions changed their religion after the Prophet's ﷺ death and that none of them remained upon the truth but a few who were like camels without a shepherd, i.e. those who supported Ali and members of his household ﷺ.”

Another man from among them (supporting the previous speaker): “Yes. May Allah bless you! All of the Companions apostatised after the Prophet's ﷺ death. (He then started saying in a sad tone and weeping): They perpetrated injustice against Imaam Ali ؑ, they deprived him of his right, they wanted to kill him and set his house ablaze while the Prophet's ﷺ daughter ؑ was there. When she came out, they flogged her so mercilessly that she had miscarriage and later died. They killed Husayn ؑ, the Prophet's grandson and smashed his head...”

I interrupted: “Brothers, when are we going to stop repeating these fables and lies against the Prophet's Companions ؑ, the best Companions any Prophet could have and the best of all people after the Prophets?!! When are we going to stop these fairy-tales that go against the Qur'aan which we claim to believe in?!!

Brothers, use your senses to ponder over these tales and lies that are insulting to Ali ؑ before any of the Companions ؑ. There was nothing between the Companions ؑ and Ali ؑ and members of his family but love. He had named his sons after Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan ؑ. He married his daughter from his wife Faatimah ؑ to 'Umar ؑ. He was the judge of al-Madeenah during the caliphate of 'Umar ؑ and never hesitated to advise him sincerely.

He was always full of praise for the Emigrants and the Helpers, and would

criticise his followers for not emulating the Companions ﷺ in their sincerity, worship and support for their religion.

He recognised the consensus of the Emigrants and the Helpers and believed that they held the right of allegiance. He believed that Allah would be pleased with whoever they pledged allegiance to.

Brothers, all that is narrated concerning rows between the Companions ﷺ and Ali ﷺ and his family was not worth the paper in which it was written. It is detrimental to Islam and the Muslims and the majority of it is error, disbelief and transgression against the honour of the Companions ﷺ who are sincere and righteous believers.

Fear Allah concerning the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ and friends who believed in him, supported him and sacrificed their lives and wealth seeking nothing but Allah's pleasure.

Brothers, if not for the Companions ﷺ – after Allah – we would not have known Islam!”

The first speaker: “Leave that aside. Do you believe in al-Bukhari or not?”

I responded: “The most authentic book after the Book of Allah is Saheeh al-Bukhari. The Ummah accept its authenticity, and its Ahadith are accepted.”

The same speaker: “There are Ahadith in Saheeh al-Bukhari which declared the Companions as disbelievers and apostates and you are saying all its Ahadith are authentic.”

(He went to the library and brought Saheeh al-Bukhari)

I said: “Brothers, fear Allah concerning Imaam al-Bukhari. He served the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. Far be it from him that he should regard the Companions ﷺ as infidels while he had filled his collection with Ahadith on the merits of the Companions ﷺ!

The same speaker opened the book and offered that I read. I insisted that he should read. He then read: “Listen to the first narration. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ: ‘There will come to me some people whom I will recognize, and they will recognize me, but a barrier will be placed between me and them. I will say: ‘They are of me.’ It will be said, ‘You do not know what they innovated in

the religion after you left'. I will say, 'Far removed, far removed (from mercy), those who changed (their religion) after me.'"

I said: "Did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, 'They are my Companions.'?"

The speaker (after looking into the book): "He said, 'They are of me.'"

I said: "This Hadith is a proof against you. You insist on misconstruing the Hadith. It is known to you that the Prophet ﷺ told Faatimah ؓ and Ali ؓ, 'You are of me', and he said the same thing about their sons.

So if you insist on your misconstruing of the Hadith, his word, 'they are of me' applied to members of his household more than his Companions ؓ.

But we – the *Ahlu-Sunnah* – do not subscribe to this misconstrual. For, we love and respect members of the Prophet's ﷺ household and we invoke Allah's pleasure on all of them. But you exaggerate in your love for some of them and you shamelessly disrespect others.

Nevertheless, the Hadith in question neither refers to the noble Companions ؓ nor to pure members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. Rather, the standard belief according to the *Ahlu-Sunnah* including al-Bukhari is that all the leaders of the Companions ؓ, including Ali ؓ shall be in Paradise, and that members of the Prophet's household, especially his wives who are mothers of the faithful and his daughters and grandsons, shall also be in Paradise.

The Hadith does not, in any way, diminish the status of the Companions ؓ or members of the Prophet's ﷺ household. It is only meant to warn and exhort them not be distracted away from righteous deeds by the materials of this world.

If the Hadith has to be avoidably referred to any group, it should definitely not be the Eminent Ten (*Ashara Mubashara*) nor the veterans of Badr nor the participants in the Allegiance of Pleasure nor the Emigrants who Allah attests to their sincerity nor the Helpers who Allah calls the successful nor even those who emigrated before the Conquest of Makkah and fought and those who emigrated thereafter. For, Allah has promised great reward for all of them.

The same speaker: "Leave that one. There is another Hadith in which the Companions were explicitly mentioned. (He then read): The Messenger of

Allah ﷻ said: ‘On the Day of Resurrection a group of my Companions will come to me, but will be driven away from the *Hauz* (the Prophet’s ﷺ blessed Lake-Fountain), and I will say, ‘O Lord (those are) my Companions!’ It will be said, ‘You have no knowledge as to what they innovated after you left; they regressed (i.e. reverted from Islam).’”

I think this Hadith is clear about the Companions that they apostatised. The Hadith, as you can see, is self-explanatory. And it is a proof against you.”

(Those who are present supported their man. But I was able to compose myself, having full confidence in Allah.)

I said: “What do you understand from the Prophet’s ﷺ saying, ‘they regressed’?”

The speaker: “It means: they apostatised and reverted from Islam to disbelief.”

I said: “Who are the ‘Companions’ who reverted from Islam after the Prophet’s death?”

The speaker: “All the Companions except Imaam Ali ؑ and his supporters.”

I said: “How many were they?”

He said: “They were many but I do not know their exact number.”

I said: “You lied. Narrations from your authorised books indicate that they were only three: al-Miqdaad, Abu Dharr and Salmaan ؓ, and that ‘Ammar ؓ initially turned away and then came back and that the fifth of them was Ali ؑ himself. After researching your books, I found out that the Companions whom your narrations did not regard as apostates were some ten, at most.”

The speaker: “I do not know what that has to do with the Hadith!”

I said: “You will know now. Tell me: who are the leaders of the apostates?”

He said: “They are: Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan, Talhah and Mu’aawiyah.”

I said: “Is that what you understood from the Hadith of al-Bukhaari?”

He said: “Yes.”

I then said: “What you understood is then different from what al-Bukhari

himself understood. He has recorded in the same book many Ahadith about the merits of all these Companions ﷺ and many others.

He has recorded the Prophet's saying about his Companions ﷺ, "The best people are my generation followed by those who came after them." This Hadith confirmed the verse:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

'You are the best of nations ever raised for mankind.'

And the verse:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا

"Thus We have made you a just (and the best) nation."

The Hadith is also supported by many verses in which the noble Companions ﷺ were praised and regarded as sincere and successful.

Not only that, Imaam al-Bukhari recorded Ahadith in which Abu Bakr ﷺ –whom you malign – is regarded as a truthful, righteous and pious leader. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'If I had to choose an intimate friend, I would have appointed Abu Bakr as my intimate friend. But he is my brother and companion.'

The Prophet ﷺ also commanded that Abu Bakr ﷺ be asked to lead the people in prayer when he was on his last illness. It was on this same occasion that he commanded 'Aishah ﷺ: 'Call for me Abu Bakr and your brother that I may write a book. For, I fear that a covetous person might come forward and say, 'I deserve (the leadership).' But Allah and the believers would prefer only Abu Bakr.'

And about 'Umar ﷺ, al-Bukhari reported, 'There are men among the children of Israel who were given inspiration though they were not Prophets. If there were to be such a person among my Ummah, it would certainly be 'Umar.'

And he reported another Hadith on the merits of 'Umar ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'While I was sleeping, I saw myself drinking (i.e. milk), and I was so contented that I saw the milk flowing through my nails. Then I gave (the milk) to 'Umar.' They (i.e. the Companions) asked, 'What do you interpret it

as?' He said, 'Knowledge.'

Al-Bukhari recorded in his collection many Ahadith on the merits of the Companions ﷺ and he would invoke Allah's pleasure on them all. Therefore, his understanding of this Ahadith is absolutely different from yours."

The speaker: "We are not obliged to follow the Ahadith collected by al-Bukhari. For, we do not regard him as an authority. We are only citing his Ahadith as proofs against you because you regard him as an authority.

I said: "Subhaanallaah! You people are just like Jews who believed in a section of the Scripture and disbelieved in others. So, you should believe in al-Bukhari as a whole or reject it as a whole, if not you are among those Allah refers to in His saying:

أَفْتَرُمُونِ بَعْضَ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ
إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ
بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

'Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment.' (Al-Baqarah 2:85)

The same speaker: "We have our own narrations and Ahadith which we believe in and which were reported by our own scholars and taken from 'the knowledge of the members of the Prophet's ﷺ family'. They are all recorded in our authorized books."

I said: "Where are your so-called 'authorized books' in which more than two thousand narrations attribute lies to the Qur'aan? Is it then farfetched to accept that similar spurious narrations might have been recorded concerning the Prophet's ﷺ pure wives and commander of the faithful, Ali, and the members of his household ﷺ?!"

Brothers, the one who could tell lies about the Qur'aan could definitely do so about just anything. If you are not ashamed to tell lies about the Qur'aan, then you can tell lies about any other thing with greater brazenness! The

Messenger of Allah ﷺ had said, 'If you have no shame, then you can do whatever you like.'

One of them (rather feeling incensed): "Look. We have been tolerant with you, considering that you are our guest. But you are not acknowledging this, and you are not using the proper method of debate."

I said: "What happened?! We are not in a quarrel! We are in a scholarly debate seeking for the truth and every one is defending what he regards as the truth!

We are not here to flatter ourselves. We are here to show the truth through debate and presentation of proofs. Your colleague would cite al-Bukhari as a proof on one occasion and on another he would claim that he is not obliged to accept the Hadith of al-Bukhari. He would accept some and reject some as if Islam is based upon his whims and desires. Then which of the two of us is not using the proper methodology of debate?!"

The same person: "All right. Do not forget that you have not responded to the Hadith in which it is explicitly mentioned that the Companions have altered (the religion) and become apostates."

I said: "Yes, we are back at the scholarly debate. Go back to the Hadith. Did the Prophet ﷺ say, 'Most of my Companions would come to me', or he said, 'A *raht* of my Companions would come to me'?"

He looked up at the book and said: "He said, 'a *raht*'."

I said: "Do you know what a '*raht*' means?"

He said: "No."

I said: "In the Arabic language, a '*raht*' means a number of people from three to ten. This indicates the fewness of those who would be prevented from reaching the Lake-Fountain. This contradicts your claim that most of the Companions ﷺ apostatized after the Prophet's ﷺ death and that only a few of them remained upon Islam.

This is in spite of the fact that the Companions ﷺ numbered approximately 100,000 during the Farewell Pilgrimage of whom more than ten thousand are prominent and two thousand are elder Companions ﷺ.

Therefore, the Hadith explains that a '*raht*' would be prevented from reaching the Lake-Fountain and you are claiming that it is only a '*raht*' that will reach it. What a contradiction!! You have categorically misrepresented the Hadith!"

The speaker: "Now listen to the third Hadith, which is the clearest proof that all the Companions apostatized but only a few."

I said: "Go on reading the Hadith, though I believe that it is impossible that the authentic narrations of al-Bukhari would contradict clear verses of the Qur'aan."

The speaker: "Al-Bukhari reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'While I was sleeping, a group (of my followers were brought close to me), and when I recognized them, someone (an angel) came out and said (to them), 'Come along.' I asked, 'Where?' He said, 'To the Fire, by Allah!' I asked, 'What is wrong with them?' He said, 'They turned apostate after you left.' Then behold! (Another) group (of my followers) were brought close to me, and when I recognized them, someone (an angel) came out and he said (to them), 'Come along.' I asked, 'Where?' He said, 'To the Fire, by Allah.' I asked, 'What is wrong with them?' He said, 'They turned apostate after you left.' So I did not see anyone of them escaping except a few who were like camels without a shepherd.'

So the Prophet's saying, 'So I did not see anyone of them escaping except a few who were like camels without a shepherd', indicates that very few of them shall be saved and they are Ali and his supporters."

I said: "*Laa hawla wala qawwata illaa billaah!* Evil circulates in the people of whims and desires as the blood circulates in the veins. This leads them to twist every proof that does not agree with their desire. Allah says,

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ
وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (٢٣)

'Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his ilâh (god), and Allah knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight? Who then will guide him after

Allah? Will you not then remember?' (Al-Jaathiyah 45:23)

Brothers, the clear verses of the Qur'aan testifies to the sincerity and success of the Companions ﷺ; that they would have the reward, that they would be given authority in this world and that they would have Allah's pleasure on the Day of Resurrection.

Listen to Allah's words:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (١٠٠)

***'And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhâjirûn (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansâr (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhâjirûn) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.'* (At-Tawbah 9:100)**

Who are the foremost to embrace Islam if not Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Uthmaan, Talhah, Abu Ubaidah, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaas and Sa'eed ibn Zayd ﷺ?!

Who are the foremost to embrace Islam if they are not the earlier emigrants to Abyssinia?! Who are they if they are not Emigrants to al-Madeenah, the veterans of Badr and the participants in the *Bay'atur-Ridwaan* (Pledge of Pleasure)?!

Who are they if not the Helpers about whom Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

'And (it is also for) those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have

no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banî An-Nadîr), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves even though they were in need of that.’ (Al-Hashr 59:9)?

Brothers, an unbiased reflection on these verses will allow us to realize that they attest to the faith and righteousness of the generality of the Companions ﷺ, and that Allah is pleased with them and has promised them Paradise and great victory.

Brothers, is it then reasonable – in the light of the above clear verses – to think that all the Companions ﷺ, with the exception of only five, apostatized?!!

Then, is this outrageous belief a suitable reward for a people who fought in the way of Allah, conquered lands for Islam and hoisted up the standard of Tawheed?!! Or their reward should be to love them, make invocations for them and ask Allah to forgive us and them and to make us join them in the Gardens of Bliss?!!

Listen to how Allah describes the Emigrants and the Helpers among them:

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ
 اللَّهُ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا
 الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ
 حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ
 نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٩) وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ
 لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ
 آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٠)

‘(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him, and helping Allah (i.e. helping His religion) and His Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) Such are indeed

the truthful (to what they say).

And (it is also for) those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banî An-Nadîr), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.

And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.' (Al-Hashr 59:8-10)

In the first verse, Allah describes the generality of the Emigrants as truthful. Is it then reasonable to think that a people whom Allah describes as truthful would be liars, traitors or apostates – considering the fact that Allah knows all that is hidden and apparent and has the knowledge of the unseen?!!

In the second verse, Allah describes the Helpers as successful; and the real success is to die in the state of being a Muslim. Is it then reasonable to think that Allah would testify to the success of a people who would later renounce Islam and die as apostates?!!

In the third verse, Allah praises the *Ahlu-Sunnah* who seek forgiveness for themselves and for those who preceded them in faith and denounce those who insult and curse the Emigrants and the Helpers and regard them as infidels.

Brothers, listen again to Allah's word in which He promises all the Companions ﷺ an excellent reward:

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا يَسْتَوِي
مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا
مِنْ بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا وَكَلَّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (١٠)

'And what is the matter with you that you spend not in the Cause of

***Allah? And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later). Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to all Allah has promised the best (reward). And Allah is well aware of what you do.'* (Al-Hadeed 57:10)**

In the above verse, Allah promised all the Companions ﷺ – those who spent their wealth and fought in the way of Allah before and after the conquest of Makkah – excellent reward.

Now tell me: how could Allah promise these Companions ﷺ excellent reward and yet you want to base your religion upon insulting and cursing these Companions ﷺ and regarding them as apostates?! Are you claiming that you know better than Allah?!!

Then listen to another verse:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا (١٨)

***'Indeed, Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave their Bai'ah (pledge) to you (O Muhammad (peace be upon him)) under the tree: He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down As-Sakînah (calmness and tranquility) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory.'* (Al-Fat-h 48:18)**

Do you know the name given to this 'pledge'? It was called *Bay'atur-Ridwaan* (the Pledge of Pleasure) because Allah was pleased with those who participated in it and they were 1,400 Companions ﷺ.

How could Allah express His pleasure with a people while you regard the same people as apostates?! Are you claiming to know better than Allah? Won't you reason?!!

Listen to another verse:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ
 وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ
 بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (٥٥)

***'Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them leadership on the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice the religion that He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely change their state of fear to a state of security (provided) they worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me.'* (An-Noor 24:55)**

This verse shows that Allah promised the righteous believers – with whose religion He is pleased – authority on the earth.

A keen observer of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ would realize that Allah gave them great authority on the earth. They spread Islam to all the corners of the earth and they ruled the land with the teachings of Islam. They worshiped Allah alone and hoisted high the banner of Tawheed. All this indicates that Allah was pleased with their religion, faith and righteous deeds. That is why he gave them authority in the land.

Brothers, many are the verses that start with 'O you who have believed'. When these verses were being revealed, their first addressees were the Prophet's Companions. This implies that Allah attested to their being believers. Then how could Allah call them believers and you call them disbelievers, relying on superstitious and spurious narrations?!

As regard the Hadith of al-Bukhari quoted above, I would like to add that understanding of a Hadith should be in the light of the general texts of the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. The Qur'aanic texts clearly indicate that the Companions ﷺ are the truthful and the successful ones, and that they were the ones whom Allah promised excellent reward and authority. Al-Bukhari also reported Ahadith on the merits – of the Companions ﷺ – both the Emigrants and the Helpers – and their excellences. A quick glance at the Book of the Merits of the Companions in Saheeh al-Bukhari would show us the

status of the Companions ﷺ in the estimation of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.*

This general belief concerning the uprightness and excellence of the Companions ﷺ is the only basis through which all other apparently contradicting texts should be viewed. And when a deep study is undertaken, it becomes clear that there is no contradiction at all.

Someone may ask: What then is the meaning of the Prophet's ﷺ saying: 'So I did not see anyone of them escaping except a few who were like camels without a shepherd'?

The answer is very easy. It is in many ways, the most significant of which is the following:

At the closer study of the clause, 'of them; and the entire context, we will realize that it refers to those who reneged. It follows then that those who reneged are a few individuals from among a large multitude of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ, and that from these renegades; only very few will be forgiven and saved.

And if one asks: who are those who 'would renounce their religion', according to the Hadith?

The answer is: They are definitely not the Companions ﷺ who the Qur'aan and the Sunnah has commended as pure, righteous and successful and who were promised excellent reward and Allah's pleasure. They are rather Musaylamah the Liar and his cohorts who renounced Islam after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and whom Abu Bakr ﷺ fought.

This is in addition to the fact that there were some individuals who pretended to be Muslims during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ but were actually hypocrites unknown to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This clause might also apply to them.

**There are many Ahadith that show the excellent qualities of the Companions. A prominent hadith in this regard is the Prophet's saying: "The stars are a source of security for the sky and when the stars disappear there comes to the sky, i.e. (it meets the same fate) as it has been promised (it would plunge into darkness). And I am a source of safety and security to my Companions and when I would go away there would fall to the lot (of my Companions) as they have been promised with and my Companions are a source of security for the Ummah and as they would go there would fall to the lot of my Ummah as (its people) have been promised." (Reported by Muslim)*

(After I finished this clarification, their speaker closed Saheeh al-Bukhari, feeling dejected and sad. Sense of defeat could be vividly seen on the faces of his colleagues who were there.) And Allah's word exactly fits them,

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا (٨١)

“And proclaim: The truth has come and falsehood has perished. Surely, falsehood is ever bound to perish.” (Al-Israa 17:81)

This reminded me of Allah's saying:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا (٨٢)

“And We send down from the Qur'aan that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers, and it increases the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers) nothing but loss.” (Al-Israa 17:82)

(Their speaker then rose up to return the Saheeh al-Bukhari into the library while the others remained silent.)

A commoner from among them suddenly broke the silence and mockingly said: “Allah is pleased with all the Companions including even Mu'aawiyah?!”

I said: “I would like to ask you a question.”

The commoner: “What is the question?”

I said: “Will you be pleased if your father is insulted?”

The commoner: “No.”

I said: “Will you be pleased if your paternal uncle is insulted?”

The commoner: “No.”

I said: “Will you be pleased if your maternal uncle, your mother's brother is insulted?”

The commoner: “No.”

I then faced the audience and said: “None of us would be pleased to hear his maternal uncle being insulted, and Mu'aawiyah ؓ, who this man is mocking is the maternal uncle of the believers because he is the brother of the Prophet's ؐ wife, mother of the faithful, Umm Habeebah Ramlah ؓ.

In addition to this, Mu'aawiyah ؓ was one of the Prophet's ؐ scribes. He was famous for his deliberateness, magnanimity, intelligence and resoluteness. He is deservedly the best of all of the Muslim kings.

It was during his reign that Allah gave honour and power to this Ummah. He established the first Muslim navy, Allah's Word prevailed and the religion of Islam triumphed over other religions.”

The commoner (angrily): “We cannot keep quiet while Allah's pleasure is being invoked on Mu'aawiyah! (He faced me). You can then invoke Allah's pleasure upon Yazeed (son of Mu'aawiyah) also! Invoke Allah's pleasure upon Yazeed now!”

I said: “The truth must be followed.”

The commoner: “Which truth? You have actually rejected the truth!”

I said: “Wait a minute and let me finish my word. You can thereafter contradict me with your proofs if you have any. The truth must be followed.

As regards the row that happened between Ali ؓ and Mu'aawiyah ؓ, Ali ؓ was the nearest of the two parties to the truth and he was supported by the truth. There were, however, some unclear issues that led to opposition from Talhah ؓ, Zubair ؓ and the mother of the faithful 'Aaishah ؓ. If not for the evil machinations of the vicious crisis-mongers, no companion would have raised his sword against another companion.

I am saying this to affirm some facts:

One: The fourth Khalif after 'Uthmaan ؓ was Ali ؓ. He was supported by the Islamic rules and he was on the correct side in the conflict.* If the crisis were to repeat itself today, I would proudly be on the side of Ali ؓ.

**The Ahlus-Sunnah are of the view that Ali ؓ was on the right side of the conflict; but many of the scholars believed that maintaining neutrality and not joining any of the two sides in fighting was the safest stand.*

This does not necessarily mean that those who opposed him among the Companions ﷺ were absolutely wrong. There were strong unclear issues that make the opposition of some Companions ﷺ to him, in some way, justified. But we do not malign them for that or disparage them. For, their actions were due to some *ijtihad* they made. And if a Muslim makes *Ijtihad* (jurisprudential deduction) and arrives at a wrong decision, he would still have a reward.

Two: The strongest of all these unclear matters was the existence of the leaders of evil and mischief who endeavored to create crisis in Ali's ﷺ camp. They were the masterminds of murders and dissension.

Ali ﷺ was excused for their existence in his camp because they were so powerful and resilient. They did not give him time to deal with them.

Three: All those who opposed Ali ﷺ – from among the Companions ﷺ – only exercised their *ijtihad*, though they were mistaken. We, therefore, beseech Allah to give them their reward and to give Ali ﷺ his double reward, in accordance with the Prophet's ﷺ saying.

Four: The Companions ﷺ never wanted to fight one another. They were too great to do that. They rather maintained cordial relationship among themselves. But the mischief-makers and the killers of Uthmaan ﷺ would not allow that cordiality to abide. The Companions ﷺ were as innocent in that crisis as the wolf was in the blood of Prophet Yusuf ﷺ. This is the reality which we believe in.

Five: The foundations of evil and mischief in this crisis were the followers of Abdullaah ibn Saba', who started the crisis by murdering 'Uthmaan ﷺ and after him Zubair ﷺ and Talhah ﷺ. They then sowed two poisonous seeds: *Tashayyu'* (Partisanship) and *Khurooj* (Revolt). The Shi'ites (who claim to be Ali's ﷺ supporters) exaggerated in their respect for Ali ﷺ, while the *Khawaarij* (those who revolted against the authority of Ali ﷺ) killed him.

Six: The *Ahlu-Sunnah* believe that Ali ﷺ was the nearest to the truth of the two warring sides and that his disagreement with some of his fellow Companions ﷺ did not make them impious – as opposed to the opinions of the erroneous groups.

Seven: The *Ahlu-Sunnah* invoke Allah's pleasure on all the Prophet's ﷺ

Companions ﷺ with no exception. They believe that they are all excellent and noble people and that they will be forgiven and shown mercy on the Day of Resurrection. All the followers of the Sunnah bear no ill-feeling against any of the Companions ﷺ. We beseech Allah to resurrect us in their group.

The commoner: "What do you have to say about Yazeed ibn Mu'aawiyah? Invoke Allah's pleasure upon him so that we can know your true picture!"

I said: "I can neither wade into the issue of Yazeed nor endorse him being insulted. The scholars of his time had different opinions about him. Some of them like Ibn Abbaas and Muhammad ibn Ali (Ibn al-Hanafiyyah) praised him. Some scholars attested to his uprightness and refuted all the injustices attributed to him. And some others did not say anything about him, adhering to Allah's saying:

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ (١٣٤)

***"That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do."* (Al-Baqarah 2:134)**

As far as I know, none of those who criticized him did endorse him being insulted or cursed."

The same man: "I don't know how I can endure this. This man (Yazeed) killed Husayn ﷺ!"

I said: "Allah honored Husayn ﷺ with martyrdom. But who killed him? His killers were those who deceived him and invited him to come to the so-called well-armed army. They sent him tens of letters. They then killed him for a paltry sum.

As for Yazeed, he did not order the killing of Husayn ﷺ, as far as I know. Rather, he was very distressed by his murder. It was a criminal called 'Ibn Jawshan' who killed him because he hated members of the Prophet's ﷺ family. He killed him in order to gain the favor of Ubaydullaah ibn Ziyaad, Yazeed's governor in Kufah.

Those who set out to fight Husayn ؑ did so in their own interpretation of the saying of his grandfather ؑ: 'Different evils will make their appearance in the near future. Anyone who tries to disrupt the affairs of this Ummah while they are united you should strike him with the sword whoever he be.'*

And his ؑ saying: 'When oath of allegiance has been taken for two caliphs; kill the one for whom the oath was taken later.'*

So they set out to prevent him from claiming the caliphate, though in his own estimation, that was an act of martyrdom. He shall, therefore, be with his grandfather in Paradise as one of the two leaders of its youth.

What I can only say regarding the crisis of that time is Allah's word:

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ (١٣٤)

“That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do.” (Al-Baqarah 2:134)

Allah knows better about them and their intentions. It is only the people of desire and error who live off lies woven around these crises and regard them as the fundamentals of their belief.

Brothers, let me ask you a question: What is the benefit of recalling those pains and crises that we did not witness? Allah did not command us to delve into them. He only commanded us to worship Him alone, obey His Messenger ؑ and follow the path of the Prophet's ؑ Companions ؑ. And He commanded us to love members of the Prophet's ؑ household. Couldn't we allow ourselves to be united by these commandments instead of delving in differences and crises that brings us no good?!”

One of them: “This is not correct! Allegiance to members of the Prophet's ؑ family necessitates renouncing their enemies. And their enemies are the Prophet's ؑ Companions upon whom you are invoking Allah's pleasure.”

*Both Ahadith are reported in Sahih Muslim

I said: “Do you know their real enemies? They are those who exaggerate in their respect for them; they were those who inconvenienced Ali ؑ; they were those who set a trap for Husayn ؑ and invited him to come and then sold him off for a paltry sum.

Do you know their enemies? They are those who abuse the most favorite members of the Prophet's family: 'Aishah ؑ and Hafsa ؑ, who are his wives. They are those who insult the Prophet's ؑ Companions ؑ, who, together with members of the Prophet's ؑ household, built the glory of Islam.

These are their real enemies. And I am clearing myself from these enemies who pretend to love members of the Prophet's ؑ household while they engage in vices such as deception, hypocrisy, abuse and cursing.”

One of them: “We have arrived at a closed way at which there is no more benefit in the debate. We can endure anything from you except your invoking pleasure on Mu'aawiyah, Yazeed and Bani Umayyah. The matters have now become clear. No more need for debate!”

I said (after noticing that the time for Fajr prayer was close): “The issue is not about Yazeed, but your stand in respect to the Prophet's ؑ Companions ؑ makes me doubt your adherence to Islam as a religion.

What is successively narrated according to your authority and ours is that the Qur'aan was collected by Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan ؑ. And you regard these men as leaders of disbelief and misguidance. We are now in front of absolute issues!’

One: Our stand concerning the Companions.

Two: Our stand concerning the Qur'aan.

The two are intertwined. We should either declare that the Companions ؑ apostatized and, at the same time, hold that the Qur'aan had been altered because it was compiled by the Companions ؑ and apostates could not be entrusted with preserving the Book of Allah; or we should clearly state that the Qur'aan was intact and guarded against any alteration, thereby showing gratitude to those who compiled it and acknowledging their due honour and leadership, especially since the Qur'aan itself praised them. That is how we

can find a sound harmony that all right thinking people would agree to.

Therefore, you should make one of the above two declarations. If you make the first declaration, then it becomes clear that you have nothing to do with this our religion, as it is clear to every sensible person.

And if you make the second declaration, then you are among the Muslims, and consequently, that erroneous foundation – including regarding the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ as disbelievers and apostates –, upon which your predecessors built the religion of the *Imamites*, is then destroyed.

One of them (who appeared to be on the verge of exhaustion): “There is no correlation between the two things. Allah has undertaken the protection of the Qur'aan by Himself. The Companions had done nothing in this regard. They rather apostatized after the Qur'aan had been revealed after the death of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Qur'aan had been compiled during the Prophet's ﷺ life. It is narrated in the Hadith that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ raised up the Qur'aan at *Ghadeer Khum* and said, 'I am leaving for you two things; you will never go astray as long as you hold unto them: The Book of Allah and my family.'”

I said: “The speaker's statement reminds me of the saying of one of our righteous predecessors: ‘If I engage in debate with one thousand scholars, I would defeat them. But if one ignorant person argues me, he will exhaust me.’ He said this because you will be at your wits' end in finding intellectual means to convince an ignorant person. For, he understands nothing.

I am really sad that our debate can descend so low to this level of triviality and ignorance.

Be that as it may, I would like to tell the speaker in unequivocal terms: The successive, and indisputable narrations in your books and ours indicate that the Qur'aan was compiled by the Companions ﷺ.

It is also indisputably reported, according to our sources and yours, that it was Abu Bakr ﷺ who compiled it following the advice of 'Umar ﷺ, and that it was then compiled on objects such as palm leaves, planks and stone plates.

During the caliphate of 'Uthmaan ﷺ, he ordered that it be written in a book form. He then made four copies thereof and sent each to major Muslim

regions. He ordered that whatever was left in people's hand should be burnt so that there would no discrepancies in the Qur'aan.

Thus did the three leaders of the Companions ﷺ compile the Qur'aan and get their reward in doing so.

It is also indisputable according to your sources and ours that the Qur'aan that we have today is the complete one compiled by 'Uthmaan ﷺ. We believe that no letter is added or omitted. And it is also a copy that all the Companions ﷺ agreed upon.

And back to the brother who spoke without knowledge, none of the authentic narrations of the Hadith you quoted ever mentioned that Prophet ﷺ held the Qur'aan, that was still being revealed, up in his hand.

By making the claim you just made now, you are destroying a very significant part of the narrations and beliefs of the *Imaamiyyah al-Ithnaa 'Ashariyyah* which you follow. For, your books were filled with narrations that claim that, after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, Ali ﷺ spent six months in seclusion compiling the Qur'aan in Faatimah's ﷺ room.

There were other narrations also from your books that claim that when he finished, he presented it to Abu Bakr ﷺ and 'Umar ﷺ for endorsement and both of them refused. He then vowed that it would never be seen again until the advent of 'al-Qaaim' – who shall be one of the descendants of Ali ﷺ – at the End of Time. That is what your books claim.

Which claim then shall we accept?!

Shall we accept the clearly mischievous claim of your scholars which casts a great doubt on the authenticity and divine protection of the Qur'aan and cancels the wisdom for which it was revealed or the obviously ignorant and spurious claim of this brother that contradicts all the authentic narrations from our sources and yours?!

Or we shall follow the clear truth that those who compiled the Qur'aan were the Prophet's ﷺ noble, pious, righteous and successful Companions led by Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan ﷺ?!!

In short, we are at crossroads: the road of Islam, which is the path of guidance and truth; and the road of disbelief, which is the path of falsehood.

With all praise due to Allah, I have explained to you the two opposing paths. It is now up to you to take the one you like

The path of the truth and guidance is clearly defined and the path of falsehood and error is also clearly defined so that those who were to be destroyed for their rejecting the truth might be destroyed after clear evidence has been shown to them; and those who were to live as believers might live after clear evidence has been shown to them. “

(After saying this, I got up to leave because the time of the commencement of the Fajr prayer was near. It was then that my friend who convinced me to come rose up and said): “May Allah reward you with good, Abu Abdullaah (that is my nickname). All praise is due to Allah who revealed the truth and made the falsehood vanish through you.”

He then faced the gathering and said: “I have been with you for four months and listened to you throughout that period. You also should listen to me now:

For these months that I had been with you, I discovered that you are devils in human skin who create misgivings in a person mind concerning his religion. Your way is to remove a person from certainty of his belief in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ into uncertainty.

I know you as a group who removes a person from a good opinion about the sincere servants of Allah into having ill-feelings about them. I know you as a group who turns a person from a well-mannered individual into a person whose main character is to curse and abuse others.

Throughout the period in which I was with you— and I wish I never met you — I wished I was never born to this world because of the doubt, confusion and error you made me live in. But now, that heavy darkness has been removed from my heart and eyes and I have realized your true colours.

I feel obliged to tell you this:

- ✿ Our religion is about worship and good manners, and not cursing and abusing others.
- ✿ Our religion is about clarity and transparency and not falsehood, hypocrisy and deception.
- ✿ Our religion is about worship, courage and gallantry and not cowardice

and deceit.

- ✿ Our religion is about the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and not myths, superstitions and spurious narrations.

The place where you are now is the farthest place from the guidance of Allah's houses in which He permits that His Name should be remembered and elevated. You have filled it with images, thereby making it look like churches.”

(He then turned to one of those sitting there and said): “Allah has removed all my doubts and replaced them with certainty and faith. I wish for you the same of Allah's favor that I wish for myself. So, save your own soul and come with us, and do not stay with the disbelievers.”

(He turned to them again and said): “I do not know you and you do not know me. I will never stay with you and you should never stay with me!”

(He then offered me his hand and said): “O, you are the one through whom Allah resurrected me from death and saved me from an imminent destruction. Let us leave this 'church'.”

(At the door, when he saw the sky he said): “All praise is due to Allah Who removed me from darkness to light!”

We went to the Masjid together and performed the Fajr prayer and after that he asked me: “What is your view about these people? Are they disbelievers or apostates?”

I replied: “They are rather disbelievers whose disbelief is very complex. The Imamite Shi'ites were keen to be a composite of all kinds of disbelief professed by all the disbelieving peoples, all kinds of polytheism of the polytheists, all kinds of exaggerations of the Jews and the Christians and all kinds of heresy and errors professed by all erroneous sects.

They emulate the Jews in their meanness and the Christians in their error and excessiveness. Most of their beliefs are borrowed from the Fire-worshippers and their Holy Hypocrisy and hypocrisy are 'cloned' from the heretics.

My brother, if you want me to give you a thousand proofs that each one of their teachings is enough to declare them as disbelievers, I can do so, with all praise due to Allah. However, it is enough for you to know that their disbelief

revolves around the following fundamentals:

One: Their excessive veneration of their so-called imams and their claim that these imams have knowledge of the unseen and that they have the power to benefit and harm and to give life and death.

Your mere glancing through the table of contents of their books such as '*al-Kaafi*' or '*Bihaar al-Anhaar*' will convince you of this.

Two: Their disbelief that manifests in their polytheistic and pagan activities. Just observe them at their Mash'hads and at the graves of their 'Imaams' to see how they call on the dead and seek their help.

Three: Their disbelief that manifests in their having doubt about the Qur'aan and their claim that there are alterations in it. Glance through their books of Tafseer such as the ones written by al-Qummi, al-'Ayashi, as-Saafi and al-Burhaan, and see how they are dead sure that the Qur'aan had been altered, and how they changed and omitted words of the Qur'aan and added their own words.

Four: They disbelieved by rejecting the authentic Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. They proudly and publicly declare that they reject all the authentic Sunnah conveyed to us by the noble Companions ﷺ.

Five: They disbelieved by regarding the Prophet's ﷺ Companions ﷺ as disbelievers.

Six: They disbelieved by declaring some of the most favorite members of the Prophet's ﷺ family – 'Aishah ؓ and Hafsah ؓ, who are our mothers – as disbelievers. And they are disbelievers by every curse and abuse they utter against these pious women.

Seven: They disbelieved because of the wrong beliefs they hold about Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the Pre-decree. It suffices you to know that they attribute weakness, ignorance and indecisiveness to Allah. They actually took this belief from their Jewish leaders.

It also suffices you to know that they distorted the reality of the Day of Resurrection. And this they took from their Fire-worshipping and Jewish leaders.

Eight: They disbelieved because they regard the entire Muslim Ummah and the followers of the pure truth and the straight path, the *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* as infidels. Therefore, they disbelieved with every Muslim they called infidel and with the blood, wealth and honour of every Muslim they violated.”

At this point, my friend showed his consternation and said: “Where do the advocates of reconciliation from among the *Ahlu-Sunnah* stand in regard to these firmly-established facts?”

I said: “Do not say 'advocates of reconciliation' but say 'victims of deception' perfected by these liars and hypocrites.”

He said: “But knowledge is the weapon of these scholars. How strange that they could be entranced by these misguided people, through ignorance?!”

I said: “I think they should not be excused for failing to know about the reality of these people. But the hypocrites have perfected their Holy Hypocrisy. If not, hardly will you find a scholar or student of knowledge who would not definitely declare them as disbelievers.”

He said: “How could they then be informed of the disbelieving ideologies that the Imamite Shi'ites hold?”

I said: “It is your obligation and that of every Muslim who knows the truth to expose these people publicly and to show that they are disbelievers. This is one of the greatest acts of *Jihaad* of our age and of the greatest acts of worship. It is also a way of spreading the correct knowledge.”

He said: “I shall then proceed with Allah's blessing, seeking for His help.”

I said: “Go on. The sun has already risen.”

He said (rather confidently): “The sunrise of this world is not what is important. It is rather the sunrise of faith in our hearts and minds.”

He then raised up his hands in supplication saying: “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, and never could we have found guidance, were it not that Allah had guided us!”

We then got up and hugged each other.

He asked me where I was going and I said: "I am going home to write this glorious and memorable battle, with Allah's permission."

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11. Al-Khutoot al-'Areedhah lil-Usus alladhi Qaama 'alayha Deen ash-Shee'ah al-Imaamiyyah, Muhibbuddeen al-Khateeb
12. Al-'Awaasim minal-Qawaasim, Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi
13. Al-Bayyinaat fee Radd 'alaa Abaateel al-Muraaja'aat, Mahmood az-Za'bi
14. Wa jaa'a Dawrul-Majoos, 'Abdullaah Muhammad al-Ghareeb
15. Al-Milal wan-Nihal, ash-Shahrastani
16. Risaalah fee Radd 'alaa ar-Raafidah, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhaab
17. Ar-Raafidah wa Tafdeel Ziyaarah Qabr al-Husayn 'ala Baytillaah al-Haraam, Dr. Abdul-Mun'im as-Saamarraa'i
18. Radd Muftarayaat ash-Shee'ah al-Ithnaa 'Ashriyyah 'ala al-Khulafaa ar-Raashideen, 'Abdullaah ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez al-Ali
19. Firaq ash-Shee'ah, an-Nubakhti
20. Rijal al-Kash-shi

**This book provides an informative and educated read
on a historic debate that occurred between
the Ahlus-Sunnah and the Shias.**

**The style of the book makes for easy reading and
easily grips the reader's attention.**

**It is at the same time an excellent resource to understand the
divide between the Ahlus-Sunnah and the Shias as it
captures the key arguments, enabling the reader to
differentiate between truth and falsehood.**

Allah, the Magnificent states:

**“And proclaim: The truth has come and falsehood has perished.
Surely, falsehood is ever bound to perish.” (Al-Israa 17:81)**



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