

Who Are Ahlul-Bayt? Part 2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the previous part, three authentic versions of "The Tradition of Cloak/Mantle" (Hadith al-Kisaa) reported in Sahih Muslim and Sahih al-Tirmidhi, and Mustadrak al-Hakim. In these traditions three wives of the Prophet testified that the Prophet (S) specified that the Members of his House (in his lifetime) are restricted to his daughter Fatimah (sa), her husband 'Ali (as) and their two sons: al-Hasan (as), and al-Husayn (as).

Also according to the quoted traditions, the purification sentence in Qur'an (the last sentence of Verse 33:33) was revealed for their virtue and NOT for the wives of the Prophet (S). Now, let us see what the Messenger of Allah used to do for quite some time after the revelation of the verse:

The Long-Term Custom Of The Prophet After The Revelation Of The Purification Verse

It has been widely narrated that after the revelation of the purification verse of Qur'an (Ayah al-Tat'hir), the Messenger of Allah used to recited this verse at the door of the House of Fatimah and 'Ali before every prayer when people were gathering to pray with the Messenger of Allah. He continued this practice for many months simply to show the people who his Ahlul-Bayt are. Anas Ibn Malik narrated:

The Messenger of Allah (S), from the time the revelation of "Verily Allah intends to... (the last part of Verse 33:33)" and for six (6) months thereafter, stood by the door of the House of Fatimah and said: "Time for Prayer Ahlul-Bayt; No doubt! Allah wished to remove all abomination from you and make you pure and spotless."

Sunni references:

- Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v12, p85
- Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v3, p258
- Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p158 who wrote this tradition is authentic as per the criteria of Muslim and Bukhari
- Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthoor, by al-Suyuti, v5, pp 197,199
- Tafsir Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, pp 5,6 (saying seven month)
- Tafsir Ibn Kathir, v3, p483
- Musnad, by al-Tiyalisi, v8, p274
- Usdul Ghabah, by Ibn al-Athir, v5, p146

Abu al-Hamra narrated:

"The Messenger of God continued eight (8) months in Medina, coming to the door of 'Ali at every morning prayer, putting his two hands on the two sides of the door and exclaiming: "Assalat! Assalat! (prayer! prayer!) Certainly God ward off all uncleanness from you, O Members of the House of Muhammad, and to make you pure and spotless."

Sunni references:

- Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthoor, by al-Suyuti, v5, pp 198–199
- Tafsir Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p6
- Tafsir Ibn Kathir, v3, p483
- Dhakha'ir al-Uqba, by Muhibbuddin al-Tabari, p24 on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik
- Isti'ab, by Ibn Abd al-Barr, v5, p637
- Usdul Ghabah, by Ibn al-Athir, v5, p146
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, pp 121,168
- Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, p338

Also Ibn Abbas (ra) narrated:

"We have witnessed the Messenger of God for nine (9) months coming to the door of 'Ali, son of Abu Talib, at the time of each prayer and saying: 'Assalamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullah Ahlul-Bayt (Peace

and Mercy of God be upon you, O Members of the House). Certainly God wants only to keep away all the evil from you, Members of the House, and purify you with a thorough purification.' He did this seven times a day."

Sunni reference: al-Durr al-Manthoor, by al-Hafidh al-Suyuti, v5, p198

In Majma' al-Zawa'id and exegesis of Suyuti it has been quoted from Abu Said Khudri with a variation in words that:

For forty days the Holy Prophet approached the house of Fatimah al-Zahra (sa) every morning and used to say: 'Peace be upon you O people of the House! The time for the prayers has come'. And thereafter he used to recite this verse: O people of the Prophet's House.... And then said: 'I am in a state of war with him who fights with you and am in a state of peace with him who is at peace with you'.

Sunni references:

- Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthoor, by al-Hafidh al-Suyuti, v5, p199
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, pp 121,168

He repeated this openly at the time of each prayer so as to demonstrate the meaning of this verse verbally as well as practically and he explained it to his followers on the lines of the sacred verse: "We have revealed the Qur'an to you so that you could tell the people what has been revealed to them and that perhaps they will think. (Qur'an 16:44)" This concept became well known among the people and even the companions of the Holy Prophet argued on its basis on behalf of the Holy Prophet's family:

Those Who Protested Based On The Purification Verse To Prove The Virtues Of The Holy Family

1. Imam al-Hasan Ibn 'Ali (as)

al-Hakim (in al-Mustadrak) in connection with the attainments of Imam al-Hasan, and al-Haythami (in connection with the excellence of the Holy Family) have narrated that Imam al-Hasan (as) addressed the people after the martyrdom of his father Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as) and said during his speech:

O People! Whoever knows me, knows me and whoever doesn't know me should know that I am al-Hasan Ibn 'Ali; I am the son of the Holy Prophet and of his executor (Wasi). I am the son him who invited people to Allah and warned them of the torture of His Hell-fire. I am the son of the luminous Lamp. I belong to the family upon whom Gabriel used to descend and from there ascend to heavens. I belong to the family from whom Allah has ward off all filth and made them pure.

Sunni references:

- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p172
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, p172

It has been narrated in Majma' al-Zawa'id and Tafsir Ibn Kathir that:

After his father's martyrdom when (Imam) al-Hasan attained the Caliphate, one day while he was performing his prayers, a man attacked him and thrust a sword in his thigh. He remained confined to bed for some months.

Thereafter, he recovered and delivered a sermon and said: "O People of Iraq! Fear Allah. We are your Amirs (leaders) and your guests and belong to the family about whom Almighty Allah has said: 'O People of the Prophet's House..' Imam al-Hasan dwelt on this subject so much that all those present in the Mosque began to cry."

Sunni references:

- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, p172
- Tafsir Ibn Kathir, v3, p486
- This tradition has also been quoted by al-Tabarani and others

2. Ummul Mu'minin, Umm Salama (ra)

In Mushkil al-Athar, al-Tahawi has quoted Umrah al-Hamdaniyyah as saying:

I went to Umm Salama and greeted her. She inquired: "Who are you?" I replied: "I am Umrah Hamdaniyyah." Umrah says, "I said O mother of the Faithful! Say something about the man who has been killed among us today. One group of the people like him and another group is inimical towards him," (He meant Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib). Umm Salama said, "Do you like him or are you hostile to him?" I replied, "I neither like him nor I am hostile to him." (Here the narrative is defective and thereafter it is like this:)

Umm Salama began to tell about the revelation of the verse of Tat'hir and said in this behalf: "Allah revealed the verse: O People of the Prophet's House... There was none in the room at that time, except Gabriel, the Holy Prophet, 'Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. I said: 'O Prophet of Allah! Am I too one of the people of the House?' He replied: 'Allah will reward you and recompense you.' I wished that he might have said 'Yes' and would have valued such a reply much more than anything else in the world."

Sunni reference: Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v1, p336

Ahmad in Musnad; Tabari in his exegesis and al-Tahawi in Mushkil al-Athar have quoted Shahr Ibn

Haushab, to have said:

When the news of the martyrdom of al-Husayn reached Medina I heard Umm Salama, wife of the Holy Prophet, saying: "They have killed al-Husayn. I myself observed that the Holy Prophet spread his Khaibari cloak on them and said: 'O Allah! These are the members of my family! Ward off any uncleanness from them and keep them clean and pure!'"

Sunni references:

- Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p298
- Tafsir al-Kabir, by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p6
- Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v1, p335

3. Ibn Abbas (ra)

Ahmad, al-Nisa'i, Muhibbuddin, and al-Haythami have reported (the wording being of Ahmad's Musnad):

'Amr Ibn Maimoon said: "I was with Ibn Abbas when nine persons came to him and said: 'Ibn Abbas! Either come out with us or provide us privacy.' He said: 'I shall go out with you.' In those days the eyes of Ibn Abbas were all right and he could see. They had mutual conversation and I am not aware as to what they talked about. After some time Ibn Abbas returned to us. He was then shaking off his dress saying: 'Fie be upon them! They are talking about the man who enjoys ten excellences.'

(Later in the narration Ibn Abbas details the virtues of the Imam till he says:) 'The Holy Prophet spread his cloak upon 'Ali, al-Hasan and al-Husayn and said: O People of the Prophet's House! Allah intends to keep you pure from all sorts of uncleanness and blemish and to purify you with a thorough purification.'"

Sunni references:

- Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, p331 (First edition)

In al-Khasa'is, al-Nisa'i has quoted Amir Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas as saying:

Muawiyah said to Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, "Why do you refrain from abusing Abu Turab?" Sa'd said, "I don't abuse 'Ali for three attributes of his which I heard from the Holy Prophet. If even one of them had been for me, I would have valued it much more than anything else on earth. I heard from the Holy Prophet that When he left Imam 'Ali as his representative in Medina and proceeded to fight a battle, 'Ali said: 'Are you leaving me with the women and the children in Medina?' The Holy Prophet replied: 'Don't you like that your position vis-a-vis me should be like that of Aaron (Harooun) with Moses. You enjoy the same

position in regard to me as Aaron enjoyed with Moses.’

On the fateful day of Khaibar, too, I heard the Holy Prophet as saying: ‘Tomorrow I shall give the standard (of the army) to one who loves Allah and His Prophet and Allah and His Prophet also love him’. All of us were keen to be graced and singled out in the face of this declaration and wished that the standard might be in our hands. In the meantime the Holy Prophet said: ‘Bring ‘Ali to me.’ ‘Ali came in such a condition that he had some trouble in his eyes.

The Holy Prophet applied the saliva of his mouth to (Imam) ‘Ali’s eyes and gave the standard in his hand. Moreover, when the verse of Tat’hir was revealed, the Holy Prophet called ‘Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn near himself and said: ‘O Allah! These are the People of my House.’”

Sunni references:

- al-Khasa’is, by al-Nisa’i, p4

● A fairly similar narration is given in Sahih Muslim, English version, Chapter CMXCVI (Virtues of ‘Ali), p1284, Tradition #5916

Also al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, al-Hakim, and al-Tahawi have quoted from Sa’d Ibn Abi Waqqas that:

At the time of the revelation of the verse, the Holy Prophet called ‘Ali along with his two sons and Fatimah and accommodated them under his own cloak and said: ‘O Lord! These are the members of my family’.

Sunni references:

- Tafsir al-Kabir, by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p7

- Tafsir Ibn Kathir, v3, p485

- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p147

- Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v1, p336; v2, p33

- History of al-Tabari, Arabic version, v5, p31

- Abu Sa’id al-Khudri

It narrated on that:

Abu Sa’id al-Khudri: I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: "This verse has been revealed about five individuals: Myself, ‘Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and Fatimah."

Sunni references:

- Tafsir Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p5, under the verse 33:33
- Dhakha'ir al-Uqba, Muhibbuddin al-Tabari, p24
- al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, by Ibn Hajar, Ch. 11, section 1, p221
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami
- Wathilah Ibn Asqa'

al-Tabari while commenting on the verse 33:33, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, al-Hakim who considers the tradition to be authentic according to the criteria of Muslim and al-Bukhari, also Bayhaqi, al-Tahawi, and Haythami quote Abu Ammar as having said (the wording is of al-Tabari):

I was sitting with Wathilah Ibn Asqa' when a discussion took place about 'Ali and the people abused him. When those present rose to leave he said to me: 'Keep sitting so that I may talk with you about the man whom they have been abusing. I was with the Holy Prophet when 'Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn approached him and the Holy Prophet spread his cloak on them and said: "O Allah! These are the members of my family. Ward off every uncleanness from them and keep them clean and pure."

Sunni references:

- Tafsir al-Kabir, by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p6
- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v2, p416; v3, p417
- Musnad, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v6, p107
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, p167
- Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v1, p346
- Sunan, al-Bayhaqi, v2, p152

Also Ibn al-Athir quoted Shaddad Ibn Abdullah saying:

I heard from Wathilah Ibn Asqa' that when the head of (Imam) al-Husayn was brought, one of the Syrians abused (Imam) al-Husayn and his father, Wathilah stood up and said: "I swear by Allah that ever since I heard the Holy Prophet say about them: 'O People of the Prophet's House! Allah intends to keep you pure from uncleanness and blemish and to purify you with a thorough purification,' I have always loved 'Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn (Peace be upon them)."

Sunni reference: Usdul Ghabah, by Ibn al-Athir, v2, p20

- 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn, Zain al-Abideen (as)

While commenting on the verse 33:33, al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir and al-Suyuti have stated in their exegesis:

‘Ali Ibn Husayn said to a Syrian: "Have you read this verse in Surah al-Ahzab, O people of the House! Allah intends to keep you pure from blemish and to purify you with a thorough purification (Qur'an 33:33)?"

The Syrian said: "Does this verse pertain to you?" The Imam replied: "Yes, it pertains to us."

Sunni references:

- Tafsir al-Kabir, by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, v22, p7
- Tafsir Ibn Kathir, v3, p486
- Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthoor, by al-Hafidh al-Suyuti, v5, p199

al-Kharazmi has quoted this very narration in his Maqtal in the following words:

When, after the martyrdom of (Imam) al-Husayn the grandson of the Holy Prophet, (Imam) Zain al-Abideen and other prisoners belonging to the House of the Holy Prophet were carried to Damascus and stationed in a jail located by the side of the Grand Mosque of Damascus, an old man approached them and said: "Praised be Allah who killed you and annihilated you and relieved the people from your men and provided the Commander of the Faithful (Yazid) with authority over you."

‘Ali Ibn al-Husayn said: "O old man! Have you read the Holy Qur'an?" He replied: "Yes." Then the Imam said: "Have you read the verse: Muhammad! ‘Say, I do not ask you of any reward for my preaching except the love of my kinsfolk’?" The old man said: "Yes. I have read it."

The Imam said: "Have you read the verse: ‘So give what is due to the near ones, the needy and the wayfarer.’ and the verse: ‘Know that whatever (income) you gain, one fifth belongs to Allah, the Messenger, his near ones, orphans the needy and the wayfarers, if you believe in Allah and what We revealed to Our servant in the Holy Qur'an’?" The old man replied: "Yes. I have read them."

The Imam said: "I swear by Allah that the word ‘near ones’ refers to us and these verses have been revealed about us. (The Imam added): And have you also read this verse in the Holy Qur'an wherein Allah says: ‘O people of the Prophet's House...’ (33:33)?" The old man said: "Yes. I have read it". The Imam said: "What is meant by people of the Prophet's House! It is we whom Allah has especially associated with the verse of Tat'hir (purification)."

The old man said: "I ask you by Allah! Are you of the same family?" The Imam replied: "I swear by my grandfather the Prophet of Allah that we are the same people."

The old man was stunned and expressed regret for what he had said. Then he raised his head towards the sky and said: "O Allah! I ask forgiveness for what I have said, and forsake enmity against this family

and hate the enemies of the progeny of Muhammad."

Sunni reference: Maqtal al-Husayn, by al-Khateeb al-Kharazmi

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/shiite-encyclopedia/who-are-ahlul-bayt-part-2#comment-0>