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Before The Pledge Of Allegiance

Now, we are discussing a matter. We do not know exactly to what extent the matter was affected by the previous conditions. Still it is enough for us to present some of the social conditions which the Muslims knew for the first time after the death of the Prophet. That is because the Prophet had a strong effect on the selves, a strong power in forming society, and a powerful hand in building the elements of the activity of beliefs.

We are recalling the memories to draw a transient picture here. Thus it is enough for us to take an appropriate thing from every event or to take the suitable events for our subject and leave the others. That is because we want, in the light of this method, to know whether our subject (i.e., the Peace Treaty of al-Hasan) was affected by the previous circumstances or not.

The greatest event in the history of Islam was the death of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. Thus that heavenly radiation gave this world all good ceased. Suddenly, the world became dark and people began to prepare themselves to commit evil deeds. When the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, died, the earth separated from the sky.

For the Prophet was the only means between them. Is the earth in no need of the sky? Of course not.

For the sustenance of the earth, its good, its life, its activity, its light, and its religion are all from the sky. This event (the death of the Prophet) would have caused intense loneliness in this world and a heavy loss for Muslims if he (the Prophet) had totally ended his relation with the world and Muslims.

However, the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, was aware that the believers would be tested after him through facing great misfortunes. The Prophet was kind to the believers. Thus he told them that only one rope would continue the relation between them and the sky. So is there a rope worthier of clinging than the rope of the sky in the time when inspiration has ceased?

For this reason, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: "I have left among you that which if you cling to, you shall not go astray after me: the book of Allah, (which) is the extended rope from the sky to the earth, and my family, the members of my house. They (Allah's Book and the Prophet's family)

shall not abandon each other till they come to me at the Hawd (the river in Paradise). So think, how will you treat them after me?" 1

Accordingly, we have the right to base the research that is between our hands, on these events to conclude the attitude of the community towards the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or the attitude of those groups who claimed that they had the right to represent the community.

That is because we want to know how that community and those groups treated the family of the Prophet after him. In the meantime we want to conclude the appropriate events for our subject. So if the word al-`itra means `asbira or the kin of the man, then 'Ali was the most prominent man of them all after Allah's Apostle. If the mentioned word means dhurriya (progeny), then al-Hasan was the eldest one in the family of the Prophet after him. For, in Arabic, the word al-`itra is used for both `ashira (kin) and dhurriya (progeny).

However, after the death of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, the Muslim community disagreed on the matter of the succession. That is because some Muslims depended on their viewpoints. Some of them cleaved to the clear traditions of their Prophet, who said many traditions concerning nominating the successor after him. However, this is not the place to mention all these traditions. Meanwhile we do not intend to discuss with those who depended on their personal interpretations, nor do we intend to discuss with those who worshipped Allah according to the clear traditions of their Prophet. For everything on which we agree and disagree with them all or with a party of them ended as it was at its time. The research, which we are doing, now has nothing to change the adopted ideas.

We do not look for excuses for those who depended on their viewpoints. In spite of their disagreement on the traditions of their Prophet, we say: The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, regarded the Qur'an and his family as his deputies after him as in the foregoing traditions and similar ones. However, those who depended on their viewpoints treated the Prophet's deputies (the Qur'an and the Prophet's family) according to their political ideas that mean that they accepted the traditions of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. In other words they thought that the interest should be taken into consideration. Also they thought that obeying the orders of the Prophet was in charge of the experienced old men. If they confirmed what the Prophet wanted, then it was okay. If they did not confirm what the Prophet wanted, they put into effect whatever they wanted.

In this manner the succession was taken from the Prophet's family. In this manner, it was possible or advisable for a great number of those who believed in Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, to give Mu'awiya the right to compete with the others for the succession of Islam and to produce old-age 2 as evidence for it. In the meantime the old men such `Amr b. al-`As, al-Mughira b. Shu'ba, Abu Hurayra al-Dousi, and the like confirmed his claim. This claim of Mu'awiya, that included disdain at the sacredness of Islam, was not for the first time. Rather it had historical backgrounds. 3

It is obvious that these historical back grounds led to an unexpected trend in Medina when the people held a meeting in the Shelter (saqifa) of banu (the sons of) Sa'ida to find a new rope other than that of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in the foregoing tradition. In this connection, Polis Salama said:

Events occurred one by one under the Shelter (*Saqifa*)

They provoked hidden things and inclinations

Tendencies divided like the branches of

The tender boxthron. 4

The owner of the right (Imam 'Ali) in the succession adopted an honorable attitude towards his brothers who depended on their viewpoints. His attitude in itself underlined that he wanted to protect Islam from collapse. Also such an attitude underlined that he was the only means or rope between the people and the sky. He (Imam 'Ali) failed for a very short time to pledge allegiance (to Abu Bakr). That is because his Islamic mind showed him his usurped right. Then he was forced to pledge allegiance.5

So some of his companions asked him: "How did your people deprive you of this position (Caliphate) while you are worthier of it than them?" He (Imam 'Ali) said: "It was a selfish act on which the hearts of people has become greedy while some people did not care for it. The Arbiter is Allah and to Him is the return on the Day of Judgment. Now leave this story of devastation about which there is hue and cry."

These words show you that Imam 'Ali was internally angry but was externally submissive.6

The enemies of Imam 'Ali have become blind to his light (outstanding merits). In other words the covering of enmity is on their eyes. So they have ignored him. However, they have not ignored his early Islam, his jihad (struggle), his close relation to the Prophet, his affinity with him, his brotherhood to him, his knowledge, and his worship.
Moreover, they have not ignored the traditions of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, concerning him. They understood these qualities of his then more than we understand them at the present time. However, the enemies of Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, showed enmity towards him because of his many outstanding merits, his intense justice, and his sword with which he killed many of them in the fields of the holy battles.

Also 'Ali's enemies showed enmity towards him because he was in the fourth decade of his life. No wonder, for they thought that the caliph after the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, should be in the seventh decade of age to be fully experienced.

'Ali's enemies have forgotten that the Imamate in Islam is religion like Prophethood itself. What is permitted in Prophethood is permitted in the Imamate. Also what is not permitted in the Imamate what is not permitted in Prophethood though great. So what is the relationship between ijtihad (the ability to

conclude religious verdicts) and an age when there is a textual nomination? What is the importance of political interests towards Allah's Words and the traditions of his Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family? 'Ali's age when the Prophet died was equal to that of `Isa b. Maryam (Jesus, Mary's son) when Allah, the Great and Almighty, raised him (Jesus) to the sky. It was possible for `Isa to be a prophet in the earth at such an age. So why was it impossible for 'Ali to be a caliph at the age of thirty-three? Worth mentioning Allah will choose such an age for the people of Paradise on the Day of Judgment. If this age was not the best years of the human being, Allah would not choose it for his servants in the gardens.

'Ali's enemies harbored malice against him because of his close relation to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. So they hated to see that the Imamate and Prophethood come together in one house. We do not know why the outstanding merit, according to this logic, has caused this malice. We do not know why 'Ali's close relation to the Prophet made his enemies prevent him from taking the reins of the Caliphate.

They (`Ali's enemies) thought that they did good things for Islam and Muslims when they separated the Imamate from the family of Prophethood, and when they helped other families to usurp the high religious position.

Moreover, they forgot the precautionary steps of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, when he limited the succession to his family.

The traditions of the Prophet have drawn the attention of the wise men to the mistakes of the people. Besides they have drawn their attention to the correctness of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family.

So the operation of separation between the Caliphate and the family of the Prophet has moved historical differences among the lovers of the Caliphate throughout various generations. Also it has caused ugly disasters for Muslims and distorted the ideal beliefs of Islam. All these differences and disasters would have not happened if the Caliphate had been given to its real owners. In other words if the people had obeyed Allah and His Apostle as in this verse*:*

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا

"And it behooves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Apostle have decided a matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Apostle, he surely strays off a manifest straying." (Qur'an: 33:36)

All these differences and disasters have taken place among Muslims because the ambitious ones have been permitted to compete with the righteous for the Caliphate.

For example, bloody battles took place between banu (the sons) of Hashim and banu (the sons of) Umayya, between banu al-Zubayr and banu Umayya, between banu al-`Abbas and banu Umayya, and between banu 'Ali and banu al-`Abbas. All these bloody battles took place because of that separation between the family of the Prophet and the Caliphate. Noteworthy the Prophet underlined the succession after him through his traditions to prevent those bloody battles and regretful events from happening in Islam.

The members of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) suffered from various misfortunes. They were liable to assassinations, capturing, and homelessness. They suffered from all these misfortunes. That was because of the first mistake which was made to disobey the policy which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, adopted to protect his community and his family. Unfortunately, the people disobeyed him in what he wanted.

However, they misunderstood the meaning of this wise policy. For they hated to see that the Caliphate and Prophethood come together in one family. Meanwhile they wanted to follow another policy.

The age was their apparent justification, which they explained for the people. No one but Allah knows the hidden reasons. Their spiteful memories resulted from the battles between them and the early Muslims or from envy that "eats religion as fire eats wood," as in the holy tradition.

The love of leadership and the desire for authority have been dangerous diseases from which people suffer. Also they are deep-rooted diseases in the nature of powerful leaders.

However, Prophethood and the Imamate, as two Divine offices, are different from the familiar meaning in the political fields. In other words Prophetic policy results from religion and belongs to it. So the only source in political affairs is the Owner of religion (the Prophet), and his words are decisive in them.

If you want to know the close relationship between this event and our subject, you have to read the following words of al-Husayn b. `Ali, peace be on him. For you will know that al-Hasan expressed his dissatisfaction in the following letter of his when the people pledged allegiance to Mu`awiya in Kufa. Al-Hasan, peace be on him, said: "When he (Allah's Apostle), may Allah bless him and his family,, passed away, the Arabs differed over the succession after him. So the Quraysh said: `We are his tribe, his family, and his friends. You have the right to dispute with us over the succession after Muhammad.'

So the Arabs believed the words of Quraysh and their proof for that (succession) against him who disputed with them over the succession after Muhammad. So you bestowed upon them and yielded to them. Then we argued[7] with the Quraysh as the Arabs did. However, the Quraysh did not treat us with justice as the Arabs treated them.

They (Quraysh), with the exclusion of the Arabs, took this matter through (asking) equity and protest. We, the members of the House of Muhammad and his friend, disputed with the Quraysh. We asked them to treat us with justice. However, they turned away from us' seized (power), and gathered together

to oppress and force us. So we suffered from their persecutions toward us. So the promise is Allah. He is the Lord and Helper.

"We became surprised at those who took unjustly our right and the succession of our family. If they (the Quraysh) had an outstanding right and priority in Islam, we would refrain from disputing with them. We do not want the hypocrites and the allies (ahzab) to find a gap in the religion to corrupt it.

"So today, Mu'awiya, the person is surprised when you have unjustly taken the authority while you are in appropriate for it. You have no known merit in religion, nor have you a laudable act in Islam. You are the son of an ally (hizb) of the allies (ahzab). You are the son of the most hostile one of all the Quraysh towards the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, and His Book. Allah alone is sufficient for you. You shall be returned to Him, and you shall know to whom the final result shall be."[8]

Al-Hasan, peace be on him, expressed his astonishment to show the relationship between Mu'awiya's usurping the right of the members of the House (Ahl al-Bayt and that of the early ones from Quraysh. The relationship between the matter of al-Husayn and that of the early Caliphs resulted from this event. In the meantime matters other than al-Husayn's matter appeared. Some of these matters related to the two brothers; some of them related to the parents; and some of them related to the general right.

We will not mention any of these matters here. For we do not want to discuss research conducted within these lines, but the matters that have a relation to our subject.

We have known that there was a skillful, political activity after the death of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. The activity enabled Abu Bakr to win the attitude (i.e., the Caliphate). `Umar called that activity Alta (i.e., unexpected event). Mu'awiya called it: "Usurping the right and disagreement on authority."[9] So the quick success which that political activity made underlined the previous determination of those in power. From this determination, we can easily understand that there was a special trend towards the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. This trend caused effects during and after its time.

So the family of the Prophet was helpless, and were intentionally removed (from authority) in all prominent developments which history witnessed then.[10]

The person who knew the Caliphate (Abu Bakr) did not prefer them (the Prophet's family) to others. Besides the person who limited the Caliphate to the three of six people (i.e., `Umar) did not treat them with justice. Were not for the election made by the people after the Event of the House (*hadith al-dar*), the Prophet's family would have had no portion in authority throughout the various times.

Then this special trend had an effect in creating a strong opposition against the two Caliphs who consulted the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, about their affairs.

At the Battles of Basrah and Siffin, there are many proofs for what we have said.

Also there are other proofs concerning the attitude of b. (the son of) `Umar, Sa'd b. Abu Waqqas, Usama b. Zayd, Muhammad b. Muslima, Qadama b. Maz'un, `Abd Allah b. Salam, Hassan b. Thabit, Abu Said al-Khudari, Zayd b. Thabit, al-Nu'man b. Bashir. They were called al-Qu `ad (the neutrals). For they preferred neutrality to jihad (holy war) and refrained from pledging allegiance to Imam 'Ali and his son al-Hasan, peace be on them.

This opposition had different fields and various kinds. Some of them were the improper, negative attitudes from which the leaders of the Prophet's family suffered in Medina, and then in Kufa.

For this reason Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, addressed the people from his pulpit in Kufa: "You who are like men, and not men! Your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of women. I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allah this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allah kill you. You have filled my heart with puss and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthfuls of grief one after the other. You shattered my counsel through disobeying and leaving me."

Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, made numerous, similar speeches on various occasions.

It was the opposes who planted evil intentions all over the cities of 'Ali, and provoked the people to refrain from supporting him using all pretexts.

I (the author) have believed in this factor. Meanwhile I do not want to forget the other factors that took part in creating the abovementioned, special trend. Namely the factors that took part in creating that opposition that had a positive, armed attitude and a betraying, negative one towards the Prophet's family during the holy Hashimite time.

I (the author) have no doubt that strict justice and accurate equality that prevailed the Hashimite times disturbed the people or some of them. So the people were not ready to show obedience and loyalty that were necessary for war and peace. Besides the booty of the conquered countries made those people cling to the life in this world.

In spite of that special trend, which was formed within twenty-five years, the time of the Caliphate of Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, had appeared before pledging allegiance to al-Hasan, peace be on him, in Kufa.

Al-Hasan was the eldest son of 'Ali, peace be on him, and the successor after him. He (al-Hasan) took part in the good days and bad days of his father. He shared him his sorrows and pains. At that time, he (al-Hasan) was aware of the hardships which his father faced from his people, his subjects, and his enemies. Those hardships made al-Hasan sad. They reminded him of his grandfather Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. For the latter ordered his community to cling to the Book of Allah and to treat his family kindly: "Think how you will treat them (my family) after me."

Though al-Hasan, peace be on him, was full of sorrow, he sometimes resorted to hope. Thus he remembered the good companions' help. Also he remembered their activity, their sacrifice, and their loyalty. Accordingly, he concluded that their deeds were free from the political ambitions in this world.

Among those companions were army leaders, excellent orators, jurists, readers of the Qur'an, and the rest of the good ones who fixed Islam.

The Commander of the faithful (Amir al-mu'minm) relied on those companions during his battles and his peace. Also the Hashimites relied on them to protect Islam from dangers.

Imam 'Ali's companions were from the Muslims who were loyal to the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. For they promised him to protect him as they protected their own selves. So al Hasan was hopeful that they would support him in achieving the authority of his father or his own authority.

They ('Ali's companions) believed in the Words of Allah concerning the members of the House of their Prophet. Also they believed in the trustee of authority (wasi) after their Prophet. They understood 'Ali thoroughly. 'Ali was the hero after the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. He was the best of this community after him (i.e., the Prophet) in loyalty to the truth, sacrificing for Islam, advising the Muslims, sound justice, and abundant knowledge. Generally speaking, 'Ali's outstanding merits made his enemies jealous of him.

Some of 'Ali's good companions were `Ammar b. Yasir, Khuzayma b. Thabit (the one with two testimonies), Hudhayfa b. al-Yamman, `Abd Allah b. Badil, Malik b. al-Harith al-Ashtar, Khabab b. al-Arat, Muhammad b. Abu Bakr, Abu al-Haythem b. al-Tayhan, Hashim b. `Utba b. Abu Waqqas (al-Mirqal), Sahl b. Hunayf, Thabit b. Qays al-Ansari, 'Aqaba b. `Amru, Sa'd b. al-Harith b. al-Samman, Abu Fadala al-Ansari, Ka'b b. `Amr al-Ante, Qurda b' Ka'b al Ansari, `Auf b. al-Harith b. `Auf, Kilab b. al-Askar al-Kinani, Abu Layla b. Balil, and the like. They were leaders in the fields of war and worshippers in prayer. They ordered people to do good and prevented them from doing evil. They competed with each other for death in the way of Allah, while other than they competed with each other for worldly desires.

It is necessary to mention that all the above- mentioned good companions died martyrs at the battles headed by 'Ali, peace be on him. Besides, sixty- three Badri companions died martyrs at the Battle of Siffin.[11] Many companions of 'Ali died martyrs at the three successive battles.

The camp of Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, became empty of those good, reliable companions. Accordingly, he was heard saying: "Allah, make haste the unhappiness of al-Muradi (i.e., `Abd al-Rahman b. Muljim)." "What prevents the most wretched person of it (the community) from coloring it (his beard) with the blood of that which is above it (i.e., his head)." "Indeed, by Allah, I wish that Allah took me out of your existence and took me to his mercy from you."

Peace be on ('Ali) on the day when he was born, on the day when he was the first to believe Islam, on

the day when he fixed Islam with his sword, on the day when he was tested, on the day when he died, and on the day when he will be raised from the dead.

Therefore, al-Hasan had to face the hardships of the time when his father lived. Namely, he had to face the hardships, which his father faced: the poverty of al-Ansar (the supporters), the armed hostility, and the betraying boycott.

1. Al-Tirmidhi, Kanz al-`Ummal, vol. I, p. 44, tradition no.874. There are many traditions similar to this tradition. For example, among them is: "I am leaving two caliphs among you: the Book of Allah, (which) is extended between the sky and the earth or (which) is between the sky and the earth, and my family, the members of my House, and they shall not abandon each other till they come to me at al-Hawd (the river in Paradise) - (Imam Ahmad, al-Musnad. Al-Tabarani, al-Kabir).
2. Ibn Abu al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, vol.4, p.13.
3. Al-Mas'udi, Hashim b. al-Athir, vol. 6, pp. 78-79. Many of our old poets, based their good poems on these historical backgrounds. For example, Mihyar al-Daylami referred to them when he said:

As for the two evil ones: b. (the son of) Hind and his son,

Even if their affair became tyrannical after fear

They did not create (anything) in what they had brought.

Rather they followed those ways.

Mihyar's teacher, al-Sharif al-Radi, may Allah have mercy on, had referred to them:

The deed of the latter ones, though rises over

The ugly deed of the early ones is not more.

Al-Kumayt had referred to the above- mentioned historical backgrounds before these two poets: The bowmen hit it (the target) with the bow of other than them So the latter, gave him the trousers. There are other poetic lines similar to these in meaning.

4. Bolis Salama.
5. Mu'awiya said in what he wrote to him (Imam 'Ali) with Abu Imama al-Bahili: "And you failed to pledge allegiance to him (i.e., Abu Bakr) till you were forced to (pledge allegiance) to him. You were dragged with the reins of force as the injured camel dragged."
6. Imam 'Ali, Nahj al-Balagha, (explained by Muhammad `Abda), vol.1, p.299
7. The ugliest spites concerning the matter of the members of the House (Ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, is that those debates disappeared from history. So we have found nothing of them but bits and pieces which the enemy's observation ignored without intention. So here, I (the author) have mentioned the following words of the renewing poet al-Hajj `Abd al Husayn al-Azdi:

Read what the desires write at your time.

(That) tells about what occurred in the past times.

8. Ibn Abu al-Hadid, vo1.4, p.12.
9. You can clearly find that in what Mu'awiya wrote to Muhammad b. Abu Bakr concerning Imam 'Ali, peace be on him. He (Mu'awiya) said: "Your father and his companions were the first to usurp his right and disagreed with him on authority. They agreed and were harmonious on that. Then they summoned him to pledge allegiance to them. However, he was slow in

coming to them and failed to answer them. So they asked him to be quick, and they intended to do a great thing against him. Then he (Imam 'Ali) pledged allegiance to them and yielded to them. However, they prevented him from taking part in their authority. And they did not inform him of their secrets till Allah made them die." Then he (Mu'awiya) added: "If what we are in was right, then your father seized it and we were his partners. Were not for your father's previous act, we would have obeyed b. Abu Talib and yielded to him. However, your father had done that (disobedience) before us. So we followed him." See al-Mas'udi, Hashim b. al-Athir, vol.6, pp.78- 79.

10. We find many examples concerning this point in the words of the Commander of the faithful (Amir al-mu'mineen peace be on him). In this connection he said: "By Allah, I am still deprived of my right. (Some people) have been preferred to me since Allah made His Apostle die till this day of people." And He said: "Allah, I ask you to show your enmity towards Quraysh and those who help them. For they have severed the relations between me and my relatives, belittled my great position, gathered together to dispute with me over the authority which belongs to me."

11. Place on the bank of the Euphrates, between `Ana and Dir al-Sha'ar.

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