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Bibliography For Some Sources Of Nahjul-Balagha

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1. In the atmosphere that had been created soon after the Prophet (S), Ahl al-Bayt (as) (members of his family) had no course except to remain secluded resulting in the world's continued ignorance of their real qualities and being acquainted with their teachings and attainments. To belittle them and keep them away from authority has been considered as the

greatest service to Islam.

If Othman's open misdeeds had not given a chance to the Muslims to wake up and open their eyes there will have been no question of allegiance to Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) and temporal authority will have retained the same course as it had so far followed. But all those who could be named for the purpose had no courage to come forward because of their own shortcomings while Mu`awiyah was sitting in his capital away from the center.

In these circumstances there was none except Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) who could be looked at. Consequently people's eyes hovered around him and the same common people who, following the direction of the wind, had been swearing allegiance to others jumped at him for swearing allegiance. Nevertheless, this allegiance was not on the count that they regarded his Caliphate as from Allah and him as an Imam (The Divine Leader) to obey as obligatory. It was rather under their own principles which were known as democratic or consultative.

However, there was one group who was swearing allegiance to him as a religious obligation regarding his Caliphate as determined by Allah. otherwise, the majority regarded him a ruler like the other Caliphs and as regarding precedence, on the fourth status, or at the level of the common men after the three caliphs. Since the people, the army and the civil servants had been impressed by the beliefs and actions of the previous rulers and immersed in their ways whenever they found anything against their liking they fretted and frowned, evaded war and were ready to rise in disobedience and rebellion.

Furthermore, just as among those who fought in jihad on the side of the Prophet (S), there were some seekers of this world and others of the Hereafter. Now, in the same way, there was no dearth of worldly men who were, in appearance, with Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) but actually they had connections with Mu`awiyah who has promised some of them positions and had extended to others temptation of wealth. To hold them as Shi`as of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) and to blame Shi`ism for this reason is closing the eyes to facts because the beliefs of these people will be the same as of those who regarded Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) fourth in the series. Ibn Abul–Hadid throws light on the beliefs of these persons in clear words:

Whoever observes minutely the events during the period of Caliphate of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) will know that Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) had been brought to bay because those who knew his real status were very few. The swarming majority did not bear that belief about him which was obligatory to have. They gave precedence to the previous Caliphs over him and held that the criterion of precedence was Caliphate. In this matter, those coming later followed the predecessors and argued that if the predecessors had not the knowledge that the previous Caliphs had precedence over Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) they will not have preferred them to him.

Rather, these people knew and took Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) as a citizen and subject. Most of those who fought in his company did so, on grounds of prestige or Arab partisanship, not on the ground of religion or belief, as we read on p. 72, Vol. 1 of Sharh Nahjul-Balagha.

ii In the atmosphere that had been created soon after the Prophet (S), Ahl al-Bayt (as) (members of his family) had no course except to remain secluded resulting in the world's continued ignorance of their real qualities and being acquainted with their teachings and attainments. To belittle them and keep them away from authority has been considered as the greatest service to Islam.

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him as an Imam (The Divine Leader) to obey as obligatory.

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