

The Ahl ul-Bayt in The Quran And Sunnah

[An Introduction to Ahl ul-Bayt](#)

His Eminence Shaykh Musa Muhammad Ali states in his *al-Sayyidah Zaynab*¹:

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad, the most honorable of the prophets and the chief of the Messengers of Allah, and upon his household, companions and progeny.

Almighty Allah says:

رَحِمْتُ اللَّهَ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ ۖ إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

The mercy of Allah and His blessings are on you, O people of the house, surely He is Praised, Glorious. (11:73)

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House and to purify you with a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (42:23)

In his book titled *al-Sahih*, Muslim records the following:

Zayd ibn Arqam narrated: In a place between Mecca and Medina called 'Khummm', the Messenger of Allah (S) once delivered a speech to us. After statements of praising and thanking Almighty Allah, as

well as statements to preach and remind about Him, the Prophet (S) said:

أَلَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي رَسُولُ رَبِّي فَأُجِيبُ، وَأَنَا تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ ثَقَلَيْنِ: أَوَّلُهُمَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ الْهُدَى وَالنُّورُ؛ فَخُذُوا بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَاسْتَمْسِكُوا بِهِ... وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي؛ أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أَذْكُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

“O people, I am no more than an ordinary person, and the messenger of my Lord (i.e. angel of death) will shortly come to me and then I will respond. Among you, I have left two weighty things: first is the Book of Allah that includes right guidance and illumination. Persevere with the Book of Allah and hold fast on to it. Second is my household; remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household.”

The first thing one can learn from this directive of the immaculate Prophet (S) is that one who loves something must prefer it over himself, otherwise such a love will be false and untrue. To attain something after a serious effort is more pleasing and delightful than to get it without sweat.

The true love for the Messenger of Allah (S) can be shown by following his words and deeds, complying with his instructions, avoiding things that he deemed as forbidden, practicing his ethics, and following him in his love for his household (the Ahl al-Bayt), by showing love for them.

The Prophet's household is of the real pure ones. It is they to whom Almighty Allah has given His love, bestowed them with a variety of miracles, purified them from the nature of soul, and saved them from following their own desires. As a result, all their thoughts have become completely connected to Almighty Allah.

Thus, love for the Prophet's household has become the origin and the first step in the way towards Allah. All manners and ranks are only levels of love.

Out of His honoring them, Almighty Allah educated the ignorant through the Prophet's family, guided the lost ones, and strengthened the weak. Therefore, to behave modestly before this pure household is a duty, to seek justice for their wronged ones is obligatory, and to serve them as much as possible is regarded as a way of seeking nearness to them.

It is Almighty Allah, the Creator, Who favored, awarded, purified, chastened, and honored the Prophet's household. This is clear in His saying:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا.

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you with a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

Therefore, everyone must bear in his or her heart that such a divine favor is a response to the Creator's instruction and to carry out the Prophet's call.

Love for the Prophet's household can only be achieved by respecting them in their presence or absence; they hence should not be slandered or disrespected. Finally, it is forbidden to backbite, especially about the Prophet's household and the sincere saints of Allah. So, Muslims should be wary of such a vicious trait. However, no one who indulges in such a thing will ever attain success, because the regard for the saints is as same as for the prophets, and to make distinction between them is to deprive them of their blessing and ingratitude for their grace.²

Regrettably, the inattentive and the deceived look at the people having honesty and loyalty, with despise. They issue misjudgments about them, charge them with deviation, and regard them as ignorant.

The clear-sighted ones, on the other hand, are persistently calm; they can see the unseen with eyes of discernment from beyond soft screens. Accordingly, misfortunes cannot defeat them and attacks of time cannot provoke them. In an instant, the flag of ease shall gleam for them, the clouds of obscurity will clear away and Almighty Allah will eradicate the interests of the conspirators.

On that account, men of perception, sagacity, decency, and observation hold faithful devotion, perfect constancy, sincere honesty and abundant esteem for the Prophet's household out of their compliance to the Creator's instruction, their honoring of the Prophet and their acceding to his commandment in the following Hadith:

Al-Tabarani, in his *al-Mujam al-Kabir*, Abu al-Shaykh, Ibn Habban, in his *al-Sahih*, and al-Bayhaqi; all recorded the Prophet's following saying:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَتَكُونَ عِزَّتِي أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ عِزَّتِهِ، وَأَهْلِي أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَذَاتِي أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ ذَاتِهِ.

“A servant of Allah shall not be faithful believer unless he loves me more than he loves himself, loves my household more than he loves his household, loves my family more than he loves his family, and loves my soul more than he loves his soul.”³

Al-Bayhaqi, Abu al-Shaykh, and Ibn Habban, in his *al-Sahih*, all recorded the following hadith on the authority of Imam Ali (a):

The Messenger of Allah (S) was furious when he came out, sat on the minbar, thanked and praised Allah, and then said:

مَا بَالُ رِجَالٍ يُؤْذُونَنِي فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي؟ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يُحِبَّنِي، وَلَا يُحِبَّنِي حَتَّى يُحِبَّ ذُرِّيَّتِي.

“What is the matter with those who hurt me concerning my household? I swear by Him Who grasps my soul in His hand that a servant (of Allah) shall not be faithful believer unless he loves me, and he shall not love me truly unless he loves my progeny.”

For this reason, Abu Bakr said:

“I love to respect the Prophet’s kinship more than I respect mine.”

Out of his honesty and wisdom, the Master of the Creation, Prophet Muhammad (S), who says nothing but truth, has said as reported by al-Tirmidhi, in his *al-Sunan*, and al-Hakim, in *al-Mustadrak*, on the authority of (Abdullah) Ibn Abbas:

أَحِبُّوا اللَّهَ لِمَا يَغْذُوكُمْ بِهِ مِنْ نِعَمِهِ، وَأَحِبُّونِي لِحُبِّ اللَّهِ، وَأَحِبُّوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي لِحُبِّي.

“You should love Allah on account of the graces that He bestows upon you ceaselessly, and you should love me on account of your love for Allah, and you should love my household on account of your love for me.”⁴

As a commentary of the Prophet’s saying, “You should love Allah on account of the graces that He bestows upon you ceaselessly,” the author of *Fayd al-Qadir* says:

“This means that you should love Allah for the various material and tangible graces that He confers upon you, such as the facilitation of food and drink – as an example of the material grace, and the leading to success and right guidance, nomination of figures of knowledge, creation of senses, and dispense of the illuminations of conviction upon hearts are in addition to other tangible graces.”

Ibn Atta–Allah al-Iskandari says:

“In every moment, Almighty Allah confers upon you with graces for which you should love Him and must thank Him at all times.”

Accordingly, it is impossible to settle the thanking when its time slips away, since thanking must be renewed in every split second. In the same way, seeking forgiveness and evasion of sins must be renewed in every moment.

Almighty Allah says:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“And if you would count Allah’s favors, you will not be able to number them; most surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (16: 18)

Hence, the Prophet (S) intended to say that one must love Almighty Allah because He is conferring upon us with His endless graces.

Al-Zamakhshari says in this regard:

“Grace denotes every advantage intended for charity. On this account, Allah the Exalted has created the whole world as grace. The world is in fact either animate or inanimate. The inanimate is grace for the animate, and the animate is a grace for liveliness, which in turn is a grace for the spirited, because without liveliness, the spirited would lose the ability to benefit by other graces. Thus, anything that can benefit is grace.”

As a commentary on the previous notion, al-Fakhr al-Razi says:

“The graces of Allah the Exalted are countless, because everything that He has given to us, such as advantages, pleasures, limbs and organs that we use for getting benefits and evading harms, things that He has created in this universe to reason out the existence of Him as the one and only Maker, and things that He has brought about so as to restrain from acts of disobedience; all these are graces. Furthermore, everything that brings pleasure is grace, and everything that does not bring pleasure but is used for evading harms is also grace, and everything that does not bring pleasure and is not used for evading harms is also grace since it can be used as evidence on the existence of the Maker and thus, a means to the recognition of and the obedience to Him. As a result, all creatures are His grace.”

It is now clear that while a servant's love for Allah does not need interpretation, Allah's love for a servant needs interpretation.

In this regard, Imam al-Ghazzali says:

“Love for Allah is factual, not figurative. It is so because love, as linguists cite, denotes the soul's tendency to something expedient and agreeable, while the excessive tendency is the ardent love. Since Allah the Exalted is All benevolent and pleasing, and tendency to benevolence and pleasantness is naturally satisfying, love for Him has become real. On the other side, Allah's love for a servant is a figurative matter that stems from the Lord's unveiling the divine screen between a servant and Him in order that the servant will see the Lord with his heart. It also stems from the Lord's enabling the servant to be close to Him.”

The following is excerpted from *Sharh al-Mawaqif*:[5](#)

“Our love for Allah is a spiritual matter that depends on the conception of His continual, limitless perfection, and it necessitates perfect attention to His Sacred Presence without languor or whereabouts. While our love for things other than Him is a manner that depends on the imagination of perfection of pleasant, humane, or comparable things, such as the love for one's beloved or the father's love for his son. Moreover, love is satisfaction, an expression of will, and avoidance of protest.

In abstract context, Allah's love for others is not real, because the reality of love denotes will, and will is associated with limited things only, and Almighty Allah has no limits. In other words, a will to do something denotes that this thing has not been done yet, and the will to avoid something denotes that it can be avoided. On that account, Almighty Allah is too exalted to will to do or avoid something, because He is the Everlasting, the eternally sought by all."

The Prophet's saying, "you should love me on account of your love for Allah," means that because Allah the Exalted loves me, He specifies your love for me as an instruction that you must carry out. This meaning is stated in the following report narrated from authentic sources:

"When Allah loves a servant, Archangel Gabriel declares: Allah has loved so-and-so, you therefore must love him."

The Prophet's saying, "You should love my household on account of your love for me," means that because I love my household for the sake of Allah's love for them, you should also then love them.

The Prophet's saying may also denote an instruction, which must be carried out, because love for the Prophet's household is obligatory because of a person's love for the Prophet (S). Almighty Allah says:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ۖ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives." (42:23)

Al-Fakhr al-Razi records that the Prophet (S) and his household are equal in five things:

During the Tashahhud⁶ of the prayers, blessings should be said to the Prophet and his household.

During the Taslim⁷ of the prayers, blessings should be said to the Prophet and his household. In the Holy Quran, Almighty Allah says:

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ آلِ يَاسِينَ .

Peace be on the family of Yasin. (37: 130)

In context of purity; Almighty Allah addresses to Prophet Muhammad (S) by saying, "طه", which means 'pure.'

Almighty Allah says:

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you. (3:31)

Almighty Allah says:

الْقُرْبَىٰ فِي الْمَوَدَّةِ إِلَّا أَجْرًا عَلَيْهِ أَسْأَلُكُمْ لَا قُلْ

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (42:23)

The Holy Quran, authentic hadiths, and consensus of Muslim scholars from different generations – all refer to the divine obligation of loving, adoring, esteeming, respecting, and honoring the household of Allah's Messenger (S). Besides this, the reason also points towards this fact on the basis of previous proofs about this obligation, which is due because we owe gratitude for all the graces received from the All-benefactor Lord. Our Prophet (S), being the prophet of mercy, the guide of the ummah, and the savior of humankind, must be thanked, appreciated, respected and honored. To honor and love the Prophet's household is a part of honoring and loving him.

On this basis, the four major guidelines of the Islamic Shariah, namely the Holy Quran, the holy Sunnah, consensus of the different generations of the Muslim scholars, and analogy, make it incumbent upon Muslims to love the Prophet's household. It is impossible to refer to all these evidences within this brief essay, because it requires compilation of a large volume of text. However, the submission to this fact is an indisputable matter for both ordinary people and scholars. So, we have referred only to some points of this topic in order to enlighten those who love the Prophet's household, for Almighty Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ .

Surely, Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Imran above the nations. (3:33)

Undoubtedly, Prophet Muhammad (S) belongs to the descendants of Abraham and as a consequence, his household belongs to the descendants of Abraham. To conclude then, the Prophet's household has been chosen by Allah.

Regarding Almighty Allah's saying:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا .

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify

you with a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

This is most surely clear-cut evidence on the special rank of the Prophet's household. There are numerous further verses from the Holy Quran and hadith, which support each other in this regard. The best example is Allah's saying:

﴿قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ﴾

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (42:23)

The authenticated frank hadiths regarding the Prophet's household are innumerable. Let us refer to some of them:

Al-Tirmidhi, in his *al-Sunan*, and Abu Hatam reported the following hadith on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam:

أَنَا حَرْبٌ لِمَنْ حَارَبَهُمْ وَسَلِّمْ لِمَنْ سَالَمَهُمْ.

I am at war with him whoever is in war with them (the Prophet's household), and in peace with him whoever is in peace with them.

Al-Tirmidhi and Imam Ahmad recorded the following hadith:

مَنْ آذَى قَرَابَتِي فَقَدْ آذَانِي، وَمَنْ آذَانِي فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ.

Anyone who hurts my relatives will be hurting me, and whoever hurts me is surely hurting Allah.

Imam al-Bukhari, in his *al-Sahih*, recorded the following on the authority of Abd-al-Rahman ibn Abu Layla:

Kaab ibn Ajarah met me and said, "May I present to you a gift that I have heard from the Messenger of Allah (S)?"

"Yes," I answered, "give it to me."

He spoke, "We asked the Prophet (S) how to send blessings on the Ahl al-Bayt, and he answered – "You should say:

قُولُوا: اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ. اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

Say: O Allah, have mercy upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad in the same way as you had mercy upon Abraham and the family of Abraham. You are surely the Praised ones and Glorious. O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad in the same way as you blessed Abraham and the family of Abraham. You are surely Praised and Glorious.”

Commenting on this hadith, our master Jabir says:

“I do not believe in my prayers where I have not send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad; I do not believe such prayers will be accepted.”

Al-Tirmidhi, in his *al-Sunan*, records the following on the authority of Umar ibn Abu Salamah, the Prophet’s stepson:

Regarding the following Verse:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا.

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a with (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

When this verse was revealed, the Prophet (S) was in the house of Ummu-Salamah – the Prophet’s righteous wife. He summoned Fatimah, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn and covered them with a cloak, which, covered his back too, and said:

اللَّهُمَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي فَأَذْهِبْ عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْسَ وَطَهِّرْهُمْ تَطْهِيرًا.

“O Allah, these are my household; therefore, (I beseech You) to keep away the uncleanness from them and purify them with a thorough purifying.”

Seeing this, Ummu-Salamah asked, “Am I added to them, Allah’s Messenger?”

The Prophet (S) answered, “You are in your own position, and you are on the right.”⁸

These are the Ahl al-Bayt from whom Almighty Allah keeps away the uncleanness and whom He purified thoroughly. In the previous hadith, the Messenger of Allah (S) showed that this honor (of thorough purification) is dedicated to them individually and without the participation of anyone else.

According to the narration, this exclusive position verifies that Ummu-Salamah heard and saw the whole situation and asked the Prophet (S) to include her to them. As she tried to lift up that cloak and go under it, the Prophet (S) took the cloak’s edge from her hand and said, “You are in your own position, and you are on the right.”

Because this exclusive position is dedicated to the Ahl al-Bayt alone, nobody else should be added, not even Ummu-Salamah, the virtuous wife of the Prophet (S) and mother of the faithful believers (may Allah please all the mothers of the faithful believers) [9](#).

If it were permissible or acceptable for anyone else to have a share among this exclusive position of the Prophet's household, it would be permissible for Ummu-Salamah to be under that cloak at least, in response to her desire, to sooth her, or to appreciate her faithfulness and loyalty. This is especially so because her wish was made to the one who "has a greater claim on the faithful –believers – than they have on themselves" and is "to the believers full of pity and merciful," [10](#) and he has been described as the kind, the sympathetic, the magnanimous, the generous, and the honest. Thus, it has become evident that this verse is dedicated only to those people who were within the cloak and not anyone else. This fact has also been proven by authentic narrations.

Thus, it has been proved that this verse is dedicated to the Prophet's household who are distinguished by virtue of such honorable merits. In addition, the holy Sunnah is filled to the brim in the Islamic world with the narrations about virtues of the Prophet's household:

In his (book entitled) *al-Sahih*, Muslim records the following on the authority of Yazid ibn Hayyan al-Taymi:

Husayn ibn Sabarah, Muslim ibn Zayd, and I went to Zayd ibn Arqam. After we had sat before him, Husayn asked, "Zayd, you have really attained great benefaction because you saw the Prophet (S), listened to his words, participated in his campaigns, and followed him in prayers. Now, Zayd, please narrate to us what you have heard from the Messenger of Allah (S)."

Zayd spoke: "O son of my brother, (I swear) by Allah I have become old in age, my days have become old, and I have forgotten some of these narrations that I used to memorize directly from the Messenger of Allah (S). You therefore should accept what I will tell you and should not ask me anything over and above my ability."

He then added, "One day, in a place between Mecca and Medina called 'Khummm', the Messenger of Allah (S) delivered a speech to us.

After statements of praising and thanking Almighty Allah, as well as statements of preach and reminding of Him, the Prophet (S) said:

أَلَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي رَسُولُ رَبِّي فَأُجِيبُ، وَأَنَا تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ ثَقَلَيْنِ: أَوَّلُهُمَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ الْهُدَى وَالنُّورُ؛ فَخُذُوا بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَاسْتَمْسِكُوا بِهِ... وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي؛ أُنْذِرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أُنْذِرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أُنْذِرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

O people, I am no more than an ordinary person and the messenger of my Lord – the Angel of Death will

shortly come to me and then I will respond. Among you, I have left two weighty things: first, the Book of Allah that includes right guidance and illumination. Persevere with the Book of Allah and hold fast on it. Second, my household; remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household.”

Husayn asked again, “Zayd, who are the Prophet’s household? Are his wives included within his household?”

He – Zayd – answered: “His wives are included within his household, but his Household are those who are forbidden to receive alms after him.”

Husayn asked, “Who are they, then?”

Zayd answered, “They are the family of Ali, the family of Aqil, the family of Jafar, and the family of Abbas.”

(Abdullah) ibn Abbas has narrated that the Messenger of Allah (S) had said:

يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ؛ إِنِّي قَدْ سَأَلْتُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُنَبِّتَ قَائِمَكُمْ وَأَنْ يَهْدِيَ ضَالَّكُمْ وَأَنْ يُعَلِّمَ جَاهِلَكُمْ وَأَنْ يَجْعَلَكُمْ جُودَاءَ نُجَدَاءَ رُحَمَاءَ. فَلَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا صَفَنَ بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ فَصَلَّى وَصَامَ، ثُمَّ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ مُبْغِضًا لِأَهْلِ بَيْتِ مُحَمَّدٍ دَخَلَ النَّارَ.

O sons of Abd–al–Muttalib, I have beseeched Allah to make the chief among you stable (on the right course), guide the ones who are straying among you, teach the ignorant ones among you, and make you generous, noble and merciful. A man who lines up to stand between the *Rukn* and *Maqam*¹¹ for praying (there) and observes fasting (there) shall most surely be entered into the fire of Hell if he meets Allah (on the Day of Resurrection) if he bears malice against the household of Muhammad.”

This hadith is recorded by al–Hakim (in his book titled *al–Mustadrak*) using the criterion of Muslim¹².

The Prophet’s household is the most worthy of the Divine Care and love for the Messenger of Allah (S), because they are regarded as security for people on this earth.

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, in his *al–Musnad*, and Abu Amr al–Ghifari have reported on the authority of Ali that the Messenger of Allah (S) had said:

النُّجُومُ أَمَانٌ لِأَهْلِ السَّمَاءِ، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَتِ النُّجُومُ ذَهَبَ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ. وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي أَمَانٌ لِأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ، فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي ذَهَبَ أَمَانٌ لِأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ.

Stars act as a security for the inhabitants of the heavens. If stars vanish, the inhabitants of the heavens will vanish, too. Likewise, my Household is acting as a security for the inhabitants of the earth. If they disappear, the inhabitants of the earth will disappear, too.

Nasr ibn Ali al-Jahdumi relates the following narration to Ali ibn Abu Talib:

The Prophet (S) took al-Hasan and al-Husayn from the hands and declared:

مَنْ أَحَبَّنِي وَأَحَبَّ هَذَيْنِ وَأَبَاهُمَا وَأُمَّهُمَا كَانَ مَعِيَ فِي دَرَجَتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Anyone who loves these two, their father, their mother, shall certainly be with me in the same position on the Day of Resurrection.

Sufyan ibn Waki and Abd ibn Hamid reported that Khalid ibn Mukhallad narrated the following to them on the authority of Usamah ibn Zayd:

One night, I visited the Prophet (S) who went out embracing two things that I could not see under a cloak. After I had asked him about the matter for which I visited him, I asked about the things that he was embracing. He (S) uncovered the cloak and they were al-Hasan and al-Husayn on his hips. He then said:

هَٰذَانِ ابْنَايَ وَابْنَاتِي. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُحِبُّهُمَا فَأَحِبَّهُمَا وَأَحِبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّهُمَا

These two are my sons and my daughter's. O Allah, I do love them and I beseech to You to love them and to love those who love them.

Al-Husayn ibn Hurayth has related that Abu Buraydah said:

Whilst the Prophet (S) was on the minbar delivering a speech to us, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, who were dressing red shirts, came towards him in stumbling steps. Immediately, the Messenger of Allah (S) descended from the minbar, carried them both, and put them before him. He then commented:

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ: "أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ" نَظَرْتُ إِلَى هَذَيْنِ الصَّبِيِّينِ يَمْشِيَانِ وَيَعْتُرَانِ فَلَمْ أَصْبِرْ حَتَّى قَطَعْتُ حَدِيثِي وَرَفَعْتُهُمَا

Truthful are the words of Allah (Who says):

"Your possessions and your children are only a trial." (64: 15)

As I saw these two boys walk stumblingly, I could not avoid interrupting my speech so as to lift them up from the ground.

Almighty Allah too has urged to respect the Prophet's Household. In this regard, al-Bukhari, in his *al-Sahih*, records that Abu Bakr narrated the following saying of the Prophet (S):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، ارْقُبُوا مُحَمَّدًا فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ.

O people, regard Muhammad through honoring his household.

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, in his *al-Sahih* – records on the authority of Ali that the Prophet (S) said to Fatimah:

إِنِّي وَإِيَّاكَ وَهَذَيْنِ (يعني حسناً وحسيناً) وَهَذَا الرَّاقِدَ (يعني علياً) فِي مَكَانٍ وَاحِدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

You, these two (i.e. al-Hasan and al-Husayn), this sleeping one (i.e. Ali), and I shall certainly be in the same position on the Day of Resurrection.

Al-Tabarani records on the authority of Ali that the Messenger of Allah (S) said:

أَوَّلُ مَنْ يَرِدُ عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي وَمَنْ أَحَبَّنِي مِنْ أُمَّتِي.

My household and those who love me among the individuals of my ummah shall be the first to join me on the Divine Pool.

Al-Tabarani, in his *al-Mujam al-Saghir*, records on the authority of Abdullah ibn Jafar that the Messenger of Allah (S) said:

يَا بَنِي هَاشِمٍ، إِنِّي قَدْ سَأَلْتُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْ يَجْعَلَكُمْ جُودَاءَ نُجْدَاءَ رُحَمَاءَ. وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَ ضَالَّكُمْ وَيُؤْمِنَ خَائِفَكُمْ وَيُشْبِعَ جَائِعَكُمْ.

O sons of Hashim, I have implored to Allah the Exalted to make you generous, noble, and merciful. I have also asked Him to guide the straying ones among you, secure the fearful ones among you, and to supply the hungry ones among you.

In his *al-Mustadrak*, al-Hakim records the following Hadith on the authority of Anas ibn Malik and decides it as authentically reported:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

رَشَدَنِي رَبِّي فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي مِنْ أَقْرَبِهِمْ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ وَلِي بِالْبَلَاغِ أَلَّا يَعْذِبَهُمْ.

Concerning my household, my Lord has promised me that He shall not punish anyone of them who believes in Allah's oneness and my (divine) message.

Al-Tabarani, in his *al-Mujam al-Kabir*, records on the authority of (Abdullah) Ibn Abbas the following hadith whose reporters are decided as trustworthy:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said to Fatimah:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَيْرُ مُعَذِّبِكِ وَلَا وَلَدِكَ

Most surely, Allah shall not punish your sons and you.

Ahmad, al-Hakim, and al-Bayhaqi record on the authority of Abu Said (al-Khidri) that the Messenger of Allah (S) said while he was on the minbar:

مَا بَالُ رِجَالٍ يَقُولُونَ أَنَّ رَحِمَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لَا تَنْفَعُ قَوْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ؟ بَلَى وَاللَّهِ، إِنَّ رَحِمِي مُوصِلَةٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَإِنِّي، أَهْبَأُ النَّاسَ، فَرِطٌ لَكُمْ عَلَى الْحَوْضِ

What is the wrong with some individuals who claim that the kinship of Allah's Messenger (S) shall not be helpful on the Day of Resurrection? This is definitely not correct. By Allah, I swear that my kinship is helpful in this world as well as the world to come. O people, I will precede you to the Divine Pool.

Al-Bukhari, in his *al-Sahih*, records the following on the authority of Abu Bakr:

While the Prophet (S) was delivering a sermon, al-Hasan came; therefore, the Prophet (S) said:

إِبْنِي هَذَا سَيِّدٌ، وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُصْلِحُ بِهِ فِتْنَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

This is my son. He is a chief. Perhaps, Allah will reconcile two Muslim parties through him.

Ibn Hajar, in *Fath al-Bari* (Commentary and explanations of al-Bukhari's *al-Sahih*), records the following saying of al-Muhallab:

In the previous hadith, the Prophet (S) relates leadership to conciliation; therefore, this indicates that none deserve leadership except those through who people benefit.

Imam Ahmad and al-Tabarani, in his *al-Mujam al-Kabir*, records that Ali (a) has reported:

As the Messenger of Allah (S) assigned me as the judge of the Yemen, I said: "Messenger of Allah (S), you have chosen me while I am still young and many elderly men are there. Besides, I do not have full acquaintance with judiciary."

The Prophet (S) answered:

إِنْطَلِقْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَيَهْدِي قَلْبَكَ وَيُثَبِّتُ لِسَانَكَ

Go ahead, for it is Allah Who shall guide your heart and strengthen your tongue.

Ali then said: “After this statement, I have never failed.”

In fact, the authentic hadiths in this regard are innumerable, for the six most reliable reference books of hadith, as well as many others, are filled up with such narrations about honoring and esteeming the Prophet’s household’s exalted rank and unanimous elevated standing. Besides, this fact is known for everybody, and it is impossible to find a single faithful believer ignoring the esteem of the family of Allah’s Messenger (S).

Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi, the grand scholar, says:

“All these reports appertained to the virtues of the Prophet’s household are mentioned in the famous books of hadith in authenticated series of narration. Refer to these books for the intended topic.”

The Prophet’s household is Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn, and their descendants and offspring are attached to them. The hadith of Mubahalah – invocation of Allah’s curse – is the evidence on the fact that only the aforementioned five individuals enjoy the special rank given to the Prophet’s household.

Exegetes of the Holy Quran have confirmed the following incident:

Regarding Almighty Allah’s saying:

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ

نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ. ثُمَّ

If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after (full) knowledge Hath come to thee, say: “Come! Let us gather together, – our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie! (3:61)

When this Verse was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (S) embraced al-Hasan and al-Husayn, Fatimah walked after them, and Ali walked after them. He then asked them to say ‘Amen’ when he would invoke Allah... etc. [13](#)

On this incident, Jarallah comments:

“This verse is the strongest evidence on the virtue of the ‘Ashab al-Kisa’ (companions in the Cloak – the Prophet’s household) [14](#).

The following Quranic Verse proves that their descendants follow them in virtue:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ.

And (as for) those who believe and their offspring follow them in faith, We will unite with them their offspring (52:21)

Scholars have confirmed that ‘offspring’ includes the descendants of the original Household up to the Day of Resurrection. On that account, the Prophet’s household includes his offspring and descendants up to the Day of Resurrection. From this point, scholars of Islamic laws have decided many verdicts, especially in questions of waqfs¹⁵ and the like. In this respect too, the question of the belonging to the Prophet’s daughter’s descendants and therefore to his lineage is very famous, and our great Imam Abu Hanifah al-Numan ibn Thabit has his clear opinion in this question.

Commenting on the previous Quranic Verse, the author of *Mahasin al-Tawil* says:

“The verse refers to those who imitate their ascendants in relation to faith and righteous deeds. The verse also shows that those descendants will be joined to their ascendants in Paradise and (eternal) bliss. Because the addressees in the verse are the Prophet’s companions who are sure of Allah’s promise, they receive the good tidings that their descendants who imitate them righteously will be added to them.”

The other Hashemites who are forbidden to receive anything from the alms enjoy a rank of honor higher than that of others, but they cannot attain the characteristics of the ‘Ashab al-Kisa’ and the Prophet’s progeny with regards to the obligation of loving, respecting, reverencing, and honoring them.

Scholars have had different opinions regarding Almighty Allah’s saying:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا.

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you with a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

Some scholars have decided that this verse is dedicated only to the descendants of Ali and Fatimah, while others have included the families of al-Abbas, Jafar, and Aqil with them.

In his *al-Risalah al-Zaynabiyyah*, Jalaluddin al-Suyuti has recorded precious words concerning the identification of the Sharifs. He says:

“In the first age of Islam, the epithet of ‘Sharif’ was said to anyone who belonged to the Prophet’s household, whether through al-Hasan or al-Husayn, belonged to Ali whether through Muhammad ibn

al-Hanafiyyah or any other son, or belonged to Jafar, Aqil or al-Abbas.”

Thus, in the biographies mentioned in al-Dhahabi's book of history, you can find many names such as, 'Sharif of al-Abbas', 'Sharif of Aqil,' Sharif of Jafar,' or 'Sharif of Zaynab.'

But, when the Fatimid dynasty ruled Egypt, they dedicated the epithet to the descendants of our masters al-Hasan and al-usayn. This matter has been followed in Egypt up to now.

Lady Zaynab married my master Abdullah ibn Jafar, her cousin. The first of her excellent, pure descendants were Sayyid Ali – the namesake of his grandfather, Sayyid Awn al-Akbar, Sayyid Abbas, Sayyid Muhammad, and Lady Ummu-Kulthum respectively. Lady Zaynab's descendants are now numerous. They are, according to al-Sabban – the scholar, added to the Prophet's family and household.

This fact is unanimously decided upon because the Prophet's family is the faithful believers from the Hashemites, son of Abd-al-Muttalib, his progeny, and his descendants. Sons (and descendants) of one's daughter are regarded as his progeny and descendants, and when such a man records something in his will for his descendants, the descendants of his daughter must have a share in it. This meaning however is more specific than the previous. As it is unanimously agreed then, it is forbidden for the descendants of Jafar to have from the alms, because they belong to the Prophet's household.

Even though it is now dedicated to the descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the epithet of 'Sharif' must be said to all the individuals who belong to the Prophet's household, according to the old concept of this epithet.

The author of *al-Mawahib* says that the Messenger of Allah (S) had no descendants except those who came through his daughter Lady Fatimah al-Zahra. Hence, the Prophet's noble progeny came through the two grandsons, Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn. Those who belong to the descendants of the two Imams are called 'Hasani' and 'Husayni.' Besides, the name 'Ishaqi' is added to those who belong to Ishaq son of Jafar al-Sadiq son of Muhammad al-Baqir son of Imam Zayn al-Abidin son of Imam al-Husayn. He – Ishaq– was the husband of Lady Nafisah daughter of al-Hasan ibn Zayd ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn Ali.

Al-Sabban says that 'sharifship' is of various classes; a general one includes all the Prophet's household, a special one is dedicated to the Prophet's progeny and, hence, includes the descendants of Lady Zaynab and all of the Prophet's daughter's descendants, and a third class is restricted to al-Hasan and al-Husayn and called 'sharifship of kinship.'

The evidence for those who claim that the name of Ahl al-Bayt is restricted to definite individuals is the following hadith, which is related from many authenticated ways of narration:

The Prophet (S), accompanied by Ali and Fatimah, holding the hands of al-Hasan and al-Husayn,

entered. He asked Ali and Fatimah to come close and sit before him. He seated al-Hasan and al-Husayn on his thighs, covered them with a cloak, and recited (Allah's saying):

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً.

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying. (33:33)

According to another narration, the Prophet (S) then said:

اللَّهُمَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي فَأَذْهِبْ عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْسَ وَطَهِّرْهُمْ تَطْهِيراً.

“O Allah, these are my household; (So, I beseech to You) Keep away the uncleanness from them, and purify them with a thorough purifying.”

According to a third narration, the Prophet (S) then said:

اللَّهُمَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي فَأَذْهِبْ عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْسَ وَطَهِّرْهُمْ تَطْهِيراً.

“O Allah, these are the family of Muhammad; (So, I beseech to You) make Your mercy and blessings on the family of Muhammad in the same way as You have made it on Abraham. You are certainly Praised, Glorious.”

Supporting those who claim generality of the expression of Ahl al-Bayt, al-Baydawi states that particularizing the expression to the five individuals only does not suit the verses that precede and antecede the intended verse (i.e. Verse of Purification). In addition, the hadith has mentioned those individuals particularly so as to refer to the Prophet's household, not anyone else.

On the other hand, the particularization is mentioned for adding the particular progeny to them, for their special rank. As a result, this does not oppose the generality of the expression.

It is also credible that the particularization of these four individuals is intended for a divine commandment. This fact is proven by the hadith narrated by Ummu-Salamah:

Seeing the situation, Ummu-Salamah lifted an edge of the cloak and tried to be with them under it. But the Prophet (S) took the cloak's edge from her hand. She then asked, “Am I one of them, O Allah's Messenger?”

The Prophet (S) answered, “You are in your own position, and you are on the right.”

In *al-Musnad*, Ahmad (ibn Hanbal) and al-Tabarani narrate the following hadith on the authority of Abu Said al-Khidri:

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ فِي خَمْسَةٍ: فِيَّ، وَفِي عَلِيٍّ، وَحَسَنٍ، وَحُسَيْنٍ، وَفَاطِمَةَ.

This Verse (of Purification) has been intended for five individuals; they are Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Fatimah, and I.”

Ibn Abu Shaybah, Ahmad, al-Tirmidhi, al-Tabarani, and al-Hakim (who decided the Hadith as authentic) all narrate the following on the authority of Anas:

Whenever he went out for the Fajr – dawn prayer (in the Masjid), the Prophet (S) used to pass by the house of Fatimah and declare:

الصَّلَاةَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ. إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Hurry for the prayer, O people of the House (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt.)

“Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying.” (33:33)

At any rate, some narrations assert the generality of the expression. Muslim and al-Nassai narrate the following on the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam:

The Messenger of Allah (S) delivered a speech to us in which he said:

أُذَكِّرْكُمْ اللَّهَ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أُذَكِّرْكُمْ اللَّهَ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي، أُذَكِّرْكُمْ اللَّهَ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِي.

Remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household, remember Allah concerning my household.”

He then was asked, “Who are the Prophet’s household?”

Zayd answered, “His household are those who are forbidden to receive alms after him.”

He was asked, “Who are they, then?”

Zayd answered, “They are the family of Ali, the family of Aqil, the family of Jafar, and the family of Abbas.”

To sum it up, the individuals of the Prophet's pure progeny have been granted a high level of honor exclusively because of the great virtue received through Lady Fatimah. They are dressed with the garb of honor and tribute, and are granted more respect and reverence.

1. This introduction has been chosen here in order to prove that the love for the Ahl al-Bayt is not a claim or myth of the Shia. The author of this introduction belongs to the Hanafite Islamic School of Jurisprudence.

2. This is an indication to Almighty Allah's saying:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of your duty to Allah; surely, Allah is oft-returning to mercy, Merciful. (49:12)

3. Al-Hafiz al-Dhahabi decided this Hadith as authentic.

4. Al-Hafiz al-Dhahabi decided this Hadith as authentic.

5. Sharh al-Mawaqif has been authored by al-Sharif al-Jurjani.

6. Tashahhud is the last obligatory part of the prayer, in which performers (of prayer) send blessings to Prophet Muhammad and his household, by saying:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

7. Taslim is the last obligatory pillar of a prayer referring to salutation.

8. After recording this hadith, al-Bayhaqi commented: According to Abu-Abdullah al-Tirmidhi, this hadith is authentic and its narrators are trustworthy.

9. In the Holy Quran (33:6), Almighty Allah says:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

“The Prophet has a greater claim on the faithful than they have on themselves, and his wives are as their mothers.”

Accordingly, the Prophet's wives were called ‘mothers of the believers.’

10. This is an indication to Almighty Allah's saying in the Holy Quran (9:128)

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

Certainly an Apostle has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) full of pity and merciful.

11. The Rukn is the corner of the Holy Kaabah, and Maqam is the standing-place of Prophet Abraham near the Holy Kaabah.

12. The most reliable reference books of hadith for our Sunni brethren are six each having independent criterion to decide a hadith's degree of authenticity. Muslim is the compiler of one of these books and hence, he has his own criterion of a hadith's degree of authenticity.

13. The incident of Mubalahah – invocation of Allah's curse – is very well known, for it is mentioned in almost all the books dealing with the Islamic history.

14. The ‘Ashab al-Kisa’ (owners of the Cloak) is a name called on the Prophet (S), Imam Ali (a), Fatimah al-Zahra (a), Imam al-Hasan (a), and Imam al-Husayn (a), because the Prophet (S) covered these four individuals under a cloak and supplicated to Almighty Allah to remove uncleanness from them and purify them thoroughly. In this incident, the Prophet (S) named them as ‘my household’ (i.e. the Ahl ul-Bayt).

[15.](#) Waqf is the endowment or settlement of property under which the proceeds are to be devoted to a religious or charitable purpose.

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