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Chapter 5: The Intrigue

In the preceding chapter, we saw a formidable record of evidence, from historical as well as Islamic traditional sources, which show that from the very first day of proclaiming Islam to the last moments of his life, the Prophet (S) indicated and expressly nominated, on every occasion, Imam Ali (a.s.) as his immediate successor. The nomination of Imam Ali (a.s.) was not a personal whim of the Prophet (S). The Qur'an declares that the Prophet (S) never spoke out of his personal wish, desire, or whim. 1 The Qur'an further declares that the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.) do not wish anything which God does not wish. 2

The nomination of a successor was never left to the Prophet (S), much less to his Umma. It was always according to the Divine commandment. However, every community suspected that there was no such thing as Divine command and that their Prophet (S) was acting by himself in appointing his successor. When Talut was appointed, the Israelites challenged saying: "How can he exercise authority over us when we are better fitted than he to exercise authority and he is not even gifted, with wealth in abundance." Their Prophet (S) replied: "Allah has chosen him above you, and has gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily prowess. Allah grants authority to whom He pleases."3

Imam Ali (a.s.) is universally acknowledged as the first person to accept Islam even when he was just in his teens. 4 Coupled with this is the fact that unlike all other companions of the Holy Prophet (S), Ali had never worshiped any idol. Imam Ali (a.s.) is universally acknowledged as the most wise and knowledgeable. 5 He is universally acknowledged as the only soldier who stood by and fought for the Prophet (S), often alone, to rescue the Prophet (S) from imminent dangers. 6

Whenever the Prophet (S) spoke of Ali (a.s.) being his successor, the companions who were always in doubt about the Prophet's motives, questioned: "Is this from you or from Allah?." The companions always had a lingering suspicion as to the wisdom of the Prophet's words and deeds, for they measured the Prophet (S) with their own parameters. Coupled with this suspicion was their hope that if the Prophet's nomination of a particular individual was proved wrong, then they might stand a chance to succeed..

Before proceeding further, we may recall here a parallel. When Satan heard that God was going to appoint His Deputy [Khalifa] on the earth, all the devilish desires and false self-esteem came to the fore

and kindled the hope that by ingratiating himself in the company of the Angels and making pretensions to piety, he [Satan] stood a fair chance of being appointed as God's deputy in the earth.

When God declared that Adam (a.s.) would be His deputy in the earth, all the envy and jealousy, which was in the devilish nature of Satan, took the shape of hatred and impotent frustration. Satan disputed and refused to obey God's command saying that being made of fire he was superior to Adam (a.s.) who was created from dust. The infallible Imams (a.s.) have explained that Satan was created in a combination of dust and fire and therefore he was an inferior jinnee and not an angel. His claim of superiority over Adam was therefore illusory.

Satan's dispute was with God, but he (Satan) vowed to punish Adam and his progeny. The nomination of Imam Ali (a.s.) was made by the Prophet (S) but the revenge was taken against Imam Ali (a.s.) and the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.)! All his pretensions to piety and being near to God in the company of Angels did not avail Satan who was banished on account of his real nature. Though the inveterate enemies of Islam pretended to become Muslims, their real status is shown in a tradition regarding Doomsday, related through ibn Abbas in which the Prophet (S) said: "Then, some of my companions will be taken to the right side and some to the left side. I will say: '(they are) My companions!' It will be said, 'They reneged after you had left them'."8

None of the companions could boast that they had never worshipped idols. As a matter of fact, Umar ibnul Khattab, who became the second caliph, was openly hostile towards the Prophet (S) and his Message. His hostility towards anything clashing with his idol worship and pagan beliefs were so severe that he persecuted his own first cousin Zaid. His hostility continued for over eight years after the proclamation of Islam and he is said to have embraced Islam only after forty or, according to some, fifty persons had already done so. 10 The only reasons offered by Umar while refusing to become the first *Caliph* was that Abu Bakr had precedence over him in accepting Islam.

All the historians and reporters of traditions are unanimous that in defending Islam in the wars of *Badr*, *Uhud*, *Khandaq*, *Khaybar*, *Hunain*... etc., during the Prophet's life, Imam Ali (a.s.) was the acknowledged champion of the battlefield. In the battle of Khaybar, for three days, Abu Bakr and Umar failed to capture the fort. 11 The Prophet (S), while bestowing the command upon Ali (a.s.), gave him the title of '*karrarun ghairo farrar*'; one who repeatedly attacks fearlessly and does not run away from the battlefield.

In the battle of Uhud, the greed of the companions for booty almost brought defeat to the Muslims. By the attacks of the infidels, the Prophet (S) was seriously injured and one of his teeth was broken. Assuming that the Prophet (S) was killed, most companions ran away from the battlefield. Only when Imam Ali (a.s.) shouted that the Prophet (S) was alive and he called out to them, did the companions return. In fact, some companions had fled so far away that they returned several days after the battle. Similarly, in the battle of *Hunain* when the infidels showered their arrows, the companions fled, leaving the Prophet (S) almost unattended. Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Prophet's uncle Abbas were left to defend the Holy Prophet (S).12

The Prophet (S) had declared that Ali (a.s.) was the fountainhead of all knowledge and wisdom. The Prophet (S) had declared that Ali (a.s.) is the best jurist among them. The valor, wisdom, and eminence of Ali (a.s.) were not only well known but also frequently acknowledged even by his derogators.

Despite the abundance of evidence of Imam Ali's nomination by the Prophet (S) as his immediate successor and the universally acknowledged merits of him, history shows that he did not succeed the Prophet (S) for about thirty years, till the fourth stage of the *Caliphate*, that too, when the *Caliphate* was literally thrust upon Imam Ali (a.s.) by popular choice and public accord.

Amir Ali writes, "Thus, by one of the strangest freaks of fortune ever recorded in history, did the persecutors of Muhammad usurp the inheritance of his children, and the champions of idolatry became the supreme heads of his religion and empire." 13

How this could ever happen is a matter for serious scrutiny. A keen and unbiased student of the history of Islam will notice that this was achieved in several well–planned phases. We should remember that the ever–scheming Satan meticulously planned and lured the companions at every opportunity to join hands and conspire with the hypocrites and enemies of Islam.

The first phase of the conspiracy was set into motion in the very lifetime of the Prophet (S) when some companions started questioning the wisdom of the Prophet's words and deeds, as for instance at Hudaibiya.

The second phase began at and around the time of the Prophet's death when the Prophet (S) was disobeyed, imputed with delirium like any other ordinary mortal, and prevented from writing down his Will.

The third phase was put into effect during the period of the first three caliphs who strictly prohibited relating or recording of *Hadith*, on the ground that *Hadith* might create confusion or that the people will neglect the Qur'an in preference to *Hadith*. It is one of those quirks of fate that the today's world of *Sunnis* is largely dependent on *Hadith*. In fact, among the Sunnis there is a sect called 'ahlul (people of) hadith' who place absolute reliance only upon traditions.

In the fourth stage of the conspiracy, the three *Caliphs* misinterpreted *Jihad* to suit their convenience and dispatched the companions on wars with foreign countries for the sole reason that there was rising discontent among their companions about the capacity of the person occupying the seat of the *Caliph*.

The fifth phase was carried out by the Umayyads, the Abbasids, and the Fatimids, all usurpers to the throne, when they popularized cursing and abusing Ali (a.s.) and the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.), encouraged coining of false traditions derogating the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.) and eulogizing their opponents or at least imputing them glory similar to Ali (a.s.) and the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.).

The last phase was when persons patronized by the Umayyad ruler of the day were allowed to collect

and record traditions favorable to the ruler or his ancestors/predecessors, from every dubious source, while scrupulously excluding the *Ahlul Bayt* (a.s.) in the matter of narration of traditions. Thus, the present day Muslim community is confronted with a plethora of conflicting and confusing traditions. The result was that the Sunnis became divided into several sects holding conflicting views, even on very fundamental matters

We shall examine in the following chapters the conspiracy, in detail, which corrupted Islam and the effect it left on Muslims. We have allotted a separate chapter for each stage of the conspiracy for the sake of the convenience of the reader.

- 1. Qur'an, 53:3.
- 2. Qur'an, 76:30, 81:29.
- 3. Qur'an, 2:246 251, Abul Fida's Qasasul Ambiya, p. 289.
- 4. Ahmed bin Hanbal's Musnad, vol. 1, p.99,141, 209, 331, 373, vol. 4, p. 368, 370–371, vol. 5, p.26; Kanzul Ummal, vol. 6, p.400, at–Tabari's Tarikh, vol. 2, p.211–213, Mustadrak of Al–Hakim, vol.3, p.111, 112, 133, 136, ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p.247, 249, Abul Fida, vol. 1, p.116, Tarikh al–Khamis, vol. 1, p.323, al–Kamil of Ibn al–Athir, vol.2, p. 20–21, Tarikh of ibn Kathir, vol. 3, p.24–25, vol. 7, p.222, 333–334, al–Mas'udi vol. 2, p. 172–173, As–Sawa'iq of ibn Hajar al–Makki, Ch.9, p. 72, Musnad of Abu Dawud, Part 1, p.26, Part 3, p.93, ibn Abdul Birr's Isti'ab, Ch. Life of Ali [s], p.470,486, Muhibbuddin at–Tabari's ar–Riyadun Nadira, Part 2, Ch.4,p.157–159, 203, Rawdatus Safa, Part 2, p. 276, Sunan of ibn Maja, Ch. 11, p.12, Mizan of ath–Thahabi, Part 3, p.212, ibn Abil Hadid, vol. 1, p. 376, vol.3, p. 257, Wasilatun Najat of Md. Mobin, p.70, as–Seera al–Alawiyya of Haider Ali Hanafi, vol. 1, p.31–42.
- 5. As-Sawa'iq of ibn Hajar al-Makki, Ch.9, Section 2, p.76, Tabaqat of ibn Sa'd, vol.2, Part 2, p. 101, Isti'ab of ibn Abdul Birr, Part 2, p.475-475, Mohibbuddin at-Tabari's ar-Riyadun Nadira, Part 2, Ch. 4, Section 6, p.198, Section 9, p.221, al-Qunduzi's Yanabi'ul Mawaddah, Ch.13, p.53, Ch.14, p. 60.
- 6. At-Tabari, vol. 3 p. 128, Dayarbakri's Tarikh al-Khamis, vol. 1, p.427-429, Madarijun Nubuwwa, vol. 2, p. 167, Tarikh al-Khamis of Dayarbakri, vol. 1 p.547-548, vol. 2, p.51, 113, vol. 3, p. 125, Tarikh al-Kamil of ibnul Athir, vol. 2, p.68, 83-84, 100, Habib as-Sayyar, vol. 1, Part 3, p.46-47, Shibli's Siratun Nabi, vol. 1, Part 1, p.313, 367, at-Tabari, vol. 2, p.83-84, Abul Fida, vol. 1, p. 140, 146, ibn Hisham, vol. 3, p.387, vol. 4, p.72, ibn abdul Birr's Istia'b Part 2, 'Life of Ali [s]', p.474, Tabaqat of ibn Sa'd, vol. 2 Part 3, p. 102, Mohibuddin at-Tabari's Ar-Riyadun Nadira, Part 2, Ch.4, Section 6, p. 194, 197, Caliphate, p. 302.
- 7. As Sira al-Halabiyya, vol. 3 p. 308-309.
- 8. Abul Fida's Qasasul Ambiya, P. 380, quoting the Sura of al-Ma'idah 117-118 and al-Bukhai's chapter on Creation.
- 9. ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p.247, 249.
- 10. As-Suyuti's al-Khasa'isul Kubra, p. 134, Shibli's al-Faruq, Part 1, p34.
- 11. Abul Fida's Qasasul Ambiya, p. 402, 408.
- 12. Abul Fida's Qasasul Ambiya, p.412 413.
- 13. A Short History of the Saracens, Ch.7, p.71.

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