

## The Prophet Appointed the Imams of the Shi`as

No researcher who has studied the biography of the Prophet, and who become familiar with the Islamic history, doubts the fact that the Prophet was the one who appointed the Twelve Imams, clearly stating so in order that they might succeed him and take charge of his nation.

Their number is mentioned in the *Sahih* books of Ahlul Sunnah together with the fact that they were twelve in number, and that all of them descended from Quraysh; this is what al-Bukhari and Muslim, as well as many others, have confirmed. Some Sunni references indicate that the Prophet named all of them, saying that the first of them was Ali ibn Abu Talib, followed by his son al-Hasan then al-Hasan's brother al-Husayn, followed by nine from the offspring of al-Husayn the last of whom is al-Mahdi.

The [Sunni] author of *Yanabee` al-Mawaddah*<sup>1</sup> narrates the following incident in his book:

A Jew named al-A`tal came to the Prophet and said, "Muhammad! I wish to ask you about certain things which I have been keeping to myself; so, if you answer them, I shall declare my acceptance of Islam before you." The Prophet said, "Ask me, O father of Imarah!"

So he asked him about many things till he was satisfied and admitted that the Prophet was right. Then he said, "Tell me about your *wasi* (successor): who is he? No prophet can ever be without a *wasi*; our prophet Moses had appointed Yusha` [Joshua] son of Noon as his successor." He said, "My *wasi* is Ali ibn Abu Talib followed by my grandsons al-Hasan and al-Husayn followed by nine men from the loins of al-Husayn." He said, "Then name them for me, O Muhammad!"

The Prophet said, "Once al-Husayn departs, he will be succeeded by his son Ali; when Ali departs, his son Muhammad will succeed him. When Muhammad departs, his son Ja`far will succeed him. When Ja`far departs, he will be succeeded by his son Musa. When Musa departs, his son Ali will succeed him. When Ali departs, his son Muhammad will succeed him.

When Muhammad departs, his son Ali will succeed him. When Ali departs, his son al-Hasan will succeed him, and when al-Hasan departs, al-Hujjah Muhammad al-Mahdi will succeed him. These are the twelve ones." That Jew, therefore, embraced Islam and praised Allah for having guided him.<sup>2</sup>

If we wish to turn the pages of Shi`a books and discern the facts they contain with regard to this subject, we will surely find many times as many *ahadith* as this one, but this suffices to prove that the scholars of “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a” admit that the number of the Imams is twelve, and there are no such Imams besides Ali and his purified offspring.

What strengthens our conviction that the Twelve Imams from Ahlul Bayt were never tutored by any of the Ummah's scholars is the fact that no historian, nor traditionist, nor biographer, has ever narrated saying that one of the Imams from Ahlul Bayt learned what he knew from some *sahaba* or *tabi`een* as is the case with all the Ummah's scholars and Imams.

Abu Hanifah, for example, was a student of Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq; Malik was a student of Abu Hanifah; al-Shafi`i learned from Malik and so did Ahmad ibn Hanbal. As for the Imams from Ahlul Bayt, their knowledge is gifted by Allah, Glory and Exaltation to Him, and they inherit such knowledge son from father, for they are the ones to whom the Almighty specifically refers when He says,

**“Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from Our servants” (Holy Qur’an, 35:32).**

Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq has expressed this fact once when he said, “How strange some people are! They say that they derived all their knowledge from the Messenger of Allah, so they acted upon it and were guided! And they narrate saying that we, Ahlul Bayt, did not learn any knowledge, nor were we thereby guided, while we are his family and offspring: in our homes did the revelation descend; from us was knowledge imparted to people! Have they really learned and were guided while we remained in ignorance and misguidance?!”

How can Imam al-Sadiq not wonder at those who claimed to have learned from the Messenger of Allah while they bear grudge and animosity to his Ahlul Bayt and the gates of his knowledge which lead to such knowledge?! How can he help expressing such amazement at calling themselves Ahlul Sunnah while they do the opposite of what this Sunnah contains?!

If the Shi`as, as history testifies, have chosen Ali to support and defend against his enemies, fighting with him, concluding peace whenever he concluded it, learning all what they knew from him, “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a,” contrariwise, were never his supporters, followers, or helpers.

Rather, they fought him and desired to put an end to him. Having killed him, they pursued his sons in order to kill, jail, or expel them. They oppose him in most *ahkam* (religious rulings) by following those who held views different from his, and who followed their own *ijtihad* with regard to Allah's commandments, changing them according to their wishes and to serve their own interests.

How can we nowadays help wondering about those who claim to adhere to the Prophet's Sunnah while they testify against themselves that they, indeed, abandoned the Prophet's Sunnah because it became the identification mark of the Shi`as?!<sup>3</sup> Is this not strange?!

How can we help wondering about those who claim to be “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a” (people who follow the path of the Prophet [P] and who follow the consensus) while there are many Maliki, Hanafi, Shafi`i, and Hanbali groups, each opposing the other with regard to the jurisdic injunctions, claiming that such differences are mercy to them? Is it merc to change Allah's religion to fit certain people's wishes, views, and desires...?!

Yes, they are various groups who disagreed among themselves in interpreting the commandments of Allah and His Messenger, yet they are united in endorsing the injustice that took place at the *saqeefa* of Banu Sa`ida, and in abandoning and isolating the Purified Progeny of the Prophet.

How can we help wondering about those who boast of being Ahlul Sunnah while they have abandoned the order of the Messenger of Allah to uphold the Two Weighty Things: the Book of Allah and his Progeny, despite their documentation of this particular tradition and their admission of its authenticity?!

They, indeed, upheld neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Progeny because by forsaking the Purified Progeny, they forsook the Holy Qur'an, too, since the sacred tradition indicates that the Holy Qur'an and the Progeny shall never part from one another, as the Messenger of Allah clearly stated: “And the most Benevolent and Knowing has informed me that they (the Holy Qur'an and the Progeny) shall never part till they join me at the Pool.”?![4](#)

How can we help wondering about people who claim to be the custodians of the Sunnah while their conduct, in fact, is contrary to what their own books classify as “authentic” Sunnah of the Prophet, of what he had done, ordered, or prohibited?[5](#)

But if we do believe in this tradition and in its authenticity, that is, the *hadith* saying, “I have left among you the Book of Allah and my Sunnah: so long as you uphold them (both), you shall never stray after me at all,” as some Ahlul Sunnah like to word it nowadays, our amazement will be even greater, and the scandal will be even more obvious:

It is so due to the fact that their own dignitaries and imams are the ones who burnt the Sunnah which the Messenger of Allah had left behind for them, prohibiting everyone from copying it or transporting its texts, as we have already indicated above.

The said statement by Umar ibn al-Khattab is included in all *Sahih* books of “Ahlul Sunnah,” including al-Bukhari and Muslim. [On his death bed] the Prophet said, “I have left among you the Book of Allah and my Sunnah,” whereupon Umar said to him, “The Book of Allah suffices us, and we have no need for your Sunnah.”

If Umar said so in the presence of the Prophet, Abu Bakr emphatically acted upon the view of his friend. And when he became caliph, Abu Bakr said, “Do not narrate any *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah, for whoever asks you, say to him, `Between us and you is the Book of Allah, so act upon what it permits and abstain from what it prohibits.’”[6](#)

How can we help wondering about people who abandoned the Sunnah of their Prophet and left it behind their backs, substituting it with innovations for which Allah never sent any proof, then they call themselves and their followers “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a”?!

But our amazement disappears when we come to know that Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman never heard such a label at all; Abu Bakr said once, “If you require me to implement the Sunnah of your Prophet, I cannot withstand it.”<sup>7</sup>

How is it possible that Abu Bakr could not withstand the Sunnah of the Prophet?! Was the Prophet's Sunnah something impossible so Abu Bakr could not withstand it?! And how can Ahlul Sunnah claim that they uphold it if their first imam and the founder of their sect could not withstand it?!

Allah has said in its regard the following verses:

***“You surely have in the Messenger of Allah a good example.” (Holy Qur’an, 33:21)***

***“Allah never places a burden on a soul more than what it can bear.” (Holy Qur’an, 65:7)***

***“He has not laid down upon you any hardship in religion.” (Holy Qur’an, 22:78)***

Did Abu Bakr and his friend Umar think that the Messenger of Allah invented a creed other than what Allah had revealed, so he ordered the Muslims to do what they could not, thus over-burdening them?

Far from him is such an allegation, for he used to quite often say, “Disseminate glad tidings; make things easy, and do not make them hard. Allah has granted you an ease, so do not make things hard for yourselves.” But Abu Bakr's admission that he could not tolerate the Prophet's Sunnah underlines our conclusion that he invented an innovation which he could “withstand” or “tolerate” according to his own wishes, one which agreed with the policies of the state he headed.

As for Mu`awiyah, he always opposed the Holy Qur’an and the Sunnah and challenged them. For example, while the Prophet said, “Ali is of me and I am of Ali; whoever curses Ali curses me, and whoever curses me curses Allah,”<sup>8</sup> you find Mu`awiyah going to extremes in cursing and condemning Ali.

He was not satisfied with doing all of that, so he ordered all his governors and officials to curse and condemn him, and he dismissed from office then killed all those who refused. It was this Mu`awiyah who called himself and his followers “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a” in order to distinguish themselves from those who were referred to as the Shi`as, claiming thus to be the ones on the right track.

Some historians indicate that the year in which Mu`awiyah took control of the Islamic caliphate, after having concluded a peace treaty with Imam al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Abu Talib, was called *`aam al-jama`ah*, the year of the Jama`ah.

Amazement is dispelled when we understand that the word “Sunnah” according to the thinking of Mu`awiyah and his *jama`ah*, his group, was none other than the custom of cursing Ali ibn Abu Talib from the Muslims' pulpits during Fridays and Eid days. If such “Sunnah” was an invention of Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, we plead to the most Glorified One to permit us to die following the *bid`a*, innovation, of Rafidism founded by Ali ibn Abu Talib and Ahlul Bayt!

Do not be surprised, dear reader, when you see how those who were expert in innovations and misguidance call themselves “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a” while the Imams from Ahlul Bayt are charged with innovations.

Here is the great mentor Ibn Khaldun, one of the most famous scholars of “Ahlul Sunnah wal Jama`a,” insolently says, after having counted the sects of the majority, “And Ahlul Bayt became the exception to the rule through sects which they invented and *fiqh* which is totally their own, one which they built on their sect, a sect which criticizes a number of the *sahaba*.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>. Abul-Qasim Mahmud ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Khawarizmi al-Zamakhshari was a senior mentor and instructor in exegesis, hadith, Arabic grammar, and logic. He was born on a Wednesday in the month of Rajab, 367 A.H./978 A.D. in the village of Zamakhshar in the area of Khawarizm. He died in Jurjan on the eve of Arafat, Thul Hijjah 9, 538 A.H./June 20, 1144 A.D. He was a Mu`tazilite who followed the Hanafi sect. He wrote more than a hundred excellent books some of which are still in manuscript form waiting to be published. He was characterized by his love for justice and equity and renunciation of any type of fanaticism.

Though Hanfani in his beliefs, he wrote an excellent book in which he compiled numerous statements made by Imam al-Shafi`i titled *Shafi al-Ay* (healer of mental blocks). May Allah have mercy on the soul of this great man and on the souls of all great men, Allahomma Aameen. \_\_\_ Tr.

<sup>2</sup>. This is recorded on p. 440 of *Yanabee` al-Mawaddah* by the Hanafi author al-Qandoozi. It is also recorded by al-Hamawayni [another Sunni scholar] who quotes Mujahid quoting Ibn Abbas.

<sup>3</sup>. For more details on this matter, refer to pp. 159–160 of my book *With the Truthful* where you will come to know that Ibn Taymiyya calls for abandoning the Prophet's Sunnah because it became the banner of the Shi`as. Yet they call him mujaddid al-Sunnah, the one who revived the Sunnah!

<sup>4</sup>. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 5, p. 189, and also al-Hakim, *Mustadrak*, Vol. 3, p. 148. Al-Hakim comments thus: “This is an authentic tradition which both Shaykhs [al-Bukhari and Muslim] had verified and did not exclude (from their own books). Al-Dhahabi, too, has classified it as authentic in his book *Al-Talkhees*, admitting its authenticity, relying in doing so on both Shaykhs' endorsement.”

<sup>5</sup>. In his *Sahih*, al-Bukhari states that the Prophet prohibited congregational taraweeh prayers during the month of Ramadan, saying, “Offer prayers, O people, at your own homes, for the best prayers one can offer are the ones which he offers at home with the exception of obligatory prayers.” But Ahlul Sunnah ignored the Prophet's prohibition and followed the innovation started by Umar ibn al-Khattab.

<sup>6</sup>. Al-Dhahabi, *Tadhkirat al-Huffaz*, Vol. 1, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup>. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 1, p. 4, and also on p. 126, Vol. 3, of *Kanz al-Ummal*.

<sup>8</sup>. Al-Hakim, *Mustadrak*, Vol. 3, p. 121; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 6, p. 323, Vol. 6; and al-Nasa'i, *Khasais*, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup>. This is stated on p. 494, in the part dealing with the science of *fiqh* and the injunctions upon which they are based, of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* (Introduction).

<https://www.al-islam.org/shiah-are-real-ahlul-sunnah-muhammad-al-tijani-al-samawi/prophet-appointed-imams-shias#comment-0>