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# Ahl Al-Bayt From The Viewpoint Of Mystics

# Merits And Virtues Of Ahl Al-Bayt In Mystics' Narrations

I know that whoever believes in Muhammad but does not believe in his offspring is not true. (Attar Nayshaburi)

We will not attend any assembly where the names of Muhammad's Household are not mentioned. (Abu-Said Abul-Khayr)

Sadi! If you wish to enjoy the pleasure of love and evergreen blossom of life, it is enough to absorb the love of Muhammad and his Household. (Sadi of Shiraz)

#### **Note**

There are few philosophers, theologians and narrator of traditions, historians, jurisprudents and men of letters who have not said or written something about Ahl al-Bayt, their dignity and their personality. Yet, mystics seem to have spoken and written more than the others, for they have probed more into various dimensions of human beings and into the features, virtues and station of Ahl al-Bayt. Hence, a separate chapter is devoted to their speech, viewpoints and description.

Most of the material used in this chapter belongs to Sunni mystics for two reasons: Firstly, to become clear that the station of Ahl al-Bayt and their sublime morality are not only adhered to by their followers but the followers of other sects also attracted are to them. Secondly, there are truths in their writings, which indicate that what is attributed to Ahl al-Bayt is not false or imaginative. Rather, these are indisputable historic facts. What is mentioned here is only an abstract of what the mystics have said about Ahl al-Bayt.

## Abul - Fadhl Meybody And Khajeh Abdullah Ansari

Abu-Bakr al-Naqqash has reported Imam Ali as saying:

One day, a Jew came to me saying, "In your book, there is a verse the meaning of which is difficult to understand. If you clarify it for me, I will become Muslim." "Which verse is that?" I asked. The Jew said, "The verse is: keep us on the right path. If you are already on the right path, why are you asking for it?" I said, "A group of prophets and God's friends have already entered Paradise and attained an eternal prosperity. We are asking Allah to keep us on that path which led them to Paradise." The Jew was convinced and he converted to Islam. 1

One day, Imam Ali (a.s.) came home to find Hasan and Husayn crying. He asked for the reason. Lady Fatimah (a.s.) said, "They have not eaten for a whole day." A pot was boiling on fire at the same time. Imam Ali (a.s) asked, "What is in the pot?" Lady Fatimah (a.s) answered, "There is plain water only." Imam Ali (a.s) became so distressed that he took his cloak to the market and sold it for six Dirhams. He had no sooner bought something for eating than he met a beggar shouting, "Whoever offers to Allah a good gift, he will have a better one for himself. Imam Ali (a.s) offered to him whatever he had and, when he came back home, he told the story to Lady Fatimah (a.s). She said, "Allah bless you, O Abul–Hasan! You are always benevolent!"

Imam Ali (a.s) was set to go to the mosque to offer prayer when he saw a nomadic selling a camel. He said, "O Abul–Hasan, I am selling this camel. Would you like to buy it?" Imam Ali (a.s) said, "I do not have money." The nomadic said, "I sell it to you until booty comes or you get something from the public fund." Imam Ali (a.s) bought that camel for sixty Dirhams and went his way. Another nomadic came to him, "O Ali! Will you sell this camel to me?" Imam Ali (a.s) said, "Yes, I will." "How much do you sell it for?" asked the man. Imam Ali (a.s) said, "Whatever price you say." He said, "A hundred and twenty Dirhams." Imam Ali (a.s) said, "I do." He then returned home. Telling the story to Lady Fatimah (a.s) he said, "I will give sixty Dirhams to the nomadic and take the other sixty for ourselves."

So he went out to look for the man. On his way, he met the Holy Prophet who asked, "Where are you going?" Imam Ali (a.s.) told him the story. The Holy Prophet rejoiced, greeted and gave him good news, "O Ali! That man was not an Arab. The first man who sold you the camel was Archangel Gabriel and the second man who bought it was Archangel Michael. The camel too was one of the camels of Paradise. This is the good gift you offered to Allah by helping that beggar. Allah, may He be honored and glorified, has said:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا

### As for those who spend their property by night and by day, secretly and openly... (2:274)

This verse was revealed on the occasion that Imam Ali (a.s.) had four Dirhams and in his house there was no one but him. He gave away all four Dirhams to beggars, one by night, one by day, one secretly and one openly.

The members of the *Mubahalah* (mutual curse) were five: the Holy Prophet, Lady Fatimah, Imam Ali, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn. The Holy Prophet put his mantle upon them saying,

"O Allah, these are my Household."

At this moment, Archangel Gabriel came and said, "O Muhammad! am I from your Household?" The Holy Prophet said, "You are from us." Taking pride in this, Archangel Gabriel said,

"Who can be like me while I am the chief of angels in heavens and a member of Muhammad's Household?"3

Ali al-Murtadha (the well-pleased) - cousin of Muhammad al-Mustafa (the well-chosen Prophet) and spouse of the Lady of the Judgment Day, Fatimah al-Zahra (the luminous lady) who was the guard of caliphate and the head of Allah's favorites - was the peer of *ismah* and Prophethood, the source of knowledge and wisdom. Devotion, truthfulness, certainty, trust in Allah, piety and abstinence were his motto and garment. He was the impetuous lion, the holder of Dhul-Fiqar (the lethal sword), and the master of the *Muhajirun and Ansar*.

### **Conquest of Khaybar**

A day before the Conquest of Khaybar, the Holy Prophet said:

Tomorrow, I will give this standard to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger and Allah and His Messenger love him.

All night, all the companions were thinking about the truthful man to whom the standard of Islam and the banner of victory 'there is no god but Allah' would be given. The next day, the Holy Prophet asked, "Where is Ali ibn Abi–Talib?" They answered, "O Allah's Messenger! He has sore eye." He said, "Bring him here." As he was brought, the Holy Prophet put forth his tongue on his eyes. He was healed and a new light was found in his sight; so, the standard of Islam was given to him.4

### **Imam Husayn and a Beggar**

It is narrated that Imam Husayn (a.s) saw a beggar and asked him about his lineage. The man said that he was son of so-and-so. The Imam said, "May Allah bless you; I was looking for you. Your father had claim of a few Dirhams over my father. Now it is time for me to pay my father's debt to you." With this pretext, he gave him the dirhams and thanked Allah.5

### The Marriage of Imam Ali and Lady Fatimah

One day, the Holy Prophet came to the Mosque holding a branch of basil in his hand. He said to Salman, "Summon Ali." Salman went to Ali saying, "O Ali! Go and see Allah's Messenger!" Ali said, "O Salman! How did you find Allah's Messenger at this hour?" Salman said, "He was very happy like a shining moon."

Ali came to the Holy Prophet who gave him that branch of basil. It had a very sweet–smell. Ali asked, "How sweet–smelling this is! What is it?" The Holy Prophet said, "It is a gift from the paradisiacal women for the marriage of my daughter, Fatimah." Ali said, "To whom will she be married, O Allah's Messenger?" He replied, "She will be married to you, Ali! I was sitting in the mosque when an angel came in a way I had never seen before, saying: My name is Mahmud and my station in heaven is Nedia. A third of night had passed when I heard a call from the layers of heaven saying: O archangels, heavenly creatures and cherubim! Get together in the fourth heaven. All got together. The inhabitants of Paradise were present too. A decree said: O Archangels and Favorites of the King! Recite the Quranic chapter: The Man (*Insan* or *al-Dahr*).

Then, Tuba Tree was ordered to offer the marriage of Ali and Fatimah Zahra to heavens! At this time, Tuba started shaking whereby Jewels, pearls and ornaments showered down. Then, there came a decree to put a pulpit of a white pearl under Tuba Tree. An angel went up the pulpit praising Allah and greeting all the prophets. Then Allah called: O Gabriel! O Michael! You are two witnesses of Fatimah, and I, the Lord, am Fatimah's Guardian! O Cherubim and heavenly creatures! I take you as witnesses that I gave Fatimah in marriage to Ali. Give the good news to My beloved that we made this marriage in heaven, you do the same on the earth.

So, the Holy Prophet invited the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar* on the same occasion. Turning his face to Ali, the Holy Prophet said, "O Ali! This was decreed in heaven. Now I give Fatimah to you in marriage against four hundred Dirhams as marriage portion. Do you accept it?" Ali said, "O Allah's Messenger! I accepted

### Imam Ali's Knowledge

Ibn Abbas is reported as saying: One night, Ali said to me, after you have accomplished your night prayer, come to me so that I can give you a gift. It was a night shining with moonlight. Ali said, "What is the meaning of (the letter) *alif* in *Surah al–Hamd* (No. 1)?" I said, "O Ali! You know it." So, he started speaking and spoke for an hour on the *alif* and another hour on (the letter) *lam*. He did the same with the other letters and when he finished, the sun was rising. I found that my knowledge as compared to Ali's was like a small pond is before a sea.7

### In praise of Ibn Muhammad, Jafar al-Sadiq

(He is) the king of the nation of the Chosen Prophet, proof of prophethood, truthful agent, scholar of research, fruit of the hearts of Allah's Favorites, a dear child of the prophets, explicator of Ali, inheritor of prophet, mystic lover, Jafar al–Sadiq (a.s). We have already said that we need a separate book to give the full account of prophets, companions and Ahl al–Bayt. Since Jafar al–Sadiq (a.s) is one of Ahl al–Bayt, a wayfarer and is reported on more occasions, we will say a few words about him.

Those who follow Imam al-Sadiq are the Twelvers; that is Shiite Muslims who believe in the Imamate of Twelve Imams. If we wish to use just one epithet to describe his character, the truthful (unaffected) would be the best. He was trustworthy and a perfect leader. He was the guide of spiritual followers, the Imam of Muslims, a man of letters, mentor of Divine lovers, prayer leader, the most noble of the pious, a man of truth, and a peerless interpreter of the Holy Quran. He has quoted Imam al– Baqir on many occasions. It is strange that the Twelvers have this impression that Sunni Muslims have nothing to do with Ahl al–Bayt. This is a wrong impression. I know that whoever believes in Muhammad but does not believe in his offspring does not truly believe in Muhammad (S). A Shafiite love for Ahl al–Bayt was to the extent that he was accused of being heretic hence put in jail. He too composed a line of poem saying:

If love for Muhammad's Family is heresy, let all jinn and men testify to my heresy.

It has been reported that once Dawud al–Tai came to Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) saying, "O son of Allah's Messenger! Give me a piece of advice, for my heart has turned black. You have an excellence over all creatures hence you have a right to give us pieces of advice." The Imam said, "Abu– Sulayman! I fear that on the Judgment Day my great grandfather will reproach me as to why I have not observed the right of adherence. Only Allah is the most deserving of all treatments and dealings." Dawud burst into tears and said, "O Allah! You – the one whose entire being is from the Holy Prophet, whose constitution is

based on proof and reason, whose grandfather is Allah's Messenger and whose mother is the all-chaste Lady is this much humble, then how can Dawud be proud of his deed!

It is reported that they saw al-Sadiq wearing a precious fur coat. They said, "O Son of Allah"s Messenger! This is not becoming for Ahl al-Bayt!" The Imam took the hand of the person into his sleeve. He had worn coarse woolen clothes stinging the arm. Al-Sadiq (a.s) said,

"This is for Allah, and that is for people."

### In praise of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s)

(He is) the proof for the people who have dealings with Allah, reason for the people of vision, Imam who is the offspring of the prophet, chosen of the followers of Ali, companion of the manifest and hidden, Abu–Jafar Muhammad Bagir whose other name was Abu–Abdullah and he was called al–Bagir.

He was known as well versed in all sciences, knowledge, and fine points. He was renowned for argumentation and demonstrative proof. Commenting on this holy verse:

#### Whoever disbelieves in Shaitan and believes in Allah...)2:256)

Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) says: What deters you from Allah is the Satan. Behold, the veil, which has kept you from Him. Try to remove that veil, for one who has a veil before his eyes cannot claim nearness to Allah.8

## Abul – Qasim Al-Qushayri

Maruf ibn Fayruz al-Karkhi was one of the spiritual guides whose prayer was answered. He was one of the devotees of Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha and became Muslim at the hands of the Imam. Maruf reports: I was bound to Kufah when I met a man called Ibn al-Sammak. He would give pieces of advice to people saying, "Whoever turns his back on Allah, Allah will turn His back on him too. And whoever turns to Allah, Allah will have mercy on him and all people will be with him." His words appealed to me; so, I turned to Allah and abandoned everything save serving Ali ibn Musa al- Ridha. I said this to the Imam who said: If you take the advice, it is sufficient."9

Husayn ibn Ali was walking home when he met several children. They had some pieces of bread. So, they invited him to have some. After having a piece of bread, Husayn took them home giving them food

and clothes and saying: They were better hosts, for they had nothing more than what they had but I have more than what I gave away. 10

It is reported that Shaqiq al-Balkhi asked the meaning of magnanimity from Jafar ibn Muhammad (al-Sadiq). The Imam asked, "What is your opinion?" Shaqiq said, "If we are given, we will thank and if it is withheld, we will wait." Imam al-Sadiq said, "Dogs in Medina will do the same." Shaqiq said, "O son of Allah's Messenger! What is magnanimity then?" The Imam replied, "If we are given, we will give away and if we are not given, we will wait."11

A man who had come from Mecca fell asleep in Medina. When he woke up, he thought his purse had been stolen. Seeing Imam Jafar, he seized him by the collar, saying, "You have taken my purse!" The Imam said, "How much money was in it?" He said, "A thousand Dinars." Jafar took him home and gave him a thousand Dinars. When the man went to his place, his purse was there! He apologetically came back to the Imam bringing back the money. However, the Imam did not accept it saying, "We will not take back what we have given." The man said, "Who is this person?" They said, "He is Jafar al–Sadiq (a.s)."12

It is reported that Paradise longs for three persons: Ali, Ammar and Salman – may Allah be pleased with them all.13

It is reported that Amir al-Muminin Ali (a.s.) – May Allah exalt his esteem – called out at a slave but he did not take heed. The Imam called him again, yet the slave took no heed. The Imam called him again but he took no notice. Rising up from his place, Ali saw him lying down. So he asked, "Did you not hear me?" He said, "I heard you." The Imam asked, "Then why didn't you come?' The slave said, "Such a noble man as you are, I knew I was free from punishment, so I was lazy." The Imam said, "I set you free for the sake of Allah, the Honored and Glorified."14

## **Muhammad Al-Ghazzali**

Abul-Hasan Madaini reports: Hasan, Husayn and Abdullah ibn Jafar – may Allah be pleased with them all – were on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Leaving their camel load in a place, they went to an Arab old woman when they were hungry and thirsty. They asked her, "Do you have anything for drink?"

She said, "Yes, I do." She milked her sheep and gave them milk. Again they asked, "Do you have anything to eat?" The old woman said, "I have no food but you can slaughter the sheep and eat it." So, they slaughtered the sheep and ate of it, saying, "We are from the tribe of Quraysh. When we go back from pilgrimage, come to us. We will treat you nicely." Then they left.

When the old woman's husband came home, he became angry saying, "You have given the sheep to people you do not know." After a while, the old woman and her husband came to Medina out of poverty. They had to pick up droppings of camels and sell them to make their ends meet.

One day when the old woman was passing through the alley, Hasan who was sitting at the door noticed her and said, "Do you know me?" She said, "No, I do not." Hasan said, "I am the one whom you hosted." He then ordered a thousand sheep and a thousand Dinars to be given to her and then he sent her along with his servant to Husayn.

"What did my brother give to you?" Husayn asked. She replied, "A thousand sheep and a thousand Dinars." Husayn gave her the same. 15

Addressing Lady Fatimah, the Holy Prophet once said, "I give you the good news that you are the doyenne of the women in Paradise." Fatimah said, "What are Asiyah and Mary then?" Allah's Messenger said, "Each of them was the doyenne of the women of her time; but you are the doyenne of all women in entire world of all times. All of you are in houses, adorned with precious stones with no suffering or preoccupation." Then, Allah's Messenger said, "I have given you in marriage to my cousin who is a master in this world and the master of my ummah in the Hereafter."16

Whenever Ali ibn Husayn performed ablution for prayer, he would look pale in face. When he was asked about it, he would say, "Do you not know before whom we are standing?" 17

One day when Ali ibn Husayn was on his way to mosque, a man swore at him. The servants made an attempt to do something but the Imam said, "Stop it! What is hidden to you from us is more! Are you in need of anything?" The man was ashamed. So Ali ibn Husayn gave him a thousand Dirhams and a garment. The man was going away saying, "I bear witness that he is but the son of Prophets." 18

# Abu - Said Abul - Khayr

Baba Hasan was prayer leader of our spiritual guide (Sheikh), Abu–Said. Under the Sheikh, Sufis followed his leadership. One day when he was performing the Morning Prayer, he came to *qunut* (Communion) saying, "Blessed and Exalted is our Lord, greetings be upon Muhammad." He went into prostration. When he completed his prayer, our Sheikh asked him, "Why did you not send greeting upon the Household of Muhammad, and why did you not say: O Allah send greetings upon Muhammad and upon the Household of Muhammad?" Baba said, "The companions have divided opinion as to whether or not to say 'The Household of Muhammad' in the first *tashahhud* and *qunut* and so to be on the safe side, I did not say it." Our Sheikh said, "We will not attend any assembly where the names of Muhammad's Household are no mentioned."19

Our Sheikh has reported: A Jew came to Amir al-Muminin Ali (a.s), asking, "Who is Allah the glorified?" At this question, the Imam's face turned pale saying, "Allah existed without the attribute of 'existence' and without the quality as He exists forever. Nothing precedes Him, for He is before everything. He is infinite. He exceeds all extremes. Did you understand, Jew?" The Jew said, "I bear witness that whoever says anything but this is false. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah."20

Our Sheikh, Abu–Said, said: I saw in dream that whoever sends greetings upon Allah's Messenger a thousand times every Friday night will see him in his dream. We repeatedly did so and saw the Holy Prophet in our dream with Fatimah sitting near him. He was rubbing his hand on the head of Fatimah saying, "This is the doyenne of the women of the worlds."21

## **Mustamli Bukhari**

Ali ibn Abu-Talib is the master of the mystics. The ummah unanimously agree that he has the authority of all prophets, because he has said that which no one has ever said and no one will ever say.

Hasan ibn Ali was given poison six times. On five occasions, the poison was not effective but on the sixth time, it was when Husayn ibn Ali came to his bed saying, "O brother! Tell me who has given you poison, so that I will take complete vengeance on him!" Hasan said, "O my brother! Neither my father Ali nor my mother Fatimah nor my grandfather Muhammad nor my grandmother Khadijah nor any of our Household was talebearer. If Allah forgives me on the Judgment Day, I will not enter Paradise unless I forgive one who gave me poison."

One day, Hasan was eating a piece of bread. At this moment, a man came to him saying, "I have a debt of ten thousand dirhams." Hasan said, "Give him ten thousand dirhams to pay his debt." They gave the money to the man and he went away.

To say something about the morality of Husayn, one day when he was having his food, a slave girl was standing over his head with a bowl in her hand. Suddenly, the bowl fell off her hand. Husayn had a look at her. The slave girl quoted a section of the holy verse, "Those who restrain the anger." Husayn said, "I forgive you." The slave girl added, "And Allah loves the benefactors." Husayn said, "You are free for the sake of Allah."

What can we say about the virtues and excellent qualities of those who are parts of the Holy Prophet?

## Abul Hasan Hajwiri Ghaznawi

## A few words in praise of Ahl al-Bayt

Ahl al-Bayt enjoy a high rank for having been purified. Each of them has an excellence in spirituality and they are all models among their own tribe. Allah willing I wish to mention some of their virtues here.

The dear one of the Holy Prophet, the sweet basil of the well-pleased Imam, the apple of the eye of the Luminous Lady, Abu-Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ali – May Allah honor his dignity – was well-versed in the spiritual path and interested in its fine points. When determinists took over and people of seclusion were dispersed across the world, Hasan al- Basri wrote a letter to Hasan ibn Ali (a.s) saying:

Peace of Allah be to you, son of Allah's Messenger and apple of his eye. Mercy and blessing of Allah be

to you. You – members of Banu–Hashim – are like ships afloat on seas and you are like shining stars and guidance. Whoever follows you will be rescued, like those who were aboard Noah's Ark. O son of Allah's Messenger, we are at a loss and we would like to know what you think on this issue, for you are from the issue of the Prophet and your link will never be cut off. Your knowledge comes from that of Allah Who is your protector.

Receiving the letter, Hasan (a.s.) wrote back:

Whoever does not believe in destined good and evil on the part of Allah is an unbeliever; and whoever attributes his sins to Allah is wicked; that is to say, denying the fate. What we have accepted in our religion is fate. Attributing sins to Allah is determinism. Therefore, a servant is free in acquisition to the extent of his capability given by Allah. Thus religion lies in between determinism and fate.

It is reported that a Bedouin was passing by while Hasan (a.s.) was sitting at the threshold of the house. A Bedouin started swearing at him and his parents. Hasan rose up, saying, "O Bedouin! If you are in need of food, I will give you food and if you are thirsty, I will give you water. What is the matter with you?" The Bedouin kept on abusing Hasan and his parents. Hasan told his servant to bring a purse of golden coins and said, "O Bedouin! I beg your pardon, this is all we have at home and I offer it to you."

Hearing this, the Bedouin said, "I bear witness that you are the son of Allah's Messenger and I have come here to test your forbearance. This is the virtue of the great ones for whom praise or blame is equal and they never change because of unkind words."

The candle of the Muhammad's Household and the master of his time – Abu Abdullah al–Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi–Talib (a.s.) – may Allah be pleased with them, was Allah's favorite, the center of the people of tribulation, and the one slain on the plains of Karbala. Those who have heard this story unanimously agree that as long as the truth was manifest, he was a follower of truth but when truth was missing, he drew out his sword and did not find comfort until he had sacrificed his dear life for the sake of Allah. His virtues are too well known to be mentioned here.

The inheritor of Prophethood, the torch of the ummah, the wronged master, the deprived Imam, the ornament of the servants of Allah, Abul-Hasan Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abu-Talib (a.s.) was the most honorable worshipper of his time. He is known for his intuition of delicate points. A story tells us that when Husayn along with his children were killed in the plain of Karbala and there was no one to look after the women, he was ill and Husayn called him Ali the junior (Ali Asghar).

When they were brought on bare camels to Syria before Yazid ibn Muawiyah – may Allah abase him – a person said, "How is your day, O Ali from the Household of Mercy?" He said, "Because of unkindness of our people, our morning was like that of the people of (Prophet) Musa because of the plight of the people of Pharaoh who killed their children and unveiled their women in a way we do not know the day from the night."

Husham ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, the story goes, was circumambulating the Holy Kabah. He wished to kiss the Black Stone but failed to find his way to it due to the huge crowd. So he went up the pulpit and delivered a sermon. After some time, Zayn al-Abidin Ali ibn Husayn entered the Mosque for circumambulation with a face as bright as moon and a garment with sweet scent. When he came near the Black stone, the pilgrims made room for him to kiss it out of respect for him. Observing such a scene, a man from Syria said to Husham, "The pilgrims did not make room for you who are a governor. Who is that good looking young man for whom the pilgrims made way near the Black stone?"

Husham said, "I do not know him." He had the intention that the people of Syria do not recognize or follow him nor show interest in his Imamate. Farazdaq, the poet who was standing there, said, "I know him." They said, "Who is he?" Farazdaq said, "He is the one whom the land of revelation and even the Sacred House know very well…" He also composed some lines in praise of Imam and Ahl al–Bayt. Hearing this, Husham became angry and had him jailed in a prison between Mecca and Medina.

When the Imam heard the story, he sent him twelve thousand Dirhams with a message saying that we did not have more than this. Farazdaq sent back the silver coins saying, "O son of Allah's Messenger! I have composed many poems for silver with false eulogy; however, what I have composed is for the sake of Allah and love for His Messenger and his offspring." When the message reached Zayn al–Abidin, he said, "Send these silver coins back and say: O Abu– Firas! If you love us, do not ask me to take back what I have given away from our property." It was then that Farazdaq was convinced to take the silver coins.22

The virtues of Zayn al-Abidin are too numerous to be mentioned here.

## Sa'di Of Shiraz

Sa'di do not suppose that the way of Chastity
Is anywhere but following Mustafa –
Who is honorable in character,
Beautiful in qualities
The Prophet of people, and mediator of followers,
The Imam of all Prophets, the leader of the way,
The trustee of Allah, the descending place of Gabriel,
The intercessor of men, the Lord of Resurrection Day,
The guiding leader, high judge of the court of Accounts,
The inter-locator whose Mount Sinai is the whole universe,
and all rays are the reflection of His light,
the orphan who had not compiled the Qur'an,
and washed away the holy books of several nations.
One night he rode, and rose to high heaven

And in worth and rank was elevated above angels.

He rode so swiftly in the land of proximity to Allah,

That Gabriel was left behind at Sadreh

What admirable eulogy can I offer you?

O people's prophet, peace be upon You!

The salutation of angels be upon your soul,

On your descendants and followers.

O Allah; I beg you by the children of Fatimah

To end my life with devotion to the Prophet's lineage.

Whether you grant my wish or not

I shall make my entreaty to the family of the Prophet. 23

# Sayyid Haydar Amuli And Sheikh Muhyo Al-Din Ibn Arabi

Sayyid Haydar Amuli in his mystical-theological exegesis of the Holy Quran entitled *al-MuHit al-Adham* wal-Bahr al-Khidhimm, has pointed out the following:

Be it known to you that the truths and secrets in the Holy Quran are Divine truths and secrets descended on purified souls from a sacred realm. Allah Himself has said,

Most surely it is an honored Quran, in a book that is protected; none shall touch it save the purified ones. (56:77–79)

Therefore, the Holy Quran is not revealed to anyone but those who have attained perfection and are free from sins and disobedience called uncleanness. Again Allah says,

Unclean things are for unclean ones and unclean ones are for unclean things and the good things are for good ones and the good ones are for good things. (24:26)

These purified souls are none but the Prophets, the Messengers and the Imams who truthfully followed them. It is for this reason that we claim that 'those who are firmly rooted in knowledge' are the Prophets, Messengers, Imams, Allah's favorites and then the inheritors of monotheism. Therefore, no one else can be included in their group as it has been pointed out by the elder Sheikhs. In this connection Allah says,

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying. (33:33)

In this verse, Allah alludes to the purification of Ahl al-Bayt and their being free from sins and disobedience. Uncleanness can mean atheism and paganism or sin and debauchery. In the first meaning, Ahl al-Bayt are necessarily free from these sins. In the second meaning, the word 'purify' cannot be applied to them unless Ahl al-Bayt are also not far from it. The sins and debauchery are the worst uncleanness and here Allah Himself has testified to their purification.

The great Sheikh Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi refers to the same meaning in getting to know the secret of Salman and his joining Ahl al-Bayt, which has a moral long story. 24 Supporting what we have said so far, let us quote the following as a proof for those who deny it:

Know this! May Allah support you! Jafar ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq in a Hadith has reported Allah's Messenger as saying,

The servant of each nation is a person from among them.

Allah's Messenger has also said,

The people of the Holy Quran are men of Allah and His favorites."

Allah too says,

Surely as for My servants, you (Satan) have no authority over them. (17:65)

Therefore, the submission of every servant of Almighty Allah on whom the right of another servant will be decreased to the extent of that right and that person will have an authority on him. For this reason, he will not become a devoted servant. This has caused the devoted servants to be detached from people in order to resort to mountain and deserts and escape from people. They are keen to rid themselves of everything. I have met many of them during my trips.

### **Purification - A Heavenly Food For Devoted servants**

Since the Holy Prophet was a devoted servant, Allah purified him and his Household thoroughly and removed uncleanness from them, which is what is considered as indecency and defect. None can be included in Ahl al– Bayt saved the purified. The Holy Prophet by saying, "Salman is from us – Ahl al–Bayt", testifies that Salman has been purified.

### Ahl al-Bayt, A Paragon of Purification

Allah Almighty has testified to the purification of Ahl al–Bayt and removal of uncleanness from them. None but a purified one can be included with them. As soon as one is included with them, they will receive Allah's favor. So what do you think of Ahl al–Bayt themselves?

They are actually the paragon of purification. The following Quranic verse indicates that Allah has made Ahl al-Bayt share His forgiveness with His Messenger:

#### Allah may forgive your community their past faults and those to follow (48:2)

Based on this verse, Allah has purified His Messenger through His forgiveness. For this reason, whatever is considered sin for us is a sin only in appearance if committed by Allah's Messenger because no blame follows him either from Allah or from us. Therefore, all the offsprings of Fatimah and those included with Ahl al–Bayt such as Salman will be subject to the above mentioned verse until the Day of Judgment. They have been purified by the honor of Muhammad and Allah's favor and they will be raised to life with forgiveness.

### **Love for Ahl al-Bayt; Desire of the Messenger**

The Holy Prophet has not asked any reward other than love for his near relatives. In this lies the secret of strengthening the ties of relationship with him. How can anyone who does not respond positively to the Holy Prophet's demand hope for his intercession? One who has the love for something will be always with it. Hence, the one who adheres to the love for Ahl al–Bayt, through the right of having claim, will not take to them to ask for what comes to him from them. A true lover of Ahl al–Bayt has said: Whatever the beloved does is good.

### Love for Ahl al-Bayt Is Love for Allah

If your love for Allah and the Holy Prophet is true, you will naturally love Ahl al-Bayt and whatever comes to you from them, even if disagreeable is a favor from Allah for their love.

### The Secret of Ahl al-Bayt and Some of Their Features

Now that we have spoken of the spiritual poles of this station and the fact that the Ahl al-Bayt are chosen by Allah, we should know that no one knows anything about their secret except the sacred ones. Al-Khidhr, may Allah be pleased with him, is one of the greatest ones among such personalities. In this regard, Allah has testified that He bestowed His mercy on him and gave him from His own knowledge that Prophet Moses had to learn from.

One secret of getting to know the station of Ahl al–Bayt and what Allah has given attention to is their high rank in knowledge. One of the other secrets is their knowledge of Allah's plan for their enemies who claim to love Allah's Messenger. The Holy Prophet himself has recommended the love for his Ahl al–Bayt and he himself is one of them. However, most people have not done what Allah's Messenger asked them to do on the order of Allah. They did not obey Allah and His Messenger, nor did they take his relatives as friends except those who did something for them. These people love their desires and they are in love with themselves. What has been said so far, has been said by the great Sheikh (Ibn Arabi). It is aimed at getting to know how to love and make friends with them, the dignity and virtues of Ahl al–Bayt and about purification, *ismah*, the secrets of the Holy Quran by adhering to them and knowing such personalities as Salman...25

After quoting this chapter from *al–Futuhat al–Makkiyyah*, Sayyid Haydar Amuli, may his soul rest in peace, in his commentary further elaborates on Ahl al–Bayt. Yet to be brief, we have even summarized lbn Arabi's statements. What Sayyid Haydar Amuli writes on the opinion of lbn Arabi is his own opinion too. Hence, we have not devoted a separate chapter to Sayyid Haydar.

We bring this chapter to conclusion with a poem by Ibn Arabi as quoted by Sulayman ibn Ibrahim Qunduzi (1220–1294) in *Yanabi al-Mawaddah*.26

Find no peer for Ahlal-Bayt
For they are people of witness
Enmity with them is a big loss.
Love for them is a great prayer.

- 1. Kashf al-Asrar: 18/1
- 2. Kashf al-Asrar, 662/1
- 3. Kashf al-Asrar: 151/2
- 4. Kashf al-Asrar: 151/3,150
- 5. Kashf al-Asrar: 106/5
- 6. Kashf al-Asrar: 49/7
- 7. Kashf al-Asrar: 686/10
- 8. Tadhkirat al-Awliya: 20,125
- 9. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 28
- 10. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 223
- 11. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 363

- 12. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 363
- 13. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 582
- 14. Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah: 394
- 15. Kimyaye Saadat: 167/2
- 16. Kimyaye Saadat; 186
- 17. Kimyaye Saadat: 414/2
- 18. Kimyaye Saadat: 421
- 19. Asrar al-Tawhid: 204/1
- 20. Asrar al-Tawhid: 248/1
- 21. Asrar al-Tawhid: 268/1
- 22. Kashf al-Mahjub: 85-95
- 23. Boostan of Sa'adi translated into English by Aladdin Pasargadi, Rahnama Publication, 2000
- 24. Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah; Vol. 1, Ch. 29
- 25. Tafsir al-Muhit al-Azam: 447/1
- 26. Yanabi al-Mawaddah: 174/3, Chapter: 65

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