

Letter 57

Muharram 25, 1330

I. Interpreting Hadith alGhadir

1) Believing in the truthfulness of the sahabah requires interpreting hadith alGhadir, whether it is consecutively reported or not. For this reason, Sunnis have claimed that "mawla" bears various meanings all of which have been applied in the Holy Qur'an. It may mean "the deserving," as the Almighty says when He addresses the infidels: "Your resort is the Fire; it is your mawla," meaning "You deserve the punishment of the Fire."

Another meaning is "the supporter," as Allah, praised be His Name, says: "It is so because Allah is the mawla of those who believe, and the infidels have no mawla." It also means "the heir," as in the statement of the Almighty: "For each We have assigned mawali [mawlas] from the inheritance of the parents and the relatives," meaning heirs.

It also means "relatives," as is clearly understood from the following verse of the Dear and Mighty One: "I fear the mawali after me," meaning relatives. It also means "friend," as the verse suggests: "On that Day, no mawla will be able to do any good to his mawla." "Wali" also connotes the person who is most qualified to fare with someone else's affairs, as we may say: "Mr. so and so is the wali of the minor."

It also means "the supporter" and "the loved one." Some have said: "The gist of the hadith could be 'whoever I have supported, befriended, or loved;' for 'Ali was as such, and this meaning agrees with the prestige enjoyed by the good ancestors, and with the imamate of the three righteous caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them.

II. The Link

2) It is also possible that some people regarded this hadith to refer to 'Ali simply because one of 'Ali's companions in Yemen noticed his uncompromising policy in executing the commandments of Allah; therefore, he spoke ill of him; for this reason, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, did not

appreciate their attitude and stood up on the Ghadir Day, praised the Imam and lauded his contributions, attracting the attention to his prestige and defending his name against those who intended to chew it.

The pretext used by such a group of advocates is that in his sermon, the Prophet (S) praised 'Ali in particular, saying: "Whoever I have been his wali, 'Ali is his wali," and his Ahl Al-Bayt in general, saying: "I am leaving with you the Two Weighty Things: the Book of Allah and my progeny, my Ahl Al-Bayt;" so, he simply recommended that they should cherish 'Ali in particular and his kin in general. They claim that such a statement neither commits Ali to be his successor, nor does it connote imamate for him, Wassalam.

Sincerely,

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