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## Beliefs Of Ahlul Sunnat And Imamiyah With Regard To Caliphate

Although both the Imamiyah and Ahlul Sunnat consider the matter of Caliphate to be a valid affair, there is wide difference in their beliefs. Also, both the sects believe in twelve Caliphs.

Today the position is such that both the sects consider the tradition of twelve Caliphs correct. But the difference is as to the names of the twelve Caliphs. Jabir Ibn Samra says that one day he went with his father to the Messenger of Allah (S). He heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say: "This affair shall not be complete till there are twelve Caliphs." Jabir says that after this, the Prophet said something, which he could not understand. So Jabir asked his father what the Messenger of Allah (S) had said. The father told him that the Prophet said: All of them (Caliphs) shall be from Quraish.

On the basis of this tradition, Ahlul Sunnat have enumerated their Caliphs as follows: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali (a.s.), Muawiyah Ibn Abu Sufyan and seven Caliphs from Abdul Malik to Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz. Some Ahlul Sunnat scholars consider Yazeed after Muawiyah and the Umayyad Caliphs in an unbroken chain among the twelve Caliphs. Even the teacher of this writer, Maulavi Sayyid Muhammad Gul Jalalabadi considered valid the Caliphate of Yazeed and the author also had the same belief during his student life. We should know that Ahlul Sunnat sect, which has excluded Yazeed from the list of twelve Caliphs has done so due to the reason that Yazeed was a transgressor and sinful man. But the sect that considers Yazeed a rightful Caliph does so with the justification that infallibility is not a necessary condition of Caliphate.

From the aspect of principle, to be a rightful Caliph one has to fulfill at least one of the necessary conditions of Caliphate, while Yazeed fulfilled many of these conditions. Yazeed had the support of the consensus (Ijma) of Abu Bakr. Only two people are sufficient for consensus while Yazeed had the consensus of hundreds of thousands of people. Apart from this, Yazeed had the condition of the nomination of Umar, the consultation (Shura) of Uthman and the military superiority of Muawiyah. In such a case, the validity of Yazeed's Caliphate is not against the principles of Caliphate. From this

aspect, we must count all the twelve Caliphs and not make exclusions like some sects of Ahlul Sunnat do by excluding Yazeed from the luminaries of twelve Caliphs. This is not an aimless discourse.

Doubtlessly, no follower of the principles of Caliphate could exclude Yazeed from the twelve Caliphs. Thus, Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlavi in his book, Izalatul Khifa mentions in serial order the names of the twelve Caliphs of Ahlul Sunnat and Yazeed is also included in the list. Now, this was about the twelve Caliphs of Ahlul Sunnat. Let us see the list of the twelve Caliphs of the Imamiyah Sect. There is no difference among the twelver Shias regarding the twelve Caliphs.

The Caliphs of Shias are as follows: Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), Imam Hasan (a.s.), Imam Husayn (a.s.), Imam Zainul Aabideen (a.s.), Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.), Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.), Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.), Imam Ali ar-Reza (a.s.), Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (a.s.), Imam Ali an-Naqi (a.s.), Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) and Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (a.j.) (Peace be upon them all).

It should be clear that Shias consider Caliphate to be a divine affair on the basis of Quran and the tradition of the two heavy things (Thaqalayn). They also all believe in the infallibility of the Caliphs. According to the Imamiyah sect, it is necessary for the Caliph to be infallible. The Imamiyah say that the Prophet was infallible, therefore his successors should also be infallible. The successor of an infallible cannot be a non-infallible.

Ahlul Sunnat people have contrary belief with regard to the matter of Caliphate and they do not consider it to be a divine affair. The writer has shown that the statement of "We have the book of Allah..." (Hasbona Kitabullah) had created an atmosphere, which was not conducive to make the affair of Caliphate a divine affair.

Thus, they consider the Caliphate of Abu Bakr valid on the basis of a single consensus (Ijma). And according to principles, they do not successfully present any Quranic or traditional proof to justify their stand. Some proofs of nomination, that are presented by some Ahlul Sunnat scholars do not conform to their own principles of Caliphate. Because, if the nominative proofs are considered correct, the Caliphate of the three Caliphs will become an affair from Allah, which is the very belief of the Imamiyah sect and which is vehemently opposed by Sunni sect.

We shall study these nominative proofs later. Here, we do not desire to dwell further on this topic. In the same way, the belief in the infallibility of the Caliphs is a belief very far from Ahlul Sunnat. They do not consider anyone infallible, except the Holy Prophet (S). Rather, there is a Sunni sect which considers Holy Prophet (S) infallible only at the time of divine revelation and for other times they do not even consider him infallible.

One of their sects even believes that before Prophethood, (Allah forbid!) the Messenger of Allah (S) was a disbeliever and his respected father was also a disbeliever. It is apparent, that on the basis of the lack of infallibility, Ahlul Sunnat cannot have the belief of the fourteen infallibles, because according to them, after the Holy Prophet (S), there was no infallible and there shall never be in the future. Unlike Ahlul

Sunnat, Shias have the belief of the fourteen Infallibles (a.s.) and this belief is special only to Shias.

Doubtlessly, some Ahlul Sunnat people have unprincipally taken this belief from Shias. It is obvious that when according to the majority of Ahlul Sunnat, when no one from the Muslim Ummah could be infallible, except the Holy Prophet (S), then from where did we get these thirteen Infallibles? Ahlul Sunnat do not consider anyone infallible except the Holy Prophet (S).

In these circumstances, if one of them agrees to the infallibility of any member of Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet, the Caliphate of the three Caliphs would become invalid. Obviously, then after this confession what remains to give preference to the three Caliphs over His Eminence, Ali (a.s.)? Preferring a non-infallible to an infallible is indeed an irrational thing!

Doubtlessly, it is a brilliant decision of Ahlul Sunnat to consider Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) non-infallible like the other common Muslims. Apart from this, if the Muslims of that time had believed in the infallibility of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), the matter of Fadak would have been decided in a different manner. Indeed, due to the confession of infallibility, the dark deeds of the house of justice towards Lady Fatima (s.a.) would have come about in a different manner.

Knowledgeable people are aware that Fatima (s.a.) was treated as an ordinary woman in the litigation of Fadak. Thus, Umar being an opposite party in the case said that Fatima is nothing more than a woman! In brief, it is the very belief of Ahlul Sunnat that Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) can commit mistakes.

The statement of Maulavi Abdul Ala regarding Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) in Bahrul Uloom clearly shows that according to Ahlul Sunnat the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) also sometimes commit mistakes like the common people and they are even prone to deviation. And this was due to the sin they committed without intention. Like the sin committed by Lady Fatima that she should accuse the Caliph of the Prophet to be a liar and that she should become aloof from him when he had confiscated Fadak.

Apparently, it seems that Fatima (s.a.) did not consider Abu Bakr a Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (S), that she should accuse him of such misdemeanor in the words of Abdul Ala. The above circumstances also show that all Bani Hashim did not consider Abu Bakr to be Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (S).

And Ali (a.s.) also had similar view, as we shall show in the following pages. In any case, the denial to believe in the infallibility of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) definitely decreased their greatness and importance. It should be clear that gradually these acts of dishonor towards Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) culminated in the incident, which is known as the Tragedy of Karbala'. The incident of Karbala' is nothing but a result of these acts and it is not even unnatural.

Here we shall mention some examples of insulting behavior towards Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) that culminated in the Tragedy of Karbala'. One of this is the burning of the door of Fatima (s.a.). This event is mentioned in the Tarikh of Abul Fida. Tarikh Tabari, Tarikh Waqidi, Al-Murtadha', Saqifah of Abu Bakr by Jauhari, Al Imamah was Siyasah etc. Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlavi also agrees to it as mentioned by him

in his book, Tohfa Ithna Ashar. Apart from this, Asian books, like Gaban, Aaseeran and Aurang also include this incident. Indeed, this incident has a historical base and it is not fiction.

Till this point, writer had not seen this incident mentioned in these books, he did not believe it to be a true incident. But after the student days, when he studied the books of history and Scholastic Theology (Ilmul Kalam), he became disenchanted with the well–known Islam. Now the condition is such that he is ashamed to call himself a Muslim.

Regrettably, even the Tohfa (gift) of Shah Abdul Aziz could not provide any succor. Rather, the replies of the Shah seem to justify sins and encourage sinful deeds. Actually, this book has distanced the writer further from popular Islam. Anyway, whether I became a denier or whatever, at least I am safe from not recognizing the Holy Prophet (S), praise be to Allah. If Allah wills, I shall not be ashamed to face the Holy Prophet (S) in front of Lady Fatima (s.a.) after I die. Let us now read the terrible and tragic incident as recorded in Al Imamah was Siyasah.

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