

Part 4: The Caliphate in The Islamic Law

32. Should the First Caliphate Have Been Established by Inheritance Popular Election or by the Prophet's Selection?

In order to know the legitimate government from the Islamic point of view we ought to know the attitude of Islam towards the human freedom and the legitimate way by which freedom could be restricted.

We ought to know also the extent of the freedom of the people in electing their governments and the extent of the freedom of the government in legislating rules and regulations. We ought to know also whether the nature of the Islamic principles agrees with the establishment of the government by election or inheritance or appointment.

The faith of Islam respects the freedom of the individual and recognizes it as long as it does not contradict the commandments of God and His prohibitions. As long as man exercises his freedom within the limitations of what God allowed his freedom is sacred and no one has the right to deprive him of it. Such freedom is a natural right. To deprive him of it is an encroachment on his natural right. It is injustice and God does not like injustice.

The faith of Islam acknowledges the right of every man and woman in ownership and in managing what they own. Islam acknowledges that every person has the right to benefit from public properties such as using the roads in land, sea and air.

As the individual has the right to manage what he owns he has the right to manage himself and his time. He has the right to move as he wants and to rest as he wants.

He has the right to exert himself and to be inactive. He has the right to think and express his opinion. He

has the right to elect and authorize whomever he wants in managing his own affairs.

Since these individual freedoms are respected and sacred in the eyes of Islam no individual has a natural right to rule others because ruling others means restricting their freedom.

It is a function of the government to mobilize armies and security forces to train those forces to discipline them to move them from one place to another and to use them in the defense and the offense. It is a function of the government to build roads to expropriate its places to regulate trade to limit or to free import and export and to regulate the internal and external relations.

These regulations interfere in the freedom of the individual and restrict it and deprive the individual of his natural right. No one has the natural right to interfere in the freedom of others anymore than the others have the right to interfere in his freedom. No individual has an exclusive right to use or manage the public property which is owned by a community because people share that right.

Since governing means restricting the freedom of the individuals the government would not be legitimate in the eyes of Islam (under normal conditions) except through one of two ways:

1. Election by the people, or
2. Selection by God

Islam Has No Room for Hereditary Rule

Rule by inheritance is forbidden in Islam for the heir of the ruler would be imposed on the people without their will. His management of external and internal public affairs would be without authorization from the people whom he rules.

Should the rule of the bequeather come through a public authorization by his contemporary generation and should that generation authorize the bequeather to hand the rule to his heir in order to rule the future generation the rule of his heir would not be legitimate in the eyes of Islam.

The future generation has rights equal to those of the contemporary generation. Thus the contemporary generation has no right to restrict the freedom of its children and grandchildren. The coming generation has the right to abolish what the previous generation decided.

If the coming generation accepts the rule of the heir of the previous ruler the government of the heir would become legitimate not because the heir has the right to inherit the rule but because the new generation authorized him to manage their affairs. By this the government of the new ruler would be a government by election not by inheritance.

This is the attitude of Islam and the Muslim scholars towards the hereditary rules. One should never think that the Shi'ite Muslim scholars subscribe to the idea of the rule of the members of the House of

the Holy Prophet by interitance.

These scholars are the most opposed to the rule by inheritance. They believe that leadership of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet was by a direct or indirect appointment by the Messenger rather than by inheritance from the Messenger.

Yes the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of Islam under normal circumstances would not take place except through election by people or selection by God. When people elect a government their election would be an authorization of the government to represent them.

Whatever it legislates of regulations which restrict the freedom of the people would be by their authorization and consent. The government in fact would be the people themselves because it represents them and fulfills their wish. This means that the individuals who elected their government are the ones who restricted their own freedom and gave up some of their natural rights by their own will.

As man has the right to restrict his own freedom the Creator has the right to restrict the freedom of His human creatures because the Creator is the giver of that freedom. Therefore He has the right to curtail it as He chooses.

Because the Creator has the right to restrict the freedom of His human creatures He sent Messengers to communicate to His servants His commandments and prohibitions and the rest of His laws. These laws restrict their freedom by commanding them to do what they do not like to do and to avoid many of the things which they do not like to avoid.

As the Creator of the individuals and the communities has the right to restrict their freedom He has the right to choose for them rulers to enforce the Heavenly law which the Almighty revealed to His Messenger.

If God chooses for His servants a ruler His choice would be binding on them. They have no right to choose for themselves other than what He chose for them. His choice for them is better than their choice for themselves.

When they choose for themselves they give up some of their freedom by their own consent but they do not insure for themselves what is good for them. They do not know with certainty the best man to rule them and they cannot foresee their future or the future of the ruler whom they choose. On the other hand God foresees their future as He sees their present and past.

The reader may think that the establishment of a government by God's appointment is a mere hypothesis which has no existence. What is available to peoples and nations is only man-made governments and their best kind is a government through a populous election.

This is true at the present. But the establishment of a government by Divine selection was possible and feasible at the time of the Holy Messenger Muhammad. He himself was a ruler by Divine selection. The

evidence of this is that God Himself commanded the believers to obey the Messenger and said:

"O you who believe obey God and obey the Messenger and the people of authority from among you. If you dispute among yourselves about a matter return it to God and the Messenger if you believe in God and the Hereafter. That is best and most suitable for a final determination." The Holy Qur'an chapter 4 verse 59.

The Messenger had the right to establish for the Muslims after him a government he chooses for them. The Holy Qur'an gives him that right:

"The Prophet has more authority over the believers than they have over themselves..." The Holy Qur'an chapter 33 verse 6.

As he had this authority over the believers he had the right to choose for them a government after him. He sees through the Light of God and the Revelation what is better for his nation. If he chooses for his nation a government his choice would be binding on it. The nation would have no right to choose for itself after he chooses for it. The Holy Qur'an declares:

"And it is not for a believing man or believing woman to choose when God and His Messenger decide a matter. And whoever disobeys God and His Messenger he clearly deviates from the road." The Holy Qur'an chapter 33 verse 32.

Government by the Prophet's Appointment

The Prophet's government was by God's authorization and the Holy Prophet had the right to appoint a succeeding government in reliance on God's revelation. When a succeeding government comes through an appointment by the Prophet its righteousness and fitness would be secured because he is supported by the Divine Revelation.

Thus he knows what is good for his nation as he knows the most qualified for leading his nation and spreading the Islamic Message in other nations.

Should this take place it would be better for the Muslims and more beneficial to them and to their religion than establishing a government after the death of the Holy Prophet by a populous election even if the electors try their best to choose the best. This is because they do not know who is the most qualified. They may elect a person whom they think to be the best but he may fail them. Furthermore masses are often influenced by people of special interest who mislead them.

Elective Government

From this it would become evident that when the establishment of a government by appointment from the Messenger is not possible the only means to establish a legitimate government in the eyes of Islam

(under normal conditions) is the populous election and nothing else.

Elective Government Is to Abide by the Qur'an

When such a government restricts its electors' freedom through its legislation it would not be encroaching on their rights because they themselves allowed it to restrict their freedom when they elected it.

However the legitimacy of a government elected by people is not absolute in the eyes of Islam. The Muslims are not allowed to elect transgressors whose actions and policies conflict with the Islamic teachings. The Holy Qur'an declares:

"And rely not on those who are unjust. The fire will touch you and you will have no protector against the punishment of God. Then you will not be helped." The Holy Qur'an chapter 11 verse 113.

The Holy Qur'an declares also the following:

"And cooperate in good doing and righteousness. And do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And obey God. Certainly God is severe in punishment." The Holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 3.

The election of transgressors and authorizing them to handle the public affairs is a reliance on the unjust individuals who are unjust to themselves or to others and a cooperation with them in sin and aggression.

In addition the Holy Qur'an is the constitution of the Muslims and their governments. When an Islamic government's program and legislations are in disagreement with the constitution the program and the legislation would be invalid.

When such a government is a government of succession to the Prophet pledging to people to do according to the Book of God and the instructions of the Holy Prophet then fails to fulfill its pledge it would lose its legitimacy and people are not supposed to give it their obedience.

Therefore it would be necessary for the Muslim electors to do their best to bring to the chair of the caliphate a person whom they believe to be truly righteous. From among the righteous candidates they should choose the most knowledgeable one who is serious in enforcing the Islamic Law concerned with the interest of the nation and endowed with capability of leading the nation.

To elect a man without these qualifications would be a negligence of the national interest and a betrayal to Islam.

Of course the electors cannot know with certainty the existence of the necessary qualifications in the one whom they elect. But if they try their best in seeking the man with the qualifications they would have fulfilled their duty.

This is to be done only if the establishment of a government by appointment of the Holy Prophet is impossible. When that is possible and feasible (and it was so before the Holy Prophet departed from this world) the elected government would be out of place. It would be a function of the Messenger and one of his important duties to choose for his nation a leader after him.

The nature of the islamic principles Is consonant with selection More than with election

Leaving the future of a reformatory message to a populous election puts the message in a serious jeopardy and most of the time it leads to the failure of the message.

Reformatory principles whether Heavenly or earthly do not accord with the populous desires. Therefore they are not consonant with populous elections. To illustrate this we ought to remember that the principles on which the foundation of a government is to be established can be of two kinds:

Popular Principles

1. The first kind are the populous principles which the majority of the people accept because they accord with their desires. Principles of this kind aim at pleasing the majority of the people. These principles would not be imposed on the people by force. They rather follow the opinion of the people and they can be changed by the people.

All the principles on which the democratic governments are founded are of this kind. These governments come through election by people and the electors are their supervisors.

These kinds of principles are consonant by their nature with populous election. Since the purpose of adopting such principles is to satisfy the desire of the masses people should try to elect an administration which serves their desires. The duty of such an elected government is to legislate laws and ordinances and issue decisions which accord with the wishes of the electors.

As long as the government does that it remains legitimate in the eyes of its electors. When its enacted laws and legislations disagree with the desires of the people they have the right to remove the government out of office.

In other words people are the highest authority when the government is based on popular principles. They have the right to supervise the government throughout its terms holding the government accountable for its errors.

Reformatory Principles

The second kind is the reformatory principles which usually do not accord with the desires of the people. These kinds of principles aim at reforming people changing their beliefs and their ways of life.

The principles which aim at changing the thinking of the people their habits and ways of life are usually born in the minds of a person (or persons) who proclaim them and call upon people to adopt them and usually the majority is opposed to them.

Should the man of such principles and the minority which follows him come to power through a coup or a revolution or any other way and a government headed by the founder of these principles be established the duty of the founding president and his government is to try to spread and protect them. It would be the duty of the founding head of state to choose as vice-president a person whom he considers to be the most sincere to the principles and the most qualified to lead the nation after him.

Let us remember that even in a democratic country the president chooses (his running-mate) vice-president and the nation which elects the president believes that he is entitled to choose his own deputy. Of course a head of state whose government is based upon a revolutionary system and unpopular principles is more entitled to choose his successor.

A government of this kind is a government of minority. It views itself not as a government by the people but for reforming the people through enforcing principles which are undesirable to them. Therefore the future of such a government and the future of the succeeding government should not be left to election by the people on whom the reformatory principles were imposed. Such a popular election may bring to power the enemies as well as the friends of these principles.

Thus populous election may become a means of destroying the principles on which and for which the revolutionary government was established Governments which are based on reformatory principles avoid populous elections because they are aware that their principles are undesirable to the people. If the establishment of the succeeding government is left to the people the electors will be anxious to elect a government less sincere to the proclaimed reformatory principles.

To illustrate this let us suppose that a minority believing in the soundness of a system such as that of the American Capitalism comes to power in a Communist country such as the Soviet Union. Such a government of minority would be expected to impose the non-Communitic principles on the people of the Soviet Union after they genuinely adopted the Communistic system. As it succeeds in enforcing the new principles the government would not be expected to leave the matter of choosing its successor to an election by the people who are expected to elect a government inclined towards Communism rather than Capitalism. The result of such an election would be the destruction of the reformatory principles upon which and for which the revolutionary government was established.

And so would be the case if a Communistic minority comes to power in the United States of America. Such a minority government would not be expected to leave the future of the succeeding government to a populous election. This is because the majority of the American people will choose representatives who believe in Capitalism rather than Communism.

Furthermore the founder of such a government would not be expected to leave the selection of his successor (or the vice-president) to a popular election nor to selection by the members of his party who believed in his principles.

The members of his party with all their sincerity may ignorantly choose a person who would be viewed by the founding head of the state to be unqualified for leadership. To choose the unqualified is dangerous to any system. But it would be more dangerous to new reformatory principles because the majority of the people do not desire the reform.

Choosing an unqualified person would be an assistance to the majority who desire to replace the new system which was imposed upon them. An impotent leader may through his inefficiency bring about deviations or entice the majority through his inaptness to start a counter-revolution. Therefore the founder of the state would be duty-bound to choose a deputy who would be in his opinion the best of the members of his party.

This means that the reformatory principles are less consonant with the election than any other kind of principles.

Islamic Principles Are Reformatory

There is no doubt that the Heavenly principles in general and the Islamic principles in particular are reformatory principles which aim at changing peoples' belief thinking and ways of life. People were always inclined to worship idols or to deny the existence of God.

The Heavenly religions came attempting to lead them to the worship of the One God. People by their nature are inclined to materialism and to try to satisfy their bodily desires excessively to commit immoralities to encroach upon the rights of others and to take what does not belong to them.

The history of Prophethood is a history of struggle between the apostles of God and the communities to which they were sent. Every Prophet met difficulties from his own people because he was trying to prevent them from what they like.

Islam in particular stands against varieties of people's desires because of its numerous commandments and regulations. It is sufficient to mention the five daily prayers the fast of a month in every year during which adults are not allowed (during the day time) to take any food or drink the prohibition of man and woman to look at each other with coveting eyes or to scandalize or backbite (a male or female) or to take intoxicants. Above all that is the stand of Islam against any biased attitude towards relatives and

friends.

Islam demands from the Muslims to side with the right side even if he is an enemy against the wrong side even if he is a brother. These and many others are repugnant to the human nature except the righteous individuals who rise through their faith to what is above their nature.

Thus a secular revolutionary founder of a state has to choose his successor (the vice president) and not leave his office to the chances of election by his party after his death.

The Prophet is more expected than any founder of state to do that because his reformatory principles are Heavenly and sacred. Such principles are more entitled to be protected at the present and in the future than any other kind of principles. The Heavenly principles which are proclaimed by such a founder of a State cannot be changed by his companions or the rest of the people or by himself while reformatory secular principles can be changed by the head of the state or by his party.

The Heavenly principles are hard on people including those who believe in them because they stand against human desires. On the other hand reformatory secular principles though the majority of the people may resent them at the beginning in the long run they may be accepted.

After all they are mostly materialistic and morally unrestrictive unconcerned with man's relationship to his Creator. Thus the preservation of the Heavenly principles would be emphatically demanding that the Messenger of God chooses his successor by himself.

Leaving the selection of the successor to the chances of election to be held after the death of the Messenger would put the message in danger and push it to an uncertain future. An election may bring the qualified as well as the unqualified leader who lacks the knowledge or firmness or righteousness.

An ignorant or unfirm or permissive leadership is dangerous to the faith of Islam and leads to deviation. A Heavenly message is a trust in the hands of the Messenger and the Messenger is too holy to neglect his sacred trust.

The Muslims were fortunate when they chose after the death of the Messenger a man such as Abu Bakr who was an outstanding companion whose short period was filled with brilliant events. The Muslims were fortunate to choose such a leader and he was fortunate when he chose 'Umar as his successor who made great achievements with which books of history are filled. The arrival of these important leaders to power without being appointed by the Messenger does not mean that the nation was not in need of a successor appointed by him as many Muslims think.

The prevalence of this opinion is due to the fact that the history of these two Caliphs dazzled the eyes of the Muslim thinkers who forgot two important aspects:

1. The period of the reigns of the Two Caliphs was only twelve years. The aim of the message is to make adherence to the Islamic teaching a second nature and a way of life to the Muslims for

generations to come.

2. The Muslims were lucky enough to have two righteous caliphs but this luck did not continue for long.

The Muslims or rather six outstanding companions had an election after the death of the Second Caliph and that was by a directive from the passing Caliph. The winner of the election was an outstanding companion who was good hearted righteous yet he was weak and unfirm. He did not manage the public funds well and his weakness led to his assassination which brought upon the Muslims wars and crises for centuries and the Muslims are still suffering the consequences.

The Muslims afterwards elected the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib the cousin of the Prophet the one whom he brothered and the one most resembling him in word and in deed. Had they followed this great Imam he would have led them on the clear road which the Holy Prophet wanted them to take. Due to many regressive evolutions born during after and before the days of the Third Caliph the Muslims failed to follow this unique Imam and their loss was great.

Imam 'Ali was assassinated and many unrighteous caliphs came after him. Hundreds of them ruled after this Imam some through semi election and most of them were imposed on the people by force.

The overwhelming majority of these caliphs were not from the kind about whom the Almighty said: "Those who if We established them in the land they would establish prayer and pay the poor due and enjoin good and prohibit evil." They were rather bad examples for the Muslims and people are followers of their leaders except some exceptional ones.

Two Days Out of a whole Year

Thus the Muslims for centuries after the period of the four Righteous Caliphs were plagued with crises civil wars and untold miseries. If we compare the period of the Two Caliphs with the period during which the Umayyads Abasside and Otoman caliphs ruled it would be like comparing two bright days to a whole dark year. It would not be logical to overlook the darkness of a whole year and remember only the two bright days. This should be sufficient to prove that the nation was in need of leaders chosen directly or indirectly by the Holy Prophet.

The aim of the Islamic message is the continuation of the rule of the Holy Qur'an along with the instructions of the Holy Prophet and the realization of the goal which the Holy Qur'an declared:

"He (The Almighty) is the One who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religions though the Pagans may be averse." The Holy Qur'an chapter 9 verse 33.

To make the realization of this goal possible the Messenger was expected to offer to his nation what he could offer of guarantees for the continuity of the message and its diffusion throughout the world for

generations to come. The first of the needed guarantees is to choose the best qualified person to take his place when he is absent and succeed him after his death.

When such a successor comes to power he would be expected to do as the Holy Prophet did. He chooses his own successor and that would be expected to be well qualified for leadership. This is because the first successor who was the Prophet's appointee is holy enough to have higher perception than other people.

The successor in his turn is expected to follow the same road and to continue until the Qur'anic goal is realized and the adherence to the Islamic teaching becomes a second nature to the Muslims regardless of differences of language nationality and race.

The Dangers Which Were About To Face The Nation

The second reason which invites us to believe that choosing a leader for the nation after the death of the Messenger was of the prime functions of the Messenger is that the Messenger was aware of what the Nation was about to face of crises.

The first of those crises appeared during the life of the Holy Prophet. Musailimah the Liar and Al-Aswad Al-Anasi appeared while the Prophet was still alive. They claimed prophethood and they found followers and their dangers were growing. The Holy Messenger expressed his expectations of many faith-testing crises that will come after his death.

Al-Hakim in his Al-Mustadrak¹ Imam Ahmad in his Musnad² Ibn Hisham in his Al-Seerat³ and Ibn Saad in his Al-Tabaqat⁴ recorded that Abu Muwaihbih servant of the Messenger said the following:

"The Messenger told me (at a night before his last ailment): 'Abu Muwaihbih I have been commanded to pray to God to forgive the Muslims who are buried at the cemetery of Al-Baqee-a. Come with me.' I went with him.

When he stood in the midst of the graves he said: "Peace be upon you inhabitants of the cemetery. Congratulations on your condition which differs from the conditions under which the people are living. I wish you knew what God has saved you from. The faith-testing crises are coming like pieces of a dark night following each other. The last is worse than the first."

The Prophet Predicted Companions' Failure in Test

The Holy Prophet informed the Muslims that many of his companions will lose their faith after his death. Here are a number of hadiths which speak clearly of that:

Al-Bukhari (in part 8 of his Sahih) in the book of prayers the section of "Al-Houdh" (the Basin) p. 149 recorded that Anas reported that the Prophet said: "Men from my companions will come to me on the

day of judgment while I am at Al-Houdh (the Basin). When I recognize them they will be taken away. I say: My Lord these are my companions. He will say: You do not know what they innovated after you.”

From the same source p. 150 we find that Abu Hazim reported that Sahl Ibn Saad said that the Holy Prophet said:

"I shall be the first among you to come to the Basin of the Water on the Day of Judgement Whoever comes to me will drink and whoever drinks will never become thirsty. Groups will come to me on that day I know them and they know me. Then they will be separated from me."

Abu Hazim said: "Al-Naaman Ibn Ayyash said: Did you hear it from Sahl this way? I said: Yes. He said: I testify that I heard Abu-Sa-eed Al-Khidri adding to it the following: "Then I say: They are from me. I will be told: You do not know what they innovated after you. I say: Woe to those who changed after me."

Muslim in his Sahih recorded this hadith in part 15 pp. 53-54 Al-Bukhari also reported that Sa-eed Ibn Al-Musayyab said that Abu Huraira used to say that the Messenger of God said: "A group from my companions will come to me on the Day of Judgment (seeking to drink from the Basin) and they will be driven away from the Basin. I will say: My Lord these are my companions. He will say: You have no knowledge of what they innovated after you. They deserted their faith and retreated after you." (part 8 p. 149)

Sa-eed Ibn Al-Musayyab used to say that the companions of the Holy Prophet said that the Prophet said that. And on p. 151 recorded that Ata-a Ibn Yasar said that Abu Huraira reported that the Prophet said:

"While I am standing a group of men will come and when I recognize them a man comes between me and them and he will say (to them) 'Come with me.' I shall say: 'Where to?' He will say 'To the Fire by God.' I shall say: 'What is their problem?' He will say 'They deserted their faith and retreated after you.' Then another group (will come). And when I recognize them a man comes between me and them. Then he will say to them 'Come with me.' I shall say 'Where to?' He replies 'To the Fire.' I say 'What is their problem?' He says 'They deserted their faith and retreated after you. I see only a few like abandoned camels will be saved from among them.'"

Al-Bukhari (in part 4 of his Sahih) in the book of the Beginning of the Creation under the caption: "And God took Abraham as a friend " p. 169 recorded that Sa-eed Ibn Jubair reported that Ibn Abbas said that the Holy Prophet said: "You will be resurrected barefooted naked uncircumcised."

Then he recited the following verse: 'As We started the first creation We shall re-create it. This is a promise from Us. Certainly We shall do it.' And the first one to be clothed on the Day of Judgment will be Abraham. There will be people from my companions who will be taken to the left. I will say: My companions my companions. God will say: They deserted their faith since you left them. I shall say as the good servant of God (Jesus) said: I witnessed them as long as I was with them..."

Muslim in his Sahih recorded that Abdullah reported that the Messenger of God said: "I am your first at the Basin of the water on the Day of Judgment and I shall be disputed concerning some groups and they will be taken away from me. I shall say: "My Lord these are my companions. It will be said to me: You do not know what they innovated after you." (part 15 p. 59)

Muslim in his Sahih (part 15 p. 64) recorded also that Anas Ibn Malik reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Men from my companions will come to drink from the Basin on the Day of Judgment. When I see them and they come to me they will be barred from me. I shall say:

My Lord (these are) my companions. And I will be told: Certainly you do not know what they innovated after you." The Messenger of God foresaw through the Light of God the near future of his nation fraught with crises which will test the faith of the believers. He congratulated the companions who died during his time because they did not live until the days of those faith-testing crises. It is inconceivable that he let his nation face such crises after him without providing the nation with the best qualified leader who could lead the Muslims to the right road if they chose to follow him.

The Prophet is the guardian of the Muslims. When a father knows that his children are surrounded by dangers of which they are unaware he should not leave them without the best possible means which they can use if they choose to pass the dangers safely. The Prophet is too great to leave the nation whom he loved so dearly without any guardian or security against spiritual dangers.

When the Holy Prophet knows that his nation will be in such a difficult position after his death it becomes his most important duty to choose a navigator that leads the ship of the nation to avoid her the perilous waves of the crises which he expects his nation to pass through.

This would be his important duty regardless of the nature of the principles of his reformatory message and its consonance or inconsonance with election. Should the nature of the Islamic principles be consonant with the election and the election be safe under normal circumstances it would not be safe at the exceptional situations which the Holy Prophet expected his nation to pass through.

To leave the nation to the chances of election during those dangerous circumstances would be a negligence of the trust which would not be committed by the greatest trustee and the master of the Prophets who was sent to mankind to lead them to the right path and spare them spiritual crises.

The Need for an Authority in Interpretation of the Qur'an and Communication of the Prophet's Instructions

There is a third reason which makes us expect the Messenger to deputize a person to lead the nation after his absence. The Heavenly message as the Messenger left it needed an exponent who could inform the nation about its details.

The Messenger left to his nation the Book of God and the instructions of the Prophet and he commanded the nation to follow these two important guides.

Interpretation of the Qur'an

The Book of God can be interpreted in more than one way. Its true interpretation is not known even to the great Muslim scholars. The Muslim scholars disagree and have various opinions. Each group of them cites the Holy Qur'an as evidence on its opinion. To illustrate this we mention the following: Some scholars believe that man's touch of a woman in any form spoils ablution. These scholars cite for their opinion the following Qur'anic verse:

"... If you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from offices of nature or ye have been touching woman and ye find no water then take for yourselves clean soil and rub therewith your faces and hands. For God does blot out sins and forgives again and again." The Holy Qur'an chapter 4 verse 43.

These scholars take this verse as evidence on their opinions because they understand from the word "touching woman" the mere touch of any part of a woman's body. Therefore they believe that renewal of ablution would be necessary when a person touches the hand of his wife even unintentionally.

Some of the scholars believe that mere touch of woman does not spoil ablution. What spoils the ablution is intercourse. They cite for their opinion the verse itself because they understand from touching women what is beyond the mere touch.

The Muslim scholars disagree on some aspects of the ablution. Some of them believe that washing both feet is a part of the ablution. This group can cite the following verse:

"O ye who believe when ye prepare for prayer wash your faces and your hands to the elbows; and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles..." The Holy Qur'an chapters 5 verse 8.

Some of the authorities on reading the Holy Qur'an read the verse in a way that it appears to make the feet join the face so both would be washed.

Another group of scholars believes that the feet are to be wiped rather than washed and this group can cite the same verse because some of the authorities in reading the Holy Qur'an read the verse in a way that it appears to have the feet join the head. So as you wipe your head you wipe your feet.[5](#)

In matters belonging to the creed of Islam which is more important than the details of ablution we find the Muslim scholars divided and each division cites for its opinion verses from the Holy Qur'an. To illustrate this we mention the following:

The advocates of predestination cite the following verses for their opinion:

"Thou makes whomever thou chooses unguided and guides whomever thou chooses..." (The

Holy Quran Chapter 7 verse 155)

Again:

"You cannot lead to the right road whomever you love but God leads whomever He Chooses..."
(The Holy Quran Chapter 28 verse 56).

"And you shall not will unless God wills..." (76:29-30)

The advocates of man's freedom and that he is not predestined to follow a specific course in his action or inaction also cite verses from the Holy Qur'an of which are the following:

"...God does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition..."
(Chapter 13 verse 12).

"And man has not but what he works for and that his work shall be seen." (Chapter 53 verses 40-41)

In the relation of the people to their ruler a group of Muslim scholars believe that people have to obey the ruler and not oppose him even if he is a transgressor. These scholars can cite for their opinion the following verse:

"O you who believe obey God and obey the Apostle and people of authority among you..."
(Chapter 4 verse 59)

The verse may be understood to command the Muslims to obey their leaders even if they were transgressors. disobedient to God in words and deeds.

Other scholars believe that when the ruler is neglecting the interest of the nation and administers its affairs opposite of what God has commanded he is to be disobeyed and overthrown. They can cite for their opinion the same verse because it commands the Muslims to obey God and His Messenger and when the transgressor ruler commands people to follow the wrong road his disobedience would be imperative. To disobey such a ruler is to obey God and His Messenger and to obey him is to disobey God and His Messenger.

These are only a few of many examples where scholars with contradictory opinions can cite a verse or verses from the Holy Qur'an and each one of them tries to show the agreement of his opinion with the Qur'an. Yet the Holy Qur'an does not contradict itself and its true meaning cannot agree with contradictory opinions.

Therefore some of the parties who contradict each other must be wrong. Who should inform us of the true meaning of the Holy Qur'an after the Holy Prophet departed from this world? Should that be left to election? Election of a person does not make him aware of the true interpretation of the Holy Qur'an.

This is our situation with the Holy Qur'an which was recited by the Messenger and memorized by his companions who recited it day and night and every one of its verses was written during the time of the Messenger. What would be our situation with the instructions of the Holy Prophet? Do we need an authority to resort to in this area?

The answer is in the affirmative. The answer is in the affirmative.

Categories of Hadiths

The instructions of the Holy Prophet were not written during his time; nor did he as far as we know advise any of his companions to write them. Most of the Prophet's instructions had not been written in any of the known books during the first century after the Hijra.

Very few hadiths were written during that period. What was recorded during the second century and afterwards was mostly uncertain. The absolute majority of the hadiths which reported those instructions were narrated by one or a small number of reporters.

The first reporter was a companion. The companion did not record the hadith; nor did the one who heard from him. The same thing happened with the third and the fourth until the hadith passed through many mediums. Finally the hadith was recorded but many hadiths were sifted and recorded in what are called Sahihis or Authentics but that did not free them completely of discrepancy.

Most of the hadiths which are free of contradictions cannot generate certainty. The hadiths are the sources of information about the words or the deeds of the prophet or his silent approvals. But these sources of information are mostly uncertain for the following reasons:

Hadith by Numerous Reporters

These sources of information are of two kinds: One kind is what we call "Mutawatir." The "Mutawatir" hadith is a statement or an action of the Prophet which was reported by numerous companions. These companions reported what they heard or witnessed.

The report of each one of these companions arrived to us through independent and reliable channels. This kind of hadith is the best source of religious information after the Holy Qur'an. For this kind of hadith generates certainty in our minds in relation to reported statements or actions of the Holy Prophet.

Unfortunately hadiths of this kind are not abundant. The books of hadith do not contain sufficient quantities of this type of hadiths to inform us about the details of the Islamic teaching and the Prophet's instructions.

Hadith Reported by Few

The absolute majority of the hadiths came to us through channels in which one narrator reported what he heard from another who heard it from a third and so on until we get back to reports which were heard from a companion who had heard the statement from the Prophet.

This kind of hadith does not make us certain that the Messenger said or did what the hadith reported. Certainty takes more than one or two sources of information to be generated. Let us remember that the companion who was the first of the reporters did not record the statement in a book. He only delivered it verbally to his student and the recipient delivered it to his student until it finally was recorded.

Let us remember also that many of the reporters including some of the companions of the Prophet were not reliable.

To say that all the companions were righteous is illogical. A good number of them such as Muawiya Amr Ibn Al-Aws Samarah Ibn Jandab Naaman Ibn Basheer Mughirah Ibn Shu-Abah Walid Ibn Aqabah Abdullah Ibn Abu Sarh and even Talhah Al-Zubayr and others had participated in (or caused) the shedding of blood of good Muslims in order to reach high positions. Many of them were assisting the rulers who shed Muslims' blood.

Some of them such as Abu Hurairah was extravagant in reporting what he claimed to have heard or witnessed from the Prophet. The number of the hadiths of Abu Hurairah is larger than the total hadiths which were reported by the outstanding companions put together in spite of their long companionship to the Prophet and the short time of the companionship of Abu Hurairah to the Prophet.

We had already mentioned in this chapter that the messenger stated in many authentic hadiths which were reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim that many companions of the Prophet will stray from his path after his death that they will be sent on the Day of Judgment to the place of punishment and that the Holy Prophet will declare on that day that he is clear from them.

The hadith specialists are not in agreement on the reliability of many of the reporters; one scholar testifies for the reliability of a narrator and another one testifies for his weakness. However we ought not forget that the reliable reporter is susceptible to forget or to be erroneous in his report.

An outstanding companion may report a hadith believing in the truthfulness of what he reported and believing that he understood what the Messenger said even though he may be mistaken. Muslim reported in his Sahih that 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab said to his daughter Hafsa that the messenger said "The deceased would be punished by the cry of his family" and that his son Abdullah reported the same.

When Ayesha was informed of the report of 'Umar and his son Abdullah she said "No by God the Messenger of God never said that the deceased would be punished for the cry of anybody. But he said the punishment of the unbeliever would increase by the cry of his family and no soul bears the burden of

another soul." And that when she was informed of the report of 'Umar and his son she said: "You are telling me about two persons who are neither liars nor discredited but the ear may mishear."[6](#)

According to another hadith: When she heard that Ibn 'Umar reported that hadith she said: "The Prophet only said: "He (the deceased) is being punished for his sin while his family is crying for him."[7](#)

The two Sheikhs reported that Amir Ibn Masrooq said to Ayesah: "Did Muhammad see his Lord?" She said: "My hair stood up because of what you said. Do not overlook the fact that there are three items whoever informs you that they took place would be lying. Whoever informs you that Muhammad saw his Lord lies. Then she recited:

'The eyes do not see Him and He sees all the eyes and He is the invisible the knower... ' Muslim reported this and added that Amir said: I was reclining. When I heard what she said I sat up and said: Did not God say 'And he had seen Him yet another time?' She said: 'I am the first one who asked the Messenger of God about this saying: Messenger of God did you see your Lord? He said: 'No I only saw Gabriel coming down.'[8](#)

This means that we know only little (with certainty) of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (which is called Sunnah). It is what we learned through the "Mutawatir" hadiths which were reported independently by numerous reporters whose cooperation in forging a lie would be improbable. These "Mutawatir" hadiths are very few.

Most of the hadiths are not of this type. They were reported only by one or a small number of reporters. Such hadiths would not produce certainty even if they were authentic and their reporters considered reliable because a reliable person can forget or misunderstand what he heard.

Of course it is our duty to accept this kind of authentic "non-Mutawatir" hadiths because some verses from the Holy Qur'an advise us to accept these hadiths.

We have the right to accept these hadiths and we are excused in the eyes of God if those hadiths were not in agreement with the fact. Yet the goal of the Islamic message is to follow the actual meaning of the Qur'an and the certain instructions of the Prophet rather than the uncertain kind. Straying from the right road is nothing but a disagreement with fact. What the Holy Prophet aimed at was to leave to his nation what secures it against straying.

It is reported through numerous channels that the Messenger of God said in his sermon during his valedictory pilgrimage the following:

"Certainly I have left for you what if you uphold you will never go astray: The Book of God and the members of my House..."[9](#)

It is recorded also in Al-Muwatta by Imam Malik and by Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet that the Holy Prophet said during the Valedictory Pilgrimage the following:

"... O people understand my word for I have delivered (the message) to you and I have left for you what if you fortify yourselves with you will never go astray: A clear teaching: The Book of God and Sunnah (the instructions) of His Prophet..."

The two hadiths indicate that the goal of the Messenger was to insure his nation against error. The first hadith contains a clear message which is easy to understand. If the members of the House of the Holy Prophet had possessed the knowledge of the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the actual instructions of the Holy Prophet the nation will know through the two sources the exact truth.

To understand the second hadith we need some kind of interpretation in order to make its contents conceivable.

This hadith tells us of two things:

1. That we have to follow the Book of God and the instructions of the Holy Prophet.
2. Adherence to these two sources is a security to the Muslims against straying. Yet following the Book of God and the instructions of the Holy Prophet may secure us against straying only if the meaning of the words of the Book of God and the real instructions of the Holy Prophet are known with certainty. The known meaning of the Book and the known instructions of the Holy Prophet unite the Muslims.

Therefore the Muslims are in full agreement about every Muhkam (clear) verse which has a clear message and about every known instruction from the Holy Prophet. But when the outward meaning of a verse is in conflict with the outward meaning of another verse and we need to interpret this or the other one the interpretation multiplies and all of them become uncertain. If each party follows what it chooses of such interpretations the Muslims would be bound to stray from the right road.

This is because the interpretations contradict each other and some of them have to be wrong. This is surely in disagreement with what actually was meant by the two verses.

The Messenger informed us through the fortification hadith (the second hadith) that if we fortify ourselves with the Holy Qur'an and the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet we would be secured against straying and deviation. The fact remained that he left to us the Holy Qur'an with written and known verses but he did not leave us written hadiths. He left us a small number of "Mutawatir" (well known hadiths) and a large number of non-"Mutawatir" hadiths which do not represent a security against straying because they produce conjecture rather than certainty.

The various Islamic schools are physical evidence that the Holy Qur'an and the hadiths were not a security to the nation against straying. The scholars who formed those schools were relying in their verdicts on the Book of God and the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet yet they did not agree on the details of the rules. Had they been in agreement we would have had only one school.

By the existence of varieties of schools the difference among Muslims took place. This difference

brought struggles and hostilities and sometimes a great deal of blood shedding. All that proves that the nation had strayed from the right road in spite of the endeavors of its scholars to try to follow the Qur'an and the "Sunnah."

Yet we know that the Holy Messenger does not say but the truth and he according to the fortification hadith said that the Holy Qur'an and his "Sunnah" are security against straying. This should make us realize that the meaning of the word "Sunnah " is the known Sunnah rather than the surmised Sunnah.

Since the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet was not known to the Muslims the Holy Prophet should have left to his nation a means through which the nation can know if it chooses the real teaching of the Holy Prophet with certainty and be able through that means to know the real meaning of the Holy Qur'an.

It would be logical to assume that "means" is a person who knows the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the actual teaching of the Holy Prophet. That man represents the Holy Prophet in teaching his nation what that nation needs to know of the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet and the interpretation of the Book of God.

Could election secure this kind of leadership which can inform the nation completely about the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the actual teachings of the Holy Prophet?

The nation cannot obtain that knowledgeable leadership through election. The nation can give its leadership to whomever it chooses but it cannot make that chosen leader knowledgeable of the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet.

Election of a person by the nation does not change his personality nor would it make him knowledgeable if he is ignorant; nor would it make him profoundly knowledgeable in the Book of God and the teachings of the Holy Prophet if he does not know it. Thus we logically come to the conclusion that the Holy Prophet should choose for his nation a knowledgeable leader who would be entrusted to perform the mission of keeping the nation on the right path.

The Prophet would not leave the matter to the election by the people. We are certain of this because we know that the nation did not elect after the death of the Holy Prophet the most knowledgeable among his students for its leadership.

Was there among the Muslims such a knowledgeable person? And did the Holy Prophet choose that knowledgeable one for the leadership of the Islamic nation? You may find the answer in the following chapters.

[1.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 53.

[2.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 3 p. 489.

[3.](#) Ibn Hisham Al-Seerat Al-Nabaweyah part 2 p. 642.

[4.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat part 2 p. 204.

[5.](#) Al-Fakhr Al-Razi in his Commentary on the Holy Qur'an chapter 5 mentioned that Ibn Kathir and Assim and Hamzah

read the verse in a way indicating the wiping rather than washing the feet is the duty in the ablution. He also mentioned two other readers: Nafi-a and Ibn Amir along with Assim read the verse in a way indicating that washing rather than wiping the feet is the duty (conveyed by Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltut in his "Tafsir Al-Qur'an" Commentary on Chapter 5)

[6.](#) Muslim in his Sahih part 6 pp. 230-232.

[7.](#) Mahmoud Abu Rayyah Adwa' Ala Al-Sunnah Al-Naba- weyah p. 74 (edition 3)

[8.](#) Mahmoud Abu Rayyah Adhwa Ala Al-Sunnah Al-Naba- weyah p. 74.

[9.](#) Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 328 (hadith no.3874)

33. Had What Ought to Be Done Been Done?

We have discussed in the previous chapter the method by which a successor to the Holy Prophet should come to power. We have mentioned that in spite of the legitimacy and appropriateness of elective government this kind of government should not exist when it is possible to establish a government based on a Prophet's directive. We have mentioned that there are three reasons which invite us to believe that the Holy Prophet should have chosen for his followers a man to lead them after him:

1. The nature of the Islamic principles is not consonant with the election because the Islamic principles are reformatory and not desirable to people. The founder of the Islamic State who was the proclaimer of the reformatory principles should not leave the selection of his deputy to a populous election or to a partisan election.

He should choose the one whom he thinks is the best among the members of his party to become his deputy. Leaving it to election may bring to power the unqualified and endanger the reformatory principles.

2. The nation was about to face dangers and crises which were expected to test the faith of the believers and the Holy Prophet was aware of that. He should have chosen for the ship of the nation a navigator to lead that ship through the turbulence of the crises and not to let the navigator be chosen by election.

3. The nation was and is still in need of an authority after the Holy Prophet to inform the nation of the interpretations of the Holy Qur'an and the real instructions of the Holy Prophet. This is because the Holy Prophet did not leave written instructions.

The election could not secure for us the needed authority who knew the meanings of the Holy Qur'an as they are and the actual instructions of the Holy Prophet. Should the companions of the Prophet elect a person their election would not change the personality of their elect; nor would it make him completely knowledgeable in this field if he were not so.

The needed authority would not be secured except through a directive by the Holy Prophet because the Holy Prophet knew the most knowledgeable among his companions.

It can be said that all of what these three reasons lead us to is to believe that it was expected from the Prophet to appoint a particular person who has all the needed qualifications for the leadership of the nation. But these reasons do not prove that what was expected had taken place. Had there been any directive by the Prophet concerning this matter?

We shall try in the following chapters to answer this question which actually is a combination of two important questions:

1. Had there been among the companions of the Prophet a man who had all the needed qualifications for the leadership including complete knowledge of the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the Islamic Law?
2. Suppose that the man with these qualifications did exist had the Holy Prophet appointed him? We find the answer to these two questions in a number of statements which the Holy Prophet pronounced at various times and places.

'Ali Is The Gate Of The City Of Knowledge

The Holy Prophet informed his followers of the existence of a man who was the treasurer of the knowledge of the Holy Prophet and he declared to them that if they want to reach the knowledge of the Holy Prophet they should take that knowledge from that treasurer. He said (and Ibn Abbas reported): "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is the gate (door) of that city. Whoever wishes to enter that city he should come through its gate."

Or he said; Whoever wants that city should come to the door." Jabir Ibn Abdullah Al-Ansari reported that the Messenger said "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate; whoever wants the knowledge should come to the gate."¹

This statement shows us that the Messenger had informed the Muslims of two important matters: 1. That the knowledgeable person whom the nation needs is available and that 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib is that knowledgeable one.

2. If the Muslims want to have the knowledge of the Holy Prophet 'Ali would be the only way through which they can obtain it. It is the duty of the Muslims to try to reach that knowledge. Thus their quest of 'Ali's knowledge and his guidance would be of their most important duties. This is because knowledge has to precede the deed.

If we want to have a sound deed it has to be in accordance with the teachings of the Messenger. The continuation of the accord of our deeds with the instructions of the Holy Prophet is dependent on our knowledge of those instructions.

The hadiths which indicate that 'Ali is the gate of the city of knowledge are not the only hadiths which

speak of the superiority of 'Ali's knowledge. There are many other hadiths. Some of them were mentioned before and all of them testify to the fact that 'Ali was the most knowledgeable in the Islamic teachings among the followers of the Holy Prophet.

It suffices to mention the hadith of Om Selemah wife of the Holy Prophet who said: "I heard the Messenger of God saying: 'Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with 'Ali. They do not part with each other until they meet me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgement)."[2](#)

Al-Hakim recorded that Anas Ibn Malik reported that the Holy Prophet said to 'Ali: "You shall inform my nation about the truth and what they dispute about after me": He said this is an authentic hadith according to the stipulation of the two Sheikhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).[3](#)

Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic Sunan recorded that the Messenger of God said: "God have Thy mercy on 'Ali. God make the right and the truth with 'Ali in all situations."[4](#)

Abu Na-eem recorded that Ibn Masud said: "The Holy Qur'an... has outward and inward meanings and 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib has the knowledge of both."[5](#)

Imam Ahmad reported that the Messenger said to his daughter Fatimah Al-Zahra: "Are you not satisfied that I have married you to the one who is the earliest in Islam among my followers their most knowledgeable and their greatest in wisdom?"[6](#)

Al-Hakim recorded that Qais Ibn Abu Hazim reported that he heard Saad Ibn Abu Waqas saying to a man from Damascus who cursed 'Ali: "Man why do you curse 'Ali?

Was he not the first one who embraced Islam? Was he not the first one who prayed with the Messenger of God? Was he not the most knowledgeable among people? Then Saad said: God this man has cursed a man from the highest righteous among Thy servants. I ask Thee not to let this group leave this place until Thou show them Thy power.

The man from Damascus immediately fell from the mount of his horse on stones and his head was split and he died."[7](#)

Of course it could be said that these hadiths only indicate that 'Ali was a leader in the Shari-ah (Islamic Law) the interpretation of the Book of God and the instructions of the Holy Prophet. But they do not indicate that he was the political leader of the nation and its appointed ruler.

Thus it does not prove his immediate succession of the Holy Prophet.

The weakness of this argument would be obvious when we realize that the purpose of the Messenger from these statements is to lead his nation and to inform it of the road which secures its adherence to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet.

The nation would not walk on that road if the affairs of the Muslims are handled by a man who is other than the man whom the Prophet trusted with his knowledge of the Islamic Law and made him the door of guidance to the Muslims.

The Muslims may walk on that road only if they have a positive attitude towards the man whom the Holy Prophet trusted with his knowledge. What took place in the history testifies to that. In spite of all these statements by the Prophet concerning 'Ali the nation did not take from the teaching of the Imam 'Ali but a little compared to what they took from the companions who were not comparable to the Imam in knowledge. We shall speak of this in details when we comment on the Hadith of Al-Thaqalain.

However there are other statements which are more indicative of the appointment of the Imam 'Ali by the Holy Prophet for the leadership of the nation. Some of these statements took place before the Hijrah and some of them took place after the Hijrah. Most of them took the shape of general declarations directed to groups of people.

- [1.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 127. Ibn Jareer reported the hadith and considered it authentic (conveyed by Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Kanz Al-Ammal part 15 p. 13 hadith no.348-379.
- [2.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 124.
- [3.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 122.
- [4.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 297.
- [5.](#) Abu Na-eem Hilyat Al-ouliya' part 1 p. 65 (Al-Fairo- zabadi Fadha-il Al-Khansah)
- [6.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 5 p. 26.
- [7.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 499.

34. The Home Conference

Three years after the commencement of his proph- ethood the Holy Prophet declared that 'Ali is his brother his executor and successor. This was in accordance with the logical and natural course. The Prophet needed a strong and truly helpful minister to support him and to aid him in spreading the message and building the State which is expected to be built on the foundation of the principles of the Heavenly Message. This was not unprecedented in the history of prophethood. Moses asked his Lord to support him with a minister from the members of his family Aaron his brother.

A minister who is strong enough to face the dangers which the Holy Prophet was expected to face ought to become his deputy and caliph who replaces him when anything happens to him. By this the Holy Prophet would have taken whatever he could take of precaution in order to secure the continuity of the Message and its defusion when he departs from this world instead of leaving its future to chances.

The reader may recall that we have discussed in the fifth chapter (vol. 1) what the Messenger did when his Lord commanded him after three years from the commencement of the Message to warn his closest

relatives when the following verses were revealed:

"And warn thy nearest kinsmen. And lower thy wing to the believers who follow thee. Then if they disobey thee say: I am free (of responsibility) for what ye do..." The Holy Qur'an chapter 26 verses 214-216.

The Holy Prophet at that time invited the children of Abdul-Muttalib who were the closest of his kinsmen. They were at that time thirty or forty men. He invited them for a banquet which contained a small amount of food and milk. They ate and drank from the little food and milk until they were satisfied. When the opportunity came the Holy Prophet spoke to them saying (and the Imam 'Ali reported it):

"O children of Abdul-Muttalib by God I know of no young man from among the Arabs ever brought his people better than I brought to you. I have brought to you the best for you in this world and in the Hereafter. Certainly God has commanded me to invite you to it. Who is among you that will be my minister in this mission and he will become my brother my executor and my successor among you?"

The audience kept silent. 'Ali said "Prophet of God I will be your minister in this mission." He held my neck and said: "This is my brother my executor and my successor among you. Listen to him and obey him." The group laughed saying to Abu Talib: "He commanded you to listen to your son and to obey him!".

Al-Tabari recorded this hadith in his history (part 2 page 216) Ibn Al-Athir in his history Al-Kamil (part 2 page 41) recorded this hadith and so did Abu Al-Fida in his history (part 1 page 116) Al-Khazin Ala-o-Deen Al-Baghdadi in his commentary on the Holy Qur'an (page 390) and Al-Suyuti in his book Jami-Al-Jawami-a (part 7 page 392) where he mentioned it in reliance on Al-Tabari. In the same part (page 397) he reported that all the six reliable recorders of the hadith (Ibn Is-Haq Ibn Jareer Ibn Abu Hashim Ibn Mardawaih Abu Na-eem and Al-Baihaqi) reported this hadith in their books. Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his commentary on Nahiul-Balagha (volume 3 page 254) also recorded this hadith and Muhammad Hussein Haikal also recorded it in his book Hayaat Muhammad first edition (page 104). [1](#)

I have already discussed in the fifth chapter the significance of this declaration. What I want to mention now is that this declaration indicates that the Messenger was looking through the light of God at the future which was stored for the blessed Message of Islam of diffusion throughout the world.

He was also expecting the birth of a state built on its principles and that the carrier of this message who would be the leader of a nation will need a deputy that represents him and succeeds him and that that deputy ought to be obeyed as the man of Message ought to be obeyed. Therefore he said to the group: "Listen to him and obey him." Thus the deputy has an authority similar to the authority of his leader.

Some scholars say that this hadith indicates only that 'Ali is the successor of the Holy Prophet among the children of Abdul-Muttalib. It does not indicate that he is the successor of the Prophet for all the Muslims.

This argument is unsound. The caliphate cannot be partitioned so the Messenger would have two caliphs: One for the Hashimites and one for the rest of the Muslims. The caliph has to be for all the Muslims because the Messenger is the head of all the Muslims and so is his caliph.

The Muslims in regard to the caliphate are two factions: One says that the Messenger did not appoint a successor; the other says that he appointed 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib. There is no third faction that says that the Messenger appointed a caliph for the Hashimites and left the rest of the Muslims without a caliph.

The Holy Prophet would not make a clannish discrimination by appointing a caliph for his clan and leaving the rest of the Muslims without leadership. The Prophet by the nature of his message is supposed to be more concerned with the future of his nation than with the future of his clan. Therefore it would be inconceivable that he appoints for his clan a religious authority that represents him and replaces him then leaves the millions of his followers without authority and leadership.

Before I end my deliberation about this declaration I would like to dwell a little while upon the significance of the contents of this declaration.

The Final of the Prophets of God "brothered" a child of thirteen years and appointed him a "caliph" (successor) of his after that child gave the Prophet a promise that he will be his minister in his important mission.

Let us first ask: What is the value of a promise of a child at this age to assist in such a tremendous mission which is concerned with the future of Islam and fraught with great consequences of this kind?

Suppose a child of this age promises to assist you in realizing a considerably important project for the future.

How can you rely on his promise? And what is the value of a promise of such a child whose opinion may change and his attitude could be reversed within days or hours?

Again how could the Holy Prophet know the righteousness of 'Ali and his capability of leadership in his future life while he is still thirteen years old? The life of a child who seems to be good and righteous could change during his youth and manhood and his nature could become corrupt.

It is also possible for a child who seems to be corrupt to change and become one of the best people during the days of his manhood. It is impossible for any human to know with certainty the future of a child. The knowledge of this belongs only to God who knows the future of everything.

The Holy Prophet's acceptance of 'Ali's promised assistance in making the mission a success and the Prophet's taking that promise with such a high consideration shows that the Prophet had foreseen the bright future of 'Ali with utmost certainty.

Giving that child the high ranks of brotherhood executorship and successorship implies a clear prophecy

concerning 'Ali and his future superiority in knowledge righteousness bravery and wisdom. It was impossible for the Messenger as a human being to foresee the future. He only saw that future through a revelation from God.

The high ranks which were bestowed upon him were only by the order of God and as a reward from God to 'Ali for his promise of assistance which the Almighty knew that it will be implemented with unparalleled sincerity.

All that indicates that 'Ali while he was in his childhood was above the rest of men and his brilliant future made him the candidate whom the Almighty chose to succeed His Messenger.

The authenticity of this hadith and the magnanimity of its content is supported by its accordance with the Hadith of the Analogy of 'Ali to Aaron which we shall deal with in the following pages and which is considered of the most authentic hadiths in the eyes of the Muslim scholars.

1. I relied in recording the above sources on Sheikh Al-Amini in his book Al-Ghadir part 2 pp. 279-280.

35. The Hadith of the Analogy "You Are to Me Like Aaron to Moses"

We have mentioned in the previous pages that the Messenger declared on the day of his conference with his close relatives in front of thirty or forty men from the children of Abdul-Muttalib and the Muttalibites that he "brothered" 'Ali and appointed him his successor and executor. This was a Divine reward to 'Ali for his genuine promise to the Messenger to be his minister in his mission.

This event took place three years after the commencement of the prophethood of Muhammad and ten years before the Hijrah.

It was made clear in the fifth chapter that the Messenger at his conference with the members of his clan wanted to follow the method of Moses of which the Holy Qur'an informs us that when the Almighty commanded Moses to go to Fera Moses prayed to the Lord saying:

"And give me a minister from my family: Aaron my brother. Add to my strength through him and make him share my task that we may celebrate Thy praise without stint..." The Holy Qur'an chapter 20 verses 25-31.

The Holy Prophet made his first declaration about 'Ali at the First Islamic Conference in front of thirty or forty men from the Hashimites. After nineteen years from the day of the conference the Holy Prophet

made a similar declaration in front of thousands of Muslims when he was heading the Islamic army to Tabook (on the borders of Jordan)

During the month of Rajab of the ninth lunar year after the Hijrah the Holy Prophet departed from Medina heading an army of twenty-five thousands of his followers aiming at the borders of Jordan leaving 'Ali to take his place in Medina.

This saddened 'Ali because he did not want to be away from the Messenger. It is reported also that some hypocrites circulated a rumor that the Messenger left him behind because he did not like to accompany him.

Whatever was the reason 'Ali followed the Messenger and reached him while he was still near Medina. A dialogue between the Prophet and 'Ali took place. The Prophet concluded the dialogue with a very important declaration which was recorded in the most authentic and highly considered books of hadith and history. Al-Bukhari recorded that Saad Ibn Abu Waqas reported the following:

"The Messenger of God took a journey to Tabook and he appointed 'Ali to succeed him in Medina. 'Ali said to the Prophet: 'Do you leave me with the children and the women?' The Messenger replied: 'Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me?'"¹

Al-Bukhari also reported that Saad said: "The Prophet said to 'Ali: Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses?"²

Imam Ahmad in his Musnad³ and Al-Hakim in his Al- Mustadrak⁴ recorded that Ibn Abbas said in a hadith the following: "The Messenger and the people departed for military operations in Tabook. 'Ali said to him: I will depart with you. The Prdphet said to him: No. 'Ali became sad. The Messenger said to him: Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that you are not a prophet? It would not be proper that I leave unless you are my successor."

Muhammad Ibn Saad in his book Al-Tabaqat recorded that Zayd Ibn Arqam and Al-Bura Ibn Azib reported concerning the military journey of Tabook the following: "The Messenger said to 'Ali: It would be necessary that I stay or you stay (in Medina). So he left him in Medina.

When the Messenger departed some people said: He left 'Ali behind him only for something he hated about him.

When this word reached 'Ali he followed the Messenger (and informed the Messenger about what people were saying). The Messenger laughed and said: 'Ali are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron was to Moses except that you are not a prophet? 'Ali said: Yes Messenger of God.

The Messenger said: It is as I told you."⁵

"Ibn Hisham recorded in his Biography of the Prophet that the Prophet said to 'Ali on that day:

"Ali are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron was to Moses except that there shall be no prophet after me?"[6](#)

Muslim in his Sahih through channels to Saad Ibn Abu Waqas recorded that the Messenger said to 'Ali on that day: "Are you not satisfied that you are to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no prophethood after me?"[7](#)

Imam Ahmad reported this hadith through four channels to Saad Ibn Abu Waqas.[8](#)

Muhammad Ibn Majah in his Sunan reported the hadith of Saad.[9](#)

Al-Tirmidhi also reported it in his Sunan.[10](#)

Imam Ahmad recorded that this hadith also was reported by Asma Bint (daughter of) Omeis.[11](#)

Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak recorded the hadith of Saad.[12](#)

Ibn Abd-Al-Barr in his book "Al-Istee-ab" recorded the following: "And the Prophet said to 'Ali: "You are to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me." The saying of the Prophet to 'Ali: You are to me like Aaron to Moses was reported by many companions and it is one of the best hadiths and most authentic. It was reported by Saad Ibn Abu Waqas... Also it was reported by Ibn Abbas Abu Sa-eed Al-Khidri Om Selemah (wife of the Prophet) Asma Bint Omeis Jabir Ibn Abdullah and numerous others."[13](#)

If there is anyone that argues about the authenticity of the hadith of the conference of the Prophet with the members of his clan I do not know of anyone from the Muslim scholars who argues about the authenticity of this Hadith of Analogy between 'Ali and Aaron. The authenticity of this hadith supports the authenticity of the Hadith of the Conference because the two hadiths accord with each other and express the same meaning.

The Hadith of the Analogy between 'Ali and Aaron gives 'Ali all the offices of Aaron except the prophethood.

Aaron was a brother of Moses and his minister. The Holy Qur'an states that Moses prayed to the Almighty saying:

"And give me a minister from my family: Aaron my brother. Add to my strength through him." The Holy Qur'an chapter 20 verses 24-31.

Aaron was a deputy of Moses and the one who used to take his place and the Holy Qur'an testifies to that:

"And We appointed for Moses thirty nights and completed (the period) with ten (more): Thus the term of communion was completed with his Lord forty nights. And Moses had charged his

brother Aaron before he went up: "Succeed me amongst my people; do right and follow not the way of those who do mischief." The Holy Qur'an chapter 7 verse 142.

Aaron like Moses was a leader of all the Israelites and was given from God an authority similar to that of Moses and the Holy Qur'an declares that:

God said to Moses: "We will certainly strengthen thy arm through thy brother and invest you both with authority so they shall not be able to touch you; with Our evidence shall ye triumph both of you as well as those who follow you." The Holy Qur'an chapter 28 verse 35.

The phrase "with Our evidence shall ye triumph both of you as well as those who follow you " indicates clearly that all those who believed in Moses were followers of Aaron as they were followers of Moses.

The verse also declares that God has given both of them authority and immunity so the unbelievers cannot harm them and that Moses and Aaron along with their followers were destined to triumph over their opponents.

‘Ali according to the statement of the Holy Prophet has all these offices. He is the brother of the Messenger and God has strengthened the Messenger Muhammad through him though there is a difference between the brotherhood of Aaron to Moses and the brotherhood of ‘Ali to Muhammad.

The brotherhood between Aaron and Moses was through birth and was not earned through any effort on the part of either one. The brotherhood between Muhammad and ‘Ali is more significant because it did not come to ‘Ali through birth.

It was bestowed upon ‘Ali as a reward to him for his great endeavor. He was also his minister. He was also the deputy of the Messenger to represent and succeed him. He was like the Messenger leader of all the Muslims. What does the caliphate mean more than that?

Thus the Messenger through this far-reaching statement has actually declared that his minister and deputy and the one who like the Holy Prophet is supposed to be followed and obeyed by all the Muslims was only ‘Ali son of Abu Talib. All these ranks which are implied in the Hadith of Analogy between ‘Ali and Aaron were clearly mentioned in the declaration of the conference where the Holy Prophet said: "This is my brother executor and successor. Listen to him and obey him."

I would like to go back to the verse which declared that God had given Moses and Aaron authority and immunity that the unbelievers cannot harm them that they and those who followed them are the triumphant. The similarity in this aspect between Moses and Aaron on one hand and between Muhammad and ‘Ali on the other hand is obvious. The Almighty strengthened Muhammad through ‘Ali. ‘Ali's bravery was the wonder of the ages. Muhammad and ‘Ali were given from God authority and immunity against the enemies of Islam.

Thus the unbelievers in spite of their overwhelming numbers compared to the small number of the

Muslims in those days were unable to reach the Messenger or 'Ali with any serious harm. The Messenger and 'Ali and those who followed them were triumphant.

The Messenger was faced with situations in which the Muslims were outnumbered and many of them thought that defeat is the destiny of the camp of the Oneness of God. Yet through the firmness of the Messenger and the heroism of 'Ali the Islamic camp was triumphant.

The Muslims in more than one battle were defeated but the Messenger and 'Ali remained at the battlefield alone. God protected them and they prevailed against the opposing forces. The Messenger and his deputy 'Ali had lived while surrounded by dangers for twenty-three years but the enemies of Islam were not able to harm them.

Unlimited Deputization

It may be said that the Hadith of Analogy between 'Ali and Aaron came on a specific occasion namely: The deputization of 'Ali by the Messenger to replace him during his journey to Tabook. Aaron also was deputized by Moses during his absence when he went for the appointed time with the Lord. This means that the hadith does not indicate that 'Ali was the permanent deputy of the Messenger. Of course a person with a sole objective of disproving the Prophet's permanent deputization of 'Ali can say that.

Yet a neutral minded person can see in the hadith a clear indication that the Prophet had given 'Ali an unlimited deputization. Had the Holy Prophet meant only to deputize 'Ali at a particular occasion his deputization would be like that of any other companion whom the Prophet appointed as temporary successor when he used to leave Medina. But the Prophet never likened any of them to Aaron.

The scholars who take this attitude have forgotten that the Messenger appointed temporary successors during the following campaigns:

Abu Lubabah to succeed him in Medina when he left to the Battle of Badr.

Ibn Arfatah when the Prophet left to Doumat Al-Jandal.

Ibn Om Maktoum during the military operations against Banu Quraidah and Banu Lihyan and Thee Qirad.

Abu Dharr when he left to Banu Al-Mustalaq.

Numeila during the time of Khaibar.

Ibn Al-Adbat during Omrat Al-Qada.

Abu Raham during the time of his military journey to Mecca.

Abu Dujanah during the Valedictory Pilgrimage. [14](#)

The Holy Prophet never said to any one of these temporary deputies what he said to 'Ali: "You are to me like Aaron to Moses..." He said that only to 'Ali because he was not a temporary successor like these companions.

Furthermore by excluding only the prophethood in the Hadith of Analogy the Prophet had clearly indicated that all the ranks of Aaron are bestowed on 'Ali. And none of Aaron's ranks (the ministry the leadership the prophethood—or the brotherhood) was temporary. Thus the deputization and successorship were permanent and not occasional.

The fact is that the Messenger used that occasion as a pulpit to declare the distinction of 'Ali his leadership of the nation his general deputization of him and that he was his only deputy.

The exception of the prophethood clearly indicates that 'Ali to the Holy Prophet is like Aaron to Moses in everything except the prophethood. The Holy Prophet in fact was saying to 'Ali that his position from him is like the position of Aaron to Moses in brotherhood ministry successorship his leadership of the nation and every rank other than the prophethood.

By saying "Except that there shall be no prophethood after me " the Prophet actually had informed the Muslims that 'Ali was deprived of the prophethood not because he was not qualified for it but only because Muhammad is the Final of the Prophets. Had the Prophet not been the Final of all the Prophets 'Ali would have been a Prophet like Aaron.

The Imam 'Ali in one of his sermons reported that the Holy Prophet told him during the period of the commencement of his prophethood: "Ali you hear what I hear and you see what I see but you are not a prophet and you are on the right path."

The successorship of Aaron to his brother Moses when Moses went to the appointed time with his Lord never was a temporary mission. He succeeded Moses when he went to the mountain for forty nights only because of his superior position among the Israelites as Moses' permanent deputy. And when the head of a nation is absent his deputy takes his place as a matter of course and as an exercise of his general function.

We have already advanced that the Holy Qur'an declares that Aaron was like Moses a leader of all the Israelites. God said to Moses: "We shall strengthen you through your brother and give you both authority that they will not reach you. With our evidence both of you along with those who follow you shall triumph."

Since 'Ali's position was similar to that of Aaron he would be like the Prophet Muhammad a leader of all the Muslims. His deputization from the Prophet at the time of his absence would be a matter of course and an exercise of his general function because he is the deputy of the head of the State.

This is some of what the Holy Messenger meant in his declaration. You have already read in the hadith

of Ibn Abbas which was reported by Al-Hakim and Imam Ahmad that the Prophet told 'Ali: "Are you not satisfied that you are to me like Aaron to Moses except that you are not a prophet? It would be improper that I leave unless you are my successor."

The reader may wonder why many Muslim scholars did not understand from the Hadith of Analogy with its clear indication that the Prophet was trying to inform the Muslims that 'Ali is his successor.

The negative attitude of these scholars is due to the fact that they lived in societies predominantly subscribing to the theory that the Messenger of God died without appointing a successor after him. As they took this theory for granted it was necessary for them to overlook the indication of any hadith that the Prophet had appointed 'Ali as successor in order to save the no-appointment-by-the-Prophet theory.

Had Abu Bakr been the subject of this declaration instead of 'Ali the negative attitude of many scholars would have been reversed. Had the Messenger said to Abu Bakr:

"Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me " the Muslim scholars of the majority would have found in the declaration a clear evidence that the Messenger had appointed Abu Bakr as his successor. Had the Prophet said that I would have believed that the Messenger had appointed Abu Bakr as his successor.

It is worthy to mention that the Messenger uttered the statement of analogy between 'Ali and Aaron on occasions other than the occasion of Tabook. Om Saleem wife of Abu Ayyoub Al-Ansari whom the Holy Prophet used to respect and visit reported that the Messenger told her: "Om Saleem the flesh of 'Ali is from my flesh and his blood is from my blood and he is to me like Aaron to Moses."[15](#)

Al-Tabari recorded that Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger said to 'Ali on the day of brotherhood (this was eight years before the occasion of Tabook):

"... 'Ali were you angry with me (showing his love to 'Ali as a brother shows his love to his brother) when I made brotherhoods between the Meccans and the Medinites and I did not make a brotherhood between you and any of them? Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me?"[16](#)

Asma Bint Omais (wife of Jaafar Al-Tayyar) said: "I heard the Messenger of God saying to 'Ali: You are to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me."[17](#) Of course Asma was not in the army of Tabook. So she heard the statement from the Messenger on a different occasion.

The Imam Al-Nisa-i in his Al-Khassa-iss Al-Alaweyah (the distinctions of 'Ali) reported that when Jaafar Ibn Abu Talib and Zayd Ibn Haritha and Imam 'Ali disputed each other about the guardianship of the orphan of Hamzah the Prince of Martyrs the Messenger said: "'Ali you are to me like Aaron to Moses..."[18](#)

Al-Hassan Ibn Badr Al-Hakim in his book Al-Kuna Al-Shirazi in Al-Alqab and Ibn Al-Najjar reported that the Messenger said to 'Ali while Abu Bakr 'Umar and Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jarrah were with the Prophet:

"Ali you are the first of the believers in belief and their first in Islam and you are to me like Aaron to Moses..."¹⁹

It is reported by Zayd Ibn Oufa that the Messenger of God said to 'Ali on the day of brotherhood (in the first year after the Hijra): "By the One Who sent me with the truth I only preserved you for myself. You are to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no prophet after me and you are my brother and my heir..."²⁰

These hadiths and others which I did not mention indicate clearly that 'Ali was to the Holy Prophet like Aaron to Moses and that he had all offices of Aaron except the prophethood. He was his permanent deputy and he was like the Prophet leader of all Muslims and the one whom they should follow.

This leadership which was given to him was only by the revelation from God to His great Messenger. The Messenger spoke of the analogy between the position of 'Ali and Aaron several times and on several occasions. The last occasion was during his journey to Tabook during the month of Rajab of the ninth year after the Hijrah.

A few months after that event the Holy Messenger took a public stand similar to this when he sent Abu Bakr to read to the pilgrims the declaration of the chapter of Bara-ah. Let us see what happened at that time.

- [1.](#) Al-Bukhari in his Sahih part 6 p. 3.
- [2.](#) Al-Bukhari his Sahih part 5 p. 24.
- [3.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 1 p. 131
- [4.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 133.
- [5.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat part 15 p. 176.
- [6.](#) Ibn Hisham Al-Seerat Al-Nabaweyah part 2 p. 172.
- [7.](#) Muslim his Sahih part 15 p. 176.
- [8.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 1 pp. 175-177-179-182.
- [9.](#) Ibn Majah his authentic Sunan part 1 p. 45.
- [10.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 302.
- [11.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 6 p. 3-23.
- [12.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part p.
- [13.](#) Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Barr Al-Islee-ab part 3 p. 1 097.
- [14.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet. Look at the record of the journeys of the Prophet.
- [15.](#) Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Mukhtasar Kanz Al-Ummal (printed on the margin of Musnad part 5 pp. 31-32)
- [16.](#) Conveyed by Sayed Sharaful-Deen Al-Murajaat p. 179.
- [17.](#) Ibn Ahd Al-Barr Al-Istee-ab part 3 p. 1 098.
- [18.](#) Al-Nisa-I The Distinctions of 'Ali p. 19 (conveyed by Al-Fairouzabadi Fadha-II Al-Khamsah part 1 p. 307)
- [19.](#) Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Kanz Al- Ummal part 6 p. 395 (conveyed by Al-Fairouzabadi Fadha-II Al-Khamsah part 1 p. 312)
- [20.](#) Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Kanz Al-Ummal part 5 p. 40 (Al-Fairouzabadi Fadha-II Al-Khamsah part 1 p. 311.

36. The Hadith of Performance and Delivery

No one shall deliver for me except i or a man from my house

Imam Ahmad in his Musnad recorded that Abu Bakr said: The Prophet sent me with the chapter of Bara-ah to the people of Mecca:

"No pagan should make a pilgrimage after this year.

No naked shall circumnavigate around the Ancient House.

No one shall enter Paradise except a Muslim soul. Any Pagan community that has between them and the Messenger of God a peace accord the accord will end by the end of the specified period (without extension) and God and His Messenger are clear of the pagans."

Abu Bakr traveled on for three days then the Prophet said to 'Ali: "Follow him and send Abu Bakr back to me and go on to deliver the message yourself." 'Ali did that and Abu Bakr came back to the Prophet. He wept and said: Messenger of God did anything happen concerning me? The Prophet said that nothing happened but good.

"But I am commanded that no one should deliver it except myself or a man from me."¹

Al-Hakim in his Sahih Al-Mustadrak recorded through his channel to Jumai-a Ibn Omair Al-Laithi that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar said to him:

"The Messenger of God sent Abu Bakr and 'Umar with the chapter of Bara-ah to the people of Mecca. The two men went on and suddenly a man overtook them. They asked: Who is this? He said: I am 'Ali. Abu Bakr give me the written message which you have. Abu Bakr said: What happened concerning me? 'Ali said: By God I did not know but good. 'Ali took the written message and went on and Abu Bakr and 'Umar went back to Medina and said:

Messenger of God what happened to us? He said nothing but good but I am told: No one should deliver for you but you or a man from you."²

Al-Nisa-i in his book "Al-Khasa-is Al-Alaweyah" (Distinctions of 'Ali) reported that the Messenger of God sent the chapter of Bara-ah to Mecca with Abu Bakr. Then he ordered 'Ali to follow him. He told him: Take the written message from Abu Bakr and go to the people of Mecca. 'Ali reached Abu Bakr and took the message from him.

Abu Bakr sadly went back and said to the Messenger: Did any Revelation come down concerning me? The Prophet said: No but I am commanded that either I should deliver it or a man from the members of

my House.[3](#)

Al-Tirmidhi recorded through his channel to Anas Ibn Malik that Anas reported: The Prophet sent Bara-ah with Abu Bakr then he called him and said: No one ought to deliver this except a man from the members of my House He called 'Ali and gave him the chapter."[4](#)

Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet recorded that Muhammad Al-Baqir reported the following:

"When Bara-ah was revealed to the Messenger he sent Abu Bakr to lead the people in pilgrimage. The Prophet was told: Messenger of God it would be good if you send Bara-ah with Abu Bakr so that he will announce it. The Prophet said: No one should deliver for me but a man from the members of my House.

Then he called upon 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib and said to him: Take the verses at the beginning of Bara-ah... 'Ali went on riding the camel of the Messenger "Al-Adba " until he reached Abu Bakr on the road. Abu Bakr said: Are you a commander or commanded? 'Ali said: I am commanded and they went on and Abu Bakr led the people in the Hajj Pilgrimage.

When the Day of Arafat came 'Ali stood up and announced to the people what the Messenger ordered him to announce..."[5](#)

It seems that this event was well known. 'Umar did not deny it when Ibn Abbas reminded him of it. Ibn Abbas reported the following:

"... 'Umar said to me: Ibn Abbas I see your man ('Ali) is treated unjustly... I said: Ameer Al-Mumineen give him his right. He pulled his hand from my hand and went on speaking to himself then he stood waiting for me.

When I came to him; he said: Ibn Abbas I think they (the Qureshites) did not give him the leadership only because they thought he was too young for that... I said: By God neither God nor His Messenger considered him too young when they ordered him to take the chapter of Bara-ah from your man. He ('Umar) turned his face away from me and sped up and I went back."[6](#)

Al-Hafith Al-Kanji Al-Shafi-i in his book Kifayat Al- Talib page 151 recorded that Al-Harith Ibn Malik reported the following:

"I came to Mecca and met Saad Ibn Abu Waqas I asked him: "Did you hear any recommendation for 'Ali?" He said: I witnessed four for him if one of them were for me I would prefer it to having the whole world living in it as long as Noah lived. The Messenger sent Abu Bakr with Bara-ah to the pagans of Quraish. He traveled a day and night then the Prophet said to 'Ali: Follow Abu Bakr take Bara-ah from him and deliver it and send Abu Bakr back to me. Abu Bakr came back crying. He said: Messenger of God did any revelation come down concerning me? The Prophet said: None but good. No one should deliver for me except myself or a man from me or he said: from the members of my House..."[7](#)

Whether the Messenger sent Abu Bakr with the chapter of Bara-ah or the chapter came down after he left for the pilgrimage; and whether Abu Bakr went back to the Prophet or he continued in his leadership of the pilgrimage these hadiths unanimously agree that the Messenger declared that no one should deliver for him (or perform for him) but a man from him or a man from the members of his House (and the first two hadiths and the hadith of Ibn Abbas stated that this was by order from God.) That man was 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib.

Let us try to understand what the Messenger meant by his saying "No one should deliver for me except a man from me (or from the members of my House).".

The Holy Prophet did not mean that no one should report his word or deed except a man from the members of his House; otherwise it would be forbidden for people from outside his House to report what he said or did and this is untrue. The Messenger used to say: "Let the present inform the absent."

Nor did the Messenger mean that he should not send a messenger to people except a man from his House because he sent many messengers to kings and princes and tribes and individuals and none of them were from the members of his House.

The rest of the people can report the words and the deeds of the Holy Prophet. But what they report would not be securely free of error. Many times the reporters themselves became confused and they contradicted each other in their reports.

Therefore none of them would be an authority to the Muslims in representing the Messenger and in replacing him as the communicator of the Islamic instructions. The one who represents the Holy Prophet is a man from the members of his House.

The one who delivers for the Messenger and represents him should be the treasurer of the Knowledge of the Messenger knowing all of what was revealed to the Messenger and what the Messenger gave of instructions.

This is exactly what the Messenger meant when he said: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is the gate of that city. Whoever wants to enter that city should come through the gate."

The Messenger informed us that the members of his House during his lifetime were only four: 'Ali Fatima and their two children (Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein). We have mentioned in the second chapter vol. 1 of this book several hadiths which indicate this. Of those hadiths is what Muslim reported through Saad Ibn Waqas: When this verse 'Let us invite our sons and your sons...' the Messenger called 'Ali Fatima and Hassan and Hussein and said: God these are the members of my House."[8](#)

No man was among these four during the time of the Holy Prophet except one person: That is 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib. Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein were still children and Fatima was a grown lady. Thus when the Messenger said:

"No one performs for me except a man from the members of my House " he had meant only 'Ali. Therefore he sent him with the chapter of Bara-ah.

The Messenger did not mean to bestow on 'Ali this office of his representation because he was from his relatives. The Prophet would not elevate his relatives above other people because they are his relatives. He is the one who called upon people to erase all tribal prejudices and declared the human equality and that there is no superiority but through righteousness.

And so the hadith of Ibn Abbas speaks clearly that what the Prophet did was by order from God and not through a human desire. The Almighty of course would prefer 'Ali to the rest of the people only because He purified him and the rest of the members of the House completely.

The quoted hadiths indicate that 'Ali was the only deputy of the Messenger and no one from the Muslims represents the Messenger except he. It is reported that Hubshi Ibn Janadah reported the following:

"I heard the Messenger of God saying: 'Ali is from me and I am from him and no one represents me except 'Ali."

Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic Sunan reported this hadith and said this is good unusual and authentic.⁹ Ibn Majah reported it also in his authentic Sunan¹⁰ and so did Imam Ahmad in his Musnad.¹¹

'Ali's general representation of the Holy Prophet stands clearly in the hadiths which declared that obedience of 'Ali is an obedience of God and His Messenger; disobedience of 'Ali is a disobedience of God and His Messenger; to slander him is to slander God and His Messenger; to love him is to love God and His Messenger and to be hostile to him is to be hostile to God and His Messenger. Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak recorded that Abu Dharr reported the following:

"The Messenger of God said: 'Whoever obeys me obeys God and whoever disobeys me disobeys God; and whoever obeys 'Ali obeys me; and whoever disobeys 'Ali disobeys me.'" Al-Hakim said: "This is an authentic hadith.¹² But the two sheikhs Al-Bukhari and Muslim did not report it." Al-Thahabi in his comment on Al-Mustadrak considered this hadith authentic.

Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak also reported on the same page many hadiths which indicate that to slander 'Ali is to slander the Messenger and to love him is to love the Messenger and to be hostile to him is to be hostile to the Messenger.

It could be argued that the hadiths of representation and delivery substantiate that 'Ali is the Imam of the Muslims in jurisprudence rather than worldly affairs. It does not substantiate his leadership in rule and administration. Therefore they do not prove that he is the first caliph of the Messenger.

The weakness of this argument is easy to discover when we remember that the hadiths which indicate the imperativeness of his obedience and the prohibition of his disobedience actually announce his leadership in jurisprudence and worldly affairs. In addition to this the separation between religion and

worldly affairs has no place in Islam.

Summary of the Previous Four Chapters

It has become clear by now that what was supposed to happen had happened. The Messenger had done what was dictated by the nature of his mission and the principles of his religion along with the grave circumstances under which his nation and state was living.

He responded to all that and to the need of the Muslims for a genuine authority in the Islamic teaching by appointing a genuine Imam for the nation to lead it after him. This is what was expected and this is what took place. The Holy Prophet informed the Muslims in many ways that he chose for them a man to lead them after him.

We have mentioned until now four kinds of statements by the Holy Prophet through which he informed the Muslims that 'Ali is their Imam. He made him their authority when he made him the gate of the city of knowledge and told them whoever wants to enter into that city has to come through the gate. He informed them also on the day of the Home Conference that 'Ali is his brother his minister his executor and his successor.

He also informed them on many occasions that 'Ali to him is like Aaron to Moses in everything except the prophethood. He informed them that God commanded him that no one should represent him but 'Ali. He informed them that their obedience to 'Ali is an obedience to God and His Messenger and that their disobedience to 'Ali is a disobedience to God and His Messenger.

The Hadith Is a Prophecy

The Prophet uttered these important statements in reliance on the Divine revelation. Otherwise he could not declare that obedience to 'Ali is an obedience to God and his disobedience is a disobedience to God. He could declare that only if God informed him through a clear revelation that 'Ali will never in his future life disagree with the command of God and the teachings of His Prophet.

The declaration itself implies a very clear prophecy and it is clear that that prophecy had been realized. The Imam lived after the Messenger about thirty years in which he was a miniature copy of the great Messenger. He followed his way one hundred per cent and never parted with the order of God and the Prophet's instructions.

The event of the chapter of Bara-ah took place during the days of pilgrimage the ninth year after the Hijra. We shall see that the Messenger during the tenth year after the Hijrah and at the time of his valedictory pilgrimage issued statements which took the shape of general declaration in the presence of thousands of pilgrims. Those statements were directed to the Muslims of every generation. This was on and before the Day of Ghadir Khum.

To try to understand what the Messenger meant in those statements I shall divide these statements into two sections though the two sections were very often put together in one statement. These two sections are the Hadith Al-Thaqalain and Hadith Al-Wilayah.

- [1.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 1 p. 3.
- [2.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 51.
- [3.](#) Al-Nisa-i Al-Khassa-iss Al-Alaweyah (The Distinctions of 'Ali) p. 20.
- [4.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 2 p. 183. (Al-Fairuzabadi Fadha-il Al-Khamsah part 2 p. 343 conveyed it.)
- [5.](#) Ibn Hisham Al-Seerah Al-Nabaweyah (Biography of the Prophet) part 2 p. 547.
- [6.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentary on Nahjul-Balagha part 3 p. 105.
- [7.](#) Al-Hafith Al-Kanji Kifayat Al- Talib p. 151 (conveyed by Al-Amini Al-Ghadir part 1 p. 40.)
- [8.](#) Muslim in his Sahih part 15 p. 176.
- [9.](#) Al-Tirmidhi part 5 his authentic Sunan p. 300.
- [10.](#) Ibn Majah his authentic Sunan part 1 hadith no. 145.
- [11.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Munad part 4 pp. 164-165.
- [12.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 121.

37. Hadith Al-Thaqalain (The Two Valuables)

Many of the Hadiths of Al-Thaqalain (the Two Valuables) have been already put in front of the reader (in the second chapter and other places in this book)

To make it easy for the reader it would be proper to repeat what I have recorded of these hadiths before and add to them others of their kind.

Imam Abu Easa Ibn Easa Al-Thermathi in his authentic Sunan recorded that Jabir Ibn Abdullah (Al-Ansari) reported: "I witnessed the Messenger of God in his pilgrimage (in the tenth year after the Hijrah) speaking while he was riding his camel called: Al-Qaswa. I heard him saying: 'O people I have left in you that which if you adhere to you will never go astray: The Book of God and the members of my House.'" [1](#)

Ibn Jareer Ibn Asim Al-Mahamili in his Amali and Ibn Rahawaih recorded that 'Ali reported that the Messenger of God said: "Whoever God and His Messenger are his "Mawla" (Guardian) this 'Ali is his Mawla. I have left in you what if you adhere to you will never go astray: the Book of God His robe in His hand and in your hands and the members of my House." [2](#)

Al-Tirmidhi recorded that Zayd Ibn Arqam reported that the Messenger of God said: "I am leaving in you what if you follow you will never stray after me. One of them is bigger than the other. The Book of God a robe extended from Heaven to earth and the members of my House.

They will never part with each other until they join me at the basin (on the Day of Judgment). Beware

how you shall treat them after me."3

Al-Tirmidhi said: "There are hadiths on this subject by Abu Dharr Abu Sa-eed Zayd Ibn Arqam and Huthaifah Ibn Oseid..."4 Al-Hakim recorded that Zayd Ibn Arqam reported:

"When the Messenger of God was coming from the Valedictory Pilgrimage he stood at Ghadir Khum... and said: I am about to be summoned (by God) and I will respond (to His call). I am leaving in you the Two Valuables: One of them is bigger than the other: the Book of God and the members of my House. Beware how you shall treat them after me for they shall not part from each other until they join me at the basin (on the Day of Judgment)..."5

Al-Hakim recorded also that Zayd Ibn Arqam said that the Prophet said on that day: "O people I am leaving in you two elements if you follow you shall not go astray. They are the Book of God and the members of my House."6

Muslim in his Sahih reported that Zayd Ibn Arqam said: "The Messenger of God stood at Ghadir Khum (between Mecca and Medina) delivering to us a sermon.

He praised the Almighty and preached and reminded us. Then he said: 'O people I am only human the Messenger of my Lord is about to come to me and I shall respond. I am leaving in you "Al-Thaqalain" (The Two Valuables) The first of the two is the Book of God. The guidance and the light are in it. Follow it and adhere to it. He urged people to follow the Book of God and induced them to do so.

Then he said: "And members of my House. Remember God in dealing with the members of my House. (Repeating this three times.)"7

Imam Ahmad in his Musnad reported that Zayd Ibn Thabit reported that the Messenger of God said: "I am leaving in you two caliphs: The Book of God and the members of my House. Beware how you shall treat them after me for they will never part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)."8

Al-Samhudi Al-Shafi-i in his book Jawahir Al-Iqdain (according to Yanabee-a Al-Mawaddah page 40) reported that Om Selemah (wife of the Messenger) said: "The Messenger of God held the hand of 'Ali at Ghadir Khum and lifted it... Then he said: 'Whoever I am his "Mawla" 'Ali is his "Mawla" '. Then he said: 'O people I am leaving in you the Two Valuables: The Book of God and the members of my House. They will never part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)."9

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Sa-eed Al-Khidri reported that the Messenger of God said: "I am about to be summoned by God and I shall respond. I am leaving in you the Two Valuables: The Book of God and the members of my House. The Almighty informed me that they will never part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment). Beware how you shall treat them after me."10

Ibn Kuthayer in his book "Al-Bidayah and Al-Nihayah" (part 5 page 209 and part 7 page 348) recorded

that Huthaifah Ibn Osaid reported that the Messenger of God said: "And I shall question you when you join me on the Day of Judgment about The Two Valuables. Beware how you shall treat them after me: The bigger Valuable is the Book of God a robe whose end is in the hand of God and the other end is in your hands. Hold it firmly. Do not go astray and do not deviate. The smaller Valuable is the members of my House. The Almighty informed me that they will not part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)." Ibn Asakir reported this hadith through Huthaifa Ibn Ossaid.

We have mentioned that Al-Tirmidhi said in his Sahih that Hutheifah Ibn Ossaid is one of the reporters of this hadith.

The hadith of Al-Thaqalain (The Two Valuables) was reported by many companions. Therefore it is considered by many scholars to be of the "Mutawatir" (a hadith conveyed by numerous reporters) kind or at least from the well known hadiths.

Of the Two Valuables' hadiths is the hadith of the safety. Al-Hakim recorded that Abu Dharr said while he was holding the door of the Kaaba: "Whoever knows me I am the one whom he knows and whoever does not know me I am Abu Dharr. I heard the Prophet saying: The position of the members of my House among you is the position of Noah's ark and his people. Whoever embarked on it was saved and whoever failed to embark on it was drowned."[11](#)

Al-Khateeb in his history part 12 page 91 reported similar to this hadith through Anas Ibn Malik. Al-Bazzaz also reported it through Ibn Abbas and Ibn Al-Zubayr reported similar to it. Ibn Jareer through Abu Dharr and Abu Sa-eed Al-Khidri also reported similar to it. Abu Naeem Ibn Abdul-Barr Muhibb Al-Deen Al-Tabari and many others reported this hadith.[12](#)

This hadith tells us what the hadiths of "Al-Thaqalain" (The Two Valuables) told us. The two hadiths actually are declaring to the nation that security against straying cannot be obtained but through the adherence to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an and leadership of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

[Prophetic Hadith](#)

The Hadiths of the Two Valuables and of the Safety tell us clearly that the Messenger did not leave this nation without leadership after him. He declared to the Muslims that the leadership of the nation is in the members of his House and that the adherence to the Holy Qur'an and to their teaching is a security against straying.

There is no doubt that the adherence to the Holy Qur'an is the imperative duty of every Muslim. And so is the adherence to the teaching of the members of the House of the Prophet and walking in their path.

The most important duty of the nation is to secure itself against straying. And when the adherence to the leadership of the members of the House of the Prophet is a security against straying it would be the duty

of the nation to follow them. These hadiths declare clearly that when the Holy Prophet chose the members of his House for the leadership of the nation he did not do it by a human motive but through the revelation of God who chose these members for the leadership of the nation.

The Messenger says that the Book and the members of his House will never part with each other and that the Almighty informed him that the Qur'an and they will never part with each other until they join him at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)

It is worthy to mention that these hadiths contain a clear Prophecy. The Holy Prophet was not able humanly to know that the members of his House will never part with the Holy Qur'an particularly when two of the members of the House Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein were still small children. No one could foretell the way the two children would develop later on.

The hadiths actually include all the members of the "Itrah" (the chosen relatives of the Prophet) who were born after the death of the Prophet such as the Imams: 'Ali son of Al-Hussein Muhammad Al-Baqir Jaafar Al-Sadiq and the Imams from the progeny of Al-Sadiq.

This prophecy was fulfilled completely. Each one of these Imams was an example of purity knowledge and righteousness. None of them departed from the Holy Qur'an for one day.

It appeared to many scholars that the hadiths of the Two Valuables contradict the hadith which advises the Muslims to follow the Book of God and the "Sunnah" (the instructions of His Prophet) which we have already discussed (in chapter 33).

There we have mentioned that Ibn Hisham reported in his book Biography of the Prophet and Malik reported in his Muwatta that the Messenger said in his sermon at the Valedictory Pilgrimage: "... O people understand my word for I have delivered the Message. I have left for you what if you fortify yourselves with you will never go astray a clear instruction: The Book of God and 'Sunnah' of His Prophet..."

It is worthy to note that this hadith was attributed to the Holy Prophet without mentioning the names of the reporters through whom Ibn Hisham and Malik received the hadith.

The hadith was reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim without mentioning the word "Sunnah." They mentioned only the word "Kitabullah" (the Book of God). (See Sahih of Muslim in the Book of Pilgrimage part 8 in the Valedictory Pilgrimage page 184 and also the Sahih of Al- Bukhari part 5 page 224.)

However let us assume that this hadith is authentic and let us try to understand its meaning. To facilitate the discussion let us call hadith "Al-Thaqalain " "The Two Valuables" (which speaks of the Book of God and the members of the House of the Prophet) Hadith no. 1 and call the Hadith of Fortification (which speaks of the Book of God and the "Sunnah" of the Prophet) hadith no. 2.

It appeared to many scholars that the Messenger's order to his followers in hadith no. 2 to fortify

themselves by the Book and the "Sunnah" against deviation contradicts hadith no. 1 which orders the Muslims to follow the Book and the members of the House of the Holy Prophet as a security against deviation and straying. The fact is that the two hadiths are not contradictory to each other. They are rather complementary to each other.

I have mentioned in chapter 3 that the word "Sunnah" in hadith no. 2 meant what is known to be the instructions of the Holy Prophet with certainty. The hadith also tells us that the Prophet wanted us to follow the known meaning of the Holy Qur'an rather than its surmised meaning without certainty. This is because the adherence to the uncertain meaning of the Book or the unknown instructions does not represent security against deviation and straying.

Many of the recorded hadiths contradict each other. When each group of scholars takes what it thinks to be authentic and the opinions of the groups differ about the authenticity and the indications of the contradictory hadiths it would become impossible for all those groups to be right. Some of them or all of them have to be wrong.

Thus there would be no security against straying. Even when there are no contradictions (as when we have only one hadith but that hadith is not certain because it is not reported by a sufficient number of reporters) the hadith would not represent security against straying. That is because it may not have been said by the Holy Prophet and it is a well known fact that most of the hadiths are from this kind.

The Qur'anic verses are not alike. Some of them can be understood clearly and certainly and some of them are not so clear. Therefore the Qur'anic commentators offered various interpretations to such verses but none of those interpretations are certain.

Thus we find that the advocates of pre-destination cite for their opinion some of the Qur'anic verses and the advocates of man's freedom also cite verses from the Holy Qur'an. The various Islamic Schools of thought argue with each other disagree with each other and each one of them cites for its opinion what appears to agree with it of Qur'anic verses or hadiths of the Prophet.

All these schools seem to be sincere in what they advocate; but with all their sincerity they differed from each other and the truth became unknown. They cannot all be right. Many of them must be wrong. Yet the Holy Prophet tells us that if we follow the Book of God and his "Sunnah" we would be immuned of error and deviation. But the security is still missing.

All these problems arise if the Messenger had commanded us to follow what we guess to be his "Sunnah" and what we guess to be the meaning of the Book.

If the Messenger had commanded us to follow what is certain to be his "Sunnah" and what is certain to be the meaning of the Holy Qur'an (and this is actually what constitutes a security against deviation and error) he would have commanded us to do what is beyond our ability. The reason: He did not leave us written or sufficient number of known "Sunnahs." What are known to be truly the "Sunnah" of the Prophet

are very few.

Yet we know that the Messenger does not command us to do what is impossible. Therefore we infer that the Messenger had left his nation a clear way for knowing the real instructions of the Holy Prophet and the meanings of the Book of God.

This way is the members of his House who are one of the Two Valuables whom he left to the nation. This is what hadith no. 1 speaks of. Should this be the case then hadith no. 2 would not be in conflict with hadith no. 1 This hadith would be rather supplementing and explaining hadith no. 2 and hadith no. 2 would be commanding us to do what is within our power.

For hadith no. 1 declared to the nation that the members of the House of the Prophet are sources of the certain knowledge concerning the actual instructions of the Holy Prophet and the meaning of the Holy Book. The nation through the members of the House of the Holy Prophet can acquire what it needs of knowledge concerning the Islamic principles and laws if it desires that and this is what secures it against straying.

This is actually what the Holy Prophet declared when he said: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate.

Whoever wants to enter the city should come to the gate." Thus the words of the Holy Messenger on this subject agree with each other and points to one road and aim namely: The duty of the nation is to follow the members of the House of the Holy Prophet who were the treasurers of the Prophet's knowledge.

Thus the Muslim generations who were living during the first three Islamic centuries with members of the House of the Prophet were able to learn from them the exact meaning of the Qur'an and the genuine "Sunnah" of the Prophet.

Sheikh Muhammad Abu Zuhrah in his book "Al-Imam Al-Sadiq " after mentioning hadith no. 1 and hadith no. 2 said the following: "But we say that the Sunni books which reported the hadiths and recorded the word "Sunnati" (my instructions) are more reliable than the Sunni books which recorded the word: "Itrati" (members of my House).[13](#)

Abu Zuhrah's argument against hadith no. 1

Sheikh Abu Zuhrah said that though hadith no. 2 is recorded without naming the reporters who attributed it to the Messenger. On the other hand hadith no. 1 was reported by numerous companions of the Prophet. It is considered "Mutawater" and for this it is certainly authentic.

I have mentioned before that Muslim reported in the eighth part of his Sahih that the Messenger said in the Valedictory Pilgrimage: "And I have left for you what you will not go astray if you fortify yourselves with: The book of God and you shall be questioned about it."[14](#) He did not mention the word "Sunnati."

Al-Bukhari also mentioned the Book of God but he did not mention the word "Sunnati."[15](#)

Sheikh Abu Zuhra is a sample of other scholars who find it difficult to accept hadith no. 1 in spite of being reported through numerous channels which made it certainly authentic. The fear of these scholars which prevents them from accepting hadith no. 1 is due to two reasons:

1. This hadith indicates clearly that the Messenger wanted the caliphate to be in the members of his House and this is what these scholars do not like to believe.
2. These scholars thought that there is a conflict between hadith no. 1 and hadith no. 2 and this was their great error.

They did not pay attention to the fact that when the Messenger commands the Muslims to follow the "Sunnah" (his instructions) while the "Sunnah" is not recorded he would be commanding the Muslims to do the impossible if he wanted them to follow with certainty. Under this condition our adherence to the known and unrecorded "Sunnah" would be possible only if the Prophet had appointed an Imam after him to inform people about what they do not know. And this is what hadith no. 1 is about.

The Prophet however would not tell the Muslims that if they follow what they guessed to be his instructions they would be secured against deviation because guessing does not secure the truth. The Holy Qur'an declares:

"Certainly conjecture never substitutes the truth." (Chapter 53 v.28)

Sheikh Abu Zuhrah was actually unconscious of his own doing when he was writing about the subject. He viewed that hadith no. 2 is more authentic than hadith no. 1 because the books which recorded the word "Wa Sunnati" are more reliable than the books that recorded the word "Wa Itrati."

Abu Zuhrah's claim is untrue because hadith no. 1 was reported by numerous companions and recorded in highly authentic books such as the authentic Sunnan of Al-Tirmidhi and Al-Mustadrak by Al-Hakim (who along with Al-Thahabi stated that the hadith is authentic.) However I should not fail to draw the attention of the reader to a contradiction in which Abu Zuhrah fell inadvertently.

Hadith no. 2 states clearly that the adherence to the book and the "Sunnah" of the Prophet is a security against straying. If Abu Zuhrah understands from the word "Sunnati" (my Sunnah) the instructions which were attributed by the hadiths to the Holy Prophet without certainty these instructions would not be a security against straying in the subject of his argument. For he fights one hadith by another hadith.

Each of the two hadiths which he views as contradictory to each other can be taken by a Muslim School as evidence on what the followers of that School believe. One of the two Schools would be necessarily erroneous if the two hadiths are contradictory to each other and both hadiths are "Sunnah." Thus the security which hadith no. 2 promised is clearly missing.

Abu Zuhrah was erroneous when he like the rest of the scholars of his School did not view in hadith no. 1 a necessary supplement of hadith no. 2 if hadith no. 2 is authentic. This is because hadith no. 2 can be logical only if the Holy Prophet had appointed for the nation an Imam as a reliable authority for teaching the "Sunnah" of the Holy Prophet and this is what hadith no. 1 is saying.

Through this hadith the Holy Prophet informed the Muslims of the means through which they can acquire true knowledge of the meanings of the Book and the actual instructions of the Holy Prophet.

Abu Zuhrah added to his argument against hadith no. 1 other arguments: He said: "Granted that the hadith is authentic. But we say that this hadith does not stop argument. It does not identify the Imams whom the Shi'ites consider to be the caliphs after the Holy Prophet. The hadith does not specify that the Imams are to be from the children of Al-Hussein rather than the children of Al-Hassan. The hadith also does not indicate that the leadership would be by inheritance.

"The hadith does not indicate that the Prophet meant political leadership. It actually speaks of the leadership in jurisprudence and knowledge rather than administrating the affairs of the States.. There is not any correlation between the two leaderships.

"The Holy Prophet used to grant leadership to men who were less knowledgeable than some of the men whom they led only because the appointed leaders had better administrative ability. The Holy Prophet used to appoint some non-jurisprudent individuals for the leadership of Medina during the times of his absence. If leadership requires high knowledge in jurisprudence this would have to be extended to the commandment of the armies. Yet we know that the Holy Prophet made Osamah Ibn Zayd the commander of an army in which Abu Bakr and 'Umar were included though Osamah did not have the knowledge of the two men."[16](#)

What Abu Zuhrah offers of arguments can be summarized in three things:

1. Hadith no. 1 does not speak specifically about the individual Imams from the members of the House; nor does it indicate the sequel in their leadership.

This is wrong because many of the channels of hadith no. 1 spoke specifically of the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib and declared him to be the authority after the Messenger and that adherence to his teaching is a security against straying. As he was chosen by the Holy Prophet he would have the jurisdiction to select his own successor and his successor can select another successor who would be the most qualified to lead the nation and so on.

Furthermore the Holy Prophet announced the names of the members of the House who lived with him. We have mentioned in the second chapter that Saad Ibn Abu Waqass reported that the Holy Prophet on the day of Mubahalah (contesting prayer) said: "God these ('Ali Fatimah Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein) are the members of my house."[17](#) It is also reported that Om Selemah said that the Messenger made a statement similar to this.[18](#)

The second argument by Abu Zuhrah against hadith no. 1 is that it does not indicate that the caliphate is by inheritance

The Shi'ites Do Not Believe In The Inheritance Of The Caliphate

I agree with Abu Zuhrah that the hadith does not indicate the inheritance of leadership. But the Shi'ite School does not subscribe to the theory of inheritance of leadership. The evidence of this is that the law of inheritance in Islam makes the child rather than the brother the heir.

Yet the Shi'ites believe that the Imam after Al-Hassan was his brother Al-Hussein rather than any of his sons. The Shi- ites say that the Islamic leadership is in the members of the House of the Holy Prophet not because of inheritance but because the Prophet selected 'Ali and his two sons for being the most qualified people for leadership. The fourth Imam who was born after the Prophet was to be selected by his father Al-Hussein on the basis of his qualifications rather than the basis of being his child or his first child.

It seems that it was too difficult for Abu Zuhrah and many other scholars of his School to think that the members of the House of the Holy Prophet were more qualified for leadership than the rest of the Muslims. Therefore they thought that the Shi'ites believe in their leadership because of inheritance.

Abu Zuhrah's rejection of hadith no. 1 in spite of its numerous reporters is probably due to this error. He could not believe that the members of that righteous family were more qualified than others; therefore he thought that the hadith meant inheritance of leadership.

He failed to pay attention to the reason which the Holy Prophet clearly declared stating that the Almighty informed him that the members of his House will not part with the Holy Qur'an until they join him at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)

Had Abu Zuhrah paid attention to a number of verses from the third chapter of the Holy Qur'an he could have been able to understand the distinctions and high qualifications of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet. In that chapter we read the following verses:

"Certainly God has chosen Adam and Noah the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above all people. Offsprings one is from the other. And God hears and knows all things." The Holy Qur'an chapter 3 verses: 33-34.

In the same chapter we read the following:

"There did Zakariya pray to his Lord saying: O my Lord grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure; for Thou art He that hears prayer. While he was standing in prayer in the chamber the angels called unto him: God does give thee glad tidings of Yehya witnessing the truth of a word

***from God and he will be (besides) noble chaste and a Prophet of the goodly (company of the righteous)."* The Holy Qur'an chapter 3 verses: 38–39.**

And so many other verses in this chapter and other chapters indicate that the Almighty created from the progenies of Prophets and their relatives individuals who were of the highest among people in knowledge and obedience to God.

Therefore He chose them above others. This was a reward to those Prophets for their efforts in leading people or it was in response to the prayers of those prophets as the above verses indicate because they contain the phrase "For Thou art the Hearer and the Knower of all things " or "Thou art He that hears prayer."

Muhammad is the final of the prophets and most outstanding among them. He is also most deserving of the Divine reward for his unique efforts in leading mankind to the right road and he is the most deserving to have his prayer answered.

The Holy Prophet repeatedly prayed to the Almighty to purify the members of his House. Om Selemah wife of the Messenger reported that when the following verse: "Certainly God wants only to remove all abominations from you ye members of the House and to make you pure and spotless" was revealed and 'Ali Fatima Hassan and Hussein were with him he took the surplus of his cloak and covered them with it. Then he stuck his hand out and turned it towards the sky and said: "God these are the members of my House and the closest to me. I ask Thee to remove all abomination from them and to make them pure and spotless..."¹⁹

He also prayed for the members of his House in his daily prayers and he taught the Muslims to say when they pray for him: "God I ask Thee to honor Muhammad and the members of his House as Thou have honored the members of the House of Abraham. Certainly Thou art The Praised the Glorious."²⁰

Al-Hakim recorded that Abdullah Ibn Jaafar Ibn Abu Talib reported that his father said: "When the Messenger of God witnessed the mercy of God coming down he said: 'Call for me call for me.' Safiyah said: 'Whom should we call for you Messenger of God?' He said: 'Members of my House: 'Ali Fatima Hassan and Hussein.'

They were brought to him. He then covered them with his garment then raised his two hands and said: 'God these are the members of my House. I ask Thee to honor Muhammad and the members of the House of Muhammad.' God revealed the following verse: 'Certainly God wants to remove the abomination from you members of the House and to purify you and make you spotless.'²¹ Al-Hakim said: "This is an authentic hadith."²²

[The Sunnis Are Closer Than The Shi'ites To The Opinion Of Leadership By](#)

Inheritance

What the aforementioned substantiates is that the followers of the House of the Prophet do not believe in the leadership of its members because of inheritance as Abu Zuhrah and other scholars from his school thought. They rather believe in their leadership because the Prophet chose them. He did that because of what they had of distinctions in righteousness knowledge purity and wisdom and because they do not part with the Holy Qur'an in deed or word.

I have mentioned in the sixteenth chapter that the Sunnite School advocates though inadvertently the idea of caliphate by inheritance. They reported many authentic hadiths which indicate that the caliphs are only Qureshites and that the caliphs are only twelve and that the caliphate shall stay in Quraish as long as two persons live on this earth.

When the Messenger made Qureshiteness a requirement in caliphate he did that by a commandment from God. If this requirement were made only because the Qureshites were related closely or remotely to the Messenger (because the Messenger and all the Qureshites are descendants of one great-grandfather: Fihir Ibn Malik) this would be an advocacy of the idea of caliphate by inheritance. Such an extremely extended inheritance cannot be supported by the Islamic Law of inheritance which makes the close relatives bar the remote ones.

Should Qureshiteness be made a requirement by God not because of relation to the Holy Prophet but only because being from Quraish is a distinction by itself this would be an invitation to a belief in a tribal superiority and aristocracy alien to the teachings of the Faith of Islam. The Faith of Islam invites us to believe in equality among the Muslims regardless of family nationality race or regional relationship and declares that the noblest in the eyes of God is the most righteous.

Since the two interpretations are not logical it would be necessary to understand the hadiths as follows: The Almighty made the caliphate in Quraish because He knew that there were or shall be among the Qureshites twelve men superior in knowledge righteousness and other qualifications for leadership.

He made these twelve men caliphs whether they come to power or people prevent them from coming to power. The twelve men are caliphs not because they are related to the Messenger closely; nor because they are Qureshites though it happened that they were from Quraish and close relatives to the Messenger.

The Holy Prophet himself was chosen by God not because he was from Quraish or from the Hashimites though it happened that he was from Quraish and a Hashimite. He was chosen because of his personal qualifications and he was the Prophet even if people did not believe in his prophethood.

If this is what was meant by the hadiths which made Qureshiteness a requirement in the caliphate this would not be an advocacy of leadership by inheritance. This logical interpretation agrees only with the Shi'ite School The Sunnite scholars do not agree with this interpretation They are rather inclined to

agree with the first or the second interpretation.

Yet the first interpretation means caliphate by inheritance which the Sunnites deny and attribute it to the Shi'ites though the Shi'ites are clear of it. The second interpretation as you have already seen is opposed to the Islamic principles.

Political And Jurisprudential Leadership

Abu Zuhrah raised a third argument against hadith no. 1. His argument was that the hadith does not indicate that the Prophet meant political leadership of his House.

He may have meant only their leadership in jurisprudence and religion. This is invalid for the following reasons: The intention of the Messenger which he stated in hadith no. 1 was to make the leadership of the members of his House a security against straying.

The leadership in jurisprudence does not constitute a security against straying when the power is in other hands. The leadership in jurisprudence cannot usually communicate its instructions and information to all Muslims.

Communication of this kind of instruction requires a positive atmosphere which enables the Imam to announce to the nation his instructions as it requires the power which directs the nation to follow his instructions and believe in their soundness. As long as the power is in the hands of other than the Imam that positive atmosphere and the facility of directing the nation would be missing.

When the caliphs are other than the Imams whom the Messenger wanted the nation to follow those caliphs would be inclined by their human nature to keep the Imams in obscurity. They do not like to publicize their instructions. They may attempt to publicize the opinions and the verdicts of others from their own followers whom they do not consider potential competitors for the authority.

They would try to publicize the opinions of individuals of this kind though they are inferior to the true Imams in knowledge. Al-Abbasi Al-Mansour asked Imam Malik to write a book about the "Sunnahs" of the Prophet and he promised to publicize that book and make it the main source in the hadiths among the Muslims. He did not ask the Imam Jaafar Al-Sadiq to do that though Malik was a student of Al-Sadiq.[23](#)

The majority of the Muslims took from Abdullah Ibn Masud Zayd Ibn Thabit Abdullah Ibn 'Umar and Ibn Abbas much more than they took from the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib in spite of the great difference between 'Ali and these companions in knowledge.

Abu Zuhrah himself recorded in his book Al-Imam Al-Sadiq the following: "It would be necessary to say that the jurisprudence of the Imam 'Ali his verdicts and his rules as the highest magistrate of the nation were not reported in the books of the Sunnites in proportion with the times of his caliphate and the time

in which he was engaged in the study of the Faith and issuing verdicts during the time of the Three Caliphs before him.

"The life of Imam 'Ali was dedicated entirely to jurisprudence and the knowledge of religion. He was the closest to the Messenger from among the companions. He accompanied the Messenger while he was a boy before the Messenger was commissioned by God and he continued with him until God summoned His Messenger to Himself.

Therefore it was expected that the books of the Sunnites contain much more than it contained of 'Ali's teaching.

"If we want to know the reason for which the instructions and the reports of the Imam 'Ali disappeared and remained unknown to most of the Muslims we say that the Umayyad authority was behind the disappearance of 'Ali's jurisprudence and rules. It would be improbable that the Umayyads would curse the Imam 'Ali on the pulpits of the Muslims then allow the scholars to report his knowledge his verdicts and his instructions to the people especially in matters which deal with the basis of the Islamic rule."[24](#)

Any reader of the books of the hadiths of the Sunnites can see clearly that what those books contained of the reports of Abu Hurairah and others like him is incomparably more numerous than what is reported or recorded for 'Ali and the rest of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet. Yet Abu Hurairah embraced Islam in the 6th year after the Hijrah while 'Ali was with the Messenger before the Messenger was commissioned by God until the hour of his death.

In spite of all that and in spite of the fact that the Messenger said that he is the city of knowledge and that 'Ali is the gate of that city and that whoever wants to enter the city should come to the gate we find the majority of the Muslims did not come to the gate very often. They took other sources of information about the Islamic teaching and left the gate of the city of knowledge out.

Thus Abu Zuhrah acknowledged the rarity of what was recorded in the books of the Sunnites from the knowledge of 'Ali and that the reason for that was political. As he acknowledged this he should have inferred from hadith no. 1 that it indicates that the Messenger wanted his nation to follow the members of his House not only academically in jurisprudence but also in political rule.

The Holy Prophet declared to the nation that its adherence to the Holy Qur'an and the members of his House is a security against straying. If he limited the function of the members of his House to the academic function and allows the nation to elect others for the caliphate he would have destroyed the purpose for which he was speaking in hadith no. 1 namely: The security against straying.

When people elect a caliph from outside the members of the House they would see in that caliph their religious and secular ruler whom they should obey even if his opinion in religion were in disagreement with the way of the members of the House of the Prophet. The elected caliph himself would see that people are duty-bound to obey him.

He may think that the Holy Qur'an supports that:

"O you who believe obey God and obey the Messenger and the people of authority from among you..." The Holy Qur'an chapter 4 verse 59.

The elected caliphs and the Muslims also may see that the duty of the Imam from the members of the House of the Prophet is to obey that caliph.

Thus the Messenger would have pushed people to confusion instead of securing them against straying by telling them to follow the members of his House and allowing them to elect and obey a caliph whose words and deeds do not agree with their words and deeds.

The Islamic history witnessed a good caliph following the opinion of Marwan Ibn Al- Hakam the exiled of the Prophet and Kaab Al- Ahbaar (an Arab Jew who adopted Islam) and he did not follow opinions and advices of the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib.

The fact is that the interpretation which Abu Zuhrah offered disagrees with the clear and logical meaning of hadith no. 1. The Messenger in this hadith declared clearly that his purpose is the unity of the leadership when he said that the Book of God and the members of his House do not part with each other. He did not want the Muslims to follow the members of his House because they were his relatives but because they will not part with the Holy Qur'an.

The meaning of this is that the leadership of the Holy Qur'an and the members of the House is one and that they do not disagree with each other. One of them the members of the House explains the other (the Holy Qur'an) and informs the Muslims about its actual meaning.

For this the adherence to both of them was the security against straying. Had the members of the House been in disagreement with the Holy Qur'an occasionally their obedience would not be a security against straying. But the Almighty informed the Messenger that the Holy Qur'an and the members of his House would never part with each other.

Thus the security of the nation against straying according to the Messenger is in the unity of the leadership without dualism. Should the Messenger allow the Muslims to elect a leadership which does not agree with the House of the Prophet the unity of the leadership and the security against straying would not exist because dualism would have replaced the unity.

Before I end the refutation of Abu Zuhrah's arguments I would like to discuss matters he mentioned of which are the following:

(1) The Holy Prophet chose to appoint for high positions some individuals who were less knowledgeable than others in jurisprudence. He appointed them because they had administrative capabilities.

(2) He appointed for the leadership of Medina during his absence some individuals who were not known

to be jurisprudent.

(3) Should the appointment by the Holy Prophet of some individuals for high positions require a profound knowledge in jurisprudence it should be extended to the military leadership. Yet we know that the Holy Prophet appointed Osamah commander of the army that included Abu Bakr and 'Umar while Osamah did not have what they had of religious knowledge.

What made Abu Zuhrah say all that is that he forgot that the purpose which the Holy Prophet declared in hadith no. 1 is the security of the Muslims against straying. Had Abu Zuhrah paid attention to this he would have differentiated between a limited authority such as succeeding the Prophet in ruling Medina during his absence or appointing a man to lead an army and the leadership of the whole nation.

To give the command of an army to a man with a limited knowledge in religion and to appoint a companion to rule Medina during the absence of the Messenger would not damage the security of the nation against straying as long as the Prophet is the highest authority in the nation and the army. The Prophet can and would correct the errors of his appointee and bring him back to the right road.

The leadership of the whole nation which the Prophet wanted to be a substantial means of security against straying does not realize his purpose if it is given to a man with a limited knowledge in interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the instructions of the Holy Prophet. Should such a leader stray there would be no authority above him to supervise him and bring him back to the right road because he is the highest authority.

If he goes wrong in his opinion the whole nation goes wrong with him. Should a religious leader advise him to retreat and go back to the right road and he refuses to take his advice the religious leader regardless of his extensive knowledge would have no authority over that caliph.

It happened during the caliphate of Uthman that 'Ali and good companions tried to bring him back to the right road and the caliph chose not to listen to their advice.

They did not succeed and the nation fell into insane crises whose effect has continued until today.

It would have been expected from Abu Zuhrah to be more prudent than he was. The Messenger informed us that the Almighty informed him that the members of his House would never part with the Holy Qur'an and that the Holy Qur'an and they represent an indispensable means of security against straying.

Bestowing such a high honor on them testifies that they were more gifted than others in knowledge wisdom and understanding. If they were so they would have high administrative capability; otherwise the Prophet would not have recommended them.

It may be said that the outcome is the same and that it would not be any different whether the Prophet had appointed members of his House to lead the nation only in jurisprudence or appointed them to lead

the nation in administration and jurisprudence. For the Muslims did not allow them to come to power and did not follow them as the Holy Prophet wanted.

Our answer to this is that the duty of the Messenger is to leave no excuse for the nation. Had he made the members of his House leaders in jurisprudence only and allowed the nation to elect others as religious and secular leaders the nation would have a good excuse for not taking its religious information from the House of the Prophet. The confusion and bewilderment would have been caused by the Messenger's permission to the nation to have dual leadership.

On the other hand if he declares to the nation the leadership of his House the nation will be responsible for its own error. This would be like the refusal of a community to believe in a Messenger sent by God with clear evidence. God would have done what He is expected to do and the community would have no excuse.

The indication of hadith no. 1 that the leadership of the House of the Prophet in all religious and worldly affairs does not need much explanation. What Abu Zuhrah offered of interpretation is an obvious attempt to give the hadith other than its meaning and purpose.

What the Holy Prophet meant is that the obedience of the nation to the Book of God and the House of the Prophet is commanded by God and that the Revelation had informed the Prophet that the two important elements will not part with each other. This means that the leadership of his House is like his own leadership in being general extensive and clear of any dualism because the members of the House of the Prophet like the Prophet never part with the Book of God.

The Faith of Islam does not separate religion from the State. The leadership of the Messenger was not only religious it was both religious and secular. He was the Prophet and the head of the State and he had the right to administer the affairs of the Muslims more than they had of right to administer their own affairs.

The Holy Prophet declared that the nation should live under the leadership of the Holy Qur'an and the members of his House. As the nation has to obey the Qur'an in its religious and worldly affairs it has to give equal obedience to the members of the House of Prophet.

This concludes the discussion of the Two Valuables.

Let us turn our attention to the second part of the Prophet's declaration at Ghadir Khum the Hadith of the Wilayah (Authority).

- [1.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 328.
- [2.](#) Al-Muttaqi recorded this in Kanz Al-Ummal part 5 p. 23 (hadith no.356)
- [3.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 329 (hadith no. 387b)
- [4.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 329 (hadith no. 387b)
- [5.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 109.

- [6.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 109.
- [7.](#) Muslim his Sahih part 15 p. 180. Imam Ahmad also reported it in his Musnad part 4 p. 367.
- [8.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 5 p. 181.
- [9.](#) Al-Amini conveyed it in his book Al-Ghadir part 2 p. 17.
- [10.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 3 p. 17.
- [11.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 151.
- [12.](#) Al-Khateeb History of Baghdad part 12 p. 91 (conveyed by Al-Amini Al-Ghadir part 2 p. 301)
- [13.](#) Sheikh Muhammad Abu Zuhrah Al-Imam Al-Sadiq pp. 199–200.
- [14.](#) Muslim his Sahih part 8 Book of Pilgrimage (Valedictory Pilgrimage) p. 184.
- [15.](#) Al-Bukhari his Sahih part 5 p. 224.
- [16.](#) Sheikh Muhammad Abu Zuhrah Al-Imam Al-Sadiq pp. 199–200.
- [17.](#) Muslim his Sahih part 15 p. 176.
- [18.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 6 p. 292.
- [19.](#) Al-Hakim-Mustadrak part3 p. 128.
- [20.](#) Al-Bukhari his Sahih part 6 p. 101 and Muslim in his Sahih part4 p. 136.
- [21.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 128.
- [22.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 128.
- [23.](#) Abu Zuhrah Al-Imam Al-Sadiq p. 27.
- [24.](#) Abu Zuhrah Al-Imam Al-Sadiq p. 162

38. The Hadith of the Wilayah

It is a well known fact in history that the Messenger made his Valedictory Pilgrimage during the tenth year after the Hijrah and that thousands of Muslims accompanied the Prophet in his pilgrimage.

Another well known event of this pilgrimage is that the Messenger while on his way back to Medina stopped thousands of pilgrims at a place called "Ghadir Khum" (between Mecca and Medina) to declare to them that it is their duty to follow "Al-Thaqalain" (The Two Valuables) who will never part with each other until they join him at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment).

He informed them also that 'Ali the head of the "Itrah" (the close relatives of the Prophet) is like the Holy Prophet in having more authority over their own affairs and that 'Ali like the Messenger is the guardian of all believers.

The Messenger delivered a sermon on the Day of Ghadir Khum. The companions remembered only a small part of it. Some of the points which he spoke of remained in the memory of many companions who were in Kufa at a gathering to report what the Messenger of God said on the Day of Ghadir Khum (this was about 27 years after the event of the Ghadir.)

Although the companions who were residing in Kufa were not very numerous several of them testified that the Messenger declared on the Day of Ghadir Khum the leadership of 'Ali. Abu Al- Tufail (a

companion) reported that:

"Ali said to the companions who were at that gathering: I ask you in the name of God whoever was present on the Day of Ghadir Khum to stand up and no one should stand to say: I was informed or I heard. I only ask a man who directly heard by his own ear and memorized by his heart the words of the Messenger."

Seventeen men including Khuzeimah Ibn Thabit Sahl Ibn Saad Uday Ibn Hatam Aqabah Ibn Amir Abu Ayyoub Al-Ansari Abu Leila (or Abu Yaala) Abu Al-Haitham Ibn Al- Teihan and men from Quraish stood up and 'Ali said to them: Tell us what you heard. They said: "We testify that we came with the Messenger of God from his Valedictory Pilgrimage.

When the noon time came the Messenger of God came out. He ordered that some trees in that place be pruned; a cloth was put above those trees. He called for the prayer and we came out. He said: What shall you say?

We said: You have delivered the Message. He said: God bear witness repeating that (three times). Then he said: I am about to be summoned (by God and I shall respond to His call). I shall be questioned and you will be questioned.

Then he said: "Certainly God is my 'Mawla' (Guardian) and I am the guardian of the believers. Do you not know that I have more authority over you than you have over yourselves? We said: Yes. He said this three times. Then he held your hand Commander of Believers (the reporting companions were addressing the Imam 'Ali) and lifted it and said: 'Whoever I am his Mawla (Guardian) this is his 'Mawla'.

God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him.' The Imam 'Ali said to the testifying companions: You have told the truth and I am among those who bear witness to that."¹

Al-Hafith Muhammad Ibn Abdullah the entitled Al- Hakim Al-Neesabouri in his Mustadrak reported through his channel to Zaid Ibn Arqam that Zaid said:

"When the Messenger of God returned from the Valedictory Pilgrimage and stopped at Ghadir Khum he ordered the Muslims to clean under the trees at that place and said: 'I am as if I were summoned and I responded. I have left in you "Al-Thaqalain " one of them is bigger than the other: The Book of God and my "Itrah" (the close relatives). Beware how you will treat them after me; for they shall not part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment).

Then he said: Certainly God is my Guardian and I am the Mawla (Guardian) of every believer. Then he lifted the hand of 'Ali and said: Whoever I am his Mawla (Guardian) this is his "Wali" (Guardian) God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him."²

Al-Hakim through another channel reported that Zaid Ibn Arqam reported that the Prophet said the following: "... O people I am leaving in you two elements you will never go astray if you follow them.

They are the Book of God and the members of my House my Itrah.' Then he said: Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than they have over themselves (repeating that three times)? They said: Yes. The Messenger of God said:

Whoever I am his Mawla this 'Ali is his Mawla."³ These hadiths contain three important items:

1. The Messenger left to his nation two important elements which do not part with each other and that obedience of the two constitutes a security against straying. The two elements are: The Book of God and the 'Itrah' (close relatives) of the messenger.
2. The Prophet had more authority over the believers than they had over themselves and that God is the Guardian of the Messenger and that the Messenger is the Guardian of the believers.
3. 'Ali is like the Prophet in being Guardian of all the believers. Jabir Ibn Abdullah Al-Ansari Amir Ibn Dhumrah Hutheifah Ibn Oseid Imam 'Ali and others reported the three contents in one hadith.

The first and the second contents were also reported by the Imam 'Ali and Om Selemah wife of the Messenger who said:

"The Messenger held the hand of 'Ali at Ghadir Khum. He raised it until we witnessed the whiteness of his armpit and said: Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his 'Mawla'. Then he said: 'O people I am leaving in you 'Al- Thaqaalain' (The Two Valuables): 'Kitabullah' (the Book of God) and my Itrah (my close relatives). And they will not part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)."⁴

We have already mentioned that Imam 'Ali reported a hadith similar to this one.

The second and the third contents were reported by a number of companions including Abu Sa-eed Al-Khidri Abu Qudamah Al-Arani Hutheifah Ibn Osaïd Amir Ibn Dhumrah Zaid Ibn Arqam and Al-Bura Ibn Azib who reported according to Imam Ahmad in his Musnad and Ibn Majah in his authentic Sunan the following:

"We came with the Messenger of God in his Valedictory Pilgrimage and he stopped at the road and called for a congregational prayer. Then he took the hand of 'Ali and said: Am I not the Guardian who has more authority over the believers than they have over themselves? They said: Yes. He said: Do I not have more authority over every believer than he has over himself? They said: Yes. He said:

This is the 'Wali' (Guardian) of whoever I am his Mawla (Guardian). God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him."⁵

These two contents were also reported by Saad Ibn Abu Waqass. He reported according to Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak the following:

"... The Messenger said to 'Ali on the Day of Ghadir Khum after praising the Almighty and exalting Him:

Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than they have over themselves? We said: Yes. He said: God whoever I am his 'Mawla ' 'Ali is his Mawla. God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him..."[6](#)

Imam Ahmad reported in his Musnad through his channel to Abdul-Rahman Ibn Abu Leila that he said: "I witnessed 'Ali at Al-Rahbah asking people to testify. He said: I ask in the name of God whoever heard the Messenger of God saying on the Day of Ghadir Khum: "Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla to stand up and testify. Abdul-Rahman said: Twelve companions who had attended the Battle of Badr stood up and I remember as if I am looking at one of them and they said:

"We testify that we heard the Messenger of God saying on the Day of Ghadir Khum: Do I not have more authority over the believers than they have over themselves?..." We said: Yes Messenger of God. He said: Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his 'Mawla.' God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him."[7](#)

As to the last content "Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla" it was reported by tens of his companions."[8](#)

Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic "Sunan" recorded that Zaid Ibn Arqam reported that the Messenger said: Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla."[9](#)

Al-Hafith Mohamad Ibn Majah in his authentic Sunan recorded the following:

"Muawiya came (to Medina) on some of his pilgrimages. Saad Ibn Abu Waqass visited him. People mentioned 'Ali and Muawiya spoke ill of him. Saad Ibn Abu Waqass angrily said to him: 'Do you say this about a man I heard the Messenger of God saying about him: Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla?'..."[10](#)

Of course whoever reported the three contents or the last two contents or the first and the third contents is from the reporters of the last one. There is no contradiction between these reports. A reporter may choose on one occasion to report some of what he heard from the Messenger or any other person then he chooses at another occasion to report most of what he heard from him and on a third occasion he may report all of what he heard completely.

And none of these reports contradict each other.

Thus Abu Al-Tufail Amir Ibn Wathilah reported that seventeen companions responded to the question of the Imam 'Ali in Kufa and testified that they heard from the Messenger on the Day of Ghadir Khum words which contained all three contents as we have mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

We find also in another hadith in which the Imam 'Ali asked the companions who were with him to testify about the event of Al-Ghadir that Abu Al-Tufail reported the following: "Ali gathered people at Al-Rahbah then he said to them: 'I ask in the name of God any Muslim who heard the Messenger of God

saying on the Day of Ghadir Khum what he said to stand up. Thirty men stood up (and Abu Na-eem said: Many People stood and testified) that the Messenger of God held the hand of 'Ali and said to people:

"Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than they have over themselves? They said: Yes Messenger of God. He said: "Whoever I am his Mawla (Guardian) this 'Ali is his Mawla. God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him." Abu Al- Tufail said: I left the place with some doubt. I met Zaid Ibn Arqam and told him what I had heard 'Ali saying. Zaid said: What do you doubt? I heard the Messenger of God saying that to him."[11](#)

The Messenger spoke about 'Ali's leadership on an occasion other than the occasion of Ghadir Khum. Al- Ter mathi in his authentic Sunnan recorded that Imran Ibn Hossain reported that four men complained about 'Ali to the Messenger of God and the Messenger was angry and said to them:

"What do you want from 'Ali? What do you want from 'Ali? What do you want from 'Ali? 'Ali is from me and I am from him. And he is the Wali (Guardian) of every believer after me."[12](#)

Imam Ahmad in his Musnad (part 4 page 437) reported this hadith with little difference in wording and he said that the Prophet said: "Leave 'Ali alone leave 'Ali alone leave 'Ali alone. 'Ali is from me and I am from him.

And he is the 'Wali' (Guardian) of every believer." Imam Ahmad recorded through his channel to Sa-eed Ibn Jubair that Ibn Jubair said that Ibn Abbas reported that Buraidah Al-Aslami said:

"I went with an expedition under 'Ali's leadership to Yemen and I noticed from him an unfriendly attitude.

When I came to the Messenger of God I mentioned 'Ali and spoke ill of him. I noticed the face of the Messenger was changing. He said: Buraidah do I have more authority over the believers than they have over themselves? I said: Yes Messenger of God. He said: Whoever I am his 'Mawla' 'Ali is his 'Mawla."[13](#)

Imam Ahmad also reported in his Musnad (part 5 page 356) that the Messenger said to Buraidah: "Speak not ill of 'Ali for he is from me and I am from him and he is your 'Wali' after me."

The hadith of the Ghadir is authentic and Mutawatir. It was reported by over one hundred companions; more than twenty-four historians; twenty-seven hadith recorders; eleven commentators on the Holy Qur'an and a like number of theologians and it was reported by many writers in every century after the Hijrah.[14](#)

The Meaning Of Hadith Al-Ghadir

Knowing that the Hadith of Ghadir is authentic and certain it is time to speak of what this hadith indicates. To understand the hadith we ought to know the following: 1. Is there any difference between

the word "wali" and "Mawla"? This is because the word "wali" came in some of the hadiths and most of the hadiths contained the word Mawla.

If the two words have one meaning what did the word Mawla mean?

What did the Messenger mean by the word "oula" which was mentioned in many of the reported statements?

"wali"and "Mawla"

The two words "wali" and Mawla almost have the same meaning except that the word wali can be associated with matters as well as with the rational beings. So you may say he is Wali of the Mosque as you may say God is the Wali of the believers. But the word Mawla would be associated only with the rational. Thus you can say Mawla of the believers and you cannot say the Mawla of the Mosque.

The Arabic dictionaries show that the word Mawla has the following meanings:

1. admirer.
2. neighbor.
3. guest.
4. partner.
5. son.
6. cousin son of the uncle.
7. nephew (son of a sister)
8. son-in-law.
9. a relative.
10. uncle (brother of the father)
11. companion.
12. benefactor.
13. benefactored.
14. a party of a pact.
15. emancipator.

16. the Lord.
17. owner.
18. master (other than the emancipator)
19. slave.
20. follower.
21. helper.
22. one who has more right in something.
23. an administrator of some affairs.
24. wali.
25. an ally¹⁵

The word Mawla probably had been used for each one of these twenty-five meanings. However the first fifteen of the meanings are not of frequent use and people do not understand from the word Mawla any of them. None of these meanings would be understood from that word except with some additional evidence.

This means that when the word Mawla is used the listener may think that the word meant one of the last ten meanings and none of the first fifteen meanings would be a good probability. In fact only two of the last ten would be a good probability when the word Mawla is used; Namely: Master and servant.

However the word Mawla in the hadith of Al-Ghadir did not mean any of the first fifteen meanings. The neighbor the guest the partner the son the son of the sister the son-in-law the companion were not meant for 'Ali. 'Ali was not a neighbor or guest or partner or a son or a son of a sister or guest or a companion to whoever the Messenger of God was a neighbor or guest or a partner or a son of a sister or son-in-law or a companion. The Prophet was not an uncle of anyone because he did not have a brother to be the uncle of his son.

The Messenger did not mean from the word Mawla a relative or a cousin because such information is senseless.

It would not be proper for the Messenger to gather people in order to declare that because every Muslim knows that 'Ali is a cousin of the Holy Prophet. Whoever is related to one of the two is related to the other.

The Messenger did not mean admirer because it would be improper for the Messenger to gather

thousands of people to announce that 'Ali admires whoever the Messenger of God admires. Again 'Ali is not the only one who admired all people whom the Holy Prophet admired. All good companions used to admire people whom the Messenger admired.

Furthermore the Messenger wanted to say that he is the Mawla of all Muslims and the Messenger did not admire all Muslims because he did not admire the transgressors among them.

The Messenger did not mean by the word Mawla the benefactor because the Messenger was not benefactor by a great number of people. He did not mean the benefactor either for he did not materially benefactor all the Muslims. The Messenger wanted to say that 'Ali is like him in being a Mawla of all Muslims from all generations. He did not mean by the word Mawla the spiritual benefactor though the Messenger was truly a benefactor of all Muslims because he led them to the religion of God.

And so was 'Ali because of his unparalleled endeavor in the way of God for making the word of God victorious. The Messenger did not mean that because he was not at that time trying to inform the Muslims about something that already took place. He wanted by this declaration to bestow on 'Ali a rank and a position.

Nor did the Messenger mean by the word Mawla the emancipator for he did not emancipate all the Muslims because the majority of the Muslims were not slaves at his time; nor were they so after his time.

The last ten meanings are not all proper for the Prophet to use. He could not mean by Mawla the Lord for that would be profane; nor did he mean the servant or the follower because the Messenger was not a servant or a follower of anybody. Nor did he mean the owner because the Messenger was not the owner of the Muslims. He did not mean an ally because the Messenger was the leader of all Muslims rather than their ally. Even the spiritual alliance could not be meant because the Holy Prophet was not in alliance with the transgressors from among the Muslims and they were and are numerous.

Nor did the Messenger mean the helper because the Messenger as I mentioned before wanted to say that he is the Mawla of all Muslims from all generations and the Messenger was not the helper of all generations. No one can be a helper of all generations except God alone.

Again the Messenger was not a helper of all Muslims. He was a helper of only the sincere ones among them and he did not want to aid the disobedient Muslims.

Only four out of ten remained which are the following: The master other than the emancipator and the one who has more right than others and the administrator of an affair and the wali.

The last one could not be meant unless it meant one of the first three because it does not have an independent meaning.

Master would be proper if it means leader or the one who is followed because the Messenger was a leader of all Muslims. The Messenger also possessed more authority than others and he was the

administrator of the affairs of the Muslims. All these meanings are close to each other and similar to the meaning of leader or the one who is supposed to be followed by people.

Thus when "Mawla" meant the one who has more authority over every believer than they have over themselves and the one who has more right to administer the affairs of the believers 'Ali would be the leader of the Muslims and the administrator of their affairs by the order of God. This is because the Prophet was their Mawla by the order of God.

What did the messenger mean by the word "Oula" when he directed the questions to the crowd asking whether they believe that he is "oula" in the believers than they are to themselves? The Arabic dictionaries tell us that the word oula may come for one of the two following meanings:

1. The one who has more right
2. The one who is more proper.

This is applicable to things rather than persons. Of course the Holy Prophet would not mean by oula the more proper. For it would be very improper for the Prophet to ask the Muslims: Am I not more proper to the believers than themselves.

The Holy Prophet wanted to remind the Muslims of a right he was given by the Almighty in a revelation recorded in the Holy Qur'an:

"The Prophet has more authority over the believers than they have over themselves..." (The Holy Quran Chapter 33 Verse 6)

The verse states that the Messenger has a Divine right in administering the affairs of the Muslims more than the Muslims have in administering their own affairs. That is because they have to obey him and to follow his order.

The Holy Qur'an emphasized this right in many verses.

Among them are the following: "And it is not permitted for a male believer or female believer to have their own choices in their affairs when God and His Messenger decide in their affairs. And whoever disobeys God and His Messenger he obviously is straying." The Holy Qur'an chapter 33 verse 36.

If we understand all this it would be easy for us to determine what the Messenger meant by his declaration on the Day of Ghadir Khum. If we take only the last part of the declaration: "Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla nothing could be meant by the word Mawla but the leader (the guardian) or the one who was given by God the right to administer the affairs of the Muslims. The Messenger declares that 'Ali is like him in that.

If we take this part of the declaration along with the second part: "Do I not have more authority over the

believers than they have over themselves" (and this was mentioned in many reports) the meaning would become crystal clear.

The Prophet according to the Holy Qur'an has more authority over believers than the believers have over themselves and this is what the Prophet wanted to remind the Muslims of. Since he followed this question by saying "whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla " he meant nothing other than that 'Ali like the Prophet has the right to administer the affairs of the Muslims more than they have of right to administer their affairs.

If anyone doubts this the first part of the Declaration of the Ghadir ought to remove any doubt. The Prophet said in that part: "I am leaving in you the Two Valuables: The Book of God and the members of my House. You shall not go astray if you follow them. Beware how you shall treat them after me and they shall not part with each other until they join me at the Basin (on the Day of Judgment)."

Since the Holy Qur'an and the members of the House of the Holy Prophet (who were headed by 'Ali) must be followed the adherence to the teaching of the "Itrah" (the members of the House of the Prophet) would be as imperative as the adherence to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an.

The hadiths which contained this part are numerous and certainly authentic. Thus the Muslims have to obey 'Ali as they obey the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet.

Adding to these hadiths what the Messenger said to Buraidah and others in various hadiths that 'Ali is from him and that he is from 'Ali and that 'Ali is the Guardian of every believer after him (or he said: He is your Wali after me) no room would be left for arguments about what the Messenger meant from the two words Mawla and "wali." This is in complete accord with other statements of the Holy Prophet.

It was also mentioned in chapter 36 that the Prophet said that to obey 'Ali is to obey God and His Messenger; to disobey 'Ali is to disobey God and His Messenger; to part with 'Ali is to part with God and His Messenger and to speak ill of 'Ali is to speak ill of God and His Messenger.

The Verse Of Proclamation

The Holy Prophet issued his declaration to the Muslims at Ghadir Khum concerning 'Ali after he was commanded by the Almighty to proclaim 'Ali's leadership.

We read in chapter no.5 Al-Ma'idah (the Food) the following verse:

"O Apostle proclaim the message which had been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou do not thou would not have communicated His message. And God will protect thee from (mischievous) people. Certainly God guides not the unbelievers." The Holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 67.

This verse regardless of any hadith that contains its explanation informs us of the following:

1. There was a previous Divine Message which came to the Holy Prophet before the revelation of this verse and that Message was supposed to be communicated to the Muslims by the Holy Prophet.
2. The Messenger delayed the communication of that message to the Muslims or he asked his Lord to relieve him from the mission of communicating that Message because he feared that some of the Muslims would not be receptive to the message. A phrase in this verse: "And God will protect thee from people" testifies to the Prophet's apprehension.
3. The contents of the previous message which was delayed was highly important. Its importance is underscored by the warning phrase contained in the verse of proclamation: "And if thou do not thou would not have communicated the message of God "

This phrase warned the Prophet that if he does not communicate the message he would not have fulfilled his mission as a Messenger of God and the failure to proclaim that Message equals the failure in proclamation of the whole Islamic Message.

The Contents of the Message

Had this verse been revealed while the Messenger was still in Mecca in the first three years from his mission we would understand that the Prophet was afraid to confront his pagan society with the invitation to disregard its idols.

But this verse is a part of the chapter of "Al Ma'idah" (the Food) which is Medinite one hundred percent. This meant that the verse as well as the whole chapter of the Food were revealed after the departure of the Holy Prophet from Mecca. Therefore the Prophet's delay in communicating the previous message was not motivated by his fear of confronting the pagan society with the doctrine of Monotheism.

Had this verse been revealed at the beginning of the Period of the Hijrah the content of the previous Message could be a commandment to combat the pagan warriors or pertaining to a prayer or Zakat or fast which seemed to fall heavy on the Muslims.

Such a commandment means loss of lives and wealth or additional toil and the Prophet was afraid that the Muslims would not like that. But the chapter of Food was revealed during the tenth year of the Hijrah after all devotional duties were proclaimed and after the Muslims had already participated in numerous battles against the pagans and others.

It is reported that Ayesha and Abdullah Ibn 'Umar both said that "Al-Ma'idah" (the chapter of Food) was the last chapter of the Holy Qur'an. [16](#) This is supported by the fact that the chapter contains a verse proclaiming the completion of religion:

"Today I have completed your religion for you and perfected My favor upon you and chosen Islam as a religion for you." The Holy Quran Chapter 5 verse 3

This verse was revealed when the Messenger was on the Mount of Arafat. Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that 'Umar reported that. [17](#) It is also reported that the verse of the completion of the religion was revealed when the Messenger was coming back from the Valedictory Pilgrimage while he was speaking on the Day of Ghadir Khum. Many hadiths have reported that and I shall mention some of them.

From this we know that the contents of the Message which the Holy Prophet delayed its proclamation was not a commandment pertaining to the proclamation of the doctrine of the One God. Nor was it pertaining to a devotional duty or a defensive war against the pagans or the followers of the Scriptures. It was rather a commandment pertaining to a matter belonging to the internal political affairs of the Muslim State. Thus we have the two following facts:

(1) The 5th Qur'anic chapter Al-Maidah which contains this verse was revealed during the Valedictory Pilgrimage or after its performance.

(2) The Messenger at Ghadir Khum proclaimed that 'Ali is like him the Mawla of all believers. This took place while he was returning from his Valedictory Pilgrimage.

Putting these facts together it would be very logical to infer that the contents of the message had to deal with the proclamation of 'Ali's leadership.

This means that when the Messenger received the order from his Lord to proclaim 'Ali's leadership he feared that some of his followers might think that he favored 'Ali because of his relationship to him. Upon this the Revelation came down ordering him to proclaim what he received from his Lord. Otherwise he would not have fulfilled his mission as the Messenger of God.

This warning was coupled with a Divine Promise: That God will protect him from the people whom he feared. When he received this serious commandment he suddenly stopped at Ghadir Khum to proclaim what he received from his Lord concerning 'Ali.

Political and Religious Leadership

Should this be what the verse meant then what the Messenger has proclaimed in his declaration on the Day of Ghadir Khum was the religious and worldly leadership of 'Ali which was similar to the leadership of the Holy Messenger.

Had what the Holy Prophet meant been less than worldly leadership he would not have feared the disagreement of his followers and there would have been no need for the strong command and serious warning. The ambitious Meccans and non-Meccans who were aspirant for the Islamic leadership would not be disturbed by giving 'Ali any rank if that rank did not include his political leadership.

The commandment of proclamation is evidence that the Almighty wanted to secure for His servant Muslims the leadership with which they will never go astray: That is the leadership of 'Ali the head of the

members of the House which does not part with the Holy Qur'an and insures the nation's unity and progress. To comply with this Divine order the Messenger stood up to address the thousands of pilgrims declaring what he declared on Ghadir Khum.

It may be said that the message which the Holy Prophet delayed its proclamation for his fear of dispute was pertaining to the people of the Scripture. The evidence of this is that before this verse we read verses speaking of the people of the scriptures among which is the following:

"The Jews say: God's hand is tied up. Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for the (blasphemy) they uttered. Nay His both hands are widely outstretched; He gives and spends (of His bounty) as He pleases.

But the Revelation that comes to you from God increases in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy. Among them We have placed enmity and hatred till the Day of Judgment. Every time they kindle the fire of war God does extinguish it but they (ever strive) to do mischief on earth and God loves not those who do mischief.

If only the people of the Book had believed and been righteous we would indeed have blotted out their inequities and admitted them to Paradise of bliss. If only they had stood fast by the Law (the Old Testament) the Gospel and all the Revelation that was sent to them from their Lord they would have enjoyed happiness from every side.

There is from among them a party on the right course; but many of them follow a course that is evil."¹⁸ In fact after the Verse of Proclamation we find a number of verses dealing with the people of the Scripture of which are the following:

"Say: O people of the Book ye have no ground to stand upon unless ye stand fast by the Old Testament and the Gospel and all the revelation that has come to you from thy Lord. It is the revelation that has come to you from thy Lord that increases in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy but sorrow thou not over these faithless people." The Holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 87-88.

If we look at the verse deeply we can easily conclude that it is independent from the verses which precede it. The meaning of the Verse of Proclamation indicates that it has no relation with what was recorded before it or after it.

The Verse of Proclamation indicates that the Messenger was afraid to announce the contents of the message to which the verse of proclamation refers. But the Messenger was not afraid at the time of its revelation to announce any message dealing with the relation of the Muslims to the people of the Scriptures.

Many battles between the Muslims and the Jews took place before the revelation of this chapter. Of

those battles were: The Battle of Banu Qainaqah, the Battle of Banu Al-Nadheer which took place at the beginning of the period of Hijrah and the Battle of Banu Quraidhah which took place after the Battles of the Confederation or (the Battle of Moat) in the fifth year after the Hijrah.

The final of those battles between the Prophet and the Jews was the Battle of Khaibar which took place during the 6th year after the Hijrah. By this all Jewish danger against the Muslims came to an end. Thus the Messenger would not be in a state of fear of Jews if he were to announce a message against them during the 10th year after the Hijrah.

The Muslims and the Christians were in a state of war started with the Battle of Muthah during the 8th year and followed by the Battle of Tabook during the 9th year. Since the Holy Prophet was not afraid to fight the Christians at the battlefield he could not be afraid to announce any message against them.

In addition to this many chapters which were revealed before the chapter of "Al-Ma'idah" (the Food) contain verses whose contents are similar to the contents of the verses which preceded or followed the Verse of Proclamation in the chapter of Al-Ma'idah.

The verses which preceded this verse command the believer not to take offense from the people of the Scripture who ridiculed the Faith of Islam and mention that from among those people are the ones who were cursed by God and whom God transformed into apes and swines. The verses call them hypocrites who tell the Muslims that they have believed in Islam yet they hasten to sinful actions and take the unlawful fund.

The verses state that whenever they start the fire of war God extinguishes it. Had the people of the Scriptures been righteous and followed the Old Testament and the Gospel they would have entered Paradise and would have eaten from above them and from below them and from what is under their feet.

What follows these verses states that the people of the Scriptures are not on a solid foundation until they follow the Old Testament and the Gospel. It states also that the children of Israel had killed some Messengers and discredited others after the covenant was made between God and them and that those who say that the Messiah is God are unbelievers.

These contents and many similar to them were announced in various chapters which were revealed before the time of the chapter of "Al-Ma'idah" (the Food)

In the second chapter we read the following:

"Is it that whenever there comes to you an apostle with what ye yourselves desire not ye puffed up with pride? Some ye called imposters and others ye slew. They say our hearts are wrapped (Thus we need no more of God's Apostle). Nay God's curse is on them for their blasphemy; little is it they believe." The Holy Qur'an chapter 2 verse 31.

And in the 3rd chapter of (Aul-Imran) we read the following:

"If only the people of the Book had faith it were best for them; among them are some who have faith but most of them are perverted transgressors. They will do you no harm barring a trifling annoyance; if they come out to fight you they will show you their backs and no help shall they get. Shame is pitched for them (like a tent) wherever they are found except when under the covenant of protection from God and from men. They draw on themselves wrath from God and pitched over them a tent of destitution. This is because they rejected the signs of God and slew the Prophets in defiance of right. This is because they rebelled and transgressed beyond bounds." The Holy Quran Chapter 3 verses 111 to 113

And in the chapter of Mary which is a Meccan chapter we read the following:

"They say: (God) Most Gracious has begotten a son! Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous. At it the skies are almost ready to burst the earth to split asunder and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin that they should invoke a son for (God) Most Gracious. For it is not consonant with the Majesty of God (Most Gracious) that He should beget a son." The Holy Quran Chapter 19 Verses 90 to 94

And in the chapter of Bara-ah which was revealed during the 9th year after the Hijrah. We read the following:

"They take their priests and their monks to be their Lords other than God and (they take as their Lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One God. There is no God but Him. Praise and Glory belong to Him; For He is above having the partners they associate with Him)." The Holy Quran Chapter 9 verse 33

All these verses indicate that the Messenger was not afraid while during the 10th year after the Hijrah to confront the people of the Scriptures with a battle or message.

But the Verse of Proclamation tells us that he was apprehensive of announcing a message which was revealed to him and God ordered him to announce it and promised to protect him from people. Therefore the content of the Verse of Proclamation testifies that it is not related to the verses before it or after it. It is completely independent of those verses.

This is what compels us to conclude that what the Messenger had feared to communicate to the people was not a message relating to the foreign policy dealing with the people of the Scriptures or the Politheists. It was rather a message dealing with an internal political affair. This is what compels us to conclude that what the Messenger had feared to communicate to the people was not a message relating to the foreign policy dealing with the people of the Scriptures or the Politheists. It was rather a message dealing with an internal political affair.

Since it was not dealing with the devotional Islamic duties it would be logical to conclude that the delayed message was dealing with the rule and the leadership of the Islamic State.

The chapter of Al-Ma'idah had been revealed during the Valedictory pilgrimage or while the Prophet was on his way back from this Pilgrimage as many hadiths indicate.

This Revelation was followed by the Messenger's sudden stop at Ghadir Khum rallying the pilgrims to announce to them the leadership of 'Ali. Putting the two events together we may logically conclude that the content of the delayed message was the proclamation of that leadership. We can conclude this without resorting to the various hadiths which announced the reasons of the Revelation of the Verse of Proclamation.

Our certainty increases when we know that several hadiths stated that the Verse of Proclamation had to deal with the leadership of the Imam 'Ali. Al-Soyouti recorded that Al-Hafith Ibn Abu Hatem recorded that Abu-Sa-eed Al-Khidri reported that the Messenger of God on the day of Ghadir Khum received the revelation of the Verse of Proclamation and that it was revealed concerning 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib. [19](#)

It is recorded in Kanz Al-Ummal part 6 page 143 that Al-Mahamili reported in his Amali through his channel to Ibn Abbas the following:

"When the Prophet was commanded to proclaim 'Ali's leadership the Prophet went to Mecca. He said: I see the Muslims coming afresh from the period of pre-Islam. If I deliver the message about 'Ali they would say he favored his cousin. The Prophet went on until he completed the Valedictory Pilgrimage then he set out towards Medina until he came to Ghadir Khum. At that place the Almighty revealed to him: 'O Messenger deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord... A caller summoned the pilgrims for prayer. Then the Prophet stood up and held the hand of 'Ali and said: Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla. God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him." [20](#)

Ibn Mardawaih reported similar to these words through his channel to Ibn Abbas. Ibn Batreeq in his book Al-Omdah page 49 reported that Abu Is-haq Al-Thaa-labi reported in his Commentary on the Holy Qur'an (Al-Kashf and Al-Bayan) that Al-Imam Al-Baqir and Ibn Abbas said that the Verse of Proclamation was revealed to the Messenger concerning 'Ali and that the Messenger took the hand of 'Ali and said "Whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali is his Mawla." [21](#)

Sheikh Al-Islam Abu Is-haq Al-Hamweeni in his book The Reasons of Revelation page 150 recorded that Abu Saeed Al-Khidri said that this verse was revealed on the Day of Ghadir Khum concerning 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib. [22](#) Imam Fakhr-UI-Deen Al-Razi in his big Commentary on the Holy Qur'an part 3 page 637 said that Al-Bura Ibn Azib Ibn Abbas and Muhammad Ibn 'Ali reported that the verse was revealed about 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib.

Thus the historical declaration of the Messenger on the day of Ghadir Khum was a compliance to a Divine Revelation commanding him to communicate to the Muslims the leadership of 'Ali and promising

him protection against whomever he feared if he communicated it.

This shows clearly that the declaration of Al-Ghadir was extremely important. It meant that 'Ali's announced leadership includes the political and non-political affairs.

Had it been anything less than that the revelation would not have come down commanding and warning the Holy Prophet. For non-political leadership of 'Ali would not be objectionable to the ambitious companions.

Why did the Prophet not say: "Ali is your Ameer or my Caliph or your Imam?"

The Declaration of Ghadir is well known to the Muslim scholars from every School of Thought. Yet many Muslim scholars say that the declaration does not prove that 'Ali is the Caliph of the Prophet and that the Prophet had chosen him as his successor. Had he chosen him as his successor he should not have used the word Mawla or wali. He should have rather said to the Muslims: 'Ali is your "Ameer" after me or he is my Caliph or he is your Imam after me.

The Messenger did not say "Ali is your Ameer after me " because the Messenger did not usually use the word ameer in any matter other than military affairs or the leadership of pilgrimage. As to the administration of the affairs of the Muslims in general or in some Islamic provinces the Messenger used to use the word "wilayah" (right of management of the public or private affairs in the people's interest). He used to send administrators to some provinces and call them Wulat (plural of Wali) and he used to call himself "Waliyyu Al-Muslimeen" (Guardian of the Muslims)

The Holy Qur'an declared:

"The Prophet is Mawla (has more authority) over the believers than they have over themselves..." (Chapter 33 verse 6).

'your Wali (Guardian) is only God His Messenger and the believers who offer the prayer and give the poor Zakat while they are bowing.' The Holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 58.

"There (on the Day of Judgment) Al-wilayat (the authority) belongs only to God the True God. He is the Best Rewarder and the Best Granter of a good fate." The Holy Qur'an chapter 18 verse 46.

The Holy Qur'an also declares:

"And you should know that God is your Mawla (Guardian). He is the Good Mawla and He is the Good Helper." The Holy Qur'an chapter 8 verse 41.

I did not see in the Holy Qur'an that God called His Messenger "Ameer " nor did I see in any hadith that

the Holy Prophet called himself Ameer or "Hakim" (ruler) or governor. The reason is that the natural relationship between the administrator of the affairs of the Muslims and the Muslims is not a relation between a ruler and a ruled or a prince or a king and subjects.

It is rather a relation similar to that of a father to his children. He administers their affairs and protects their interests as a father protects the interests of his children. The administrators of the affairs of Muslims are not a high class and the rest of the people are not a lower class.

As to the question of why did not the Prophet use the word caliph the answer is that a caliph should be obeyed only after the death of the Messenger. 'Ali according to the Prophet's declaration is not only his successor but also his deputy during his life time and his successor after his death. Thus he was to be obeyed at the time of the Prophet as well as after him.

I have advanced that Abu Dharr reported that the Messenger said: "Ali whoever obeys me obeys God and whoever obeys you obeys me and whoever disobeys me disobeys God and whoever disobeys you disobeys me."²³

Thus 'Ali was not only a successor of the Messenger but also his representative and deputy during his lifetime. He was (according to the Declaration of Ghadir Khum) like the Prophet in being a guardian of the believers and having more authority over them than they have over themselves.

The Prophet declared that 'Ali to him is like Aaron to Moses and Aaron was deputy of Moses during his lifetime and like Moses a leader of the Israelites. This is what was expressed by all the hadiths in this chapter and previous chapters. We ought not forget that the Messenger said to Bureidah and other companions according to various hadiths:

"Ali is from me and I am from him and he is your Wali after me or that he is the Wali of every 'Mu'min' (believer) after me." These hadiths unequivocally indicate that 'Ali is the Caliph of the Prophet and so does his statement in the hadiths of Al-Thaqalain which was discussed extensively in chapter 37. These hadiths state clearly that the members of the House of the Holy Prophet are successors of the Prophet and 'Ali was the head of the members of his House.

Before I conclude my discussion about the Declaration of Ghadir Khum I would like to mention that the Muslims who argue against the indication of the hadith on the succession of the Imam to the Messenger were not motivated by stubbornness or prejudice.

Their negative attitude is due to the fact that they had grown up in a society which believes that the Messenger did not appoint any successor. Thus it became difficult for them to reconcile this belief and the indication of the Declaration of the Ghadir Khum that the Messenger had appointed 'Ali as his successor.

I would say sincerely that if the Messenger had stood on the day of Ghadir Khum saying: Whoever I am

his Mawla Abu Bakr is his Mawla. God love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him " I would have believed without any hesitation that the Messenger had appointed Abu Bakr as his successor.

Had this been the case the Muslims who deny the indication of 'Ali's appointment would not deny Abu Bakr's appointment. Had the Prophet said that Abu Bakr has more authority over the believers than they have over themselves and that the adherence to his command and the command of the Holy Qur'an is a security against straying the Messenger's appointment of Abu Bakr would not have become controversial.

- [1.](#) Al-Oundouzi Yanabi-a-Al-Mawaddah p.42. He recorded that Imam Samhoodi (nor Al-Deen 'Ali Ibn Abdullah Al- Shafi-i reported that Abu Na-eem in his Hilyat Al- Ouliyah) recorded it.
- [2.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 109.
- [3.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 pp. 109-110.
- [4.](#) Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Kanz Al- Umal part 5 p. 23 hadith no.356.
- [5.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 4 p. 281 and Ibn Majah in his authentic Sunan part 1 p. 45.
- [6.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 3 p. 116.
- [7.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 1 p. 119.
- [8.](#) Of these: Abu Leila Al-Ansari Hubshi Ibn Janadah Abu Ayyoub Khalid Ibn Zeid Al-Ansari Sahl Ibn Sa'd Talhah Ibn Obeidullah Abdullah Ibn Abbas Abdullah Ibn 'Umar Abdullah Ibn Masud the Third Caliph Oday Ibn Hatam Aleyah Ibn Bishr Al-Mazine Aquabah Ibn 'Umar Al- Tuhani Ammar Ibn Yasir Abu Al-Haitham Al-Taihan Habash Ibn Badeel Al-Khuza-i Khuzaimah Ibn Thabit (the man of the Two Testimonies) Abdullah Ibn Badeel Al- Khuza-i Qais Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abadah Hashim Al-Mirqal and many others. Conveyed by Al-Amini in his book Al- Ghadir part 1 pp. 184-185.
- [9.](#) Al-Tirmidhi in his authentic Sunan part 5 p. 297 (hadith no.3797)
- [10.](#) Ibn Majah his authentic Sunan part 1 p.45.
- [11.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 4 p. 370.
- [12.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his authentic Sunan part5 p. 296.
- [13.](#) Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad part 5 p. 347. Al-Hakim also recorded it in Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 110.
- [14.](#) Al-Amini Al-Ghadir part 1 p. 6-8.
- [15.](#) Al-Amini Al-Ghadir part 1 pp. 362-363.
- [16.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 2 p. 311.
- [17.](#) Al-Bukhari his Sahih part 6 p. 63 (Book of Commentary on the Holy Qur'an chapter 5)
- [18.](#) The Holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 68.
- [19.](#) Sheikh Hussein Amini in his book Al-Ghadir part I pp. 214-222.
- [20.](#) Sheikh Hussein Amini in his book Al-Ghadir part I pp. 214-222.
- [21.](#) Sheikh Hussein Amini in his book Al-Ghadir part I pp. 214-222.
- [22.](#) Sheikh Hussein Amini in his book Al-Ghadir part I pp. 214-222.
- [23.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 131.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/brother-prophet-muhammad-imam-ali-shaykh-muhammad-jawad-chirri/part-4-caliphate-islamic-law#comment-0>