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Their neglecting of the Prophet's sunna:

Al-Bukhari reports in volume 1 in "The Chapter of Neglecting of the *Salat*" from Ghaytan: "Anas b. Malik said: 'I know nothing which is [performed] now that was performed in the time of the Prophet (S.A.W.)'. It was said: 'The prayer'. He (Anas) responded: 'Have you not neglected it [amongst the things] that you have neglected?'

He said: "I heard al-Zuhri say: 'I visited Anas b. Malik in Damascus and [I found him] crying. I said to him: 'What makes you cry?' He said: 'I do not know of anything which I encountered [during the time of the Prophet] except this *salat* and this has [also] been abandoned (al-Bukhari volume 1, p. 134).'"

Al-Bukhari has also reported in volume 1 in "The Chapter of the Superiority of the *Fajr* in Congregation: "Al-A'mash told us: 'I heard Salim saying: 'I heard Umm Darda say: 'Abu Darda came to me whilst he was angry. I said to him: 'What has angered you?' He said: 'By Allah, I do not know from the *umma* of Muhammad (S.A.W.) anything else except that they prayed in congregation (al-Bukhari vol. 1, p. 159).'"

In volume 2 in "The Chapter of going to a Mosque in which there is no *Minbar*" al-Bukhari reports that Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said: "The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) used to go out on the day of *'id al-fitr* and *'id al-duha* to the mosque. The first thing that he used to do was to pray, and then he would exhort the people. The people continued this [practise] until I went out with Marwan when he was the governor of Medina on the day of *'id al-duha* or *'id al-fitr*.

He wanted to ascend the pulpit before praying. I caught hold of his clothes but he pushed me away, ascended the *minbar* and delivered the sermon before the prayer. I said to him: 'You have altered [the *sunna*], by God'. He said: 'Abu Sa'id, what you know has gone away'. I said: 'By Allah, it is better than what I do not know.' He responded: 'The people would not remain after the prayer, so I delivered it before the prayer (al-Bukhari, vol. 2, p. 4).'"

The companions during the time of Anas b. Malik and Abu Darda and during the lifetime of Marwan b. al-Hakam, and this was a period [which was] very close to the lifetime of the Prophet (S.A.W.), changed the *sunna* of the Prophet (P) and had discarded everything, even the prayer, as you have heard, and

reversed the order of the *sunna* of the chosen one (P) for their evil benefits, i.e., the Banu Umayya adopted the practise of reviling and cursing 'Ali and the *ahl al-bayt* from the pulpits after every sermon.

Most of the people at the *'id al-fitr* and *'id al-duha* had dispersed after prayer was completed, as they did not like to hear the Imam curse 'Ali b. Abi Talib and the *ahl al-bayt*, as a result, the Banu Umayyad intended to change the *sunna* of the Prophet (P), so they delivered the *khutba* before the prayer at the two *'ids*, so that the practise of cursing and abusing 'Ali could be established in the presence of the entire Muslim community, against their will.

At the head of this was Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan, for he established this practice which, for them, became one of the best ways of getting close to Allah. It reached a point where some historians reported that one of their Imams finished his sermon on a Friday and, having forgotten to curse 'Ali started to descend the *minbar* to lead the prayer.

The people from every corner started screaming at him: "You have abandoned the *sunna*! You have forgotten the *sunna*! Where is the *sunna*?"

Yes, unfortunately, this innovation which Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan initiated, remained in continuous practice for eighty years on the *minbar* of the Muslims – and even to this day its influences remain. Despite this, the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* are pleased with Mu'awiya and his followers and they do not accept any reproach or criticism of him, under the pretext of respect for the companions.

Praise be to Allah that the sincere Muslims researchers have begun to differentiate between truth and falsehood. Many of them have begun to distance themselves from the deeds of the companions which Mu'awiya, his partisans and followers, instituted. Now the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* have begun to wake up to this repulsive inconsistency. They defend all the companions to the extent that they curse one who reviles [even] one of them.

If you tell them: "This curse of yours includes Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan, for he reviled and cursed the best of all companions and certainly meant to curse the Apostle of Allah who said: 'He who has cursed 'Ali has cursed me, and he who has cursed me has cursed Allah,'" at that, they stammer and hesitate in answering.

They say things, which if they point to anything, merely indicate the stupidity of their minds and deep, blind fanaticism. Some of them, for example, respond by saying: "These are the lies fabricated by the Shi'as" and others say: "They are the companions of the Prophet of Allah; they can say what they wish to about others. As for us, we are not at their level to criticize them."

Glory and all Praise be to You, my Lord! Your words in the noble Qur'an led me to the realities which were difficult for me to comprehend and believe. Every time I used to read: ***"And We have prepared for hell many of the jinn and humankind, they have hearts through which they understand not; they have eyes with which they see not and ears with which they hear not. They are like cattle, nay,***

worse yet; they are those who are heedless" (7:179).

I used to be astonished [at this] and would ask myself: "How can this be?" Can a dumb animal be better guided than this human? Is it possible for a person to admire a stone, then worship and seek sustenance and assistance from it? However, praise be to Allah, my astonishment ceased when I dealt with people and travelled to India where I saw astonishing upon astonishing things, doctors in anatomy, well versed in knowledge of the cell structure of human and its formation, yet they worshipped the cow.

Had this sin been committed by the ignorant Hindus, one would have accepted their excuse. But you will see the cream of their intellectuals worshipping cows, stones, the sea, the sun and the moon. After [seeing] this, there remains [no alternative] but for you to submit and to understand the things to which the glorious Qur'an points to, especially those human beings who are more misguided than animals.

Abu Dharr al-Ghifari's testimony regarding some of the companions

Al-Bukhari reports in volume 2 under the heading "That from which *Zakat* is paid is not Buried Treasure" from al-Ahnaf b. Qays [who] said: "I was sitting with the notables from Quraysh, and there came a man of coarse hair, clothes and appearance who stood in front of them, greeted [them] and said: 'Inform those who hoard (wealth) that a stone will be heated in the hell fire and will be put on the nipples of their breasts until it comes out from their shoulder bones, then it will be put on their shoulder bones until it comes from their nipples, it will be moving [inside them]'".

Then he went away and sat near a pillar. I followed him and sat near him, although I did not know who he was. I said to him: 'I do not think the people liked what you said.' He replied: 'They do not understand anything. My friend said to me....' I said to him: 'And who is your friend?' He said: 'The Prophet (S.A.W.)'. He said to me: 'O Abu Dharr, do you see Uhud?' He said: 'I looked at the sun, to see how much of the day remained.

I thought that the Prophet wanted to me to go somewhere for a need. So I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'I do not wish to have gold the size of Uhud unless I would spend it all (in charity) except three dinars.' These [people] do not understand, they collect only worldly pleasures. No, by Allah, I will not ask them for worldly possessions nor seek their guidance in religion until I meet Allah the most Honourable, most Majestic (al-Bukhari, volume 2, p. 12)."

Al-Bukhari also reports in section seven in "The Chapter [entitled] 'The Fountain and the Saying of Allah, the Most High: ***Indeed I have given you al-kawthar***". On the authority of 'Ata b. Yasar, from Abu Hurayra, that the Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "While I will be standing, a group of my followers will be brought there and, after I recognise them, a man will come between me and them and will say: 'Come along'. I will ask: 'Where to?' He will say: 'To the fire, by Allah'. I will say: 'What is with them?' He will say: 'They apostatized after you and moved backward'.

Then another group will be brought and, as I will recognize them, a man will come between me and them saying: 'Come on'. I will say: 'Whereto?' He will say 'To the fire, by Allah'. I will say: 'What is their case?' He will say: 'They renegated and apostatized after you and I do not see any of them being spared except a few who are like cattle without a shepherd'".

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri: "It will be said: 'You do not know what they initiated after you'. I will say: 'Woe, woe unto those who changed [things] after me'" (Bukhari vol. 7, p. 209).

Al-Bukhari volume 5 in "The Chapter of The Battle of al-Hudaybiyya and the Saying of Allah the Almighty: ***'And verily Allah was pleased with the believers as they pledged their fealty to you under the tree'***". From 'Ala b. al-Musayyab, who narrated from his father, who said: "I met al-Bara'a b. 'Azib (R) and said to him: 'You are fortunate, you were a companion of the Prophet and paid allegiance to him under the tree'. Whereupon he said: 'My nephew, you do not know what we innovated after him'" (al-Bukhari, volume 5, p. 66).

This is a major testimony from a prominent companion who was, at least, honest with himself and with the people. His testimony is confirmation of what Allah said regarding them: ***"If he dies or is killed, will you then go back on your heels?"***

It is [also] a confirmation of the Prophet's (S.A.W.) statement: "Then it will be said to me: 'They apostatized after you and receded [from Islam]'".

Al-Bara' b. 'Azib was an eminent companion amongst the earliest notables who pledged their allegiances to the Prophet under the tree. He is bearing witness against himself and against other companions that they innovated [practices] after the death of the Prophet (P) so that the people may not take pride in them.

He made it clear that being a companion of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and giving him allegiance under the tree which was called "the pledge of pleasure" did not prevent a companion from going astray and reverting [to unbelief] after the Prophet (P).

In volume 8 al-Bukhari has reported under the heading "The Prophet's (S.A.W.) words: 'You will surely follow the practices of those who were before you'". "On the authority of 'Ata b. Yasar, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, that the Prophet (S.A.W.) said: 'You will follow the practices of those before you, literally even if they enter a lizard's burrow, you will follow them'. We said: 'O Prophet of Allah, (do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?' He said: 'And who else'" (al-Bukhari vol. 8, p. 151)?

History's testimony about the companions

For us, after the Qur'an and the *sunna*, there is another form of testimony which can be more explicit and clear for it was actually lived and felt by the people. They witnessed and interrelated with it, this evolved into history which was recorded and related, memorized and printed.

If we read the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* historical books like the works of al-Tabari, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Sa'd, Abu'l-Fida, Ibn Qutayba and others, we see the most surprising things; we realise that what the *ahl al-sunna* say regarding the upright conduct of the companions and the absence of blemish in any of them are simply views which are based on no proof, no sound reason will accept them. No one will agree with [these views] except the fanatics, [in them] light has been overcome by darkness.

They do not differentiate between the companions and Muhammad, the Prophet (S.A.W.), the infallible one, who uttered not one word from his own desire and did nothing but what was right. The Qur'an bore witness to their hypocrisy, corruption and lack of uprightness. You find them defending the companions more than they defend the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). I cite some examples of these:

When it is said to any one of them that *Sura 'Abasa* does not refer to the Apostle of God (S.A.W.) but, rather, refers to one of the prominent companions whom Allah rebuked for his pride and arrogance when he saw a poor blind man, you will not find him accepting this interpretation. He says instead:

"Muhammad was nothing but a man, he erred on several occasions and Allah rebuked him more than once. He is not infallible except in proclaiming the Qur'an". This is his view regarding the Prophet of Allah.

If, however, you tell him that 'Umar al-Khattab erred in innovating *salat al-tarawi* which the Prophet of Allah (P) forbade and instead ordered the people to pray in their houses by themselves if a prayer is of a supererogatory nature (i.e., not compulsory), you will see him defending 'Umar b. al-Khattab with defenses which cannot be discussed.

He will say: "It is a good *bida*" and he will exert all efforts to find an excuse, despite a clear text from the Prophet (P) forbidding [it]. If you say to him that 'Umar abrogated a share for those whose hearts were to be appeased as [a share] ordained by God in His glorious book, you will find him replying: "Our master 'Umar knew that Islam was strong, therefore he said to them: 'We do not need you.' He is more versed in the Qur'an than everyone else". Are you not surprised at this?

The limit was reached when I said to one of them: "Let us leave aside this "good *bida*" and those whose hearts were to be placated. What is your defense of him when he threatened to burn the house of Fatima al-Zahra and all who were [residing] in it unless they came out to pledge allegiance"?

He said to me quite candidly: "The truth was with him. Had he not done that, many of the companions would have sided with 'Ali b. Abi Talib and discord would have occurred."

Our conversations with this group of people do not help or benefit us. It is very unfortunate that most of the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* reason in this way for they do not know the truth except according to 'Umar and his actions. They have inverted the rule and know the truth by the men; they are supposed to know the men by the truth (know the truth and you will know it's people as Imam 'Ali has said).

This type of belief spread amongst them and 'Umar surpassed all the *sahaba*. They are all [seen as]

upright and it is impossible for anyone to disparage or criticize them. By this method, they built a thick wall and an impenetrable barrier for every researcher who seeks to know the truth. You will find that he does not finish one wave but several [others] oppose him; he does not overcome one danger except that several others are put in his path. It is impossible for the poor researcher to arrive at the shore of safety unless he is persevering, patient and brave.

If we return to the topic of history, we find that in the case of some companions, their secrets are exposed, their veils dropped and their true colors are shown, [things] which they had sought to hide from the people. Their helpers, followers and evil judges who sought to be close to them, [also] tried [to hide].

The first thing that grabs the attention is their stance regarding the Prophet (S.A.W.), the morning after his death, may my soul be sacrificed for him. How could they leave his corpse when they had not prepared, washed it nor shrouded or buried it? Instead, they rushed to their meeting in the hall of Banu Sa'ida, debating and arguing amongst themselves over the Caliphate, whose religiously designated owner they knew. They had pledged allegiance to him during the lifetime of the Prophet (P).

What convinces us that they used the occasion to benefit from the absence of 'Ali and the Banu Hashim, whose morals had prevented them from leaving the Prophet of Allah (P) and rushing to the Saqifa, is that these [companions] wanted to finalize the matter quickly, before they had completed their noble task, and then impose upon them a decided issue. They (the Banu Hashim) were not able to say [anything] or debate since those at the Saqifa had vowed to kill anyone who sought to nullify the matter which they had decided upon, on the pretext of combating those who opposed and [on the pretext] of averting anarchy.

The historians have recorded surprising and strange things, that had occurred in those days, by those companions who later became the Caliphs of the Prophet (P) and commanders of the believers; like their forcing people to pay allegiance by violence, threats and power; their attack on the house of Fatima and opening it, and the pressure on her stomach with the door which she was behind, causing her to miscarry her child.

And their coercing 'Ali, with his hands tied, and threats to kill him if he refused to pay allegiance. Similarly, they denied Fatima's rights of gifts, and her inheritance, and her share as a close relative of the Prophet. Up to her death, she was angry with them and she would pray against them in every prayer. She was buried at night in secrecy and no one attended her funeral.

[Another example is] their killing of companions who refused to pay the *zakat* to Abu Bakr in protest until they knew the reason of 'Ali being overlooked for the Caliphate. [This was because] they had pledged to him during the Prophet's time at Ghadir Khum.

Or like their dishonoring the women and transgressing the limits of Allah in their killing of innocent Muslims and forcing themselves upon the women without observing the stipulated waiting period (*'idda*).

[Historians have also recorded] their altering the rulings of Allah and His Prophet (P) which are clear in the book and the *sunna* and substituting, instead, judgments based on their personal reasoning that served their personal purposes.

[They have recorded events] like some of them consuming alcohol and continuing to commit fornication when they were governors of Muslims and their judges.

[Events] like the exile and banishment of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari from the city of the Prophet (P) until he died in solitude without having committed any sin. [Similarly] their beating of 'Ammar b. Yasir until he became unconscious and the beating of 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud until his limbs broke and their isolating the sincere companions from positions of power which they gave instead to the corrupt ones and hypocrites from the Banu Umayya, [who were] the enemies of Islam.

[Historians have also recorded] the insults and curses directed against the *ahl al-bayt*, whom Allah had cleansed and purified completely, and the killing of virtuous companions who followed them.

[Events] like their usurping the Caliphate by force, aggression, murder and threats; and removing anyone who opposed them by different ways like assassination, poisoning and other [means] and their seizing the city of the Prophet by the army of Yazid to do in it as they pleased in spite of the saying of the Prophet: "Indeed, my sanctuary [lies] in the city, whoever violates it will have the curse of Allah, the angels and mankind all upon him."

[Historians have also recorded events] like their stoning the house of Allah with [large] catapults and burning the holy sanctuary and their killing some companions who were in it.

[Events] like their waging war against the Commander of the Faithful and the leader of the successors and the master of the pure household at the battles of the Camel, Siffin and al-Nahrwan, due to their despicable greed for this transitory world. He was, to the Prophet of Allah, [the position that] Aaron was to Moses.

[Events] like their killing of the two masters of youths in paradise, Imam al-Hasan by poison and Imam al-Husayn by slaughter and mutilation, and their killing of the whole household of the Prophet (P) (apart from 'Ali, b. Husayn, no one was saved). They committed other acts due to which human conscience cries out. I spare my pen from writing about them. The *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* are aware of many of these [deeds] and [due to that] try their utmost to prevent the Muslims from reading history or researching the lives of the companions.

All the crimes and acts of violence that I have mentioned [quoting] from the historical books are, without doubt, the actions of the companions. It is not possible for anyone with intelligence, after reading this, to insist on the companions being faultless and to judge them [all] as being virtuous, [not allowing] criticism of any of them.

It must be stressed that we are absolutely aware of the moral probity, uprightness and piety of some of

them, of their love for Allah and His Prophet (P) and their remaining true to the covenant [given to] the Prophet (P) until they died and that they did not change in the least. Allah is pleased with them and makes them reside in the proximity of their beloved Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

They are too great, honored and exalted for any person to ruin their reputation, or to fabricate any lies about them, for the Lord of Glory and Power has Himself praised them on several occasions in His glorious book just as He has acclaimed their companionship and their sincerity to the Prophet of mercy more than once.

History has recorded nothing but the most honorable status, filled with chivalry, nobility, bravery, piety and servitude to Allah; congratulations to them, peaceful be their abode and gardens of eternity with doors opened for them, the pleasure of Allah is greatest for those who are grateful. As the book of God reminds us, the grateful ones are a small minority, so do not forget!

As for those who submitted yet no faith entered into their hearts, they accompanied the Prophet of Allah (P) either out of desire, fear or some personal motives which they kept hidden. The Qur'an rebuked and threatened them; the Prophet of Allah warned and cursed them on several occasions. History has recorded some despicable acts and stances ...they do not deserve any respect and reverence, let alone that we should be pleased with them and accord them the position of Prophets, martyrs and upright ones.

This, by my life, is the true view for those who weigh things in a just manner and do not transgress the limits imposed by Allah for His slaves, i.e., love for the believers and enmity and dissociation from the corrupt ones. Allah says in His glorious book: ***"Do you not see those who befriend a group that has Allah's anger upon it? They are not from you, nor are you from them. They swear falsely, knowingly. Allah has prepared a severe punishment for them. Evil indeed is what they used to do! They used their oaths as a cover to obstruct [men] from the path of Allah; for them is a humiliating chastisement.***

Neither their wealth nor their progeny will avail them with Allah. They are the inhabitants of the hell fire, they will dwell therein eternally. On the day when Allah will resurrect all of them, they will swear to Him as they swear to you. They will think that they have something, but they are liars. Satan has won them over and caused them to forget the remembrance of Allah. They are the party of Satan. Most certainly, the party of Satan are the losers!

Those who resist Allah and His Prophet are the most abased. Allah has written that I and my Prophet will triumph; indeed Allah is most Strong, Powerful. You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the last day loving those who resist Allah and His Prophet, even if they be their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their kinsfolk. For them, Allah has written faith in their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will grace them with gardens below which rivers flow to dwell therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him,

they are the party of Allah. Certainly, the party of Allah are the successful ones" (58: 14–22).

I must not fail to record in this respect that the Shi'as are on the truth for they do not accord love except to Muhammad and his progeny and for the companions who walked on their path and the believers who followed them in goodness until the day of judgment.

On the other hand, non-Shi'a Muslims accord love to all the companions paying no heed to those who resisted Allah and His Prophet, and they generally cite as their proof the words of Allah the Exalted: ***"O Allah, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and cause not in our hearts any rancor for those who believe. O Our Lord, you are most kind, most Merciful"*** (59: 10).

You will find them being pleased with 'Ali and Mu'awiya without being concerned with the deeds which the latter committed. The least of what can be said of them is that these are [acts of] disbelief, deviation and fighting against Allah and His Apostle. I have previously mentioned an odd [instance], there is no harm in repeating it.

One of the righteous people visited the grave of the eminent companion, Hujr b. 'Adi al-Kindi and found a man crying bitterly. Assuming him to be a Shi'a, he asked him: "Why are you crying?" He replied: "I am weeping over our master Hujr, may Allah be pleased with him."

He said: "What befell him?" He replied: "Our master Mu'awiya, may Allah be pleased with him, killed him."

He asked: "Why did he kill him?"

He replied: "Because he refused to curse our master 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him."

Whereupon the righteous man said to him: "And I weep for you, may Allah be pleased with you."

Why this persistence and obsession with the love for every companion? We find that they do not send blessings to Muhammad and his family without adding "and all the companions." The Qur'an did not order them to do this nor did the Prophet (P) demand it nor did any companion say it. The sending of blessings is only for Muhammad and his household, as revealed in the Qur'an and as was taught by the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) to them.

If I ever doubted anything, one thing I do not doubt and never will doubt, is that Allah asked the believers to love the close relatives, they are the *ahl al-bayt*. He made this obligatory for them, like a reward for the message of Muhammad. The most High said: ***"Say, I do not seek from you any reward except love for [my] kindred"*** (42:20).

The Muslims have unanimously agreed upon the need for the love for the *ahl al-bayt* (A.S.) and have differed about others. The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "Leave that which causes you doubt, for that which causes you no doubt."

The position of the Shi'as regarding love for the *ahl al-bayt* and their followers is indubitable, whereas the view of the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* for the love for all companions presents grave doubts. Otherwise, how can the Muslims accord love to the enemies and murderers of *ahl al-bayt* (A.S.) and be happy with them? Isn't there a clear contradiction?

Let us leave aside the talk of those who have gone astray and some Sufis who maintain that a person's heart does not become pure and knows no real faith until there remains not an atom's weight of hatred for all of Allah's servants be they Jews, Christians, heretics and polytheists. They have some incredibly strange sayings about that, agreeing with the Christian church evangelists who deceive men by saying that Allah is love and religion is love. One who loves His creation has no need for prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and other [rituals].

These, by my life, are idle talks, not accepted by the Qur'an, *sunna* nor reason. The noble Qur'an says: ***"You will not find a community believing in Allah and the last day, loving those who resist Allah and His Messenger". He also says: "O you who believe! Do not take Jews and Christians as friends, for they are friends of each other. Whosoever amongst you takes them as friends, they are amongst them, God does not guide the wrongdoing community"*** (5:51).

The Most High has said: ***"O you who believe! Do not take your fathers and brothers as friends if they prefer disbelief over belief. Whoever amongst you befriends them, they are the wrongdoers"*** (9:23). ***He also said: "O You who believe, do not take My enemy and your enemy as friends and protectors. You show them love when they have rejected the truth that has come to you"*** (60:1).

The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) has said: "The faith of a believer is never complete until his love is for Allah's sake and his hatred is for Allah's sake." And he also said: "Love for Allah and love for His enemy can never co-exist in the heart of a believer."

Traditions of this genre are innumerable. Reason in itself is enough proof that Allah, Glory be to Him, has made believers love faith and adorned it in their hearts. He has made them hate disbelief, corruption and disobedience. For a man may hate his son or his father or his brother for his opposition to the truth and his swaying back and forth to the path of Satan; and he may love a stranger to whom he has no connection, except the brotherhood of Islam.

For all of this, it is incumbent that our love, affection and friendship be to those whom Allah has commanded us to love, just as it is necessary that our animosity, hatred and dissociation be from those whom Allah, Glory be to Him, has ordered us to dissociate from.

As a result of this, our affection is for 'Ali and the Imams from his progeny, even though there was no preceding love for them; [this is] because the Qur'an, *sunna*, history and reason have left us no doubt regarding them.

Because of this, we dissociate ourselves from those companions who usurped his rights to the

Caliphate, even though there was no preceding hatred for them; [this is] because the Qur'an, *sunna*, history and reason have left for us grave doubts regarding them.

Since the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) instructed us: "Abandon that which causes doubt for that which does not cause doubt," a Muslim must not follow any doubtful matter nor neglect the book in which there is no doubt.

Similarly, it is incumbent on every Muslim that he frees himself from the chains and blind imitations and judge according to his reasoning, without any preceding notions nor latent jealousy; because desires and Satan are two very dangerous enemies, they adorn a person's evil deeds so he sees them as beautiful. What a wonderful poetry Imam al-Busayr said in *al-Barda*:

"Deny the soul and the devil. Obey them not
They are foul advisers so refute them".

It is incumbent on Muslims to fear God [in dealing] with His upright servants. As for those who are not pious, there is no sanctity for them. The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "There is no [sin] in slandering a corrupt person." This is so that the Muslims are made aware of his matter and so that they may not be deceived by him nor befriends him.

It is necessary today that Muslims be truthful with themselves and take a good look at their painful, sad, debased reality and do away with praising and taking pride in the greatness of their predecessors and seniors. If our predecessors were on the right path, as we think today, we would not have arrived at this conclusion which is certainly the result of the revolution that occurred in the community after the demise of its Prophet, may my soul and the souls of the entire world be ransomed for him.

"O you who believe, stand firmly for justice and bear witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents or your kin whether they be rich or poor. For Allah is better than them both. Do not follow desires lest you stray. And if you deviate or decline then verily Allah is well informed what you do" (4:135).

Views of those who know regarding some of the companions

Imam 'Ali (A.S.) said, describing those companions who are seen as among the earliest companions: "When I finally accepted the matter [of leadership], one group broke [their pledge]; the other deviated and others missed the truth as if they did not hear Allah's words when He said: ***"That is the abode of the hereafter that we have created for those who do not strive to exalt themselves in the earth nor to create mischief. The best outcome is [for] the pious ones"***. Nay, indeed, by Allah, they heard and perceived its meaning but alas! the world seemed glittering in their eyes and it's embellishments seduced them (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 90)."

And he (A.S.) also said about them: "They chose Satan as their master in their affairs, and he made

them partners. He has laid eggs and hatched them in their bosoms. He creeps and crawls in their laps, he sees through their eyes and speaks through their tongues. He has led them to sins and adorned for them what is foul, like the action of one whom Satan has made a partner in his authority and speaks falsehood through his tongue (*Nahj al-Balagha* page 96).”

He said regarding 'Amr b. al-'As, the famous companion: "How strange it is with the son of Nabigha . He has uttered falsehood and sinned with his tongue. Is not the worst of speech, lies? When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks [it]; when he seeks a favour, he nags; and when he is asked for something, he is miserly. He betrays his pledge, and he ignores kinship... (*Nahj al-Balagha*, page 200).”

The Prophet of Allah said: "The signs of a hypocrite are three: When he speaks, he lies; when he promises he breaks [it]; when he is entrusted [with something], he betrays". All these vices, and even more than these were present in 'Amr b. al-'As.

He said, in praise of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari and in criticism of 'Uthman and those with him who had banished him to Rabdha, and exiled him till he died alone: "O Abu Dharr, You were angry for Allah's sake, so place your hopes in Him for whom you were angry. The people were afraid of you for their world, and you feared them for your religion. So leave in their hands that, due to which, they were afraid of you, and flee with that, due to which, you feared them. How badly they need what you have denied them and how little you need what they have denied you.

Tomorrow you will know who has profited and you will know the envious ones. Were the skies and the earth a burden for a servant and were he to fear Allah, then Allah would remove his burden. So love nothing but the truth and hate nothing but lies. Had you accepted their world, they would have loved you, had you appropriated to yourself some part of it, they would have given you asylum (*Nahj al-Balagha*, page 299).”

Regarding al-Mughira b. al-Akhnas, who was also a prominent companion, he (A.S.) said: "O son of the accursed one! O tree which has neither root nor branch. By Allah, He will not assist whoever you help and whoever you raise will not stand straight. Go away from us. May Allah distance you from your purpose. Do what you like, and may His mercy be withheld from you if you remain alone (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 306).”

He (A.S.) said of Talha and al-Zubayr, the two famous companions who waged war against him after having sworn their oaths of allegiance to him, then they breached it: "By Allah, they did not find any evil in me, they did not do justice between me and them. They are demanding a right which they abandoned and blood which they spilled". This is a rebellious group which contains the near one (Zubayr), the scorpion's venom and doubts which cast veils. The matter is clear and falsehood has been shaken from its foundation, and its tongue has stopped uttering mischief.

You hurried to me shouting allegiance! allegiance! like she camels having delivered newly born young ones, leaping towards their young. I held back my hand but you pulled it towards yourself. I drew back

my hand but you dragged it. O Allah, these two have severed all bonds of friendship and wronged me!

They broke their oaths and instigated the people against me. My Lord, let what they plot against me fail. Unfasten what they have tied, and do not make strong what they have woven. Show them the evil of what they aimed and acted upon. Before the battle, I gave them a chance to correct their deed and treated them with respect but they belittled the blessing and refused the safety (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 306)."

In a letter to them, he said: "O two respected Shaykhs! Revert from your present position for the worst that can befall you now is shame. Later, both shame and hell fire will be combined [against you]. Peace (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 626)."

Regarding Marwan b. al-Hakam, who had been taken as captive at the battle of the Camel, then set free. He was amongst those who had given a pledge and then broke the pledge: "No need have I for his pledge for it is the palm of a Jew. If he swears with his hand, he will violate it after a short while. He will get power for so long as a dog licks its nose, he is the father of four rams who will also rule. The people will face hard days through him and his sons (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 176)."

He said of those companions who journeyed with 'A'isha to Basra in the battle of the Camel, amongst them were Talha and Zubayr: "They came out dragging the wife of the Prophet (S.A.W.) just as a maid slave is dragged for sale. They took her to Basra where they put their women in their houses but exposed the wife of the Prophet (S.A.W.) to themselves and to others in the army in which there was not a single person who had not offered me his obedience and sworn to me allegiance willingly, without being forced.

They approached my officers and treasurers of the public treasury and its other inhabitants. They killed some of them in prison and others by treachery. By Allah, even if they had killed willfully a single Muslim without any fault, it would have been lawful for me to kill the whole of this army because they were present in it but did not disagree with it nor prevented it by tongue or hand, not to say that they killed Muslims of a number equal to that with which had marched on them (*Nahj al-Balagha*, page 370)."

His words regarding 'A'isha and the companions who followed her at the battle of the Camel: "You were the soldiers of a woman and the followers of an animal. The animal snorted and you responded, and when it was killed you fled. Your character is low, your pledge is broken and your religion is hypocritical (*Nahj al-Balagha* p. 98)."

"As for so and so, she is gripped by feminine views while malice is boiling in her bosom like the furnace of a blacksmith. If she were called upon to deal with others as she is dealing with me she would not have done it. Even then she will be given the original respect, while her accounting [of her acts] is with Allah (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 334)."

As for the general Quraysh, who were certainly companions, he said about them: "As for the eviction of

us from this position, although we were the highest as far as descent was concerned and the strongest in relationship with the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), it was a selfish act towards which the hearts of the people became greedy while some people did not care for it.

The arbiter is Allah and to Him is the return on the Day of Judgment. Leave this story of devastation about which there is hue and cry. Come and look at the son of Abu Sufyan. Time has made me laugh after weeping. No wonder, by Allah, what is this affair which surpasses all wonder and which has increased wrong doing? The people have tried to extinguish the light of Allah from His lamp and to close His fountain from its sources.

They mix epidemic producing water between me and themselves. If the trying hardships are removed from us, I would take them on the course of the truth; otherwise I do not feel sorry for them. 'Do not let your soul go out vainly, sighing after them. Surely, Allah knows what they are doing (*Nahj al-Balagha*, p. 348).'"

When he buried Fatima al-Zahra, leader of the women of paradise, he addressed the Prophet thus: "Your daughter will inform you of how the *umma* joined together to oppress her. Ask her in detail and she will explain the situation. This has happened when you have recently left us and your remembrance has not disappeared (*Nahj-al Balagha*, 460)."

In a letter to Mu'awiya, 'Ali (A.S.) said:

"You are one whom the devil has taken complete possession of; he has secured his wishes in you and has taken complete control over you like the soul and blood. When were you, O Mu'awiya, the protector of the subjects and guardian of the affairs of the people, without any forward step or conspicuous distinction? We seek Allah's protection against the befalling of previous misfortunes and I warn you lest you continue getting deceived by desires and your appearance be different from your inner self.

You have called me to war. Leave the people on one side, come out to me [for fighting] and spare both parties from fighting so that it may be known which of us has a rusted heart and covered eyes. I am Abu'l-Hasan, slayer of your father, your uncle and your brother, all in single combat on the day of Badr. That same sword is still with me and I meet my adversary with the same heart. I have not altered the religion nor put up any new Prophet. I am surely heading on that very path which you had willingly forsaken and which you had embraced by force (*Nahj al-Balagha*, 526)."

As for what you say, that "We are of the progeny of 'Abd al-Manaf", so too are we. But Umayya was not like Hashim, nor Harb equal to 'Abd al-Muttalib, nor Abu Sufyan to Abu Talib nor one freed (at the conquest of Mecca) equal to a Muhajir, nor one of clean descent a match for him who has been adopted, nor the truthful one the same as one on falsehood, nor is a believer a match for a hypocrite. How bad are the successors who go on following the predecessors who have fallen in hell.

Besides that, we also have the distinction of Prophethood among us, by virtue of which we subdued the

strong and raised up the down trodden. When Allah caused the Arabs to enter his religion in overwhelming numbers, and this *umma* accepted Islam, some did so willingly while others did so forcefully. You were among those who entered Islam due to greed or fear at a time when others had preceded and the first Muhajirs had taken away all the distinction (*Nahj al-Balagha*, page 533)."

"You have called us to follow the judgment of the Qur'an but you are not the people of the Qur'an. We did not accept your proposal but we respond to the Qur'anic injunctions, Peace (*Nahj al-Balagha*, 595)."

"And say: 'Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Falsehood [is bound] to perish.'"

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