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Shia'ism or Islam-Original

People mostly ignorant of what actually Shia'ism is and what in fact the commitment of a Shia is to his faith what actually it is in practice, are labouring under a gross misunderstanding of faith and its adherents.

When asked what actually means Shia'ism and the commitment of a Shia to his faith, the Sixth Holy Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad As-Sadiq gave the whole in a nutshell, after which there remains no room for any question about the faith or its adherents.

“Man kaana lillah mutee'an wahowa lana vali.”

'He who is obedient to God is our friend (a Shia),'

“Man kaana lillah ahoo an wahown lana odoo.”

'He who is hostile to God, i.e., disobedient to Him, he is our enemy (a non-Shia).

“Wala yanalo vilayatena illa bil wara'e wal amalis Saleh”

'And reacheth not our love save through piety and righteousness.'

What is Shia'ism?

Shia'ism is no new religion, creed or faith. It is nothing but the Original Islam in its original purity. It is the, very same faith which was preached and practised by the Holy Prophet without anything added to or subtracted of it.

Why then call it Shia'ism and not Islam?

It is an undeniably acknowledged and a universally acknowledged fact that the last exhortation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to his faithful adherents the Muslims was:

“I leave behind me amidst you the Two great things, the BOOK OF GOD (the Holy Qur'an) and my 'ITRAT my' AHLUL BAYT' (the members of the holy family, Fatimah, her husband Ali and her issues) Should ye be attached to these TWO never, never shall ye be misled, after me, for verily these Two will never be separated from one another until they meet me at the SPRING (the Spring of Kauther).” (TK., DM., SM., and others)

Under the above apostolic instruction from the Holy Prophet every true Muslim has to abide by the Word of God (the Holy Qur'an) guided only by the Ahlul Bayt and none else, and this is the one and only basis on which Shia'ism, i.e., the Islam Original is based. With the departure of the Holy Prophet from the world, as the people of Moses and Jesus went astray so also the Muslim.

The love of pleasures and the glory of this world maddened the masses and led them astray from the right path, under the evil influence of those in power. To get the religious authority and the powers to rule over the destinies of the people, the self-assumed rulers of the states, the self-made religious heads and the fanciful spiritual leaders, misinterpreted the Holy Qur'an and added much of falsehood to the Traditions or the Sayings of the Holy prophet, and many false traditions were fabricated to assume unwarranted powers and authority. At the same time, to see that the masses do not get rightly guided by the Holy Ahlul Bayt, the Ahlul Bayt were thrown into the background.

They were not only totally neglected but also teased and tortured and all access to them by the public was strictly banned and if any one was found to have any friendly contact with these holy ones, he was severely punished even to the extent of his property being confiscated, his family being put to all sorts of torturous miseries and himself being mercilessly killed. But a very few who feared but God and cared not for any loss of property or the pleasures of this world against the perpetual gain and the everlasting bliss in the life hereafter, suffered the tortures and kept themselves faithfully attached to the Holy Ahlul Bayt, to be on the right path. Some such godly devotees like Meytham Tammar and others of his group were heartlessly tortured, which they bore with ideal patience and some were mercilessly put to death, but the great soul most willingly met even the most painful death with matchless courage and boldness but never gave up their attachment to the Holy Ones.

When Islam was being corrupted at the hands of the aspirants for power and pleasures of this world, and the Holy Ahlul Bayt were ignored, those who resorted to the right guidance from the right authorities were tortured and put to miseries and torturous death. It can be imagined how deep was the Truth buried and how difficult it was for any one to have it, but Truth was always there with the Ahlul Bayt and none could snatch it away from them at any cost, but only a very few, the sincere and bold ones, could have it. This state of affairs went on until the Sixth Holy Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad, when the corrupted form of Islam was also called Islam, and the genuine or the original form of it which was with the Holy Ahlul Bayt and practised secretly by the faithful devotees to them, needed to be distinguished with some particular name to identify it from the corrupt form.

Those who remained attached to the Holy House of the Holy prophet, were known as the Shias of Ali

Ibn Abi Talib, and the True or the Original Islam was identified with the name *Mazhabe-Ja'fari* or *Shia'ism* (i.e., the Original Islam followed by the Shias). Thus Shia'ism is no other than the Islam-Original, but it is only identified with the name 'Shia'ism' just to distinguish it against the corrupted form. One can judge the Truth in this statement from the brief explanation of the Faith and this Article given in this book.

Thus the Original Islam is identified with the distinguishing token name '*Tashiyu*' or Shia'ism and its followers are known as the Shias. It means the followers of the Islam-Original without the subsequent adulteration effected in it.

Shia'ism (Islam-Original) strictly follows the Holy Qur'an, and the Holy Prophet guided by the divinely commissioned Twelve Holy Imams, whose physical and spiritual purity and personal excellence, the Islamic World as a whole unanimously acknowledges. Shia'ism, in order to help people to remain attached only to the Word of God as interpreted by the Holy Prophet, wants its followers to strictly abide by the following Declarations of the Holy Prophet.

1. At the start of his apostolic mission he declared that Ali was His Deputy, his Vicegerent, his Successor or his Caliph, with his orders to the assembly to listen to Ali and to obey him.

2. Before the huge assembly of pilgrims numbering to several thousands, after his Last Hajj or the pilgrimage, on the Eighteenth of Zilhaj 10 A.H. at Ghadeer al-Khum:

"Of whomsoever I am the Maula (or the Lord), this Ali is his Maula (or the Lord)."

3. Just before his departure from this world saying:

"I leave behind me amidst you Two important things. The Book of God (The Holy Qur'an) and the members of my family. As long as you keep yourselves attached to these Two, you shall never get astray after me. These Two shall never be separated from one another until they meet me at the Spring of Kauther."

With the above three main guiding factors, the Islam-Original or Shia'ism, keeps its faithful followers, the Shias, strictly attached to the Final Word of God, (the Qur'an), the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and his holy 'Ahlul Bayt (i.e., the Divinely chosen members) of the apostolic family.

Shia'ism demands every Shia to cling fast to virtue and to be always with the virtuous, loving them more than their own lives.

Shia'ism demands every Shia to be always away from every vice and hate the wicked and be always aloof from them.

Shia'ism–Its Articles of Faith and Its Practice

A Shia Muslim believes in:

1. The absolute unity of God, with all his divine attributes as inseparable and essential qualities of His absolute Self.
2. The Perfect and flawless Equity of the Lord. Every word and act of the Lord being based on nothing but perfect justice. Inequity is imperfection and every imperfection is a defect and the Lord is free from every defect.
3. The infallibility, sinlessness and truthfulness of all the apostles of God, from Adam, the First of God's apostles to the Holy Prophet Muhammad the Last of them. All the apostles were the personalities purified by the Lord Himself and Himself conditioned for the services divinely assigned to them, and no apostle or prophet did come after the Holy Prophet and neither any will come until the end of the world.
4. With the conclusion of the ministry of the Holy Prophet Muhammad the Last one of God's apostles the infinite mercy of the Lord, for the guidance of man on the right lines of His revealed religion Islam instituted the series of godly souls His own commissioned Imams, or Guide or Leaders from the same Lineage of Abraham to continue the divine guidance and thus started the institution of Imamatus in the place of '*Risalat*', i.e., apostleship. The Twelve God's commissioned Guides or Imams are:
 - (i) Ali son of Abu Talib the Cousin germain, the Son-in-Law of the Holy prophet and Vicegerent, Brother. Heir and Caliph declared by him at the outset of his ministry at the Dawate Asheera and at the close of the apostleship, at Ghadeer al-Khum at the command of the Lord revealed in verse 5:67
 - (ii) Hasan son of Ali Ibn Abi Talib and the Holy Lady Fatimah Zahra—the First grandson of the Holy Prophet martyred by poison.
 - (iii) Husayn the second son of Ali Abi Talib and the Holy Lady Fatimah Zahra, '*Zibhe Azeem*'—e, Great Sacrifice, butchered with the Seventy-two godly souls of his kith and kin and devotees, in the wholesale slaughter at Karbala enacted by the Caliph Yazid son of Mu'awiyah.
 - (iv) Ali al-Zainul-abideen As Sajjad the first son of Husayn the King of Martyrs of Karbala, the Prisoner of Yazid martyred by Caliph Waleed bin Abdul Malik.
 - (v) Muhammad al-Baqir son of Ali al-Zainul-abideen the Fourth Imam, martyred by Hisham bin Abdul Malik.
 - (vi) Ja'far al-Sadiq son of Muhammad Al-Baqir the Fifth Imam, martyred by Mansoor.
 - (vii) Moosa Al-Kazim son of Ja'far As-Sadiq the Sixth Imam martyred by the 'Abbaside Caliph Haroon ar Rasheed.

(viii) Ali ar-Ridha' son of Moosa al-Kazim the Seventh Imam, martyred by the 'Abbaside Caliph Maamoon ar-Rasheed.

(ix) Muhammad at-Taqi son of Ali ar-Ridha', the Eighth Imam martyred by the 'Abbaside Caliph Mo'tasim.

(x) Ali an-Naqi son of Muhammad at-Taqi the Ninth Imam martyred by the 'Abbaside Caliph Mo'tasim.

(xi) Hasan al-Askari son of Ali an-Naqi the Tenth Imam martyred by the 'Abbaside Caliph Mo'tamad.

(xii) Muhammad al-Mahdi son of Hasan Al-Askari, living by the will of the Lord as is Jesus in the seed of Isaac through his virgin mother Mary. Both this Holy Imam and the Holy Prophet Jesus will re-appear at the will of the Lord before the end of the world after which will be the Last Day of Resurrection and Final Judgment.

The Last Day of the Final Judgment (Qiamat)

It is now for any intelligent one to say that if the above fundamentals of the faith are those prescribed by the Holy Qur'an or not, or if they contain anything more or less than what the Holy Prophet preached and enjoined upon his followers. As regards the practice of the faith a Shia Muslim shall:

1. Offer regularly the prescribed five times compulsory prayers.
2. Fast the whole of the Holy month of Ramadhan.
3. Perform '*Hajj*' i.e., pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'ba in Mecca at least once in his life provided he could afford to do it as laid down by the Holy Prophet.
4. Pay the '*Zakat*' (the prescribed poor-rate) of 2-1/2 per cent of his assets as prescribed by the Holy Qur'an and explained by the Holy Prophet.
5. Pay the '*Khums*' (the 1/5th of the nett savings as laid down by the Holy Qur'an and explained by the Holy Prophet.
6. Endeavour his most, i.e., '*Jihad*', as needed for the defence and the welfare of the faith and the faithful and even fight in the way of the Lord for the purpose if called to do it by the Apostle of God or any one of God's commissioned Guides the Imams.
7. Preach or enjoin what is good to his brethren in all peaceful and desirable ways.
8. Preach abstinence from evil, to his brethren in all peaceful and desirable ways.
9. Love God, God's chosen men and godliness and be always attached to the godly ones particularly to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his Holy Ahlul Bayt.

10. Always keep himself away from evils and the evil ones, having nothing to do with the wicked ones with definite aversion to their wicked conduct and character.

Let any unbiased reader who pursues the above fundamentals and their practice declare, if there is nothing but good and it is nothing but godliness pure, in belief and practice, or if there is anything bad or objectionable in it. As regards the Holy Qur'an, a Shia Muslim believes that the present Holy Qur'an, is the very same Book of God, complete in itself without any deduction or addition to it and without any alteration or misarrangement of its verses This is the Holy Qur'an which was revealed to the Holy Prophet which was then and there recorded in writing by Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood, and Ma'aaz Ibn Jabal and which was read out to the Holy Prophet during his very lifetime. As regards the 'Qiblah' or the point of turning towards, during prayers, a Shia Muslim holds the Holy Ka'ba in Mecca as his Qiblah. As regards the daily prayers a Shia Muslim offers regularly the five times compulsory daily prayers with the number of the Rak'ats or units as given below:

Prayer wajib Rak'ats or units Sunnat

Fajr (Morning) 2 2 2

Zohr (Mid-day) 4 4 8

Asr (afternoon) 4 4 8

Maghrib (Evening) 3 3 4

Isha (Night) 4 4 2

Total Compulsory 17 17 24

The '*Kalema al-Shahadat*' or the verbal declaration of the faith, the Kalema of a Shia Muslim is the same as that of any other Muslim:

"La ilaha ilallah Muhammadur Rasoolullah"

'There is no god save (the One God) Allah Muhammad the Apostle of God.'

A Shia Muslim declares his identity with the Islam-Original to mean that his Islam is that of the Ahlul Bayt whose head after the Holy Prophet was Ali, and not the Islam adulterated by unwarranted authorities, pronouncing his faith in Ali as the Friend of God or the Divinely commissioned Guardian over the Muslims after the Holy Prophet. To do this a Shia Muslim declares with in continuation of the above declaration:

"Aliyyan waliullah Wasiyyu Rasoolillah"

'Ali the Friend of God the Successor of the Holy Prophet'

Be it known that the above two clauses are pronounced not as a part of the Kalema but just as a note of distinction of the faith from the creed adulterated later.

This is the whole of the Shia'ism or the Islam Original and nothing else.

Under the Ninth article of the practice of the faith called '*Tawallah*' a Shia Muslim mourns the martyrdom of each of the holy ones of the Ahlul Bayt and expresses his sorrow and grief for the miseries and the calamities the holy ones suffered, individually and also collectively in congregational services called the *Majlis al-Aza* in which are recited the Holy Qur'an and the life-readings of the holy ones with the Islamic philosophy and religious teachings for the information of the fellows in the Shia faith.

Let the readers themselves judge if the above conduct could be in agreement or the token of devotion to God and the loyalty to the godly ones who suffered the calamities and laid their all in the way of the Lord for the guidance of mankind, or it could in any manner or sense be in the least objectionable. At the same time it has at last to be judged that not doing so will be ingratitude and disloyalty to God and the godly ones or not.

The Commemoration of the Historic 'Ashoora'

'Ashoora' means the 'tenth', i.e., the Tenth day, of the Lunar month of Moharram 61 A.H. on which historic day, Husayn surrendered his all in the way of the Lord to save the truth and thus to save humanity from getting beguiled by the Brute on the throne and the brutal forces of the mercenary scholars whom he had enlisted under his command. All those who love truth and the welfare of mankind at large, will naturally love Husayn and his holy family, and will naturally be moved to express their sympathy and sorrow for the Great Godly Hero of Karbala who sacrificed his all, suffered the worst of miseries and met the most torturous and brutal death but neither yielded to the blasphemy perpetrated by the Brute nor the destruction of the Divine Principle of his holy Grandfather.

Honestly, not to commemorate such a solemn occasion will be thanklessness and ingratitude to godliness and to God Himself, and to do it will surely earn the blessings of the Lord. Every one who has the least appreciation or the admiration for the matchless sacrifices, the Great Hero and his godly comrades, who suffered martyrdom along with him, will naturally be moved to express his sorrow on the solemn occasion, and those who love devilry and the Devil Yazid, will naturally be festive on that day.

Intercession or Shafa'at

The possibility of intercession for the sinners on the Day of Judgment is quite obvious from the repeated declarations of the Holy Qur'an. The declarations are so clearly worded that none can misinterpret them otherwise:

“Who is anyone to intercede with Him, save with His permission.” (2:255)

According to this verse, intercession is possible only with permission of the Lord. There are the following verses clearer still:

“They shall not own intercession, save he who has covenanted with the Beneficent God.” (19:87)

“On that Day (of Judgment) no Intercession shall avail except of him whom the Beneficent Lord allows and with whose word He (God) is pleased with.” (20: 109)

The above verses are too clear to create any doubt against some dear ones to the Lord having the authority from Him to intercede. Who else could be more entitled to this divine grace and unique privilege than the apostles of God, more particularly the Last one, the chief of them, and those who have surrendered their lives in the way of the Lord like Husayn and his faithful comrades who were martyred along with him? The point is that to one who sincerely seeks to know the truth, a straight answer, with the simplest logic, will certainly suffice, but to one who wants to go on arguing merely for argument's sake, even the apostles from God could not satisfy. No amount of arguing will be of any avail when the understanding is never to come at all from within the enquirer. One can give an argument but never an understanding.

The Houses of Miracles and response to Prayers

Let the materialist world know from the millions of the devoted Muslims, who have visited the Shrines in Iraq and other holy places, how brightly the Glory of God shines in the shrines of Husayn and the members of his holy family and also of his faithful comrades who sacrificed their lives along with him in Karbala. One need not wait long to witness any miraculous event on any of the week days, in the shrines of Husayn and ‘Abbas, particularly the holy shrine of ‘Abbas al-Alamdar (i.e., ‘Abbas the Standard Bearer of Husayn) is the place where from hundreds of thousands of the sufferers get their prayers immediately heard, and many a time this valiant son of Ali, the Lion of God, has rendered miraculous and timely rescue to those who invoked the mercy of God in his holy name. It can be most confidently said, let any one try his holy name. It can be most confidently said, let any one try his luck if he needs any help from God with the necessary sincerity and devotion to the great saintly brother of the King of Martyrs.

Even today the holy name ‘Abbas' is a watchword for millions and millions of his sincere devotees for the immediate and miraculous rescue needed, in any unavoidable risk or danger. Where is the wonder for one who surrenders himself to God, God will also surely honour his name when mentioned in any prayer to Him. God Himself enjoins on man to seek a medium unto Him:

“Seek ye a medium unto Him (God).” (Holy Qur’an5:35)

It is the disbelievers who get hopeless of their dead. Be it noted that the ‘Kalema’ or the Word of the

Declaration of the Faith 'Shia'ism', is only:

“Lailaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasoolullah.”

'There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the (Holy) Prophet of God.'

Respect, Regard and Reverence to the Sacred Emblems

Alams (the Emblems of Husayn, 'Abbas and The other A'imma), The Zarees, Mimbers, Imambadas and the other things dedicated to the sacred memory of the Holy Ones of the Ahlul Bayt, held with feelings of sanctity by the Shias (the devotees of the Holy Ahlul Bayt).

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