

The Source of Ziyarat ‘Ashura` and its Authenticity

Ziyarat ‘Ashura` is a sacred tradition (hadith qudsi) which is authentic and veracious. Its main references are two fundamental works of authority:

1. Misbah al-Mutahajjid by Shaykh al-Tusi
2. Kamil al-Ziyarat by Ibn Qulawayh

All the traditions that narrate this ziyara are proven by scholars of hadith to be sound and veracious. In order to establish their authenticity, they have discussed all the chains of narration at length and proven the reliability of every narrator. Those interested in understanding the intricacies of the traditions may refer to works written in this regard.¹

The contemporary venerated jurisconsult, Ayatullah Sayyid al-Shubayri al-Zanjani (may Allah protect his noble spirit) was asked about the authenticity of Ziyarat ‘Ashura` and he responded saying:

بغض النظر عن التأييدات الغيبية الواردة بطرق معتبرة حول زيارة عاشوراء
والتي برأسها دليل على اعتبار هذه الزيارة الشريفة، فإنَّ السند المذكور في
مصباح المتهدج في ذيل هذه الزيارة سند صحيح.

Disregarding what has been narrated from reliable sources about its endorsement from the unseen realm (*al-ta'yidat al-ghaybiyya*), which in itself suffices as a proof of the authenticity of this sacred *Ziyarat*, the chain of narration mentioned in *Misbah al-Mutahajjid* after this *Ziyarat* is veracious.²

Other Ways of Establishing Authenticity

Apart from the aforesaid, the authenticity of this radiant *Ziyarat* can be established through other methods considered in the science of *hadith*. For example, there are many other *ziyarat* where expressions similar to those contained in *Ziyarat 'Ashura'* appear. This indirectly endorses the veracity of the *Ziyarat*.

Furthermore, much of the information contained in the *Ziyarat* has come in so many of our traditions, some of which are copiously narrated and even rank among the traditions that are successively narrated (*mutawatir*) in terms of meaning at least.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Sanad, one of the contemporary Shi'a scholars, when asked about the veracity of the different supplications and *ziyarat*, including *Ziyarat 'Ashura'*, says:

ان مضامين الزيارات والأدعية المدرجة في السؤال لا يقتصر ورود مضمونها على تلك الزيارات والأدعية فهناك العديد من الزيارات الأخرى والأدعية الأخرى بأسانيد أخرى قريبة المضمون معنىً ولفظاً لقطعات من الأولى، كما أن هذه الزيارات والأدعية قد ورد كثير من مضامينها في الروايات الواردة في المعارف، وهي في كثير من طوائفها مستفيضة بل بعضها متواتر معنوي أو إجمالي، وعلى هذا فالدغدغة في أسانيد هذه الزيارة أو تلك أو هذا الدعاء وذاك تنطوي على عدم المام بهذه الحقيقة العلمية المرتبطة بعلم الحديث والرواية

Indeed the contents of the *ziyarat* and supplications under question do not only appear in their respective places, but there are a number of other *ziyarat* and supplications with other chains of narration, that have similar contents both in word and meaning. Furthermore most of their contents have been narrated in other traditions on Divine Teachings, many of which have been copiously narrated.

Rather some of them are also successively narrated (*mutawatir*) in their meaning and gist. Therefore being worried about the chains of narration of this *Ziyarat* or that or this supplication or that, is because of disregarding this intellectual reality that pertains to the science of traditions and narrations.³

Those, therefore, who persist in doubting the authenticity of the *Ziyarat* overlook the other factors that strongly endorse the *Ziyarat*. The great Shi'a scholars have always lived with this *Ziyarat* and many of them incessantly recite it with great zeal and humility.

Some ignorant people, due to the expression of imprecation contained in the *Ziyarat* try to doubt its authenticity. Such people feel that Islam is a religion of peace and hence such words must not be

uttered. In response to them, we say that curse is not any kind of abusive expression. Its reality, as we shall come to learn in the commentary of the *Ziyarat* is to seek the remoteness of the accursed.

Such prayer for remoteness, considering its Qur`anic origin, is nothing but harmony with Allah's Volition. We shall also learn that cursing those who established the foundation of oppression and evil is also a kind of expression of one's stance against evil. If one tries to reflect carefully, one would understand that the spirit of cursing evil and its epitomes it to flee from imperfection. It is important for us therefore to tear off the veils of the periphery of the *Ziyarat* and touch the center and appreciate the universal message that it confers.

La'n and invoking curse is not merely an emotional state of anger that is evanescent. It is a translation of the reality. Therefore whether we invoke curse on them, or not they will always be distanced from the mercy of Allah (SwT), due to the seeds of mischief that they had sown in this world.

Seeking the kernel of the curses, we would come to realize that we have parables of Yazid and Mu'awiya in our time and age too. If we cursed the Yazid of a thousand years ago, it was not because of himself per se, but his ideology and actions. The Yazid of today must be repelled the same way. This is the message of curse.

May the Almighty enable us understand the spirit of the *Ziyarat*, so that we avoid discussing trivial issues that distance us from a sacred effusion that rains down perpetually and requires receptive containers. The Holy Qur`an says:

أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا

He sends down water from the sky whereat the valleys are flooded to [the extent of] their capacity... (13: 17)

All Praises Belong to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

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1. The contemporary scholar Ayatullah Ja'far Subhani has written a separate treatise on establishing the veracity of Ziyarat 'Ashura` [<http://www.Imamsadeq.org/book/sub3/rasaeel-va-maghalat-j3/>] [1]
 2. <http://www.alhodacenter.com/ashora/details.php?id=2996> [2]
 3. <http://www.rafed.net/research/05/06.html> [3]
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