

# **Ziyaratu Ashura: An Analytical Study of the Reports of the Pilgrimage to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) on the Day of Ashura**

# Ziyaratu Ashura: An Analytical Study of the Reports on the Day of Ashura



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**Article**

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## **Dedication**

This translation is dedicated to the warm memory of my two late grandmothers, Mrs Nurbanubai Sumar (Maa), Mrs Marziyabai Khalfan (Nani maa), my late grandfather Mr Ahmadbhai Sumar, my late great aunt Mrs Sughrabai Dinani and my two late cousins Miss Taherabai Kara and Miss Fatimbai Manji. Heartfelt gratitude is due to Aly Nasser and Miqdad Versi for reading the entire draft of the translation and suggesting feedback.

Shaykh Ja'far Subhani published this essay in Arabic in the third volume of a series of four volumes. The four Volumes are titled "Letters and Essays: Researches on the subjects of Philosophy, Theology, Law, Jurisprudence and Society." The edition consulted for this translation was the first edition, obtained by the translator whilst studying in the erstwhile precincts of the mausoleum of the Lady Zainab (a.s.) in the city of Damascus in the year 2008 AD. These volumes were published by the Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) Institute in the year 2002 AD.

## **Introduction: Historical and Jurisprudential Issues Pertinent to the Ziyaratu 'Ashura'**

As a prelude to the study of the chains of transmission of Ziyaratu 'Ashura' and in order to clarify the subject, several themes surrounding it will be discussed.

## Reliability of the Traditions

Early Shi'ite scholars classified traditions into two: the reliable and the unreliable. Those traditions that were corroborated by circumstantial evidence were considered reliable and authoritative. Those that were not, were considered unreliable.

So, what is circumstantial evidence? Circumstantial evidence can be defined as any of the following:

- 1) The presence of a tradition in many of the four hundred primary works of traditions that were circulating among the early scholars and which they transmitted on the authority of their teachers in an unbroken continuous chain, which linked them to the infallible Imams (as).
- 2) The recurrence of a tradition in one or more primary works of traditions by means of multiple reliable chains. Alternatively, the existence of a tradition in a primary work attributed to a disciple of any of the Imams whose reliability and truthfulness was unanimously attested by the scholars. Examples of such disciples are Zurara bin A'yan, Muhammad bin Muslim and Fudhayl bin Yasar.
- 3) The existence of a tradition in one of the primary works that was presented to one of the Imams who commended it and praised its compiler. Examples are the book of traditions of 'Ubaydullah al-Halabi (presented to Imam al-Sadiq), or the books of Yunus bin 'Abd al-Rahman and Fadhl bin Shazan (presented to Imam al-'Askari).
- 4) The citation of a tradition from the books in circulation among the predecessors of the early scholars, provided the books were reliable, trustworthy and credible, irrespective of whether the compiler was an Imami or a non-Imami. Examples of such works from Imamis are the book on the ritual prayers of Hurayz bin 'Abdullah al-Sijistani or the books of the two sons of Said bin al-Husayn al-Ahwazi and 'Ali bin Mahzayar.

From the non-Imamis these include the book of Hafs bin Ghiyath al-Qadhi and Husayn bin 'Ubaydullah al-Sa'di as well as the book on the prayer direction (*al-Qibla*) of 'Ali bin al-Hasan al-Tatari. The early scholars therefore judged the transmitted traditions of some of the narrators as authentic and correct even when those narrators were not from the Imamiyya, such as 'Ali bin Muhammad bin Riyah. [1](#)

These are some of the examples of circumstantial evidence used to determine the authenticity of traditions. There are many other types of evidence too, but for the purposes of this discussion, the above-mentioned evidence will suffice.

With regards to the later Shi'ite scholars, they had to relinquish the two-fold classification in favour of a four-fold classification of traditions: authentic (*sahih*), dependable (*muwathaq*), good (*hasan*) and weak

(*dha'if*). The reason for the adoption of a four-fold classification was the lack of circumstantial evidence, due to the passage of time and the loss of reliable primary compilations of traditions.

Thus, the evidence rendering a tradition authentic due to the knowledge that it originated from the infallible Imams, was also lost. The four-fold classification of the traditions was now based on an analysis of the chains of transmission of the traditions and an investigation into the circumstances, conditions and positions of the narrators who featured in these chains.

Hence, for the early Shi'ite scholars, if the origin of a tradition was from the infallible Imams, it was confirmed by circumstantial evidence and was considered to be authentic. However, as a consequence of a loss of this evidence over time, the same was not the case for the later Shi'ite scholars.

## **The Probative Authority of a Tradition (hujjiyyat al-khabar)**

The ultimate question is: can a tradition be proven as reliable based on the fact that it is transmitted by a reliable narrator or can it only be authoritative if it is rendered certain that the text originated from an infallible? There are two perspectives on this.

The most correct position is the latter one; the reliability of a tradition based on the certainty that the text originated from an infallible. It is for this reason that, in the instance where the reliability and truthfulness of the narrator is not established, but circumstantial evidence proves the report to have originated from an infallible, the report assumes probative authority. As a consequence, it is adopted in law, which completes and lends credence to the practice of the intelligent people in this field.

Rational jurists (*al-Usuliyyun*) focussed on discussing the probative authority of a reliable person's reported speech in their studies in a way that suggested that the divine Legislator intended to establish this as a principle above all else. However, an investigation into the matter shows that there is no evidence in the law that this is the case. Even the evidence from Qur'anic verses in favour of the principle, is not definitive, as is apparent to anyone who refers to the works of jurisprudence.<sup>2</sup>

With regards to the transmitted traditions pertaining to this issue, all of them are concerned with the latter position. This is because the query contained in the relevant traditions is associated with concerns in favour of the second position and there is nothing in the traditions that legitimately points to the establishment of the first position. Hence for example, it is sometimes the case that a narrator would ask the Imam

“Is Yunus bin 'Abd al-Rahman reliable and *should I take from him what I need of the religious directives?*”<sup>3</sup>

Or the Imam is reported to have said,

“Al-'Umari and his son are both reliable, therefore whatever they claim to convey from me *then that is from me*”.[4](#)

The sole evidence for the probative authority of a singly transmitted report is therefore the practice of intelligent people, implemented in their daily lives. This practice transpires into a reliance on a reliable and authentic report originating from an Infallible. The reliability of the reporter of such a report must also be one of the circumstantial pieces of evidence that renders the report certain as originating from an Infallible. It is for this reason that in the instance where the reliability and truthfulness of a narrator is established and circumstantial evidence does not prove the origins of a tradition to be from an Infallible, the tradition is abandoned.

In conclusion, for the early scholars the criterion for the probative authority of a tradition lay in the testimony of internal and/or external circumstantial evidence for the provenance of a tradition's origins to be from an Infallible.

## **Widespread Practice of a Tradition Mitigates the Weakness of its Chain**

The widespread practice of the contents of a tradition compensates for the weakness of its chain. A tradition may be divided into three types in terms of its fame and renown.

1) Fame and renown due to widespread transmission: A tradition may be renowned and famous due to its wide transmission among narrators and transmitters of hadith as well as its transmission in books, irrespective of its utilisation by the jurists and scholars.

2) Fame and renown due to widespread reliance and use by jurists: A tradition may be renowned and famous due to jurists' widespread reliance on it and their use of it in issuing verdicts. An example is the Prophetic tradition “every person is responsible for what he undertakes till he discharges that responsibility,” or the Prophetic report “people have authority over their possessions”. Both these traditions, even though they are not transmitted in the Shi'ite books of traditions, have been applied in the juridical exercises of jurists.

Therefore, widespread reliance on and use of the contents of traditions by jurists indicates the existence of circumstantial evidence related to those traditions, which makes it certain that the origins of those traditions are from an Infallible.

It is known that the widespread transmission of a tradition produces benefit if the transmission is coupled with practice. However, if the hadith is merely transmitted widely without being practiced then this negates its authority and instead engenders suspicion about the tradition's authenticity.

3) Fame and renown of a juridical verdict: Sometimes, there is a famous and renowned juridical verdict regarding a particular issue, irrespective of a relevant tradition existing in its favour or the verdict being contrary to a tradition. In such a case the question is: does such renown possess probative authority or not? The matter is a lengthy and detailed one, which has been explained in my jurisprudential lectures.

However, in general, a tradition that is widely utilised in juridical deduction (indicating wide reliance on it by jurists) compensates the weakness of its chain, if a chain exists, and engenders certainty regarding its authentic provenance.

The evidence for such a stance is the 'accepted' report (*maqbulah*) of 'Umar bin Hanzala.<sup>5</sup> Here the Imam was asked about two contradictory traditions which were transmitted by two reliable persons.

Ibn Hanzala reports that he said to the Imam, "Both the narrators are veracious and acceptable to our companions such that it is not possible to prefer one over the other."

The Imam responded, "Look into what they are transmitting from us regarding the matter under consideration and *the tradition which is unanimously agreed upon among your colleagues is the tradition and judgement to be accepted as originating from us and the contrary report* (i.e., the one which is rare and unknown among your colleagues) *is to be set aside*. This is because *the matter that is unanimously agreed upon is beyond doubt* (*fa inn al-mujma' 'alayhi, la rayba fihi*). Indeed matters are of three types. A matter, whose correctness is established, has to be obeyed. A matter whose error is manifest has to be avoided and finally a matter which is doubtful and ambiguous has to be returned to Allah and His prophet."<sup>6</sup>

## **Evidence in Favour of this Perspective**

The meaning and intent of the phrase '*that which is unanimously agreed upon*,' does not mean a tradition that is *unanimously* transmitted by all but rather that the tradition is transmitted *widely* among the Shi'ite. This understanding is supported by the following statement from the Imam, "...and the rare tradition is to be set aside; that which is rare and unknown among your colleagues."

A tradition that is renowned in its transmission among the Shi'ite means that it is one that is renowned in transmission as well as practice according to its contents and its utilisation in issuing juridical verdicts. As mentioned earlier, a tradition that is simply transmitted but not practiced inspires doubt about its

authenticity.

Furthermore, the meaning of the statement '*a unanimously agreed upon tradition is beyond doubt*' is the absolute negation of doubt. The vocabulary used is similar to the Qur'anic verse (2:2) '*This Book, there is no doubt in it (dhalik al-kitabu la rayba fih...)*' where the negative phrase 'there is no doubt in it' contains the word '*rayb*', meaning 'doubt', in the indefinite form. The use of the indefinite form denotes generality (the definite form would have been '*al-rayb*'). Therefore, if a renowned and practiced tradition is one that has no doubt in it, then a rare tradition would have the opposite connotation: there would be no doubt about its invalidity from a logical perspective.

When the validity and correctness of one part of a proposition is certain and beyond doubt then the other part is obviously invalid and incorrect. Otherwise it would require the combination of certainty and doubt regarding a single matter, which is logically unacceptable. For example, if the veracity of Zayd is beyond doubt then its contrary, his dishonesty, is negated beyond doubt too.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that a renowned tradition belongs to the first part of the tripartite division mentioned by the Imam, that is, a matter whose correctness is established and is therefore required to be obeyed, while the rare tradition belongs to the second part of the tripartite division, that is, a matter whose error is manifest and therefore needs to be avoided. The rare tradition cannot be said to belong to the third part of the tripartite division, that is, a matter which is dubious and which requires its knowledge to be returned to God and His Prophet.

Therefore the meaning of the Imam's statement '*that which is unanimously agreed upon is beyond doubt*' is the tradition that is renowned and practiced among the Shi'ite and not a tradition regarding which there is mere unanimity that it originates from the infallible. This is because the narrator in the tradition above assumes that both the contradictory traditions, which two veracious and acceptable narrators report, ensue from the Imam and that is why neither one can be preferred over the other, for if the converse were true, and only one of the traditions was unanimously known to originate from the Imam then there would have been no crisis of ambiguity.

The significance of a renowned tradition having its meaning elucidated as above lies in its ability to stimulate certainty with respect to its origins (being from an Infallible). It is this that makes it the subject of the principle of the probative authority of a tradition.

Therefore, in light of the above discussion, it should be known that when the five chains of transmission of Ziyaratu 'Ashura', each of which varies in its reliability and concomitant authority, are collectively considered along with the circumstantial evidence that accompanies them, then this bequeaths certainty and conviction regarding its divine origins. As a result, the faith and devoutness professed in it has come about in light of its probative authority and the recitor will be awarded according to the rewards specified in the tradition.

The analysis of the chains of Ziyaratu 'Ashura', according to the criteria of the science of biographies, is a significant and substantial affair. However, to restrict oneself to its conclusions and to disregard the large amount of circumstantial evidence proving its authenticity and correctness would be to make a mistake. The circumstantial evidence presented in this study will perhaps bestow a level of reliability to the narrators or to the tradition itself.

## **The Book of Biographies of Al-Ghadha'iri and its Scholarly Significance**

The scholar, al-Husayn bin 'Ubaydullah al-Ghadha'iri or his son Ahmad bin al-Husayn are attributed to have had a book of biographies of the narrators of traditions compiled. The collection is entitled '*Kitab al-Du'afa*',<sup>7</sup> which, as its title makes apparent is a book that purports to contain information on hadith transmitters deemed weak and unreliable. However, the authenticity of this attribution has not been verified.

This is because this book was lost for a couple of centuries between the time of al-Ghadha'iri (d 411 AH ) and his son, till its discovery two centuries later by Seyyid Jamal al-Din Abu al-Fadha'il Ahmad bin Tawus al-Husayni al-Hilli (d 673 AH). In light of these facts, how is it possible to rely on this work?

In addition to the above, circumstantial evidence related to this book proves that it does not belong to the aforementioned individuals. Seyyid al-Khu'i has elaborated on this matter in his book *Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith* <sup>8</sup> and we have done the same in our book *Kuliyatu fi 'Ilm al-Rijal*.<sup>9</sup> Those who wish to be apprised of the details should refer to these books.

Furthermore, the early scholars of Qum have disparaged a huge number of the narrators but their disparagement was not based on the report of a veracious person from a veracious person, but rather on the basis of their theological differences with those narrators. Therefore if they noticed anything in a tradition that seemed like an exaggeration (*al-ghuluww*) in doctrinal issues, they would criticise the tradition as being exaggerated or fabricated.

Al-Muhaqqiq al-Bihbahani writes,

'It is clear that many of the early scholars and especially the scholars of Qum, of which al-Ghadha'iri was one, used to profess distinctly special beliefs regarding the Imams on the basis of their personal research and they would not tolerate any infringement of those beliefs. They used to consider any infringement of their theological stance to amount to doctrinal exaggeration (*al-ghuluww*) to the extent that they considered the negation of forgetfulness for the Imams to be akin to such exaggeration. It is

possible that they even considered any concept of the delegation of divine powers, any sort of elevation, miracles and extraordinary acts, negation of defects, and knowledge of the secrets of the heavens and the earth attributed to the Imams as doctrinal exaggeration and worthy of censure. This is especially in light of the fact that people professing deviant religious ideas and beliefs had concealed themselves among the Shi'ite, mixing with them and deceiving them.

In short, it is clear that the early scholars disagreed on theological issues such that there would be a matter considered by some of them to amount to disbelief or doctrinal exaggeration while the same matter would be considered a requirement of the faith by others, or it could be that the matter was neither this nor that. Or perhaps the source of their disparagement would be their feeling that a tradition was a fabrication by those deceitful exaggerators or that the claim of the leading scholars of the sect that a certain tradition was a fabrication of those extremists<sup>1</sup>.

Al-Muhaqqiq al-Bihbahani writes,

'It should be known that (Ahmad bin Muhammad bin 'Isa and) al-Ghadha'iri used to accuse a narrator of lies or fabrications *after* having accused him of doctrinal exaggeration as if his transmission indicated that'.<sup>10</sup>

## The Utility of a Weak Report

Previously, it was pointed out that the later Shi'ite scholars classified the traditions into a fourfold division: *sahih*—authentic, *hasan*—good, *muwathaq*—reliable and *dha'if*—weak. A *sahih* tradition is one that has been transmitted from an infallible by a continuous chain consisting of veracious Imamis. A *hasan* tradition is one that has been transmitted from an infallible by a continuous chain consisting of commendable Imamis but where there is no explicit or clear statement of their veracity.

A *muwathaq* tradition is one that has been transmitted from an infallible by a continuous chain consisting of veracious individuals, some of whom may espouse unorthodox beliefs and ideas. Given these definitions, a *dha'if* tradition is contrary to all three categories, though it may be in accord with reality and perhaps more so than the other three categories. However, due to the criteria established in the science of hadith, verification of such a tradition will not have probative authority.

Hence, in light of this explanation, if there is a tradition regarding a specific matter that is judged weak, it is not possible to abandon it simply on the basis of its weakness. This is because every tradition has an effect and a bearing on the soul of an individual with respect to its reliability. Therefore, if reasons for its reliability increase then the degree of its reliability also increases in the estimation of a person.

In light of the above, if it is assumed that the chains of Ziyaratu 'Ashura' are weak (although such an

assumption is incorrect as will be proven later), then these five chains, especially in light of the individuals who feature in them who are peerless and who cared to transmit this salutation, still inspires confidence in its truthfulness when the separate chains are considered together and in their totality. One should therefore not be hasty in rejecting this salutation on the basis of the weakness of its chain.

## Principle of Leniency in Deducing Proofs for Recommended Acts (al-tasamuh fi adillati al-sunan)

The principle of leniency in deducing proofs for recommended acts is one that is widely known among scholars. The significance of this principle is that a researcher does not insist on the fulfilment of those stringent conditions that are necessary in establishing obligatory acts and duties, when attempting to ascertain recommended acts.

For example, one of these stringent conditions is that the narrators in a chain must be absolutely reliable and trustworthy. This condition is however, not mandatory in ascertaining recommended acts. It is sufficient even if a recommended act is transmitted by means of an inferior chain in terms of the reliability and trustworthiness of the narrators who appear in it.

This principle is addressed and discussed by both Sunni and Shi'ite scholars. The Sunni scholars refer to it as 'an act based on a weak tradition, (which is nevertheless encouraged) because of the merits of virtuous acts' - *al-'amal bi al-khabar al-dha'if fi fadha'il al-'amal*. The following scholars have alluded to this principle in their respective works:

- 1) Al-Shahid al-Awwal in his work, *Al-Dhikra*.
- 2) Ibn Fahd al-Hilli (d 8541 AH) in his work, *'Uddat al-Da'i*.
- 3) Al-Shahid al-Thani (d 966 AH) in his work, *Al-Diraya*.
- 4) Baha al-Din al-'Amili (d 1030 AH) in his work, *Al-Arba'ina*.
- 5) Shaykh al-Ansari (d 1282 AH) in a special treatise devoted to discussing this principle.

Shaykh al-Kulayni transmits the following authentic report from Ibn Abi 'Umayr who in turn reports from Hisham bin Salim who heard from Abu 'Abdullah al-Sadiq (as) that:

“One, who learns of the merits and virtues of an act and as a result carries it out, will be eligible for that reward, even if later that report proves to be inauthentic”. [11](#)

Scholars have elaborated at length on this and other traditions similar to it, as well as discussing whether or not such reports accord the act a position of being meritorious and recommended. However, further discussion on this subject is not necessary here as the issue has been considered at length both in this paper and in our jurisprudential lectures. [12](#)

It should be noted that there is no aim to encourage the transmission and propagation of weak reports by means of these traditions, rather the aim is to preserve the teachings and traditions of the Prophet and the Imams so that they may not be abandoned simply because the chain is deemed weak.

Therefore, if it is assumed that the chains of this Ziyarat are weak, (an incorrect assumption), a Shi'ite Muslim will still obtain the rewards mentioned for this Ziyarat if he recites it with a heart brimming with grief and sadness due to the oppression and injustices to which Imam al-Husayn (as) was subjected.

Some pertinent points have been mentioned briefly here. A reader who gives due consideration to these points and those to follow in the study of the chains of Ziyarat 'Ashura' will come to realize that the Ziyarat is a reliable one, which has its origins with the Imams of the Ahlulbayt (as). It ensued from a pained and sorrowful heart, denouncing the politics of tyranny and oppression perpetrated by the Banu Umayya against the Ahlulbayt and that it was and continues to remain radiant throughout the centuries.

## **The Study of the Chains**

The recommendation to visit the grave of the Lord of the Martyrs, Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) (d. 61 A.H. / 680 A.D.) on the tenth day of the month of Muharram, is one on which the scholars of the Imamiyya sect have collectively agreed on throughout the centuries. This consensus is the best proof of its authenticity and its origins from the Imams of the House of the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all.

A question has been posed concerning the authenticity of the reports that recommend this pilgrimage, which are included in the books of the Imamiyya. This essay has been written in order to set aside any doubts, regarding the authenticity of the recommendation of this pilgrimage.

The reports encouraging the pilgrimage to the grave of the Lord of the Martyrs on the tenth day of the month of Muharram, have been narrated through five chains of transmissions.

The distinguished jurist and leader of the Imamiyya sect, Shaykh Tusi (d. 460 A.H. / 1067 A.D.) has recorded three reports in his book *Misbahul Mutahajjid wa Silahul Mut'abbid*. Each report has its own chain of transmission. The first report simply describes the rewards of visiting the grave, without providing the well-known text of the salutation, which is supposed to be recited at the site of the grave. However, the two other reports both state the text of the salutation.

In addition, Ibn Qawlawayhi (d. 369 A.H. / 979 A.D.) has recorded two reports of this recommendation in his book Kamil al-Ziyarat and both reports include a chain of transmission. Therefore the reports total five in number. In what follows, the five reports and their respective chains of transmissions will be presented and examined.

## **The First Chain of Transmission: The Chain of the Report about the Rewards of the Pilgrimage to the Grave of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.)**

Shaykh Tusi reports: Narrated Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', from Salih bin 'Uqba, from his father, from Abu Ja'far<sup>13</sup> (a.s.) (d. 114 A.H. / 732 A.D.) who said: "Whoever visits the grave of al-Husayn bin 'Ali (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura', in the month of Muharram and persists in weeping at his grave, then Allah the Glorified and Exalted will receive him on the Day of Judgment with the reward of two thousand major pilgrimages, two thousand minor pilgrimages and two thousand military expeditions. The reward of each major and minor pilgrimage and military expedition will be akin to having undertaken them with the Prophet of Allah and the Rightly Guided Imams."

The narrator said: "May I be ransomed for you<sup>14</sup>, but what about him who lives in far and distant lands and is unable to travel there (i.e. to the site of the grave) on that day?"

He (the Imam) said: 'If that is so, then let such a person go out into the desert or climb up to the terrace or roof-top of his house and gesture in the direction of the grave of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.); send greetings and salutations and exert himself in invoking curses on his enemies. Thereafter he should recite two units of prayer. This ritual should be done at the beginning part of the day, before the sun passes its zenith. Thereafter, he should lament and weep over al-Husayn (a.s.), and command the people of his house, who are unaware of it, to cry over al-Husayn (a.s.). He should establish mourning in his house by expressing grief and sorrow over al-Husayn (a.s.). Some of them are to console others of their feelings of distress. If they do all this, then I am their guarantor near Allah the Exalted.'

I said (i.e. the narrator, in a state of amazement): 'May I be ransomed for you, are you their guarantor in that?!'

He (the Imam) said: 'I am the guarantor for him who does that.'

I (i.e. the narrator) said: 'But how do some of us console others?'

He (the Imam) said: 'You should say: "May Allah magnify our recompense due to our distress for al-Husayn (a.s.). May He establish you and us from amongst those who seek to avenge his murder, in the company of His friend, the Imam al-Mahdi from the progeny of Muhammad."

(The Imam continues). 'Furthermore, if one is able to abstain from spending this day in fulfilling needs<sup>15</sup>, then do so, for it is a day of misfortune and calamity, in which the needs of a faithful are not fulfilled. If the need is fulfilled, it will not be blessed and he will not see any goodness in it. None of you must attempt to accumulate anything for the future in his house on that day; for he who does so will not obtain any blessings in what he has accumulated and neither will his family.

Thus if they do this, Allah will ordain for them the reward of a thousand major pilgrimages, a thousand minor pilgrimages and a thousand military expeditions, as if done with the Prophet of Allah (saw). Additionally, for such a person will be the recompense of the suffering of every Prophet, Messenger, Successor (of the Prophets), the Truthful and the Martyr who was killed, since the creation of the world till the Day of Judgement."<sup>16</sup>

Here ends the text reported by Shaykh Tusi regarding the rewards of the pilgrimage to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura'. The report does not mention a specific salutation to be recited at the gravesite; rather it merely mentions the rewards of going out into the desert or climbing up to a high rooftop and pointing towards al-Husayn's gravesite with greetings and exertion in cursing his enemies.

## [An Analysis of the Chain of This Tradition](#)

Shaykh Tusi has obtained the above tradition from the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' and the Shaykh has mentioned his chain of authorities leading to Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' 's book in his Fihrist<sup>17</sup> as follows;

Ibn Abi Jid, from Muhammad bin al-Hassan bin al-Walid, from 'Ali bin Ibrahim, from Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi'.<sup>18</sup>

Thus the Shaykh narrates the rewards of visiting al-Husayn (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura' from the following authorities:

Ibn Abi Jid – Muhammad bin al-Hassan bin al-Walid – 'Ali bin Ibrahim – Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' – Salih bin 'Uqba – 'Uqba bin Qays – from Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.).

## A study of the integrity of these narrators

1) Ibn Abi Jid: His name is Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Abi Jid, known by the epithet Abu al-Hassan. He was one of the authorities and teachers of Najashi (d. 450 A.H. / 1058 A.D.) and Shaykh Tusi; the teachers of Najashi are all trustworthy and reliable.

2) Muhammad bin al-Hassan bin al-Walid: He died in the year 343 A.H. (954 A.D.) and was among the important leaders and respected authorities of the (Imamiyya) sect, such that his integrity is beyond doubt. Shaykh Saduq learned the science of “biographical analysis” from him. This science is known as 'Ilm al-Ta'dil wa al- Tajrih.

3) 'Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qummi: He was a teacher of Shaykh Kulayni and lived until the year 307 A.H. (919 A.D.) He was one of the authorities of the (Imamiyya) sect, without equal and unrivalled in his integrity.

4) Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi': He was from the companions of Abu al-Hassan (al-Kadhim), al-Ridha' and al-Jawad (a.s). Shaykh Tusi remarks concerning his character in his Rijal as follows: “reliable, veracious and a Kufan”<sup>19</sup> (i.e. from Kufa in 'Iraq). In addition Najashi says: “He was from amongst the virtuous and trustworthy members of the (Imamiyya) sect, and abundant in doing good deeds.”<sup>20</sup>

5) Salih bin 'Uqba: He is Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an. Najashi introduces him as: Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an bin Abi Rabiha. He narrates from his father, who in turn narrates from his own father and from Zayd bin Shahham. Whilst those who narrate from him include: Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Abi al-Khattab and his son (i.e. Salih's son) Isma'il bin Salih bin 'Uqba.<sup>21</sup>

It needs to be pointed out here that the person by the name of Salih bin 'Uqba mentioned in this chain must not be confused with Salih bin 'Uqba bin Khalid al-Asadi. This is because Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' narrates from Salih bin 'Uqba bin Khalid al-Asadi through the intermediary of Muhammad bin Ayyub whilst he narrates without any intermediary from Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an. This is proved from a study of the chain of authorities of Najashi to the book of Khalid al-Asadi, where he writes, after mentioning a number of his teachers and authorities...”from Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', from Muhammad bin Ayyub, from Salih bin 'Uqba bin Khalid al-Asadi”.<sup>22</sup>

Thus it can be seen that Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' transmits from Salih bin 'Uqba bin Khalid al-Asadi via an intermediary, whereas he transmits directly from Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an as observed in the chain above which is the subject of the current scrutiny.

This is further supported by the chain recorded by Shaykh Tusi where he writes; “Salih bin 'Uqba possesses a book, about which Ibn Abi Jid informed us, from Ibn al-Walid, from al-Saffar, from

Muhammad bin al-Husayn, from Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', from him".<sup>23</sup> And the person meant here by the word "him" is Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays and not Khalid al-Asadi. Thus what Muhaqqiq al-Tustari assumed is incorrect.<sup>24</sup>

Therefore according to a general rule regarding all that Najashi mentions, Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an bin Abi Rabiha was an Imami, for had he been other than that, then Najashi would have raised an objection about his sectarian affiliations, just as if there was a concern about his integrity, then he would have mentioned it.

The scholars of the science of Rijal<sup>25</sup> such as Seyyid Bahr al-'Ulum al-Tabatabai (d 1212 A.H. / 1797 A.D.) have relied on this general rule. He mentions this general rule as the tenth benefit in his book al-Fawaid al-Rijaliyya. He held the view that all those narrators whom Shaykh Tusi and Najashi mention in their (two) books (of Rijal) are from among the Shi'ite Imamiyya, of correct sectarian affiliation and praiseworthy in a general sense. These are the attributes, which qualified them to be mentioned among the scholarly authors.

Furthermore, due to these very same attributes, attention was also paid to their significance and the significance of their books; the mentioning of the paths of transmission to them; along with citing the names of those who narrated from them; as well as those whom they narrated from. This is with the exception of those among them, who were stipulated on the contrary to be from the Zaydiyya<sup>26</sup> or Fathiyya<sup>27</sup> or the Waqifiyya<sup>28</sup> and others.

In light of this, Salih bin 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an bin Abi Rabiha was an Imami, praiseworthy in a general sense, which was the reason he was included in the books.

Secondly, from another perspective, two noble authorities from the great Shi'ite scholars narrate from him. They are: Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Abi al-Khattab (died in the year 262 A.H. / 875 A.D.) and Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', who was one of the great Shi'ite scholars.

Admittedly, Ibn al-Ghadhairi has considered him (Salih bin 'Uqba) to be weak, just as Allama Hilli (d 726 A.H. / 1325 A.D.) has mentioned in his book Al-Khulasa where he writes concerning Salih bin 'Uqba; "Extremist, liar, he is not to be paid any attention to."<sup>29</sup>

However, the disparagement of Ibn al-Ghadhairi is not to be relied upon, for he has criticized many of our scholars and trustworthy people who were unparalleled and peerless in their integrity. Ibn al-Ghadhairi had some unique beliefs and ideas about the twelve Imams and whoever disregarded these views or narrated a tradition on the topic of the Imamate which did not agree with his beliefs, tended to be described by him as an extremist and as a liar, as in this speech: "extremist, liar, he is not to be paid any attention to." This is proof that his describing somebody with falsehood, was because of his (Ibn al-

Ghadhairi's) suspicions of extremism.

Indeed, how is it possible for Salih bin 'Uqba to be described as an extremist when he was from the authorities of Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Abi al-Khattab and Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi'. The latter was mentioned in the presence of al-Ridha' (a.s.), who said (about Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi'); "I would love to see people like him amongst you." He was a person towards whose person and book, the two authorities Najashi and Tusi devoted their attention to, so it can be concluded that his trustworthiness and reliability was strong and his narrations are reliable.

6) 'Uqba bin Qays bin Sim'an: Shaykh Tusi has mentioned him in his Rijal and considered him from the companions of Imam al-Baqir (a.s.)<sup>30</sup>. His being a companion of Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) proves that he was an Imami and the Shaykh has not criticized him.

Here ends the study of the first chain of the report presented by Shaykh Tusi, regarding the rewards of visiting the grave of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura'. It can be concluded here that the chain has no defects and it is one of the *hasan* <sup>31</sup> chains, in the sense of being generally praiseworthy.

## **The Second Chain of Transmission: The Chain to The Text of the Salutation Recital, as narrated by Shaykh Tusi**

The important thing here is the study of the chain by which Shaykh Tusi narrates the text of the salutation. He writes:

Salih bin 'Uqba and Sayf bin 'Umayra narrate from 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami who reports: "I said to Abu Ja'far (al-Baqir) (a.s.); 'Teach me a salutation by which I may greet and salute him (al-Husayn) on that day (i.e. the day of 'Ashura'), if I were to visit him from near, and by gesturing towards him when from afar and when at home."

'Alqama said: "He (al-Baqir (a.s.) said to me 'O 'Alqama, if you recite two units of prayer after gesturing towards him with greetings and salutations, then say these words after glorifying<sup>32</sup> Allah.<sup>33</sup> And so if you say that, then you will have greeted and saluted him with words by which the angels greet him. And Allah will elavate you a million ranks and you will be like him who was martyred with al-Husayn (a.s.) and you will share with them in their ranks. Then you will be known as being with the martyrs who were martyred with him. Allah will ordain for you the reward of visiting every Prophet and every Messenger and (the reward) of the pilgrimage of every person who visited al-Husayn (a.s.) since he and his family were killed.'

## The Salutation

'Greetings to you, O Aba 'Abdillah.<sup>34</sup> Greetings to you, O son of the Messenger of Allah. Greetings to you, O son of the Prince of Believers and the son of the Leader of the Successors. Greetings to you, O son of Fatima, the Mistress of the Women of the Worlds...'

“Then he (al-Baqir) (a.s.) said – after specifying the salutation once and invoking of curses once – 'then prostrate and say:

“O Lord, for you is the praise, the praise of the thankful ones, (even) during adversities and tribulations. Praise be to Allah for my intense grief. O Lord, grant me the intercession of al-Husayn on the Day of Judgement, and strengthen me in truth, with you and with al-Husayn, and with al-Husayn's companions who sacrificed themselves for al-Husayn (a.s.).”

Then 'Alqama said: “Abu Ja'far (al-Baqir) (a.s.) said; 'If you are able to greet and salute him (al-Husayn) every day with this salutation from your house, then do so, and you will obtain the reward of all that (all the above-mentioned rewards).”<sup>35</sup>

This is the conclusion of the report of the salutation of 'Ashura', along with its chain and text.

## An Analysis of The Chain of This Report

The manner of the mode of expression makes apparent that Shaykh Tusi has taken this tradition from the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' regarding whose reliability there is no doubt, rather the need for verification is for those whom he narrates from.

Thus Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' narrates the text of the salutation through the following chain: Salih bin 'Uqba and Sayf bin 'Umayra, and they from 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami.

As for Salih bin 'Uqba, his biographical details have been presented above, as well as the fact that he is considered in the books of Rijal (biographies) to be an Imami and praiseworthy in a general sense. Further, other evidences prove that he was acceptable in his narrations despite the criticisms of Ibn al-Ghadhairi.

Nevertheless, if we were to assume the absence of proof of his trustworthiness, this does not affect the authenticity of the chain, for Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' narrates the text of the salutation from two persons; one of them being Salih bin 'Uqba and the other being Sayf bin 'Umayra and the second is

reliable without doubt.

Najashi says: Sayf bin 'Umayra al-Nakha'i was an Arab, a Kufan and trustworthy. He reports from Abu 'Abdillah (the sixth Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) and Abu al-Hasan (the seventh Imam al-Kadhim (a.s.)). He possessed a book and a group of our companions narrate from it.[36](#)

Shaykh Tusi has explicitly declared his trustworthiness in his Fihrist.[37](#)

Thus, so far, the narrators are all trustworthy and consequently the narration is authentic. Now there remains the need to verify the last narrator: 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami.

Shaykh Tusi regarded 'Alqama to be one of the companions of al-Baqir (a.s.) and al-Sadiq (a.s) (d. 148 A.H. / 765 A.D.).[38](#)

There is no explicit statement about his veracity in the books of biographies; however other evidences testify to his reliability, such as:

1) Al-Kashi (floruit in the first half of the fourth century hijri) reports from Bukar bin Abi Bakr al-Hadhrami, who said: "Abu Bakr (al-Hadhrami) and 'Alqama (al-Hadhrami) visited Zayd bin 'Ali (d. 122 A.H./ 739 A.D.). 'Alqama was older than my father. Zayd seated one of them on his right and the other on his left. It had reached their attention that he was saying; 'the Imam from amongst us[39](#) is not one who is politically quiescent.[40](#) So Abu Bakr, who was the more courageous of the two, said to him (Zayd), 'O Abu al-Hasan, tell me about 'Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.). Was he an Imam when he was leading a politically quiet life[41](#) or did he not become an Imam till he drew his sword?

Zayd understood the intent of his speech, and so remained silent and didn't answer. Abu Bakr repeated his question thrice and each time Zayd did not answer him.

So he (Abu Bakr) said to him (Zayd): ' If 'Ali bin Abi Talib was an Imam even when he was politically inactive then it is possible that there is an Imam after him who also leads a politically inactive life, and if 'Ali was not an Imam and leading a politically inactive life, then what is your problem here?'

(At that moment), 'Alqama insisted that Abu Bakr should restrain himself (from carrying on his speech) and so Abu Bakr kept silent."[42](#)

This tradition reveals that the two brothers possessed insight in the matter of the Imamate.

2) Furthermore, on the basis of the forthcoming analysis of the third chain below, through which Shaykh Tusi narrates the text of the salutation, it can be determined that Sayf bin 'Umayra, the trustworthy

narrator (*al-thiqa*), complained to Safwan bin Mihran, also a trustworthy narrator (*al-thiqa*), that the supplication by which he supplicated<sup>43</sup>, doesn't appear in the report of 'Alqama from al-Baqir (a.s.), whereupon Safwan excused himself and clarified that he had heard the supplication from Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) during the course of the latter's pilgrimage to his ancestor al-Husayn (a.s.).

Thus Sayf's complaint at the absence of the supplication, and the response of Safwan that he had heard it from Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.), delineates from the acceptability of these two trustworthy men, the trustworthiness of 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami, for if not, then Sayf bin 'Umayra would not have advanced 'Alqama's report as an argument, and Safwan would not have responded to him that he had heard it (the supplication) from al-Sadiq (a.s.).

On this basis, it is known that the reported supplication (to be recited after the salutation) is not from 'Alqama, even though it is famously believed to have been reported from him, rather it is reported from Safwan bin Mihran.

Therefore, the following conclusion can be deduced:

- 1) That the chain of Shaykh Tusi leading to the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' is authentic as found in (his) Fihrist.
- 2) That Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' is unanimously agreed upon to be trustworthy.
- 3) That Sayf bin 'Umayra is trustworthy, which has been explicitly declared by Najashi.
- 4) That 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami is trustworthy according to the evidences made known.

This brings to a close the second chain. Thus if we were to maintain the trustworthiness of 'Alqama, then the chain is authentic (i.e. *sahih*)<sup>44</sup> and if not, then it is good (*hasan*) according to general praiseworthiness.

### **The Third Chain of Transmission: The Chain to The Text of the Salutation**

Shaykh Tusi has an additional third chain in (his book) Misbah al-Mutahajjid for the text of this salutation.

Shaykh Tusi reports: Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi narrated from Sayf bin 'Umayra who said; "I rode out with Safwan bin Mihran al-Jammal towards al-Ghary, <sup>45</sup> and a group of our companions were with us. This was after Abu 'Abdillah (a.s.) (i.e. Imam al-Sadiq) had left. Later we set out for Medina from al-

When we had completed performing the pilgrimage rites, Safwan turned his face in the direction of the grave of Abu 'Abdillah (al-Husayn) (a.s.) and said to us: 'salute and greet al-Husayn (a.s.) from this place, from the place of the head of the grave of the Prince of the Believers[47](#), the blessings of Allah be upon him, for Abu 'Abdillah (al-Sadiq) (a.s.) pointed towards it (towards the grave of al-Husayn) from right here, and I was with him.”

He (Sayf bin 'Umayra) said: “Then Safwan recited the salutation, which 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami had narrated from Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.) for the day of 'Ashura. Thereafter he recited two units of prayer at the head of the grave of the Prince of the Believers. At the end of these two rites, he bid farewell to the Prince of the Believers and gestured towards (the grave of) al-Husayn (a.s.) in the state of salutations and greetings, making his departure while his face was turned towards his (al-Husayn's) direction and bid him farewell. At the end he recited the following supplication: 'O Allah! O Allah! O Allah! O He who responds to the call of the afflicted...” (The famous supplication, widely known as the supplication of 'Alqama).

This tradition is clear that Safwan greeted Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) by the salutation text, which 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami had narrated.

At the end of the tradition, Sayf bin 'Umayra says; “So I asked Safwan: "Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami did not narrate this supplication, by which I mean, 'O Allah! O Allah! O Allah! O He who responds to the call of the afflicted...!' Rather he narrated only the text of the salutation!"

So Safwan replied: 'I arrived with my Master, Abu 'Abdillah al-Sadiq (a.s.) at this place and he acted in a similar way to how we acted in our pilgrimage rituals and he supplicated with this supplication when bidding farewell after having recited the ritual prayers which we had recited, and he bade farewell in the same manner as we bade farewell.'

Thus the disagreement was regarding the supplication that is recited after the salutation, whereas there is no disagreement about the famous text of the salutation, which is accepted and acknowledged.

The report continues further as follows:[48](#)

“Then Safwan said to me: 'Abu 'Abdillah (al-Sadiq) (a.s.) said to me: “Commit yourself to the recitation of this salutation, and supplicate by this supplication (of 'Alqama) and visit him (i.e. Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) for I am a guarantor near Allah the Most High for anyone who visited and greeted (al-Husayn) with this salutation and supplicated by this supplication from near or from afar: that his visit will be accepted, his endeavours acknowledged and appreciated, his greetings arriving (at their intended destination)

without being veiled (or concealed) and his needs fulfilled by Allah however difficult, and He (Allah) will not disappoint him.

O Safwan! I obtained this salutation guaranteed with this guarantee from my father, and my father from his father 'Ali bin al-Husayn (a.s.). 'Ali bin al-Husayn (a.s) obtained it from his father al-Husayn, and al-Husayn from his brother al-Hasan, and al-Hasan from his father, the Prince of the Believers. The Prince of the Believers obtained it from the Prophet of Allah, and the Prophet of Allah from Gabriel and Gabriel from Allah, Great and Exalted.

The guarantee is that Allah, Great and Exalted, has taken it upon Himself that whosoever visits and greets al-Husayn (a.s.) with this salutation text, from near or from afar and supplicates with this supplication then He will accept his greetings and his supplication with regards to his problem however difficult, and will fulfil his wish.

Thereafter the visitor will not turn away from Allah disappointed, rather Allah will turn his state into a happy one; (a state) whereby his eyes will be delighted by the granting of his requests and success in heaven and emancipation from hell. Furthermore, Allah will accept the intercession of any who intercedes, except the intercession of our opponent, the opponent of the people of the House (of the Prophet). Allah has undertaken this on Himself, and called us to witness what the angels of His realm had witnessed regarding that.

Then Gabriel said: 'O Messenger of Allah, He (Allah) has sent me to you with glad tidings and joy, and glad tidings and joy for 'Ali (a.s.) and Fatima and al-Hasan and al-Husayn (a.s.) and for the Imams from his (al-Husayn's) progeny till the Day of Judgment. So may your happiness and joy continue O Muhammad, and that of 'Ali and Fatima and al-Hasan and al-Husayn and the Imams from al-Husayn's progeny and that of your adherents till the Day of Resurrection.'

Then Safwan said: 'Abu 'Abdillah (a.s.) said to me, 'If you happen to be in need and desire it's fulfilment from Allah, then greet and salute (al-Husayn) with this salutation wherever you may be, and supplicate with this supplication and beseech your need from your Lord, it will certainly be fulfilled by Allah, for Allah is not one who goes against His promise nor does He go against what He has blessed and graced His Messenger with, and all praise is due to Allah.[49](#)

## **An Analysis of The Third Chain**

Shaykh Tusi has taken this tradition from the book of Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi and has mentioned his chain of transmission to this book in his Fihrist. He says: He (i.e. Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi) has a book which we have transmitted from al-Husayn bin 'Abdallah (al-Ghadhairi), from

Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Yahya (the teacher of Shaykh Saduq), from his father (Muhammad bin Yahya al-'Attar al-Qummi), from Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Mahbub, from him (i.e. Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi).[50](#)

Shaykh Tusi's chain of transmission to the book (of Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi) is authentic and correct, and Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Yahya is one of the teachers and authorities of Shaykh Saduq. Shaykh Saduq narrates from him with appreciation and satisfaction, and the teachers do not need further verification.

It should be known that the judgment about the veracity of the chain of transmission depends on an analysis of the integrity of the narrators who occur in it, and the narrators who occur in this chain are: Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi, Sayf bin 'Umayra, and Safwan bin Mihran al-Jammal.

As for the second narrator, Sayf bin 'Umayra, Najashi has authenticated him, thus what remains is the need to analyse the first and third narrator.

As for Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi, Shaykh Tusi has considered him in his Rijal to be one of the companions of al-Kadhim (a.s.).[51](#) Further, the testimony of great authorities confirms and corroborates his veracity. These include:

- 1) 'Ali bin al-Hasan bin al-Fadhthal
- 2) Sa'd bin 'Abdillah al-Qummi
- 3) Hamid bin Ziyad: Shaykh Tusi says in his Fihrist[52](#) that: Hamid transmits many Usul[53](#) from Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi (who is) also known by the epithet of Abu 'Abdillah.
- 4) 'Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qummi
- 5) Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Mahbub
- 6) Muhammad bin Yahya al-M'adi
- 7) Mu'awiya bin Hakim.[54](#)

Najashi writes: Muhammad bin Khalid bin 'Umar al-Tayalisi al-Tamimi, Abu 'Abdillah, died when three days were yet left in the month of Jamadi al-Akhar in the year 259 A.H. (872 A.D.). He was ninety-seven years old.[55](#)

And perhaps this number of verifications substantiates his eminence in hadith and that he commanded prestige and dignity amongst the scholars of hadith.

Thus it can be concluded that he was an Imami and praiseworthy, and therefore acceptable in transmission.

As for the third narrator in the chain by whom I mean: Safwan bin Mihran, he was a Kufan and trustworthy, and known by the epithet of Abu 'Abdillah.[56](#)

## **Concluding Remarks**

Here ends the analysis of the three chains of transmissions through which Shaykh Tusi reports the recommendation for the pilgrimage to the grave of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) as well as the text of the salutation to be recited at his gravesite, and the following conclusions can be deduced:

The first of the three chains of transmissions is the chain of Shaykh Tusi to the report, which describes the consequences of visiting al-Husayn (a.s.) in terms of the rewards attainable, in a general sense. It was initially thought that to mention this report here would be a digression, however, Shaykh Tusi has narrated all three reports in one place and therefore we decided to mention it as well.

As for the second chain of transmission, Shaykh Tusi narrates it from Sayf bin 'Umayra and he is reliable and trustworthy by consensus. He in turn narrates it from 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami. Shaykh Tusi did not elucidate his reliability; rather other evidences prove his trustworthiness.

As for the third chain, Shaykh Tusi narrates it from Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi, from Sayf bin 'Umayra, from Safwan bin Mihran. The last two are reliable. As for the first, the Shaykh did not elaborate on his reliability; rather other evidences prove the acceptability of his hadith transmissions.

Next we will consider the chains of transmissions of Ibn Qawlawayhi to the text of this salutation.

## **The First Chain of Transmission of Ibn Qawlawayhi to the Text of the Salutation**

Ibn Qawlawayhi reports the salutation of the day of 'Ashura' in his book Kamil al-Ziyarat with the following chain:

Hakim bin Dawud bin Hakim and others narrated to me, from Muhammad bin Musa al-Hamadani, from Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi, from Sayf bin 'Umayra and Salih bin 'Uqba together, from 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami, from Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.) who said: "Whoever visits (the grave of) al-Husayn bin 'Ali (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura' and persists in weeping at his grave, then Allah the Glorified and Exalted will present him on the Day of Judgment, with the reward of two thousand major pilgrimages..."

And Muhammad bin Isma'il, from Salih bin 'Uqba, from Malik al-Juhani, from Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.) who said: "Whoever visits (the grave of) al-Husayn bin 'Ali (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura' in the month of Muharram and persists in weeping..."<sup>57</sup>

Ibn Qawlawayhi has concluded the first chain with the words "from 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami," and then he starts with the other chain and says "and Muhammad bin Isma'il, from Salih bin 'Uqba."

Thus his words "Muhammad bin Isma'il..." carry two possibilities:

First possibility: Ibn Qawlawayhi commenced with the first chain and took the tradition from the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', and you know that Shaykh Tusi narrates the same salutation from that book. As discussed earlier in the section on the analysis of the first chain of transmission of Shaykh Tusi, that his path of transmission to the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' is authentic and correct and thus it yields evidence of the existence of the text of the salutation in that book.

Thus both the authorities, Shaykh Tusi and Ibn Qawlawayhi, have undertaken its narration from that book, although the chain of transmission of the Shaykh to the book is known while the chain of Ibn Qawlawayhi to it is not known. However, that does not harm the authenticity of the tradition, due to the knowledge of the existence of the tradition in that book by way of the path of transmission of the Shaykh. This possibility is the most distinguished and so Ibn Qawlawayhi has two chains of transmissions for the salutation of 'Ashura'.

Second possibility: His writing "and Muhammad bin Isma'il", is a coordinating conjunction to his writing "Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi". Thus the chain of transmission of Ibn Qawlawayhi to the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' is the same chain as his chain to the book of Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi. Thus it would seem that he narrates the book of Ibn Bazi' by the same path of transmission as the one through which he narrates the book of al-Tayalisi.

Therefore, his chain to the book of Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi' would be as follows: Hakim bin Dawud, from Muhammad bin Musa al-Hamadani, from Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi'. However this possibility is far fetched.

Third Possibility: None who have the knowledge of (the science of) Rijal would voice this, which is, that his writing “and Muhammad bin Isma’il” is a coordinating conjunction to his writing ”Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami ” and therefore a part of the preceding chain. Indeed this would be far from accurate, indeed exceedingly far-fetched, for 'Alqama is from the companions of al-Baqir and al-Sadiq (a.s.), while Ibn Bazi' is from the companions of al-Ridha' and al-Jawad (a.s.), and so with a difference in the generation, how can a person from a later generation be considered contemporaneous to a person from an earlier generation?

Now that this has been clarified, a study of the narrators of the first chain will be undertaken.

## Study of the First chain of Narrators

1) Hakim bin Dawud bin Hakim: He is one of the teachers of Ibn Qawlawayhi and Ibn Qawlawayhi has authenticated his (Hakim bin Dawud bin Hakim) teachers en masse in the beginning of his book where he says; “He (Hakim bin Dawud bin Hakim) does not mention anything in his book except that which he has come across from authentic sources.”

And Ibn Qawlawayhi narrates from him in Kamil al-Ziyarat in the second chapter, hadith number eleven, and in the fifty fourth chapter, third hadith<sup>58</sup> in addition to the seventy first chapter, hadith number nine.

2) Muhammad bin Musa al-Hamadani: Najashi mentions him as follows: “Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa, Abu Ja'far al-Hamadani al-Saman.”

Muhammad bin Yahya al-'Attar al-Qummi narrates from him (i.e. from Muhammad bin Musa al-Hamadani). This is proven from the path of transmission of Najashi to Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa bin al-Hamadani's book, where Najashi says; “Ibn Shadhan informed us, from Ahmed bin Muhammad bin Yahya, from his father, from him (Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa bin al-Hamadani), from his book.

Similarly, Muhammad bin Ahmed bin Yahya bin Imran al-Ash'ari narrates from him. He was the most important of Kulayni's teachers. Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa bin al-Hamadani has been mentioned in the chains of the book Nawadir al-Hikma of al-Ash'ari, though Ibn al-Ghadhairi has undermined his integrity saying he was: “weak, narrates from weak people and it is permissible that he be ruled out as a witness.” Ibn al-Walid, the teacher of Shaykh Saduq (d. 381 AH / 991 AD) also undermines his integrity.

However, their disparagement is due to their differences regarding the stations of the Imams, for the people of Qum and at their head was Muhammad bin al-Walid, had special beliefs with regards to the members of the Prophet's house to which perhaps, the Imamiyya scholars did not agree with.

Shaykh Mufid (d. 413 AH / 1022 AD) writes in his book *Tas-hih al-I'tiqad* that: “we have heard an opinion of Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin al-Hasan bin al-Walid, regarding which we did not find any support in the exegesis, which is what is narrated from him that he said: 'the first stage of extremism (ghuluww) is the negation of forgetfulness for the Prophet and the Imams (a.s.)!’”<sup>59</sup>

Thus, if this account is true, then he was a reductionist<sup>60</sup> despite the fact that he was from the scholars of Qum and their chief. We also met a group from Qum whom we found clearly denigrating matters of religion and lowering the rank of the Imams (a.s.) from their stations alleging that they (the Imams) did not know many laws of religion until it was impressed (lit: scratched) on their hearts.

There were amongst them those who said that they (the Imams) took recourse to personal opinions and conjectures in matters of the law. They also claimed that the Imams were merely from the scholars. This implies that the Imams had no special significance above the others. This is a denigration of the stations of the Imams, about which there is no doubt!!”<sup>61</sup>

Therefore it is not improbable that Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa bin al-Hamadani's disparagement by Ibn al-Walid is due to their differences with regards to the stations of the Imams, and for that reason, when Najashi narrates the speech of Ibn al-Walid saying that he (i.e. Muhammad bin Musa bin 'Isa bin al-Hamadani's) used to forge traditions, he (Najashi) concluded with the words “and Allah knows best”.<sup>62</sup>

3) Muhammad bin Khalid al-Tayalisi: His biography has been mentioned in the course of the study of the third chain of Shaykh Tusi and evidences prove him being acceptable in his narrations.

4) Sayf bin 'Umayra: It has been mentioned that he is reliable without doubt.

5) Salih bin Uqba: His biography has been mentioned during the course of the study of the first chain of Shaykh Tusi. He was an Imami and praiseworthy in a general sense.

6) 'Alqama bin Muhammad al-Hadhrami: His biography has been presented during the course of the study of the Shaykh about him. And we said that the evidences prove that he was trustworthy.

Here ends the first chain of Ibn Qawlawayhi. What follows is the study of the second chain.

## **The Second Chain of Transmission of Ibn Qawlawayhi to the**

## Text of the Salutation

Muhammad bin Isma'il narrates from Salih bin 'Uqba, who narrates from Malik al-Juhani, who narrates from Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.) that: "Whoever visits (the grave of) al-Husayn bin 'Ali (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura', in the month of Muharram and persists in weeping at his grave..."

Now, this chain of transmission does not need an analysis except for the biography of Malik al-Juhani, for the biographies of Muhammad bin Isma'il and Salih bin 'Uqba have already been presented. As for Malik al-Juhani, Shaykh Tusi has considered him to be from the companions of al-Baqir (a.s.) and al-Sadiq (a.s.) in his Rijal, saying; "(He was) a Kufan, (and he) died in the lifetime of Abu 'Abdillah (a.s.)."[63](#)

It is possible to demonstrate his reliability with the following evidences.

First: 'Ali bin Ibrahim narrates from Muhammad bin 'Isa, from Yunus, from Yahya al-Halabi, from Malik al-Juhani who said: "Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (a.s.) said; 'O Malik! You are from our Shi'ites, yet do you not see that you are being negligent in our affair?! Indeed it is impossible to appraise the attributes of Allah, and just as it is impossible to appraise the attributes of Allah, likewise it is impossible to appraise our attributes, and just as it is impossible to appraise our attributes, likewise it is impossible to appraise the attributes of the believer.

Surely when a believer meets another believer and shakes hands with him, Allah continues to watch over them and their sins wear away from their faces just as leaves fall off from trees, till they part company, so how is it possible to appraise the attributes of one who is like that?"[64](#)

Even though this tradition ends at Malik al-Juhani himself, the interest of 'Ali bin Ibrahim al-Qummi and Muhammad bin 'Isa bin 'Abid and Yunus bin 'Abd al-Rahman in narrating it, expresses their reliance and confidence in his narrations.

Second: al-Kulayni (d. 329 AH / 940 AD) narrates from 'Isa al-Halabi, from Ibn Miskan from Malik al-Juhani who said: "Abu 'Abdillah (a.s.) said to me; 'O Malik! Aren't you all satisfied and pleased that you establish prayers, give the poor-rate, refrain (from the prohibited) and that you will enter heaven?

O Malik! Indeed it is not for any community which is led by a leader in the world, except that he (the leader) will come on the Day of Judgment cursing them and they will be cursing him, save you and he who is in the same state as you. O Malik! Surely the deceased among you, who adheres to our leadership, is like a martyr with the status of a fighter who fought with his sword in the way of Allah."[65](#)

Third: His eulogy in praise of Imam al-Baqir (a.s) highlights his perception and cognizance of the station of the Imam, and that he used to publicly declare devotion and allegiance to the Imam at a time when

declaring it was prohibited. He said:

“If mankind demands the knowledge of the Qur'an,  
Then the Quraysh are dependent on him (i.e. on al-Baqir (a.s.),  
And if it is said, 'where is the son of the daughter of the Prophet?'  
I realized that in you with long branches,  
They [i.e. the Ahlulbayt] are like stars, which shine and glitter for those who set out at night,  
(They are like) mountains that bequeath great knowledge”.[66](#)

## Concluding Remarks

This study is a quick citation of the chains of transmissions of the reports recommending the pilgrimage to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) as well as transmitting the text of the salutation of 'Ashura'. Their authenticity and acceptability has also been discussed. A consideration of the sum-total of these chains results in strengthening some of them with the others and grants knowledge or approximate certainty of the origins of these traditions from the infallibles (a.s.) in addition to two further considerations, which are:

- 1) The consensus of the (Shi'ite) community and their diligence in reciting this salutation throughout the centuries, which is one of the indications that the origins of these traditions lie with the infallibles, and
- 2) A careful study of the contents of the salutation indicates its origins to be from a heart brimming with grief and sadness, whose tears and torment cannot be appeased except through revenge, and it is in harmony with the contents of all the transmitted traditions in the supplications and salutations.

Here culminates what was intended to be explained in this essay, of the study of the chains of transmissions of the salutation to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) on the day of 'Ashura'.

Ja'far Subhani

Qum – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) Institute.

Composed on the 20th of Safar al-Mudhaffar, year 1422 A.H.

[1.](#) Al-Wafi, volume 1, pages 11–12, in the second introduction.

[2.](#) Refer to our lectures transcribed in the book 'Al-Mahsul fi 'Ilm al-Usul' and 'Irshad al-Uqul fi 'Ilm al-Usul', in the context of the discussion of the probative authority of solitary traditions.

[3.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'a, volume 18, chapter 11, hadith number 33. This chapter contains traditions on the attributes and qualities necessary for a judge.

[4.](#) Ibid, hadith number 4.

[5.](#) A similar report is ascribed to Zurara bin A'yan and is identified as marfu'. A marfu' report is defined as one whose chain

has some narrators omitted. A marfu' tradition can also be termed as mursal. A mursal tradition is defined as one which has either all or some of the intermediary narrators omitted. Shaykh Subhani points out that he has not cited the marfu' tradition of Zurara here and has instead preferred the maqbula report of Ibn Hanzala. This is because the marfu' report of Zurara is mursal and that is because 'Allama al-Hilli (d 726 AH) has reported it from Zurara (d 150 AH) (without providing the intervening chain). Shaykh Subhani writes that such a report cannot be used as evidence.

[6.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'a, volume 18, chapter 11, hadith number 1. This chapter contains traditions on the attributes and qualities necessary for a judge.

[7.](#) This title would be translated as: 'the book of weak narrators'.

[8.](#) Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith, pages 113–114 of the introduction, in the Najaf edition and pages 101–103 of the Lebanon edition.

[9.](#) Kuliyyatu fi 'Ilm al-Rijal, page 81–106.

[10.](#) Al-Fawa'id al-Rijaliyya of Wahid al-Bihbahani, pages 38–39, printed at the end of the work Rijal al-Khaqani. The same may be found on page 8 of this work printed as part of the introduction of Minhaj al-Maqal.

[11.](#) Wasa'il al-Shi'a, volume 1, chapter 18, hadith number 6. This chapter contains traditions on the acts required to be carried out in preparation for the formal rituals.

[12.](#) Irshad al-'Uqul volume 3, pages 435–444.

[13.](#) Translator's Note: This was the epithet of the fifth Twelver Shi'a Imam Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Baqir (a.s.).

[14.](#) Translator's Note: This is an expression of respect found in Arabic texts used to address noble and venerable people.

[15.](#) Translator's Note: What is meant here are a person's worldly needs, the implication being that this day needs to be reserved solely for the remembrance of Imam al-Husayn (as).

[16.](#) Misbahul Mutahajjid wa Silahul Muta'abbid, pg 713.

[17.](#) Translator's note: This is one of Shaykh Tusi's books of biographies.

[18.](#) Al-Fihrist, pg 160, in the chapter on Muhammad, no. 606, and the Shaykh mentions him also on pg 183, no 705.

[19.](#) Rijal of -Shaykh Tusi pg 364, in the chapter on the companions of al-Ridha' (a.s.), no. 6.

[20.](#) Rijal of Najashi, vol 2 pg 214, no. 894.

[21.](#) Rijal of Najashi, vol 1 pg 444, no. 530.

[22.](#) Rijal of Najashi, vol 1, pg 445, no. 532.

[23.](#) Al-Fihrist pg 110, no. 364.

[24.](#) Qamus al- Rijal, vol 5, pg 465, no. 3633.

[25.](#) Translator's note: The discipline of Rijal is the science, which studies the integrity, or otherwise of the narrators who appear in the chains of traditions.

[26.](#) Translator's note: Those who opted for the Imamate of Zayd bin 'Ali, another son of the fourth Imam Zainul 'Abideen (a.s.), rather than Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.).

[27.](#) Translator's note: Those who opted to follow the eldest son of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.), namely; 'Abdullah bin Aftah, after the sixth Imam's demise.

[28.](#) Translator's note: Those who halted at the Imamate of the seventh Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a.s.), after his death, claiming ignorance of any stipulated succession.

[29.](#) Al-Khulasa, second section, pg 23; Rijal al-Najashi, no.894.

[30.](#) Rijal al-Tusi, pg 142, in the chapter of the companions of Imam al-Baqir (a.s.), no.74.

[31.](#) Translator's note: A chain of transmitters, which is classified as hasan, is one where all the transmitters are Imami but the moral probity of each transmitter is not individually confirmed, rather it would be individually confirmed for some and deduced on a general level from indirect evidences, for others.

[32.](#) Translator's note: The actual Arabic word used here is "Takbir".

[33.](#) Translator's note: Thus the sequence of acts which is recommended is as follows; Takbir – then the recitation of the salutation whilst pointing and gesturing towards the Imam's grave – then two units of prayer.

[34.](#) Translator's note: This was the epithet of Imam al-Husayn (a.s.). It means "the father of 'Abdullah". Men in the Arab tradition tend to be given such epithets as "O father of..." with the name following being generally, that of the eldest son.

[35.](#) Misbahul Mutahajjid pg 715 – 718.

- [36.](#) Rijal al-Najashi vol 1, pg 425, no.502.
- [37.](#) Fihrist of Shaykh Tusi pg 104, no. 335.
- [38.](#) Rijal of Shaykh Tusi, pg 140, in the section of the Companions of al-Baqir (a.s.), no. 38 and in the section of the Companions of al-Sadiq (a.s.), pg 262, no.641.
- [39.](#) Translator's note: The phrase 'from amongst us' here, means 'from amongst the ahl al-bayt.'
- [40.](#) Translator's note: A literal translation of the Arabic text would be 'the Imam from amongst us is not one who lowers the curtain down over himself, rather the Imam is one who draws his sword.'
- [41.](#) Translator's note: This is obviously a reference to the approximately twenty five years of political hiatus in the life of Imam 'Ali (a.s.), beginning from soon after the death of the Prophet till his election as Caliph in the year 35 A.H.
- [42.](#) Al-Kashi, the number of the biography is 416, and 417.
- [43.](#) Translator's note: The supplication referred to here is the one customarily recited after the recital of the salutation text. This supplication is commonly known as the Du'a al-'Alqama.
- [44.](#) Translator's note: A sahih chain is one where all the narrators in the chain are Imami and the moral probity of each one of them has been individually established.
- [45.](#) Translator's note: This is the name of the place where Imam Ali (a.s.) is buried. Another, more well-known name for this place is al-Najaf-al-Ashraf.
- [46.](#) Translator's note: From the context of this report, as will become clear a little later on, it seems that Sayf bin 'Umayra, along with Safwan al-Jammal and their companions rode out to the grave site of 'Ali bin Abi Talib in order to pay homage to him at his grave. They then later paid homage to Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) from the same spot, i.e. from near the grave of 'Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.).
- [47.](#) Translator's note: "Prince of the Believers" is the famous title of 'Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.).
- [48.](#) Translator's note: The paragraphs that follow describing the exhortation of al-Sadiq (a.s.) to Safwan to adhere to the recitation of this salutation and the accompanying supplication and the description of Allah's guarantee are not part of the original article. The translator has appended it here for the sake of completion and wholesomeness. He has also sourced this passage from an edition of Misbahul Muthahajjid different to that of the author's.
- [49.](#) Misbahul Muthahajjid, pg 542 – 543 (Different edition: Published by Alami Library, Beirut Lebanon, P.O.Box 7120, 1998).
- [50.](#) Fihrist of Shaykh Tusi, pg 176, no: 648.
- [51.](#) Rijal of Shaykh Tusi, pg 343, from amongst the companions of al-Kadhim (a.s.), no: 26. Observe also the chapter titled: "He who did not narrate from the Imams," no: 11.
- [52.](#) Fihrist of Shaykh Tusi, pg 176, no: 648.
- [53.](#) Translator's Note: The "Usuls" formed the primary texts of Shia hadith literature. They tended to be little notebooks or manuscripts compiled by the companions and disciples of the Imams, during their times. The companions would jot down the narrated traditions of the Imams as well as their teachings on various aspects of the faith. And if there was an intermediary between the compiler and the Imam, such an intermediary tended to be just one or two persons. This literature belonged to the time before the period of the larger compilations, which have come down to us today. Most of these primary compilations are no longer extant. Refer to the following article for further information on this literature: 'Al-Usul al-Arba'u Mi'a' by E.Kohlberg, published in Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam (JSAI), 10, 1987.
- [54.](#) Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith, vol 18, pg 76.
- [55.](#) Rijal al-Najashi, vol 2, pg 229, no: 911.
- [56.](#) Rijal al-Najashi vol 1, pg 440, no: 523.
- [57.](#) Kamil al-Ziyarat, pg 173, Chapter 71.
- [58.](#) Qamus al-Rijal, Vol 3, number, 2385.
- [59.](#) Translator's note: The reader will find it interesting to note that some of the people of Qum in the fifth century hijri / 10th century A.D considered anyone believing that the Prophet and the Imams could not forget as a Ghaliy, i.e. a person who wrongfully exaggerates the position and stations of the prophet and the Imams beyond their proper bounds! This is contrary to our contemporary times where the belief that the Prophet and the Imams could not possibly forget has become an established principle of the Shi'ite faith and maintaining the contrary would be considered heresy.
- [60.](#) Translator's Note: A reductionist here is a person who "falls short, lessens or curtails" the unique stations and merits of

the Prophet and the Imams.

[61.](#) Tas-hih al-l'tiqad, pg 66.

[62.](#) Rijal al-Najashi, vol 2, pg 227, number 905.

[63.](#) Rijal of Shaykh Tusi, pg 145, in the section of the Companions of al-Baqir (a.s.), number 11, and in the section of the Companions of al-Sadiq (a.s.), pg 302, number 458.

[64.](#) Al-Kafi, vol 2, pg 180, hadith number, 6.

[65.](#) Al-Rawdha, pg 146, number 122.

[66.](#) Al-Irshad, pg 262.

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