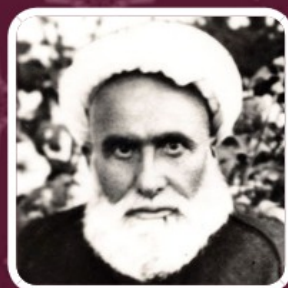


House of Sorrows, The life of Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra and her grief



Shaykh 'Abbas Qummi

**Translated by
Aejaz Ali Turab Husain Bhujwala (Husainee)**

Al-Islam.org

A Translation of Baytul Ahzan Fi Masaib Sayyedatun Niswan

Author(s):

Shaykh 'Abbas Qummi [3]

Publisher(s):

The Islamic Publishing House (IPH) [4]

House of Sorrows is the first ever book in English to detail the last six months of the life of the only daughter of Prophet Muhammad, Fatimah az-Zahra. This book focuses on the status of Lady Fatimah from Qur'anic verses and traditions and delves into the events immediately preceding the death of Prophet Muhammad. There are a number of events discussed in this text such as saqifah, the taking of Fadak, and then, in vivid words, goes through the last months of her life. Be prepared to shed tears as you read the heart-wrenching events of what happened to az-Zahra as recounted and narrated in the major books of the Ahlul Sunnah and the Shi'a.

Translator(s):

Aejaz Ali T Bhujwala (Al Husaynee) [5]

Category:

Fatima al-Zahra [6]

Miscellaneous information:

House of Sorrows, The life of Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra and her grief A Translation of Baytul Ahzan Fi Masaib Sayyedatun Niswan Written by al-Haj Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi Translated by Aejaz Ali Turab Husain (al-Husainee) ISBN: 978-0-9809487-2-1 eISBN: 978-1-927930-01-4 © Copyright 2010 by the Islamic Publishing House First Published in 2010 by: Islamic Publishing House www.iph.ca · iph@iph.ca In Co-Operation with: Islamic Humanitarian Service 81 Hollinger Crescent Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, N2K 2Y8 ihs786@muslimyouth.ca · www.al-haqq.com All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the Copyright holder, except in the case of brief quotations quoted in articles or reviews. Printed in Canada Printed by Friesens Corporation – www.friesens.com

Featured Category:

Introducing the Ahlul Bayt [7]

Person Tags:

Fatimah al-Zahra [8]

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا فَاطِمَةَ الْبَتُولِ

Peace be upon you, O Fatimah al-Batul!

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا زَيْنَ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ

Peace be upon you, O embellishment of the women of the worlds!

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَ عَلَيْهِ

Peace be upon you, O daughter of the Prophet of Allah, the Lord of the worlds, salutations be upon you and upon him!

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا أُمَّ الْحَسَنِ وَ الْحُسَيْنِ

Peace be upon you, O mother of Hasan and Husayn!

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ أُمَّةً غَضَبَتْكَ حَقِّكَ وَ مَنَعَتْكَ مَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ حَلَالاً

May Allah curse those who usurped your rights, and who prevented you from that which Allah made lawful for you!

أَنَا بَرِيٌّ إِلَيْكَ مِنْهُمْ وَ مِنْ شِيعَتِهِمْ

I disassociate myself from them and their adherents!

The method of transliteration of Islamic terminology from the Arabic language has been carried out according to the standard transliteration table mentioned below.

Please review the html and text for this table. It has errors

ء	‘	t
ا	a	z
ب	b	‘
ت	t	gh
ث	th	f
ج	j	q
ح	h	k
خ	kh	l
د	d	m
ذ	dh	n
ر	r	w
ز	z	y
س	s	h
ش	sh	
ص	s	
ض	dh	
Long Vowels		
ا	a	a
و	u	u
ي	i	i

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

When we were first given the opportunity to undertake the publishing of the seminal work authored by Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi, on a very tragic and lesser-known aspect of Islamic history, entitled Baytul Ahzan – ‘House of Sorrows’, our immediate response was a resounding “yes”!

Already having published a book on the last and greatest Prophet for all of mankind, Muhammad b. ‘Abdullah authored by ‘Allamah Muhammad Husayn al-Taba’taba’i, and translated into English by Shaykh Tahir-Ridha Jaffer entitled “Sunan an-Nabi”; and following up that project with a comprehensive book on the last Imam and saviour of humanity, Imam al-Hujjat b. al-Hasan al-’Askari al-Mahdi entitled, “The Last Luminary and Ways to Delve into the Light” authored by Sayyid Ridha Husayni Mutlaq and

translated by Saleem Bhimji [both books are available for review and purchase at www.al-mubin.org [9] or www.iph.ca] [10] – it was only fitting for our third major publication to be a magnum opus on the greatest woman to ever walk this Earth – a woman whom the Prophet of Islam described as being “The chief mistress of women of the entire universe – from the first to the last”, lady Fatimah al-Zahra.

The author of this work, the late Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi took tremendous pains to write this book and quoted extensively from the most authentic narrations of Islamic history and sahih (reliable) traditions from both the Shi’a and non-Shi’a sources to ensure fair and balanced treatment of the topic at hand.

Thus, as you begin to read this work, one needs to first clear one’s thoughts of all personal biases and ‘blind love’ for influential and leading figures in Islamic history, and be prepared to open the mind and heart to permit the painfully tragic events, which began just hours after the Prophet of Islam left this world and continue until this day in various ways and forms, to permeate one’s heart and soul.

If this is not done, then the blood-stained pages of grief which recount the history of the family of the Prophet and his noble and loyal companions will remain as mere historical anecdotes, rather than serving their ultimate purpose of an inner change in one’s life and character.

Within the circle of Islamic ideology, it is a known fact that the Prophet of Allah was always extremely careful in what he said and how he said it, and that his words were never due to personal sentiment or emotions nor due to family or cultural ties, and thus it should come to no surprise for Muslims to read how the Prophet elevated the status of his only daughter and subsequently through her, women in general – and this is important to remember when we reflect on the time in which the Qur’an was being revealed in which women were mere commodities that were bought and sold, with infanticide of baby girls practiced on a regular basis by numerous ‘Arab tribes and many other cultural perversions.

Indeed it is only through studying the life of noble women such as the Prophet’s first and most beloved wife, Khadijah b. Khuwaylid; the cherished daughter of the Prophet, Fatimah al-Zahra; and other notable women from amongst the family of the Prophet and his illustrious companions and the lofty rank that Islam has endowed upon them, that we see the power and forward-thinking nature of the teachings of Islam.

Since the translator has already done a comprehensive review of the status of women in various societies and dispensations throughout the world in his foreword, in our preface, we will focus our words on Fatimah al-Zahra and the legacy which she left for humanity.

Every year, millions of Muslims cry for Fatimah al-Zahra. There are a multitude of gatherings – both commemorations and mourning ceremonies in her memory. There are observances of praise, joy, and honour for her in which her noble characteristics are remembered, while Muslims also hold rituals of lamentation where they recount – in vivid detail – the painful events of Islamic history which led to her

intense grief and eventual martyrdom. The faithful even go to the extent of invoking Almighty Allah to deprive those who hurt her from His Mercy and Blessings!

Despite everything which is recalled on the pulpits throughout the world and the articles and booklets which have been published so far about this great woman, the true history of her short life and the salient features of her personality are still unknown; however still, with the little that the Muslims know about her, they still accept Fatimah – her majesty and greatness – whole-heartedly. Despite everything which is recalled on the pulpits throughout the world and the articles and booklets which have been published so far about this great woman, the true history of her short life and the salient features of her personality are still unknown; however still, with the little that the Muslims know about her, they still accept Fatimah – her majesty and greatness – whole-heartedly.

The sphere of influence of Fatimah al-Zahra is extensive and she not only appeals and is a person of reverence for the Muslim community and whom only Muslim authors write about; rather her character, personality and visage actually transcend religion and the Muslim sphere.

In her recent work, *Chosen among Women: Mary and Fatimah in Medieval Christianity and Shi'ite Islam*, Mary Thurkill writes the following about the beloved daughter of Prophet Muhammad: In her recent work, *Chosen among Women: Mary and Fatimah in Medieval Christianity and Shi'ite Islam*, Mary Thurkill writes the following about the beloved daughter of Prophet Muhammad:

According to early medieval Christian and Shi'ite tradition, God chose Mary and Fatimah as vessels for his sublime progeny. Mary, an obedient maiden gave birth to the God-Man Jesus; Fatimah, sharing in the divine nur, held the Imamate within her womb ... Theologians clearly relied on Mary and Fatimah to articulate and expand their respective orthodoxies and notions of rightness. By defining first their pure and immaculate nature, authors transformed Mary's and Fatimah's bodies into sacred containers ... Fatimah also served as a sacred vessel, holding the Imam's nur within her while simultaneously sharing it. Fatimah al-Zahra existed as the only female member of the holy family and, like her father, husband and sons, remained immaculate and infallible. Both Shi'ite and Christian authors also likened their holy women to an ancient container, Noah's ark; the women's wombs carried humanity's true salvation.

Mary and Fatimah served equally important functions in political and sectarian discourse. With such a rhetorical agenda in mind, hagiographers accented Mary's and Fatimah's maternal roles. These holy women, as mothers, effectively defined the limits of community and sectarian division. By symbolically adopting believers to their maternal care, Mary and Fatimah damned unbelievers to hell. Hagiographers advertised their holy mothers by describing their homey miracles and domestic skill. Both women experienced superhuman parturitions, multiplied food, and interceded for their spiritual offspring ... Fatimah, the mystical nexus of the holy family, rewards her adoptive kin who weep for her slain son, Husayn, and escorts women into paradise on judgement day.

Because these women (Mary and Fatimah) are both powerful in their own right yet intimately connected

to domestic (private) space, they can be employed by authors for a variety of purposes. Mary and Fatimah can signify both female independence and agency and submission and chastity ... Whether in the seventh century or the twenty-first, Mary's and Fatimah's charisma affords scholars and religious alike an important symbol of community and religiosity that may be manipulated in various ways.

The holy women's attendance within the home subtly stresses the male households' presence and dominance. In the end, however, Mary and Fatimah – chosen by God as holy vessels and chosen by men as didactic models – manage to provide moral exemplars for women, promote standards of sanctity and faith, and chastise religious and political heresy. Within such legacies the domestic indeed complements public (masculine) authority and gains a place for feminine sanctity not easily ignored.¹

The Prophet of Islam , who speaks nothing but what has been revealed to him and is ordered to say by the Most High, has mentioned the following glowing tributes in regards to his beloved daughter: The Prophet of Islam , who speaks nothing but what has been revealed to him and is ordered to say by the Most High, has mentioned the following glowing tributes in regards to his beloved daughter:

On the Day of Judgement, a caller will call out, 'lower your gaze until Fatimah has passed.'²²²²

I am not pleased unless Fatimah is pleased.³³³³

The most beloved of my family to me is Fatimah.⁴⁴⁴⁴

The head of the women of Paradise is Fatimah.⁵⁵⁵⁵

Many men have reached completion, but no women have reached completion except for four: Maryam, Asiyah, Khadijah, and Fatimah.⁶⁶⁶⁶

The verse of purification (al-Qur'an 33:33) was revealed concerning five people: myself, 'Ali, Hasan, Husayn, and Fatimah.⁷⁷⁷⁷

Fatimah is part of me. Whatever upsets her upsets me, and whatever harms her harms me.⁸⁸⁸⁸

Fatimah is part of me, and whoever pleases her, pleases me.⁹⁹⁹⁹

Oh Fatimah, verily God is angry when you are angry.¹⁰¹⁰¹⁰

These and hundreds of other Prophetic statements and numerous verses of the Noble Qur'an give us a glimpse into this great woman and oblige us to study her life and the legacy she has left behind.

It is indeed difficult to speak about the personality of Fatimah ; she is the role model that Islam wants all women to follow. She is a symbol of the various dimensions of womanhood. She is the perfect model of a daughter when dealing with her father; the perfect model of a wife when dealing with her husband; the

perfect model of a mother when raising her children; and the perfect model of a passionate, strong, fighting woman when confronting her time and the oppressions in her society. Fatimah herself is a guide – an outstanding example of someone to follow, an ideal type of woman – one whose life bore witness for any woman who wishes to ‘become herself’ and to regain her own identity.

Her life was wrought with many difficulties: losing her mother when she was only five years old; being brought up by her father (the Messenger of Allah) who had the added responsibility of being the final Messenger of God; the physical aggression and mental torture which the polytheists wreaked on her family, friends and the believers; and ultimately, having to leave her birth-city of Mecca and migrate to a new home and community hundreds of kilometers to the north in the city of Madinah. Panultimately, she had to witness the death (or according to most reports, the poisoning and murder) of her father with the masses vying for political authority – leaving his lifeless body to take part in elections; and finally the rejection of her husband and his Prophetically and Divinely granted authority over the community by the majority of the Muslims; and tragically in the end, the physical attacks against her which resulted in her miscarriage and ultimately murder at the tender age of eighteen.

Fatimah ؑ lived like this and died like this – however after her death, she began a new life in history.

The repression and cruelty that Fatimah al-Zahra ؑ went through was not something that was ‘accidental’ or ‘unintentional’ – rather, every act of transgression against her and the Ahlul Bayt were pre-meditated acts of aggression.

Ziyarat ‘Ashura’, which is accepted as being a Sacred Tradition (Hadith al-Qudsi – revealed words of Allah to His Prophet which do not form a part of the Qur’an) states the following:

فَلَعَنَ اللَّهُ أُمَّةً أَصَّسَتْ أَصَاسَ الظُّلْمِ وَالْجَوْرِ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ...

“May the removal of Allah’s blessings and mercy (la’n) be upon the individuals who laid the foundations for oppression and tyranny (to be inflicted) upon you Ahlul Bayt.”

This line, if carefully studied speaks volumes as to ‘who’ is responsible for not only the crimes inflicted on the Muslim community immediately after the death of the Prophet which are recounted in this book – but also all acts of oppression, tyranny, corruption, violence and terrorism which continue to be perpetrated today under the guise of Islam.

Scholars who have written upon Ziyarat ‘Ashura’ relate that the ‘individuals’ referred to in this ziyarat are two fold: the general community of Muslims at large who overlooked the rank and status of the Ahlul Bayt and deprived them of their rights, choosing and permitting others to take the reigns of caliphate; and on a secondary level, it refers to those individuals who were present at the event of as-Saqifah (which is detailed in this work) and were part and parcel of the usurpation of the caliphate from the

Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali b. Abi Talib . This group, which was made up of the Ansar and Muhajirin had no justification – neither from the legal code of Islam, nor from the ‘temporal’ law – to arbitrarily decide upon the fate of the entire Muslim community and appoint an individual to become the first caliph of Islam.

The reason it is said that the individuals who were at as-Saqifah and were altering the course of history are worthy of the perpetual damnation of Allah is that it is through their acts of tyranny and oppression specifically targeted against the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet, they showed complete disregard for the commandments of Allah and His Prophet and through such reckless actions, every act of injustice that takes place on the Earth today lies squarely on their shoulders.

Had they permitted the orders of Allah to be carried out and the caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali b. Abi Talib to manifest, the oppression against the Ahlul Bayt would not have occurred – including the events detailed in this work in regards to Fatimah al-Zahra, the tragic events of Kerbala, and even the atrocities inflicted upon the other Imams.

Indeed, the acts of terrorism and killing of innocent men, women and children throughout the world today under the guise of Islam would also not be happening had the political ramblings at Saqifah not taken place. (For an indepth analysis of what transpired in regards to these events, refer to ‘When Power and Piety Collide’ by Sayyid Mustafa al-Qazwini and ‘The Sacred Effusion’ by Muhammad Khalfan – both can be purchased from www.al-haqq.com [11])

Therefore, we state with complete certainty that the people responsible for the first act of oppression and tyranny against the Ahlul Bayt deserve to have the eternal damnation of Allah , just as Allah Himself states in the Qur’an with clarity:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَ لَآخِرَةِ...؟

“Indeed those who hurt and upset Allah and His Messenger will have the mercy and compassion of Allah removed from them, both in [this] world and in the next life...” (al-Qur’an 33:57)

What greater grief can one inflict upon the Messenger of Allah than to accost his daughter, make her suffer emotional and physical pain; cause her to have a miscarriage; force her to see her husband’s rights snatched away and plundered; see her husband physically abused and ultimately, lose her own life?

Therefore in the light of such tragedies, all of those who have suffered; all of those whose rights have been plundered; all of those who have been deceived and tricked – have taken the name of Fatimah ؑ or her beloved son, Husayn as their banner.

The memory of Fatimah ﷺ grows through the love of the men and women who throughout the history of Islam, have fought for freedom and justice. Throughout the centuries, innocent people have been punished under the merciless and bloody lash of various governments. Their cries and anger grew and overflowed from their wounded hearts and this is why in the history of all spiritually awakened and knowledgeable Islamic communities, Fatimah has been the source of inspiration for those who want to reclaim their rights, for those who seek justice, and for those who resist oppression, cruelty and discrimination.

She was not just a wife to Imam 'Ali; rather, Imam 'Ali looked upon her as a friend – a friend who was familiar with his pains and his aspirations. She was his endless refuge, the one who listened to his secrets; the one who was the only companion in his loneliness. This is why 'Ali behaved towards her and her children slightly differently than the wives he took after his beloved's death and the other children that he fathered. After Fatimah died, 'Ali married other women and he had children from them; but from the very beginning, he separated the children who were from Fatimah, from his other children – the latter were called 'Bani 'Ali', (lit. the children of 'Ali) while the former were referred to as 'Bani Fatimah' (lit. the children of Fatimah).

I
In closing, we relate the words of the late Ali Shariati in his work, Fatimah is Fatimah:

I do not know what to say about her or how to say it? I wanted to imitate the French writer who was speaking one day in a conference about the Virgin Mary. He said, "For 1,700 years all of the speakers have spoken of Mary. For 1,700 years, all philosophers and thinkers of various nations of the East and West have spoken of the value of Mary. For 1,700 years, the poets of the world have spent all of their creative efforts and power in their praise of Mary. For 1,700 years, all of the painters and artists have created wonderful works of art showing the face and form of Mary. But the totality of all that has been said and the efforts of all the artists and thinkers throughout these many centuries have not been able to better describe the greatness of Mary than the simple words, 'Mary was the mother of Jesus Christ.'

And I wanted to begin in this manner with Fatimah. I got stuck. I wished to say, 'Fatimah was the daughter of the great Khadijah,' but I sensed this would not fully describe Fatimah. I wished to say, 'Fatimah was the daughter of Muhammad,' but I sensed this would not fully describe Fatimah. I wished to say, 'Fatimah was the wife of 'Ali,' but I sensed this would not fully describe Fatimah. I wished to say, 'Fatimah was the mother of Hasan and Husayn,' but I sensed this would not fully describe Fatimah. I wished to say, 'Fatimah is the mother of Zaynab,' but I still sensed this would not fully describe Fatimah. No, these are all true, and none of them is Fatimah – Fatimah is Fatimah."

Some notes as you read this work

In researching and writing this work, the late Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi has employed numerous references from both the Shi’a and Ahlus Sunnah scholars. The readers may sometimes come across numerous explanations in regards to a particular event – and at times, some of these diverse opinions may seem to contradict one another or may not be what the “official” Shi’a position is. It is at this point that one should keep in mind that the author is merely presenting the various opinions about what transpired after the death of the Prophet as have been recorded in various sources; and for this reason, he has relied on quoting and analyzing multiple reports before he arrives at his own conclusion, or as will be seen, he leaves it up to the reader to read the various report, and make up their own mind as to where the truth lies.

It is customary to offer a prayer for God’s peace and blessings whenever we mention the name of Prophet Muhammad , his family, or any of God’s prophets, angels, or saints. While in the past, we have used the diphthongs, “”, “”, “” and others to remind the reader to invoke these prayers, due to the nature of this work, we have omitted these markings. This decision should not be construed as a sign of disrespect to these great personalities. The only reason for leaving them out is to remove hindrance in the fluency of the text. In following with Islamic tradition, the reader is still encouraged to make his invocations while reading these names just as was done during the layout and editing of this work.

In closing, we first thank the Creator, Allah ﷻ for bestowing upon us the Divine providence (tawfiq) to be able to complete the publication of this work, as without His constant guidance and blessings, we would not be where we are today; and His support would not be there were it not for the intercession of Prophet Muhammad and his noble family members – whom we pray that the Most High continues to bless and raise their ranks in Paradise and that they accept this noble publication as our humble attempt to keep alive their memory and teachings.

We must recognize the author of this work, the late Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi for his untiring efforts to acquaint the Muslims with the life of Fatimah al-Zahra and for all of his other valuable contributions to the community – books such as Mafatih al-Jinan, Manazil al-Akhirah, Muntahal al-A’mal and many others.

We must also thank the translator, Aejaz Ali Turab Husain (al-Husainee) for his hard work in rendering this book into English and for his thorough and thought-provoking introduction. In order to truly appreciate the services of Islam and the teachings of the Prophet and the life and death of Fatimah al-Zahra on the world scene, we need to understand how other cultures, societies and religions view woman and then compare that to the model of lady Fatimah and the Islamic ideal – and he has done this in a very lucid and comprehensive style in the Translator’s Foreword.

We would like to acknowledge the support, encouragement and assistance of Sr. Arifa Hudda, specifically her review and careful editing of this entire book.

Last but not least, we would like to appreciate and sincerely thank the various private donors who generously contributed towards the publication of this work – without your continued support of our projects, this and many other works would remain unknown to the English speaking world.

Our sincere appreciation also extends to the non-Profit organizations and foundations that have assisted in the publication of this work (presented in alphabetical order). Please do consider volunteering your time or donating to these organizations so that they can in turn, further promote and assist in the dissemination of the faith of Islam:

Islamic Humanitarian Service

More information on the I.H.S. can be found at their website of www.al-haqq.com [11]

Mohsin and Fauzia Jaffer Foundation, Inc.

May Allah accept this humble effort from us in our attempts to educate the Muslim community on the greatest woman to ever inhabit the Earth, Fatimah al-Zahra .

Saleem Bhimji – Director of the Islamic Publishing House

9th Rabi' al-Awwal, 1431 ah

'Eid al-Zahra

February 24th, 2010 ce

1. Chosen Among Women: Mary and Fatimah in Medieval Christianity and Shi'ite Islam; written by Mary F. Thurlkill; Printed by University of Notre Dame Press 2007; pp. 119–123
2. Kanzul 'Ummal, v. 13, p. 91 & 93, Muntakhab Kanzul 'Ummal quoted in the margin of al-Musnad, v. 5, p. 96; al-Sawa'iq al-Muhariqa, p. 190; 'Usdul Ghaba, v. 5, p. 523; Tadhkirat al-Khawwas, p. 279; Dhaka'ir al-'Uqba, p. 48; Manaqib al-Imam 'Ali of Ibn al-Maghazali, p. 356; Nurul Absar, p. 51–52, Yanabi' al-Mawadda, v. 2, ch. 56, p. 136
3. Manaqib al-Imam 'Ali of Ibn al-Maghazali, p. 342.
4. Al-Jami' al-Saghir, v. 1, #203, p. 37; al-Sawa'iq al-Muhariqa, p. 191; Yanabi' al-Mawadda, v. 2, ch. 59, p. 479; Kanzul 'Ummal, v. 13, p. 93.
5. Kanzul 'Ummal, v. 13, p. 94; Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Fadha'il, Chapter on the Virtues of Fatimah; al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya, v. 2, p. 61.
6. Nurul Absar, p. 51.
7. Is'af al-Raghibin, p. 116; Sahih al-Muslim, Kitab Fadha'il al-Sahaba.
8. Sahih al-Muslim, v. 5, p. 54; Khasa'is al-Imam 'Ali of al-Nisa'i, p. 121–122; Masabih al-Sunnah, v. 4, p. 185; al-Isabah, v. 4, p. 378; Seir 'Alam Al-Nubala', v. 2, p. 119; Kanzul 'Ummal, v. 13, p. 97; similar wording is related in al-Tirmidhi, v. 3, Chapter on the Virtues of Fatimah, p. 241; Haliyatul Awliya', v.2, p. 40; Muntakhab Kanzul 'Ummal, in the margins of al-Musnad, v. 5, p. 96; Ma'rifat ma yajib li 'ala Al-Bayt al-Nabawi min al-haqq 'ala man a'dahum, p. 58; Dhakha'irul 'Uqba, p. 38; Tadhkirat al-Khawwas, p. 279; Yanabi' al-Mawadda, v.2, ch. 59, p. 478.
9. Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhariqa, p. 180 & 132; Mustadrak al-Hakim; Ma'rifat ma yajib li 'ala Al-Bayt al-Nabawi min al-haqq 'ala man a'dahum, p. 73; Yanabi' al-Mawadda, v. 2, ch. 59, p. 468.
10. Al-Sawaa'iq al-Muhariqa, p. 175; Mustadrak al-Hakim, Chapter on the Virtues of Fatimah; Manaqib al-Imam 'Ali of Ibn al-Maghazali, p. 351.

Shaykh ‘Abbas b. Muhammad Ridha al-Qummi was born in 1877 ce in Qum, Iran. His father, Shaykh Muhammad Ridha was a merchant and renowned as a pious, religious man. His mother Zaynab was a virtuous lady who had made a pledge with herself to always be in a state of spiritual purity at the time of feeding her newborn. She practiced what she said and for two years she fed ‘Abbas while always being in a state of purity and it was because of this that later on in his life Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi was quoted as saying, “The main reason for my success was due to my mother’s blessings because that respected lady, within all possible limits, always fed me in a state of cleanliness and purity.”

Shaykh ‘Abbas progressed rapidly in acquiring religious education such that after a short period of time, he became well-known in Qum and was addressed as ‘Shaykh ‘Abbas’ and was described as a young religious person who had a vast amount of knowledge on Islam.

Apart from his sermons and lectures, he also kept busy compiling books. When he turned 21 years of age, his first major accomplishment was reached when he published his first book in the city of Qum. This was a great source of happiness for the Shaykh and his neighbours for which, he thanked Allah for this success and continued to work much harder and wrote many other books.¹

In Qum, he gained maximum benefit from the renown scholar, Ayatullah Mirza Muhammad Arbab al-Qummi (d. 1942) and made extensive use of his library. He also benefitted from the presence of Haj Aqa Ahmad Tabataba’i.

From his youth, Shaykh ‘Abbas had elegant handwriting and was fond of calligraphy and took time to learn the different styles of calligraphy such as the ‘Naskh’ and ‘Nastaliq’ from the art teacher, Aqa Shaykh Muhammad Husayn. He acquired skills in the art of calligraphy to such an extent that his first book, Fawa’id al-Rajabiyyah, printed in 1897 was written in his own handwriting! In the same year, at the end of the month of Safar, he transcribed 220 pages of (the commentary of) Surah Yasin written by the well-known scholar, Mulla Sadra in the Naskh calligraphy style and at the end of the work, had the humility and humbleness to mention himself as a ‘student of the lowest grade and the lowest creature on the earth.’²

After completing the preliminary studies at the Theological Seminary, Shaykh ‘Abbas realized that the knowledge which he had gained in the Hawzah of Qum would not satisfy him, and thus in 1898, he migrated to Najaf al-Ashraf (in ‘Iraq) to quench his thirst for more knowledge.

Since Shaykh ‘Abbas was very eager to know about the true narrators of the Islamic sciences, he mentions that from the time he entered Najaf, he was fascinated by the scholarly personality of Ayatullah Mirza Husayn Nuri Tabarsi (d. 1902) and began to attend his lectures. Within a short period, he gained vast amounts of knowledge from his teacher and due to his own zeal, became one of his most endeared students. Other scholars in the Hawza, such as Muhaddith al-Nuri trusted him to such an extent that he gave him the task of transcribing his book Mustadrak al-Wasa’il.

During this time, he gained official recognition of his studies from his teachers in the fields of the rational

and traditional sciences, jurisprudence, exegesis, scholasticism and other religious disciplines.

He remained with his teacher in Najaf for four years and only returned to his hometown of Qum after the death of Muhaddith al-Nuri. In regards to the death of his teacher, he is quoted as saying, "His death was so difficult for me to bear, that I can still taste its bitterness."³ Returning back to Qum, he remained engrossed in teaching and training students, writing and public speaking.

He then proceeded for Haj and shortly thereafter in 1904, he moved to Mashhad, Iran due to various personal and economic challenges. He continued his religious training and teaching and remained in the sacred city of Mashhad for a considerable period of time.

It was during this period that Ayatullah al-Uzma Shaykh 'Abdul Karim Haeri Yazdi (d. 1936) migrated from the city of Arak, Iran to Qum and was responsible for the revival of the Theological Seminary of Qum. Students from all over the world flocked to Qum to gain benefit from the teachers and classes being offered; and in order to strengthen and mobilize the Hawzah in Qum, Ayatullah Yazdi invited numerous scholars to settle there, and at this time requested Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi to come as well. Shaykh 'Abbas readily agreed and hastened back home to Qum and settled there.

He was passionately attached to books, and in this regard his son said, "From my early childhood, whenever I travelled with my father, I always saw him engrossed in studying from the early hours of the morning until late at night."⁴

Once, he travelled to Syria with a group of businessmen and those with him narrate that while they would go sight-seeing, he would stay behind and remain busy in studying and writing, and whenever they invited him to accompany them, he would politely refuse. At night, while they would be fast asleep, he would be busy in his studies.

His love of books was so intense, that inspite being in financial difficulty, he would save his money to buy books and he was quoted as saying, "During my days while I was studying in Qum, I had become very indigent. I would gather each and every qiran (penny) to make some tuman (a dollar). I would then walk from Qum to Tehran [which is approximately a 90 minute trip by car], buy the books I needed (from there) and then return back home."⁵

In terms of his humility and humbleness, it is related that a man once requested Muhaddith al-Qummi to recite a majlis⁶ and promised that he would give him fifty 'Iraqi dinars, while at that time, the monthly expenses of Shaykh 'Abbas were only three dinar. Hearing this, Muhaddith al-Qummi replied, "I mount the pulpit for Imam Husayn and not for anything else, therefore I cannot accept your offer."

He led a very simple and sober life such that even an ordinary student lived a far better life than him. He had a cloak made of canvas that he ensured was kept neat, perfumed and clean. He spent many winter and summer months over the course of numerous years wearing it but never thought of changing it, and even the floor of his house was covered with a coarse carpet.

He was familiar with the Qur'an from early childhood, and when arriving at the verse,

“And I did not create the jinn and the humans but that they may worship (Me)”⁷,

his entire body would tremble and he would be heard whispering, “How unaware and how far away we are from the Divine goal!”

He firmly believed that the performance of obligatory deeds alone was not sufficient to reach the peak of perfection, but rather performance of the supererogatory (Nawafil) and recommended (Sunnah) prayers, coupled with the remembrance of Allah, supplications and invocations will lead one to the ultimate position, and he himself was never ignorant of performing these acts. His son, Mirza ‘Ali Muhaddith Zadeh narrates, “As far as I can recall, my father never missed his night prayers (Salatul Layl) – even during journeys.”

With his lofty scholarly rank and level of piety and learning, he always showed humility and modesty, and was weary of pride and fame and desired to live a life of anonymity. He was respectful to all, but mostly he paid particular respect to the scholars who hailed from the Prophetic lineage (Sadat) and people who were in some way the propagators of the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt. When he entered a religious gathering, he would sit wherever he found a place and would not give priority to himself over others.

He has left behind a great treasure of books authored by him on various Islamic subjects. According to his son Mirza ‘Ali Muhaddith Zadeh, he wrote 63 books on prayers, ethics, history and biographies; however Muddaris Tabrizi has listed 30 books by the Shaykh in his work, Rayhanatul Adab. Ayatullah Sayyed Muhsin al-Amin lists 65 books authored by him⁸ while at the same time, ‘Ali Dawani introduces about 85 large and small books penned by this great scholar.⁹

Some of these books include:

1. Mafatihul Jinan wa Baqiyatus Salihat – considered one of the best books on supplications and ziyarat;
2. Safinatul Bihar wa Madinatul Hikam wal Athar – a subject-wise compilation of the traditions found in Biharul Anwar of ‘Allamah Majlisi which took 20 years to compile;
3. Muntahal A’mal fi Tarikh al-Nabi wal Al – a comprehensive book investigating the lives of the fourteen infallibles;
4. Al-Fusulul ‘Aliyyah fil Manaqibal Murtadhawiyyah – the excellences and ethics of Imam ‘Ali;
5. Kohlul Basar fi Sirate Sayyedul Bashar – a biography on the life of the Noble Prophet;
6. Nafasul Mahmum – a book focusing on the tragedy of Karbala and the martyrdom of Imam Husayn;¹⁰
7. Nafasul Masdur – a continuation of Nafasul Mahmum and published as an annexure to it;

8. Manazilul Akhirah – discussing the various stages of the hereafter;¹¹

9. Baitul Ahzan fi Masaib Sayyidatun Niswan – the glorious life of Sayyidah Fatimah and the episode of Saqifah and Fadak.¹²

Ayatullah Aqa Buzurg Tehrani writes about this great personality, “I found him to be a perfect human being and a great scholar. He was an embodiment of all the laudable qualities, and possessed a praiseworthy character. He was humble and possessed utmost piety and abstinence (to the transient world). I was acquainted with him for a considerable time and my spirit gained utmost benefit from his divine spirit.”¹³

Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi died at the age of around 65 years on the 23rd of Dhul Hijjah 1359 ah (1940 ad) after a productive and full life in which he has left behind an enormous wealth of knowledge for humanity to benefit from.

Ayatullah al-‘Uzma Sayyid Abul Hasan Isfahani (d. 1978) recited the prayers upon his body and he was laid to rest beside his teacher, Muhaddith al-Nuri in the courtyard of the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali عليه السلام in Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq.

“Allah will exalt (you in) ranks (unto Him), those who believe among you, and those who have been granted knowledge, and Allah is All-Aware of whatsoever you do.”¹⁴

1. . ‘Ali Ma’sumi, Chehreha wa Qisseha
2. . ‘Ali Dawani, Mafakhire Islam
3. . Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi, Fawa’id al-Radhawiyyah
4. . At the end of the translation of Nafasul Mahmum, a book authored by Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi
5. . Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi, Marde Taqwa wa Fazilat
6. . A religious gathering in which an orator relates the excellences of the Ahlul Bayt followed by their sufferings; also accompanied by enjoining the performance of good deeds and preventing from the evil ones, ornamenting them with evidences from the Qur’an and Prophetic traditions (ahadith).
7. . Noble Qur’an, Suratul ariyat (51):56
8. . Ayatullah Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, A’yan al-Shi’a
9. . ‘Ali Dawani, Mafakhire Islam
10. . The translator (of this current book) had the great privilege to translate this precious and informative book into the English language which has been published by Madinatul Ilm Islamic Center of Mumbai (India); and Ansariyan Publications of Qum (Iran).
11. . The translator (of this current work) also had the honour of translating this book into the English language and it has been published by Madinatul Ilm Islamic Center of Mumbai (India); and Imam ‘Ali Foundation, Qum (Iran).
12. . The present book.
13. . Aqa Buzurg al-Tehrani, Tabaqat A’lam al-Shi’a
14. . Noble Qur’an, Suratul Mujadilah (58):11

Praise be to Allah with all the hymns by which He is praised, by the Angels who are the nearest to Him; by His creatures who are most honourable in His Sight; and by those adorers who are best approved by

Him. A praise that excels all praise in the same way that the Lord excels all of His creations. May His blessings be upon His Messenger Muhammad, the Prophet of Mercy, and upon his pure progeny who are the lanterns in the darkness, the brilliant minarets of guidance and the high lofty standards of the religion.

May His special blessings be upon His last deputy and His remaining emissary, the expected Mahdi – may Allah hasten his advent and include us among his adherents.

The status of women in the world has been one of the hottest issues of debate for many years. Several organizations whose goal is 'women's liberation' have been formed around the globe and who strive – day and night – to liberate the 'oppressed women' from the clutches of fanaticism and oppression. Freedom, equality, equity and fair justice for women are the slogans of such organizations that endeavor to give women their lost status in society and to portray her independent identity so that she may walk alongside men and execute all of those tasks which men perform and even those that which some men dare not to perform!

Religion is condemned for limiting women's involvement in all affairs of the society and barring them from reaching their goals. Islam, in particular, has been continuously criticized for its 'bias against women' confining them within the four walls of their house, hidden under the 'ugly black veil' and considering them as a 'door-mat' – thus hindering their progress.

Western organizations are at the forefront in the criticism of Islam for this 'injustice' and have succeeded in gathering around them a multitude of 'liberated Arab and Muslim women', who have most passionately responded to their calls for 'freedom'.

Before discussing the status of women in Islam, let us have a look at the status which women enjoyed in the past (and the present as well) in the other major religions of the world and 'progressive nations'.

Christianity, which is considered to be the most liberal religion in the world has been far more rigid in its stance against women. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his monumental work, *Discovery of India*, writes:

Bad as the legal position of women was in ancient India, judged by the modern standards, it was far better than in ancient Greece and Rome, in early Christianity, in the Canon Laws of Medieval Europe, and indeed right up to comparatively modern times at the beginning of the 19th Century.¹

In the early ages of Christianity when the religion of the people, of a high and low societal status, ignorant and educated, consisted only of the adoration of the mother of Jesus, the Church of Christ had placed the sex under a ban. Priest after Priest had written about the enormities of women, their evil tendencies, inconceivable malignity and considered them to be a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painted evil!

St. Tertullian (circa 155 ce – 225 ce) represented the general feeling in a book in which he addressed

women saying:

Do you not know that each of you is an Eve? The judgement of God on this sex of yours lives even in this age and the guilt (associated with it) must, out of necessity, also live on (and continue to exist). You are the Devil's gateway; You are the unsealer of the forbidden tree; You are the first deserter of the Divine law; You are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desertion, even the Son of God had to die.²

St. Augustine (354 ce – 430 ce) wrote the following to a friend:

What is the difference whether it is in a wife or a mother, it is still Eve the temptress that we must beware of in any woman ... I fail to see what use woman can be to man, if one excludes the function of bearing children!³

Martin Luther (1483 ce – 1546 ce), the German theologian and Church reformer says:

If they [women] become tired or even die, that does not matter. Let them die in childbirth, that's why they are there.⁴

The Orthodox Church excluded women from the exercise of all religious functions except the lowliest. They were completely excluded from society, were prohibited from appearing in public and were forbidden from going to feasts or banquets. They were directed to remain in seclusion, observe silence, obey their husbands, and apply themselves to weaving, spinning and cooking. If they ever went out, they were to be clothed from head to foot.

In the 19th century, after long discussions, religious leaders of France decided, "A woman is a human being, but she is made to serve man."

In England it was not until about 1850 that women were counted in the National Population Census. It was in 1882 that a British law, unprecedented in the country's history, for the first time in its history, granted women the right to decide how their own earnings should be spent instead of handing them over directly to their husbands! Until then, even the clothes on their back had been their husband's property.

In his days, Henry VIII had even forbidden women to study the Bible when the first English translations appeared.

The Reformation Statement on the role of women declares:

In the beginning God made man, male and female. He made Adam first, and then made Eve from Adam's rib. This order of creation subordinates wives to their husbands in marriage, and women to men in the church. As an act of submission to their Creator, women are commanded to submit to their husbands and to male leadership in the church. Women are not allowed to teach or have authority over men in any formal capacity in the church.⁵

Female infanticide among earlier Hinduism was common. A woman was barred from studying the Vedas – the most sacred of the Aryans texts; or participating in the oblations to the Manes; or in the sacrifices to the deities. The wife's religion was, and still is to serve her husband, her Lord and her eternal happiness depends on the strict performance of this duty.

Child marriages of daughters as young as 5 and 6 years old was common due to the custom of the dowry and to avoid scandals.⁶ Law books prescribed that the best partner for a man was one-third his age and thus a man who was 18 years old should marry a girl six years old! It has been stated that:

A man, aged thirty years, shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him, or a man of twenty-four a girl of eight years of age; if (the performance of) his duties would otherwise be impeded, he must marry sooner.⁷

This system still prevails in many parts of India.

An Aryan (Hindu) husband could at any time accuse his wife of infidelity and if the wife protested her innocence, the council of village elders would order a trial by fire. The accused woman would be required to pass through a blazing flame. Not just death, but any signs of burns would be taken as a sign of guilt and the wife would then have to undergo the penalty for infidelity.⁸ Adultery carried the death sentence in Aryan law – either way she would have to pay with her life for her husband's or elders' mere suspicions.

The ideal role model for this custom was Sita, the wife of Rama. She was required by her spouse, the most adored of Hindu Gods, to pass through the fire ordeal after her return from Lanka where she had been abducted by the king Ravana.

The death penalty was prescribed for Aryan women guilty of infidelity and the Manu Smriti, the most authoritative Indo-Aryan law-book states:

When a woman, proud of her relations [or abilities] deceives her husband (with another man), then the king should [ensure that] she be torn apart by dogs in a place much frequented by the people!⁹

Not only that, but adultery was defined as the simple touching of clothes and even conversing with men:

He who addresses the wife of another man at a pilgrimage site outside the village, in a forest, or at the confluence of rivers, suffer (the punishment for) adulterous acts.¹⁰

A wife, a son, and a slave – these three were declared to have no property; the wealth that they earned was (acquired) for the man to whom they belonged.

The Aryans, upon their invasion of India circa 1,500 bc, introduced the horrific custom of sati, meaning that the faithful wife would sacrifice herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband! The woman performing this 'noble act' found a niche in the hearts of all the votaries of Hinduism as one of the best

and noblest of her sex and often became herself the object of worship. It is sanctioned by the Hindu's most sacred texts, and was practiced from the fall of the Semito-Dravidian Indus Valley civilization to the modern age.

The most sacred of Aryan scriptures are the Vedas, and the Rig Veda, the oldest Veda, mentions the custom of sati. The following famous 'Sati Hymn' of the Rig Veda was (and still is) recited during the actual immolation of the widow:

Let these women, whose husbands are worthy and are living, enter the house with ghee¹¹ (applied) as collyrium (to their eyes). Let these wives first step into the pyre, tearless without any affliction and well adorned.¹²

If women do not perform sati, then they will be reborn into the lowly body of a woman again and again until they perform sati.¹³

It is the highest duty of the woman to immolate herself after her husband.¹⁴

Thus, it is evident that the Aryans introduced the custom of sati because it was encouraged in their scriptures and many goddesses even performed the act. Several of Krishna's (one of the most venerated Hindu gods) wives performed sati upon his death, including Rukmini, Rohini, Bhadra and Madura.¹⁵ Madri, the second wife of King Pandu considered an 'incarnation' of goddess Dhriti, and performed sati.¹⁶

Sati still continues to this day and in 1990, more than 50 widows were burnt alive in sati.¹⁷

Another aspect of women's suppression in Hinduism is the 'Devadasi system' that prevails even until today. Since the Hindu divinities loved music and dancing, a large number of dancing girls are attached to the temples, who are by no means vestal, and whose services are at the disposal of the ministrants of the cult. Devadasi (lit. servant of God) originally describes a Hindu religious practice in which girls are 'married' to a deity or temple. In addition to taking care of the temple, they learn and practice classical arts and dances. Some scholars are of the opinion that the custom of dedicating girls to temples became common in the 6th century ce, as most of the Puranas containing reference to it have been written during this period. Several Puranas recommended that arrangements should be made to enlist the services of singing girls for worship at temples.

The dedication ceremony of the devadasi is far more interesting. It initiates a young girl into the devadasi profession and is performed in the temple by the priest. In the Brahminical tradition, marriage is viewed as the only religious initiation (diksha) permissible to women. Thus the dedication is a symbolic 'marriage' of the pubescent girl to the temples' deity.

In these ceremonies, the devadasi-initiate consummates her marriage with an emblem of the god borrowed from the temple as a stand-in 'bridegroom'. In practice this often means that the priest will

have sexual union with her in addition to the other nuptial rites that are performed at a typical Hindu wedding. From then onward, the devadasi is considered a 'nitya sumangali,' meaning that the woman is eternally free from the adversity of widowhood. She would then perform her ritual and artistic duties in the temple.

The puberty ceremonies are an occasion not only for temple honour, but also for community feasting and celebration in which the local elites also participate. The music and dance and public display of the girl also helps to attract patrons.

Patronship in a majority of cases is achieved at the time of the dedication ceremony itself. The patron who secures this right of spending the first night with the girl can pay a fixed sum of money to maintain a permanent liaison with the devadasi, and pay to maintain a relationship for a fixed amount of time, or terminate the liaison after the deflowering ceremony. A permanent liaison with a patron does not bar the girl from entertaining other clients, unless he specifies otherwise. In case the girl entertains, then the other men have to leave the girl's house when her patron comes.

In modern India the tradition has become associated with commercial sexual exploitation, as described in a recent report by the National Human Rights Commission of the Government of India.¹⁸

According to this report, "after initiation as devadasis, women migrate either to nearby towns or other far-off cities to practise prostitution." A study from 1990 recorded that 45.9% of devadasis were prostitutes.¹⁹

Buddhism and Jainism were both protest movements against the Vedic system. However, they did not lead to any major changes in the status of women. This was due to the emphasis placed by these religions on asceticism. Thus, although these reformers opposed certain cruelties against women, yet they were considered as hurdles on the path to salvation. The Buddha was very strict in his insistence on asceticism. He left his home and his wife to attain nirvana (spiritual enlightenment) and considered women as a hindrance to reach that goal. Buddha is said to have induced his disciples not to look at a woman or even talk to her.²⁰

Never was the condition of women so bad, never was she held under greater subjugation, a slave to the caprice of man, than under the Mago-Zoroastrians. In relation to the sexes, the Persians recognized no law but that of a man's own will. He could marry his nearest kindred and divorce his wives at his pleasure. The system of female seclusion was not confined to the Persians alone as among the Ionic Greeks, women were confined within the Gynaikonitis, often kept under lock and key and never allowed to participate in public life. In Persia, the custom of employing eunuchs [a castrated man, in particular, one castrated early enough to have major hormonal consequences] to guard the women prevailed from the remotest antiquity.²¹

Now, let us turn to Arabia, the birth place of Islam.

The position of women in the pre-Islamic days was no better than our contemporary society. Arabia was a male dominated society in which women had no status of any kind other than as sex objects. The number of women a man could marry was not fixed; and when a man died, his son 'inherited' all of his wives, except his own mother.

A savage custom of the Arabs was to bury their female infants alive. Even if an Arab did not wish to bury his daughter alive, he still had to uphold this 'honourable tradition', being unable to resist social pressures. The Qur'an speaks out against this atrocity in clear words:

And when is announced unto (any) one of them a daughter, darkened becomes his face and he is filled with wrath. He hides himself from the people due to the bad the tidings given to him, (he ponders whether) he shall keep her with disgrace or bury her (alive) in the dust, behold (how) evil it is what they decide.²²

At another place it is quoted:

And kill not your children for fear of want, We sustain them and yourselves (too), Verily killing them is a great sin.²³

Also Allah says:

And when the female-baby buried (alive) shall be asked, for what sin (of hers) was she put to death?²⁴

Imam al-Bukhari, on the institution of marriage in Arabia before Islam, quotes from al-Zuhri, who says that 'Urwah b. Zubayr informed him that 'Ayesha told him that marriage in the pre-Islamic period was of four types:

(1) One was the marriage of people as it is today, where a man betroths his ward or his daughter to another man, and the latter assigns a dower to her and then marries her;

(2) Another type was when a man said to his wife when she was purified from her menses, "Go to X and have intercourse with him", her husband then stays away from her and does not touch her at all until it is clear that she is pregnant from that man with whom she sought intercourse. When it is clear that she is pregnant, her husband has intercourse with her if he wants. He acts thus simply from the desire for a noble child. This type of marriage was known as 'Nikah al-Istibda', the marriage of seeking intercourse;

(3) Another type was when a group of less than ten men used to visit a woman and all of them had to have intercourse with her. If she became pregnant and bore a child, when some nights had passed after the birth she sent for the men and all had to come to her. When they had come together in her presence, she would say to them, "All of you (men) know the result of what has taken place – I have borne a child and he is the child of ... " – naming whoever she wanted to choose from the group of ten men. Her child would then be attributed to that man and he was not allowed to refuse this;

(4) The last type is when many men frequent a woman and she does not keep herself from anyone who comes to her – these women were the prostitutes. They used to set banners up at the door of their house and were called “ladies of the flags.” Whoever wanted them, went in to their house. If one of these women conceived and bore a child, all of the men who had been with her gathered together and summoned the physiognomists. Then they attributed her child to the man whom they thought was the father, and the child remained attributed to him and was called his son and no one was permitted to object to this course. When the Prophet Muhammad came preaching the truth, he abolished all of these types of marriages of the Pre-Islamic era except that which people practice today.

Unfortunately, the West has not given Islam a fair chance. Every opportunity is utilized to denigrate and blaspheme the true Islamic point of view. Due to blindly and gullibly swallowing the filth that is fed to them day and night by the Western media, even Muslims have become adversely affected by such falsehood and have begun to doubt the true Islamic standpoint.

How remarkably Ayatullah Sayyid Ruhullah al-Khomeini stated it when he described a woman in Islam by saying:

From the Islamic viewpoint, women have sensitive roles in the formation of an Islamic community. Islam promotes a woman to the extent that she is able to recover her human status in the community and cast off her status as an object, and commensurate with such growth, she can assume responsibilities in developing the Islamic government.²⁵

In several places, the Noble Qur'an discusses the equal position that a woman enjoys alongside man:

Verily the Muslim men and Muslim women, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obedient men and the obedient women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the alms-giving men and the alms-givings women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their private parts and the women who guard (their private parts), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember Allah (much), for them has been prepared forgiveness and a great recompense.²⁶

At another juncture, Allah says:

Whosoever does good, whether male or female, and is be a believer, then We shall certainly make that person live a good and pure life, and certainly We will give them their return with the best of what they were doing.²⁷

In yet another verse we read:

And whosoever does deeds of righteousness, whether male or female, and is a believer, then these shall enter Paradise and they shall not be wronged (even) to the husk of a date-stone.²⁸

Each of the five pillars of Islam is as important for women as it is for men, and there is no differentiation in their reward:

And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves, mates, that you may dwell (inclined) unto them, and He placed love and compassion between the two of you. Indeed in this are signs for a people who reflect.²⁹

This is a very apt definition of the relationship between man and woman as they are not bound together only by a physical relationship, but rather are brought together by love and mercy and such a definition and description comprises mutual care, consideration, respect and affection.

The Qur'an states:

They (your wives) are an apparel for you (the husbands) and you (the husbands) are an apparel for them.³⁰

As an apparel gives protection, warmth, comfort and decency, so too a husband and wife offer each other intimacy, comfort and protection from adultery and other vices.

Allah also states:

I will not suffer the work of any of you that works to be lost, be he male or female, the one of you being from the other.³¹

Every man or woman should pursue his or her education as far as it is possible. One of the main aims of acquiring knowledge in Islam is to become Allah-conscious, and in the history of Islam, we find that there were women who were narrators of hadith, mystics, scholars, authors, poets and teachers in their own right! They utilized their knowledge within the precepts of Islam.

Indeed, Islam was founded with the rights of women inbuilt within the tenets of the Shari'ah and therefore a Muslim woman is totally liberated and independent and within the limits of the Shari'ah, she can stand side by side men! Today in many Muslim countries, we find women in various professional fields gaining excellence and reaching their goals with modesty and virtue.

Islam is criticized for two reasons which are considered to be 'injustice against women'; namely the hijab (Islamic covering for women) and polygamy. In reality, hijab does not hamper the socio-psych-economic growth of women – in fact a woman wearing the hijab commands more respect and is treated as an individual and not as an object of lust.

Rana Kabbani, a modern day author, writes in her book:

The wearing of Islamic dress gives these women greater – rather than less – freedom and mobility, for in such austere garb and with the mentality that accompanies it, they are much less likely to be closely

monitored by their families. Wearing the hijab can be a form of liberation, freeing women from being sexual objects, releasing them from the trap of Western dress and dictates of Western fashion. Just as feminists in the West have reflected on the connection between 'feminist clothes' and female oppression, so Muslim feminists reject the outward symbols of sexual allure. In favour of the hijab, it can be said that by distancing its wearer from the world, it enriches spiritual life, grants freedom from material preoccupations, and erases class differences by expressing solidarity with others in the same uniform. Since all women look the same in it, it is a most effective equalizer, and since it camouflages rich clothing, it is in keeping with the Islamic injunction against ostentation.³²

Frankly, what freedom and equal status has the Western civilization give to women? Prostitution, massage parlors, lesbianism, illegal mistresses, one-night stands, nudity and whamelessness! These are only some of the 'rights' that the 'Western world' has given to women. It has made women the cheapest commodity on the face of the Earth – from a car to a pack of candy, everything sells with the picture of a nude or semi-nude woman. The body of this cheap woman is the property of one and all. Every lusty and lecherous man is at full liberty to cast his filthy gaze upon her anatomy and commit everything evil and profane in his mind and heart. How cheap and despised is this woman on show!? How cheap is this woman the West has created!

On the contrary, the woman in Islam is a precious jewel not to be viewed by all. She is far too respectable than to be viewed and exhibited to any lecherous man. Her beauty and charms are reserved for the only person that truly appreciates and loves her – her husband. Thus, she is highly protected and covered at all times, unlike the cheap, shameless woman of the West, who has become the playmate of thousands, but loved by none for who she truly is.

In countries that have given women the so-called rights of freedom and equality and left them free to do as they wish, they are now shedding tears of remorse over the pathetic plight of their degeneration and disintegrating societies. Their women being economically and socially independent are no longer faithful and dedicated daughters, wives, sisters and mothers.

Marriage has become outdated and old-fashioned. Instead they prefer companionship, which becomes a relationship with no commitment binding upon the man or the woman. Children of such parents become delinquents and drug addicts – in summary, the whole society begins to decay and disintegrate so fast such that we see today, many countries have reached a point of no return.

Will Durant, the famous sociologist, says:

City life prevents men from observing the seasons, while sexual passions increase and conditions make indulgence easier. A civilization that makes marriage economically impossible before the age of thirty, drives a man to sexual deviation, weakens continence, and reduces purity from its original esteem as a virtue to distant lip-service as an impractical dream. Art enhances human beauties, man cease to count their sins. Women, claiming equality with men, fall prey to passions. Love affairs unlimited and premarital

cohabitation becomes the rule rather than the exception. The streets may be free of prostitutes – but not through fear of the police! It is because women have bankrupted prostitutes by taking over their business for free.³³

Before the advent of Islam, a man had no limit in regards to the number of their wives that he could keep. Islam imposed a limit and allowed plurality of marriage with the idea of abolishing adultery and although it allowed polygamy, it laid down strict rules so as to be safeguarded from misuse.

The Qur'an states:

Then marry those who seem good to you, two or three or four, and if you fear that you shall not deal justly (with so many) then (marry) one only.³⁴

In another verse we are told:

And even if due to some circumstances divorce should take place among them, the woman should under no circumstances be wronged. And for the divorced women (too) (shall) be a provision in fairness, (this is) a duty on those who guard themselves (against evil).³⁵

Allah also mentions in the Qur'an:

O Prophet! (Say to the people) When you divorce (your) women, divorce them at their prescribed period, and reckon the iddah (prescribed waiting period), and fear (the wrath of) Allah your Lord, and turn them not out of their houses, nor shall they (themselves) go out, unless they commit any indecency. These are the limits of Allah, and whosoever transgresses the limits of Allah, then indeed he does injustice to his own self. And when they reached their iddah (the term prescribed), then either retain them with fairness or part with them with kindness.³⁶

History is full of examples that prove that polygamy existed, rather ruthlessly among the major religions of the world long before the advent of Islam.

The Sasanian king, Khusroe Pervaz had 3,000 wives and 12,000 slave girls who were musical performers.³⁷ In China the Li Ki law gave every man the right to have up to 130 wives. In Israel one man could have several hundred wives. Charlemagne had 400 and Ardeshir Babekan had about the same number. Nor did the Gospel, following the Torah, abrogate or condemn this practice or utter a decree to ban it such that up until the second half of the 8th century ad and the time of Charlemagne, polygamy was customary in Europe and was not condemned by the Church!

Among all Eastern nations of antiquity, polygamy was a recognized institution. Its practice by royalty, which bore the insignia of divinity, sanctified its observance to the people.

Among the Hindus, polygamy, in both its aspects, prevailed from ancient times. Krishna, the most revered of Hindu deities, is believed to have had 16,108 wives! Dashratha, the King of Ayodhya and the

father of Rama – another of the revered Hindu deities, married three wives.

Apparently, among the ancient Medes, Babylonians, Assyrians and Persians, there was no restriction as to the number of wives a man could take.

Polygamy existed among the Israelites, before the time of Prophet Moses, and it continued after him without any limit on the number of marriages that a Hebrew husband could contract. In later times, the Talmud restricted the number of wives a man could have through the ability of the husband to maintain them properly, and although the Rabbis counseled that a man should not take more than four wives, the Karaites differed from them and did not recognize the validity of any limitation.

To the Persians, religion offered a premium on the plurality of wives.³⁸

Among the Syro-Phoenician races, whom the Israelites displaced, conquered or destroyed, polygamy was degraded into bestiality.

Among the Thracians, Lyndians, and the Pelasgian races that settled in different parts of Europe and Western Asia, the customs of plurality of marriages prevailed to an inordinate extent, and dwarfs all comparison with the practice prevailing elsewhere!³⁹

As for the Athenians, the most civilized and the most cultured of all the nations of antiquity, the wife was a mere chattel, marketable and transferable to others and a subject of testamentary disposition. She was regarded as being evil however indispensable for ensuring the orderliness of the household and for the procreation of children. An Athenian was allowed to have any number of wives, and the Demosthenes glorified in the possession by his people of three classes of women, two of which furnished the legal and semi-legal wives.⁴⁰

Among the Spartans, though the men were not allowed, unless under special circumstances, to have more than one wife, the women could have and almost did have more than one husband.⁴¹

History proves conclusively that until very recent times, polygamy was not considered so reprehensive as it is now. St. Augustine himself seems to have observed in it no intrinsic immorality or sinfulness, and declared that polygamy was not a crime if it was in the legal institution of a country.

Considering the exploitation of woman in the name of liberation, numerous non-Muslim scholars too voice their support in favour of the institution of polygamy.

Dr. Annie Besant says:

When we see thousands of miserable women who crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouths to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, happier for a woman, more respectable for a woman, to live in Islamic polygamy, united to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms surrounded with respect, than to be seduced, cast out

into the streets, perhaps with an illegitimate child outside the pale of law – unsheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passerby, night after night rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all.

In nations in which multiple marriages is legal, it is made possible for practically all women to have a husband, children and a true family life which meets their spiritual needs and satisfies their feminine instincts.

Unfortunately Church laws in Europe have not allowed multiple marriages and left many women to a life of spinsterhood. Some died unsatisfied; some were driven by their desires or by the need to earn their livelihood into immorality; some perished with qualms of conscience and broken hearts.

Nor can I understand, after giving much thought to the matter, why a man, whose wife falls ill of a chronic or incurable disease or proves barren or unable to bear a living child, should not take a second wife alongside the first. This is a question the Church should answer – unfortunately it cannot.

Good laws are those which ensure a happy life when obeyed, not those which deprive people of happiness or bind them hand and foot in the trammels of unnecessary bondage or which incite people to despise them and so to rush to the other extreme of corruption, prostitution or other kinds of vice.⁴²

It has also been stated by Dr. Gustave Le Bon that:

Nothing has been more criticized in Europe than Eastern customs of multiple marriages. No view held in Europe has shown the same amount of ignorance and error as this criticism. Surely the legal multiple marriage of the East is better than the hypocritical secretive multiple marriages of the West. The clandestine nature of the illicit relationship is degrading to both parties. The legalization of multiple marriages is far more seemly in every respect.⁴³

It is true that today, far too many women in the East lead an unsatisfactory way of life and face humiliation, neglect and deprivation. But this is not due to Islam's regulations – rather it is due to the neglect of religious precepts in political, social and economical institution by Muslims themselves. Nonetheless it is far better than the degradation and exploitation of women in the West under the pretext of liberation.

In the autobiography of Bertrand Russell, who was one of the most headstrong opponents of polygamy, we read that in his early life, apart from his mother, two women created a great impression upon him. One of them was Alys, his first wife, and the other one was his friend lady Ottoline Morell, one of the well-known women of that period and a friend of many of the early 20th century writers.

It seems that it was his love affairs that brought an end to his relationship with his wife. Russell himself wrote that one afternoon he resolved to ride to the country houses near the city on a bicycle, and that “all of a sudden I felt that I no longer loved Alys!”

The Bible also allows polygamy, to cite a few examples, “He (Solomon) had seven hundred wives of

royal birth and three hundred concubines.”⁴⁴ At another place it is quoted, “If he take upon him another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall not diminish her.”⁴⁵

We now turn to the vision of Islam and its teachings on women. The best and the most perfect example of a woman’s excellence and significance in Islam can be found in the glorious and peerless personality of Sayyidah Fatimah, the only daughter of Prophet Muhammad and Lady Khadijah. She was also his most beloved daughter and was the wife of Imam ‘Ali and the mother of eleven infallible leaders (Imams).

She combined in herself all the noble qualities, merits and ideals that even the most virtuous of men have failed to achieve. Her unparalleled wisdom, excellent traits, unfaltering character, lofty morals and firm belief in Allah reigns superior such that she stands unequalled in the annals of history.

What more excellence could Islam bestow upon a woman when we find a woman in an immaculate personality of Fatimah! And who else, except the Noble Prophet could praise his daughter suitably. Several times he declared, “Fatimah is a part of me; whoever delights her, delights me; and whoever enrages her, enrages me.”

Islam has produced numerous virtuous ladies who were peerless in their age, but none could attain the lofty position that Lady Fatimah did.

Prophet Adam’s wife Hawwa; Prophet Ibrahim’s wives Hajra and Sarah; The Pharaoh’s believing wife Asiyah; Prophet Isa’s mother Sayyidah Maryam; some of Prophet Muhammad’s wives, at the head of which was Sayyidah Khadijah, his mother Aminah b. Wahab, the mother of Imam ‘Ali, Fatimah b. Asad, etc. were ladies of lofty characters, but it was Fatimah alone who was declared as the “Mistress of the women of the worlds”, from the beginning until the end of time.

Her eminence is evident at several occasions when the Prophet himself would stand up to greet her whenever she came into his presence, and this was not due to a father’s love for his daughter, but rather due to her own identity and her distinction. Indeed, tongues fall short of words to describe her eminence, and pens lack the ability to note down her merits.

Numerous books have been written by Shi’a and non-Shi’a scholars upon the life of this eminent personality, to name a few:

1. Fatimah al-Zahra Ummul Imamah wa Sayyadatun Nisa written by Ayatullah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Naini
2. Fatimah al-Zahra minal Mahd ilal Lahad written by Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Kadhim al-Qazwini
3. Fadak fil Tarikh written by Ayatullah Sayyed Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr

4. Fatimah al-Zahra: Umme Abiha written by Ayatullah Sayyid Fadhil al-Milani
5. Wafat al-Siddiqatuz Zahra written by Sayyed ‘Abdul-Razzaq al-Muqarram
6. Fatimah al-Zahra: Qudwah wa Uswah written by Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Modarresi
7. Fatimah al-Zahra al Mar’ah al Namuzajjiyyah fil Islam written by Ayatullah Shaykh Ibrahim Amini
8. Fatimah al-Zahra written by Ayatullah Sayyid Dastaghaib Shirazi
9. Balagatul Fatemiyyah minal dawha al Muhammadiyah written by Sayyid Jasim al-Shabbar
10. l’ilamu Anni Fatimah written by Shaykh ‘Abdul-Hamid al-Muhajir
11. Al-Batul al-Azra written by Muhammad Husayn Shamsuddin
12. Al-Batul Fatimah al-Zahra written by Dr. ‘Abdul-Fattah Muhammad al-Halu
13. Ummul Hasnain binte Akram Rasul as-Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra al-Batul written by Ahmad ‘Abdul-Mun’im ‘Abdus-Salam al-Halawani
14. Al-Sugur al-Basemah fi Fadhail Fatimah written by Jalaluddin Suyuti
15. Al-Islam yuqif ila janibil mar’ah wa yukarrimoha fi shakhsiyyatiz Zahra written by ‘Abdul-Rasul ‘Ali Khan

The book in your hands, *Baytul Ahzan Fi Masaib Sayyadatun Niswan*, (The House of Sorrows relating to the sorrows of the Mistress of the Women) is authored by the celebrated scholar Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi.

This book focuses on the glorious life of Sayyidah Fatimah and also discusses in detail the heart-breaking episodes of Saqifah and Fadak which took place after the death of the Noble Prophet. Wherever I have found it necessary, I have annexed notes to the translation to further understanding and clarification, and the readers are requested to refer to these notes.

This book is the third in the translation series of the works of Shaykh al-Qummi’s books – the first being *Manazilul Akhirah* which focuses on the life in the next world after this life; and the second one being *Nafasul Mahmum* concerning the tragic event of Kerbala.

‘Arabic being an eloquent and lucid language, it is usually impossible to translate certain words or phrases into any other language, thus it becomes necessary at some places to quote the original ‘Arabic words.

Notwithstanding whatever knowledge and effort put in such work, it remains far from being perfect, for perfection is the essence of Allah. I therefore request the readers to write in, should they feel it

necessary, to raise any point or make any remarks in so far as the translation is concerned and not the actual text of the book.

For the translation of the sermon of Sayyidah Fatimah, I have referred to the book of Ayatullah al-Uzma Shaykh Husayn 'Ali Muntazari that explains her sermon in detail, rather than translating it myself, for it is impossible for an ordinary person like me, to comprehend the eloquence of the words of the Infallibles. His explanation on her sermon was given in his 'Ba'thul Kharij' lectures (highest level of lectures in the Islamic seminary) delivered by the Ayatullah to the students of the Islamic seminary and have been compiled into a book.

As for the Qur'anic verses, I have referred to the English translation and Commentary by Ayatullah Shaykh Mahdi Pooya Yazdi and S.V. Mir Ahmad 'Ali, published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an Inc., Elmhurst, NY.

May Sayyidah Fatimah accept this humble service of mine seeking her pleasure and the pleasure of Allah, and may Allah exalt the position of the author of this informative book, Shaykh 'Abbas b. Muhammad Ridha al-Qummi, and offer him refuge under His Emphyrean on the Day of Resurrection and count him among the slaves of the Ahlul Bayt.

May Allah hasten the auspicious reappearance of Imam al-Mahdi, the one who will fill the earth with justice and equity as it is filled with injustice and oppression; and may Allah include us among his slaves and adherents.

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17th August 2007 ce

3rd Sha'ban 1428 ah

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Praise and gratitude belongs to the Almighty Allah and salutations upon the Prophet of Mercy – Muhammad, and upon his virtuous progeny, who are the guides of mankind.

This book is a summary on the glorious life of the best woman of the two worlds, the mother of the Infallible Imams, Fatimah al-Zahra, the 'Human Hourie'.

I have divided this book into four chapters and have further arranged the chapters into different sections:

Chapter 1: Circumstances relating to the birth of Sayyidah Zahra, her names and the reasons for these names being attributed to her.

Chapter 2: Her virtues and character, and her marriage to Imam 'Ali.

Chapter 3: Incidents after the death of the Prophet, her chivalrous sermon, her resistance, and other related topics.

Chapter 4: Her anxiety and grief upon the separation of her honourable father, her will to Imam 'Ali, and topics relating to her last days.

'Abbas b. Muhammad Ridha (May Allah forgive them both)

Fatimah az-Zahra was born in Makkah on the twentieth day of the month of Jumadi ath-Thani in the fifth year of 'The Declaration of Prophethood' (Bi'that), when Prophet Muhammad was 45 years old, as narrated by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq and Imam Muhammad al-Baqir; Sayyidah Khadijah b. Khuwaylid was her mother.

During one of his ascensions (Me'raj) to the heavens, Prophet Muhammad consumed various fruits, fresh dates and apples of Paradise. Allah transformed this food into water in the loins of the Prophet and when he returned to Earth, he spent the night with Sayyidah Khadijah, and subsequently, the light of Fatimah entered her womb. Thus Fatimah is referred to as the 'human hourie' in the sense that she lived on Earth like a human, however was from among the houries of Paradise.

From that point onward, whenever the Prophet desired to smell the sweet fragrance of Paradise, he would go to Fatimah and smell her, as she emitted the fragrance of Paradise and of the tree of Tuba.¹ The Prophet would also frequently kiss his daughter although this was disliked by some of his wives due to their ignorance of the esteemed position of Sayyidah Zahra.

It is possible that a question may arise regarding the veracity of the above report since the ascension of the Prophet occurred six months before the Hijrah (migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah), while according to other reports, it occurred in the second year of the 'Declaration of Prophethood', while Sayyidah Zahra was born in the fifth year of the 'Declaration of Prophethood' – thus, how can the above report be accurate?

It should be noted that the ascension of the Prophet was not limited to a one-time event, such that this

incident may be doubtful. Rather, it has been related from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that the ascension of the Prophet of Allah took place one hundred and twenty times, and each time Allah advised the Prophet regarding the 'Wilayah' (mastership) and 'imamah' (leadership) of 'Ali and the Imams after him – more than all other religious precepts and obligations.

'Allamah al-Majlisi states in his work, Bihar al-Anwar, that one day the Prophet was seated at a place named al-Abtah (between Makkah and Mina). He was accompanied by Imam 'Ali, 'Abbas b. 'Abdul Muttalib, Hamzah b. 'Abdul Muttalib, 'Ammar b. Yasir, Mandhar b. ahdhah, Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Suddenly, Jibra'il appeared in his own enormous form, and his wings spanned from the east to the west and he said, "O Muhammad! Allah the Almighty sends you greetings and commands you to distant yourself from Khadijah for forty days." This order was very difficult upon the Prophet for Khadijah was very dear to him and he was attached to her. However (because Allah's order was dearer to him than anything else) the Prophet remained away from her for forty days and spent his days fasting and nights in worship until the last days arrived.

He sent 'Ammar b. Yasir to Sayyidah Khadijah with the message that, "O Khadijah! Do not presume that I have distanced myself from you due to lack of love or heedlessness. Rather, (be informed that) my Lord has commanded me to do this so that He may execute His Decree. Do not imagine anything else except fairness and felicity. Allah the Exalted praises you abundantly on a daily basis in the presence of His Esteemed angels. When it becomes dark, close your door and rest on the bed, and behold that I have taken abode in the house of Fatimah b. Asad."

Sayyidah Khadijah was deeply grieved due to the separation of the Prophet during the forty days period.

Upon its completion, Jibra'il descended upon the Prophet and said, "Allah sends greetings to you and says that you must prepare yourself for the recompense and gift." The Prophet asked, "What is the gift from Allah?" Jibra'il displayed ignorance, when suddenly Mika'il descended with a tray covered with a cloth of fine silk or woven with heavenly gold brocade and placed it in front of the Prophet. Jibra'il proceeded further and said, "Allah commands you to break your fast tonight with this meal."

Imam 'Ali relates that, "The Prophet had taken abode at our house. At the time of breaking his fast, he would command me to open the doors so that anyone could come in and partake of the food with him. But that night, the Prophet commanded me to stand at the door of the house and said, 'O son of Abu Talib! Consuming this meal is forbidden upon anyone except for me.' I sat at the door and the Prophet entered therein alone and when he uncovered the tray, he saw one bunch of dates and one of grapes. He ate until he was satiated and also drank the water (which was there). Thereafter, he extended his sacred hands to wash them. Jibra'il poured the water, Mika'il washed them and Israfil wiped his hands. Then they ascended to the heavens with the leftover food.

The Prophet stood up to perform the (recommended) prayers, when suddenly Jibra'il reappeared and said, "The prayers are forbidden upon you at this moment, you should go and meet Khadijah, for Allah

has promised Himself that tonight He shall create a virtuous child from your loins.” Hearing this, the Prophet proceeded to the house of Khadijah after forty days of separation.

An Account from Sayyidah Khadijah

Sayyidah Khadijah relates that, “I was accustomed to living alone during this period, and when it would get dark, I would cover my head, draw the curtains and lock the doors. I would then offer my prayers, turn off the lights and retire for the night. During that night (after the Prophet’s forty day separation), I was half-awake when the Prophet arrived and softly knocked at the door. I asked, ‘Who knocks at the door, for knocking at this door is not lawful for anyone except Muhammad.’

The Prophet of Allah replied with a sweet and soft voice, ‘O Khadijah! Open the door, I am Muhammad.’ I was overjoyed and opened the door and the Prophet entered therein. It was the custom of the Prophet that whenever he entered the house, he would call for water, perform the ablution, offer two units of (recommended) prayers and then he would retire for the night. But that night, he neither asked for water, nor prayed’ but instead, he reclined on the bed (with me). He arose from the bed and by Allah, the Prophet had not yet left me when I felt the light of Fatimah in my womb and felt the heaviness of pregnancy within me.”

The author (of this book) says that the Prophet remained aloof from Sayyidah Khadijah for forty days so as to prepare for a gift from Allah which would manifest in the sacred form of Sayyidah Fatimah. Thus in the supplications addressed to Sayyidah Zahra we read the following:

“Salutations upon the chaste and virtuous ... Fatimah, the daughter of Your Messenger and part of his flesh; the core of his heart; a piece of his liver; the one whom You chose for him, and the gift specialized with revelation...”

Thus, the Prophet remained aloof from Sayyidah Khadijah for forty days to reveal the esteemed position of ‘The Mistress of all the Women’ – Sayyidah Zahra – and indeed, none has the ability to frame this event into words. Allah sent a tray full of dates and grapes from Paradise to the presence of the Prophet to signify that these two fruits are a source of prosperity and plentiful gains, since no other tree produces more abundance than the date and the grape trees. Apart from this, these two trees were created from the excess mud that was (left over from the creation of) Prophet Adam and it is not far to assume that it signifies the abundance of (her) ‘chaste, pure, and felicitous progeny’, as will be quoted later at its appropriate place.

In regards to Jibra’il’s statement to the Prophet that, “The prayers are forbidden upon you at this moment”, he meant the recommended (nawafil) prayers and not the obligatory ones, for the Prophet had already completed the obligatory prayers before breaking his fast, and Allah is the Best Knower.

Her Birth

Shaykh as-Saduq relates through his chain of transmitters from Mufadhdhal b. 'Umar that, "I asked Imam as-Sadiq regarding the birth of Sayyidah Fatimah and the Imam replied, 'When Khadijah married the Prophet of Allah, the women of Makkah (due to their hatred with the faith of Islam) distanced themselves from her. They would not visit her house, or greet her, nor would they permit any of the women to visit her. Due to this, Khadijah was frightful and extremely distressed, lest they also harm the Prophet. However when Khadijah became pregnant with Fatimah, she (Fatimah) would speak to her mother from the womb and console her – something which Khadijah concealed from the Prophet. One day the Prophet entered the house and heard Khadijah speaking with someone and asked, 'Who are you speaking to?' Khadijah replied, 'The child in my womb speaks to me and is my companion.' The Prophet continued, 'Jibra'il informs me that this child is a daughter, a chaste and auspicious child, and very soon Allah will multiply my progeny through her and the Divinely appointed leaders (Imams) will emerge from her progeny and will be made the vicegerents and (my) heirs after the termination of revelation (i.e. after my death).'"²

Sayyidah Khadijah spent the days of pregnancy in this similar manner until the time of the birth of Sayyidah Fatimah arrived. She sent a message to the women of Quraysh and the Bani Hashim to assist her in childbirth, as was the custom that other women would assist a pregnant woman during her delivery. However the women of Quraysh and Bani Hashim replied saying that because she had not paid heed to their words and had rejected them by marrying Muhammad, the orphan of Abu Talib ('Abdullah) who was indigent, they would not come to help her, nor assist her in any manner. What an extreme moment it was during the initial days of his official proclamation! The Prophet had many enemies and Islam was isolated to such an extent that even at the time of childbirth, people distanced themselves from the wife of the Prophet and refused to assist her!

Khadijah became restless and dejected after hearing their reply, but her Lord did not forsake her. Suddenly she saw four women with a wheat-coloured complexion and tall stature, similar to the women of Bani Hashim, enter her room. Looking at them, Khadijah was confused. Suddenly one of them said, "O Khadijah, do not be grieved! We have come to your aid by the command of Allah. We are your sisters, I am Sarah (the wife of Prophet Ibrahim); this is Asiyah, the daughter of Mazahim (the believing wife of Pharaoh), who shall be your companion in Paradise; while this is Maryam, the daughter of 'Imran; and the fourth one is Kulthum, the sister of Prophet Musa b. 'Imran. Allah the Almighty has sent us to assist you at the time of childbirth."

One of them sat at the right side of Khadijah, the second on her left, the third facing her and the fourth behind her head. At that moment Sayyidah Fatimah arrived in this world in a pure and virtuous state. As soon as she lay on the earth, a radiant light emerged from her that shone upon all the houses of Makkah, and there was nothing in the east or in the west, except that her glittering light gleamed upon everything.

Suddenly, ten houries of Paradise descended, carrying trays and pitchers filled with the water of the fountain of al-Kawthar. The woman standing in front of Khadijah lifted up Fatimah and washed her with the water (of al-Kawthar). Then two white pieces of cloth which were whiter than milk and emitted fragrance better than musk and amber were brought and she was wrapped in one of them, while the second one was used as a veil and scarf. Thereafter they requested Fatimah to speak. She opened her mouth and bore witness to the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad in these words, “I bear witness that there is no other deity worthy of worship except Allah; and that my father is the Messenger of Allah, the chief of the Prophets, and that ‘Ali is the chief of the vicegerents, and my sons are the leaders of the tribes (Asbat).”³

Thereafter, she greeted the four women addressing them by their names and they in turn attended to her with content and smiling faces. The houries and the dwellers of Paradise greeted one another upon the birth of Fatimah, while a glorious light shone upon the heavens, the like which the angels had never seen before.

The women then turned towards Khadijah and said, “Take hold of your child, who is chaste, virtuous and filled with prosperity and auspiciousness, and a blessed progeny will emerge from her.”

Khadijah took her in her arms with delight and fed her. Fatimah’s age increased daily equalling to a month (of an ordinary child) and every month equalling one year compared to other children.

Her Names

Yunus b. abiyan relates that Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq said, “Fatimah possesses nine names in the presence of Allah: Fatimah, as-Siddiqah (the honest one), al-Mubarakah (the blessed one), at-Tahirah (the virtuous one), az-Zakiyyah (the chaste one), ar-Radhiyyah (one who is pleased with Allah), al-Mardhiyyah (one who will be satisfied by Allah), al-Muhaddatha (a person other than a prophet with whom the angels speak to), and al-Zahra (the splendid one).” He continued, “Do you know what Fatimah means?” I replied, “O my master, relate it to me”, and he replied, “The one separated from every type of filth.” He then continued, “If the Commander of the Faithful⁴ ‘Ali would not have been created, there would have been no match for Fatimah throughout this entire world, from the time of Adam until the end of the world.”⁵

It is also related in some traditions that she was named Fatimah because she and her adherents would be ‘separated’ from the fire of hell, and also because she was different from others due to her wisdom and excellence, and because she was immune from the menstrual blood. While it is beyond human imagination to recognize her excellence, Allah has kept her, her monotheist and believing progeny, and her friends away from the fire of hell.

It is also related that her name Fatimah originates from the name of Allah, ‘al-Fatir’ (which means The Originator).

She is named 'at-Tahirah' because she was purified from all filth and error and because she never witnessed the blood of menstruation or childbirth.

She was named 'al-Zahra' because the light of her beauty shone three times daily for the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali.

Abu Hashim Ja'fari relates, "I asked Imam Hasan al-'Askari as to why Sayyidah Fatimah was named 'al-Zahra' and the Imam replied, 'The illuminated countenance of Sayyidah Fatimah shone for Imam 'Ali in the beginning of the day, similar to the shining sun; and at the time of the early evening similar to a radiant moon; while at sunset it resembled the glowing stars.'"

Shaykh as-Saduq relates from Imam 'Ali al-Ridha that he said, "When the moon of the month of Ramadhan would shine in the sky, the light of Sayyidah Zahra would prevail upon the light of the moon and would conceal it. The moon would be visible only when Fatimah would not be present."

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq relates, "Fatimah is named al-Zahra because a dome of red rubies has been created by Allah for her in Paradise. The height of the dome measures a distance equalling one year (of travel) and is suspended in the air by the power of Allah, without being held by chains from the Heavens so as to take care of it, nor is it supported by pillars on the Earth so as to be attached to it (it is suspended in between the Heavens and the Earth). The dome contains ten thousand doors and on each door, one thousand angels stand on guard. The dwellers of Paradise will behold the dome just as you see the shining stars on the skies, and it will be said to them: 'This glowing (castle) belongs to Fatimah.'"

It is related in another tradition that once, Allah wished to test His angels. He sent a black cloud towards them that turned the atmosphere dark such that they could not even see one another. They requested Allah to remove it and Allah accepted their plea and created the light of Fatimah which was similar to a lamp. Allah suspended it (the lamp) all throughout the Heavens such that the seven Heavens and the seven Earths all glittered by the glow of her light. The angels praised and glorified Allah and He said, "I swear by My Honour and My Glory! Certainly I shall gift the recompense of your praise and glorification (of Myself) until the Day of Resurrection to the friends of Zahra and the friends of her father, her husband and her sons."

Among the other names of Sayyidah Zahra are: al-Hisan, al-Hurrah, as-Sayyidah (the mistress), al-Azra' (the virgin), al-Hawra' (a hourie), Maryam al-Kubra (the elder Maryam) and al-Batul (one who never experienced the blood of menstruation). It is related that she is named 'al-Batul' because she never witnessed the blood of menstruation; and similarly Maryam, the mother of Prophet 'Isa (Jesus) was also named 'al-Batul.⁶ Some scholars relate that her name 'al-Batul' is derived from 'Batal' (to remain detached), and it means that she remained aloof from the (pleasures of the) world and sought closeness to Allah; while others say that she was named so because she was unparalleled and unique.

Ibn Shahr Ashub states in his book al-Manaqib that, "It is related through trustworthy authorities that Sayyidah Fatimah had twenty names, and each of her names conveyed one of her excellences", and

these names have been quoted by Ibn Babawayh in his book, Mawlid Fatimah.

Her kunyah (titles) have been stated as: Ummul Hasan, Ummul Husayn, Ummul Muhsin, Ummul Imams, Umme Abiha and Ummul Mu'minin and these titles have been quoted in the salutations addressed to her.

It is also quoted in al-Manaqib that in the Heavens she is known by the name of al-Nuriyyah (the glowing one), al-Samawiyyah (the heavenly one) and al-Haniyah (the compassionate). She is named al-Haniyah because she was kind and affectionate towards her husband and sons.

An Example of Her Kindness Towards her Husband

It is sufficient to mention that she bore patiently the physical strikes, insults, breaking of her bones, the wounds of the whip on her arms that had swelled, and all of this patience was due to her immense love towards her husband and in defence of his sanctity, until ultimately she was martyred due to these sufferings.

While on her deathbed she wept and Imam 'Ali asked her, "Why do you weep?" She answered, "I weep upon the sufferings that will befall you after my death." The Imam replied, "Do not weep. I swear by Allah that if these calamities befall me in the way of Allah, I consider them to be minute and naught."

Shaykh al-Mufid in his book Kitab al-Irshad relates that in the eighth year of the migration, the Prophet of Allah commanded Amirul Mo'minin 'Ali to proceed on an expedition of Dhat al-Salasil⁷ to the sandy region of Yabis to crush the rebellion of the enemies. Imam 'Ali possessed a headband that he would tie whenever he would have to go to a fierce battle and when he resolved to go for this expedition, he came to Sayyidah Fatimah and ask her for it. She asked, "Where are you going and where does my father intend to send you?" The Imam replied, "I have been commanded to proceed on an expedition to the sandy region (of Yabis)." Hearing this, Sayyidah Zahra started weeping due to the danger of that battle and her love and concern for her husband. At that moment, Prophet Muhammad entered the house and told her, "Why do you weep? Do you fear that your husband will be killed? No, he will not be killed by Allah's will." Imam 'Ali said, "O Prophet of Allah! Do you not desire that I should be martyred and thus enter Paradise?"

Her Affection Towards her Sons

It is sufficient to quote what Shaykh as-Saduq has quoted from Hammad who relates from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that he said, "It is not lawful for a man to marry two women (at the same time) from among the descendants of Sayyidah Fatimah, for when this news reaches her she is agrieved." Hammad asked, "Does this news reach her?" Imam replied, "Yes, by Allah!"

A Dream of Ibn 'Unayn – A Seventh Century Poet

An astonishing event has been quoted in the book Umdatul Talib regarding Bani Dawud b. Musa al-Hasani who is renowned amongst the genealogists and others, and it is transmitted through a reliable chain of authorities and quoted in the 'Diwan' of Ibn 'Unayn.

The famous poet, Ibn 'Unayn, once proceeded towards Makkah with a large amount of wealth and merchandise. On the way, he encountered some of the sadat of Bani Dawud, who robbed him and destroyed all of his merchandise; they even took the clothes off of his body, injured him and left him alone in a wretched state.

Ibn 'Unayn wrote a letter to 'Aziz b. Ayyub, the King of Yemen, complaining to him (about what had happened to him) and requested his assistance. During that period, the king of Yemen had dispatched his brother, Malik Nasir to the bank of a river that he had freed from the hands of the Europeans and had conquered. Malik Nasir requested his brother (the king) to permit him to stay for a while at the banks of the river.

Ibn 'Unayn, in his letter that was comprised of a provocative couplet, incited the king of Yemen to seek revenge from the sadat who had plundered his belongings. The starting words of the couplet were as follows:

“Your virtuous qualities and munificence are beyond the capacity of eulogizing by the eloquent; you have reached such position with regards to your benevolence that has exceeded the frontiers of goodness; do not say that I have conquered the bank that was under the colonization of the Europeans, for the bank cannot be compared with the city of Aden, these both cannot be similar; then if you intend the ‘holy war’, unsheath your sword against the community that have destroyed the precepts and customs of Allah; then purify the ‘House of Allah’ (the Ka’bah) with your sword from the pollution and the degraded and ugly community (the Bani Dawud); do not say that they are among the progeny of Fatimah and that you would not fight them; for if these people would have gained access to the family of Harb (Abu Sufyan), they would have united to kill Imam Hasan.”

When Ibn 'Unayn compiled these verses and sent it to the king of Yemen, one day he dreamt that he was near the Ka’bah. Sayyidah Zahra was circumambulating the Ka’bah. He stepped forward and saluted her but she did not reply to him. He started weeping and humbly asked her what sin he had committed that stopped her from replying to his salutation. In reply to Ibn 'Unayn, Sayyidah Zahra recited the following verses:

“Never! The entire progeny of Fatimah be base and degraded, but time has oppressed us with deceit and deception; if one person from among my progeny dealt with you with evil, you should not have deliberately abused us all; then repent on your attitude, for if any one treats us badly and then repents (sincerely), Allah will forgive him; then hold them (the sadat) dear for the sake of their grandfather

Mustafa and do not hurt any one from among his progeny nor insult them; then whatever (harm) reaches you from them, ask its recompense from us on the Day of Resurrection when you meet us.”

Ibn ‘Unayn relates that, “I awoke from my sleep wailing and in fear. I saw that the wounds of my body had healed due to Sayyidah Zahra. I repented and regretted my words and then compiled these words in repentance:

‘I repent in the presence of the daughter of the Messenger, the Guide against the crime and request her to forgive me; and accept repentance from the one who suffered due to his words; I swear by Allah that if anyone from among them (the sadat) were to tear me to pieces with their spears or swords, I shall not deem it to be evil, but shall look at it with goodness.’”

1. Ref. to the Qur’anic Verse: “(For) those who believe and do good, a great bliss (Tuba) shall be theirs and a beautiful place of return.” (Suratul Ra’d (13):29). Tha’labi in his Tafsir relates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir that the Prophet was questioned regarding the above verse to which he replied, “Tuba is the name of a tree in Paradise whose roots shall be in my house and its branches will be in the houses of other believers.” The narrator asked, “O Prophet of Allah! We put forward the same question to you before and you replied that it is the name of a tree in Paradise whose roots shall be in the house of ‘Ali and its branches in the houses of other believers.” The Prophet replied, “Verily my house and that of ‘Ali shall be one and the same in Paradise.” (Sayyid Hashim al-Husaini al-Bahrani, “Ghayatul Maram”).

2. Ref. to the Qur’anic verse: “And We intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs.” (Suratul Qasas (28):5).

Hafiz al-Haskani al-Hanafi says that Abu’l Hasan al-Farsi related to me through his chain of transmitters from Mufadhdhal b. ‘Umar who says that he heard from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq that the Noble Prophet looked at ‘Ali, Hasan and Husain and wept and then said, “You are the ones ‘considered weak’ after me.” Mufadhdhal says that, ‘I asked the Imam as to what the Noble Prophet meant?’ Imam as-Sadiq replied, ‘The Prophet meant that you are the Imams after me’, then he recited the above verse and said, ‘Thus this verse refers to us until the Day of Resurrection.’

3. Refer to the Qur’anic verse

“And of Musa’s people is a party, who guide (people) with truth and thereby do justice. And We divided them into twelve tribes (or) nations” (Suratul A’raf (7): 159–160).

4. The Commander of the Faithful, a title specific only to Imam ‘Ali bestowed upon him by the Prophet of Allah.

5. Shaykh al-Kulayni, “Usul al-Kafi”, vol. 1, ch. 461

6. ‘Umar b. ‘Ali relates from Imam ‘Ali b. Abi Talib that he said one day the Prophet was asked, “What is the meaning of Batul, as we have heard you say Maryam al-Batul and Fatimah al-Batul?” He replied, “Batul is used to refer to a woman who never sees red (menstrual blood), meaning she never menstruates, because menstruation is resentful if it occurs in a Prophet’s daughter.” (Shaykh as-Saduq, “Ilal ash-Shara’i”).

7. In the eighth year of the migration, twelve thousand polytheists of the Valley of Yabis gathered and pledged that they would kill both Prophet Muhammad and Imam ‘Ali. When the Noble Prophet was informed about this, he dispatched Abu Bakr with four thousand men against them with orders that first, he should invite them towards Islam and if they refuse then to fight them, however Abu Bakr returned back without accomplishing the task.

The Noble Prophet told him, “You disobeyed my orders and did not perform what I asked, by Allah, you are a disobedient one.” Then he sent ‘Umar b. al-Khattab with similar orders but he too returned back unsuccessful. Then the Noble Prophet sent Imam ‘Ali, who as usual, accomplished the task most obediently and put to sword the polytheists (in defence). The chapter of the Qur’an, al-Adiyat was revealed regarding this expedition and several other verses also came down in praise of Imam ‘Ali.

When Imam 'Ali returned back victoriously, the Noble Prophet himself went forth to welcome him and said, "Ascend your mount, Allah and His Prophet are pleased with you." He then continued, "O 'Ali! If I had not feared that a group from among the nation would attribute such thing (divinity) to you as the Christians attribute to 'Isa, I would have narrated several words in your praise. Today you shall not pass by a group of men, except that they will take the Earth from beneath your feet as blessings."

8. Literally this word means masters. A word of respect referred to those from among the descendants of Prophet Muhammad through Sayyidah Zahra and Imam 'Ali.

Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra was one of the members in the event of al-Kisa¹, one of the participants in the invocation at Mubahilah², and also one of those who had migrated (from Makkah to Madinah) under extreme conditions, in the way of Allah. She is also one of those regarding whom the verse of 'Tathir' (spiritual purification) was revealed,

"Verily Allah intends to keep off from you (every kind of spiritual) uncleanness, O' the People of the House, and to purify you (with) a thorough purification" (Suratul Ahzab (33), v. 33),

while Jibra'il himself took pride in being one of those (who was under the blanket during the revelation of this verse) and Allah Himself was a Witness to the truth and purity of those select individuals. She is also the mother of the Imams and the remembrance of the Prophet of Allah, and the Messenger's progeny descend from her and they shall remain until the Day of Resurrection. She is also the mistress of the women of the two worlds from the beginning until the end (of creation).

She resembles the Prophet most in regards to her speech. Her character and mannerisms are a mirror of the character and mannerisms of the Prophet of Allah as her manner of movement also resembles him.

Whenever she would go to the Prophet, he would welcome her warmly, kiss her hands and sit her in his own place. Likewise when the Prophet would go and meet Fatimah, she would rise up and receive him warmly while kissing his hands. The Prophet would kiss Zahra often and whenever he longed to smell the fragrance of Paradise, he would go to Fatimah. In regards to her, he has said, "Fatimah is a part of me, whoever pleases her pleases me and whoever hurts her hurts me;" and he also said, "Fatimah is the dearest person to me." Other statements of his bear witness to his immense love for Fatimah, and he would often address her as "O beloved of her father!"

Al-Tabari relates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir who relates from his grandfathers (the other Imams) that Sayyidah Fatimah said, "The Messenger of Allah told me, 'O beloved of her father! Every type of intoxication is prohibited, and every intoxication is wine.'

Friendship for the Sake of Allah

It must be kept in mind that love for those who are spiritually close to Allah and also towards their children, relatives and close friends does not originate due to their own self or human impulse; rather they are far removed from following the base, human desires. Showing love and attachment to them is purely for the sake of Allah, because they do not hold anyone dear except Allah, while the love which they show towards other than Allah is simply because this love results in the love of Allah. It is for this reason that Prophet Ya'qub loved his son Prophet Yusuf more than any of his other sons.

Due to the fact that his sons were ignorant of the real essence of his love for his son (Prophet Yusuf), they considered their father to have gone astray and said,

“Surely Yusuf and his brother are dearer to our father than we, though we are a (bigger) group; verily our father is in manifest error.”³

In addition, the affection which Prophet Ya'qub displayed towards Prophet Yusuf was not due to materialistic reasons, but rather it was because Allah loved Yusuf and had chosen him (as a prophet) from among his other brothers. Thus, it is as clear as light that the beloved of Allah should also be the beloved of His Prophet.

Shaykh al-Kulayni relates from Muhammad b. Sinan that, “I was in the presence of Imam Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Jawad and informed him about the difference of opinion that had crept up amongst the Shi’a. The Imam replied, ‘O Muhammad! Allah is constantly Unique and Peerless in His Individuality and Matchlessness. Then He created Muhammad, ‘Ali and Fatimah and these three lights remained (in worship) for thousands of years. Then Allah created all of the other beings and made them witness upon His creations and made their (Muhammad, ‘Ali and Fatimah’s) obedience incumbent upon all of His creatures and handed all of the affairs to them. They made lawful what they desired and forbade what they desired – but they desired not except what Allah desired.’⁴

Then Imam al-Jawad continued, ‘O Muhammad! This is the original piety. Thus those who move rapidly and go forward (from them) fall astray, while those who move slowly and lag behind (them) are doomed, but those who move in harmony with the religion and remain constantly attached to it (the faith of Islam) shall reach the truth. O Muhammad! Memorize these words and take heed.’”

The author says: These words prove that the personality of Sayyidah Zahra was of one who had been bestowed with authority over all of the creations by Allah. She had been given the permission to make lawful what she desired and to prohibit what she desired – bearing in mind that she would not desire (anything on her own), only that which Allah desires.

The Book of Fatimah

It is related in numerous traditions from the Infallible leaders of the faith that the 'Book of Fatimah' remains with them.

It is related in Basairul Darajat from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that he said, "Fatimah left a book as a remembrance. That book is not the Qur'an, but it contains words of Allah from among His numerous words that He revealed to Fatimah. The Prophet of Allah dictated it (to her), while it was written down by Imam 'Ali."

Abu Basir relates, "I went to Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq and asked him, 'May I be ransomed for you! I have a question. Is there any stranger here who may hear me?' Imam as-Sadiq lifted a curtain which was drawn between his room and the adjoining one, looked therein then said, 'O Aba Muhammad! You may ask whatever you desire.' I said, 'May I be your ransom! The Shi'a relate a tradition that the Prophet of Allah opened a door of knowledge for Imam 'Ali, and from that door, one thousand doors (of knowledge) opened up. By Allah! This is the complete and true knowledge!' Imam as-Sadiq remained silent for some time and then said, 'Verily this is the knowledge, but not a complete one, O Aba Muhammad! We have with us the 'Jami'a' (a compilation), and do people even know what is the compilation? It is a scroll measuring a length of seventy cubits dictated by the Prophet of Allah himself and written down by 'Ali. It contains all that is lawful and unlawful and all other religious laws that people need, even the penalty of inflicting a scratch.' Then he patted me with his hand and said, 'O Aba Muhammad! Do you permit me?' I replied, 'I am one of you, you may do as you wish.' Then he pinched me with his sacred hand and said, 'The 'compilation' also contains the penalty for inflicting a pinch', he replied this while appearing a bit angry. I said, 'By Allah! This is the complete knowledge!' The Imam replied, 'Verily this is the knowledge, but again not a complete one.'

Then again he remained silent for sometime and continued, 'Indeed we have 'Jafr' with us, and what do people know what the 'Jafr' is?' I asked as to what it was and he replied, 'It is made of leather, a treasure containing the knowledge of (previous) prophets, the vicegerents and the ancient erudites of the Tribes of Isra'il.' I again said, 'Indeed this is the complete knowledge!' The Imam replied, 'This is the knowledge, but not a complete one.' Saying this, he remained silent for a moment and continued, 'Indeed we have with us the 'Book of Fatimah'! Do people know what is the 'Book of Fatimah'?' I asked him, 'What is the 'Book of Fatimah?'

The Imam replied, 'It is a book three times the size of the Qur'an that is in your possession by Allah! It does not even contain a word from the Qur'an.'⁵ I again said that this was indeed the complete knowledge and the Imam replied, 'It is the knowledge but not a complete one.' Then he remained silent for a moment and said, 'All the knowledge of the past and the future until the Day of Resurrection is with us.' I said, 'This is then the complete knowledge!' The Imam replied, 'This also is the knowledge, but not a complete one.' I asked, 'Then what is the complete knowledge?' The Imam said, 'It is the knowledge

that manifests every day and night referring to one subject after the other, and one thing after another until the Day of Resurrection.”

The Status of Fatimah in Paradise

It is related in some traditions that Fatimah is one of the people who shall ride upon ‘Ghazbah’ – the camel of the Prophet of Allah on the Day of Resurrection, and will enter the ground of Mahshar on this ride.

Ibn Shahr Ashub relates that, “When the Prophet of Allah was on his deathbed, his camel, Ghazbah addressed him saying, ‘Whom do you bequeath me to after your death?’ The Prophet replied, ‘O Ghazbah! May Allah give you abundance! You are from among the property of Fatimah who shall ride upon you in this world and in the hereafter.’ When the Prophet passed away, the camel came at night to the presence of Sayyidah Fatimah and said, ‘Peace be upon you, O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! My end has drawn near. I swear by Allah that since the death of the Prophet of Allah, I have not tasted water or grass.’ The camel died three days after the passing away of the Prophet.”

It is related in the Tafsir of Furat b. Ibrahim that the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali said, “One day the Prophet came to meet Fatimah while she was aggrieved. The Prophet related to her the events regarding the Day of Resurrection and said, ‘O Fatimah! When you reach the gate of Paradise, twelve thousand houries shall come to greet you. They will not have met anyone before you, nor will they meet anyone in this manner after having met you. They will be carrying dazzling weapons and will be riding upon radiant camels – the saddles of which will be made of gold and red rubies.

Their bridles will be studded with pearls, and each of these camels will be covered with studded, silk brocade heaped with various precious gems. When you enter Paradise, the dwellers therein will rejoice at your arrival and shall bring dishes of food specially prepared for your Shi’a, will be laid down upon radiant chairs. They will partake from it, while others will be entangled in accounting. Your Shi’a will always be given whatever and whenever they desire anything, and when the friends of Allah will finally settle down in Paradise, all of the prophets, starting from Adam and those who came after him, will come to greet you.”

Words of Fatimah – A Delight for the Prophet’s Heart

Sayyidah Fatimah relates, “When the verse, ***‘Make not the addressing of the Prophet among you like how you address one another’***⁶ was revealed, I started addressing the Messenger as ‘O Prophet of Allah’; but the Prophet wanted me to (continue) to address him as ‘O father.’ He did not say anything to me three times, but thereafter he turned towards me and said, ‘O Fatimah! This verse has not been revealed for you or your progeny, as you are from me and I am from you! Rather this verse has been revealed in regards to the unkind and rough Quraysh and the arrogant and egoistic people.’ Then he continued, ‘Address me as ‘O father’ for these words of yours enliven my heart and please Allah.”

It is related in Misbahul Anwar by the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali that Fatimah said, "The Prophet of Allah told me, 'Allah grants pardon to the one who sends salutations upon you, and unites that person with me in my status in Paradise.'"

Hunger of Sayyidah Fatimah and the Prophet's Prayer

Shaykh al-Kulayni narrate from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir who relates from Jabir b. 'Abdullah al-Ansari that, "One day the Prophet went to see Sayyidah Fatimah while I was with him. When we reached the door, he knocked at it and said, 'Peace be upon you!' Fatimah replied, 'Peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allah!' The Prophet asked, 'May I enter inside' and she replied, 'You may enter, O Prophet of Allah.' The Prophet asked, 'May I enter alongwith the one accompanying me?' Fatimah replied, 'O Prophet of Allah! I do not have a veil on.' The Prophet said, 'O Fatimah! Then cover your head with the extra part of your over garment.' Fatimah did as directed and the Prophet said, 'Peace be upon you.' Fatimah replied, 'Peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allah.' The Prophet continued, 'Do you permit me to enter now' and she replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said, 'Do I enter alongwith the person accompanying me?' Fatimah replied, 'Yes, both of you may enter.' Both of us entered therein and the Prophet saw that Fatimah's face had turned pale. The Prophet asked her the reason and she replied, 'O Prophet of Allah! It is due to excessive hunger.' Hearing this, the Prophet made the following supplication, 'O Allah, the One Who satiates the hungry, the One Who amends the affairs of the deficient ones! Please satiate Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad!'"

Her Modesty Towards her Husband

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri relates that, "One day Imam 'Ali was very hungry. He came to Fatimah and said, 'O Fatimah! Do you have some food so that I may partake of it?' Fatimah replied, 'No, I swear by the Lord Who has chosen my father for prophethood and Who has bestowed the vicegerency upon you that we have no food. Two days have passed since we have had any food, and if I had some, I would surely have given you preference over myself and my sons, Hasan and Husayn.' Hearing this Imam 'Ali said, 'O Fatimah! Why did you not inform me so that I could have arranged food for all of you?' Fatimah replied, 'O Abal Hasan! I felt embarrassed in the presence of my Lord that I should burden you with something beyond your ability.'"

Division of Labour in the House and Outside

It is related in the book Qurbul Isnad from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that Imam Muhammad al-Baqir relates that, "Imam 'Ali and Sayyidah Zahra requested the Prophet to distribute the tasks inside the house and outside between the two of them. The Prophet allotted the tasks inside the house to Fatimah and outside the house to Imam 'Ali. Sayyidah Zahra says that, 'No one except Allah knows to what extent I was pleased due to this distribution for the Prophet saved me from enduring the inconvenience of meeting other men (and he allotted such work to my share that would not make me leave my house and mix with

other men).”

Angels in the Service of Sayyidah Zahra

In the book al-Khara’ij by ‘Allamah al-Rawandi it is related through Salman (al-Farsi) that, “One day I was in the house of Sayyidah Zahra. I saw that she was seated and grinding barley with a mill. I also saw that the handle of the mill was soaked with blood (from her hands) while Husayn, who was an infant, was weeping in the room due to excessive hunger. I said, ‘O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! Do not strain yourself much, Fidhdhah is present here and at your service.’ She replied, ‘The Prophet of Allah has recommended to me that one day I should do the work of the house and one day let Fidhdhah do it. Yesterday was Fidhdhah’s turn while today is my turn.’ I said, ‘I am your ransomed slave and am at your service, either let me grind the barley or look after Husayn.’

She replied, ‘It befits me more to look after Husayn, while you may grind the mill.’ I started grinding the mill when suddenly I heard the call to prayer. I went to the masjid and offered prayers behind the Prophet of Allah. After the prayers I related what had transpired to Imam ‘Ali who started weeping. He made his way towards the house and then returned back smiling. The Prophet of Allah asked him the reason for his smiling and he replied, ‘I went towards Fatimah and saw that she was sleeping while Husayn was sleeping on her chest and I saw that the grind-mill was turning around on its own.’ The Prophet smiled and said, ‘O ‘Ali! Do you not know that Allah has appointed some angels to circulate the earth and serve Muhammad and his progeny, and this service of theirs will continue until the Day of Resurrection.’”

The Prophet Assists Fatimah

It is related that one day the Prophet of Allah went to the house of Imam ‘Ali and saw that both ‘Ali and Fatimah were busy grinding millet. He said, “Which one of you is more tired?” ‘Ali replied, “Fatimah is more tired than I.” The Prophet told her to stand up and she did as she was asked. The Prophet then sat in her place and helped ‘Ali in grinding the millet.

Affluence of the Food of Fatimah

It has been mentioned in some books that Jabir b. ‘Abdullah al-Ansari has related, “Some days passed and the Prophet had not eaten anything. He was greatly disturbed due to his hunger and could not find food in any of his wives’ rooms. He went to the house of Fatimah and asked for food to satisfy his hunger to which Fatimah replied, ‘May I be your ransom! There is no food available in the house.’ Hearing this, the Prophet left.

Thereafter, one of her neighbours brought Fatimah a gift of two loaves of bread and some meat. Fatimah took it, placed it in a pot, covered it with a cloth and said, ‘I give preference to the Prophet of

Allah (in satiating his hunger) over myself and over those with me (my husband and sons).’

Fatimah sent a message to the Prophet through Hasan and Husayn and the Prophet arrived at their house and Fatimah related to him regarding the gift that she received. The Prophet said, ‘Bring it to me’, and she brought the pot to him. The Prophet lifted the cloth off it and saw that it was full of bread and meat.”

Jabir says that, “We were surprised when we saw it and I reminisce how this was one of the graces of Allah and I praised and glorified Allah and sent blessings upon His Prophet.”

The Prophet asked Fatimah, ‘Where did you get this food from?’ Fatimah replied, ‘From Allah, Allah gives abundant sustenance to whomsoever He wills.’

Thereafter the Prophet sent a man to fetch ‘Ali and then everyone gathered. The Prophet of Allah, Imam ‘Ali, Sayyidah Fatimah, Imam Hasan, Imam Husayn, the wives of the Prophet, and other people of the house ate from the food, however still the vessel remained full of food. Fatimah said, “I shall distribute this food to all of the neighbours, Allah has bestowed plentiful abundance to this food, just as He had offered abundance (of food) to Maryam.”

Her Worship

Hasan al-Basri says that in the community of Islam there was no One who was paralleled in their worship to Sayyidah Fatimah for when she stood up for prayers, she would stand for so long such that her legs even swelled up.

The Prophet of Allah once asked Sayyidah Zahra, “What is best thing for a woman?” She replied, “Neither that she looks at any (non-Mahram)⁷ man nor any (non-Mahram) man looks at her.” The Prophet, after hearing her reply, embraced her and recited the following verse: “**Offspring, one from the other**”⁸ [This tradition refers to the fact that the teachings and way of life of the daughter of the Prophet were in line with the teachings of the Prophet of Islam. – ed.]

Imam Hasan relates, “I saw my mother on Thursday night standing in the prayer-niche; she was constantly bowing and prostrating until dawn. I heard her taking the names of the believers and praying for them, but she did not pray for herself. I asked, ‘O Mother! Did you not pray for yourself like you did for others?’ She replied, ‘Neighbours first, thereafter one’s own household.’”

Shaykh as-Saduq relates that Sayyidah Fatimah said, “I heard the Prophet of Allah say, ‘On Friday, there is a specific time wherein Allah fulfills whatever a Muslim desires from Him regarding well-being.’ I asked, ‘What time is that?’ He replied, ‘The time when the half disc of the sun is hidden under the horizon while the other half of it is not yet hidden.’ Fatimah told her servant, ‘Go on top of the house, and when the half disc of the sun disappears, let me know so that I may beseech or supplicate to Allah.’”

It is also related that when she would enter her prayer-niche to offer prayers, her light would shine forth for the dwellers of the heavens, just like the light of the stars shine for the dwellers on the earth.

Service in Her Husband's House and Request for a Maid

Shaykh as-Saduq relates from Amirul Mo'minin Imam 'Ali that once he said to a man from the clan of Bani Sa'ad, "Should I relate to you regarding Fatimah when she was in my house?" Then he continued, "In spite of being the most beloved person to the Prophet of Allah, she drew water herself by means of a leather-bag, such that the mark of its strap was visible upon her chest; she swept the floor of the house to such an extent that her clothes were covered with dust; and she blew the fire below the vessel (to cook food) to such an extent that the colour of her dress changed." After seeing such toil and hardship, I told her, "You should go to the Prophet and ask for a maid who can help you in your household chores."

Fatimah went to the Prophet but saw some youth with him and returned back without uttering a word. The Prophet of Allah realized that Fatimah had come to him with a request, but had returned back without asking him. Thus the next morning, the Prophet of Allah himself came to our house while we were sleeping. The Prophet, as was his custom, saluted us three times and we thought that if we did not answer him on the third time, then he would return back home as his custom was that whenever he came over, he would greet us three times requesting to enter and if he did not receive a reply, he would return back. Thus I replied, "And peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allah! Do command." He entered therein and sat near our head and said, "O Fatimah! Yesterday you came to me – ask what you desire." Fatimah did not utter a word due to her modesty and I feared that if I would not convey her desire to him, the Prophet would get up and leave.

Thus I lifted my head and said, "O Prophet of Allah! I would like to inform you that Fatimah draws water by means of a leather-bag such that the mark of its strap is visible upon her chest; she mills the flour to such an extent that her hands are full of blisters; she sweeps the floor of the house to such an extent, that her clothes are covered with dust; and she blows the fire below the vessel (to cook food) to such an extent that the colour of her dress has changed. I told her that she should come to you and request a maid who can help her in our household chores."

The Prophet replied, "Do you want me to teach you that which is better than a maid? When you retire for the day, recite Allahu Akbar thirty-four times, Alhamdulillah thirty-three times, and Subhanallah thirty-three times." Upon hearing this Fatimah lifted her head and said, "I submit and am pleased with Allah and His Prophet."

It is related in al-Manaqib from Abu Bakr al-Shirazi (a scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah) that, "When Sayyidah Zahra related her state to the Prophet and asked for a maid, he wept. Then he said, 'O Fatimah! I swear by the Lord Who has chosen me for truth! At present, there are four hundred men in the masjid without (adequate) food or clothing. If I had not feared that your merit would be lessened, I would have fulfilled your desire. O Fatimah! I do not wish that your own recompense and reward will part

away from you and be passed on to your maid.’”

It is related in the Tafsir of al-Tha’labi from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and also in Tafsir of al-Qushayri from Jabir b. ‘Abdullah al-Ansari, that, “The Prophet saw Sayyidah Fatimah wearing a woolen dress and milling the flour while feeding her child. Tears flowed from his eyes and he said, ‘O daughter! Hasten towards the pleasantries of the Hereafter from the severities of this world.’ Fatimah replied, ‘O Messenger of Allah! Praise be to Allah upon His favours, and thanks be to Him upon His gifts.’

The Knowledge and Excellence of Fidhdhah – Her Maid

Abul Qasim al-Qushayri relates in his book from some other people that, “Fidhdhah, the maid of Sayyidah Zahra, lost her way in the desert while going for the hajj. A man named ‘Abdullah Mubarak, who was also left behind says, ‘I saw a woman alone in the desert. I was riding upon a camel and went towards her, and whatever I asked her, she replied to me in the words of the Qur’an.’ Their conversation was as follows:

‘Abdullah: Who are you?

Fidhdhah: ***And say: Peace (be upon you), for they shall soon know. (Suratul Zukhruf (43):89)***

I saluted her and asked:

‘Abdullah: What are you doing here?

Fidhdhah: ***And whomsoever Allah guides, then for him none shall beguile. (Suratul Zumur (39):37).***

I realized that she had lost her way.

‘Abdullah: Are you from among the Jinn or the human beings?

Fidhdhah: ***O children of Adam, put on your adornment. (Suratul A’raf (7):31).***

I perceived that she was a human.

‘Abdullah: From where do you come?

Fidhdhah: ***Who are called to from a place far away. (Suratul Fussilat (41):44)***

I realized that she had come from a far off place.

‘Abdullah: Where do you intend to go?

Fidhdhah: ***And for Allah, is incumbent upon mankind, the pilgrimage to the House. (Surat Ale ‘Imran (3):97)***

I perceived that she was intending to go to Makkah.

‘Abdullah: Since when did you part away from your caravan?

Fidhdhah: ***And indeed created We the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days. (Surat Qaf (50):38)***

I realized that she had been separated from her caravan for the past six days.

‘Abdullah: Do you want food?

Fidhdhah: ***We made them not (such) bodies not eating (requiring) food. (Suratul Anbiya (21):8)***

I realized that she wanted some food to eat.

‘Abdullah: Hasten and walk fast.

Fidhdhah: ***Allah does not impose upon any soul but to the extent of the (individuals) ability. (Suratul Baqarah (2):286)***

I perceived that she was tired and could not travel further.

‘Abdullah: Mount upon the camel behind my back.

Fidhdhah: ***Had there been in (the heavens and the earth) (other) deities except Allah, they both would have been in disorder. (Suratul Anbiya (21):22)***

I realised that she was embarrassed to sit behind me and thus I made her ride alone and I walked.

When she mounted, she said:

Fidhdhah: ***Glory be to Him Who subjected this unto us. (Suratul Zukhruf (43):13)***

When we reached a caravan I asked,

‘Abdullah: Is there anyone in that caravan from among your relatives?

Fidhdhah: ***O Dawud! Verily We have appointed you a vicegerent in the Earth. (Surah Sad (38):26) And Muhammad is not but an Apostle. (Surah Ale ‘Imran (3):144) O Yahya! Hold thou the book fast. (Surah Maryam (19):12) O Musa! Verily I am Allah. (Suratul Qasas (28):30)***

I realized that in this caravan there were men by the names of Dawud, Muhammad, Yahya and Musa who were related to her, thus I called out their names. Four youth came out of the caravan and went towards her, I asked her,

‘Abdullah: Who are these men in relation to you?

Fidhdhah: ***Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. (Suratul Kahf (18):45)***

I understood that they were her sons. When they came to her, she said to them:

Fidhdhah: ***O my father! Employ him, verily the best of those whom you can employ is the strong (man), the trusted (one). (Suratul Qasas (28):26)***

I realized that she wanted them to give me some recompense. They gave me some wealth. Then she said:

Fidhdhah: ***And verily Allah gives manifold increase to whosoever He wills. (Suratul Baqarah (2):261)***

I realized that she wanted them to give me more, thus they gave me more wealth. I asked them as to who she was and they said that she was Fidhdhah, the maid of Sayyidah Zahra. It had been twenty years that she spoke nothing but the Qur'an."9

Fatimah's Virtues and Status in Paradise and Her Followers

Abu Ja'far al-Tabari relates in Basharatul Mustafa from Hamam Abi 'Ali that he said, "I asked Ka'ab al-Ahbar, 'In your opinion, who are the Shi'a of 'Ali b. Abi Talib?' He replied, 'O Hamam! I have found their merits mentioned in the Qur'an! Among the creations (of Allah), they are the party of Allah¹⁰, the helpers of His religion, the adherents of the 'Friend of Allah', and His special and virtuous slaves. Allah has chosen them for His religion and created them for His paradise. They shall dwell in the lofty gardens of Paradise in tents and rooms studded with transparent pearls.

They are the ones near to the 'righteous ones'¹¹ and shall consume a drink that has not yet been touched by any one and has been sealed. The drink shall be from the stream of 'Tasnim' which has been created exclusively for them, and 'Tasnim' is a stream that Allah gifted to Sayyidah Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad and the wife of 'Ali. The source of the stream is from under a pillar whose dome is cool – its coolness is similar to camphor; its taste is similar to ginger; and its fragrance resembles musk. The drink shall flow in a stream and the adherents and friends of Fatimah will drink from it.

The dome is held up by four pillars, one studded with white pearls and the stream of 'Tahur' flow from underneath it; the second one is of green emeralds and from underneath it, two streams flow – one of them is the 'pure drink' and the other is of honey, and both of these streams flow from under a part of Paradise; however 'Tasnim' flows in the lofty Paradise and only the exclusive ones will drink from it.

These are the friends and Shi'a of 'Ali and this is the meaning of the Qur'anic verse:

"They shall be provided to partake of the pure drink (which shall be) sealed (to others), the seal (being) of musk, for that they may aspire (all) those who (wish to) aspire, mixed therein shall be

***the water of 'Tasnim', (which is) a spring from which drink the near ones.*"¹²**

By Allah! None loves the Shi'a (of 'Ali) except from whom Allah has taken the pledge."

After quoting the above mentioned tradition, Abu Ja'far al-Tabari, stated, "It is befitting for the Shi'a to note down this tradition with gold so that it is extensively quoted and not destroyed (or forgotten). In this context they should perform such acts that would serve as a medium for all of them to reach the lofty Paradise. Furthermore, this tradition is quoted by the Ahlus Sunnah and thus it is acceptable to use as a solid proof since its authenticity is clear."

Reply to a Question from Salman

Al-Tabari relates in Basharatul Mustafa from the book, Kanzal 'Ummal that Abu Dharr said, "Once, I saw Salman and Bilal al-Habashi come to the Prophet of Allah. Suddenly, Salman fell to the ground and started to kiss the feet of the Prophet. The Prophet stopped him from doing so and said, 'O Salman! Do not perform such an act with me as the Persians do to their kings as I am from among the slaves of Allah, and (like the creations of Allah) I eat and sit.'

Salman replied, 'O my Master! I wish that you would relate to me the excellence of Sayyidah Fatimah on the Day of Resurrection.' The Prophet looked at him with a smiling face and said, 'I swear by the Lord in Whose hands is my life! Fatimah is a woman who shall pass by the ground of 'Mahshar' mounted upon a camel and her face will reveal piety and her eyes will shine forth with the light of Allah.

Jibra'il will be on the right side of the camel, while Mika'il on the left. 'Ali will walk in front of her, while Hasan and Husayn will walk behind her. Allah will be her Protector and Guardian until she passes by the ground of 'Mahshar'. Then suddenly the voice of Allah will come, 'O creatures! Lower your gazes and bow your heads down. This is Fatimah, the daughter of your Prophet, wife of 'Ali your Imam, and the mother of Hasan and Husayn.'

Then she shall pass over the bridge (sirat) while adorning two white and clear veils. When Fatimah enters Paradise and witnesses the blessings and gifts that Allah has reserved for her, she will say:

'In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praise is Allah's (alone) Who has taken away from us (all) grief, Verily our Lord is Oft-Forgiving, the greatest appreciator (of goodness). He Who has alighted us of His grace in an abode to abide, therein touches us not any toil, not affects us therein any fatigue.'¹³

Then Allah will reveal to Fatimah: 'Ask me whatever you desire so that I may offer you that which will please you. Fatimah will reply: 'O Lord! I desire You! Rather You are far above what I desire. I ask in Your presence not to punish my friends and the friends of my progeny in the hell-fire.'

Allah will say: 'O Fatimah! I swear by My honour and My glory! I have sworn to Myself two thousand

years before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, that I shall not punish your friends and those of your progeny in the hell-fire.”

Her Abstinence and Piety

Sayyed Ibn Tawus relates from the book Zuhdan Nabi of Abu Ja'far Ahmad al-Qummi that, “When the two verses of the Qur'an were revealed: ***'And verily hell is certainly the promised abode for them all. For it (the hell) are seven gates, and for each of those (gates) will be a separate party (of the sinners) assigned'***¹⁴, the Prophet wept abundantly such that his companions also wept upon seeing him. However, the companions could not understand why the Prophet wept, and none could question him beholding his state.

It was the habit of the Prophet that whenever he saw Fatimah, he was delighted, and thus one of the companions went to Fatimah to bring her to the Prophet. When he reached her house, he saw that she was grinding barley in the mill and reciting the following verse of the Qur'an, ***'And what is with Allah is better and more lasting.'***¹⁵ The man went and saluted her and informed her about the Prophet's lamentation. Immediately Fatimah stood up, put on a worn-out veil which contained twelve patches of the leaves of date palms, and came outside.

When Salman's sight fell upon her, he wept and said, 'O the grief! The daughters of Caesars (Roman kings) and Chosroes (Persian kings) adorn dresses of brocade and silk, while the daughter of the Prophet wears a worn-out and patched veil!'

Fatimah came to the Prophet and said, 'O Prophet of Allah! Salman is surprised at my dress, when by the Lord Who has chosen you by truth, five years have passed since we use a sheet made of sheep's hide, we sleep upon it at nights, and during the day we turn it and lay leaves for the camels to eat, while our pillow is also made from the leaves of date-palm.' The Prophet turned towards Salman and said, 'Verily my daughter is among the foremost ones in the eyes of Allah.'

Fatimah then asked the Prophet, 'O dear father, may I be your ransom! Why do you weep?' The Prophet recited the above verses revealed by Jibra'il. When Fatimah heard the name of hell, she fell down prostrating upon the ground and constantly repeated, 'Woe, and woe upon those who enter the fire of hell.'

When Salman heard the verse he said, 'I wish I would have been a sheep, my family would have slaughtered me and torn my hide and I would not have heard the name of hell.' Abu Dharr said, 'I wish my mother was barren and had not given birth to me so that I could not have heard the name of hell.' Miqdad said, 'I wish I was a bird in the forest, then I would have been free from accounting and not heard the name of hell.' Imam 'Ali said, 'I wish the beasts would tear my flesh and I wish my mother had not borne me so that I would not have heard the name of hell.'

Saying this, the Prophet put his hand upon his head and wept, then said, ‘O the lengthy journey! And O the insufficient belongings for the journey of the resurrection! The people (sinful ones) will go towards the fire and the fire shall turn them over. They are the sick persons that none visits them, and are the injured ones that none goes to heal their wounds. They are the imprisoned ones that none goes to rescue them from the fire, while their food and drink is from the fire. They shall turn upside down in the large vessels filled with fire. They adorn cotton clothes in this world while their dress in hell shall be of pieces of fire. They embrace their spouses in this world, while in hell the satans will embrace them.’”

Devoutness of Sayyidah Zahra and of the Prophet

It has been mentioned in the book, *Kashful Ghammah* from the *Musnad* of Ahmad b. Hanbal that, “It was a practice of the Prophet that whenever he went on a journey, Sayyidah Fatimah would be the last one that he visited, and upon his return, she would be the first one that he would visit (because he could not bear her absence for long periods of time).

In one such journey, when he returned back to Madinah, he went to the house of Sayyidah Fatimah and saw an exquisite curtain drawn while Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were wearing silver bracelets. Seeing this, the Prophet returned back without entering therein. Sayyidah Fatimah was informed about this and understood that the Prophet had left due to the curtain and bracelets. Sayyidah Fatimah had given these bracelets to Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn, however she immediately removed the curtain, took away the bracelets from them and all together, they came weeping to the Prophet of Allah.

The Prophet took the bracelets away from them and giving them to one of his servants named Thawban told him to sell them. He also told him to buy in lieu of that, a wooden necklace for Fatimah and two bracelets of ivory. Then he said, “Verily my Ahlul Bayt do not rejoice in utilizing the good things in the life of this world.”¹⁶

Veneration of Zahra Towards Remembrance of the Prophet

The eminent Shaykh Abu Ja’far Mumad b. Jarir al-Tabari in his book *al-Dala’il al-Imamah* relates with his chain of authorities from Ibn Mas’ud, that once a man came to the presence of Sayyidah Zahra and said, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! Do you possess a thing as remembrance of the Prophet that I can earn the reward of seeing it?” Sayyidah Fatimah said to her maid, ‘Get the slate for me.’ The maid went to search for it, but could not find it. Sayyidah Fatimah said to her, ‘Woe be to you! Search for it, because the worth of it to me is similar to that of Hasan and Husayn.’

The maid once again searched for it and found it in the garbage can, as it was lost while sweeping the floor. She brought it to the presence of Sayyidah Zahra, and on it was written, ‘Muhammad the Prophet said: He is not a believer from whose harm one’s neighbour is not safe, and the one who believes in Allah and the Day of Resurrection does not hurt his neighbour. The one who believes in Allah and the Day of Resurrection, his speech should be gentle or remain silent. Allah loves the one who is

benevolent, tolerant and virtuous. Allah hates the one who abuses, is foul-mouthed, shameless, and one who asks excessively and is persistent in his questions, as modesty is a part of true faith and (those who possess) true faith shall enter Paradise, while abusing is from shamelessness and (those who possess) shamelessness shall go to hell.”

Prophet’s Praise of Fatimah and Predictions Regarding Her

Shaykh as-Saduq relates an extensive report from Ibn ‘Abbas that the Prophet informed us regarding the oppression that will be meted out upon his Ahlul Bayt after his demise – some of his words from that narration are, “As for my daughter Fatimah, who is the mistress of all the women-folk of the two worlds from the beginning until the end of time, who is a piece of my body, the light of my eyes, the fruit of my heart and my soul that exists in me, she is a human hourie. When she stands up in the niche for prayers in the audience of Allah, her light shines forth for the Heavenly angels as the stars shine for the dwellers of the Earth, and Allah tells His angels: ‘O My angels! Behold My maid, who is the mistress of all My maids, she stands in My audience for prayers. Behold how her limbs tremble due to My fear, while her heart is reserved entirely for My worship. I make you witness that I shall save her Shi’a from the fire of hell.’”

The author says, the Prophet continued, “Whenever my sight falls upon Fatimah I recall those events and sorrows that will befall her after my death. It is as if I see that trouble has entered her house and others disrespect her while usurping her rights. She is not given aid while her side is fractured and the child in her womb is killed and she cries out: ‘O Muhammad!’ There will be none to reply her and she will ask for help but none will come to her rescue. It is as if I see that she is constantly aggrieved, sad and tearful after me, when she recalls that the ascending of revelation has stopped in her house (due to my death), and she remembers the days that she has to spend in my separation. Previously she constantly heard my voice reciting Qur’an at the time of the night prayers, but behold she will no longer hear it, thus she gets up at night in fear. And she is all the more sorrowful when she recollects how honourable she was during her father’s lifetime. At that moment Allah will appoint angels to accompany her. They shall speak to her like they spoke to Maryam and will address her by saying: ‘O Fatimah! Verily Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds. O Fatimah! Be devout to your Lord and prostrate yourself and bow down (in Prayers) with those who bow down.’”¹⁷

It is as if I see that she is hurt and sick and needs attending to, then Allah will send Maryam the daughter of ‘Imran, to attend to her. She shall attend to her and then Fatimah will say to Allah: ‘O Allah! I am satiated and tired of this life and am depressed by the worldly men, thus unite me with my father.’ Then Allah will unite her with me, and she will be the first among my progeny to join me in a grievous and sad state – in a state that her right has been usurped, and they will have killed her. Then I shall complain to Allah saying: ‘O Lord! Keep Your mercy away from the one who oppressed her, and punish those who usurped her rights and disgrace those who hurt her and throw the one into the fire of hell who struck at her flank and aborted her child.’ At that moment the angels shall call out: ‘Ameen (so be it!).’”¹⁸

The Marriage of Sayyidah Zahra

Mahr of Fatimah

It is related in Bihar al-Anwar from the work al-'Amali of Shaykh al-Mufid from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that the Prophet married Sayyidah Fatimah to Imam 'Ali.

One day the Prophet went to meet her and saw her weeping and asked, "Why do you weep? I swear by Allah! If there was another person better than 'Ali in my family, I would have married you to him. Besides I did not marry you to 'Ali except that I consider you to be his perfect match, while your mahr will be the khums of this world forever."

Her Marriage Dowry

Imam 'Ali has said, "The Prophet of Allah told me, 'Rise and go and sell your armour.' I went and sold the armour and brought the money to the Prophet – he did not ask me how much it was, nor did I tell him. The Prophet took some amount from it, and gave it to Bilal al-Habashi, and told him, 'Buy some perfume for Fatimah from this.' Then he took two handfuls from that amount and handed it to Abu Bakr and said, 'From this amount, buy whatever is suitable for Fatimah with regards to clothes and household necessities.' He then sent 'Ammar b. Yasir and some others from among his companions behind Abu Bakr. They went to the market, and whatever they liked they pointed it out to Abu Bakr who consented and bought it. The things they bought were as follows:

- A dress worth seven dirhams;
- A shawl worth four dirhams;
- A black gown from the (cloth of) Khaybar;
- A mattress filled with the leaves of a palm tree (or a pillow padded with the leaves of a palm tree);
- Two Egyptian quilts, one stuffed with wool and the other with the leaves of a palm tree;
- Four pillows of tanned hide made in Taif filled with dry grass;
- A delicate woolen curtain;
- A straw mat stitched in Hajar (a town in Bahrain);
- A hand mill;
- A copper tub;
- A water-skin;

- A clay bowl;
- A water-skin specially made to cool water;
- An earthen pitcher that was coloured from inside;
- A green clay ewer;
- A few cups made of clay.

When the purchase was complete, Abu Bakr carried some of these things, and the others accompanying him carried some, and they brought everything to the Prophet. The Messenger of Allah held these things with his sacred hands and said, ‘O Allah! Grant abundance to these for the Ahlul Bayt.’”

Her Bethrotal and the Marriage Feast

Imam ‘Ali relates that, “One month passed after these events, I prayed along with the Prophet of Allah and went to my house, but I did not utter a word to him regarding the actual marriage. After one month the wives of the Prophet told me, ‘Should we speak to the Prophet (on your behalf) to send Fatimah to your house?’ I asked, ‘Can you speak to him?’

They went to the Prophet of Allah and Umme Ayman¹⁹ said, ‘O Prophet of Allah! I have come to you regarding a matter that if Khadijah had been alive, she would have been delighted in regards to. ‘Ali would like to take his wife to his home. Let Fatimah be delighted by the glance of her husband and so too will we be delighted.’

The Prophet asked, ‘Why does ‘Ali himself not speak to me regarding this matter – I expect that he should precede you.’ Imam ‘Ali replied, ‘O Prophet of Allah! Modesty refrains me from speaking to you regarding this matter.’ The Prophet said, ‘Who is present here?’ Umme Salma replied, ‘I am at your service, and Zaynab too, and so and so are also present.’ The Prophet said, ‘Prepare a room from among the adjacent rooms for my daughter Fatimah and my cousin (Imam ‘Ali).’ Umme Salma asked, ‘Which room?’ The Prophet replied, ‘Your room.’”

The Prophet asked his wives and the other women to adorn Fatimah, befitting her dignity. Umme Salma said, “I went to Fatimah and asked, ‘Do you have perfume?’ She replied in the affirmative and brought a bottle of perfume and sprinkled some upon the palm of my hands. Its scent was so splendid that I had never ever smelt something similar to it. I asked her, ‘Where did you get this perfume from?’ Fatimah replied, ‘One day, Dihyah al-Kalbi came with the Prophet and my father told me, O Fatimah! Bring a mat for your uncle. I brought a mat and spread it on the floor, and they sat upon it. When they stood up, something scattered upon the floor from his clothes. My father told me, ‘Gather this.’ ‘Ali asked the Prophet as to what it was and the Prophet replied, ‘This is amber that has fallen from the wings of Jibra’il.’²⁰

Imam ‘Ali continued, ‘The Prophet then told me, ‘Prepare food for your relatives, the meat and bread will be arranged by us, while you take care of the oil and dates.’ I went and bought oil and dates and gave it to the Prophet. He lifted his sleeves up and mixed the dates in the oil, and sent a fleshy sheep and a large quantity of bread. Then he told me, ‘You may invite anyone whom so ever you desire.’ I went to the Masjid and saw that there were many companions therein. I felt ashamed that I should invite some and leave some and therefore I called out in a loud voice, ‘You are invited to a feast for the bethrotal of Fatimah’. Hearing this, all of them came. I was embarrassed due to the large number of men and the small quantity of food. When the Prophet perceived my embarrassment, he said, ‘I will pray to Allah to grant abundance to the food.’

All of the people ate and drank to their fill and prayed for us that Allah may grant us abundance. All of them, who numbered more than four thousand, were satiated, but the food did not become less. Then the Prophet called for some bowls, he filled the bowls with food and sent them to the house of his wives. Then he took a bowl, and filled it with food and said, ‘This is for Fatimah and her husband.’”

Night of the Marriage

After sunset, the Prophet told Umme Salma, “Bring Fatimah to me.” Umme Salma brought Fatimah to him with her skirt flowing on the ground, sweat trickling down her face and legs trembling due to her immense modesty. Seeing this the Prophet said, “May Allah safeguard you against the trembling of this world and the hereafter.”

Fatimah sat facing the Prophet, he lifted off her veil and Imam ‘Ali who was also present witnessed her immense beauty. The Prophet then placed the hand of Fatimah in the hand of Imam ‘Ali and said, “May Allah grant you abundance in the daughter of the Prophet of Allah. O ‘Ali! Fatimah is an excellent spouse, and O Fatimah! ‘Ali is an excellent spouse. Hasten to your house and do not perform any task until I come to you.”

Imam ‘Ali says that, “I sat Fatimah on one side of the house, while I sat on the other, and both of us had our heads bowed down due to (our) modesty.”

The Prophet Blesses the Bride and Groom

Imam ‘Ali relates that, “The Prophet came to the door of our house and said, ‘Who is there?’ I answered, ‘O Prophet of Allah, enter inside, felicities to the ones beholding you and to the one who is entering.’ The Prophet entered and sat Fatimah at his side and said, ‘O Fatimah! Rise and bring me some water.’ Fatimah got up and filled a vessel with water and brought it to him. The Prophet took a little water from the vessel, gargled with it and put it back in the vessel. He then sprinkled some water from it upon her head and told her to sit facing him. When she sat facing him, he sprinkled some water upon her chest and between her shoulders and prayed, ‘O Lord! This is my daughter, the most beloved to me from any other creation and O Lord, this is ‘Ali, my brother and the most beloved to me, more than any other

creation. O Lord! Make him Your friend and aide, and make his household a means of prosperity for him.’ Then he turned towards ‘Ali and said, ‘Go to your wife, may Allah make her a means of abundance for you, and may the Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you, the One Who is worthy of Praise, Exaltation and Commendation.’”

In another tradition it is related from the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali that, “Three days passed after Fatimah came to my house, and the Prophet did not visit us. On Wednesday morning, he paid us a visit while Asma b. Umayy was also present. The Prophet asked her, ‘Why have you come here when the man (‘Ali) is here?’ She replied, ‘May my parents be your ransom! When a woman goes to her husband’s home and passes (the first) days of her marriage, she needs another woman who can fulfill her needs, thus I have come here.’ The Prophet answered, ‘O Asma! May Allah fulfill your desires of this world as well as the next.’”

Imam ‘Ali relates that, “Those were the days of winter while Fatimah and I had covered ourselves with a blanket. When we heard the Prophet’s voice, we started to get up but the Prophet said, ‘By the right that I hold upon you, do not disperse until I come to you.’ Saying this, he entered and sat at our heads. He placed his legs under the blanket and we warmed his feet. Then he said, ‘Bring me a pot of water.’ I brought it for him and he blew at it three times while reciting some verses of the Qur’an. He then told me, ‘Drink this water and leave some.’ I did as he directed and the Prophet sprinkled the left-over water upon my head and chest saying, ‘May Allah keep (every kind of) uncleanness away from you O Abal Hasan and purify you (with) a thorough purification.’

Then he asked for another pot of water and I did as I was told. Again he recited some verses of Qur’an upon it and blew therein three times. Then he gave it to his daughter Fatimah saying, ‘Drink this water and leave some.’ She did as directed and the Prophet sprinkled the left-over water upon her head and chest saying, ‘May Allah keep (every kind of) uncleanness away from you, and purify you (with) a thorough purification.’”

Recommendations of the Prophet to Fatimah

Imam ‘Ali continued, “Then the Prophet told me to go into another room while he spoke to Fatimah saying, ‘O dear daughter! How are you and how do you find your husband?’ Fatimah replied, ‘O dear father! I found my husband to be the best, however a group of women from the Quraysh visited me and said that my father had married me to an indigent man.’

The Prophet replied, ‘Dear daughter! Neither is your father indigent, nor is your husband! Allah has given me authority upon all the gold and silver treasures of this Earth but I have preferred the recompense near Allah over it. My dear daughter! If you had known what your father knows, the world would seem wretched in your eyes. I swear by Allah, that I have not been stingy with regards to your well-being. Your husband is the foremost in Islam, the most knowledgeable among everyone, and the most forbearing. O my daughter! Allah exclusively beheld the Earth and chose two men from among all –

one he made your father and the other your husband. O my daughter! Your husband is a virtuous husband. Obey him in all matters.”

Recommendations of the Prophet to Imam ‘Ali

Then the Prophet called me and said, “Enter your house and deal with your wife with love and kindness, for Fatimah is a piece of me and whoever hurts her, hurts me, and whoever pleases her, pleases me. I offer you to Allah and may He be your Protector.”

Imam ‘Ali continued, “I swear by Allah, I never made her angry nor forced her to do anything until Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, took away her soul. She never made me uneasy, nor did she ever disobey me, and whenever I looked at her, all of my grief and sorrow vanished away.”

Request for a Maid & a Lesson for Better than a Maid

The Prophet stood up to leave and Fatimah requested him to provide a maid to help her in the household affairs. The Prophet replied, “Do you want to have something better than a maid?” She answered in the affirmative. The Prophet continued, “Then recite daily thirty three-times ‘Subhanallah’, thirty-three times ‘Alhamdulillah’, and thirty-four times ‘Allahu Akbar’. This equals a hundred exaltations and will be a means of bestowing a thousand gifts in the weighing scales (on the Day of Resurrection). O Fatimah! If you recite this every morning, Allah will fulfil your desires of this world and the hereafter.”

It is related in Misbahul Mutaḥajjid of Shaykh al-Tusi that the Prophet married Fatimah to Imam ‘Ali on the first day of the month of Dhul Hijjah, while some believe that it was on the sixth of the month of Dhul Hijjah.²¹

1. ‘Ayesha relates that one day the Prophet of Allah came outside enwrapped in an embroidered black woolen mantle (al-Kisa). Just then, Hasan b. ‘Ali came to him and the Prophet took him into the mantle. Soon Husayn b. ‘Ali followed him and he was also taken into the mantle. After him came Fatimah, and the Prophet took her into the mantle as well. Lastly ‘Ali came, and the Prophet also had him enter under the mantle. Then the verse of purification (Ayah al-Tathir) was revealed. (Imam al-Muslim, “as-Sahih”, vol. 2, pg. 283; Ahmad b. Hanbal, “al-Musnad”, vol. 1: pg. 330. Also refer to Jalaluddin as-Suyuti, “Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthur”, vol. 5; Fakhruddin al-Radhi, “Tafsir al-Kabir”, vol. 1; Jalaluddin s-Suyuti, “Khasaisul Kubra”, vol. 2; Ibn Hajar al-Haithami, “Sawaiqul Muhriqah”, pg. 85; Ibn Athir, “Jami’ al-Usul”, vol. 1; Muhibuddin al-Tabari, “Riyadhun Nazarah”, vol. 2; al-Haythami, “Majma’ul Zawaid”, vol. 9; al-Tirmidhi, “Jami”, vol. 2; Hakim al-Naishaburi, “al-Mustadrak”, vol. 3; Ibn Kathir, “al-Bidayah wa Nihayah”, vol. 3; Ibn Sabbagh, “Fusulul Muhimmah” pg. 8.

2. The famous incident of Mubahilah took place in the tenth year after the migration and it was against the Christians of Najran. A deputation of sixty Christians from the city of Najran came to the Noble Prophet to discuss about the personality of Prophet ‘Isa. The Prophet asked them not to attribute divinity to him as he was just one of the prophets of Allah. When they refused to agree to any amount of reasoning, the following verse was revealed, “And unto him who disputes with you therein after the knowledge has come unto you, say (unto them): come, let us summon our sons, and (you summon) your sons, and (we summon) our women and (you) your women, and (we summon) ourselves and (you) yourselves, and then let us invoke and lay the curse of Allah upon the liars.” (Surat Ale ‘Imran (3): 61). The Christians agreed to the Mubahilah (a spiritual contest invoking the malediction of Allah upon the liars) for the following day. On the next day the Christians gathered their holy men, women and children while the Prophet came with Imam Husayn in his lap, Imam Hasan holding

his finger and walking beside him (as his sons), Sayyidah Fatimah (as his women), and Imam 'Ali behind her (as his self). At the appearance of these Divinely-sent souls with the halo of a Divine light radiating from their noble faces, the chief monk, 'Abdul Masih began to gaze at their faces and exclaimed, "By God! I see the faces which, if they pray to God for mountains to move from their place, the mountains will immediately move." He continued, "O believers in Jesus of Nazareth! I will tell you the truth that should you fail to enter into some agreement with Muhammad and if these Godly souls curse you, then you will be wiped out of existence until the last day of the life on this earth." This event is marked in Islamic history as the eternal triumph of Islam upon Christianity and numerous non-Shi'a historians have related it in their books, such as Imam Fakhurddin al-Radhi in his Tafsir; Abu Ishaq al-Tha'labi in his Tafsir; Jalaluddin as-Suyuti in Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthur, Qadhi al-Baidhawi; Jarullah al-Zamakhshari, Imam al-Muslim in his Sahih.

3. Noble Qur'an, Surah Yusuf (9): 8

4. Refer to the Qur'anic verse

"And you desire not save what Allah desires; verily Allah is All-Knowing, the All-Wise." (Suratul Dahr (76): 30)

5. The great scholar, Shaykh Muhammad b. Hasan al-Saffar (d. 290 ah) in his book, Basairul Darajat relates, "Al-Jafr is a book that Imam 'Ali inherited from the Prophet of Allah and it contains knowledge of the past and future events. There are two types of Jafr: the White Jafr contains the previous scriptures such as the Zabur, Tawrah, Injil and even the Scrolls (Suhuf) of Ibrahim. The Red Jafr is a leather bag that contains the weapons of the Prophet, and both of these Jafr have been consequently passed on to each Imam, while the mushaf of Fatimah is a part of the white Jafr. This mushaf is said to be three times the size of the Qur'an, but there is not even a word of the Qur'an in it. Part of the contents includes the will of Fatimah. It is related that after the death of the Prophet of Allah, Fatimah informed Imam 'Ali that she could hear voices from within. He asked her to inform him what she heard, for it was actually an angel speaking to her. She dictated what she heard to Imam 'Ali, and this formed the mushaf. It also pertains to future events." (Here ends the quotation of Shaykh al-Saffar). This is why one of her names was Muhaddatha, i.e., a person other than the Prophet, with whom the angels speak.

6. Noble Qur'an, Surah al-Nur (24): 63

7. The term 'mahram' refers to a person of the opposite gender who is related to an individual either through permanent or blood relationship, such as father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, great-grandfather or great-grandmother and so on; brother or sister; son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, great grandson or great granddaughter; uncle or aunt; nephew or niece, etc...while another group become ones' mahram through marriage, such as: father-in-law or mother-in-law; son-in-law or daughter-in-law, etc...

8. Noble Qur'an, Surah Ale 'Imran (3): 34

9. Her previous name was Maymunah and she was a Nubian princess – Nuba being a city in (present day) Sudan. She left the life of ease and comfort to come and serve the Prophet of Allah and his Ahlul Bayt. When she came to the Prophet, he asked her name and she replied that it was Maymunah, the Prophet told her, "From today your name will be Fidhdhah (silver)" so that she may not be embarrassed by her dark colour, for colour and beauty are not a criterion for judging a person's faith. This proves her excellent merits and high status near Allah, the Prophet of Allah and his Ahlul Bayt. The Prophet then sent her to his daughter Fatimah with the instructions that, "O Fatimah! Let Fidhdhah do the housework one day and the other day you should perform all the work."

All throughout her life Sayyidah Fatimah followed this advice of the Prophet and even during the days of her illness, she performed all of the tasks in the house every alternate day. Fidhdhah most obediently and graciously served the Ahlul Bayt such that she herself was sometimes considered as 'one of the household'. She learnt many Islamic sciences in the house of Ahlul Bayt, such that she spoke for forty (or according to some reports twenty) years in no other language but that of the Qur'an. After the death of Fatimah she remained at the house of Imam 'Ali looking after and caring for their children Imam Hasan, Imam Husayn, Sayyidah Zaynab and Sayyidah Umme Kulthum. She even accompanied Imam Husayn at Karbala and bore all of the sufferings along with Sayyidah Zaynab and Sayyidah Umme Kulthum but did not leave their side even for a single moment. She is buried in the Bab al-Saghir Cemetery in Syria and people throng from far and near to perform her ziyarah. Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon her!

10. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

“Whoever takes as his guardian, Allah and His Apostle, and those who believe, verily the party of Allah, they are those that shall (always) be triumphant.” (Suratul Ma'idah (5): 56)

11. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

“Verily the Righteous ones shall drink a cup tempered at the fountain of camphor. The stream wherf shall drink the servants of Allah, they shall cause it to flow a desirable flow.” (Suratul Dahr (76): 5)

12. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Muttaffifin (83): 25–28

13. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Fatir (35): 34–35

14. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hijr (15): 43–44

15. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Shura (42): 36

16. This report cannot be relied upon, for the Ahlul Bayt and Sayyidah Fatimah remained aloof from the pleasures and never considered the possessions of this materialistic world. Numerous authentic reports have been related (in this book too) that prove their abstinence and detachment from this world and they are the ones for whom the following verse of the Qur'an was revealed,

“And they give away their food out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive, (saying) We feed you only for Allah's sake, we intend not from you any recompense, nor (even) thanks.” (Suratul Dahr (76): 8–9).

All the commentators of the Qur'an accept that this verse was revealed in praise and generosity and munificence of the Ahlul Bayt. Refer to al-Qurtubi, “al-Jami'atul Kamil Qur'an”; Nizamuddin al-Naishaburi, “Gharaibul Qur'an”; al-Khazin, “Lubab al-Ta'wil”; Husayn al-Baghawi, “Ma'alimut Tanzil”; al-Baidhawi, “Tafsir”; al-Alusi, “Tafsir”; Hafiz al-Kalbi al-Garnati, “Tashil al-'Ulum at-Tanzil”; to name just a few.

17. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

“O Maryam! Verily Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds. O Maryam! Be devout unto your Lord and prostrate yourself and bow down (in prayers) with those who bow down.” (Surah Ale 'Imran (3): 42)

18. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

“And soon shall know those who deal unjustly, what an (evil) turning they shall be turned into.” (Suratul Shu'ara (26): 227)

19. Some say it was the wife of the Prophet, Umme Salma.

20. It is related that in reality it was Jibra'il who came to meet the Prophet in the form of Dihyah al-Kalbi. The Prophet spoke to Jibra'il while those present presumed that he was speaking to Dihyah al-Kalbi and he (Dihyah al-Kalbi) was a handsome man and the foster brother of the Prophet and was among his companions.

21. Anas b. Malik relates that Abu Bakr paid a visit to the Prophet, sat before him and said, “You know about my loyalty and my precedence in accepting Islam. I have done this and that and...” The Prophet asked, “What do you want?” Abu Bakr replied, “I have come to propose for the hand of Fatimah. The Prophet did not say a word and turned his face away from him. Abu Bakr came to 'Umar and said, “I am condemned to death!” 'Umar asked him why and he told him that he had proposed for the hand of Fatimah but the Prophet turned his face away from him. 'Umar said, “You look after the things here and I shall go to the Prophet to propose for the hand of Fatimah.” He too proposed, however the Prophet turned his face away from him as well. (Muhibuddin al-Tabari, “Riyadhun Nazarah”; Imam al-Nisa'i, “al-Khasais”; Muttaqi al-Hindi, “Kanzul 'Ummal”). The strangest case was the proposal of 'Abdul Rahman b. 'Awf. He came to the Prophet saying, “If you give Fatimah to me in marriage, I will give her a dowry of one hundred camels with loads of precious material from Egypt along with ten thousand dinars.” Hearing this, the Prophet became enraged and threw a handful of gravel at him saying, “Do you think that I am a servant of wealth that you express pride in it (the dowry which you want to give to marry my daughter)?” (Sibt b. Jawzi, “Tadhkiratul Khawas al-Ummah”). Such a person is considered to be one of the “Asharah Mubasharah” (one of the ten men promised paradise by the Prophet) by the Ahlus Sunnah! The Prophet truly said, “If 'Ali

was not born, Fatimah would have not had any one (to marry her).” (al-Manawi, “Kunizul Haqaiq”).

Shaykh al-Tusi in Talkhis al-Shafi, ‘Allamah al-Tabarsi in al-Ihtijaj and Ibn Abil Hadid in his commentary of Nahjul Balagha relate regarding the events of Saqifah from the book al-Saqifah of Ahmad b. ‘Abdul-Aziz al-Jawhari¹ the summary of which follows.

Gathering of the Ansar

When the Prophet of Allah passed away², the Ansar gathered at the Saqifah (a tent) of (the tribe of) Bani Sa’idah which was a place used for gatherings and had a shade over top of it. Although he was sick, they still brought Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah who was an elder from the clan of al-Khazraj, lying on his bed, from his house to proclaim him as the successor of the Prophet and a guide for the Muslims.

He gave a speech in which he invited the people to hand over the reins of the affairs to him. All of the Ansar accepted his call and said to one another, “If the Muhajirin say that we have migrated along with the Prophet (from Makkah to Madinah) while we are the foremost companions of the Prophet and are from his family, why do you dispute with us regarding the caliphate and sovereignty after the death of the Prophet, then what shall we reply to them?”

A group from among them said, “We will reply to their objection by saying, ‘Let there be one commander from among us and one from among you.’ We will not accept any proposal other than this.”

When Sa’ad heard this conversation he said, “This is the first weakness (manifest in you).”

Disappearance of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and the Discourse of Abu Bakr

When ‘Umar b. al-Khattab was informed about the events (at Saqifah), he called for Abu Bakr to come to him immediately. Abu Bakr sent a message saying that he was busy. Again, ‘Umar sent him a message saying, “An incident has occurred for which your presence is a must, therefore hasten immediately.” Hearing this Abu Bakr rose up and came to ‘Umar who said to him, “Don’t you know that the Ansar have gathered at the Saqifah of Bani Sa’idah and are determined to hand over the reins of the affairs to Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah while a good man from among them suggested that, let there be one commander from among us and one from among you!?”

Hearing this, Abu Bakr was terrified and hastened towards the Saqifah along with ‘Umar, while Abu ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrah was also with them. When they entered the Saqifah, they found a large gathering present there.

‘Umar relates the following upon their arrival at the Saqifah, “I thought of standing up and addressing the

people when Abu Bakr said, 'Slow down, let me address them first, thereafter you may say what you wish.' Then Abu Bakr addressed them, and he spoke exactly as I had intended to speak and stated, 'Allah, the Almighty, chose Muhammad as a prophet, a messenger and a guide for the people and He made him a witness over the Ummah until they worshipped the One God and abandoned polytheism, while previously people had chosen various deities for themselves and worshipped them. They believed that these deities would intercede for them and give them benefit. However these statues were made of carved stones and wood, and they worshiped other gods besides Allah that which can neither hurt them nor profit them.³

But it was hard for the 'Arabs to forsake the religion of their forefathers. Allah the Merciful, then granted this distinction upon the Muhajirin to be the first ones to hasten to his call and believe in him. They generously rose up to defend him, and in this way they endured and bore patiently the severities, tortures and belying of the polytheists. The Muhajirin were the foremost to worship Allah upon this earth and they were the first ones to believe in Allah and His Prophet.

The Muhajirin are the friends and relatives of the Prophet and are more liable to hold authority over the masses after his death, while the one who opposes them regarding this matter is an oppressor! O group of Ansar, you are not among those who deny their distinction and superiority in religion and their precedence in (accepting) Islam. Allah chose you to be the companions and friends of the religion and the Messenger, and commanded the Prophet to migrate towards you. Most of his wives and companions were from among you, while none equals you in our eyes after the foremost Muhajirin and thus we are the commanders and you are the ministers. We will not refrain from taking your advice and we will not issue orders without consulting you in the affairs.”

Discourse of the Friends and Companions

After the address of Abu Bakr, Hubab b. Mandhar b. Jamuh (from amongst the Ansar) stood up and said, “O group of Ansar! Hold fast to your affairs for there are men under your command ready to strike anyone, while no one has the audacity to oppose you regarding it and none has the power to take the reins of affairs in their hands without your order and consent. You are the ones possessed with honour, splendor, manpower, potential and personality. People turn to you for their tasks and for advice so do not dispute among yourselves otherwise the result of your affairs will be ruined! If they (the Muhajirin) do not accept what I said and what you heard, then our opinion is that one man from among us may be chosen as a guide and one man from among them.”

Hearing this 'Umar b. al-Khattab said, “Far be it! There cannot be two swords in one sheath and the 'Arabs will never consent to this (two leaders). The Ansar may be their guides for the reason that the Prophet's clan was different from that of yours, while the 'Arabs do not differ in the matter that the guide should be from the same clan as that of the Prophet. Then who is it that disputes with us regarding the affairs of the authority that is the right of the Prophet, while we are the friends and relatives of the

Prophet.”

Again, Hubab b. Mandhar stood up and said, “O group of Ansar! Take care of your opinion and do not accept the words of this man and his companions as they desire to snatch away the authority from your destiny! If they oppose you, then remove them from your city for you are most worthy of authority! If expelling them from Madinah requires the use of the sword then do so, men are in approval and steadfast with you, while I stand in this way as a solid pillar and an unagreeable flaw (against them). To straighten the affairs, I insist to be similar to the stick that is erected in the sleeping-place of the camels upon which they rub the dirt of their bodies. I am similar to a palm-tree that rests upon a wall or a pillar, and I am like a lion that does not fear anyone. I possess the heart of a lion. By Allah! If you wish I will turn around his (‘Umar’s) limb.” ‘Umar replied, “Then may Allah kill you.” Hubab said, “May He kill you!”

In the commotion, Abu ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrah said, “O group of Ansar! You were one of those who were the foremost to help the Prophet in your city! Do not be the first ones to make changes and alterations (in Islam).”

Then Bushr (or Bashir) b. Sa’ad, the father of Nu’man b. Bashir rose up and said, “O group of Ansar! Beware that Muhammad is related to the Quraysh, he was their kinsman and their near one. By Allah! You shall not find me differing with them in regards to the matters of authority.”

The Command of Abu Bakr and Allegiance to Him

Then Abu Bakr stood up and said, “Here are ‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah, you may pledge allegiance at the hand of the one whom you desire.”

‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah said, “By Allah! We will not precede you in taking the affairs of the caliphate in our hands. You are the best of the Emigrants (Muhajirin), while you were the vicegerent of the Prophet in offering the prayers, which is the best command of religion. Now extend your hand so that we may pledge allegiance at your hands.”

Abu Bakr extended his hand so that ‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah may pledge allegiance to him, but Bashir b. Sa’ad preceded them and pledged allegiance at his hands.⁴

Seeing this, Hubab b. Mandhar al-Ansari called out, “O Bashir! May dust be upon your head! You have acted stingy in the matter that your cousin (Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah) may become the commander!”

Then, Usayd b. Hudhair, the chief of the clan of ‘Aws, called out to his companions saying, “By Allah! If you do not pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr, the people of the clan of al-Khazraj will always show pride over you (in regards to this).”

The companions of Usayd stood up and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr and Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah was badly defeated since the people of the clan of al-Khazraj did not side with him. At that moment, people

came from all sides and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, and Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah, who was sick and sitting on his bed, was almost crushed due to the crowd, at which point he called out, "You will kill me!" 'Umar said, "Kill Sa'ad, may Allah kill him!"

Stern Words of Sa'ad with 'Umar and His Refusal to Swear Allegiance

At that moment, the son of Sa'ad (Qays b. Sa'ad) jumped up, and grabbing 'Umar by the beard said, "By Allah, O son of Sahhak! You are the one who runs away from battle in fear, but among (ordinary) people and at times of peace you behave like a lion! If you move even a single hair of the head of Sa'ad (my father), then you shall not return back but that I will fill your face with wounds such that the bones thereof will be visible!"

Abu Bakr told 'Umar, "Remain calm and act cautiously, for caution is better and profitable."

Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah then told 'Umar, "O son of Sahhak! By Allah! If I had the strength to stand up and if I had not been sick, indeed you and Abu Bakr would have heard my roaring, similar to a lion, in the streets of Madinah, and you would have fled from Madinah in fear! I would have joined ranks with a group of men through whom you would be degraded and subjugated (not like the present circumstances in which) others will be under your command (and you in charge of the people). O children of Khazraj! Take me away from this place of commotion."

They lifted Sa'ad up from his bed and took him to his house.⁶

Thereafter Abu Bakr sent a message to Sa'ad saying, "People have taken the oath of allegiance to me, and you too may do so." Sa'ad replied, "By Allah! I will not swear the allegiance to you until I exhaust all the arrows in my quiver against you and until I dye the point of my lance with your blood and fight with you until the sword remains in my hands. Remember that my hands have not become shortened to fight against you. My relatives, those under my command and I myself shall fight you. By Allah! Even if all the men and Jinn unite together to make me swear allegiance at the hands of you two evil men, I will never do so until I meet my Lord, and I will place my accountability to Him."

When the message of Sa'ad was sent to Abu Bakr, 'Umar said, "There is no way (out for him) except that he must pledge allegiance."

Bashir b. Sa'ad told 'Umar, "O 'Umar! Sa'ad will never pledge allegiance at any cost until he is killed, and if he is killed, the two clans of Aws and Khazraj will also be killed along with him. Leave him alone, for he will not harm you while living in seclusion."

'Umar and his associates consented to the suggestion of Bashir and left Sa'ad alone.

After that, Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah neither prayed along with them, nor referred to them in any of the legal

matters, and if he had sufficient manpower, he would have fought against them. He remained in this (aloof) state during the caliphate of Abu Bakr and after him, when ‘Umar b. al-Khattab took the reins of caliphate in his hands, his attitude remained the same. Sa’ad went to Syria in fear of confronting ‘Umar (if he remained in Madinah) and he stayed there in the city of Hawran until he died – some time during the caliphate of ‘Umar, and during this entire period, he never swore allegiance to either Abu Bakr or ‘Umar. As for how he died, it has been stated that one night he was shot by an arrow that killed him, and a rumour was spread that a group of the Jinn had killed him.

The Forged Tale of Assassination of Sa’ad by a Group of the Jinn

It is related by the historian al-Balazuri that ‘Umar b. al-Khattab ordered Khalid b. al-Walid and Muhammad b. Maslamah al-Ansari to kill Sa’ad. Both of them shot arrows at him that killed him. They propagated the a group of Jinn had killed him and spread this verse of poetry that the Jinn said, “We killed the chief of Khazraj, Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah, thus we shot two arrows at him that failed to miss his heart.”

Narration of Ibn Abil Hadid Regarding the Saqifah

Ibn Abil Hadid relates through his chain of narrators that, “When the Prophet left for the heavenly abode, the Ansar gathered around Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah. Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah went to them and Hubab b. Mandhar said, ‘One chief from among us and one from among you. By Allah! We are neither stingy nor envious with you regarding the caliphate for we fear lest the sovereignty may pass on to those whose fathers, sons and brothers have been killed by them (the Bani Hasihm), and they may become our ruler.’”⁷

Ibn Abil Hadid further states that, “I read this narration to Abu Ja’far Yahya b. Muhammad al-’Alawi and he said, ‘I agree with the astuteness and intelligence of Hubab b. Mandhar for he predicted exactly (what would transpire) and what he feared actually ended up taking place when the revenge of the polytheists killed in the battle of Badr was taken from the Muslims from amongst the Ansar (at the event of the Saqifah and how they went about choosing their leader – based on past grudges).’”⁸

Abu Ja’far Yahya b. Muhammad al-’Alawi continued, “The Prophet of Allah also feared that the tyranny might come forth and oppress his Ahlul Bayt and his close companions. The blood of the polytheists had been shed and if his daughter (Sayyidah Fatimah) and her sons would come under the rule of the oppressive tyrants, they would be in great danger. Therefore, time and again he declared that his cousin (Imam ‘Ali) would be his successor after him, so that his (Imam ‘Ali’s) life and that of his family (Ahlul Bayt) would remain safe. If the reins of caliphate come into the hands of the progeny of the Prophet, it would have been beneficial for the life of ‘Ali and his Ahlul Bayt, rather than them being under the command of some other ruler. But destiny (and the greed of malicious men) did not favour him and such

adverse incidents came forth that his (grand) sons had to face severity, as you are aware.”

Another Angle and Groundwork of Saqifah: Absence of Imam ‘Ali and the Bani Hashim

The eminent scholar, Shaykh al-Mufid states in his book al-Irshad that, “After the death of the Prophet, Imam ‘Ali was busy in the bathing, shrouding and burial (of the Prophet), while the Bani Hashim remained away from the people due to this great calamity. Thus the people took advantage of this opportunity and in regards to the caliphate and choosing a caliph, established the leadership of Abu Bakr in the absence of Imam ‘Ali and the Bani Hashim.

While there was a dispute among the Ansar regarding this matter, the freed ones (during the victory of Makkah) and those who were permitted by the Prophet to enter Islam to change their hearts, detested any sort of delay in the selection of the caliph and thus, they settled the matter of the caliphate and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, before the Bani Hashim could find respite. They did so because Abu Bakr was present at the place of their gathering (Saqifah) and the means and requirements of his affairs were ready and acceptable.”

We will not quote the details of this incident in this book, but will leave it for another book.

The Discourse of Imam ‘Ali

It is related that when the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr concluded, a man came to Imam ‘Ali who was carrying a shovel and was busy preparing the grave of the Prophet of Allah. He said to Imam ‘Ali, “People have sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr, while the Ansar have been defeated in this matter of choosing the caliph, for a dispute arose among themselves. The freed ones (those who had been freed by the Prophet during the victory of Makkah) took precedence and swore allegiance to him (Abu Bakr), they did not seek your advice because you were absent.”

Imam ‘Ali laid the shovel upon the ground, while its handle was in his hand and said,

“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Alif Lam Mim. What! Do people imagine that they will be left off on (their) saying: ‘We believe’, and they will not be tried? And indeed We did try those before them, and Allah certainly knows those who are truthful, and certainly He knows the liars. Or imagine they who work evil that they will escape Us? Ill is what they judge!”⁹

Rejection of Abu Sufyan’s Proposal

Abu Sufyan came to the house of the Prophet, while Imam ‘Ali and ‘Abbas b. ‘Abdul Muttalib were present. They looked at him as he recited the following verses of poetry, “O Bani Hashim! Do not let others have greed for it (the caliphate), particularly the people of the clans of Taym b. Murrah (Abu Bakr)

and Adi (‘Umar) for the affair is only your right and will return to you, particularly to Abul Hasan ‘Ali, O Abal Hasan! Clench your claws and prepare yourself, for you are more worthy for the affair and that what you desire!”

Then he said, “O Bani Hashim! O children of ‘Abdul Manaf! Do you agree that Abu Fusayl (referring to Abu Bakr), the lowly and son of the lowly, may rule over you? By Allah! If you desire, I can gather such a large army of horsemen and foot soldiers that they will put them (Abu Bakr and his supporters) in a fix!”

Hearing this Imam ‘Ali (who was aware of the evil intentions of Abu Sufyan) replied, “Return back, I swear by Allah that whatever you say is not for the sake of Allah! You are always in a state of deceit and playing tricks against Islam and the Muslims. We are attending the funeral of the Prophet, and everyone will reach the reward of their good deeds, and Allah is the Guardian and Helper of the oppressed.”¹⁰

When Abu Sufyan (who had intended evil and desired to spread discord amongs the Muslims) heard this, he became disappointed and left Imam ‘Ali and went towards the Masjid. He saw people from among the Bani Umayyah gathered in the Masjid and tried to incite them to take the affairs of the caliphate into their hands, but they too did not respond to his proposal. Thus, mischief was manifest such that everyone would become entangled in it and there were evil pretexts that had come forth; Satan had gained authority while the mischief-mongers were working hand in hand with one another. Due to this, the believers were afflicted and abjected, and this is the concealed meaning of the words of Allah,

“And guard yourselves against an affliction which may smite not (only) those who committed injustice among you in particular (but all of you).”¹¹

The Intrigues of Vicious Men

The eminent scholar, Shaykh ‘Ubaydullah b. ‘Abdullah al-Astarabadi in his book al-Muqni’ah fil Imamah, relates the incidents that took place at Saqifah and how the people resolved to take away the right of the ‘One bestowed with Authority (by Allah)’ that was due to him and writes:

“The historians and biographers agree that when the Prophet of Allah passed away, the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali was busy in his funeral proceedings. The Emigrants (Muhajirin) and helpers (Ansar) were waiting to see the reaction of Imam ‘Ali and the Bani Hashim. Satan assumed the form of Mughirah b. Shu’bah, the squint-eyed man of the Bani Thaqif and came to them saying, “What are you waiting for?” They replied that they were waiting for the Bani Hashim to conclude their tasks. Mughirah (Satan) said, “Go and complete the task for by Allah, if you wait for the Bani Hashim to finish up with the burial proceedings of the Prophet, you will always be under their influence and shall shift the affairs of the caliphate (to them), which is similar to the caesars of Rome and chosroes of Persia.

Some time back, a group of Qurayshite men had consented and written upon a scroll that if the Prophet died or was killed, they would divert the authority from the Bani Hashim so that both the position of

prophethood, as well as caliphate would not be combined in them. They kept this as a trust with Abu ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrah and then Satan in the form of Mughirah) came to the Ansar and incited them to take the reins of the caliphate into their hands and advised them similarly. Thus, the Ansar proceeded towards Saqifah Bani Sa’idah.”

An Astonishing Report of Abu Dhuaib al-Hudhali

The above mentioned scholar (‘Ubaydullah al-Astarabadi) continues that, “Abul Hasan b. Zanjī, the linguist of Basra, informed me in 433 ah that Abu Dhuaib al-Hudhali said that, ‘We were informed (while they were away from Madinah) that the Prophet of Allah was ill. We were aggrieved by this sudden news and passed the night in great anguish and disturbed. I was very much distressed in my sleep and while I was awake, and in the morning suddenly I heard a caller saying: ‘A great fissure has appeared in Islam at Madinah! Prophet Muhammad has died while our eyes shed tears upon this calamity!’”

Abu Zawib says, ‘I woke up from my sleep in fright and looked up at the sky but saw nothing except a star named Sa’ad Zabeh. I saw the book of fortunes and in it was written that death and bloodshed would take place among the ‘Arabs. I concluded that either the Prophet of Allah had died that night, or that he would not survive from an illness, and thus I rose up and mounted my camel and went towards Madinah. I travelled until morning and I looked around to find something that I may see the book of fortunes upon it. Suddenly I saw a male porcupine that had hunted a small snake and held it in its mouth. The snake was moving but the porcupine bit it until it ate the snake. Thus I concluded that something evil had taken place. The clutching of the snake in the mouth indicated the snatching and opposing the authority from the vicegerent of the Prophet, while the swallowing of the snake indicated that the authority had been usurped.

I started galloping the camel fast so that I could reach Madinah, and saw that the people of Madinah were engrossed in sorrow, and their wailing was similar to the wailing of the pilgrims while wearing the ihram¹². I asked someone what had happened and he replied that the Prophet of Allah had passed away. Hearing this, I hastened towards the Masjid and saw that no one was there. I went towards the Prophet’s house and saw that it was closed. It was said to me that the Prophet had died and his body was shrouded, and none except his Ahlul Bayt, were busy in his funeral proceedings. I inquired as to where the other people were to which I was told that, ‘The people have assembled around the Ansar at Saqifah Bani Sa’idah.’

I reached Saqifah and saw Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, Mughirah (Ibn Shu’bah), Abu ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrah and group of other Quraysh men. Among the Ansar, I found Sa’ad b. Dalham and their ‘Chief of Poets’, Hissan b. Thabit. I talked to the Quraysh and the Ansar regarding the caliphate and did not hear any truth from them, and then they all swore allegiance to Abu Bakr.

After this incident, Abu Zawib returned back to the desert from where he had come and stayed there until he passed away during the rule of ‘Uthman b. al-Affan.

Verses of Poetry Regarding Saqifah

The previously mentioned scholar (‘Ubaydullah al-Astarabadi) says, “Nabighah Ju’da (Qays b. Ka’ab, a poet) came out of his house and asked the people in regards to the death of the Prophet. ‘Imran b. Hasin told him, “If I had interacted with them (in Saqifah); a sacrifice (of an animal as an atonement) would have been incumbent upon me.”

Qays b. Sarmah said: “The community dawned with an astonishing event, and the authority passed into the hands of the one who prevailed; while I speak the truth and not falsehood, verily tomorrow the notables of ‘Arabs shall perish.”

Hearing this Nabighah asked, “What was Abul Hasan ‘Ali doing at that time?” Two men replied to him saying: “Tell the bald man (referring to Imam ‘Ali) of the (Bani) Hashim that you unfastened the twisted rope (and gave away the caliphate); that which the Quraysh prided upon with others, when you were more worthy of it and were its leader; and yesterday they saluted you as an authority (in Ghadir) upon the believers, but (today) they broke their commitment; the Bani Taym b. Murrah (clan of Abu Bakr) violated their oaths, and became worthy of the fire of hell; they revealed their enmity (against you) on the day of Saqifah; but tomorrow you (‘Ali) will be their enemy (meaning on the Day of Resurrection).”¹³

On the day of Saqifah, ‘Utbah b. Abi Sufyan b. ‘Abdul Muttalib recited the following verses of poetry, “The one in authority after Ahmad is ‘Ali, who was his companion everywhere; the vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah in reality and his son-in-law, the first one who offered prayers and the one who preceeded in accepting Islam.”

‘Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet recited the following verses of poetry after Saqifah, “I wonder at the community, that they elected a commander not from the (Bani) Hashim, (but rather, they imposed one) upon the (Bani) Hashim who happen to be the clan of Prophet Muhammad; when they (those who took over the caliphate) were not greater than them (the Bani Hashim) in excellence, nor were they close to being comparable (to the Bani Hashim) in deeds and leadership!”

‘Utbah b. Abi Sufyan b. ‘Abdul Muttalib recited the following verses of poetry, “The Abu Taym (tribe of Abu Bakr) snatched away with injustice (the caliphate) from the (Bani) Hashim, and kept aside ‘Ali who was designated in the past (by the Prophet); they disregarded the ‘near ones’ of the Prophet, and in this way they ignored knowledge.”

Zafar b. Harith b. Hudhayfah al-Ansari recited the following verses of poetry, “Surround ‘Ali and assist him, for he is the vicegerent (of the Prophet) and foremost in Islam; but if you desert him and unpleasant circumstances arise, then you will not be able to find anyone else who can ward it off (except for ‘Ali).”

Khuzaymah b. Thabit said, “I cannot explain this authority that transferred from (Bani) Hashim when ‘Ali was among them; was he not the first one who prayed towards the Qiblah, the most learned among men

with regards to the Qur'an and customs (Sunnah of the Prophet), the last one who remained with the Prophet, and the one who was assisted by Jibra'il in the washing of the bath and shrouding (of the Prophet); who it is that distanced you away from him, verily your allegiance (to Abu Bakr) is the greatest of frauds." Some attribute these words to 'Utbah b. Abi Lahab.

Khuzaymah b. Thabit also said, "O 'Ayesha! Leave 'Ali and do not ridicule him, for you are nothing but a mother (of the believers); and he is the vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah among his Ahlul Bayt, while you yourself are a witness to it!"

The Ansar Side with Imam 'Ali and Verses of Poetry of Hisan

The author of al-Muqni'ah fil Imamah, Shaykh al-Astarabadi says, "When the caliphate of Abu Bakr was established, the people came from Saqifah to the houses near the Masjid. 'Umru b. al-As¹⁴ started maligning the Ansar and calling them mean, wretched and degraded. Through his actions, he revealed the grudge and envy he harboured against Islam from the time of the Prophet, and at this moment in time, he had the chance to bare his animosity.

When Imam 'Ali was informed about this, he got up and went towards the Masjid. He ascended the mimbar (pulpit) and spoke about the merits of the Ansar and related the Qur'anic verses revealed in their praise in front of the Muslims present. Then he continued, 'It is necessary upon everyone to recognize the rights of the Ansar and safeguard their honour.'

The people requested Hisan b. Thabit, a renowned poet of the Ansar, to recite verses in praise of 'Ali due to his seniority in Islam. In this manner, those people from amongst the Ansar who had not sided with Imam 'Ali in Saqifah, regretted their actions.

At this point, Hisan b. Thabit recited the following verses, 'May Allah's best rewards be upon Abul Hasan and the reward lies in His Hands, and who is similar to Abul Hasan; the Quraysh take pride that you are from amongst them, thus your chest is wide and your heart tested; some people from amongst the Quraysh desired to acquire your position, far be it that a feeble one compares himself with a sturdy one; and you aided Islam in every situation, you were similar to the bucket fastened with a rope (Islam is like a well, full of blessings and you became a medium of reaching the blessings to humanity); you were enraged when 'Umru (b. al-As), due to his speech killed piety and enlivened tribulations; you are the hope (of people) from among the progeny of Luwayy b. Ghalib¹⁵, in all the present affairs and those to come in the future; you safeguarded the Prophet and his progeny for us, and who is more deserving for it (the caliphate) other than you and you alone. Are you not the brother of the Prophet in guidance and his vicegerent, and the most learned among them with regards to The Book (al-Qur'an) and the customs (sunnah of the Prophet); and until the roots remain in Najd and Yemen, you will be (the most) honourable among us.'"

Verses of Poetry of Umme Ayman

The learned scholar (Shaykh al-Astarabadi) the author of al-Muqni'ah fil Imamah continues, "The historians relate from Abul Aswad al-Du'ali that, 'A man narrated to me that Umme Ayman narrated, 'On the night after people pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, I heard these verses from someone who was not seen, and his words were, 'Verily with the passing away of Ahmad, Islam has become weakened, and all the Muslims from amongst your ranks wept; and sorrows piled up with the assistance of the astray ones, against the guide, the approved one, the generous – the vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah, the foremost in Islam, the most learned among the worshippers who gave Zakat in dirhams (referring to Imam 'Ali); the inferior ones tried to gain authority over the brother of Mustafa, and snatch away the distinction of superiority (from him).'"

If a sober person reflects upon the meaning conveyed in these verses of poetry, one will conclude how people behaved with Imam 'Ali after the death of the Prophet of Allah. He will also understand the similarity of their treatment with 'Ali with that of the Tribes of Isra'il in regards to Prophet Harun, the brother of Prophet Musa in his (Musa's) absence, since the events of the people clashing with 'Ali were similar to the events of the behavior of the Tribes of Isra'il with Prophet Harun.

In this matter, Muhammad b. Nasr b. Bissam al-Katib eulogises so well, "Verily 'Ali bore tribulations for the religion, and was deceived; Mustafa declared him to be his own self, a status that was not enjoyed by anyone else; he designated him similar to Harun among his community, immediately for the world and for the hereafter; so refer to (Surah) al-A'raf and you will see how the community dealt with Harun."

Indeed, one should refer to Suratul A'raf to see how the Tribes of Isra'il treated Harun, and then will one realise how the community treated Imam 'Ali after the death of the Prophet.

A Letter from Abu Bakr to Usamah and his Reply

Another piece of evidence to verify the claim of the ones who state that the status of Imamah is confined to Imam 'Ali after the Prophet and that his right was snatched away a letter of Abu Bakr addressed to Usamah b. Zayd after the episode of Saqifah.

It should be remembered that Usamah b. Zayd was appointed the commander of an army by the Prophet and was ordered to proceed towards Syria to crush the aggression of the enemy. The Prophet had declared that anyone who did not pay heed to the command of Usamah was a culprit. Thus, at the time of the death of the Prophet and the proceedings of Saqifah, Usamah was away from Madinah at a place called Jurf (near Madinah), proceeding towards Syria (following the command of the Prophet).

The contents of the letter addressed to him were as follows, "From Abu Bakr, the caliph of the Prophet of Allah to Usamah b. Zayd. Now then! The Muslims have taken refuge in me and have chosen me for the leadership of caliphate and made me their chief after the Prophet of Allah." (The letter being lengthy,

until he reached here), “Thus when my letter reaches you, you may come to me, similar to the other Muslims and swear allegiance to me. Then you may even permit ‘Umar b. al-Khattab to be free from under your leadership and stay with me here for I need him.¹⁶ Then you may proceed towards the frontline as directed by the Prophet.”

When the letter reached Usamah, he read it and replied, “From Usamah b. Zayd, the freed slave of the Prophet of Allah, to Abu Bakr b. Abu Qahafah. Now then! Your letter has reached me, but it is completely incompatible from the beginning until the end. First you claim to be the caliph of the Prophet and then say that the Muslims gathered around you and chose you as their leader? If it was such, then they would have pledged allegiance at your hands in the Masjid and not at the Saqifah. Furthermore you request me to excuse ‘Umar b. al-Khattab from the army for the reason that you need him! Know that he has already stayed away on his own without my permission and it is not lawful for me to excuse anyone for the Prophet himself had deputed them for this battle under my command. In this matter there is no difference between you and ‘Umar, that both of you have stayed behind, and violation of the Prophet’s command after his death is similar to disobeying him during his lifetime. You very well know that the Prophet had ordered you and ‘Umar to proceed towards this expedition under my command while the opinion and command of the Prophet regarding you is better and preferable to your own opinions regarding yourselves. Your position was not hidden from the Prophet who made me your commander and not you my commander. Thus opposing the Prophet is hypocrisy and deceit...”

The author (Shaykh al-Qummi) says, “We have preserved this detailed letter of Abu Bakr and the successive reply of Usamah in our book ‘Uyunul Balaghah fi Unsul Hadrir wa Naqlatul Musafir’, and we suffice with it’s summary in this book.

Scrutiny of the Incident of Saqifah: Absence of a Majority of Muslims in the Burial of the Prophet

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibn ‘Abdul Birr in his book, al-Isti’ab relates that, “On the day the Prophet died, allegiance was sworn to Abu Bakr at Saqifah Bani Sa’idah. But public allegiance took place on Tuesday – one day after the death of the Prophet. Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah, the chief of Bani Khazraj and his fellow companions refused to pay allegiance to Abu Bakr.

Shaykh al-Mufid relates in his book, al-Irshad, that numerous men from among the Muhajirin and Ansar remained away from the proceedings of the burial of the Prophet due to the discord that arose among them regarding the caliphate, while many others among them could not pray over the body of the Prophet.¹⁷ Sayyidah Fatimah bewailed in the morning calling out, “Woe evil morning! Today I have lost my father”, while Abu Bakr said, “Verily your day is an evil day.”

The esteemed erudite, Sayyed Ibn al-Tawus addressed his son in his book Kashful Mahajjah with the following words: “One of the astonishing things that I saw in the books of the Ahlus Sunnah which has

also been quoted by al-Tabari in his book of history is that the Prophet died on Monday, but was buried on Wednesday. It is related that the corpse of the Prophet lay for three days and then was buried. Ibrahim al-Thaqafi writes in the fourth volume of his book al-Ma'rifah that, 'Certainly the body of the Prophet lay for three days and then was buried. This happened because the people were busy in establishing the caliphate of Abu Bakr and were struggling for it.'

The revered Imam 'Ali could not detach himself from the body of the Prophet and did not want to bury him before the people had an opportunity to pray over his body. The Imam did not do so (bury the Prophet immediately) because he feared that the people would kill him or that they would exhume the grave of the Prophet and remove his corpse. He also delayed the burial of the prophet for the reason that people would not accuse him that he buried the Prophet in haste or that he buried him in the wrong place. May Allah keep His Mercy away from that group of people who abandoned the corpse of the Prophet and remained engrossed in choosing the caliph, while 'the foundation and the origin of guidance' was the prophethood and apostleship of the Prophet of Allah. They were hasty in doing so because they desired to separate the authority from the Ahlul Bayt and his progeny. O my son! By Allah! I do not understand what humanity, intellect, manliness and conscience these people had and what type of companions (of the Prophet) they were, inspite of the several obligations and mercies showered upon them by the Prophet! How could they show such audacity in the sacred presence of the Prophet!

How rightly Zayd b. 'Ali (b. Husayn) had said, 'By Allah! If it was possible for the people to get hold of the sovereignty without clinging to the prophethood, they would have detached themselves from the Prophet's prophethood even.'

One of the responsibilities upon the Muslims after the death of the Prophet was that on the day of his death, they should have sat upon the earth, perhaps upon the sand, and should have worn the clothing befitting those in distress, like the black colour and should have refrained from food and drink, and each one from among them, whether male or female, should have gathered to lament and wail, for there was no other day similar to that day, nor would a day similar to it ever dawn again.'"

Saqifah in the Eyes of Bura' b. Azib

Ibn Abil Hadid and Sulaym b. Qays relate from Bura' b. Azib that, "When the Prophet of Allah passed away, I was with his family. I was frightened and worried that the caliphate would pass to someone else, but at the same time I was immersed in sorrow due to the death of the Prophet. Sometimes I hastened frantically to the house of the Prophet and saw that his Ahlul Bayt were engrossed in his funeral proceedings, and at other times I went to Saqifah and saw those people struggling in electing a caliph. The Ansar wanted to impose themselves upon the Muhajirin, while the Muhajirin wished to dominate the Ansar. A time passed in this turmoil and I returned back.

The elders, along with 'Umar and Abu Bakr were not seen (at the Prophet's house). Suddenly I heard a person saying, 'The people have gathered at Saqifah', while another said, 'They have sworn allegiance

to Abu Bakr.’ After a while I saw Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah along with a group of people wearing good clothes. They tricked whoever they met on the street and forced them to swear allegiance at the hands of Abu Bakr, whether that person agreed or not. Seeing this, my intellect parted ways due to immense sorrow, and I hastened towards the house of the Prophet. I saw that the Bani Hashim had shut the door for the funeral proceedings. I pounded upon the door and said, “People have sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr.” Hearing this, ‘Abbas, the uncle of Prophet said, “May your hands sever until the end of the world.”

Circumstances of the Allegiance by Bani Hashim

The author of al-Ihtijaj, ‘Allamah al-Tabarsi, and in addition, Ibn Qutaybah Daynuri in his book al-Imamah was Siyasah and others relate that when the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali completed the funeral proceedings of the Prophet, he sat down in the Masjid, and with a sorrowful and shattered look on his face, he was bereaved by the loss of the Prophet. The Bani Hashim had gathered around him and Zubayr b. Awwam was also alongside him. The Bani Umayyah had gathered around ‘Uthman in another corner of the Masjid, while in another corner, the Bani Zuhra had assembled around ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf. In this way people were gathered in the Masjid in groups when Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and Abu ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrah entered therein.

They said, “Why do we see you people scattered in groups? Rise up and swear allegiance to Abu Bakr just like the Ansar and the others have done.”

‘Uthman, ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf and their associates stood up and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, while Imam ‘Ali and the Bani Hashim left the Masjid and gathered in his house along with Zubayr.

‘Umar, accompanied by the people who had sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr, including the likes of Usayd b. Khuzayr and Salmah b. Salamah, stood up and went to the house of Imam ‘Ali and saw that the Bani Hashim had gathered therein. They told them, “People have sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr, and you too may follow them.” Hearing this Zubayr rose up with a sword in his hand, then ‘Umar said, “Charge this dog and save us from his mischief.” Salmah b. Salamah jumped towards him and snatched away the sword from his hand, while ‘Umar took it from Salmah and struck the sword with such force upon the ground that it broke. Then they surrounded the Bani Hashim and forcibly brought them to the Masjid near Abu Bakr. They told them, “People have sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr, you too may do so. By Allah, if you disobey, we will put you to sword in this trial.” When the Bani Hashim found themselves in such straightened circumstance, they came forward one after the other and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr.

Assault at the House of Imam ‘Ali and the speech of Sayyidah

Zahra

‘Allamah al-Tabarsi, the author of al-Ihtijaj relates from ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf that, “‘Umar b. al-Khattab tightened his shirt to his waist and went around the city of Madinah calling out, ‘People have sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr, thus hasten to do the same!’ The people had no choice but to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. ‘Umar was informed that a group of men had hidden themselves in their homes and thus, accompanied by a group of men, he attacked them and brought them to the Masjid and forced them to swear allegiance at his hand.

Some days passed and ‘Umar came to the house of Imam ‘Ali accompanied by a group of men. He called out to Imam ‘Ali to come out of his house (and swear allegiance). Imam ‘Ali refused to do so. Then ‘Umar called for wood and fire and said, ‘I swear by Him in Whose hands is the life of ‘Umar! If he (referring to Imam ‘Ali) does not step out, I will set the house on fire along with those inside it.’

Some people from amongst those present told ‘Umar, ‘Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet is in the house as well as his sons (Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn) and his symbols.’ The people began to object to ‘Umar (and his threats to burn down the house) and when he realized the gravity of the situation, he said, ‘What do you think? Do you think that I will really do this? I only meant to scare them and not burn them.’

Imam ‘Ali sent a message saying, ‘It is not possible for me to step outside, for I am busy compiling the Qur’an that you have abandoned behind your backs, and attached yourselves with materialism. I have sworn that I will not step out of the house, nor wear my cloak until I finish compiling the Qur’an.’

At this moment, Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, came out and stood near the door facing the people and said, ‘I have not known a group more ill-mannered than you! You left the corpse of the Prophet in our midst and took the affairs (of electing a caliph) into your own hands! You did not seek our advice and rather, neglected our rights. Perhaps you pretended to not know the event of Ghadir. By Allah! On that day, the Prophet of Allah took the pledge from the people regarding the friendship and authority of ‘Ali.¹⁸ The Messenger did that so that you would never desire to take the authority in your own hands, but you scraped the relation with your Prophet (by doing so). Surely Allah is the Judge between us and you in this world and in the hereafter.’”

The Incident of Forcing the Allegiance From Imam ‘Ali in the Words of the Scholars of Ahlus Sunnah

Allegiance in the Eyes of Ibn Qutaybah al-Daynuri

Abu Muhammad ‘Abdullah b. Muslim b. Qutaybah al-Daynuri, better known as Ibn Qutaybah al-Daynuri, a renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah who lived during the time of the “lesser occultation” (of Imam

al-Mahdi) and died in 322 ah, writes in his book al-Imamah was Siyasah regarding Imam 'Ali's refusal to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr that, "Then 'Ali (may Allah have mercy upon his face) was (forcefully) brought to Abu Bakr while calling out, 'I am the slave of Allah and the brother of the Prophet of Allah.'

A man told him to swear allegiance at the hands of Abu Bakr, to which he replied, 'I am more worthy of the caliphate than you, I shall not swear allegiance at your hands when you are more entitled to swear allegiance at my hand, while you have taken the position in your hands! You snatched the caliphate away from the Ansar on the grounds that you are his relatives and thus in reality you usurped the rights from us – the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet! Did you not put forward this claim in front of the Ansar that you were more entitled to succeed Muhammad being his close relatives? Thus the Ansar handed over the authority to you and surrendered. Now I put forward the same claim that you put forth to the Ansar (regarding the relationship with the Prophet). I was nearer to the Prophet in his lifetime and even now after his death. Then deal justly with us if you possess faith, or else (is it that) you intentionally seek refuge in oppression.'

'Umar replied, 'We shall not release you until you swear allegiance to Abu Bakr.'

Hearing this, Imam 'Ali said, 'Milk thou and keep half for your self, and strive for him (Abu Bakr) today, for tomorrow he shall return it (the caliphate) to you.'¹⁹ Then he continued, 'O 'Umar! By Allah! I shall not yield to your words and swear allegiance to him.' Abu Bakr replied, "If you do not swear allegiance, then I will not force you.'

Then, Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah said, 'O cousin! You are still young while these two are seniors in the community and you do not have the same experience and intelligence which they have. In my opinion Abu Bakr has more potentials than you to take the reins of caliphate in his hand as he possesses more tolerance and is better informed than you.'²⁰ Hand over the caliphate to Abu Bakr and if you remain alive and have a long life, you shall be rightfully entitled to the caliphate with regards to excellence, religiosity, knowledge, intelligence, seniority, relationship and kindship that you possess.'

Imam 'Ali replied, 'Allah! Allah! O group of Emigrants! Do not bring out the 'authority of the Prophet' among the 'Arabs from the interior of his house into the interior and bottom of your houses! Defend the status of his Ahlul Bayt among the people and their rights! O Emigrants! By Allah! We are the most entitled among all men to take the authority into our hands for we are the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet and are more entitled to the caliphate than any of you.'"

Seeking Aid from the Ansar

Ibn Qutaybah further says, "At night, 'Ali (May Allah have mercy upon his face) sat Fatimah upon a mount and took her to the Ansar and she told them to support 'Ali. They replied, 'O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! We have taken the oath of allegiance to this man (Abu Bakr) and the die has been cast. If your cousin and husband had approached us in the beginning, before we had given the

allegiance to Abu Bakr, we would have supported him and listened to him regarding the caliphate.’

‘Ali replied to them, ‘In that case should I have left the corpse of the Prophet in his house unburied and come to you and dispute with men regarding the caliphate?’

Fatimah said, “Abul Hasan (Imam ‘Ali) was bound and more befitting to accomplish the funeral proceedings of the Prophet, while the Muhajirin and Ansar have committed such an act that Allah will reprimand and punish them.”

Ibn Qutaybah narrates regarding how the allegiance was forced upon Imam ‘Ali as follows: “When Abu Bakr was informed about those who had not pledged allegiance to him and that they were with ‘Ali, he sent ‘Umar to them. ‘Umar went to the house of ‘Ali and called them to come out to take the oath of allegiance, but they refused to come out. ‘Umar said, “I swear by Him in Whose hands is the life of ‘Umar! Certainly you should come out, or else I shall burn down the house with its occupants!”

Some of those present told ‘Umar, “Fatimah is also in the house”, and ‘Umar replied, “So be it.” Thus all of those present in the house were forced to come out and swear allegiance except ‘Ali who had sworn that, “I will neither come out of my house nor wear a cloak upon my shoulders until I complete the compilation of the Qur’an.”

Fatimah stood near the door and addressed the Emigrants saying, “I have not known a group more ill-mannered than you, you left the corpse of the Prophet amongst our midst and took the affairs into your hands yourself, you did not seek our advice and neglected our rights.”

When ‘Umar heard these words, he went to Abu Bakr and said, “Why do you not arrest or reprimand this man since he refuses to swear allegiance?”

Abu Bakr called for Qunfudh, his freed slave, and sent him to ‘Ali with a message that he (‘Ali) was to go to Abu Bakr. Qunfudh went to ‘Ali and he asked him what he wanted. Qunfudh replied, “The caliph of the Prophet of Allah has called you.” ‘Ali replied, “How soon do you attribute a lie to the Prophet (by claiming that Abu Bakr is his caliph)?” Qunfudh returned to Abu Bakr and conveyed ‘Ali’s reply, hearing which Abu Bakr wept bitterly.

‘Umar again repeated to Abu Bakr saying, “Do not give respite to this violator (referring to Imam ‘Ali).” Abu Bakr told Qunfudh, “Go to ‘Ali and tell him that the Commander of the Faithful has invited you to come to him and take the oath of allegiance.” Qunfudh went back to ‘Ali and related the message of Abu Bakr to him. ‘Ali raised his voice and said, “Glory be to Allah! He claims that (status) which is not his!” Qunfudh returned back to Abu Bakr and related to him ‘Ali’s words, hearing which Abu Bakr again wept bitterly.

Suddenly ‘Umar arose and accompanied with a group of men, came to the house of Fatimah and banged at the door. When Fatimah heard their voices, she cried out in a loud voice to her father, “O

father! O Prophet of Allah! What oppression has befallen us by the son of al-Khattab and the son of Abu Qahafah after your passing away!”

When those accompanying ‘Umar heard the voice and lamentation of Fatimah, they were deeply grieved and wept so bitterly such that it was as if their hearts were tear apart and their liver was being punctured (due to their intense grief), however ‘Umar remained at the house of Fatimah and forcefully brought out ‘Ali from inside and took him to Abu Bakr and said, “Swear the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr!”

‘Ali replied, “I will not do so.” They said, “By Allah! If you do not swear the oath of allegiance, we will strike your head.” ‘Ali said, “In this way you will have killed the slave of Allah and the brother of the Prophet of Allah.” ‘Umar replied, “Slave of Allah – yes, but the brother of the Prophet of Allah – no!”²¹

Abu Bakr was silent all this time and did not utter a word, when ‘Umar told him, “Do you not order ‘Ali to take the oath of allegiance?” Abu Bakr replied, “I will not force ‘Ali anything, as long as Fatimah is with him.”

‘Ali left and made his way to the grave of the Prophet of Allah, weeping and called out in a sorrowful voice, ***“O son of my mother! Verily the people did reckon me weak and had tried to kill me.”***²²

Abu Bakr’s Discourse with Fatimah

‘Umar told Abu Bakr, “Take me to Fatimah as we have angered her.” Both of them came to the house of Fatimah and asked permission to enter. Fatimah did not permit them to enter inside and thus they went to ‘Ali and told him to plead on their behalf for an audience with her. Imam ‘Ali took permission (with Fatimah) and they came to her, but she turned her back towards them and did not reply to their salutations.

Abu Bakr said, “O beloved of the Prophet of Allah! By Allah! The family of the Prophet is dearer to me than my own family, and I hold you dearer to myself than my daughter ‘Ayesha and I had wished that on the day of the death of the Prophet of Allah I would have died in his place and would not have survived him. Do you perceive that in spite of being aware of your excellence, I would keep you away from your rights and inheritance at this moment? I have heard your father the Prophet of Allah say that, ‘We prophets do not leave anything as inheritance, whatever is left behind is charity.’”

Fatimah replied, “Then if I narrate to you from my father, will you act according to it?” They replied in the affirmative and so Fatimah said, “I put you on oath of Allah, haven’t you heard the Prophet of Allah say, ‘The pleasure of Fatimah is my pleasure, and her discontent is my discontent. Then the one who loves Fatimah, my daughter, loves me. The one who pleases Fatimah, pleases me, and the one who angers Fatimah angers me.’”

They replied, “Yes indeed we have heard this from the Prophet.”

Fatimah continued, "I hold Allah and the angels witness, that you have angered me and displeased me and when I meet the Prophet of Allah I will complain to him regarding you!"

Abu Bakr replied, "I seek refuge of Allah from His anger and that of yours O Fatimah!" Then he wept so bitterly that it was as if he would have died. Fatimah said, "I swear by Allah, I will make prayers against you after every prayer."²³

Abu Bakr came out of the house of Fatimah weeping and the people gathered around him. He addressed them saying, "Each one of you men lie in bed with your wives at night and embrace each other and live happily with your relatives, and leave me alone in this conflict. I do not need your allegiance – break the oath of allegiance that you have sworn at my hands."

The people said, "O vicegerent of the Prophet! The caliphate is incomplete without you! You are more informed than us in the affairs. If you remove yourself from the caliphate, the religion will be destroyed!"

Abu Bakr said, "By Allah! Had I not feared that the rope of religion would be weakened, I would not have slept in a state with the oath of allegiance of even one Muslim upon myself, after having heard the words of Fatimah."

Ibn Qutaybah further says, "Ali did not take the oath of allegiance of Abu Bakr until Fatimah passed away and she (Fatimah) did not survive more than seventy days after the passing away of the Prophet."

The Discourse of Ibn ‘Abd al-Rabbah al-Andalusi

In the second volume of his book *al-Uqdu al-Farid*, Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qurtubi al-Marwani al-Maliki, renowned as Ibn ‘Abd al-Rabbah al-Andalusi (d. 328 ah) who was from among the eminent scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah, states the following in regards to the incident of seeking the pledge of allegiance (to Abu Bakr), the summary of that which follows:

"Among those who had opposed to swear the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr were ‘Ali, ‘Abbas and Zubayr who had gathered at the house of ‘Ali. Abu Bakr sent ‘Umar b. al-Khattab to them with orders to bring them out of the house of Fatimah and had instructed, 'If they refuse to come out of the house, then fight them.'

‘Umar brought fire along with him to burn the house alongwith its occupants and when Fatimah confronted him saying, 'O son of al-Khattab! Do you intend to burn our house?' ‘Umar replied, 'Certainly, unless those present therein come out and swear allegiance.' ‘Ali came out, went to Abu Bakr and pledged allegiance to him."

A Discourse of al-Mas'udi – the Renowned Historian

In his book, *Muruj al Dhahab*, the renowned historian, 'Ali b. Husayn renowned as al-Mas'udi relates the following regarding the uprising of 'Abdullah b. Zubayr, “'Abdullah b. Zubayr resolved to gather the Bani Hashim including Muhammad b. Hanafiyyah (the son of Imam 'Ali) at the 'Valley of Abu Talib'²⁴. He gathered such an amount of fire-wood that if one spark of fire was tossed upon it, the entire clain of Bani Hashim would have been burnt alive and none would have been saved. Then Abu 'Abdullah Judali came to Makkah with an army of four thousand men under orders from Mukhtar and saved the Bani Hashim from this peril.

Al-Mas'udi further says that al-Nawfali in his book written on the life of one of the relatives of 'Ayesha, relates from Hammad b. Salamah that, “When 'Urwah b. Zubayr, the brother of 'Abdullah b. Zubayr, heard the criticism relating to his brother, he brought this excuse saying, “'Abdullah gathered the firewood only to frighten the Bani Hashim and not to burn them so as to persuade them to swear allegiance to him, and this was similar to 'Umar b. al-Khattab, who had frightened the Bani Hashim such that he gathered firewood and threatened to burn them because they refused to pledge allegiance (to Abu Bakr).”

Al-Nawfali futher says that, “We have not included this in detail here but have discussed it in detail in our book *Hadaequl Azhan* which speaks about the merits of the Ahlul Bayt and their life history.”

Discourse of Some of the Eminent Shi'a Scholars

The eminent Shi'a erudite, Sayyed Murtadha “*Alamul Huda'* (d. 436 ah) in his book, *al-Shafi'* refutes the words of Qadhiul Qudhat who refuses to accept that the door of the house of Sayyidah Fatimah was burnt down by 'Umar. He says that the incident of the burning down of the door of Sayyidah Fatimah has even been quoted by non-Shi'a scholars who are not accused of dishonesty by the Ahlus Sunnah, while refuting these traditions without adequate evidences would not be appropriate.

The renowned historian, al-Balazuri who is considered trustworthy with the Ahlus Sunnah and his authenticity and compilation of traditions is renowned and has not been accused of any favoritism towards the Shi'a, relates from al-Madaeni that, “Abu Bakr sent a man to 'Ali to force him to take the pledge of allegiance, but he ('Ali) refused to do so. Brandishing fire, 'Umar came to the house of 'Ali and saw Fatimah beside the door. Fatimah said to him, 'O son of al-Khattab! I see that you have come to burn our house, is that so?' 'Umar replied, 'Yes, and this task is more potent than what your father (the Prophet) had brought (i.e. the message of Islam).' At that moment 'Ali came out of the house and took the pledge.' This tradition is quoted through several chain of authorities by the Shi'a traditionists and also by the traditionists of the Ahlus Sunnah.”

Ibrahim Sa'id al-Thaqafi relates through his chain of authorities from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that, “By Allah! 'Ali did not take the pledge of allegiance, until he saw smoke emit from his house.”

In his book *Kashful Mahajjah*, the eminent scholar Sayyid Ibn Tawus (d. 664 ah) in the context of the life of Abu Bakr and his staying away from the army of Usamah, and his usurpation of the caliphate in Saqifah, addresses his son in the following words, “He (Abu Bakr) did not suffice with this. Rather he sent ‘Umar to the house of your father ‘Ali and mother Fatimah, while ‘Abbas (b. ‘Abdul Muttalib) and a group of men from the Bani Hashim were with them. They were mourning the death of your grandfather Muhammad and were passing the days in lamenting this heart-rending calamity of the (loss of the) Prophet. ‘Umar ordered that if they did not come out of the house to swear the pledge of allegiance that they would be burnt. This has been quoted by the author of ‘Uqdul Farid in the second volume of his book as also by a group of scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah who are not accused of dishonesty.

And the similarity of this act (of burning the house of Fatimah), as far as I know, has not been committed by any ruler known for his tyranny and brutality before ‘Umar or after him with regards to the (treatment of) prophets and their vicegerents. Rather even the non-Muslim kings have not committed such an act that they should dispatch a group to the one who delays swearing allegiance to him so as to burn them, apart from threat, murder and beatings. A prophet or the ‘one in authority’ (by Allah) rescues men from poverty, disgrace and loss, and guides them towards felicity in this world and in the hereafter, and Allah bestows him victory upon the cities that were under the dominance of the tyrants. Then when the prophet or the ‘one in authority’ passes away from this world and leaves behind his only daughter among the people, after announcing to them time and again that she is the mistress of the entire women-kind, and that daughter has two sons less than seven years old, then is it appropriate that the reward for this prophet or the ‘one in authority’ should be such that fire should be sent and burn his two sons and their mother, when that daughter and her sons are the soul and life of that prophet or the ‘one in authority’?”

An Astonishing Event

‘Allamah al-Tabarsi in his book *al-Ihtijaj* relates from Ahmad b. Hisham that, “During the days of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, I went to ‘Ubadah b. Samit (a companion of the Noble Prophet) and asked him, ‘Did the people consider Abu Bakr superior to others before he assumed the seat of caliphate?’

‘Ubadah replied, ‘We are silent in this regard, thus you too should remain silent and do not spy. By Allah! ‘Ali was more worthy for the caliphate just as the Prophet of Allah was more worthy for the prophethood over Abu Jahl. Apart from this, listen to this report from me: ‘One day we were in the presence of the Prophet of Allah; and ‘Ali, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar came to the door. First Abu Bakr entered, followed by ‘Umar, and then ‘Ali entered. Seeing this, the Prophet’s face turned grey as if ash had been rubbed on it. He told ‘Ali, ‘These two men have preceded you, when Allah has appointed you commander over them!’ Abu Bakr said, ‘O Prophet of Allah! I forgot.’ ‘Umar said, ‘I committed a mistake and was negligent.’

The Prophet told them, ‘Neither did you forget, nor did you commit a mistake! It is as if I see the two of you snatching away the caliphate from him, and falling into dispute and battle (with him) to take the reins into your hands, while the enemies of Allah and His Prophet have aided you in this regard! I also see

that you have spread bloodshed among the Muhajirin and the Ansar who are thrusting at each other with their swords for want of this world. As well it is as if I see my Ahlul Bayt being oppressed and dishonoured, while they are scattered around, and this has been written in the 'Knowledge' of Allah.'

Then the Prophet wept to such an extent that his tears flowed. He turned towards 'Ali and said to him, 'O 'Ali! Bear patiently! Bear patiently, until the Command of Allah comes forth! Surely there is no Might and no Power except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great. There is such a reward reserved for you with Allah that the two angels authorized to write the deeds cannot calculate them. After the caliphate comes into your hands, there will come sword after sword, and killing after killing²⁵ until the opponents return back to the word of Allah and the Prophet of Allah, for surely you are upon the truth, just as those alongwith you who have risen against those who are upon falsehood. In the same way, after you, your sons²⁶ will be upon the truth until the Day of Resurrection.'"

The Sermon of Shaqshaqiyya

The Sermon of Shaqshaqiyya²⁷ 125 125

Shaykh as-Saduq relates through his chain of transmitters from Ibn 'Abbas that, "Once I was in the company of Imam 'Ali (during the days of his caliphate) when a discussion arose between us regarding the caliphate (after the Prophet). Imam 'Ali replied in detail [as has been quoted in Nahjul Balaghah]:

"By Allah! The son of Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill. He knew that the stream of wisdom and perfection that comes forth from the highlands flows through me and the birds of high flight even do not have the strength to reach the peak of my intelligence. Thus I released the mantle of caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

Then I began to think whether I should stand up alone to defend my right or endure calmly the events of censorship and oppression that have taken place, wherein the grown up are made feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain until he meets Allah (upon his death). I found that patience and endurance thereon was wiser, so I followed the path of patience and endurance, although my state was similar to the one whom there was pricking in the eye and suffocation in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance until the first one passed away but handed over the caliphate to the second one ('Umar) after himself.

Then, Imam 'Ali recited the verses of al-A'sha: 'My days are now passed on the camel's back in hardship, while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir's brother, al-Hayyan.'²⁸

It is strange that during his (Abu Bakr) lifetime he wished to be released from the caliphate, but then he wed the caliphate to the other one ('Umar) after his death. No doubt these two shared the caliphate among themselves similar to the two udders of a camel. Thus he put the caliphate in the hands of a man

who was very rude, hot-tempered, one stuffed with errors and who always made excuses.

Then the one assumed the leadership who was similar to a rider of an unruly camel, if its reins are pulled and not let loose, the nostrils (of the camel) would tear, but if it be let loose it would fall in the precipice of perdition. Consequently, by Allah, during his ('Umar's) days, people got involved in misconceptions, failed to strive for the truth and walked the path of deviation.²⁹

During this period I remained patient until he too passed away. But during his last days, he handed over the caliphate to a group of council and regarded me to be one of them. Verily, we seek refuge in Allah from this council! Was there any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones?³⁰ But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them (Sa'ad b. Abi al-Waqqas) turned against me because of his envy towards me, and the other one ('Abdul Rahman b. 'Awf) inclined the other way due to his relationship, while the third one (Uthman b. al-Affan) emerged a winner and took the reins of caliphate into his hands.³¹

He, similar to a camel that is satiated and with a swollen belly, resolved nothing but to accumulate the public property (for himself) and usurp it, while the adherers of his father (Umayyah) also stood up, similar to the starving camels that rush to eat the foliage of spring and gulp with such greed, to swallow the wealth of Allah.³² Ultimately his rope broke and his unworthy actions destroyed his tasks."

The Period of the Caliphate of Imam 'Ali

"After him ('Uthman), a crowd of people rushed towards me from every side like the mane of a hyena so much so that it was near that the two lights of my eyes and the remembrance of the Prophet of Allah, Hasan and Husayn, would have been crushed and both ends of my clothing would have been ripped.

They collected around me like a herd of sheep that seek refuge from a wolf and when I took up the reins of caliphate, a group (consisting of Talhah and Zubair) broke their allegiance and another group (the Kharijites) turned disobedient and left the religion. Another group (consisting of Mu'awiyah and his adherents) disobeyed with regards to following the right with an intention of acquiring dominion and power³³ as if they had not heard the word of Allah saying,

'That abode in the hereafter, We assign it for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, nor (to make) mischief (therein); and the end is (best) for the pious ones.'³⁴

Yes, they had heard it very well and understood it too, however the glitter of the world blinded their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold, by Him who split the grain (to grow) and created living beings! If people had not come to me from all sides and stood up to support me and in this way the argument was established, and if there had not been the pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not submit in the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed, I would have cast away the reins of the caliphate, and would have given the last one the same treatment as to

the first one. Then you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is no better than the sneezing of a goat.”

When Imam ‘Ali reached this point in his speech, an ‘Iraqi arose and handed him a letter. Imam looked at the letter and read its entire contents then remained silent. Ibn ‘Abbas said, “O Commander of the Faithful! It would be better if you continued where you had left off.” Imam ‘Ali replied, “Alas! O Ibn ‘Abbas! It was like foam of a camel that gushed out and subsided.”

Ibn ‘Abbas says that by Allah, I never grieved over any utterance as I did over this one because Imam could not finish it (his sermon) as he wished to.

Discourse of Jalib, the Tutor of Ibn Abil Hadid

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibn Abil Hadid says, “My tutor, Abul Khayr Musaddiq b. Shabib al-Wasti (d. 603 ah) explained to me the meaning of the words of Ibn ‘Abbas in the above passage. He says that, I read this sermon to my teacher Abu Muhammad ‘Abdullah b. Ahmad, renowned as Ibn Khashshab and when I reached the passage of Ibn ‘Abbas, my teacher said, ‘If I was present there I would have told Ibn ‘Abbas, was there anything more with ‘Ali that he did not say, that you aggrieve? By Allah! He did not leave anything regarding the first ones nor the last ones (but he said it all).’”

The Heart-Ache of Imam ‘Ali Expressed to Ibn ‘Abbas

‘Allamah Majlisi relates in his book Bihar al-Anwar from Kashf al-Yaqin that Ibn ‘Abbas relates, “Whenever I recall an incident I remember the fury of Imam ‘Ali and his agitation. One day, an adherent of Imam ‘Ali who was staying in Syria wrote a letter to him whose contents were as follows: ‘Umro b. As, Utbah b. Abi Sufyan, al-Walid b. ‘Aqbah and Marwan b. Hakam gathered around Mu’awiyah when a discussion concerning Imam ‘Ali’s sermon arose among them. They criticized him (Imam ‘Ali) extremely and made it known among the people that he (‘Ali) had lessened the quantity of the Prophet’s companions (by waging the battle of al-Jamal and now al-Siffin).

They attributed such faults to him (and implied) which they themselves were more worthy of possessing. This letter reached Imam ‘Ali when he had commanded his troops to proceed to the encampment at al-Nukhaylah and to stay there until he himself joined them (and from there they would proceed for the battle of al-Siffin against Mu’awiyah), however the troops displayed laxity and entered Kufah leaving him alone.

This episode grieved Imam ‘Ali and word spread all around about what had transpired. When I was informed about it, I went to meet Imam ‘Ali at night and met Qambar (his servant) and asked him, ‘What is the news of the Commander of the Faithful?’ Qambar replied, ‘He is sleeping.’ However, the Imam heard the voice of Qambar and asked who was there, to which Qambar replied that I had come to meet

him. He permitted me to enter therein and I saw him sitting in a corner of his bed. He had wrapped himself with his shirt and was looking disturbed. I said, 'Tonight I see you in an extraordinary state, O Commander of the Faithful!'

He replied, 'O son of 'Abbas! Woe be to you! The eyes are sleepy but the heart is troubled, while the heart is the king of all your bodily parts. Thus when the heart is aggrieved, sleep parts away from the eyes. You now see me that I am constantly thinking from the start of the night about how the community broke their promises during the beginning (after the death of the Prophet), and they have made this breach of trust their destiny.'

During his lifetime, the Noble Prophet had commanded his companions to salute me addressing me as the Commander of the Faithful, and I always strived to be so even after the death of the Prophet. O son of 'Abbas! I am the best one and the most near among them after the death of the Prophet. But people's attachment to the world and the sovereignty has brought such animosity, while their hearts have drifted away from me and they do not obey me. O son of 'Abbas! My situation has reached to such an extent that I am being considered equal to the son of Hind, the chewer of the liver (of Hamzah) (i.e. Mu'awiyah), 'Umro b. As, 'Utbah, al-Walid, Marwan and their accomplices.³⁵

Due to this, I am disturbed and I see that the caliphate and the legacy of the Prophet is in the hands of the one who considers himself to be the chief of men, and the men obey him and these chiefs criticize the 'friends of Allah' and accuse them unjustly! Thus, they reveal their enmity towards them through lies and ancient malice; while the companions of Muhammad, who are the defenders and guardians of his secrets, very well know that all of my enemies in fact are obeying Satan by opposing me and have made the people heedless of me. They obey the caprice of the self and have thus destroyed their hereafter. Allah is Absolute and Self-Sufficient and it is He Who is the Bestower of Grace in the path of guidance and righteousness.

O son of 'Abbas! Woe be to the one who oppresses me and usurps my right and snatches away the great position from me. Where were these men when I had prayed alongside the Prophet during my childhood, when prayers were not even incumbent upon me, while they were worshipping their idols and neglecting the commands of Allah and they were the kindlers of the fire of hell? Then they turned away from infidelity and accepted Islam unwillingly, but their hearts were full of infidelity and hypocrisy.

In their greed to extinguish the 'Light of Allah', they impatiently awaited the death of the Prophet and counted each minute of his prophetic mission to conclude. Their avarice and envy reached such height that they resolved to kill the Prophet in Makkah, and for this gathered at Darul Nadwa to plan his murder. Allah says regarding this, ***"And they planned and Allah (also) planned, and verily Allah is the best of planners."*** (*Surat Ale 'Imran (3): 54*)³⁶, and He also says, ***"They intend to put out the Light of Allah with (the blow of) their mouths, and Allah disdains this save that He prefers His Light³⁷, though the infidels may detest."*** (*Suratul Bara'at (9): 32*).

O son of 'Abbas! During his lifetime, the Prophet of Allah invited them towards the revelations of Allah and commanded them towards my authority and friendship. Satan led them astray in the same motivation that he had enmity for our grandfather, Prophet Adam. He (Satan) envied Adam and due to this very envy with the friend of Allah, he was expelled from the presence of Allah and became entangled in the wrath of Allah forever. The envy of the Quraysh towards me – Allah willing – shall not put me in any loss.

O son of 'Abbas! Each of these men desire to be a chief and superior and that the world and her adherents should turn towards them, while the caprice of their self and the pleasure of the affection of the world, as well as the obedience of men, made them usurp my right bestowed upon me by Allah.

If I had not feared that the Ahlul Bayt would be left behind and the tree of knowledge would be severed and that the firm rope of Allah, the fortress of the trustworthy of the Allah and the sons of the Prophet of Allah would be killed – death and the meeting with Allah would be more dear to me than the water which a thirsty man desires and is sweeter than the dream of the dreamer.

However I bore patiently until the extreme sorrow jammed into my heart and the commotion settled in my mind. But (my course is) timely patience, and Allah is He Whose help is to be sought against what you describe.³⁸ In the past too, messengers were oppressed and the friends of Allah were killed; and soon the disbelievers will know for whom is the sequel of the eternal abode.”³⁹

At that moment, the sound of the call to prayer arose and the caller called out, “the prayers!”

Imam 'Ali said, “O son of 'Abbas! Do not forget and seek forgiveness for me and yourself while Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the guardian of the good, and there is no might and no power except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.”

Ibn 'Abbas says that I was very much saddened due to the ending of the night and the concluding of the Commander of the Faithful's speech.

Decision by Twelve Men to Protest Against Abu Bakr

A group of Shi'a scholars (as well as scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah) relate that when the caliphate of Abu Bakr was established, twelve men openly protested against him. Six men were from the Emigrants (Muhajirin), namely: Khalid b. Sa'id b. al-As from the Bani Umayyah, Salman al-Farsi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Miqdad b. al-Aswad, 'Ammar b. Yasir and Buraydah al-Aslami; the six men were from among the helpers (Ansar) were: Abul Haytham b. al-Tihan, Sahl b. Hunayf, 'Uthman b. Hunayf, Khuzaymah b. Thabit Dhus Shahadatain, 'Ubayy b. Ka'ab and Abu Ayyub al-Ansari.

When Abu Bakr ascended the pulpit in the Masjid, they opined with one another. Some said, “By Allah! We shall go to Abu Bakr and bring him down from the pulpit of the Prophet of Allah”, while others said, “By Allah! If we do this, we shall doom our ourselves, when Allah says in the Qur'an: ***'And cast not***

yourselves with your own hands into perdition.⁴⁰ It is better that we go to the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali and seek his advice regarding this.”

Seeking an Opinion from Imam ‘Ali and his Reply

The twelve men went to Imam ‘Ali and said, “O Commander of the Faithful! Indeed you are the best and worthiest for the caliphate among the people – for we have heard the Prophet of Allah say that ‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with ‘Ali, and the truth turns towards wherever ‘Ali goes.⁴¹ We have decided to go to Abu Bakr and bring him down from the pulpit of the Prophet of Allah and have come to seek your advice in this regards, and will do whatever you say.”

Imam ‘Ali replied, “If you do (what you are intending to do), then fights will erupt amongst you and you are less in number. The community has gathered and forsaken the words of their Prophet and have attributed falsehood to Allah. I have counselled with my family regarding this and they have decided to remain silent for they are aware of the resent and enmity of the opponents towards Allah and the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet of Allah. The enemies pursue the hostility of the days of ignorance and desire to seek revenge of those days.

Go to Abu Bakr and relate to him whatever you have heard (regarding me) from the Prophet and through this, clear the doubt from his mind as this will prove to be greater evidence for him. Ultimately his punishment will increase on the day when he is brought in front of Allah, for he has disobeyed His Messenger and opposed him.”

The twelve men went to the Masjid, which happened to be a Friday, the fourth day after the death of the Prophet, and surrounded the pulpit. When Abu Bakr ascended, each one of them came to him and began to defend the rights of ‘Ali and related to him the merits of ‘Ali from the words of the Prophet, which we do not quote here in detail for brevity’s sake.

The first one to come forward was Khalid b. Sa’id b. al-As and he was followed by the other Emigrants and then the Ansar came forward. It has been related that when the men ended their speeches, Abu Bakr sat upon the pulpit, disturbed, and did not have any intelligent answer to reply to them except, “You are more worthy of authority and I am not the best one among you, leave me, leave me!”

When ‘Umar heard this he shouted, “Come down from the pulpit, you ignoble! If you do not have the power to reply to the arguments of the Quraysh, why have you taken this position (of caliphate)? By Allah! I resolve to depose you from this position and hand it over to Salim, the freed slave of Hudhayfah.”

Hearing this, Abu Bakr came down from the pulpit, and taking hold of the hand of ‘Umar, took him to his house, and they did not come out for three days, nor did they go to the Masjid of the Prophet (during this time).

Skirmishes of the Fourth Day

On the fourth day as well, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar did not come out of their homes until the time when Khalid b. al-Walid, accompanied by a thousand men, came to the house of Abu Bakr and called out, “Why do you sit in your homes? By Allah! The Bani Hashim have set their eyes upon the caliphate.”

Then from the other side, Salim, the freed slave of Hudayfah, accompanied by a thousand men, came; and from the other side Ma’adh came with a thousand men until four thousand men had gathered there with unsheathed swords. ‘Umar b. al-Khattab was at the forefront and they brought Abu Bakr to the Masjid and waited there.

‘Umar started his speech by saying, “O companions of ‘Ali! By Allah! If anyone among you says what they said yesterday, your heads shall roll off (your bodies).”

Hearing this, Khalid b. Sa’id stood up and said, “O son of Sahlak the Abyssinian! Do you threaten us with your swords and large numbers? By Allah! Our swords are sharper than yours and we are also greater in number! We may seem small in numbers, however we are far more because the ‘evidence of Allah’ is amongst us. By Allah! If we had not held the obedience of our Imam more dear (compared to anything else), we would have unsheathed our swords without considering his (our Imam’s) orders, and fought against you until we take our rights from you thus having fulfilled our responsibilities.” Hearing this, Imam ‘Ali told Khalid b. Sa’id, “Allah has recognized your stand and has reserved a suitable reward for you – but now, sit down”, thus Khalid sat down.

Discourse of Salman and his Intense Involvement

Salman then stood up and said, “Allah is Great! Allah is Great! I have heard with my ears from the Prophet of Allah, and may my ears turn deaf if I speak a lie, where he said, ‘It shall come forth that my brother and the son of my uncle (Imam ‘Ali) will be seated in the masjid with a group of his companions, then a group of the dogs of hell will surround them and resolve to kill them.’ I do not doubt that the ones referred to by the Prophet are you who have come to kill ‘Ali and his companions.”

When ‘Umar heard this, he jumped and attacked Salman. Suddenly Imam ‘Ali arose and grabbed ‘Umar by his clothing, pressed him hard and threw him to the ground saying, “O son of Sahlak the Abyssinian! If the command of Allah had not been written and the promise had not been given to the Prophet regarding this, I would have shown you who among us is weak with regards to companions and less in numbers!”

Imam ‘Ali then turned towards his companions and said, “Arise and leave, may Allah’s blessings be upon you! By Allah! I will never enter the masjid, but like my brothers (prophets) Musa and Harun when the Children of Israel told them: **‘Both of you go with your Lord and fight, indeed we shall stay here sitting.’**⁴² By Allah! I will not enter the masjid except to visit the grave of the Prophet of Allah, or to judge

by the orders of Allah for it is not lawful to delay the commandments of Allah that have been brought by the Prophet of Allah and to leave people in a state of perplexity and distress.”

Discourse of Imam ‘Ali

The eminent traditionist, Shaykh al-Kulayni (d. 328 ah) relates from Abu Haytham b. al-Tayhan that he said, “One day, the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali recited the following sermon in Madinah for the people. First he praised and glorified Allah and then he said, ‘Be aware! I swear upon Allah Who split open the seed and created mankind, that if you had obtained the knowledge and excellence from the mine (i.e. the original source), and drank the water when it was pure and agreeable, observed righteousness from it’s original place, paved the way through the illuminated path, and traversed righteousness from it’s own path; the path of salvation would have been manifest upon you, the signs of righteousness would have been apparent and the customs of Islam would have been illuminated for you. Then you would have enjoyed the blessings of Allah abundantly, and not a single family from among you Muslims would have fallen victim to indigence and oppression and even the protected disbelievers would have been in peace.

However you traversed the path of the tyrants while your world turned dark even though it was vast and the doors of knowledge and excellence closed upon your faces, then you spoke in conformity to the whims of your desires. You created discord in your religion and gave verdict in the religion of Allah without knowing anything. Then you obeyed the astray ones who misled you and you betrayed the ‘masters of righteousness’ and they too left you to your own selves!

You dawned under the influences of your whims and then, when you faced a problem, you asked the **‘people of the Dhikr’**⁴³. When we give you our verdict regarding it, you say: ‘Knowledge is but here’, but then what is the use of this confession to your state when you do not follow them in practice, rather you oppose them and leave their orders behind your backs! Be quiet! Soon you shall reap what you have sown and shall witness the punishment of your deeds.

I swear by Allah Who split open the seed and created the human being, you very well know that I am your master and guide and I am the one whose obedience has been assigned. I am the erudite among you under whose light the right path can be paved; I am the vicegerent of your Prophet and the chosen one of your Lord; the tongue of your light; the one cognizant of your affairs. Then very soon shall the wrath of Allah descend upon you regarding what you have been promised, just like it descended upon the people before you. Very soon will Allah ask you regarding your Imam and you will arise alongwith your Imam⁴⁴ and return to your Lord.

I swear by Allah! If I had alongwith me such quantity of men equalling the men of Talut⁴⁵ or similar to the combatants at Badr, and they in turn would be your enemies, I would have strikeed at you with the sword alongwith them, until I would have returned you towards righteousness and truth, and this striking is better for shutting down the path of infidelity and hypocrisy and would be more effective than leniency

and moderateness. O Allah! Judge between us with righteousness for surely You are the best Judge.”

Abu Haytham says that after ending this sermon Imam ‘Ali came out of the masjid and walked a little distance in the desert where he saw approximately thirty sheep that had taken shelter in the pen. Seeing this he said, “By Allah! If I had alongwith me men who were true supporters of Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, and His Prophet, equaling the number of these sheep, I would certainly have deposed this son of the one who eats flies (Abu Bakr), from his authority.”

Trial of Friends and their Lack of Acceptance

The same narrator (Abu Haytham) says that at the end of that day, three hundred and sixty people swore allegiance at the hands of Imam ‘Ali to defend him until their death. Imam ‘Ali said, “Go now and come back tomorrow to me with shaven heads at the street of Ahjar al-Zait.⁴⁶

They went away and Imam ‘Ali shaved his head and reached to Ahjar al-Zait the next day and sat awaiting the three hundred and sixty men, however only five men turned up with shaven heads. The first one to come was Abu Dharr, he was followed by al-Miqdad, then Hudhayfah b. al-Yaman, and then ‘Ammar b. Yasir who was followed by Salman.

Imam ‘Ali raised his hands towards the heavens and said, “O Allah! The community has weakened me similar to the Children of Israel who had weakened Harun.⁴⁷ O Allah! You are well aware of what is hidden in our hearts and what we reveal, while nothing in the heavens or the earth is hidden from You. Let me die the death of a Muslim and unite me with the virtuous ones.” Then he continued, “Be aware! I swear by the Ka’bah and the one who takes to the Ka’bah, [while according to another narration he said, I swear by the Muzdalifah and the rapid camels that take the pilgrims for pelting the stones at Jamarah in Mina]! If there would not have been the promise and testimony of the Prophet, I would have flung the opponents into the canal of perdition and would have sent storms of thunderbolts of death towards them. Then soon would they have understood the meaning of my speech.”

‘Ali’s Request for Aid from the Muhajirin and Ansar and the Scoffing by Mu’awiyah

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibn Abil Hadid narrates that ‘Ali took Fatimah to the houses of the Ansar to invite them to defend ‘Ali (as has been narrated earlier). He then states that (later on) Mu’awiyah, while scoffing at ‘Ali, told him, “I cannot help but remember the days when you seated your wife upon a donkey, clasping the hands of your Hasan and Husayn. On that day, people had sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr. You went in pursuit of the people of Badr and those who were foremost in coming to Islam and invited them towards yourself. You, along with your wife and sons, requested them to assist one another in defending your rights and told the men to come and take allegiance at the hands of the defender of the Prophet of Allah, but none, except four or five, accepted your call. I swear by my

life! If you had been upon the truth, they would certainly have accepted your call. But your claim was false and you subconsciously uttered words and aimed at the affair (caliphate) that you had failed to achieve! You have forgotten, while I have not, the words you spoke to Abu Sufyan when he invited you to take the authority in your hands. You said, 'If forty strong and steadfast men were along with me, I would have fought with these men.' But the view of the Muslims are not alongwith you."

Strong Protest of Malik b. Nuwayrah

Some researchers (such as Faidh al-Kashani) in the summary of the book al-Tihabi Niranil Ahzan, has written the following, the summary of which is as follows: "When the people swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, Malik b. Nuwayrah, one of the faithful companions of the Prophet who was staying with his family just outside of Madinah, entered the city enquiring about the succession to the Prophet. It was a Friday when Malik entered the masjid and he saw that Abu Bakr was seated on the pulpit of the Prophet delivering a sermon. Seeing this he asked, "Is this man from the clan of Taym?" The answer came in the affirmative.

Malik said, "Where is the successor of the Prophet regarding whom the Prophet himself ordered us to obey and befriend (he meant Imam 'Ali)?"

Mughirah b. Shu'bah replied, "You were absent while we were present here, and one incident after another other took place." Malik said, "By Allah! No incident took place but that you all committed treachery with Allah and His Prophet."

Then he came near Abu Bakr and said, "O Abu Bakr! Why do you ascend the pulpit of the Prophet of Allah while his successor (Imam 'Ali) is seated (down)?" Abu Bakr said, "Throw this bedouin who urinates upon the backs of his soles, out of the masjid!"

Hearing this, 'Umar, Khalid and Qunfudh, the three men, arose and trampled him under their feet and after this insult and beating, forcefully removed him from the masjid.

Malik sat on his mount and left Madinah, and while heading back towards his hometown he was reciting these couplets: "We obeyed the Prophet of Allah while he was amongst us; then O community, what is my business with Abu Bakr; if the young camel (meaning Abu Bakr) dies, the other young camel ('Umar) shall sit in his place; while this, by the House of Allah, is but an episode that breaks the back; he ('Umar) defends him (Abu Bakr) and conceals his faults as though he is at war against men or is standing at the end of a grave (in grief); thus if the successor (of the Prophet) takes a stand, we shall remain alongwith him similar to the embers."

In some books the last part of the couplet is stated as, "Thus if among the Quraysh a group of righteous men take a stand to defend the right, we shall support them."

Assasination of Malik by Khalid b. al-Walid

When the caliphate of Abu Bakr was firmly implemented and he gained control over the people, he called for Khalid b. Walid and told him, “You are witness to what Malik b. Nuwayrah said that day and how he protested against me in the presence of the people and then how he recited couplets of poetry against me. Be aware that we are not safe from his deceit and trickery and he will pose a threat for the authority. In my opinion you should kill him along with those who side with him and arrest their womenfolk (under the pretext) that they have turned apostate and refuse to pay the zakat, and (for this) I will dispatch you to him with an army.”

Thus Khalid, accompanied with an army, went towards Batah, where Malik b. Nuwayrah was living.

When Malik was informed about the army, he put on his armour and fixed the saddle of his horse, preparing to defend himself. Malik was one of the valiant fighters of the ‘Arabs and his strength was comparable to that of one hundred fighters. When Khalid was informed that Malik had prepared himself for the battle, he became frightened and tried to deceive him by promising him that he was under his security. Malik did not trust Khalid’s promises, but then Khalid took a solemn oath that deceit was not what he intended and he never wished him evil. Thus Malik relied upon the promises of Khalid and made him and his army his guests.

When some hours of the night passed by, Khalid, accompanied by a few of his associates, in a coward-like fashion, entered the house of Malik. He caught him off guard and killed him and on the same night, had sexual intercourse with Malik’s wife, Umme Tamim. He cut off the head of Malik and placed it in a big vessel in which the meat of a camel was cooked for the wedding feast that same night.

It is astonishing that Khalid ordered his army-men to eat the food from the vessel that contained the severed head of Malik! After this, he imprisoned the womenfolk of Malik on the pretext that they had turned apostates and left the religion of Islam.

Elegy of Imam ‘Ali Mourning Malik

When the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali received the heart-wrenching news of the murder of Malik b. Nuwayrah and the imprisonment of his womenfolk, he was grieved and sorrowed and said, “Verily we are Allah’s and verily unto Him we shall return.” Then he recited the following couplets: “Forebear for a little time as after difficulty comes ease; and everything has a time and destiny (associated with it); and the Guardian (Allah) is aware of our state; and even above our fate lies the plans of Allah.”

The episode of the killing of Malik at the hands of Khalid b. Walid has been recorded by both the Shi’a and the Ahlus Sunnah narrators.

Complaint of Abu Qutadah and the Silence of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar

Abu Qutadah al-Ansari was present in the army of Khalid and when he witnessed this deception and crime, he was deeply grieved. He mounted his horse and galloped hastily towards Madinah and when he arrived, he went to Abu Bakr and related the entire episode of what had transpired to him and swore that in the future he would not accompany any army that had Khalid as its commander. Abu Bakr replied, “Khalid has stolen the wealth of the ‘Arabs by deceit and has opposed my orders.” When ‘Umar b. al-Khattab was informed of this, he discussed it in detail with Abu Bakr and said, “It is incumbent that retribution should be taken against Khalid.”

Khalid returned to Madinah wearing a canvas shirt with a plate of iron armour over it. He had placed two arrows in his turban and in this state (announcing his victory) entered the masjid. When ‘Umar saw him, he snatched the arrows from his turban and broke them into pieces saying, “O enemy of your ownself! You violate a Muslim and kill him, then seek enjoyment with his wife!? By Allah! I shall stone you!”

Khalid was silent and did not say a word and assumed that Abu Bakr thought the same (about him) as ‘Umar, and therefore he went to Abu Bakr and apologized and he (Abu Bakr) accepted his deceitful apology and absolved him from having to face any form of retribution.⁴⁸

Khalid came out of Abu Bakr’s house and found ‘Umar waiting for him near the masjid. Seeing ‘Umar, Khalid said, “Come near me, O son of Umme Shamlah!” By speaking in such a fashion, ‘Umar concluded that Khalid had come from Abu Bakr pleased, and thus he did not speak to him and returned home.”

‘Allamah al-Majlisi says, “‘Umar’s his rebuke and anger towards Khalid with regards to the killing of Malik b. Nuwayrah was not due to ‘Umar’s apparent act of giving importance to the limits and bounds of the religious penal codes and the commandments of Islam. Rather, his restlessness was because during the days of ignorance, Malik was his comrade but when ‘Umar was informed that Khalid had killed Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah, he forgave him.

Some Shi’a narrators relate from the Imams that during his caliphate, ‘Umar met Khalid outside of Madinah and asked him, “Did you kill Malik b. Nuwayrah?” Khalid replied, “Yes, I killed him due to the enmity that existed between him and I, and I did this in exchange for the murder of Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah (by your orders) for the reason that there was enmity between both of you.” Hearing this, ‘Umar became pleased, embraced Khalid and said, “You are the sword of Allah and (the sword) of His Prophet.”⁴⁹

Compilation and Arrangement of the Qur’an

Sulaym b. Qays relates the episode of Saqifah from Salman and then says, “When Imam ‘Ali saw the

excuses, deceit and disloyalty of the people, he returned home and started compiling and arranging the verses of the Qur'an and did not step out of his house until he had completed this work; because previously the Qur'an was written upon papers, planks, bones of sheep, sheets and cloth.

When Imam 'Ali completed the arranging of the Qur'an and had written down its tanzil⁵⁰ and ta'wil⁵¹ and marked the abrogated and abrogating verses⁵², Abu Bakr sent him a message to come out of his house and swear allegiance at his hands. Imam 'Ali replied, "I am busy arranging the Qur'an and have sworn that I will not wear the cloak upon my shoulders, except for prayers, until I compile and arrange it." Abu Bakr and his associates gave him respite for some days and when Imam 'Ali completed the arrangement, he put it (the Qur'an) in a cloth (bag) and affixed his seal upon it.

In another narration it is stated that Imam 'Ali took the Qur'an (which he had compiled) and came to the grave of the Prophet. He placed the Qur'an down and recited two units of prayers and conferred salutations upon the Prophet of Allah. When the people gathered in the masjid around Abu Bakr, Imam 'Ali addressed them in a loud voice saying, "O people! From the time that the Prophet of Allah passed away, I have been engrossed in many actions – first in the burial of the Prophet, and thereafter in compiling the Qur'an. I arranged the entire Qur'an which now lies in this bag. I have recorded each and every verse which descended upon the Prophet. There is no verse in the Qur'an, except that the Prophet read it to me, and I in turn wrote it down. He also related its concealed interpretations to me."

He continued, "This declaration is addressed to those who tomorrow can not say that they were not aware of this (compilation by 'Ali) and on the Day of Resurrection you should not say that I did not invite you to assist me or remind you about my rights, nor did I invite you towards the book of Allah from the beginning until the end."

Hearing this 'Umar said, "The presence of the Qur'an with us does not make us dependant upon the compiled Qur'an of yours towards which you invite us to." In another narration it is related that he said, "Leave the Qur'an and go to your own task."

Testimony of the Prophet and its Denial by 'Umar

Imam 'Ali then said, "The Prophet of Allah told you that, 'I leave among you two weighty things, the Book of Allah (the Qur'an) and my progeny (my Ahlul Bayt). These two things shall not part from one another until they meet me at the fountain (of Kawthar in paradise).⁵³ Then if you accept the Qur'an, you should also accept me along with it so that I can judge among you by what Allah has revealed in the Qur'an, for I am more aware than you regarding the entire Qur'an and what it contains with regards to abrogating (nasikh) and abrogated (mansukh) verses, its interpretation (ta'wil), the clear (muhkam) and allegorical (mutashabih) verses⁵⁴, the lawful and the unlawful.'"

Hearing this 'Umar replied, "Take away this Qur'an! That which shall not part away from you and you shall not part away from it. We neither need this compiled Qur'an of yours, nor do we need you!"

Imam 'Ali took the Qur'an and returned home and when there, he sat in his place of worship, opened the Qur'an and kept it on his lap and read verses from it, while tears flowed from his eyes."

Visiting the Brother

At this moment his brother 'Aqil b. Abi Talib visited him (Imam 'Ali) and found him crying and said, "O brother! Why do you weep, may Allah not make your eyes weep!"

Imam 'Ali replied, "My brother! By Allah! I weep because the Quraysh and their associates have paved the way of misguidance and turned away from the truth and have returned back to their (days of) mischief and ignorance. Thus they have fallen into the valley of discord and hypocrisy and the desert of misguidance. They have united to fight against me, just like they had united to fight against the Prophet. May Allah punish them for they have torn apart the relation between us and snatched away the authority of my cousin the Prophet from us!"

Then he wept loudly and said, "Verily we are Allah's and verily unto Him shall we return." Then he recited the following couplets as a comparison of what he was going through: "Then if you ask regarding my state, know that forbearing the skepticism of the world is similar to being crucified, it is hard upon me to see myself grieved, that which pleases the enemy and turns the friends restless."

Messages of Abu Bakr to Imam 'Ali and his Reply

Sulaym b. Qays relates that, "Imam 'Ali returned back to his house at which point 'Umar told Abu Bakr, 'Send someone to fetch 'Ali that he may come and swear allegiance, for the caliphate will not be considered established without the allegiance of 'Ali. If he does so, we shall give him protection.'"

Abu Bakr dispatched someone to 'Ali with the message that, "Hasten to the invitation of the caliph of the Prophet of Allah." The messenger came to Imam 'Ali and conveyed the message of Abu Bakr to him, to which Imam replied, "Glory be to Allah! How soon they belie the Prophet of Allah, while Abu Bakr and his associates are well aware that Allah and the Prophet of Allah did not appoint anyone as his caliph except me."

The messenger returned back to Abu Bakr and conveyed the reply of Imam 'Ali to him. Abu Bakr said, "Then go and tell 'Ali, Hasten to the call of the Commander of the Faithful."

The messenger came to Imam 'Ali and gave the message of Abu Bakr to him to which Imam 'Ali replied, "Glory be to Allah! Not much time has passed since the Prophet that they have forgotten! I swear by Allah that Abu Bakr is well aware of the fact that this title (Commander of the Faithful) is not suitable for anyone else except for me.

Indeed the Prophet had commanded him to salute me addressing me as the Commander of the Faithful, and he was one among the seven men commanded by the Prophet to do so. He (Abu Bakr) and his

companion (‘Umar) asked the Prophet of Allah, among the seven men present, whether this command was from Allah and His Prophet, to which the Prophet answered, ‘Yes, indeed it is from Allah and His Prophet.

He is the Commander of the Faithful and the Master of the Muslims, the bearer of the glowing standard. Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime shall appoint him over the bridge of sirat on the Day of Resurrection and he will despatch his friends to paradise and his enemies to hell.’ The messenger came back and related to Abu Bakr the message of ‘Ali and they desisted from calling him on that day.”

Sulaym b. Qays relates from Salman that as the night advanced, Imam ‘Ali placed Fatimah on a donkey, and taking hold of the hands of his sons Hasan and Husayn, went to the houses of the companions of the Prophet of Allah, and no companion was left except that ‘Ali visited him. They reminded the companions, by the sake of Allah, regarding their rights, and invited the companions to assist them (the Ahlul Bayt). None except for four men hastened to their call, and they were Salman (himself), Abu Dharr, al-Miqdad and al-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwam. We shaved our heads (showing willingness to assist ‘Ali) and resolved firmly to assist Imam ‘Ali, while al-Zubayr was the most eager one from amongst us to assist him.”⁵⁵

Kindling Fire at the Door of the House of Zahra

When Imam ‘Ali saw the disloyalty of the people and perceived that they were seeking excuses in order to not assist him and were gathering around Abu Bakr, he settled into his house and did not come out. ‘Umar said to Abu Bakr, ‘Why do you not send a message to ‘Ali to come and pay allegiance at your hands? Everyone has sworn allegiance except him and four others.’

Abu Bakr was tender-hearted and moderate and was careful in affairs while ‘Umar was stone-hearted and rough, and possessed a sharp tongue and thus ‘Umar said, “I shall send Qunfudh to seek ‘Ali, for Qunfudh is stone-hearted, hot-tempered and unkind, he is a freed slave but from among the progeny of ‘Adi b. Ka’ab.”⁵⁶

Abu Bakr sent Qunfudh along with some others to ‘Ali and when Qunfudh came to the house of ‘Ali, he first asked permission to enter, but the Imam refused him. The companions of Qunfudh returned back to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar who were seated in the masjid with a group of men and said that ‘Ali did not permit them to enter his house. Hearing this ‘Umar said, ‘Return back to the house of ‘Ali, and if he does not permit you, then enter without permission.’

They came to the door of the house of Imam ‘Ali and asked permission to enter. Sayyidah Fatimah came to the door of the house and said, ‘I forbid you to enter my house without permission.’

Qunfudh remained at the house while the companions of Qunfudh again came to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and informed them about Fatimah’s refusal to grant them permission to enter.

Hearing this 'Umar was enraged and said, 'What do we have to do with the tasks of women!' Saying this, he ordered firewood to be gathered. They gathered firewood and along with 'Umar, came to the door of the house of Fatimah. They scattered the wood at the door while 'Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn were inside the house. Then 'Umar shouted, 'By Allah! If you do not step out O 'Ali and swear allegiance at the hands of the caliph of the Prophet of Allah, I shall burn you down.' His demands were heard by 'Ali and Fatimah, to which Fatimah replied, 'Why do you deal with us in this manner?'

'Umar replied, 'Open the door or else I will burn you down!'

Fatimah said, 'Do you not fear Allah still and still persist in wanting to enter my house?'

'Umar did not move and asked his associates to bring fire at which point he burnt the door of the house of Fatimah, and pushed against the door with force, then stepped inside. Seeing this, Fatimah stood facing him and called out, 'O father! O Prophet of Allah!'

'Umar unsheathed his sword and struck Fatimah on her side at which point she called out, 'O father!'

Then 'Umar lifted his whip and struck the arm of Fatimah at which point, she let out a cry, 'O Prophet of Allah! Bear witness to how badly Abu Bakr and 'Umar have dealt with us!'

At this moment Imam 'Ali jumped up and caught hold of the collar of 'Umar and threw him down to the ground with such force that his neck and eye were injured. He was determined to kill him but suddenly recalled the testimony of the Prophet (to forebear) and called out, 'O son of Sakhak! I swear by Allah Who exalted Muhammad to the rank of prophethood that if the command of Allah would not have been decreed and the promise (to bear patiently) not have been given to me by the Prophet of Allah, you would have realized how difficult it is to enter my house!'

'Umar then sent a man to Abu Bakr asking him for further assistance and to his appeal, a group of supporters of Abu Bakr came and entered the house of Imam 'Ali.

Seeing this, Imam 'Ali arose and unsheathed his sword. Qunfudh ran back to Abu Bakr in fear that 'Ali would strike at them with his sword, for he was aware of the valour and courage of 'Ali in the battles.

Abu Bakr told Qunfudh, 'Return back to the house of 'Ali. If he comes out of his house bring him to me, or else burn down the house with its inhabitants!'

Qunfudh returned back and entered the house of 'Ali with his associates without seeking permission and 'Ali tried to lift his sword, however Qunfudh preceded him and snatched away the sword from him. At that moment, Fatimah came in between to defend Imam 'Ali and Qunfudh took his whip and struck her (may Allah's eternal curse be upon him and his associates, and may Allah fling him into the bottomless pit of hell in the next world). When she (Fatimah) died, the mark (of the whip) was visible upon her arm similar to that of a bracelet.'

Imam 'Ali was then forcefully brought to Abu Bakr, while 'Umar was standing at his head with his sword unsheathed, and others, namely Khalid b. al-Walid, Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah, Salim the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, Ma'adh b. Jabal, al-Mughirah b. Shu'bah, Usayd b. Hudhayr, Bashir b. Sa'ad and others were standing around Abu Bakr fully equipped with weapons.

Cry of Fatimah and her Decision to Pray Against the Attackers

Al-'Ayyashi relates that, "(After Imam 'Ali was taken to Abu Bakr), Fatimah came out (of her house and went to the Masjid) and turned towards Abu Bakr and said, 'Do you intend to take my husband away from me, making me a widow? If you do not release him, I swear by Allah, I will dishevel my hair and tear my collar and go to the grave of my father and pray to Allah against you.'

Suddenly, Fatimah took the hands of Hasan and Husayn and proceeded towards the grave of the Prophet. Imam 'Ali was aware of the consequences (were she to imprecate against these individuals) and told Salman, 'Go and stop Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad! It is as if I see the two sides of Madinah trembling and swallowed by the earth. By Allah! If Fatimah dishevels her hair and tears the collar of her clothing while going to the grave of the Prophet and imprecates to Allah, the people of Madinah will not get any respite and they will all be swallowed up by the earth!'

Salman hastened to reach Fatimah and said to her, 'O daughter of Muhammad! Allah has made your father a mercy for the worlds! Please return back to your home and do not imprecate.'

Fatimah replied, 'O Salman! They desire to kill 'Ali and my patience has now parted away, let me go to the grave of my father that I may dishevel my hair, tear the collar of my clothing and imprecate to Allah.'

Salman said, 'I fear that Madinah will tremble (due to your prayers) and the earth will swallow up everyone. 'Ali himself has sent me to you to return back to your house and to ask you to refrain from imprecating.'

Hearing this Fatimah said, 'In that case I will return back, forebear, listen and obey him.'

'Allamah al-Tabarsi relates in his book al-Ihtijaj that Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq said that when Imam 'Ali was brought out of his house, all of the women of Bani Hashim came out of their houses and decided to go to the grave of the Prophet of Allah. Fatimah called out, 'Leave my cousin! I swear by Allah Who has chosen Muhammad with the truth! If you do not release him, I will dishevel my hair and place the shirt of the Prophet upon my head and imprecate in the presence of Allah, and the camel of Prophet Salih is not dearer in the sight of Allah than my sons.'⁵⁷

Salman has been quoted as saying, "I was standing near Fatimah and by Allah, I saw that the walls of the masjid of the Prophet rose up from the earth to such an extent that if anyone wanted to cross from underneath, they could do so easily! I went near her and said, 'O exalted woman and O my Lady! Allah has sent your father as a mercy for the worlds, do not be a source of loss for the people.' Hearing this

Fatimah returned back home and the walls of the masjid came down with such force that the mud (from beneath it) splashed into our eyes.”

The eminent traditionist, Shaykh al-Kulayni relates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that they said that when the affairs of people reached this point, Fatimah grabbed 'Umar by his shirt and threw him onto the ground and said, 'By Allah, O son of al-Khattab! If I had not feared that the innocent ones would be entangled in the curse (of Allah), you would have known that I would have imprecated in the presence of Allah and sought His refuge, and very soon Allah would have fulfilled my desire.’”

It is also related that when Imam 'Ali was brought out of the house, Fatimah placed the shirt of the Prophet upon her head, and taking the hands of Hasan and Husayn, came to Abu Bakr and said, “O Abu Bakr! What do we have to do with you? You wish to orphan my children and take my husband away from me? By Allah! If it was appropriate, I would have disheveled my hair and imprecated in the presence of Allah.” Hearing this one of the companions of Abu Bakr told him, “What do you intend to do? Do you wish to bring perdition upon everyone?” (Thus they released 'Ali), then 'Ali took the hand of Fatimah and returned back to the house.

In another tradition Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says that, “By Allah! If she (Fatimah) had disheveled her hair, everyone would have perished.”

An Account of Ibn Abil Hadid on the Skirmishes to Extract the Pledge of Allegiance from Imam 'Ali

Ibn Abil Hadid, a renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah relates from the book al-Saqifah of al-Jawhari that al-Sha'bi relates that Abu Bakr asked 'Umar, “Where is Khalid b. al-Walid?” 'Umar told him of his whereabouts and when Khalid arrived, Abu Bakr told both of them, “Both of you go to 'Ali and Zubayr and bring them here to me.”

'Umar and Khalid both went to the door of the house of Sayyidah Zahra with Khalid standing at the side and 'Umar entered therein. He looked at Zubayr and told him, “What is this sword that you have in your hands?” Zubayr replied, “I have prepared this sword so that I may pledge allegiance to 'Ali.”

There were many companions in the house, one of them was al-Miqdad, along with the entire clan of Bani Hashim. 'Umar snatched the sword from Zubayr's hand and hit it on a stone that was in the house, shattering the sword. Then he grabbed Zubayr by the hand and holding it up, dragged him out of the house. He came out and told Khalid, “Keep an eye on Zubayr!” Khalid watched over Zubayr while many of the adherents of Abu Bakr gathered to guard 'Umar and Khalid.

Then 'Umar entered the house again and told 'Ali, “Arise and take the oath of allegiance (to Abu Bakr).” 'Ali did not rise and refused to pledge allegiance and so 'Umar grabbed 'Ali by the hand and said,

“Arise!” but he refused to do so. ‘Ali was then forcefully brought out of the house and handed over to Khalid, while a large group of people were in the company of Khalid.

‘Umar, along with his accomplices brought ‘Ali and Zubayr by coercion to the masjid and at this point, large groups of people began to gather and came out to catch a glimpse of what was going on, such that the streets of Madinah were full of people.

When Fatimah saw the treatment being meted out by ‘Umar, she came out weeping and wailing. The women of Bani Hashim and the other women surrounded her from all sides. She stood near the door and said, “O Abu Bakr! How soon have you come to assault the progeny of the Prophet and display such forms of audacity towards them? By Allah! I will never talk to ‘Umar until I meet my Lord.”

The narrator (as quoted by Ibn Abil Hadid, a renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah) says that when ‘Ali and Zubayr swore the allegiance and the nuisance and tumult quieted down, Abu Bakr came to Fatimah and pleaded on behalf of ‘Umar and requested her to forgive him, at it was at this point that Fatimah became pleased with ‘Umar.

Ibn Abil Hadid further says that, “In my view what is true is that when Fatimah departed from this world, she was angry with Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and had written in her will that they should not even participate in the prayers of her dead body. This act (the disrespect shown to Fatimah) is considered a minor sin in the eyes of our scholars but an act which can be forgiven. However, it would have been better if Abu Bakr and ‘Umar respected Fatimah and considered her eminence (before acting as they did). But they feared discord and controversy and acted upon that which was best in their estimation as they held a prominent position in religion and powerful certitude (in Islam). If a similitude of this episode is found anywhere, it is not a major sin but rather, a minor one and should not be made a criterion for friendship or enmity (towards them).”⁵⁸

Fatimah Crushed Between the Door and the Wall

‘Allamah al-Majlisi in his work, Bihar al-Anwar quotes from the book of Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilali al-Kufi that Aban b. Abil ‘Ayyash relates from Sulaym (b. Qays) that Salman and ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abbas narrate that, “When the Prophet of Allah passed away and had not yet even been put to rest, the people broke the pledge (given to the Prophet) and turned apostates and gathered to work against the dictates of the Prophet. ‘Ali remained busy in the funeral proceedings of the Prophet and gave him the funeral bath, shrouded him, applied the hunut⁵⁹, recited the prayers upon his body and laid him in the grave. Then he returned back to his house and in accordance with the will of the Prophet, remained engrossed in compiling and arranging the verses of the Qur’an, and this kept him away from everything else.”

‘Umar told Abu Bakr, “All the men have pledged allegiance at your hands except this man (‘Ali) and his family – send a man to him inviting him to come here and pledge the oath of allegiance.”

Abu Bakr chose the cousin of 'Umar named Qunfudh for this task and told him, "Go to 'Ali and tell him to hasten to the call of the caliph of the Prophet of Allah."

Qunfudh went to 'Ali several times and relayed the message of Abu Bakr to him however each and every time, 'Ali refused to go with him.

'Umar was enraged and called out to Khalid and Qunfudh and told them to gather fire and wood – which they gladly obeyed. They took wood and fire and went along with 'Umar to the house of Fatimah. Fatimah was behind the door and was still wearing the clothes of grief (over the Prophet's death) and had become weak due to the separation from the Prophet, when 'Umar came to the front of the house, banged at the door calling out, "O son of Abu Talib! Open the door!"

Fatimah answered, "O 'Umar! What do we have to do with you, why do you not leave us alone, while we are still in grief!" 'Umar replied, "Open the door or else I will burn it down upon you!" Fatimah said, "O 'Umar! Do you not fear Allah? You enter my house without seeking permission and want to assault us?" However 'Umar was not moved at all and called for fire and began to set the house on fire. Then he pushed the half-burnt door and Fatimah came face to face with 'Umar and called out, "O Father! O Prophet of Allah!"

'Umar unsheathed his sword and struck at the side of Fatimah and she screamed out. Then 'Umar lifted his whip and struck the arm of Fatimah and she screamed again, "O Father!"

Hearing this Imam 'Ali rushed and caught hold of the collar of the shirt of 'Umar and pulling him, threw him upon the ground such that his nose and neck were injured. He had resolved to kill 'Umar when suddenly he remembered the promise he had given to the Prophet to forbear (the difficulties) and obey (Allah and His Prophet) patiently and thus said, "O son of Sakhak! By Allah Who cherished Muhammad for prophethood! If there was no will of the Prophet, you would not have had the courage to enter my house without permission!"

'Umar then cried out and called for help and a group of people ran forward to help him. They entered the house of 'Ali and dragged him towards the masjid. Fatimah was standing at the door when Qunfudh struck her with his whip, and when she passed away, the sign of the whip marks were visible upon her arm similar to a bracelet. Qunfudh then pushed the door with such severity and threw it towards the side of the body of Fatimah that one of her ribs broke and the child in her womb died – and in this state she lay on her bed until she attained martyrdom."

Thanking Qunfudh

Sulaym b. Qays relates that, "One year 'Umar b. al-Khattab took away half of the rights of his workers as indemnity due to a shortfall in the budget but left the entire stipend of Qunfudh." Sulaym says that, "I went to the masjid of the Prophet and saw that a group of people were seated in a corner of the masjid

and all of them were from among the Bani Hashim except for Salman, Abu Dharr, al-Miqdad, Muhammad b. Abu Bakr, 'Umar b. Abi Salamah and Qays b. Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah. 'Abbas (the uncle of Prophet) told Imam 'Ali, "Why did 'Umar not take away the property of Qunfudh like he took away the property of others?" Imam 'Ali looked around, and with tears rolling down his eyes, he replied, "He did this to thank him (Qunfudh) for the whip that he struck Fatimah with and (know that) when she died, the marks (of the attack) were visible on her arm similar to (those which) a bracelet (leave)."

Imam Hasan's Reply to Mughirah b. Shu'bah

Sulaym b. Qays relates that Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba said the following to Mughirah b. Shu'bah in protest to Mu'awiyah and his accomplices when Mughirah uttered malicious filth against Imam 'Ali, "And then you O Mughirah b. Shu'bah! You are an enemy of Allah and (you are) the one who opposed the Qur'an and belied the Prophet! You attacked the daughter of the Prophet with the whip and wounded her, an act which led to her losing her child (in the womb). Then, you opposed the Prophet with such audacity and vilification and considered the Prophet's statement regarding the eminence of Fatimah to be unimportant when he said that, 'O Fatimah, You are the mistress of the women of Paradise.' O Mughirah! May Allah throw you into hell, and may He load the burden of the extreme guilt of lies upon your neck."⁶⁰

Another Viewpoint on the Circumstances to Extract the Pledge of Allegiance from Imam 'Ali and the Support of Sayyidah Fatimah

The researcher and philosopher, Faydh al-Kashani in his book 'Ilmul Yaqin quotes from the book, al-Tihab Niranul Ahzan regarding the circumstances relating to how people assaulted the house of Imam 'Ali in the following words: "Umar gathered a group of emancipated slaves and hypocrites around him and came to the house of 'Ali. They saw that the house was bolted from inside and called out, 'O 'Ali! Come out of the house for the caliph of the Prophet wishes to see you.'

Imam 'Ali refused to open the door and so they brought firewood and fire in order to burn the door of the house. 'Umar called out, "By Allah! If you do not open the door, I will burn down the house."

When Sayyidah Fatimah realized that they wanted to burn down her house, she got up and began to open the door. The group pushed open the door before she could even (completely) veil herself and thus, when Fatimah saw this, she hid behind the door so that the foreign men (men not related to her by blood or marriage – her non-Mahram) would not see her. 'Umar pushed the door forcibly at which point, Fatimah took refuge between the door and the wall. 'Umar and his accomplices then laid an assault on the house of Imam 'Ali who was sitting upon a mat (in another room). They surrounded him, grabbed him by the collar of his shirt and dragged him to the Masjid. Seeing this, Fatimah came and stood in

between them and ‘Ali and said, “By Allah! I will not let you take my cousin to the Masjid in this oppressive manner. Woe be to you! How soon you have committed treason with Allah and His Prophet and oppressed his family, when the Prophet had advised you towards maintaining our obedience and friendship and had told you to adhere to us in all affairs, and Allah said in the Qur’an,

‘Say (O Prophet), I demand no recompense for it (the toils of prophethood), save the love of (my) relatives. (Suratul Shura: 23).’⁶¹

The narrator says that upon hearing these words of Fatimah, most of the people scattered, however ‘Umar along with his accomplices, remained there. He told his cousin Qunfudh, “Hit Fatimah with your whip.” Qunfudh hit her back and side with his whip and the scars (of this assault) became visible upon her body. He hit her with such force that the child in her womb, whom the Prophet had named Mohsin, died.⁶²

The people then dragged the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali to the Masjid and made him stand in front of Abu Bakr. At that moment, Fatimah came to the Masjid in a distressed state so as to save ‘Ali from their clutches but she could not do so and proceeded to the grave of her father and wept profusely, reciting the following heart-rendingly elegy: “My life is trapped in my chest, and I wish it could flow out; There is no good remaining in life after you (O father) and now I weep profusely so as to not remain alive anymore.”

Then she said, “O Father! Alas upon your separation; and alas upon the bereavement of your beloved Abul Hasan – the Commander of the Faithful, the father of your two grandsons, Hasan and Husayn. ‘Ali, whom you trained in his childhood and when he grew up, you declared him to be your brother, the one who was the most eminent and beloved among your companions in your sight, and is the one who preceded others in accepting (Islam) and the one who migrated towards you. O dear father! O the best of (Allah’s) creations! Now he (‘Ali) is being dragged and arrested similar to how they treat a camel!” Then she cried out while wailing, “O Muhammad! O beloved! O father! O Abul Qasim! O Ahmad! O the minority of helpers! O aide! O remoteness of relatives! O sorrow! O afflictions! O evil day!” Then she let out a cry and fell down unconscious. The people started wailing in a loud voice due to her wailing and the Masjid of the Prophet was engulfed in sorrow.

‘Ali was then made to stand face to face with Abu Bakr and it was said to him, “Extend your hand and pledge allegiance.” Imam ‘Ali replied, “By Allah! I will not pay allegiance, for my allegiance still remains upon your necks (that you all had pledged at Ghadir by the Prophet’s command).”

How the Hand of Abu Bakr was Placed on the Hand of Imam ‘Ali

‘Adi b. Hatim relates the following, “By Allah! My heart did not burn for anyone as much as it did for ‘Ali. He was grabbed by the end of his shirt and collar and dragged towards the Masjid. It was said to him, ‘Pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr.’ He replied, ‘What if I do not then what will happen?’ It was said to him,

‘Your head will be severed.’ Hearing this, Imam ‘Ali lifted his head towards the heavens and said, ‘O Lord! I hold You as a witness that this community has come forth to kill me, while I am the slave of Allah and the brother of the Prophet of Allah.’

They again repeated, ‘Extend your hand to pledge allegiance.’ He refused to do so and this time, they took his hand and tried to extend it forcibly. He closed his fist while those present tried their level best to open his hand, but could not do so. Ultimately, the hand of Abu Bakr was extended and rubbed upon the closed hand of ‘Ali, while ‘Ali turned towards the grave of the Prophet and said, ‘O son of my mother! Verily the people did reckon me weak and had well-nigh slain me.’⁶³

Then Imam ‘Ali turned towards Abu Bakr and recited the following couplets: “Then if you have gained authority due to counsel, then what counsel is this in the absence of the counselors; and if you have attained it (the caliphate) due to nearness (of the Prophet), then there are others who are more rightful than you for the Prophet’s nearness.”

Imam ‘Ali often said, “Interesting! The caliphate can be obtained on the grounds of companionship (of the Prophet), but cannot be obtained on the grounds of both relationship and companionship?”

An Account from ‘Umar on Burning the House of Zahra

‘Umar b. al-Khattab wrote a letter to Mu’awiyah, the contents of which were as follows, ‘I went to the house of ‘Ali, after having decided with others to bring him out of the house. Fidhdhah came out and I told her, ‘Tell ‘Ali to come out and swear the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr for all Muslims have done so.’ Fidhdhah replied that ‘Ali was busy (in arranging the Qur’an).’ I said, ‘Keep this talk aside, tell ‘Ali to come out or else we will forcefully enter the house and bring him out!’

At that moment, Fatimah came and stood with her back towards the door and said, ‘O misled liars! What do you say and what do you want from us?’ I addressed her and she said, ‘What do you want O ‘Umar?’ I replied, ‘Why has your cousin sent you here to reply while he remains seated behind veils?’ Fatimah said, ‘Your rebellion has brought me out O ‘Umar and I have ended my proof upon you, and every misled is erroneous.’ I said, ‘Keep these vain and womanish words aside and tell ‘Ali to come out of the house.’ She replied, ‘You are not worthy of love and generosity. Do you make us fear the ‘Party of the Devil’ O ‘Umar? Verily the Party of the Devil are the losers!’⁶⁴ Hearing this I said, ‘If ‘Ali does not come out of the house, I will bring fuel and kindle a fire and burn down the house alongwith its dwellers or I will take ‘Ali to the Masjid for (the oath of) allegiance.’ Then I took the whip (of Qunfudh) and struck Fatimah with it and told Khalid b. al-Walid, ‘Bring firewood’, then again I told her, ‘I will burn down the house!’

Fatimah said, ‘O enemy of Allah and enemy of the Prophet of Allah and the enemy of the Commander of the Faithful!’

Two hands came out from behind the door to stop me from entering the house, however I pushed back

the hands and then pushed the door with force, while striking at her hands with the whip, so that she would let go of the door. She wailed and wept due to the intense pain of the whip and her weeping was such a heart-rendering scream that it was as if my heart was going to melt and I almost retreated. Suddenly, I recalled the envy and avarice which I had towards ‘Ali because he was the one that had shed the blood of the eminent Quraysh apostates and thus, I kicked at the door, however she had grasped the door such that it would not open. When I kicked at the door, I heard the cry of Fatimah and thought that this cry would topple the entire city of Madinah.

In this state Fatimah called out, ‘O Father! O Prophet of Allah! How do they treat your beloved and your daughter! O Fidhdhah! Hasten to my aid, for by Allah, the child in my womb has been killed.’

I presumed that Fatimah had stood with her back to the wall due to the extreme pain of labour and at this point, I pushed at the door with intense force and the door opened. When I entered therein, Fatimah came and stood in front of me (even though she was in immense pain), but my intense anger had overwhelmed me as if a veil was cast before my eyes. In this state, I slapped her on her face, striking her veil, and she fell down to the ground.”⁶⁵

An Account of Fatimah

It is related in the book *Irshad al-Qulub* that Sayyidah Fatimah said, “Firewood was brought to our house with the intention of burning it down along with its occupants. I was standing behind the door and was requesting the people to leave us alone and for the people to defend us in the name of Allah and His Prophet. ‘Umar took the whip of the emancipated slave of Abu Bakr named Qunfudh, and hit my arms such that its mark remained upon it like the marks (left) from a bracelet (on one’s wrist). Then he kicked at the door and pushed it towards me. I fell upon the ground face down while I was pregnant. He (‘Umar) took the fire and placed it near my face while hitting me with his hands through which my earrings broke. Due to this attack, I felt the intense pains of labour take hold of me and my child, Muhsin, who was in my womb was innocently martyred.”

The Prophet was Informed Regarding the Oppression on Fatimah on the Night of Ascension (Me’raj)

One of the events which the Prophet was informed about on the night of Me’raj was in regards to his daughter and it was said to him, “As for your daughter, she will be oppressed and deprived of her right that you will bestow upon her. She will be beaten while being pregnant and they will enter her house without permission. They will leave her in a state of dilemma and sorrow. At that moment there will be none to defend her and her child will be miscarried and killed due to the intense beatings.”

Hearing this, the Prophet said, ‘Verily we are from Allah and verily unto Him we shall return, and I am satisfied and bow my head in front of Your Command, while favour and patience are from You alone.’”

Punishment for Those who Hurt Fatimah

It is related that on the Day of Resurrection, the first person who will be rendered justice and called for judgement will be Muhsin, the (martyred) son of ‘Ali. His murderer along with Qunfudh will be called forth and flogged with whips of fire – and if one whip of that would be struck at all of the seas (of this world), then all of the water from the east to the west would flow out due to its intense simmering; and if one whip was struck at the mountains of the world, they would crumble and turn into ash – the murderer of Muhsin will be struck with this whip!

In explaining the words of Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq, Mufadhdhal b. ‘Umar relates that on the Day of Resurrection, Sayyidah Khadijah and Sayyidah Fatimah b. Asad, the mother of Imam ‘Ali, will come forth carrying Muhsin. They will be weeping and wailing while his (Muhsin’s) mother, Fatimah, will be reciting the following verse of the Qur’an,

“This is your Day, which you were promised.”⁶⁶

(Remember) The Day (of Judgement) when every soul shall find present whatever it has wrought of good; and whatever it has wrought of evil, it will wish that the distance between it and himself was wide.”⁶⁷

Saying this, Imam as-Sadiq wept bitterly such that his sacred beard was soaked with tears and then he said, “May those eyes not be cooled that do not weep upon this suffering.”

The Property of Imam ‘Ali on the Resurrection

Prophet Muhammad told Imam ‘Ali, “You are the one who has a great property in Paradise and you are the one who has its two branches”, and these two branches refer to Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn.

Shaykh as-Saduq relates that, “I have heard from some of my teachers that the property referred to in the above tradition is Muhsin, the son of Imam ‘Ali, who was miscarried when Fatimah was pressed in between the door and the wall. It has been related in traditions that on the Day of Resurrection, the miscarried child will be standing at the side of Paradise in a serious and angry state. It will be said to the child, ‘Enter Paradise’, and he will reply, ‘I will not enter Paradise until my parents enter before me.’”

Discourse of al-Nazzam – a Tutor and Scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah

The eminent sayyed, our master Mir Hamid Husayn al-Hindi, in his book ‘Abaqat al-Anwar, relates from the book al-Wafi bil Wafiyyat authored by Salahuddin al-Safadi (a scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah) in reference to the life of al-Nazzam (Ibrahim b. Sayyar al-Basari) the teacher of Abu ‘Umar and Jahiz, that al-Nazzam says that the Prophet specified that the position of Divinely appointed leadership

(Imamate) was for Imam 'Ali and he designated him for it. All of the companions (of the Prophet) were aware of this fact, however 'Umar denied it for the sake of Abu Bakr. Al-Nazzam further states that on the day when the allegiance was paid to Abu Bakr, 'Umar hit Fatimah on her side with a whip due to which her son Muhsin was miscarried (and martyred).

The Prophet's Order Permitting the Killing of Hubar

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibn Abil Hadid in his commentary of Nahjul Balaghah relates that on the day of the Victory of Makkah which took place in the sixth year of the migration (Hijrah), a man named Hubar b. al-Aswad frightened Zaynab, the daughter of the Prophet⁶⁸, who was seated in the camel litter, due to which the child in her womb was aborted.

Due to this act, the Prophet declared it lawful to shed the blood of Hubar. Ibn Abil Hadid further says that, "I related this incident to my teacher Abu Ja'far al-Naqib and he replied, 'If the Prophet considered the shedding of the blood of Hubar b. al-Aswad to be lawful because he frightened Zaynab through which her child was miscarried, then it proves that if he would have been alive, he would have considered lawful shedding the blood of the one who had frightened Fatimah and due to which her child was miscarried.' I asked him, 'Then should I relate this through your authority that Fatimah was frightened and that her son, Muhsin was miscarried?' Abu Ja'far al-Naqib replied, 'Do not narrate it's accuracy nor it's inaccuracy on my authority, while I am neutral regarding it and I refuse to speak out regarding it due to some reports present with me.'" ⁶⁹

As-Sayyid Jazu'i composed the following beautiful couplets, "They made her swallow anger after her father, and how bitter it was, what she swallowed; they enraged her and in a way they enraged Allah the Lord of the Heavens; whose daughter was she and whose mother and whose wife, woe be to the ones who oppressed her and hurt her."

Sorrow of the Imams Over the Sufferings of Fatimah

Grief of Imam al-Jawad

It is related in the book, Dala'il al-Imamah of al-Tabari from Zakariyyah b. Adam who says that, "One day, I was in the presence of Imam 'Ali al-Ridha when his son, Imam Muhammad al-Jawad, who was less than four years old, was brought to him. When he was brought in, he struck his palms upon the ground and raised his head towards the heavens and remained engrossed in deep thought for a long time. Seeing this, Imam al-Ridha asked him, 'May I be your ransom! What are you thinking about?' Imam al-Jawad replied, 'I am engrossed in thought regarding the sufferings that befell my mother, Fatimah. By Allah! I will bring out those two men from their graves and burn them and then scatter their ashes into the seas.'

Hearing this, Imam al-Ridha asked his son to be brought closer to him and then he kissed him on his

forehead and said, 'May my parents be your ransom! You are worthy for this affair (Imamat).'"

Sorrow of Imam al-Baqir and Imam as-Sadiq

It is related that whenever Imam Muhammad al-Baqir was afflicted with a fever, he would pour cold water on his body and say, "Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad!" In explanation of this tradition, 'Allamah al-Majlisi says that Imam al-Baqir desired that through pronouncing the sacred name of Fatimah, he would ward off his fever.

The author says, "I strongly believe that fever could afflict the sacred body of the Imam due to the sufferings of his mother Fatimah which were lying concealed in his sacred heart. He would cleanse the heat of the fever with water through the remembrance of his mother Fatimah and her sufferings, and this is similar to an afflicted person who tries to lessen his sorrow through sighs and deep breaths."

The sufferings of Sayyidah Zahra were more painful to her sons, the Imams, than the wounds of swords and knives; and her pain was more scorching to them than fire. It was decreed for them (by Allah) to observe dissimulation (taqiyyah) and thus, they could not reveal the sufferings of Sayyidah Zahra. Thus when the name of Fatimah would be taken in their presence, their hearts would turn sorrowful and any one with intellect could observe its effect upon their faces.

It is related that Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq asked al-Sakuni, whom Allah had blessed with a daughter, "What name have you chosen for her?" He replied, "Fatimah." Hearing this, Imam al-Sadiq said, "Oh! Oh!" Saying this he placed his hand upon his forehead and sat down, full of grief.

As has been quoted earlier, 'Abbas (the uncle of Prophet) asked Imam 'Ali, "Why did 'Umar not take away the property of Qunfudh like he did to others?" Imam 'Ali looked around and tears rolled down his eyes, and he then replied, "He did this as a show of thanking him for the whip that he struck at Fatimah, and when she died the mark was visible on her arm similar to (the mark left by) a bracelet."

An Incident with Bashshar al-Makari

Our scholars have related from Bashshar al-Makari that he has said, "I went to meet Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq in Kufah and saw that the dates of Tabar zad were brought for him and he was eating them. He said to me, 'Come here and eat these dates.' I replied, 'No, may I be your ransom! On the way here, I witnessed an incident that has stirred my sorrow. My heart is bleeding and tears have engulfed me.' Imam said, 'I say to you by the right that I hold upon you, come near and eat from these.'

I went near and ate some dates, then he asked, 'Now tell me what you saw.' I replied, 'On the way, I saw a guard of the kingdom striking a woman on the head, and dragging her towards the prison. She was yelling, 'I seek refuge of Allah and His Prophet, and I do not seek refuge from anyone else except Allah and His Prophet.'"

Imam as-Sadiq asked, 'Why were they hitting the woman and taking her to prison?' I replied, 'I heard people saying that the woman was walking on the road and suddenly she tripped and fell. She called out, 'O Fatimah! May Allah keep away His Mercy from the ones who oppressed you!' Thus the guards arrested her and began to hit her.'

Hearing this, Imam as-Sadiq stopped eating (the dates) and wept to such an extent that his handkerchief, beard and chest were drenched in tears. Then he said, 'O Bashshar! Arise and let us go to Masjid al-Sahlah and pray for the release of that woman and request Allah to safeguard her.'"

If Imam al-Sadiq was grief-stricken so much after hearing about the unpleasant incident of a woman from among the Shi'a of Fatimah, then what would be the effect upon him when her sufferings are related to him?!

That tyrant slapped her (Fatimah) to such an extent that her earrings broke due to the severity of the attack!

Comparison with the Event of Karbala

As has been quoted earlier, inspite the extreme persecution, the innocence of Imam 'Ali and his forbearance came to light. However it can be said that some of the afflictions upon Imam 'Ali were more severe than those faced by his son, Imam Husayn, whose afflictions are great in comparison. As an example, we quote the following incident from the book *Nafasul Mahmum*.⁷⁰

Al-Tabari relates that Shimr b. Dhil Jawshan advanced until he reached a particular tent of Imam Husayn, and striking at it with his lance said, "Bring me fire so that I may burn it along with its occupants!" Hearing this, the women-folk started shrieking and came out of the tents in panic. Imam Husayn called out in a loud voice saying, "O son of Dhil Jawshan! Do you ask for fire to be brought so as to burn the tent along with my family? May Allah burn you in the fire (of hell)!"

Azdi says that Sulayman b. Abi Rashid relates from Hamid b. Muslim that he said, "I said to Shimr b. Dhil Jawshan, 'Glory be to Allah! This does not suit you. Do you desire to taste the wrath of Allah by killing the children and ladies? By Allah! The commander will be pleased with you by killing the men only.' Then Shimr asked me as to who I was and I said, 'I shall not disclose who I am.' I said this, for by Allah, I feared that he would complain about me in the presence of the sovereign. Then Shabath b. Rab'i came to Shimr, whose orders he obeyed more (than any other person), and said, 'I have not heard a more evil speech from you before, nor have I seen a more degraded situation that you have placed yourself into! Have you now started frightening the women?' Upon hearing this, Shimr became ashamed of himself and retreated back."

One should reflect on this point that inspite him being a foolish, empty-headed and shameless person, Shimr was stopped by Shabath b. Rab'i, and he yielded to his orders and desisted from burning the tents, however the individual (who was more shameless), came to the house of Imam 'Ali and

threatened to burn him and his family saying, “By Him in whose hands is my life! You should step out of the house to swear allegiance, failing which I will burn the house upon all of you!” Someone told him, “Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet of Allah and his two sons (Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn) are also in the house!” But I (the author) bear witness that he did not desist, nor was he ashamed but did what we have quoted earlier, and the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali did not have anyone who could assist him or defend his family.

As has been quoted, when Zubayr b. al-Awwam saw Imam ‘Ali treated in this manner and dragged in that wretched state to the Masjid, he unsheathed his sword and called out, “O tribe of Bani ‘Abdul Muttalib! ‘Ali is being treated in this manner while you are alive?” Then he fumed at ‘Umar and lifted his sword to strike at him however ‘Umar took away the sword, and hit it against a stone and broke it.

Oppression upon Imam ‘Ali

The eminent traditionist and trustworthy authority of Islam, Shaykh al-Kulayni relates from Sudayr that he said, “We were in the presence of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and were discussing the events that took place after the death of the Prophet of Allah and the troubles and estrangement which came upon Imam ‘Ali.

One of the people present asked Imam al-Baqir, ‘May Allah mend your affairs! What happened to the esteem and glory of the Bani Hashim and their large numbers?’

Imam al-Baqir replied, ‘There was no one from amongst the Bani Hashim who were present and (know that) the glory of the Bani Hashim was due to the presence of Ja’far al-Tayyar and Hamzah. After the passing away of these two men, there remained two other individuals who were old, feeble and from the earliest of the Muslims, ‘Abbas (b. ‘Abdul Muttalib) and ‘Aqil (b. Abi Talib). Take note that by Allah! If Hamzah and Ja’far had been alive, they (the oppressors) would not have reached the position that they acquired; and if they (Hamzah and Ja’far) would have been there, those two men (who had taken the rights of Imam ‘Ali) would have fallen into perdition!’

Due to this loneliness and deprivation (of his rights) that it is related that whenever Imam ‘Ali would ascend the pulpit, his last words before stepping down would be, ‘I have always been oppressed from the time Allah took away the soul of His Prophet.’”

Musayyab b. Najiyyah relates that one day Imam ‘Ali was reciting a sermon when a man suddenly called out, “O oppression!” Imam ‘Ali said to him, “Come near”, he came near and Imam said, “I have been oppressed equalling the quantity of the particles of sand in the desert and the hair on the body of animals.”

It is also related that a desert ‘Arab once passed by and called him (Imam ‘Ali), “O Commander of the Oppressed!” Imam told him, “My dear! I am the one who has been oppressed equalling the quantity of the particles of sand (in the desert) and the hair (on the body of a camel).”

Abu Dharr al-Ghiffari would address Imam ‘Ali as, “The oppressed and persecuted master!”

It is related from the eminent traditionist, Shaykh al-Kulayni that Imam ‘Ali al-Hadi said: “Stand at the grave of ‘Ali and salute him in these words:

الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ اللَّهِ، أَنْتَ أَوَّلَ مَظْلُومٍ وَأَوَّلَ مَنْ غَصِبَ حَقَّهُ، صَبَرْتَ وَ
اِحْتَسَبْتَ حَتَّى أَتَاكَ الْيَقِينُ. فَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ لَقِيتَ اللَّهَ وَأَنْتَ شَهِيدٌ. عَذَّبَ اللَّهُ قَاتَلَكَ
بِأَنْوَاعِ الْعَذَابِ وَجَدَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَذَابُ.

‘Peace be upon you O friend of Allah! You are the first one who was oppressed and the first one whose right was usurped; you forebore patiently until the certainty (death) came to you. I bear witness that you went to the presence of Allah while you were a martyr, may Allah engulf your murderer with various types of punishments and renew them upon him.”

The author says: This is one of the sighs of the scorched hearts and one of the many (amongst the numerous) of the heart-rending sorrows (which befell the Ahlul Bayt) which could melt mountains.

An Elegy Expressing Grief Upon Zahra

Below, we quote the gist of an elegy by Shaykh Salih al-Hilli who says:

“When oppression seized the progeny of Muhammad, Muhammad lay without a shroud; Those who said to Fatimah that you hurt us due to your excessive weeping and wailing – they cut the tree of ‘Arak’ so that she could not sit under the shade of its leaves and flowers and weep; They gathered wood at the house of the ones in whose absence, the religion would not have been founded; The one who gathered at the house of Batul and subsequently she miscarried her child; They dragged their Imam forcefully, while chastity (Fatimah) was wailing behind them; Leave my cousin or I shall call upon the Lord with disheveled hair and complain to Him; The camel of (Prophet) Salih and its children are not more dear in the sight of Allah than me; She went to the sacred grave (of the Prophet) with intense grief and a sorrowful heart; When the nails of sorrow engulfed in her heart, she complained regarding the scarcity of defenders to assist her; O father! This Samaritan and its calves are under the mercy of men and they have ambushed Harun (referring to Imam ‘Ali); What shall I complain to you about, should I complain about the striking of the whip upon me and its mark and pain that shall remain upon me until the end of my life; Should I express grief upon the separation from my father, or the usurpation of the right of ‘Ali, or upon my broken ribs, or the miscarried child; They usurped my inheritance refusing to acknowledge my rights even after well recognizing my status; They aggrieved your Hasan and Husayn, and when I asked them for my rights they refused to give them to me.”

An Account From al-Mas'udi Regarding the Episode of the Allegiance

The renowned historian and scholar, al-Mas'udi in his book *Ithbatul Wasiyyah* says, “When the Prophet of Allah passed away, the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali was thirty-five years old. He (‘Ali) stood up to take hold of the reins of caliphate by the will of Allah – the believers obeyed him, while the hypocrites refused to side with him and chose someone else for the caliphate, and thus, they opposed the one who was chosen by Allah and His Prophet.”

It is related that when the Prophet passed away, ‘Abbas b. ‘Abdul Muttalib came to Imam ‘Ali and told him, “Stretch forth your hand so that I may pledge allegiance (to you).” The Commander of the Faithful replied, “Other than me, who claims this status and who except me is worthy of it?” At that moment a group of people, including Zubayr and Abu Sufyan came to ‘Ali to swear allegiance, however ‘Ali refused to accept it.

The Muhajirin and Ansar opposed each other and the Ansar said, “There should be one chief from among us and one from among you.” However the Muhajirin replied, “We have heard from the Prophet that the caliphate rests with the Quraysh.”⁷¹

Ultimately, the Ansar accepted the claim of the Muhajirin after trampling Sa’ad b. ‘Ubadah under their feet. ‘Umar b. al-Khattab pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, placing his hand upon Abu Bakr’s and after him, the bedouins and the neo-Muslims who had just come to Madinah took the pledge of allegiance with others following suit.

This news reached Imam ‘Ali who had just completed the funeral proceedings of Prophet Muhammad. Imam ‘Ali, along with the Bani Hashim and some of the companions (of the Prophet) like Abu Dharr, Salman, Miqdad, ‘Ammar, Hudhayfah, Ubay b. Ka’ab, and a group of other companions comprising of forty men recited the prayers upon the dead body of the Prophet after which Imam ‘Ali arose and spoke to those present. He praised and glorified Allah and then said, “If the caliphate rests with the Quraysh, then I am the most worthy among the Quraysh for it. If it does not rest with the Quraysh, then the Ansar’s claim remains.”

Similitude of the Duties of Imam ‘Ali with Five Prophets

Imam ‘Ali returned home and kept his distance from the people. Then one day he told his followers, “I resemble five prophets in five ways: Prophet Nuh (Noah) – he addressed Allah saying: ***‘Verily, I am overcome (by these people), so please help,***⁷² Prophet Ibrahim (***Abraham***) – ***he told the polytheists: ‘I withdraw from you (all) and what you call upon other than Allah,***⁷³

Prophet Lut (Lot) – he told his rebellious people: ‘If only I had strength to resist you or if I could

take refuge in a mighty support,⁷⁴

Prophet Musa (Moses) – he told the people of Fir’aun: ‘So I fled from you when I feared you,’⁷⁵

and

Prophet Harun (Aaron) who told (his brother) Prophet Musa: ‘Verily the people did reckon me weak and they were about to kill me.’⁷⁶

Imam ‘Ali then became engrossed in compiling and arranging the Qur’an (and after completing it), he put it in a cloth and affixed his seal upon it. He told the people, “This is the book of Allah that I have arranged according to the orders of the Prophet as it was revealed upon him.” Some of those present told him, “Take your Qur’an and go away!” Imam ‘Ali told them, “The Prophet of Allah had told all of you that, ‘I leave behind me two weighty things, the Book of Allah and my progeny, and these two shall not part from one another until they meet me at the (fountain of) Kawthar.’ If you recognise the words of the Prophet, accept me, that I shall judge among you on the basis of the orders of the Qur’an.” They replied, “We do not need you nor your Qur’an, now take your Qur’an and go away!” Hearing this Imam ‘Ali went to his house as did his followers (Shi’a), for the Prophet of Allah had taken this pledge from them (to bear the difficulties that would come with patience).

However, the people did not sit by idle. Rather, they gathered at the house of ‘Ali and (attempted to) burn his house. They forcefully dragged him to the Masjid (to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr), while Fatimah was crushed in between the wall and the door and her child, Muhsin, was miscarried. They told ‘Ali, “Swear allegiance” but he refused saying “I shall not do so.” They replied, “If you do not do so, we will kill you!” ‘Ali replied, “Will you kill me while I am the slave of Allah and the brother of the Prophet of Allah?” They forcibly extended his hand but he closed it and it was not possible for them to open it, thus they rubbed the closed hand of ‘Ali upon Abu Bakr’s hand.

Two Shocking Miracles

Al-Mas’udi continues saying that, “After some days, Imam ‘Ali met one of the two men (Abu Bakr) and advised him to remember Allah and the Day of Allah (Day of Resurrection) and told him, ‘Do you wish to meet the Prophet now so that he may advise you to forbid (evil) and enjoin (good)?’ He replied in the affirmative and ‘Ali took him to Masjid al-Quba and showed him the Prophet of Allah who was seated therein. The Prophet of Allah said to him, ‘O so and so! Do you pledge with me in this manner that you will give the caliphate (back) to ‘Ali as he (‘Ali) is the Commander of the Faithful?’ Seeing this, he returned back with ‘Ali and resolved to hand the caliphate over to him but his friend (‘Umar) did not permit it (to occur).”

He said, “This is nothing but apparent magic and the renowned sorcery of the Bani Hashim! You forget that one day, we were with Ibn Abi Kabshah (meaning the Noble Prophet). He signaled towards the two

trees and they joined together, then he went behind and answered the call of nature. Then he gestured towards them and they separated from one another.” The first one (Abu Bakr) said, “Now that you have reminded me about this matter, I too recall an incident. The Prophet and I had taken shelter in the cave (of Thaur). He stretched his hand towards my face and motioned with his feet at which time I saw a river. He then showed me Ja’far (al-Tayyar) and his companions who were seated on a boat and sailing.”

However even after all of this, he (Abu Bakr) was influenced by his friend (‘Umar) and changed his mind to hand over the caliphate to ‘Ali.

They resolved to kill ‘Ali and recommended (this act) to one another while promising each other (to ensure that this would be carried out) and for this, they deputed Khalid b. Walid.

Asma’ b. ‘Umays⁷⁷ became aware about their plans and informed ‘Ali about it. She dispatched her maid to the house of Imam ‘Ali and when the maid reached his house, she took hold of the two sides of the door and recited this verse in a loud voice,

“Verily the chiefs are consulting to slay you, begone, verily unto you I am of the sincere advisers.”⁷⁸

In order to prepare for the attack, Khalid hid his sword under his garments and it was decided that as soon as the prayer leader (Abu Bakr) recited the salutations to end the prayer, Khalid would arise and attack and kill ‘Ali inside the Masjid. He (Khalid) became so stirred up and excited at the thought of carrying out this act that the people assumed he had committed some error in his prayers. However, before the prayer leader (Abu Bakr) finished reciting the last salutation to end the prayers, he said, “Khalid should not do that which I have commanded him, and peace be upon you and Allah’s mercy and blessings.”

Usurpation of Fadak

‘Allamah Abu Mansur al-Tabarsi in his book al-Ihtijaj and ‘Ali b. Ibrahim relate from Hammad b. ‘Uthman who relate from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq that when the swearing of allegiance to Abu Bakr concluded and his caliphate was established over the Muhajirin and Ansar, he sent his messenger to Fadak⁷⁹ and told him to expel the deputy of Fatimah from there.

Protest of Sayyidah Fatimah and the Testimony of Witnesses

When Fatimah was informed about the orders of Abu Bakr, she went to him and said, “Why did you take away the inheritance that my father had left for me and expel my deputy from there when the Prophet of Allah had declared it to be my property by the command of Allah?” Abu Bakr replied, “Bring me a witness for your claim.” Fatimah left and brought Umme Ayman⁸⁰ as a witness.

Umme Ayman told Abu Bakr, “I shall not bear witness until I make you, O Abu Bakr, confirm my merits in the words of the Prophet of Allah! I ask you in the name of Allah, did the Prophet not say that verily Umme Ayman is from among the women of paradise?”

Abu Bakr replied, “Yes, the Prophet said so.”

Then Umme Ayman continued, “I bear witness that Almighty Allah sent revelation to His Prophet saying: **‘And give to the near of kin their due.’**⁸¹ When this verse was revealed upon the Prophet, he immediately gifted Fadak to Fatimah.”

Then Imam ‘Ali came to Abu Bakr and bore witness in the same fashion.

Abu Bakr was convinced that Fadak was the property of Fatimah and he wrote a follow-up letter dismissing his claim and handed the letter over to Fatimah. When ‘Umar was informed about this, he rushed to Abu Bakr and asked him, “What is this letter?” Abu Bakr replied, “Fatimah came to me claiming that Fadak was her property and she brought Umme Ayman and ‘Ali as witnesses for her statement. On this basis I wrote a letter handing Fadak back to Fatimah and gave her this letter.”

‘Umar rushed towards Fatimah, snatched away the letter from her, tore it into pieces saying, “Fadak is among the spoils of war and it belongs to all of the Muslims. Malik b. Aws b. al-Hadathan, ‘Ayesah and Hafsa (daughter of ‘Umar and another wife of the Prophet) all bore witness that the Prophet of Allah said that, ‘We the group of prophets do not leave anything as inheritance, whatever we leave behind is charity.’ As for the witness of ‘Ali, he is the husband of Fatimah and will thus look after his own well-being. As for Umme Ayman, she is a righteous woman and if another person bears witness alongside her, then we will accept this claim.”

Fatimah returned back from Abu Bakr and ‘Umar in a grievous state and said, “Just as you have ripped this letter of mine, may Allah rip your stomach.”⁸²

Logical Reasoning of Imam ‘Ali with Abu Bakr

The next day, surrounded by the Muhajirin and Ansar, Imam ‘Ali approached Abu Bakr in the Masjid. He told him, “Why did you forbid Fatimah from the inheritance that she received from her father, the Prophet of Allah, which he had handed over to Fatimah during his life-time?”

Abu Bakr replied, “Fadak is from the spoils of war and is associated with all of the Muslims. Thus, if Fatimah brings witnesses that the Prophet of Allah had given it to her as her (own personal) property, we will give it to her, otherwise she has no claim over it.”

Imam ‘Ali said, “O Abu Bakr! You have judged against the orders of Allah regarding us among the Muslims.”

Abu Bakr said, "It is not so!"

‘Ali said, "If a property is in the possession of another Muslim and is under his control and I was to claim that it is my property, from whom will you ask for two witnesses?"

Abu Bakr replied, "I shall ask you to produce two witnesses to support your claim (that the property is yours and not that other Muslim's)."

Then Imam ‘Ali said, "Then why do you ask for two witnesses from Fatimah regarding a property that was already under her possession, and it was very much under her possession during the life-time of the Prophet and even after his death? Why do you not ask the Muslims to produce two witnesses on their claim in the same way that you ask me to produce witnesses when I claim the property under the possession of someone else?"

Hearing this Abu Bakr could not offer any reply and remained silent. ‘Umar then said, "O ‘Ali! Keep aside these talks for we do not have the capability to refute your claims. If you bring just witnesses, then we will accept your claim; if not, Fadak is the property of all the Muslims and you and Fatimah have no claim upon it!"

Then Imam ‘Ali again said to Abu Bakr, "Have you read the Qur’an?" Abu Bakr replied in the positive. Imam ‘Ali continued, "Then tell me in whose praise was this verse of the Qur’an revealed, ***‘Verily Allah intends to keep off from you (every kind) of uncleanness, O Ahlul Bayt, and purify you (with) a thorough purification.***'⁸³ Is this verse revealed in our praise or anyone else?"

Abu Bakr replied, "It is revealed in your praise."

Imam ‘Ali continued, "Presume that some people bear witness that (Allah forbid) Fatimah has committed a crime, what would your orders be in regards to her?"

Abu Bakr replied, "I shall punish her according to the laws of Allah as I would do to any other woman."

Imam ‘Ali said, "In that case you would be among the disbelievers in the sight of Allah!"

Abu Bakr asked, "Why is that so?"

Imam ‘Ali replied, "For you would have refuted the witness of Allah regarding the chastity of Fatimah and accepted the witness of the people – thus you have rejected the command of Allah and that of the Prophet of Allah! The Prophet of Allah gifted Fadak to Fatimah under the direct command of Allah and it remained under her possession in the life-time of the Prophet. You refute this command of Allah and you accept the witness of a bedoin who urinates upon his heels (‘Aws b. Hadasan)? You snatch Fadak away from Fatimah and claim that it is from among the spoils of war for all Muslims (to own a share of), whereas the Prophet of Allah had said that proof is to be brought by the claimant while an oath is to be taken by the defendant! You refute the words of the Prophet of Allah!"

Hearing this, the people were enraged and a hue and cry arose among them and some of them said, “By Allah! ‘Ali speaks the truth.” However after all of this transpired, Imam ‘Ali returned back to his house.

Fatimah then came to grave of the Prophet, and while circumambulating it, recited the following couplets, “Verily such silent conspiracies arose after you, that if you were present they would not have increased (as much as they currently are).”

A Drafted Conspiracy to Kill ‘Ali

In his book al-Ihtijaj, after quoting the above incidents, ‘Allamah al-Tabrisi again relates from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq that, “After Imam ‘Ali protested in regards to what was going on, Abu Bakr returned to his house from the Masjid and called ‘Umar b. al-Khattab. Abu Bakr said to ‘Umar, ‘Did you see how the discourse between ‘Ali and myself concluded? If such clashes take place between us again, certainly our power will tremble and the pillars of our authority will become unstable – what do you think should be done?”

‘Umar replied, ‘In my opinion we should order the assassination of ‘Ali.’

Abu Bakr asked, ‘How should we go about doing this and who can do the job?’ ‘Umar replied, “Khalid b. al-Walid is fit for this job.”

They dispatched a man to find Khalid and had him brought to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. They told him, ‘Would you like us to appoint you to carry out an important task?’

Khalid replied, ‘Load me with whatever you want, even if it may be the task of killing ‘Ali b. Abi Talib.’

They both replied, “That is exactly what we want!”

Khalid asked, “I shall do what you order – but tell me, how should I kill him?”

Abu Bakr replied, ‘Go to the Masjid and sit beside ‘Ali to recite the prayers, and when I recite the last salutations to conclude the prayer, arise and behead him!’

Khalid replied, ‘Good, I shall do that.’

Asma b. Umayy, who was the wife of Abu Bakr, was present in the house and heard their plans. She called her maid saying, ‘Go to the house of ‘Ali and Fatimah and give my salutations to them and tell ‘Ali: ***‘Verily the chiefs are consulting with one another and are planning to kill you! Begone, verily unto you I am of the sincere advisers.***’⁸⁴ Hearing this Imam ‘Ali told the maid, ‘Tell Asma’ that Allah intervenes between them and what they desire.’

Imam ‘Ali came out of his house to go to the Masjid to recite the prayers and then sat in the rows. Khalid

too entered therein with his sword and sat beside 'Ali. The prayers started and when Abu Bakr sat to recite the tashahhud⁸⁵, he began to regret his (previous) decision and feared that a commotion would erupt in recognition of the valour and courage of 'Ali. He was so disturbed that he wondered whether he should recite the last salutation or not such that the people presumed that he had fallen prey to error and doubts during his prayers. Suddenly (in the state of his prayers), he turned towards Khalid and said, 'Do not do that what I commanded you... (then he continued with the salam of the prayers) and peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and His blessings.'

Hearing this Imam 'Ali told Khalid, 'What did he command you to do?' Khalid replied, 'He had ordered me to behead you.'

'Ali said, 'Then why did you not do so?'

Khalid replied, 'By Allah! If he had not stopped me before ending the prayers, I would have certainly killed you.'

At that moment, Imam 'Ali pushed Khalid and he fell down. The people gathered around and requested the Imam to leave Khalid alone.

'Umar called out, 'By the Lord of the Ka'bah! He ('Ali) will surely kill Khalid.'

The people told Imam 'Ali, 'We request you in the name of the one buried in this grave (Prophet Muhammad) to release Khalid!' Hearing this, 'Ali let him go."

Abu Dharr al-Ghiffari relates that, "Imam 'Ali caught hold of the neck of Khalid between two of his fore fingers and squeezed it such that Khalid screamed out. The people became frightened and each one feared for his life! At that moment, Khalid urinated in his clothes and thus, folded his legs over one other and did not utter a word. Seeing this Abu Bakr told 'Umar, 'This is the result of your chaotic opinion! I see today's incident and thank Allah that we are safe.' Whoever would go near 'Ali to rescue Khalid from his firm grip returned back in fright looking at his enraged eyes."

Abu Bakr sent 'Umar to 'Abbas b. 'Abdul Muttalib who came and intervened and said to 'Ali, 'I request you in the name of the occupant of this grave and your sons and their mother, to release Khalid.' Hearing this, Imam 'Ali released Khalid at which point, 'Abbas kissed Imam 'Ali between his two eyes.

In another narration it is related that Imam 'Ali then caught hold of the shirt of 'Umar and said, "O son of Sahnak, the Abyssinian! If there would not have been the command of Allah and the oath of the Prophet of Allah (taken by me), you would have known who among us is more feeble and less in number!" Those present intervened and Imam 'Ali released 'Umar and at that moment, 'Abbas b. 'Abdul Muttalib went to Abu Bakr and said, 'By Allah! If you had killed 'Ali, you would not find anyone alive among the children of (the Tribe of) Taim.'

Reply by the Tutor of Ibn Abil Hadid to his Questions

‘Allamah Majlisi in his work, Biharul Anwar relates from the renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibn Abil Hadid who said, “I said to my teacher, Abu Ja’far al-Naqib that, ‘I am amazed at how ‘Ali was able to remain alive for such a long time after the death of the Prophet of Allah in spite the deception of the enemies and they could not find an opportune moment to kill him, considering all of the enmity that they bore against him!’

Abu Ja’far replied, ‘If ‘Ali had not practiced patience and had not remained isolated, he would have been killed! However, he remained in worship, prayers, recitation of the Qur’an and kept himself away from (the masses). He put away his sword and spent his life like the one in search of respite. He wandered the forests, deserts and the ends of the mountain ranges. He complied with the caliphs⁸⁶ similar to the others and thus his enemies forgot him. No one could have killed him except by (first) obtaining permission from the caliphs or by obtaining their secret approval. However those in charge did not have the motivation to kill ‘Ali – they had no choice but to keep their hands off of him, otherwise (had the situation permitted) they would have killed him! From another angle, death itself is a firm and steady circle and a solid fort which cannot be (easily) traversed, and thus death cannot come forth and nobody can be killed (except by Allah’s will and command).’

I then asked my teacher regarding the incident of Abu Bakr appointing Khalid to kill ‘Ali to which he replied, ‘A group of people among the ‘Alawites (Shi’a) relate this incident, and they also say that a man came to Zafar b. Hudhayl, the student of Abu Hanifah and asked him, ‘Is it true that Abu Hanifah says that it is permissible for a person to, before he concludes his prayers by reciting the salutations, talk, do something or answer the call of nature?’ Zafar replied, ‘It is permissible, in the same manner as Abu Bakr talked before reciting the salutation in prayers.’ The man asked, ‘What did Abu Bakr say before the salutations?’ Zafar replied, ‘It does not suit a man like you to ask a question like this.’ However he repeatedly requested an answer and thus Zafar said to those present, ‘Remove this man from here as I feel that he is one of the adherents of Abul Khattab.’”⁸⁷

Ibn Abil Hadid says that I asked my teacher Abu Ja’far al-Naqib, “What is your opinion regarding this incident – did Abu Bakr order the murder of ‘Ali?” al-Naqib replied, “I presume it to be far-fetched, however the sect of the Imamiyah quote it.”

A Pounding Letter from Imam ‘Ali to Abu Bakr

It is quoted in al-Ihtijaj of Shaykh al-Tabarsi that when Imam ‘Ali was informed that Abu Bakr had taken away Fadak from Fatimah and that he (Abu Bakr) had thrown out her labourers who were working the land, he wrote a powerful letter to Abu Bakr which read as follows:

“Steer through the waves of mischief by the boats of deliverance; put off the crowns of pride, and turn away from the conceit of egoistic men. You should turn towards the fountainhead of grace and light.

You have taken for yourself the inheritance left by the 'pure souls', now, come out of the circle of ignorance, negligence and perplexity. It is as if I see with my eyes that you, similar to a blindfolded camel, are circumambulating around destruction and walking in bewilderment and distress. By Allah! If I had been ordered, I would have blown your heads off similar to the ripping of the ready harvest with a sharp iron sickle and I would have severed the heads of your brave ones with such a ferocity that your eyes would be wounded and each one of you would be frightened and perplexed.

I am the one who has scattered the abundant crowd (of enemies) and had destroyed armies and thus, I could strike at your group and your customs! I was busy in the battlefield fighting (the enemies), while you fled back to your homes!

Just yesterday, I was busy in serving the Prophet and all of you were aware of my deeds and acknowledged my status.

I swear by the life of my father! You never did consent that prophethood and caliphate would both be combined in our family. You still have not forgotten the envy of the battles of Badr and Uhud. By Allah! If we reveal to you what Almighty Allah has decreed regarding you, certainly the bones of your ribs would enter your bodies similar to the points of the compass.

If I speak out, they will call me greedy for power, but if I keep quiet they will say that 'Ali b. Abi Talib is afraid of death. Alas! Alas! I am more desirous of death than an infant is to the breast of its mother. I am the one who has made the many enemies taste death and have greeted death with open arms in the battlefield. I do not have the slightest fear or terror of death. I am the one who turned away the flags of the enemies in the pitch-black darkness of the night; I am the one who warded off blockade and sorrow for the sake of the Prophet, and I am authorized to tell you what Allah has revealed regarding you and I know it, (and if you were to hear it) then you would tremble like ropes in deep wells and would wander in the desert in bewilderment. But I am forebearing and lead a simple and easy life, so that I may meet the Lord of the Universe with hands empty of the pleasures of this life and a heart vacant of darkness.

Know that the reality of this world of yours is similar to the cloud that hangs in the air and looks wide and thick over the heads of men, then it (suddenly) disappears and scatters away! Very soon will the dust set from in front of your eyes and you shall witness the results of your evil deeds, and at that point, you will reap the bitter seeds of poison and perdition that you have sown. Know that Allah is the Best Judge and His beloved Prophet will be your greatest enemy, while the ground of the Resurrection will be your place of return.

Allah will keep you away from His mercy and He will engulf you in His severe wrath; and peace will be unto him who follows the guidance."⁸⁸

Reaction of Abu Bakr upon the Letter of Imam ‘Ali

When Abu Bakr read the letter of Imam ‘Ali, he became restless and fearful and said, “What an astonishment! Indeed ‘Ali has demonstrated such a show of audacity and boldness against me!” Then he said, “O group of Muhajirin and Ansar! Did I not discuss with you regarding the matter of Fadak? Did you not tell me that the prophets do not leave behind anything as inheritance? Did you not declare that it was necessary that (the income of) Fadak should be used to guard and mobilize the frontiers and for the general well-being of the people? Certainly I accepted your advice and approved of what you stated, but now ‘Ali b. Abi Talib opposes this view and threatens me with words similar to the sparks of lightening and the roaring of thunder! Actually he opposes my caliphate. I wish to resign from this, however you do not permit. From the first day of opposition, I did not want to come face to face with ‘Ali and I fled, and I am still escaping from skirmish and disputes with him.”

Strong Protest of ‘Umar Against Abu Bakr

Hearing this, ‘Umar b. al-Khattab was enraged and addressed Abu Bakr in these words, “Can you not say anything else except such things!? You are the son of that father who was never at the forefront of any battle, nor was he generous and beneficent during the days of severity and famine. Glory be to Allah! What a coward and timid man, possessing a weak heart you are!

I handed you clear and pleasant water (the caliphate) but you are not ready to take benefit from it nor quench your thirst with it? I made the stubborn necks bow and submit to you and gathered diplomats and experienced men around you. If it would not have been for my efforts and endeavour, this success would not have come to you and certainly ‘Ali b. Abi Talib would have broken your bones!

Offer thanks to Allah that because of me you have acquired this significant position, when certainly the one who acquires the place of the Prophet of Allah on his pulpit should thank Allah. This ‘Ali, the son of Abu Talib is similar to a solid rock that cannot break so that water may pass through it; and he is similar to a dangerous snake that cannot be tamed except through charm and trick; and he is similar to a bitter tree that even if it is fed honey, it will not bear sweet fruit. He has killed the brave men among the Quraysh and has crushed the stubborn ones. Be calm and do not fear his threats and do not let your heart tremble by his lightening and thunder. I shall finish his task and stop his way before he steps forth to hurt you.”

Three Reasons for our Success

Hearing this, Abu Bakr told ‘Umar, “Keep aside these extravagant talks as by Allah, if ‘Ali wishes he can kill us with his left hand without even having to use his right one. There are three factors in our favour: first, he is alone and has no aide; second, he is under compulsion to act according to the testimony of the Prophet (to forebear) and he will never go against it; and third, seeing as how most of the people of

the various tribes envy him and bear animosity towards him because their family (the infidels) had been killed at his hands – they do not want to establish favourable relations with him. If these factors would not have been there, certainly the caliphate would have gone to him and our opposition would be useless. O son of al-Khattab! Pay attention that ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, just like he has written in his letter, is not inclined towards this world and he flees from the life of this world, while we are frightful of death and flee from it, so how will such a man fear death?”

Glance at the Sermon of Fatimah

It is quoted in the book al-Ihtijaj of Shaykh al-Tabarsi from ‘Abdullah b. Hasan who relates from his fore-fathers that when Sayyidah Zahra was informed that Abu Bakr had confiscated Fadak, she put on her veil and cloak, and accompanied by some servants and women of the Bani Hashim, came to the Masjid and facing Abu Bakr and the Muslims who were present, recited a powerful sermon.

Sayyidah Zahra had worn a long dress (and was thus placing her feet upon her dress) and her way of walking was similar to that of the Prophet. When she entered the Masjid, Abu Bakr was seated with a group of the Muhajirin, Ansar and others and a curtain was put up for her and she sat behind it.

Lamentation of those Present

Sayyidah Zahra heaved a sorrowful sigh from her scorched and aggrieved heart such that all of those present were affected by it and began to weep. The gathering was converted into a mourning ceremony and everyone was deeply touched. Sayyidah Zahra then remained silent for a moment until the weeping of those present calmed down, and then she began her speech.

Praise and Eulogy for the Lord and Witness of the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad

She started her speech⁸⁹ by saying: “Praise be to Allah for His bounties (upon us) and thanks be to Him for all that He inspired; and commended is His name for all the bounties He created before our own creation, for all the common bounties that He bestowed (upon us) from His Ownself without even (our) asking for it, and abundant and complete bounties⁹⁰, such plenteous and unlimited bounties whose numbers cannot be computed,⁹¹ and thanks cannot be offered for the duration and commencement (of the bounties), and whose perpetuity is beyond comprehension. He invited (His servants) to offer praise, thus resulting in an increase and perpetuity (in their blessings)⁹², and in lieu of this abundance (of bounties), Allah desired that His creatures praise Him. Again, He invited you (to perform good deeds) resulting in bounties of this world as well as for the hereafter.

I bear witness that there is no other deity (worthy of worship) except Allah – He is Unique and Unparalleled. Certainly interpretation (and result) of this witness (of monotheism) is sincerity, and it’s

comprehension has been placed in the hearts, and the mind is illuminated by its (profound) understanding. He (Allah) cannot be seen with the eyes, nor can He be described with the tongues, and His state cannot be perceived. He is the One Who created all things without any past prototype, and originated them without having any past image and equals. Rather He created them with His Might and dispersed them according to His Will, He did not create them for a need, nor did He shape them for a benefit (for Himself), but rather (He did all of this) to establish His Wisdom and to bring their (the creature's) attention to His obedience, and manifest His Might and (so that) His creatures may venerate Him, and (He created to) strengthen His invitation by dispatching His prophets and friends. Thus He provided recompense for His obedience and granted punishment for His disobedience, (He informed) His slaves from performing such acts that invite His wrath, and thus would gather them in His Paradise.

And I bear witness that my father Muhammad, is His slave and His Messenger, while Allah the Almighty chose him and selected him before bestowing prophethood upon him, and named him before selecting him, and chose him before sending him (for the mission of Islam), when the whole of creation was concealed in the hidden world, and they were in awe, and were in the extinction of nothingness.

Almighty Allah was certainly aware of the consequences of all the tasks, and was acquainted with the occurrences of the ages, and conscious of the position of the destined. Allah sent His Prophet so as to complete His commands, to execute His rulings, and to deliver His decisive ordinances. He saw the nation divided into various religions, addicted to their places of worship, worshipping their idols, denying Allah despite their knowledge of Him. Then Allah illuminated their darkness (misguidance) through the medium of my father Muhammad and lifted the veils of obscurity from their hearts, and removed ignorance from their eyes. He (the Prophet) stood up among them for their guidance; delivered them from misguidance, enlightened their eyes from blindness, guided them towards the 'Straight Path' and invited them towards 'the Right Path'.

Then, Allah took away his soul with affection and by his choice, willingness and submission. Thus, Muhammad was relieved of the toils of this world and entered (the world of) comfort. There, he lives in ease among the righteous angels, and in the Paradise of the forgiving Lord, and in the neighbourhood of the Mighty King.

May Allah's mercy be upon my father, His messenger and the trustworthy one with regards to His revelation, His friend, the best among His creations, His favourite one; and peace upon him and Allah's Mercy and Blessings.

Focus upon Memorizing the Qur'an, an Exalted Trust of Allah

You are the slaves of Allah and you are the establishers of His commands and prohibitions. You are the possessors of His religion and His revelation, the trustworthy ones with regards to yourselves and you should propagate it (Islam) to other nations, while you deem yourselves worthy of all this?⁹³

A pledge had been taken from you in advance by Allah and there is among you His remembrance and that is the book of Allah (Qur'an), the speaking one. It is a book of complete truthfulness and a bright light, the brilliant light. Its imminence is evident, its secrets are revealed, its apparents are clear, its adherents become reasons for others to envy, it leads its adherents to the status of paradise (or the pleasure of Allah), its listeners are guided towards salvation⁹⁴ and through it are gained the illuminated evidences of Allah. It determines the ordinances and prohibitions (of Allah), its evidences are illuminated and its proofs are sufficient, it contains the virtues of the recommendable acts (mustahabbat)⁹⁵, freedom with regards to performing the lawful things (mubah)⁹⁶ and (informs about the) discouraged (makruh)⁹⁷ acts, and in it are written down other legal laws (of Islam).

Concentration upon the Philosophy and Aim of Divine Ordinances

Faith has been set so as to cleanse you of polytheism; Salat (prayers) are prescribed to keep you away from pride, Zakat (charity) has been prescribed to purify ones' self and results in the increase of sustenance⁹⁸; Sawm (fasting) has been prescribed so that genuineness may be reinforced; Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) has been prescribed to establish the religion; justice is prescribed to establish proper harmony in the hearts; the obligation to obey us (the Ahlul Bayt) has been prescribed to set up order in the community, and our authority (Imamah) has been prescribed to save the people from differences.

Jihad (struggle) is the honour of Islam and a humiliation for the people of polytheism and hypocrisy; patience has been made a medium for recompense to be bestowed⁹⁹; enjoining good has been prescribed for the general welfare (of the society); righteousness with one's parents is a safeguard against His (Allah's) wrath; kindness with one's relatives is a medium of increasing one's age and results in an increase of friends and relations; retribution has been prescribed so that people's lives may be safe-guarded¹⁰⁰; fulfillment of vows leads to forgiveness¹⁰¹; consideration of accuracy in measurement in weighing commodities saves one from loss.

Prohibition of intoxicants has been prescribed so that humanity may remain away from filth¹⁰²; the prohibition of defaming (of adultery) has been prescribed so as to keep oneself away from the curse of Allah¹⁰³; robbery has been prohibited so that the hands may be pure; and polytheism has been prohibited so that sincerity may be established in Allah's Divinity.

Thus fear Allah as you should, and (see that) you die not but as Muslims. ¹⁰⁴

Obey Allah with regards to His orders and prohibitions for surely only those of His servants are conscious of Allah who are endowed with knowledge. ¹⁰⁵

The Decisiveness of the Prophet in Strengthening the Path of Guidance

O people! Know that I am Fatimah and my father was Muhammad. I say and I will repeat this again and again and I do not utter any falsehood, and whatever I do shall not be wrong.

Indeed an Apostle from among yourselves has come to you, grievous to him is your falling into distress, (he is) solicitous regarding your welfare, towards the faithful (he is) compassionate, (and) merciful. 106

If you look and understand, you will find that this Apostle is my father and not the father of any one of your women; he is the brother of my cousin (Imam 'Ali) and not the brother of any one of your men and how fortunate is the one related to him (the Prophet).

The Prophet proclaimed the message and prevented the people from ignorance and polytheism and worked at opposing the customs of the polytheists. He broke their backs while their breath was entrapped in their chests. He called to the way of his Lord with wisdom and kind exhortation. 107 He broke the idols and crushed the heads (of rebellion) of the polytheists until they were eradicated and took to flight. Then, the darkness of the night passed and it dawned and the truth became manifest in its true form. When the leader of the religion (the Prophet) spoke, foam gushed forth from the mouths of the polytheists and they became silent; the degraded group of the hypocrites was annihilated and pledges between disbelief and animosity broke. You all started uttering words of sincerity (Monotheism) and you were among a group consisting of illuminated countenances and fasting ones – those whom Allah intended to keep off from them uncleanness and purify them with a thorough purification. 108 Indeed, you were on the brink of the pit of the hell-fire. 109

You were a community that was (considered just) – a medium who would quench the thirst of others and were a tool in the hands of the avaricious. You were similar to the place where hasty men come to take the fire (for their own benefit) and were being trampled under the feet while at that time, your state was such that you would drink water from the wayside gutter and your food was the uncleaned hides (of animals) or leaves. You were the humiliated and degraded ones from among the masses, fearing that people may carry you away by force! 110 Thus Allah, the Blessed, the Sublime, delivered you through the medium of my father Muhammad, while you attained this deliverance after he (the Prophet) had to face numerous difficulties and fight with the stubborn polytheists, the beasts among the 'Arabs and after that with the People of the Book (the Christians and the Jews).

Role of Imam 'Ali in the Defense of Islam

Whenever the polytheists kindled the fire of wars, Allah would put it out; and when the adherents of Satan would manifest themselves or the beastly ones among the polytheists opened their mouths of

envy, he (the Prophet) would dispatch his brother (Imam 'Ali) towards them. He (Imam 'Ali) would crush them and extinguish the blaze of their fire with his sword and he (Imam 'Ali) bore extreme brutality in the way of Allah and strove to obey the commands of Allah. He was the nearest to the Prophet of Allah and the master of the friends of Allah.

He was always ready to serve the creations (of Allah), looking over the welfare of the people, endeavouring and toiling (in this way) and he was not affected with the censure of any censurer¹¹¹; while you were living a life of pleasure and peace, and were far away from the severity of battle, (you were in) enjoyment and security. Then you waited that we, the Ahlul Bayt, may be engulfed in severity of trials and waited to hear this news and in the heat of the battle, you retreated and fled from the battlefield!

Criticism Against the Treachery of Men

Thus when Allah the Almighty exalted his Prophet from this perishable world towards the abode of His prophets and His chosen ones, the thorns of hypocrisy became manifest in you and the mantle of your religion gave, and the astray ones, who were silent until yesterday, suddenly started shrieking; the degraded and mean ones came out of their burrows into the open ground, and the valiant ones of the polytheists of falsehood started roaring.

Now, these very people have taken the reins of authority into their hands and Satan has raised his head from the place of his concealment, inviting you towards evil – thus he found you to be among those accepting his invitation and you held him (in esteem) with the intention of securing position or being deceived. Satan invited you to rebel and found you to be (among the) base and meanest of people and he incited your rage and thus you became enraged.

Then you started to snatch the rights of others and entered the spring that did not belong to you and you did all of this when not much time had passed since the passing of the Prophet and the wound (of his death) was deep and our hearts had not yet healed, and the corpse of the Prophet was not even laid to rest in the grave!

You acted very swiftly dreading the outbreak of an agitation – beware that they themselves have fallen into the pit of agitation. Surely into trial have they already fallen, and verily hell encompasses the infidels.¹¹²

Far be it away from you! What has happened to you? Where are you wandering while the book of Allah (The Qur'an) is amongst you; whose orders are apparent and judgements are illuminated; its emblems dazzling and whose enjoinders and prohibitions are straightforward. Did you not leave it behind your backs and then turned your faces away from it in disgust and turned to something else for judgement? Evil for the unjust will be the exchange;¹¹³ and whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the next world he will be among the losers.¹¹⁴

You did not even wait that the tempest may calm down! Rather, you hastened to take the reins (of the caliphate) into your hands. After having acquired it (the caliphate), you started to ignite the fire of mutiny and you became engrossed in inciting the fire. You responded to the call of Satan, the seducer, and you intended to put out the light of the glorious religion.¹¹⁵ You started to destroy the practices of the chosen Prophet, then you delighted in suckling the delicacies of the caliphate and opposed the Ahlul Bayt in secret and in the open.

We have no choice but to bear the cuts of your daggers and the piercing of your spears into the body.

Reasoning of Fatimah for Fadak

Now you presume that we do not have any inheritance from the Prophet – do you follow the customs of the (age of) ignorance? Is it the judgement of (the days of) ignorance (the Pagan era) that they desire? Who (else) can be better than Allah to judge for the people of assured faith.¹¹⁶ Indeed, it is as bright as the sun that I am the daughter of the Prophet of Allah.

O Muslims! Is it befitting that I am deprived of my inheritance? O son of Abu Quhafah! Is it contained in the Glorious Qur'an that one should inherit from their father; while in your opinion, I should not inherit from my father? Indeed you have come with an unusual thing¹¹⁷ (attributed) upon Allah and His Prophet. Did you then intentionally forsake the Book of Allah and leave it behind your backs? Allah says: ***'And Sulayman inherited Dawud'***¹¹⁸; in regards to the life of Zakariyyah, He says: ***'So grant me from Yourself an heir who shall inherit from me and inherit from the family of Ya'qub'***¹¹⁹; 'Allah also says: ***'And the blood relations are nearer to each other in the Book of Allah'***¹²⁰; Allah says: ***'Allah enjoins upon you about your children – the male shall have the equal of the shares of two females'***¹²¹; and He also says, ***'If he (the believer) leaves behind any goods that he makes a bequest for parents and (the nearest) kinsmen in goodness (this is) a duty upon the pious ones.'***¹²²

You assume that I do not have a share and allowance (in the inheritance) and that I should not inherit from my father and that there is no relation between us? Has Allah in His verses (of the Qur'an) not taken into consideration everyone in general and are not all (of the) classes of men included in these verses? Is my father discharged from the applicability of this verse or do you say that two people of the same community do not inherit from one another? Are my father and I not a part and parcel of one community? Then, are you more cognizant of understanding the general and particular verses of the Qur'an than my father and my cousin (Imam 'Ali)? Then take it (Fadak) until we meet you on the Day of Judgement – where Allah will be the Best Judge, and Muhammad will be the claimant on that day, and our destined time of meeting will be the Resurrection and on that promised day, the fallacious ones will be ungulfed in deep loss and their regret (on that day) will be of no use to them! For every prophesy, there is a (prefixed) time¹²³ and you will soon realize upon whom a torment (of tribulations) will descend which will disgrace him, and on who falls this lasting punishment."¹²⁴

Intense Criticism of the Ansar

Then Sayyidah Fatimah turned towards the Ansar and said, “O group of valorous men! The aides of the nation! The helpers of Islam! What is this slackness (that you display) in regards to me while you are witnessing the oppression being metted upon me, but you still lie in a deep sleep! Did my father not say that the rights of a father for his children must be considered? How soon have you changed tracks, even though you possess the strength to stand up for my rights and are capable of supporting me regarding my claim! Do you then say that Muhammad has passed away and there remains no responsibility upon us? His loss is great and the crack that has appeared (in Islam) is severe and the division is immense. Unity has been shattered, the Earth is engulfed in darkness due to his concealment, the sun and the moon are eclipsed, and the stars have scattered away! Hopes have broken, mountains have crumbled, the family of the Prophet has been lost and their sanctity has been dishonoured after his death! This is, by Allah, a great calamity and a grand adversity, while this calamity is incomparable and there is no other greater calamity than the death of the Prophet!

This (the death of the Prophet) had already been conveyed to you in the Book of Allah, may He be glorified.¹²⁵ You were reading the Qur’an day and night in a loud voice, lamentingly, in a normal tone and in a pleasant voice. As for what happened in the past to Allah’s prophets and apostles – the command is decisive and destiny enjoined: ***‘And Muhammad is not but an apostle, (other) apostles have already passed away prior to him, therefore if he dies or is killed, will you turn upon your heels? And he who turns upon his heels will by no means do harm to Allah in the least, and soon shall We reward the grateful ones.’***¹²⁶

Be aware! I have said what I wanted to say, even though I know that you will not assist me as this slackness of yours to assist us has become a part of your heart (your practice). But all of this complaint is the result of the grief of the heart and the internal rage (that I feel) and (I know that) it is of no use, but I have said this to manifest my internal sorrow and to complete my proof upon you.

Thus usurp it (Fadak) and fasten it firmly, for it is weak and feeble, while its shame and disgrace will always remain over you. The sign of the rage of the Supreme Allah has been cast upon it, and it will be an everlasting disgrace upon you and it will lead you to the fire of Allah which will engulf the heart. Thus Allah sees whatever you do, ***‘And soon shall those who deal unjustly know what an (evil) turning they will be turned into.’***¹²⁷

I am the daughter of that Prophet who was sent to warn you against the severe wrath of Allah, ***‘Act (you) whatever you can, and verily we (too) act, and wait, indeed we too are waiting.’***¹²⁸

Verses of Poetry of Shaykh Azari

How good has Shaykh Kadhim Azari al-Baghdadi said in this matter, “They dishonoured the promise given to Ahmad with regards to his brother, and made Batul taste sorrow; on the day when ‘Adi and

Taym (the tribes of Abu Bakr and 'Umar) came, and due to them her cry arose; she complained in the presence of Allah, and the mountains trembled due to her complaint; I do not know what her state was while she was aggrieved, the nation opposed her husband and her father; she preached to the nation with her sermons, as if it was the voice of Mustafa; this is the book (Qur'an) so ask it and it shall narrate to you regarding the issue of inheritance; and in the meaning of (the verse of Suratul Nisa (4): 11), 'Allah enjoins you', and are included in it – O the near ones; she cleansed their hearts and it was near that grudges may be warded off; (She said) O nation! Turn towards Allah through our medium, we are the gracious garden of paradise; know then, that we are the emblems of the religion of Allah, it is upto you to honour and obey us, for in us lies affluence from the treasures of the unseen, from which the guided ones take guidance. O people! Which daughter of the Prophet that has been deprived of the inheritance of her father; how can they take away from me my ancient inheritance by putting forth forged traditions; how could our master (the Prophet) not will regarding us, yet the Taym (the tribe of Abu Bakr) among us may do so; do you think that we are not entitled for guidance, and the Taym are entitled to it; or do you think that he (the Prophet) has left us in the wilderness (of ignorance) after Divine knowledge, and you try to settle scores with him? Deal with us with justice and defend us from these two, those (two individuals – Abu Bakr and 'Umar) who have not considered the sanctity of the Prophet!"

Reply of Abu Bakr to Fatimah

When the speech of Fatimah reached this point, Abu Bakr replied to her and after praising and glorifying Allah he said, "O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! Your father the Prophet of Allah was affectionate, generous, kind and merciful towards the believers and enraged and severe towards the unbelievers. The Prophet of Allah was your father in (blood) relation and not of any other woman, and he was the brother of your husband and not of anyone else. The Prophet preferred him ('Ali) for all of the important tasks over everyone else, and he (Imam 'Ali) was an excellent aide for him (the Prophet). No one befriends you except the felicitous ones and none, except the unfortunate ones bear enmity towards you. Thus, you are the chaste progeny of the Prophet of Allah and you are the virtuous and chosen ones of Allah. You are our guides towards felicity and are our masters towards paradise; and you are the best of women, and the daughter of the best of prophets! You are honest in your speech and eminent with regards to intelligence and your words cannot be refuted – rather they must be accepted!

By Allah! I have not disobeyed the orders of the Prophet of Allah and have not acted except by his permission. Certainly the one who leads does not speak a lie. I hold Allah as witness that I have heard from the Prophet of Allah that, 'We prophets do not leave any gold or silver, land or property as inheritance – our inheritance is knowledge, wisdom, the Book and prophethood. Whatever we leave behind of the things of this world is under the possession of one who takes the reins of the authority in his hands, and it is upon him to spend it as he may deem fit.'

I have spent from that, regarding which you claim, for preparing avenues and resources for wars, such as weapons and mounts, so that the Muslims may succeed and obtain greatness and that they may

attain victory in wars against the polytheists and enemies. I have done this after obtaining general consent from the Muslims, and I do not share this view alone. This (with me) is my personal wealth, you may take it as you please for I do not wish to hoard my wealth after withholding (wealth) from you. You are the mistress of the nation of your father and the chaste mother of your children. We do not refuse your merits and status in regards to your father and children, and although your order upon that which is in my hands is binding, however, how can I disobey the orders of your father, the Prophet of Allah?"

Fatimah's Reply to Abu Bakr

Hearing this Sayyidah Fatimah replied, "Glory be to Allah! My father the Prophet never turned his face away from the Qur'an nor did he ever oppose it! Rather he was obedient to its injunctions and traversed the path in the light of its verses. Have you gathered together upon treachery and are making excuses with deceit and fraud? These strategies of yours are similar to the strategies of the hypocrites during the lifetime of the Prophet and this is the Qur'an that is a justifiable judge and a decisive orator.

The Qur'an says: 'So grant me from Yourself an heir who shall inherit from me and inherit from the family of Ya'qub'¹²⁹ and it also says: 'And Sulayman inherited Dawud.'¹³⁰ Surely Allah in His Book has discussed in detail and complete clarity regarding the laws of inheritance and the precepts and classes of heirs, and has explicitly declared the portions of heirs among men and women and there is no reason left for hesitation or suspicion by deceptive people! These verses of the Qur'an have refuted the suspicion and doubts of those to come in the future, however you, your (guilty) selves have beguiled yourselves into something, but (my course is) absolute patience, and Allah is He whose help is to be sought against what you ascribe.'" ¹³¹

Abu Bakr's Reply

Abu Bakr replied, "Certainly the words of Allah and His Prophet are true, and while you, O daughter of the Prophet of Allah speak the truth. You are the mine of wisdom, the homeland of guidance and blessings, the pillar of religion and the evidences of truth and I do not dispute your opinion and words, however this group of Muslims who are seated in front of you are the ones who shall judge, and they have concluded similarly and whatever I have done is in accordance to their opinion. And this (the taking of Fadak) is not done by me to display arrogance or to show myself as being great, nor is my personal opinion present in it, nor do I prefer myself upon others and these people all are witnesses upon my words." ¹³²

Fatimah Criticizes the Deceit of the People Present

Then Fatimah turned towards those present and said, "O group of Muslims! How soon have you hastened towards deceptive words and shut your eyes in the wake of ugly and lossful deeds. ***'What! Do they not reflect on the Qur'an, or are their locks set upon their hearts;'***¹³³ ***'Nay! Rather there is***

rust upon their hearts.’¹³⁴

Your evil deeds have shut your ears and eyes! Indeed the outcome of your deeds is very evil as also what you have indicated (by your actions!). That which you have usurped or taken control (unjustly) is also evil (for you) and by Allah, you shall find it weighty and will not be able to bear its burden. Its eventual outcome will also be very ugly at that time when the curtain will be lifted from in front of you and the adversities behind it will be made manifest (to you) ***and there will appear unto you from your Lord that which you had not been reckoning***¹³⁵, and ***those who stood on falsehood will then be the losers.***”¹³⁶

Poetry of Fatimah Zahra Addressing the Prophet

At the conclusion of her sermon, Sayyidah Fatimah turned towards the grave of the Prophet of Allah and addressed him saying, “Shortly after you such troubles and incidents came up, that if you had been alive they would not have increased; your death upon us is similar to the Earth that is devoid of rain – your nation defaulted (from their promise) after your departure, then you be witness and do not neglect it. The one who occupies proximity and status near Allah, is near his relatives too (and does not forget them). A few men arose whose hearts were full of rancour, when you were no longer amongst us and were hidden under the Earth; a group of men looked at us with resentment and deemed our status to be low, when you went away from our midst and (they) snatched away all of our rights. You were the light and a full moon from whom people benefited, and it is you upon whom the books were revealed from Allah; while Jibra’il who brought the verses was our aide. All goodness left with your parting away; I wish death had taken us before your parting, for we are engulfed in such sorrow after your departure, that no sorrow among the ‘Arabs and non-’Arabs can be compared to that of ours.”

It is stated in the book, ad-Durrun Nazim that Sayyidah Fatimah added three more verses to the above elegy, “As long as you were alive, I had an aide to support me, and I paved the way with respect and you were similar to my wings; and today I am humbled and fear the wretched one, and defend myself against those who have done injustice to me; and the turtledove cries upon the branch at night, while I weep upon you in the morning.”

Shaykh al-Mufid in his book al-Amali relates from his chain of narrators from Sayyidah Zaynab, the daughter of Imam ‘Ali that when Abu Bakr decided to seize Fadak from Fatimah, she became disappointed with him, threw herself upon the grave of the Prophet of Allah. She complained to him regarding the oppression of the nation and wept such that the earth of the grave of the Prophet of Allah was soaked with her tears.

She then recited the following heart-rending elegy, “Just after you such troubles and incidents came up, that if you had been alive they would not have increased; your death upon us is similar to the earth that is devoid of rain, your nation defaulted (in their beliefs) after your departure, then you be witness and do not neglect it. The one who occupies proximity and status near Allah is near his relatives too (and does

not forget them). A few men arose whose hearts were full of rancour, when you were no longer amongst us and were hidden under the earth; a group of men looked at us with resentment and deemed our status to be low, when you went away from our midst, (they) snatched away all of our rights. You were the light and a full moon from whom people benefited, and it is upon you whom the books were revealed from Allah; while Jibra'il who brought the verses was our aide. All of the goodness left with your parting away; and I wish death had taken us before our parting, and we are engulfed in such sorrow after your departure, that no sorrow among the 'Arabs and non-'Arabs can be compared to that of ours.'"

A Heart-Rendering Discussion Between Fatimah and 'Ali

It is quoted in the book al-Ihtijaj of Shaykh al-Tabarsi that Imam 'Ali was waiting at home for Sayyidah Fatimah. She rose up from the grave of the Prophet of Allah after her discourse in which she wept (so bitterly) then proceeded towards her house in a disturbed state. When she entered the room and saw Imam 'Ali, she addressed him saying, "O son of Abu Talib! You are sitting in seclusion similar to a child wrapped in his mother's womb and have taken refuge in a corner of the house similar to the one accused. Are you not the one who has torn the wings of the hawks, but now the empty-handed people are usurping your rights! This is the son of Abu Quhafah who is forcefully snatching away the gift of my father and the sustenance of my sons. He openly opposes me and I have found him to be my worst enemy through his speech!

The Ansar have shown slackness in assisting me and even the Muhajirin have turned a blind eye. Everyone has shut their eyes – no one defended me and no one wants to prevent the oppression (upon me). I left the house in a fit of rage and have returned insulted and humiliated. From the day you have sheathed your sword, you portrayed yourself as meek in front of others. You are the one who has hunted the wolves of 'Arabs and now you have taken refuge upon the earth? Neither do you silence the speaking ones, nor do you take steps to stop the fallacious ones. I have nothing in my fold and I wish I had died before sitting in seclusion and humiliation.

May Allah forgive me that I have spoken harshly in your presence, but you should defend and assist me. Woe be upon me every sunrise! Woe be upon me every sunset! My refuge (the Prophet) had parted away and my arms have weakened due to his separation, I complain to my father and I complain to Allah. O Allah! Your Power and Might is more than anyone else and your punishment and wrath is also more severe than everything!"¹³⁷

'Ali Consoles Zahra

Hearing this Imam 'Ali told her, "Woe and wailing should not be for you, but it should be for your enemies! Control yourself, O daughter of the chosen one of Allah and the remembrance of prophethood! I have not acted feebly in the acts of religion, nor have I neglected that which is destined for me. But if you worry regarding your sustenance, know that it is already reserved for you and your Surety (Allah) is

trustworthy. Whatever has been destined for you in the hereafter is better than that which they have snatched away from you. Leave it in Allah's accountability."

Fatimah was calmed by the words of Imam 'Ali and said, "Verily Allah is Sufficient for me and the Most Excellent Protector is He."

Audacious Speech of Abu Bakr after the Sermon of Fatimah

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibne Abil Hadid relates from the book al-Saqifah of Ahmad b. 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Jawhari that the following: "When Abu Bakr heard the sermon of Sayyidah Fatimah in regards to Fadak, her words weighed down upon him. He mounted the pulpit in the midst of the people and said, 'O people! What situation is this? Why do you lend your ears to every speech and where was this desire of yours during the age of the Prophet of Allah? Be aware! Anyone who has heard anything regarding it (Fadak) from the Prophet of Allah should relate it, and whoever was present should say something. Verily he is a fox who is betrayed by his own tail (referring to Imam 'Ali), he seduces and is the one who says that we should return to the previous state when he has turned old. He invites the weak ones to assist him and seeks help from the women, similar to the renowned woman Umme Tahhal¹³⁸ whose most dear of kinsmen was the one who was the most disgraced. Be aware! If I wanted, I could speak and if I speak I could bring to light, but now I have chosen silence."

He then turned towards the Ansar and said, 'O group of Ansar! I heard your foolish talks that you are nearer to the Prophet, that you gave refuge to the Prophet and assisted him because he came to you. Be aware! I shall extend my tongue and hands towards the one who thinks that we are not entitled to this (high) position.'"

Saying this, he stepped down from the pulpit and Fatimah returned home.

Ibne Abil Hadid continues: "I related this (audacious) speech to Naqib Yahya b. Abi Zayd al-Basari and asked him, 'Who does Abu Bakr refer to in this speech and who does he mean?'

He replied, 'He (Abu Bakr) made it clear.'

I asked him again, 'If he had made it clear, then I would not have questioned you.'

Naqib smiled and said, 'He meant 'Ali b. Abi Talib.'

I asked, 'All these words were meant for 'Ali?'

He replied, 'Yes, this is the truth, my son.'

I asked, 'What did the Ansar say in this regard?'

He replied, 'They accepted (the words of) 'Ali and because Abu Bakr feared what they would say thus he

stopped them from saying anything more.’ I then asked him (Naqib) the meaning of the speech of Abu Bakr which he further explained to me.

Umme Salama Defends Fatimah

It is quoted in ad-Durrun Nazim by Jamaluddin Yusuf b. Hatim, the jurist of Syria, that when Umme Salama was informed about what Abu Bakr said to Fatimah she said, “Is it right that a person similar to Fatimah should be addressed with such words? By Allah! Fatimah is a human hourie, the soul of the Prophet and has been raised in the pious laps! The hands of angels have lifted her up and she has matured in the laps of virtuous ladies. She has been fostered under the rays of virtue and brought up under (complete) chastity.

Do you imagine that the Prophet of Allah would deprive her from her inheritance and would not tell this to her when Allah had informed His Prophet saying, ***‘And warn your relatives of nearest kin.’***¹³⁹

Did the Prophet not warn Fatimah against sins and did Fatimah ever disobey her father; and Fatimah is the best of the women of both worlds, the mother of the masters of the youth (of Paradise) and the equal to Maryam, the daughter of ‘Imran?

The message of Allah concluded with her father and I swear by Allah that the Prophet of Allah protected Fatimah against heat and cold and would make his right hand her pillow and cover her with his left one. O Muslims! Be aware! You are under the sight of the Prophet of Allah and he is watching you! You shall be brought in the audience of Almighty Allah! Woe be to you! Very soon you shall witness the outcome of your deeds.”

It is said that the same year (in which this event transpired), the monthly pension of Umme Salama was stopped (by the caliph) due to her protest.

Conversation Between Fatimah and Abu Bakr

Ibne Abil Hadid relates from the book al-Saqifah of al-Jawhari that Sayyidah Fatimah told Abu Bakr, “Umme Ayman bears witness that the Prophet of Allah bestowed Fadak upon me.”

Abu Bakr replied, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! By Allah! Allah has not created anything that is dearer to me than your father the Prophet of Allah, and I wish that the heavens had fallen down upon the earth on the day of his death. By Allah! It is better in my eyes to see ‘Ayesah turning indigent rather than you. Do you presume that I give the rights of everyone to them and oppress you in relation to your rights – while you are the daughter of the Prophet of Allah! However this property (Fadak) is not from among the personal properties of the Prophet, rather it was the property of the Muslims. The Prophet spent from it to send people to the war front or in the way of Allah and in general charitable matters, and after the Prophet, the reins of affairs have come into my hands and I am the care-taker of this property.”

Fatimah replied, “By Allah! I shall not speak to you after this.”

Abu Bakr replied, “By Allah! I shall never stay away from you.”

Fatimah said, “By Allah! I shall imprecate upon you.” (It is said that) when Fatimah lay on her deathbed, she willed that Abu Bakr not be allowed to recite the prayers over her body, and thus she was buried at night and ‘Abbas b. ‘Abdul Muttalib recited the prayers over her body and the time–span between her death and that of her father was seventy–two nights.

A Precise Statement of al–Jahiz Regarding the Matters of Inheritance

Abu ‘Uthman al–Jahiz al–Basri, one of the renowned teachers and thinkers of the Ahlus Sunnah quotes the words of Sayyid al–Murtadha ‘Alamul Huda that, “The people (companions) presume that the veracity of the tradition of the Prophet narrated by the two men, meaning Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, that ‘We the prophets do not leave anything as inheritance’, can be established on the basis that when this was attributed to the Prophet, the Muslims did not refute it – rather they accepted it. But I say to those men who think likewise that if the veracity of this tradition is proved because the people did not refuse to accept it, then the people did not even object against the claim and protest of ‘Ali and Fatimah, and this should also be a proof of their (‘Ali and Fatimah’s) truthfulness. No one objected to them, nor said that they were lying, even though the dispute and discussion between Fatimah and Abu Bakr was prolonged. Their enmity reached to such an extent that Fatimah willed that Abu Bakr should not even recite prayers over her body after she passes away.

When Fatimah came to Abu Bakr to claim her right, she said, “If you die, who will inherit you?” He replied, “My family and my children.” Fatimah replied, “How is it that we should not inherit from the Prophet, but your children may inherit from you?”

When Abu Bakr prevented Fatimah from her father’s inheritance and started making excuses, and when Fatimah witnessed his cruelty and saw her own helplessness and loneliness, she told Abu Bakr, “By Allah! I shall imprecate upon you.” Abu Bakr replied, “By Allah! I shall pray for your well–being.” Fatimah said, “By Allah! I will not speak with you from now on”, and he replied, “By Allah! I will never be away from you.”

Therefore, if the truthfulness of Abu Bakr preventing Fatimah from her father’s inheritance can be established on the grounds that the companions did not protest against him, then it can be said that Fatimah was also truthful in her claim (since no one protested against her either). The least thing that was necessary upon the people was that if Fatimah was unaware (of the rule of Islam), then they should have explained it to her, and if she had forgotten, then they should have reminded her. If she was speaking nonsense [may Allah forgive us for even thinking such a thing] or was going astray or severing relations, then they should have brought her on the right track by protesting.

Thus it can be said that if no one protested against those two men, and no one even protested against Fatimah – then this meaning is at par and opposing with each other and thus no one has the ability to argue regarding this.

In this matter, we should refer to the original rules of inheritance and ordinances of Allah regarding the matters of inheritance, and this is the best mode to follow.

An Exact Question

Al-Jahiz continues by saying, “How can anyone say that Abu Bakr hurt Fatimah when we see that even though Fatimah dealt with him harshly and spoke to him roughly, he still replied to her with extreme politeness!

For example when Fatimah told him that, ‘By Allah! I shall imprecate upon you’, Abu Bakr replied, ‘By Allah! I will pray for your well-being.’ Fatimah said, ‘By Allah! I will not speak with you from now on’, and he replied, ‘By Allah! I will never be away from you.’ In this way, Abu Bakr bore the rudeness of Fatimah with patience while in the court of the caliphate in front of the Quraysh and the awe and pomp of the caliphate did not deter him from gentleness!

The status of caliphate is dependant upon glory and awe and it is likely that it is incumbent upon the caliph to safeguard the great status of caliphate from the decisiveness of limits, and prevent (anyone) from crossing these limits. But Abu Bakr did not even consider these limits so as not to hurt Fatimah but rather, spoke to her with extreme politeness to safeguard her status and respect. When he said to Fatimah, ‘No one is dearer to me than you in the case of want and free of want. However, what should I do when I have heard from the Prophet that, ‘We the group of prophets do not leave anything as inheritance, whatever we leave behind is charity.’”

An Answer to the Above

In reply to the above, al-Jahiz says, “This show of gentleness and kindness (of Abu Bakr) does not prove that he is free from the acts of oppression, injustice and violation (of the law). Indeed it is possible that a tyrant and treacherous person may use deceit and fraud particularly if he is clever and intelligent (in order to confuse the people). He can put forward his true intentions using kind words and gentle dictates and portray himself to be just and equitable, but yet show himself to be saddened by events (taking place around him).”

An Interesting Reply of ‘Uthman to ‘Ayesah

Two renowned historians, al-Tabari and al-Thaqafi relate that, “During the days of the caliphate of ‘Uthman, ‘Ayesah came to him and said, ‘Grant me the pension bestowed upon me by my father Abu Bakr and after him by ‘Umar.’

‘Uthman replied, ‘Abu Bakr and ‘Umar granted this to you on their own willingness, but I have not found anything in the book (al-Qur’an) and the (prophetic) traditions (supporting it) that I should give you any pension, and thus, I will not do so.’

‘Ayesha replied, ‘Then give me the inheritance that I received from the Prophet of Allah.”

‘Uthman replied, “But you seem to have forgotten that Fatimah came to your father and claimed her inheritance left by the Prophet of Allah, while you and Malik b. Aws bore witness that the Prophet did not leave anything as inheritance. You refuted the claim of Fatimah’s inheritance (Fadak) 140 and now you come to claim that your inheritance? No, I shall not give you anything!”

Al-Tabari further adds that ‘Uthman was seated with his back resting upon a pillow and when he heard the claim of ‘Ayesha, he sat upright and said, ‘Were you not the one, who along with the bedouin who would perform the wudhu with his (own) urine, bore witness near your father that the prophets do not leave anything as inheritance?”

First False Testimony (given) in Islam

It is related in the book al-Ikhtisas of Shaykh al-Mufid that ‘Abdullah b. Sinan relates from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq that he said, “When the Prophet of Allah passed away and Abu Bakr sat in his place (as the caliph), he sent a message to the representative of Fatimah at Fadak and expelled him. Fatimah came to Abu Bakr and said, ‘O Abu Bakr! You claim to be the successor of my father and sit in his place, and you sent your messenger to expel my representative from Fadak when you know that the Prophet of Allah had gifted it to me and I have witnesses for it.’

Abu Bakr replied, ‘The Prophets do not leave anything as inheritance.’

Fatimah returned to ‘Ali and related to him what Abu Bakr had said. Imam ‘Ali told her, ‘Go to Abu Bakr and tell him that he claims that Prophets do not leave any inheritance from themselves, whereas Sulayman inherited from (his father) Dawud and Yahya inherited from Zakariyyah – then why should you not inherit from your father?”

Fatimah came to Abu Bakr and told him what Imam ‘Ali had told her. Hearing this, ‘Umar replied, ‘You have been trained and have been told to come here and say this.’

Fatimah replied, ‘If I have been trained, then my husband and my cousin has trained me (with truth and there is no fault in it).’

Abu Bakr replied, “‘Ayesha and ‘Umar bear witness that they heard from the Prophet of Allah that prophets do not leave anything behind them as inheritance.’

Fatimah replied, ‘This is the first false witness that they have borne in Islam.”

Testimony of Imam 'Ali and Umme Ayman

Fatimah replied, 'Fadak is the property that my father gifted to me and I have evidence for it.'

Abu Bakr replied, 'Then go and bring those witnesses.' Fatimah brought Umme Ayman and 'Ali to Abu Bakr as her witnesses. Abu Bakr asked Umme Ayman, 'Did you hear anything from the Prophet regarding Fatimah?'

Umme Ayman and 'Ali said, 'We heard the Prophet say that Fatimah is the mistress of the women of Paradise.' Then Umme Ayman said, 'The one who is the mistress of the women of Paradise will not claim anything that is not her property, while I myself am a woman from among the women of Paradise (as related by the Prophet). I do not attribute anything to the Prophet of Allah that I have not heard from him.'

'Umar said, 'Leave aside these words! What witness do you bear regarding Fatimah?'

Umme Ayman replied, 'I was seated in the house of Fatimah while the Prophet of Allah was present there too. At that moment, Jibra'il descended and said, 'O Muhammad! Rise up and come with me – Allah has commanded me to draw the boundary of Fadak with my wings.' The Prophet of Allah stood up and went with Jibra'il and returned after an hour and Fatimah asked him, 'O Father! Where did you go?' The Prophet replied, 'Jibra'il marked Fadak for me with his wings and drew its boundaries.' Fatimah said, 'O Father! I worry about economic necessities after you! Make Fadak an insurance against these necessities for me.' The Prophet said, 'I give this property (to you to be) under your possession' – and Fatimah spent from it. The Prophet of Allah told me to be a witness and told Imam 'Ali to also witness this.'

'Umar said, 'You are a woman and we do not accept the witness of a woman, and as for the witness of 'Ali, he is prompted to do this for his own benefit!'¹⁴¹

Hearing this, Fatimah got up in a fit of rage, and turning her focus towards Allah said, 'O Allah! These two men have oppressed the daughter of your prophet and have usurped her rights – punish them severely', saying this they turned their back from Abu Bakr.

Imam 'Ali then mounted Fatimah on an animal upon which there was spread a frilled cloth. He went along with Fatimah for forty mornings to the doors of the (homes of the) Muhajirin and Ansar and invited them to assist and aid them.

Tearing the Document of Fadak in Disapproval

In continuation of the above report by Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, Imam 'Ali told Sayyidah Fatimah, "Go to Abu Bakr when he is alone, for he is of a gentle temperament more than the other ('Umar). Tell him that you (Abu Bakr) claim to be the successor of my father and that you sit in his place, then presume that if

Fadak was your (own personal) property (as the Caliph of the Prophet) and I receive as a gift from you, it would be incumbent upon me to return it back (to you).”

Sayyidah Zahra went to Abu Bakr and said what Imam ‘Ali had told her to which Abu Bakr replied, “You speak the truth”, then he called for a paper and wrote down a document returning Fadak back to Fatimah. Fatimah took the title deed of Fadak and left.

On the way home, ‘Umar met her and asked, “What is that letter?” Fatimah replied, “This document is the certificate returning Fadak (back to me), written by Abu Bakr for me.” ‘Umar said, “Give it to me”, and she refused. ‘Umar was enraged and kicked her on her chest and the child which was in her womb named Muhsin, was miscarried. He then proceeded to slap her with such severity that it was as if I saw her earrings ripped off. He then snatched the paper away from Sayyidah Zahra and tore it into pieces.

It was because of this incident that Fatimah became ill and was martyred seventy-five days later. At the time of her death she willed to Imam ‘Ali saying, “I request you, due to the right of the Prophet of Allah, that when I die, do not let those two men attend my funeral, nor recite the prayers over my body.” Imam ‘Ali replied, “I shall certainly fulfill your desire,” and when she died, Imam ‘Ali buried her in her house at night.

The author (Shaykh ‘Abbas al-Qummi) says: In my opinion, the above tradition is not reliable just like the other ones related in this regard, however because ‘Allamah al-Majlisi has quoted it in his work, Biharul Anwar, we too have added it in this book.

Returning the Ransom Back to Zaynab

It is quoted by the biographers that during the battle of Badr, Abul ‘As b. Rabi’, the nephew of Khadijah and husband of Zaynab, the daughter of the Prophet¹⁴², was in the army of the polytheists and was arrested by the Muslims and brought to Madinah after the battle. When the people of Makkah heard about this, they sent some money as ransom to free their relatives who were prisoners. Zaynab, who was in Makkah, also sent something as ransom to Madinah consisting of some goods and a necklace to free her husband and this necklace was an heir-loom of Sayyidah Khadijah that she had given to her daughter on the night of her marriage.

When the Prophet saw the necklace, he was deeply moved and told the Muslims, “If you permit I will release Abul As and return this ransom back.”

The Muslims replied, “May our lives and wealth be your ransom O Prophet! Certainly we permit it.” The Prophet released Abul ‘As without any ransom amount and sent the necklace with him to Zaynab in Makkah.

The renowned scholar of the Ahlus Sunnah, Ibne Abil Hadid says, “I related the above report to my teacher Abu Ja’far Yahya b. Abi Zayd al-Naqib to which he replied, “But ‘Umar and Abu Bakr were not

present when this incident took place, nor did they witness this episode from the Prophet so as to learn this lesson of mercy, so that they too could please the heart of Fatimah by bestowing Fadak to her with mercy and favour. Otherwise they would have asked the Muslims to return back Fadak to her. So was the status of Fatimah less in the eyes of the Prophet than her sister Zaynab? Fatimah was the mistress of the women of both worlds! In fact, this grant was to be given when it was not even proven that Fadak was the inheritance received by Fatimah, or that the Prophet had gifted it to her (in his lifetime).”

I asked my teacher Abu Ja’far al-Naqib, “But according to the tradition related by Abu Bakr, Fadak was from among the rights of Muslims, and thus it was not lawful for Abu Bakr to take it from the Muslims and give it to Fatimah.”

Abu Ja’far replied, “But then the ransom of Abul ‘As too had become a right of the Muslims, and at that moment the Prophet took it from them and returned it to Zaynab.”

I said, “The Prophet of Allah was the master of the shari’ah, and there was no other command upon his command while Abu Bakr did not enjoy the same status.”

He replied, “Then could Abu Bakr not have requested the Muslims to return Fadak back to Fatimah as the Prophet desired from the Muslims to return the ransom back to Zaynab the wife of Abul ‘As? If Abu Bakr had told the Muslims that, ‘O Muslims! This is the daughter of your Prophet and has come to claim some palms trees¹⁴³ (Fadak), then do you accept this and permit (us) to give it to Fatimah do you think that the Muslims would have refused? Certainly not!”

I replied, “The honourable judge, Abul Hasan ‘Abdul Jabbar b. Ahmad had the same opinion.”

Al-Naqib said, “In reality those two men did not deal with Fatimah in a courteous manner and with fair conduct, although according to the religion (and its teachings), they acted fairly.”¹⁴⁴

Beautiful Verses by Sayyed Jazu’i

How good has Sayyed Jazu’i said in this regard, “Fatimah came to them to claim her inheritance from Mustafa, but they refused to give it to her; I wish I knew why they opposed the customs of the Qur’an, when the laws (of inheritance) are mentioned therein; so was the verse of inheritance abrogated, or did these two men change it after it’s obligation? Do you not see the verse of mawaddah, in which the love for Zahra and her near kins is mentioned; they told her that your father had said so (that we prophets do not leave anything as inheritance), and they adamantly established this as evidence; they said that the prophets do not leave anything as inheritance from ancient time, and thus they took it away from her. Had not the daughter of the Prophet known, if it was ever said by the guide Prophet; then did the piece (of the flesh) of Muhammad disobey his words, Allah forbid that our mistress may do so; if she had heard it from her father, then did she claim her inheritance with misguidance or ignorance? She could not do so for surely was the most pious in the eyes of Allah, the best of creatures and very virtuous.

To nullify their claim ask the chapter of al-Naml, and the chapter of Maryam that comes before (the chapter of) Taha, in these chapters it is stated regarding the inheritance of Yahya, and of Sulayman if one wishes to verify her words. When they did not listen to her she complained to Allah, and her tears rolled down; then she said that Fadak was gifted to me by my father, but they refused to give (it back to) her; then she brought for them witnesses, but they refused saying that they are your husband and sons; they did not consider the witness of the sons of the Prophet to be sufficient, when they are the guides of the worlds and thus they bore enmity with them.

Were not 'Ali and Fatimah truthful in their eyes, and their sons too; the progeny (of the Prophet) who do not know the customs of oppression, where they mistaken? Was then the piety of the old man (Abu Bakr) more than them? It is ugly who says so and is absurd; they made her swallow her anger manytimes after her father, and what a swallowing it was; I wish I knew what would they have lost, if they had considered the promise of the Prophet regarding her; for her respect was similar to the respect of the seal of the Messengers, the guide of mankind and the warner. How good (it would have been) if they had given back to her the Fadak, and it was not good to prevent her from it.

Would the Muslims have reprimanded them, if they had given it back to her; was there any other daughter of the Prophet besides her under the heavens who was the truthful, the declarer, the trustworthy. Whose daughter, whose mother, and whose wife (was she), woe be to the one who oppressed her and harmed her.”

1. He is Abu Bakr Ahmad b. 'Abdul-Aziz al-Jawhari, one of the eminent scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah who authored the book "Saqifah wal Fadak."
2. Ibn 'Abbas reports that when the Noble Prophet's illness grew serious, he asked for pen and paper in order to leave after him a document that would keep the community from going astray after him. But 'Umar b. al-Khattab interrupted saying, "This man is overcome by illness (may Allah protect us from such statements) and the book of Allah is sufficient for us (as a guide)." At this, dissention broke out and the quarelling became intense. At last the Prophet said, "Get away! Quarrelling is not proper in my presence." As he left the house, Ibn 'Abbas said, "It's the worst of all calamities, that the Prophet was prevented from leaving a document after him." (Refer to Imam al-Bukhari, "Sahih", Kitabul 'Ilm, vol. 1, pg. 22 and vol. 2, pg. 14; Imam al-Muslim, "Sahih", vol. 2, pg. 14; Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, "Musnad", vol. 1, pg. 325; Ibn Sa'ad, "Tabaqat al-Kubra", vol. 2, pg. 244; Ibn Abil Hadid, "Sharh Nahjul Balaghah", vol. 2, pg. 20). 'Umar himself had heard the Prophet declare several times that, "I leave amongst you two weighty things, the book of Allah (Qur'an) and my progeny – my Ahlul Bayt. If you hold fast unto them, you will never go astray after me; and they will not part from one another until they reach me at the stream of Kawthar." However he feared that if the authority of the Ahlul Bayt and the Imamate of Imam 'Ali was written down during the last moments of the Prophet when he was the centre of everyone's attention, then it would have become an established evidence in history for all times to come, and it never could have been refuted at any time, thus he immediately declared that, "the book of Allah is sufficient for us", consequently revealing his inner confusion and fear.
3. Noble Qur'an, Surah Yunus (10): 18
4. One of the scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah, al-Mawardi writes in his Ahkamul Sultaniyyah that only five people pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr at Saqifah – 'Umar b. al-Khattab, Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah, Usayd b. al-Khuzayr, Bashir b. Sa'ad and Salim.
5. Sahlak was an Abyssinian slave-girl who was the grandmother of 'Umar b. al-Khattab.
6. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani and al-Balazuri in their Tarikh, Muhammad b. Khawind Shah in Rawdatus Safa, Ibn 'Abd al-Birr in Isti'ab relate that Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah and some of the people from the tribe of Khazraj and a group of Quraysh did not swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. Moreover, eighteen prominent and distinguished companions of the Prophet did not swear

allegiance to him and these included: Salman al-Farsi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Miqdad b. Aswad al-Kindi, 'Ammar b. Yasir, Khalid b. Sa'id b. al-As, Buraydah Aslami, 'Ubaid b. Ka'ab, Khuzaymah b. Thabit Dhu Shahadatayn, Abul Haytham b. Tihan, Sahl b. Hunayf, 'Uthman b. Hunayf, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, Jabir b. 'Abdullah al-Ansari, Huzayfah b. al-Yaman, Sa'ad b. 'Ubadah, Qays b. Sa'ad, 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas, and Zayd b. Arqam. Al-Ya'qubi writes in his Tarikh that a group of Muhajirin and Ansar kept themselves aloof from the paying of allegiance to Abu Bakr and they were the followers of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. Among them were 'Abbas b. 'Abdul Muttalib, Fadhl b. 'Abbas, Zubayr b. al-Awwam, Khalid b. Sa'id b. al-As, Miqdad b. 'Umar (or al-Aswad), Salman al-Farsi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, 'Ammar b. Yasir, Bura' b. Azib, and 'Ubay b. Ka'ab. As can be noted that the above list contains names of most eminent companions of the Prophet of Allah, each of whom possessed distinguished merits of their own – thus, how can the caliphate of Abu Bakr be justified and established on the grounds of 'al-Ijma' (general consensus), as claimed by his followers??

7. Referring to the likes of Bani Umayyah.

8. He refers to the episode of Harrah that took place in the year 63 ah when the people of Madinah learned about the sinful acts of Yazid and his murder of Imam Husayn, they broke their allegiance to him, cursed him and expelled his governor 'Uthman b. Abu Sufyan. When this news reached Yazid, he sent a large army of Syrians under the command of Muslim b. Uqbah against the people of Madinah. The slaughter of the Muslims in Madinah continued for three consecutive days in which time, Yazid's forces killed seven hundred memorizers of the Qur'an from amongst the Quraysh, Muhajirin, Ansar and ten thousand other people of Madinah. Those who were saved were forced to swear allegiance as slaves of Yazid. After the mass slaughter of the people in Madinah, one thousand unmarried women gave birth to children (they had been raped by Yazid's army). (Sibt b. Jawzi, "Tadhkirah"; Abul Wardi, "Tarikh"; Abul Fidha, "Tarikh"; Madaeni, "Hirrah"; Ibn Sa'ad, "Tabaqat al-Kubra"; etc.) It is also related in Jazbul Qulub of Muhaddith Dehlawi and Hujajul Karamah of Siddiq Hasan Khan that horses were tied in the Masjid al-Nabawi (the Prophet's Mosque and mausoleum) and these horses polluted it.

9. Noble Qur'an, Suratul 'Ankabut (29): 1-4

10. On one side Abu Sufyan desired that he should take up arms, while on the other hand he noticed that those 'Arabs who had accepted Islam dubiously were leaving it, and people such as Musailimah – the liar, and Talhah b. Khuwaylid were misguiding tribe after tribe. In these circumstances, if there was a civil war and the Muslims fought against one another, the forces of heresy and hypocrisy would have joined together and destroyed Islam from the face of the earth. Imam 'Ali preferred to keep silent with the purpose of maintaining solidarity within Islam and confined himself to protesting peacefully rather than taking up arms. This was because formal power was not so dear to him as the over-all good and prosperity of the community. There was no other course for stopping the plots of the hypocrites and defeating the aims of the mischief-mongers, except that he should not fan the flames of war and thus give up his own claim, and indeed this was a great act which he carried out for the preservation of Islam. Here Imam 'Ali, in harsh words, revealed the evil intentions of Abu Sufyan in that he was neither a well-wisher of Islam, nor were his intentions just, rather he desired conflict, bloodshed and the extinction of Islam.

11. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Anfal (8): 25

12. A special two piece seamless attire worn by the pilgrims of hajj or 'umrah. Also, a state of ritual consecration during which the pilgrim must abstain from certain acts.

13. After this, the author quotes several verses composed by various people regarding Saqifah, but I quote only a few ones here and forego the rest.

14. 'Umro (or 'Amr) b. As b. Wa'il, who is considered to be one of the 'eminent companions' of the Prophet of Allah, was one of the staunch enemies of Imam 'Ali and the Ahlul Bayt, and he was constantly in search of an opportunity to revile and slander them. Several words of Imam 'Ali are quoted in Nahjul Balaghah in his condemnation. In one of his sermons, the Imam says, "I am surprised at the son of al-Nabighah that he says to the people of Syria about me that I am a jester and engaged in frolics and fun. He said wrong and spoke sinfully. Be aware! The worst speech is what is untrue. He speaks lies. He makes promises then breaks them. He begs and sticks, but when someone begs from him he withholds miserly. He betrays the pledge and ignores kinship. When in a battle, he commands and admonishes, but only until the swords do not come into action and when such a moment arrives, his great trick is to turn naked before his adversary! By Allah, surely the remembrance of death has kept me away from fun and play, while complete disregard of the next world has prevented him from speaking the truth. He has not sworn allegiance to Mu'awiyah without a purpose, and has beforehand got him to

agree that he will have to pay its price, and he gave him an award for forsaking religion.” Imam ‘Ali addresses him as the son of al-Nabighah as that was the surname of his mother Layla b. Harmala. The reason for attributing him to his mother is her common reputation in the matter (of having many sexual partners). Once, Arwa b. Harith b. ‘Abdul Muttalib went to Mu’awiyah and during the conversation, when ‘Amr b. As intervened, Arwa said to him: “O son of al-Nabighah! You dare speak, although your mother was known publicly (for her actions) and was a singer of Makkah! That is why five people claimed you (as a son), and when she was asked she admitted that five men had relations with her and that you should be regarded as the son of the one which you resemble the most. You must have resembled As b. Wa’il and therefore you came to be known as his son.” These five persons were (1) As b. Wa’il, (2) Abu Lahab, (3) Umayyah b. Khalaf, (4) Hisham b. Mughirah, and (5) Abu Sufyan b. Harb. (Ibn ‘Abd Rabbah, “al-‘Uqdu Farid”, vol. 2, pg. 120; Ibn Hijjah, “Thamarat al-Awraq”, vol. 1, pg. 132; “Jamharat Khutab al-‘Arab”, vol. 2, pg. 363; Ibn Abil Hadid, “Shahr Nahjul Balaghah”, vol. 6, pg. 283–285, 291; ‘Ali al-Halabi, “al-Sirah”, vol. 1, pg. 46). It cannot be forgotten that he was the one who took a leading part in the battle of Siffin and suggested to Mu’awiyah to raise the Qur’an on lances to mislead the Muslims and create discord among the army of Imam ‘Ali. He was also the one who killed Muhammad b. Abi Bakr, the governor of Egypt appointed by Imam ‘Ali. It is also related that ‘Ayesha had cursed him (Ma’rifatus Sahabah).

15. One of the ancestors of Prophet Muhammad and Imam ‘Ali.

16. Before his death, the Prophet of Allah had appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the commander of the army against the enemies at Syria and had specifically said that, “Usamah’s army must leave at once. May Allah curse those men who do not go with him” (al-Shahristani, “al-Milal wal Nihal”). He had placed many elderly companions including Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf, Abu ‘Ubaydah b. Jarrah, Sa’ad b. Abi Waqqas, Talhah b. ‘Ubaydullah, Zubayr b. Awwam, Khalid b. Walid and many others under the command of Usamah, who at that time was only eighteen years old! Usamah went to his camp at Jurf but found most of the companions absent. By doing this, the Prophet of Allah actually wanted to send away all of those who would challenge the caliphate of ‘Ali, whom he had time and again declared as his immediate successor by the command of Allah. But most of these ‘eminent companions’ stayed back and even after assuming the seat of caliphate, Abu Bakr himself did not join the army of Usamah – rather he asked him to excuse ‘Umar for he needed him more with him! One may wonder – was his need of ‘Umar more important than the command of the Prophet (and in essence, the command of Allah)?

17. This is the most unfortunate, astonishing and shameful event that has taken place in the annals of history. One of the greatest reformers of the world, the best one amongst Allah’s creations, Prophet Muhammad, the mercy for the worlds, died and there were only a few Muslims to attend his funeral proceedings even though his son-in-law, Imam ‘Ali postponed his burial for three days; but then when he found the so-called ‘companions’ of the Prophet immensely occupied in choosing the caliph, he finds no alternative, except to bury him (rather than wait for them). One may wonder as to what responsible Muslims they were to have left the corpse of their Prophet unattended and what was the urgency in electing his caliph when his sacred body lay unburied? Muslims of all ages should ponder upon these points. How right was Sayyidah Fatimah when she admonished them saying, “I have not known a group more ill-mannered than you, you left the corpse of the Prophet amongst our midst and took the affairs into your hands yourself!”

18. The episode of Ghadir is one of the well-known historical events in Islam. This episode and the hadith in regards to it is discussed by numerous Shi’a and non-Shi’a authors in their works. One hundred and ten companions of the Prophet reported this tradition, eighty-four Tabi’in, three hundred and sixty scholars after the age of the Tabi’in and thousands of other authors. For further readings, refer to the comprehensive work ‘al-Ghadir’ by ‘Allamah Shaykh ‘Abdul Husayn al-Amini in which he has quoted all of this information in detail.

19. How true did Imam ‘Ali predict, he most prudently made public the hidden desire of ‘Umar. Why did he strive so ardently to assist Abu Bakr in establishing his caliphate? The reason was that deep inside in his heart lay hidden the desire of gaining the caliphate for himself one day and this came to light when Abu Bakr was on his death bed. At this event, he called for ‘Uthman b. ‘Affan and told him to write an appointment letter saying, “In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful. This is the order of ‘Abdullah (Abu Bakr) b. Abi Quhafah to the Muslims. Whereas...”, saying this he fell unconscious. ‘Uthman added the words, “I appoint ‘Umar b. al-Khattab as my successor among you.” When Abu Bakr regained consciousness, he told ‘Uthman to read the letter to him. ‘Uthman read it and Abu Bakr said, “Indeed God is great (Allahu Akbar)! I think you were afraid that people may disagree amongst themselves if I died in that state.” ‘Uthman replied

in the affirmative. (Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, "Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk"). 'Uthman was amply sure that Abu Bakr intended mentioning the name of 'Umar, thus he noted it down himself. It was thus a pre-organized plan between them to pass the caliphate subsequently to one another. As can be noted that later, 'Umar nominated an electoral committee with such slyness that would result in the appointment of none other than his own candidate 'Uthman, for the caliphate.

20. Such a weird remark by Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah, considered one of the 'honourable companions' of the Prophet, is nothing but the outcome of his prejudice and animosity against Imam 'Ali. Did he not hear numerous traditions of the Prophet regarding the excellences and knowledge of Imam 'Ali and the testimony of several companions regarding his unparalleled wisdom? Numerous traditions are quoted in the non-Shi'a books that prove this point. The Noble Prophet declared, "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate. Anyone who wants to enter the city can do so only by passing through the gate." (Imam al-Tirmidhi, "Ja'mi"; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Ja'mi al-Saghir"; Hakim al-Naishaburi, "Mustadrak", vol. 3; Ibn 'Abd al-Birr, "Isti'ab", vol. 2; Khatib al-Tabrizi, "Mishkat al-Masabih", vol. 8; al-Manawi, "Kunuzul Haqa'iq"; Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul Ummal"; Muhibuddin al-Tabari, "Riyadhatul Nazarah", vol. 2). 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas says, "Among the ten parts of knowledge 'Ali was given nine, and the remaining one is shared by all of you. By Allah! Even in the tenth part 'Ali has his share." (Ibn 'Abd al-Birr, "Isti'ab" vol. 2; Muhibuddin al-Tabari, "Riyadhatul Nazarah", vol. 2; Ibn Athir, "Usdul Ghabah", vol. 4; Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi, "Izalatul Khifa"). Ibn Hani narrates that, "I asked 'Ayesha whether the 'masah alal khuffayn' (wiping on the shoes during the time of wudhu) was forbidden or not, to which she replied, "Go to 'Ali, he is more learned than me." (Imam al-Muslim, "Sahih" vol. 1; Ibn Majah, "Sunan"; Imam al-Nisa'i, "al-Khasais"; Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, "Musnad", vol. 1). 'Umar b. al-Khattab said, "Amongst us, the best judge is 'Ali." (Imam al-Bukhari, "Sahih", ch. 18 and 20; Ibn Majah, "Sunan"; al-Manawi, "Kunuzul Haqa'iq; Ibn Hanbal, "Musnad", vol. 5; Khatib al-Tabrizi, "Mishkat", vol. 8; Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul Ummal"). Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrates that he heard 'Umar b. al-Khattab saying when he asked 'Ali about some problem, "I seek refuge of Allah from living in the midst of people among whom there is no 'Ali." (Muhibuddin al-Tabari, "Riyadhatul Nazarah", vol. 2). Also 'Umar b. al-Khattab said, "If 'Ali was not there, 'Umar would have perished." (Ahmad b. Hanbal, "Fadhilat Sahabah", vol. 2, pg. 647; Ibn 'Abd al-Birr, "al Isti'ab", vol. 3, pg. 39; al-Khawarizmi, "al-Manaqib", pg. 48; Ibn Sa'ad, "Tabaqat al-Kubra", vol. 2, pg. 338; Muhibuddin al-Tabari, "Riyadhatul Nazarah", vol. 2, pg. 194; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Tarikhul Khulafa", pg. 171; etc.)

21. In their lust for the world, people turned a deaf ear to the words of the Prophet of Allah. 'Ali b. Abi Talib narrates that, "The Prophet of Allah established brotherhood between the Muhajirin and Ansar (in the second year of the migration) however neglected me in this event. I asked: 'O Prophet of Allah! You have built up brotherhood, linking up each one with the other, but have ignored me, leaving me alone?' At this, the Prophet replied, 'I have kept you for myself. I am your brother and you are mine. Now if anyone gets into an argument with you, tell him that you are a slave of Allah and the brother of the Prophet of Allah. If anyone else claims to be so, he is an imposter.'" (Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul 'Ummal") The above tradition is also quoted, with slight variations, in Jami' al-Saghir of Jalaluddin al-Suyuti; al-Isti'ab of Ibn 'Abd al-Birr vol. 2; Riyadhatul Nazarah of Muhibuddin al-Tabari, vol. 2; al-Isabah of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, vol. 4; Tabaqat al-Kubra of Ibn Sa'ad, vol. 3; 'Usdul Ghabah of Ibn Athir, vol. 4. Also the Prophet of Allah declared, "O 'Ali! You are my brother in this world and in the next." (Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Jami' al-Saghir"; al-Manawi, "Kunuzul Haqa'iq"; Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul 'Ummal"). This tradition is also reported by Ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, Ibn Magazili in al-Manaqib, Tha'labi in his Tafsir, Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani in his Mawaddatul Qurba, Ibn Jarir al-Tabari in Kitabul Wilayah etc.

22. Noble Qur'an, Suratul A'raf (7): 150

23. The Noble Prophet time and again declared in the presence of the Muslims that, "Fatimah is a part of me, whoever pleases her pleases me, and whoever hurts her hurts me" and numerous other traditions in her praise. These traditions are quoted by Shi'a and non-Shi'a sources, to name a few: Imam al-Bukhari, Imam al-Muslim, Ibn Majah, Abi Dawud, Imam al-Tirmidhi, Abu 'Abdul Rahman al-Nisa'i (all authors of the Sihah al-Sittah), Abul Faraj al-Isfahani, Hakim al-Naishaburi, Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani, Hafiz al-Bayhaqi, Abul Qasim al-Bagawi, Khwarizmi, Ibn 'Asakir, Ibn Abil Hadid al-Mu'tazili, Ibn Jawzi, Ibn Athir al-Jazari, Sibti Ibn al-Jawzi, Ganjei Shafe'i, Muhibuddin al-Tabari, Jamaluddin al-Zarandi, Mu'izzuddin Haythami, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, Qadi Dayar al-Bakri, Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, Abul Qasim al-Tabarani, etc. Yet still these voracious men, in their lust of acquiring worldly possessions, turned a blind eye to the Prophet's words!

24. Shi'b Abi Talib (The Valley of Abu Talib) – This valley occupies an important place in Islamic history. A few days before

the beginning of the seventh year of Bi'that (official appointment of Prophet Muhammad to his station of prophethood), the leaders of the various clans of the Quraysh met and by consensus, they drafted and signed a document which stipulated that they would isolate and ostracise not only Muhammad, but the entire clan of Bani Hashim – both an economic and social boycott. They pledged themselves not to buy anything from, nor sell anything to the members of the Bani Hashim and prohibited inter-marriage with them. The covenant was then suspended on the wall of the Ka'bah. The atmosphere in Makkah had become so explosive that the Bani Hashim found themselves in great peril. Abu Talib realized that it would not be prudent to live in the city where at any moment, the enemy could set fire to their houses. Therefore, in the interests of the security of the clan, he decided to leave Makkah and seek safety in a ravine near Makkah that later came to be known as Shi'b Abi Talib. The siege lasted for three years. Abu Talib himself did not sleep at night because for him, the safety of the Prophet took precedence over everything else. When Prophet Muhammad fell asleep, Abu Talib woke him up and asked him to sleep in the bed of one of his four sons, and ordered his son to sleep in his bed. A little later he would again wake up the Prophet and ask him to go to the bed of another one of his sons. He knew that the enemies were tenacious, treacherous, vicious and vindictive and if one of them crept into the ravine with the intention of killing Muhammad, he would rather that they kill one of his own sons instead of the Prophet.

25. Referring to the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan.

26. Referring to the eleven leaders from the progeny of Imam 'Ali.

27. This sermon is known as the Sermon of Shaqshaqiyyah and is counted among the most famous sermons of Imam 'Ali. It was delivered at Rahbah and although some people have denied it to be his utterance and attribute it to Sayyid Radhi, however there is evidence in non-Shi'a books even that prove that this sermon is from Imam 'Ali. Ibn Abil Hadid writes that his master, Abul Khair Musaddiq b. Shabib al-Wasiti (d. 605 ah) stated that he heard this sermon from Shaykh Abu Muhammad 'Abdullah b. Ahmad al-Baghdadi (d. 567 ah) known as Ibn al-Khashab, he also saw this sermon in the compilations of his master Abul Qasim ('Abdullah b. Ahmad) al-Balkhi (d. 317 ah). Other non-Shi'a scholars who acknowledge its veracity are Sibti Ibn al-Jawzi al-Hanafi (d. 654 ah) in Tadhkiratul Khawasul Ummah, Qadhi Shihab al-Khafaji in Sharh Durrah al-Ghawas, Shaykh 'Ala ad-Dawla al-Simnani in al-'Urwah li Ahl al-Khalwah wal Jalwa, Abul Fadhil Ahmad al-Maydani in Majma'ul Amthal, Ibn Athir in al-Nihayah, etc.

28. Hayyan of Yamaamah was the chief of the tribe Banu Hu Haniifah and was quite wealthy. Jabir was the name of his younger brother while al-A'sha, whose real name was Maymun Maymun b. ibn Qais Qays b. ibn Jandal, enjoyed the position of being his bosom close friend and led a decent and happy life through his bounty. In the quoted verses of poetry, above verse he compares his current life, when he roamed about in search of livelihood, with the previous one wherein he led a happy life in HHayyan's company. Imam 'Ali quotes this verse comparing his present life wherein he was deprived of his right and persecuted, to the days during the Prophet of Allah when he enjoyed peace and security.

29. Imam 'Ali speaks the truth because during his caliphate, 'Umar introduced numerous innovations in Islam that did not exist during the time of the Prophet of Islam and forbade things which the Prophet himself had enjoined. To quote a few:

1) He initiated the congregational Tarawih prayer in the month of Ramadhan, which the Prophet himself had forbidden it upon the community (Imam al-Bukhari, "Sahih", vol. 3 and 8);

2) He added the following line into the adhan of the Fajr prayers, "As-salatu khairum minan nawm (Prayer is better than sleep)" (Imam al-Malik, "al-Muwatta");

3) Pointing the index finger during recitation of salutations (salam) in prayers towards the Ka'bah (Shibli al-Nu'mani, "al-Faruq"; Shah Waliyullah Muhaddith al-Dehlawi, "Izalatul Khifa", vol. 3);

4) Changed the ruling of the Noble Prophet by treating three pronounced divorces in one sitting and same time, as one (Imam al-Muslim, "Sahih");

5) The first one to award himself the title of Amirul Mu'minin (Imam al-Bukhari, "Sahih"; Ibn Khaldun, "al-Muqaddamah"; Shibli Nu'mani, "al-Faruq");

6) Entered into a treaty with the Christians of Syria in which he offered them entirely new terms by drafting a document that

sought to humiliate them, quite contrary to the Prophet's dealings with them (Ibn Taymiyah, "al-Fatawa"; Ibn Hazm, "al-Muhalla"; Shibli al-Nu'mani, "al-Faruq");

7) Ordered the killing of Magians (Abi Dawud, "al-Sunan", bk. 19);

8) Depriving the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet a share from the khums after his death;

9) Despatching cruel commanders (like Khalid b. Walid) with drawn swords and large troops to expand his dominion under the pretext of spreading Islam far and wide;

10) Forbidding the writing of Prophetic traditions (ahadith);

11) Prohibiting the pronouncement of "Hayya 'ala khayril 'Amal" (come towards the best deed [as-salat]) in the adhan (Imam al-Malik, "al-Muwatta"; al-Taftazani, "Shahr al-Maqasid"; al-Qushaji, "Shahr al-Tajrid"; 'Ali al-Halabi, "Siratul Halabiyah";

12) Prohibited the mut'ah of hajj and mut'ah with women while both of these were permitted during the lifetime of the Prophet (Imam al-Bukhari, "Sahih"; Imam al-Muslim, "Sahih", vol. 1; al-Taftazani, "Shahr al-Maqasid"; al-Qushaji, "Shahr al-Tajrid").

He most audaciously declared, "There are two mut'ah which existed in the time of the Prophet of Allah and during Abu Bakr which I have banned and I will punish those who disobey my orders – these two are the mut'ah of the hajj and the mut'ah of the women." Imam 'Ali says, "If 'Umar had not forbidden mut'ah, there would have been only a few unfortunate men who committed fornication." (al-Tabari, "al-Tafsir"). 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas also comments saying, "Mut'ah was a blessing that Allah, the Almighty, endowed the nation of Muhammad and had it not been prohibited, no one except the truly perverted ones would have committed adultery." (Ibn Athir, "al-Nihayah"; al-Zamakhshari, "al-Fa'iq");

13) He forbade the mahr for women to be more than 400 dirhams, even when a woman in the public pointed out a verse from the Qur'an permitting it. (Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Tafsir Durr al-Manthur", vol. 2; Ibn Kathir, "al-Tafsir", vol. 1; al-Zamakhshari, "Tafsir al-Kashshaf", vol. 1; Ibn Majah, "al-Sunan" vol. 1; al-Baihaqi, "Sunan al-Kubra", vol. 1; al-Qastalani "Irshadus Sari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari" vol. 8; Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul Ummal" vol. 8; Hakim al-Naishapuri, "al-Mustadrak" vol. 2), and many more acts.

One should refer to the words of the Qur'an, "And whatever the Apostle give you, accept it, and whatever he prevents you from, keep away from it; and fear (the wrath of Allah); Verily Allah is severe in retribution." (Suratul Hashr (59): 7) – however 'Umar seemed to be heedless of this injunction of the Qur'an!

30. Imam 'Ali revealed his pain for he was extremely aggrieved to find himself being counted among worldly men. It is a proven fact of history that Imam 'Ali led an austere and simple life, while all of the other people of that committee were stuffed up with large amount of properties and wealth. Ibn Sa'ad in his Tabaqat al-Kubra says about 'Uthman b. al-Affan, "When he died, he left thirty-five million dirhams, one hundred and fifty thousand dinars, three thousand camels and herds of horses. He built himself a palace in Madinah with marble and teakwood. He also had one thousand slaves." Zubayr b. al-Awwam built tenement houses in Kufah, Basrah, Fustat and Alexandria (Egypt). His property was estimated at fifty thousand dinars, in addition to which he possessed a thousand horses and one thousand slaves. Talhah b. 'Ubaydullah built a large tenement house of bricks and precious wood in Madinah. 'Abdul Rahman b. al-'Awf built himself a rich and spacious dwelling, his stables contained a hundred horses and his pastures had one thousand camels, ten thousand sheep, and one quarter of the inheritance that he left after his death was valued at eighty-four thousand dinars. ("Arabs, Islam and the Arab Caliphate in the early Middle Ages", New York, 1969). Far be it that Imam 'Ali should be made to stand with these gluttonous men! He was often heard in the middle of the night, crying, "O vicious world! Go away from me, why do you come in front of me like this? Do you want to allure me? Allah forbid that I should be allured and tempted by you and your pleasures. It is not possible! Go and try your allurements on someone else. I do not desire to own you and do not want to have you, I have forsaken you three times. It is similar to divorcing a woman three times after which she cannot be taken back as a wife. The life of pleasures that you offer is for a very little period. There is no real importance in what you offer,

the desire of holding you is an insult and humiliation to sober minds. Sad is the plight of those who want to acquire you. They do not provide for the hereafter. They have to pass through a long journey over a very difficult road towards a sad destination.” (Nahjul Balaghah: saying 77). Also, the Imam said: “Now look to your Imam (Imam ‘Ali meant himself). In this world he has satisfied himself with two old, torn and coarse garments and two pieces of bread (one in the morning and one in the evening).” (Nahjul Balaghah: letter 45).

31. Imam refers to the council of six men chosen by ‘Umar b. al-Khattab on his death-bed to elect the caliph after him – ‘Ali b. Abi Talib, ‘Uthman b. al-Affan, ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf, Sa’ad b. Abi al-Waqqas, Zubayr b. al-Awwam and Talhah b. ‘Ubaydullah. It is true that ‘Umar did not designate anyone as his successor, but his electoral committee was in fact, a de facto designation. Its constitution guaranteed the selection of ‘Umar’s own candidate (i.e. ‘Uthman). His first stipulation was that the candidate who gets most of the votes would become the caliph, and there was no way for Imam ‘Ali to get most of the votes because ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf was the husband of the half-sister of ‘Uthman, and Sa’ad b. Abi al-Waqqas was the first cousin of ‘Abdul Rahman and was under his influence. ‘Tribal solidarity’ or ‘tribal chauvinism’ was very strong among the ‘Arabs; and Talhah belonged to the clan of Abu Bakr and was married to one of his daughters. Therefore it was unthinkable that any of them would vote for ‘Ali. Thus one could count out four of the votes even before the beginning of the meeting. In any case, ‘Abdul Rahman b. ‘Awf had the casting vote. As ‘Umar’s confidante, it was inevitable that he would give his vote and support only to his (‘Umar’s) favourite and the brother of his own wife, ‘Uthman. Also ‘Umar laid a stipulation that if anyone of them disagreed with the majority, he would forfeit his life. Is this order to kill the dissenting member or members of his electoral committee, who were all companions of the Prophet, a sample of his ‘justice’? In addition, by including name of Zubayr into the electoral committee, he made him stand face to face against ‘Ali whom he had favoured in the beginning. As is related that when the house of ‘Ali was attacked, Zubayr had tried to defend him with his sword, while ‘Umar himself was a witness to it. Thus he succeeded in fuelling the desire of power in the heart of Zubayr and thus he opposed Imam ‘Ali. Later we find the same Zubayr come out in the open to fight ‘Ali in the battle of Jamal!

32. ‘Uthman b. al-Affan was a squanderer and bestowed lavish gifts upon his friends and members of his family, the Bani Umayyah, without any legal justification. Ibn Abil Hadid writes in the first volume of his book, The Commentary of Nahjul Balaghah that, “‘Uthman built a sophisticated stone house with doors made of sandalwood. He accumulated great wealth which he bestowed lavishly on the Umayyads and others. For instance, the religious levy (khums) from Armenia, which was conquered during his time, was bestowed on Marwan without any religious sanctions. He also gave him one hundred thousand dirhams from the public treasury and very generously offered him Fadak that had been usurped from Sayyidah Fatimah. He gave four hundred thousand dirhams to ‘Abdullah b. Khalid, a hundred thousand dirhams to Hakam b. ‘As (the father of Marwan), who was cursed and banished (along with Marwan) by the Prophet, and two hundred thousand dirhams to Abu Sufyan. These unjustifiable grants of his resulted in public uproar and many eminent companions of the Prophet protested against him. Even ‘Ayesha is quoted to have said, “Kill the na’tal (a reference to a Jew of Madinah), for indeed he has become an infidel”, because ‘Uthman resembled this particular individual. (Ibn Athir, “al-Tarikh”, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbah, “Uqdu’l Farid”)

33. The Nakithin or the violators of oath, referred to by Imam ‘Ali is the group who fought against him at the Battle of Jamal, derived from the Qur’anic verse: “So whoever violates his oath (nakatha), does violate it only to the injury of his (own) self” (Suratul Fath (49): 10). The Qasitin or The Deviators, referred to by Imam ‘Ali is the group who fought against him at the Battle of Siffin and is derived from the Qur’anic verse “And as for the deviators (Qasitun), they shall be the fuel for the hell” (Suratul Jinn (72): 15). The Mariqin or those who missed or overlooked (the true teachings) of the religion as mentioned by Imam ‘Ali referred to the Kharijites who fought against him at the Battle of Nahrawan, and their name is derived from a prophetic tradition.

34. Noble Qur’an, Suratul Qasas (28): 83

35. Mir Sayyid ‘Ali Hamadani relates in his Mawaddatul Qurba from Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Karkhi al-Baghdadi, who said that he heard from ‘Abdullah b. Ahmad b. Hanbal who asked his father Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal to rank the companions of the Prophet – he named Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthman and stopped. ‘Abdullah then asked his father, “Where is the name of ‘Ali b. Abi Talib?” He replied, “He belongs to the noble descendants of the Prophet. We can not mention his name alongwith those people!” Now such a day had dawned upon Imam ‘Ali that his name was mentioned along side the hypocrites and scoundrels and this episode was very painful for Imam ‘Ali and he was deeply disturbed by it.

36. On the Noble Prophet's return from the expedition of Tabuk, fourteen hypocrites conspired to kill him. The plan was to push him off of his camel at night into a precipice as he rode over al-Aqaba – a narrow passage through which only one person could pass at a time. When they tried to execute their plan, Jibra'il informed the Prophet about it at which point he (the Prophet) sent Hudhayfah b. al-Yaman al-Nakha'i to hide behind a hill. When the conspirators arrived and talked together, he recognized all of them – among them seven belonged to the Bani Umayyah. Hudhayfah came to the Prophet and named all of them however the Noble Prophet ordered him to keep the plot a secret and said that Allah was their guardian. It is from this event that Hudhayfah was referred to as 'the possessor of the secret'. In the early part of the night, the Prophet began the journey, followed by his army. 'Ammar led the camel from the front and Hudhayfah drove it from behind. When they reached the narrow passage, the hypocrites threw their leather bags full of sand (or oil cans) in front of the camel making a huge noise, hoping that the frightened animal would throw the Prophet down the steep cliff. But Allah protected him and the conspirators fled away in the crowd. (Refer to Hafiz Abu Bakr Bayhaqi, "Dalailun Nubuwwah"; Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, "al-Musnad". Imam al-Ghazali in his 'Ihya'ul 'Ulum relates that 'Umar b. al-Khattab would often ask Hudhayfah, "You are the possessor of the secret of the Prophet regarding the hypocrites. Do you find anything in me regarding the signs of hypocrisy?" Indeed, a guilty mind pricks the conscience!

37. Shaykh Sulayman al-Hanafi al-Qanduzi relates in his book Yanabi'ul Mawaddah from (Imam) 'Ali b. Husayn that he said, "Verily Allah will perfect the Imamah and that is the Light." Then he recited the above verse (Suratul Saff (61):8) and said, "The light referred to here is the Imam."

38. Noble Qur'an, Surah Yusuf (12): 18

39. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ra'd (13): 42

40. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Baqarah (2): 195

41. This tradition has been narrated by many narrators of traditions of the Ahlus Sunnah, such as Muhammad b. Yusuf Ganji al-Shafe'i, "Kifayat al-Talib" and "Matalib al-Su'ul"; Khatib al-Khwarizmi, "al-Manaqib"; Sam'ani, "Fadha'il as-Sahabah"; Ibn Sabbagh al-Maliki, "Fusul al-Muhimmah", Khatib al-Baghdadi, "Tarikh Baghdad", vol. 14; Hafiz Mardawayh, "al-Manaqib"; Ibn Qutaybah, "Imamah wa Siyasah", vol. 1; Imam Ahmad b. al-Hanbal, "al-Musnad"; Shaykh Sulayman al-Qanduzi, "Yanabi' al-Mawaddah", chap 20; and others.

42. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ma'idah (5): 24

43. Refer to the Qur'anic verse: "So ask the 'people of the Dhikr' if you know not." (Suratul Nahl (16): 43) Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari in his Tafsir, through his successive chain of authorities, relates from Jabir, who relates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir that he said, "We are the people of the Dhikr" (Ref. Jami'ul Bayan fi Tasfir al-Qur'an) Also refer to Mawlawi 'Ammar 'Ali, "Umdat al-Bayan"; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Tafsir Durr al-Manthur"; Ibn Mardawayh etc.

44. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

"Remember the Day (of Judgement) when We will summon every people with their Imam (leader)." (Suratul Bani Isra'il (17): 71)

45. Talut (Saul) was a virtuous man among the Children of Israel who was appointed by Prophet Ashmawil (Samuel) to fight Jalut (Goliath) who had captured all the land on the shore of the Mediterranean, including Palestine and Egypt. At the conclusion of this battle, Talut won. This event has been referred to in Suratul Baqarah in the Holy Qur'an and because of the reference to Talut in the above sermon, this sermon is also referred to as 'Khutbah al-Talutiyah'.

46. An area within the city of Madinah.

47. The Noble Prophet said, "O 'Ali! You are to me as Harun was to Musa, except that there shall be no Prophet after me." This is referred to as the tradition of al-Manzilah and is quoted in various Shi'a and non-Shi'a books of traditions through reliable chains of transmitters. Refer to Imam al-Bukhari, "al-Sahih (Kitab al-Magazi)"; Imam al-Muslim, "al-Sahih (Fadhail as-Sahabah)"; Abi Dawud, "al-Sunan"; Ibn Majah, "al-Sunan"; Imam al-Tirmizi, "al-Sahih"; Abu Nu'aim, "Hilyat al-Awliya"; Imam Ahmad b. al-Hanbal, "al-Musnad"; Imam Nisa'i, "al-Khasa'is", pg. 19; Khatib al-Baghdadi, "Tarikh Baghdad"; Hakim al-Naishapuri, "Mustadrak"; Ibn Sa'ad, "Tabaqat al-Kubra"; Mas'udi, "Muruj al-Dhahab", vol. 2; 'Ali al-Halabi, "Sirat al-Halabiyah" vol. 2; Sibti Ibn Jawzi, "Tadhkiratul Khawas" pg. 13-14; Shaykh Sulayman Hanafi al-Qanduzi, "Yanabi' al-Mawaddah", ch. 9 and 17; Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, "Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk"; al-Tahawi, "Mushkil al-Athar".

48. Here, Abu Bakr clearly violated the Qur'an and the Islamic principles which lay down the law to punish an adulterer.

How did Abu Bakr, who claimed to be 'the caliph of the Muslims,' allow himself to listen to all of these crimes and be silent about them? Moreover he asked 'Umar to stop attacking Khalid and was very angry at Abu Qutadah because he strongly protested against Khalid's action! What excuse could be given to those corrupt criminals who violated human integrity?

'Umar thought that Khalid should be killed because he had killed an innocent Muslim or he should be stoned because he had committed adultery with Layla (Umme Tamim), the widow of Malik. But nothing happened to Khalid – rather, he defied 'Umar because he had the full support of Abu Bakr, who knew the whole truth about Khalid more than anyone else. Historians have recorded that after this terrible misdeed, Abu Bakr sent Khalid on a mission to al-Yamamah, from which he came out victorious and subsequently married a girl from there in the same way as he had Layla, before the blood of those innocent Muslims and the blood of the followers of Musailamah had dried. Later, Abu Bakr rebuked him in regards to his actions and used stronger words than those he used during the incident involving Layla. (Muhammad Husain Haykal, "Al-Siddiq al-Akbar").

Undoubtedly, this girl's husband was killed by Khalid who then proceeded to take her for himself in the same way as he had done with Layla, the widow of Malik! It must have been so otherwise Abu Bakr would not have rebuked him using stronger words than the previous event. The historians mention the text of the letter which Abu Bakr sent to Khalid b. Walid in which he said, "O Ibn Umme Khalid! Upon my life! You are doing nothing but marrying women and in the yard of your house lies the blood of 1,200 Muslims that has not yet even dried up!" (Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, "Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk", vol. 3; Husain Dayar Bakri, "Tarikh al-Khamis", vol. 3) When Khalid read the letter, he commented, "This must be the work of al-A'sar", meaning 'Umar b. al-Khattab.

49. Khalid b. Walid was the commander of the right wing at the battle of Uhud under the army of Abu Sufyan, and he also fought against the Muslims in the battle of Khandaq. He accepted Islam in the year 8 ah after the Noble Prophet married his cousin Maymunah. It is also reported that he was among the ones who had fled from the battle of Hunain (Ref. Husain Dayar Bakri, "Tarikhul Khamis"; Jamaluddin Muhaddith, "Rawdhat al-Ihbab"; Mir Khund, "Habib al-Siyar"). There is a famous story about Khalid that happened during the lifetime of the Prophet when the Messenger of Allah sent him on a mission to the tribe of Bani Juzaymah (in Yemen) to call them to Islam, and ordered him not to fight against them. However, since they did not declare their Islam completely, and instead kept saying, "We are turning to... we are turning (to Islam)", Khalid began to kill them and take them as prisoners, and pushed them towards his friends and ordered them to kill the prisoners. Some of his friends refused to do what they were told because they realized that these people had truly converted to Islam. They went back and told the Prophet what had happened. He said. "O Allah I am innocent of Khalid's deed." The Prophet repeated this sentence twice (Imam al-Bukhari, "al-Sahih", vol. 4).

Then he sent 'Ali b. Abi Talib to Bani Juzaymah with money to pay compensation for their dead and for the loss of their wealth – even for the loss of a dog! The Prophet of Allah stood up and faced the Qiblah (Ka'bah in Mecca) and raised his hands to the sky, then repeated three times, "O Allah, I am innocent of Khalid's deed." (Ibn Hisham, "Sirah", vol. 4; Ibn Sa'ad, "Tabaqat al-Kubra"; Ibn Athir, "Usdul Ghabah", vol. 3).

If Khalid b. Walid, who is considered to be one of the greatest military leaders, was 'the sword of Allah', does that mean that Allah drew His sword to kill the innocent Muslims and to violate the integrity of people? There is a clear contradiction here, because Allah forbids the killing of human beings and prohibits the committing of vile deeds, but Khalid seems to have drawn the sword of injustice to kill innocent Muslims and to confiscate their wealth and to take their women, while 'Umar most delightfully bestowed him with the title of saifullah (the sword of Allah)! No doubt the Orientalists find great pleasure in saying that, "Islam was spread by the sword."

If Muslims pride themselves in following such immoral personalities and portraying them as 'Islamic Heroes', no doubt terrorism and bigotry will be linked to Islam. It is upon the Muslims to separate such obscure personalities from Islam and bring forward the true Islamic spirit of peace and tolerance, as preached by Muhammad and his immaculate progeny.

50. Revelation of the Qur'an.

51. Regarding ta'wil, two views have gained general acceptance: The first is from the early generation of scholars who used

the word exegesis, ta'wil, as a synonym for commentary or tafsir. According to this view, all Qur'anic verses are open to ta'wil. The view of the later scholars is that exegesis refers to the meaning of a verse beyond its literal meaning and that not all of the verses have exegesis, rather only the implicit ones. (The Qur'an in Islam by Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Taba'taba'i)

52. Among the verses in the Qur'an containing orders or laws, there are verses that abrogate the verses previously revealed and acted upon. These abrogating verses are called nasikh, and those verses whose validity they terminate are called mansukh.

53. This is the most renowned tradition of al-Thaqalayn (the tradition of the two weighty things) which has been reported by numerous Shi'a and non-Shi'a traditionists and historians. To quote a few: Imam al-Muslim, "al-Sahih", Part 7 of Kitab Fadhail al-Sahabah; Imam Hakim al-Naishapuri, "al-Mustadrak 'ala Sahihain"; al-Tirmizi, "al-Sahih", vol. 5; Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, "al-Musnad"; Hafiz Abu Nu'aym, "Hilyatul Awliya"; Ibn Athir, "Usdul Ghabah"; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Tafsir Durr al-Manthur" and "Jami' as-Saghir"; Hakim al-Naishapuri, "al-Mustadrak"; al-Bayhaqi, "Sunan al-Kubra"; 'Allamah al-Manawi "Faydh al-Qadir"; al-Darmi, "Sunan"; Abi Ya'la, "Sunan"; etc.

54. Muhkam are those verses that are explicit, clear and immediate in their message, and therefore, incapable of being misinterpreted. Mutashabih are those verses whose meanings are implicit and which are allegorical. They outwardly seem to express a meaning, but contain a further truer meaning whose interpretation is known only to Allah, His Prophet and the noble Imams. Refer to the Qur'anic verse, "He it is Who has sent down to you the book, of it there are (some) verses clear, these are the basis of the Book, and others are ambiguous. But those in whose hearts there is perversity, they are after that which is ambiguous therein seeking to mislead and seeking to interpret (to suit their selfish motives). While none knows its (hidden) interpretation except Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge." (Surat Ale 'Imran (3): 7). Shaykh Sulayman Qanduzi al-Hanafi in his book, Yanabi' al-Mawaddah relates from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that he recited the above verse of the Qur'an and said, "We are those who are firmly rooted in knowledge."

55. On his death-bed, 'Umar appointed a counsel of seven men from which one was to be elected as caliph after him, and Zubayr b. al-'Awwam was also included among them. Thus 'Umar most schemingly made him stand face to face against 'Ali whom Zubayr had favoured many a times, as is related in the report mentioned, while 'Umar himself was a witness to it. Thus he succeeded in fuelling the lust of worldly passion into the heart of Zubayr and thus oppose 'Ali. Later we find the same Zubayr come out in the open to fight Imam 'Ali in the battle of Jamal!

56. Some say that he was also the cousin of 'Umar b. al-Khattab.

57. The people of Thamud acted rebellious to the instructions of Prophet Salih and killed the she-camel that was sent as a trial, and this conduct of theirs brought perdition to them. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"But they belied him (Prophet Salih) and hamstrung her (the she-camel), so crushed them their Lord crushed them for their sins, and levelled them (to the ground). (Suratul Shams: 14)

Sayyidah Zahra refers to the camel of Salih as a similitude that if Allah can send His curse due to the she-camel, He certainly will send curse upon these rebellious people due to His intense love for the children of Fatimah.

58. This view of Ibn Abil Hadid is nothing but the outcome of his prejudice and unscrupulous nature. On the one hand, he narrates numerous traditions to prove that Sayyidah Fatimah suffered countless pains at the hands of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, but on the other hand he believes as is stated and tries to defend their stand. He even hypocritically goes on to say that Fatimah forgave 'Umar, when it is a proven fact, while Ibn Abil Hadid himself relates in his book, that when Fatimah died, she was displeased with 'Umar and willed that they should not even participate in her funeral rites.

59. After bathing a dead body, it is obligatory to perform the act of hunut – to apply camphor on the parts of prostration – the forehead, both the palms, both the knees and the toes of both feet.

60. There is no narration which says that Mughirah used his whip against Fatimah, but what Imam Hasan meant was that since Mughirah had disrespected the Ahlul Bayt and due to his vain lies and siding with the oppressors, this act of his was similar to he himself whipping Fatimah – and Allah is the Best Knower!

61. This is one of the most renowned verses revealed in praise of the Ahlul Bayt well known as the verse of al-Mawaddah. Numerous narrators of traditions have quoted in their books that the 'relatives' in this verse refer to 'Ali, Fatimah and their

progeny. Refer to Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani, "Hilyatul Awliya"; al-Tabari, "al-Tafsir"; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Tafsir Durr al-Manthur"; Hakim al-Naishapuri, "Mustadrak 'ala Sahihain"; al-Zamakhshari, "al-Kashshaf"; al-Tabarani, "al-Awsat" and "Mu'jamul Kabir"; al-Haythami, "Majma'ul Zawa'id"; Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, "Sawaiqul Muhriqah"; al-Nabahani, "al-Sharaf al-Mu'abbad"; al-Wahidi, "Asbabul Nuzul"; Tha'lab, "al-Tafsir"; Husayn al-Bagawi, "Tafsir Ma'alimut Tanzil"; Ganji al-Shafe'i, "Kifayatul Talib"; al-Qastalani, "Mawahibul Ladunniyah"; al-Zarqani, "Sharhul Mawahib"; Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, "Ihya'ul Mayyit"; Muhammad al-Sabban, "Is'afur Ragibin"; Ibn Magazili, "al-Manaqib"; Muhibuddin al-Tabari, "Zakhairul 'Uqba"; al-Hammuwi, "Faraidus Simtain"; Ibn Talhah al-Shafe'i, "Matalibus Su'ul"; Ibn Sabbag al-Maliki, "Fusulul Muhimmah"; al-Shablanji, "Nurul Absar"; al-Samhudi, "Jawahirul Iqdain"; etc.

62. Certain people who turn a blind eye to the realities refuse to accept the fact that Sayyidah Fatimah miscarried her child named Muhsin when 'Umar b. al-Khattab and his cousin Qunfudh (under 'Umar's order) attacked her. There are numerous traditionists and historians of the Ahlus Sunnah that have quoted this incident in their books. We read in Sharh al-Kushaji, pg. 407 as follows, "Abu Bakr sent 'Umar when 'Ali refused to give allegiance to Abu Bakr. 'Umar went with fire and this caused Fatimah distress as a result of which she suffered a miscarriage." Salahuddin Khalil al-Safadi in his book, Wafi al-Wafiyyat under the letter 'A' cited the view of Ibrahim b. Sayyar b. Hani al-Basri better known as al-Nazzam that: "On the day of allegiance, 'Umar hit Fatimah on the stomach such that the child in her womb died." There are numerous other historians that quote this incident such as Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, "Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk"; al-Mas'udi, "Muruj al-Dhahab" and "Ithbatul Wasiyyah"; Ibn Abil Hadid, "Shahr Nahjul Balaghah"; Shibli al-Nu'mani, "al-Faruq"; etc.

63. Noble Qur'an, Suratul A'raf (7): 150

64. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Mujadilah (58): 19

65. This letter is quoted by 'Allamah al-Majlisi in his work, Bihar al-Anwar in which he says that I have related this letter from Dalail'ul Imamah vol. 2 of al-Tabari that after the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn at Karbala, 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (b. al-Khattab) along with a group of people from Madinah came to Syria. They protested in front of Yazid regarding his atrocities at Karbala and in this gathering, Yazid told 'Abdullah b. 'Umar, "Do you wish to see the letter of your father", saying this he brought forth the letter (quoted in the text) of 'Umar which was kept in a case and then he gave it to 'Abdullah.

66. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Anbiya (21): 104

67. Noble Qur'an, Surah Ale 'Imran (3): 30

68. One of the numerous concocted stories of the non-Shi'a historians who allege that the Prophet had three daughters through Sayyidah Khadijah b. Khuwaylid apart from Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra. The names of these daughters are stated as being Zaynab, Umme Kulthum and Ruqayyah, but in reality, they were the daughters of Hala b. Khuwaylid (wife of 'Amr b. Hadam) and sister of Khadijah, who after her death, were brought up by their aunt, Sayyidah Khadijah and Prophet Muhammad. The Shi'a scholars have put forward several proofs in refutation of this alleged claim which was raised simply to compete with Sayyidah Zahra's personality and also because two of them were later married (consequently) to the caliph, 'Uthman b. al-Affan.

69. On one hand he agrees and opines that the crime had actually been committed, while on the other hand he hypocritically says that he is in doubt regarding this – such double standards!

70. Nafasul Mahmum is a comprehensive book authored by Hajj Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi and is considered to be one of the reliable books written on the episode of Karbala (maqatal). Nafasul Mahmum forms the basis of reference for contemporary authors, researchers, historians and orators and is acclaimed by one and all. I had the honour of translating this magnificent book into the English language and it has been published by Ansarian Publications, Qum, Iran. (Tr.)

71. Yahya b. Hasan narrates from twenty different narrators in the book Kitabul Ummah from the Noble Prophet that, "There will be twelve successors after me, and all of them will be from Quraysh." Imam al-Bukhari has quoted this tradition from three different transmitters in his Sahih; Imam al-Muslim has quoted this tradition from nine transmitters in his Sahih; Abu Dawud in three channels in his Sunan; al-Tirmidhi in one channel in his Sahih. Also refer to Sulayman al-Qanduzi, "Yanabi'ul Mawaddah", ch. 77; al-Hamwini, "Faraidus Simtayn"; al-Khwarizmi, "al-Manaqib"; Ibn Magazili, "al-Manaqib"; Tha'labi, "al-Tafsir"; Ibn Abil Hadid, "Sharh Nahjul Balaghah"; Sayyid 'Ali al-Hamadani, "Mawaddatul Qurba"; Imam Ahmad b. al-Hanbal, "al-Musnad"; Abi Dawud al-Tayalisi, "al-Musnad"; Abu Nu'aim, "Hilyatul 'Awliya"; Muttaqi al-Hindi, "Kanzul Ummal"; Hakim al-Naishapuri, "al-Mustadrak"; Dhahabi, "al-Talkhis"; Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, "Fathul Bari"; Nuruddin al-Haithami "Majma'ul Zawa'id"; Ibn Hajar al-Haithami, "Sawaiqul Muhriqa"; Jalaludin al-Suyuti, "Tarikhul Khulafa"; Ibn

Kathir, "Al-Bidaya wan Nihaya"; etc.

72. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Qamar (54): 10

73. Noble Qur'an, Surat Maryam (19): 48

74. Noble Qur'an, Surat Hud (11): 80

75. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Shu'ara (26): 21

76. Noble Qur'an, Suratul A'raf (7): 150

77. Asma b. 'Umays b. Ma'ad was one of the devoted and loyal adherents of the Prophet's family. Her half sister was Maymunah b. Harith, the wife of the Prophet. Her first husband was Ja'far b. Abi Talib who was martyred in the battle of Muta in the eighth year after the migration. She had several children from Ja'far, one of whom was 'Abdullah, better known as 'Bahrul Sakha' (the ocean of munificence). He too was a faithful adherent to his uncle Imam 'Ali and his affection towards 'Abdullah can be proven by the fact that he married his daughter Sayyidah Zaynab to him, from whom they had several children, two of them – 'Aun and Muhammad, were martyred in the battle of Karbala alongwith their uncle, Imam Husayn. Later Asma b. 'Umays married Abu Bakr b. Abu Quhafa from whom she bore Muhammad b. Abu Bakr. Although being in the house of Abu Bakr, she remained dedicated to Imam 'Ali and Sayyidah Zahra as is evidenced from the narrated report. After the death of Abu Bakr, Imam 'Ali married her and consequently Muhammad b. Abu Bakr was brought up by the Imam. Imam 'Ali loved him immensely and regarded him as his own son and used to say, "Muhammad is my son from Abu Bakr." Muhammad was appointed the governor of Egypt by Imam 'Ali and was martyred by the order of Mu'awiyah in 38 ah at the young age of twenty-eight years. (He also took part in the Battle of Jamal on the side of Imam 'Ali – against his own half-sister, 'Ayesha.)

78. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Qasas (28): 20

79. Fadak was a fertile area of land near Madinah. It belonged to the Jews and in the seventh year after the migration, it was given to the Prophet under the terms of a peace treaty. The reason for the settlement was that after the fall of Khaybar, the Jews realized the real power of the Muslims, their martial aspirations were lowered, and noting that the Prophet had spared some Jews on their seeking protection, they also sent a message of peace to him and expressed the wish that Fadak might be taken from them and this area should not be made a battle-field. Consequently, the Prophet accepted their request and gave them amnesty and this land became the Prophet's individual property wherein no one else had any share in it, nor could there be any such shared ownership with the rest of the Muslim community, because the Muslims only had a share in those properties which they had acquired as booty after a war; while the property acquired without fighting is referred to in Islamic terminology as 'Fay' and the Prophet alone was entitled to it. Thus Allah says,

"And whatever Allah has bestowed on his Apostle from them, you pressed not against it any horse or a camel, but Allah grants authority unto His Apostles against whomsoever He wills, and Allah is All Powerful over everything. Whatever Allah has bestowed upon His Apostle from the people of the towns, belongs unto Allah, and for the Apostle, and for his (Prophet's) kindred, and the orphans..." (Suratul Hashr (55): 6-7).

No one ever disputed the fact that Fadak was secured without a battle and it was therefore the Prophet's personal property to which no one else had any portion of it. In fact, the historian al-Tabari writes, "Fadak was personal property belonging solely to the Prophet and the Muslims did not use their horses or camels (battled) for it." (al-Tabari, "Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk", vol. 3, pg. 303). Imam al-Balazuri writes, "Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet as the Muslims had not used their horses or camels (battled for it)." (Futuhul Buldan, pg. 37). It has also been proven in the agreed way that the Prophet had given this land to Sayyidah Fatimah as a gift during his lifetime.

80. Umme Ayman's name was Barakah and she was the Abyssinian slave girl of 'Abdullah, the father of Prophet Muhammad. After his marriage to Aminah she remained in their household serving them. Even after the death of 'Abdullah, Barakah was always on the side of Aminah to console her until the Noble Prophet was born. When the Prophet was six years old, his mother Aminah too passed away leaving him in the care of Barakah, who most willingly and affectionately brought him up and took utmost care of him such that the Prophet addressed her as 'his mother'. Later on, she was married to 'Ubayd b. Zayd and bore him Ayman and thereafter came to be known as Umme Ayman. When he died, she married Zayd b. Harith and bore him Usamah b. Zayd. Although in the beginning, Usamah was not among the adherents of Imam

‘Ali, however later on, he turned to him and remained devoted to him until his death during the Imamate of Imam Husayn. As is related in the above report that the Prophet himself had declared that Umme Ayman was from among the women of paradise and her devotion towards Imam ‘Ali and Sayyidah Fatimah is also well known.

81. Noble Qur’an, Suratul Bani Isra’il (17): 26. When the above verse was revealed to the Noble Prophet, he gave Fadak to Fatimah. Refer to al-Tha’labi, “Kashful Bayan”; al-Suyuti in his Tafsir Durr al-Manthur relates from Hafiz Ibn Mardawayyah; the famous commentator Ahmad b. Musa as well as Hafiz al-Haskani (in his book Shawahedut Tanzil) report from Abu Sa’id al-Khudri; Faqih al-Shafe’i in his Tarikh; Shaykh Sulayman al-Qanduzi in his Yanabi’ul Mawaddah report from the book Jami’ul Fawa’id; al-Waqidi and Hakim al-Naishapuri relate in their Tafsir; ‘Ali Muttaqi al-Hindi in Kanzul Ummal; Ibn Abil Hadid in Shahr Nahjul Balaghah; Ya’qut al-Hamwini in his Mu’jamul Buldan; etc.

82. This prediction of Sayyidah Fatimah came true a few years later. Abu Lu’lu (Fayruz), a Persian slave of Mughirah stabbed ‘Umar (in the stomach) with a two-headed dagger. ‘Umar was brought a drink known as nabith (a drink of dates) and he drank it, but it wasn’t even distinct from the blood (coming from his wound). So they gave him milk to drink and it came out of the wound. He said, “If I had that amount of gold which would fill the earth, I would ransom myself by it from the terror of the resurrection.” (Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, “Tarikhul Khulafa”). Did not the ‘caliph of Muslims’ read the Qur’an which says,

“The day when neither wealth or sons will avail anyone, save him who comes unto Allah with a heart submissive” (Suratul Shu’ara (26): 88-89).

Or was he fearful of his state in the hereafter due to all of the oppression that he meted upon the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet?! ‘Abdul Rahman b. Aban b. ‘Uthman relates from his father who relates from ‘Uthman b. al-Affan said, “I was the last one to see ‘Umar b. al-Khattab (before his death). I called upon him and saw his head on the lap of his son ‘Abdullah, and noticed that he was in a weary state. He told his son, “Keep my cheek on the ground.” ‘Abdullah refused, so he said again, “Keep my cheek on the ground.” ‘Abdullah refused, so ‘Umar said, “Keep my cheek on the ground, you motherless one.” So he kept his cheek on the ground, and then ‘Umar said, “O my mother! Woe to me my mother! I am not forgiven (by Allah).” He went on saying that until he died. (Shaykh al-Mufid, “al-Amali”)

83. Noble Qur’an, Suratul Ahzab (33): 33

84. Noble Qur’an, Suratul Qasas (28): 20

85. In the second rak’at (unit) of every prayer, the third rak’at in the Maghrib prayers and the fourth rak’at of Zuhr, ‘Asr and ‘Isha prayers one must sit up straight after the second prostration and recite the tashahud – bearing witness to the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood of (Prophet) Muhammad followed by sending Allah’s blessings on the Prophet and his progeny and the tashahhud is among the obligatory parts of prayers. It will not be out of place to quote the words of Imam al-Shafi’i who says, “O Ahlul Bayt! Your love is a duty imposed on us in the revealed Book (al-Qur’an). It is sufficient evidence of your honour in the eyes of Allah that if a worshipper omits sending prayers upon you in one’s prayers, then their prayers are even void!”

86. This is not an acceptable historical proof, rather Imam ‘Ali reverted to leading a quiet life, almost confined to the four walls of his house. This has been pointed out by Veccia Vaglieri in E12, Article “‘Ali and the Sermon of Shaqshaqayyah’ bears witness to this. Ibn Abil Hadid writes a long commentary on this speech and explains major characteristics of the first two caliphs, their policies in arranging the affairs of the community, their attitude towards Imam ‘Ali and his reservations about the handling of matters by them. However Imam ‘Ali never remained obedient to the Caliphs and history narrates numerous incidents wherein he differed from them in various matters. On political and administrative matters, his disagreement with ‘Umar on the question of Diwan (distribution of stipends) and his absence from all of the wars fought under ‘Umar (in name of extending the frontiers of Islam) can be cited. Nevertheless, whenever any serious matters came up for Islam or the Muslims, he was the first one to hasten to their call. There are numerous occasions recorded in history that whenever the Caliphs faced certain straightened circumstances, which were beyond their apprehension and judgement, they would turn to Imam ‘Ali for help and he would most generously offer his excellent and flawless judgement in this regard. Due to this, on numerous occasions ‘Umar is found to have said, “If ‘Ali was not there, ‘Umar would have perished.”

87. This was Maqlas al-Asadi al-Kufi and he was an extremist. There are traditions in his condemnation, curse and disassociation and he was killed by 'Isa b. Musa al-'Abbasi, the governor of Kufah, after Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq cursed him. (Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi, "Hadiyatul Ahbab")

88. Noble Qur'an, Surah Taha (20): 47

89. This is the renowned sermon of Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra. The words of the Infallibles are far beyond the comprehension of anyone except their Creator, who created them as the epitome of infallibility and embodiment of perfection. Their words are replete with lucidity, insight and perfection, while pearls of wisdom and eloquence flow through their tongues. It is for this reason that I have mainly relied upon the book "Khutbae Hadhrat Fatimah" of one of the present Marja', Ayatullah al-Uzma Shaykh Husayn 'Ali al-Muntazari, wherein he explains each of her statements in detail. Instead of translating the literal meanings, I have sufficed upon quoting their explanation. For further study, readers are requested to refer to this informative work.

90. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

"This day have I perfected for you, your religion, and have completed my favour upon you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the religion." Suratul Ma'idah (5): 3.

This verse was revealed on the day of Ghadir al-Khum wherein the authority of Imam 'Ali was established by the Prophet while returning from the farewell pilgrimage. Thus the 'complete bounties' in this case refers to the bounty of the wilayah of Imam 'Ali by whose means the bounty of guidance is completed.

91. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

"And if you reckon Allah's bounties, you will not be able to compute them." Surah Ibrahim (14): 34.

92. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

"And when your Lord declared: If you are grateful then I will increase (My favours) upon you, and if you are ungrateful, then verily My torment is indeed severe." Surah Ibrahim (14): 7.

93. Here Sayyidah Fatimah taunts the audience and says that you think that you are worthy of all of these great entitlements and satisfied with it, while the reality is that you do not stand up to defend truth against falsehood. Then what is the use of this status being bestowed upon you when you do not act and defend the rights of the Ahlul Bayt?

94. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

"And when the Qur'an is recited, then listen to it and be attentive that you might be shown mercy." Suratul A'raf (7): 204.

95. They are the recommended acts which are rewarded, but if they are not performed, then no sin is committed. For example, the optional (nafilah) prayers that either precede or follow the daily prayers.

96. Permissible acts, performance or non-performance of these acts does not entail any reward or punishment.

97. There are certain unworthy acts, which a Muslim is advised to avoid, but no sin is committed if one engages in them, Allah's pleasure is not in them.

98. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Take alms out of their wealth (O Prophet), you would cleanse them and purify them thereby." Suratul Bara'at (9): 103

99. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Verily, only the patient ones will be paid their recompense without any account." Suratul Zumar (39): 10

100. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"And for you there is (security of) life in retribution, O you people of understanding, so that you may guard yourself (against evil)." Suratul Baqarah (2): 179

101. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"They who fulfill their vows, and fear the day the woe of which stretches far and wide" Suratul Dahr (76): 7

102. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Intoxicants and games of chance, (dedication of) stones (i.e. idols) and (divination by) arrows, are only an adomation of shaitan's handiwork." Suratul Ma'idah (5): 90

103. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Verily they who accuse protected believing women, unaware (of the crime), shall be accursed in this world and in the hereafter." Suratul Nur (24): 23

104. Noble Qur'an, Surah Ale 'Imran (3): 102

105. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Fatir (35): 28

106. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Tawbah (9): 128

107. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"And call you unto the way of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation and dispute with them in a manner which is the best." Suratul Nahl (16): 125

108. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Verily Allah intends but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness O people of the House, and purify you (with) a thorough purification." Suratul Ahzab (33): 33

109. Noble Qur'an, Surah Ale 'Imran (3): 103

110. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"And remember when you were few and deemed weak in the Earth, fearing that people may carry you away by force, but He strengthened you with His aide and provided you with the good things (of sustenance) that you may give thanks"
Suratul Anfal (8): 26

111. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

"Soon will Allah bring (forward) a people, them He loves and they love Him, lowly before the believers, mighty against the infidels, striving hard in Allah's way, and they fear not the censure of any censurer. This is the Grace of Allah, He gives it to whomsoever He desires" Suratul Ma'idah (5): 54

112. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Tawbah (9): 49

113. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Kahf (18): 50

114. Noble Qur'an, Surat Ale 'Imran (3): 85

115. Refer to the Qur'anic verses,

"They intend to put out the Light of Allah with (the blow of) their mouths, and disdains Allah save that He perfects His Light, though the infidels may detest this." Suratul Tawbah (9): 32 and

"They intend they to put out the Light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His Light, though the disbelievers may be averse." (Suratul Saff (61): 8)

116. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ma'idah (5): 50

117. Noble Qur'an, Surah Maryam (19): 27

118. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Naml (27): 16

119. Noble Qur'an, Surah Maryam (19): 5–6
120. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Anfal (8): 75
121. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Nisa' (4): 11
122. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Baqarah (2): 180
123. Noble Qur'an, Suratul An'am (6): 67
124. Noble Qur'an, Surat Hud (11): 39
125. Refer to the Qur'anic verse,

“And Muhammad is not but an Apostle, (other) Apostles have already passed away prior to him, therefore if he dies or be slain, will you turn upon your heels?” (Surat Ale 'Imran (3): 144)

126. Noble Qur'an, Surat Ale 'Imran (3): 144
127. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Shu'ara (26): 227
128. Noble Qur'an, Surat Hud (10): 121–122
129. Noble Qur'an, Surat Maryam (19): 5–6
130. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Naml (27): 16
131. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Yusuf (12): 18
132. Ibn Abil Hadid in the sixteenth volume of his commentary on Nahjul Balaghah writes, “I once asked ‘Ali b. al-Faruqi, the tutor of Madrasah al-‘Arabiyyah in Baghdad and my teacher, ‘In your opinion, was the claim of Fatimah for Fadak true or false?’ He replied, ‘Fatimah was truthful in her claim.’ Then I asked, ‘Then why did Abu Bakr not return Fadak back to her?’ He smiled at my question and replied, ‘If Abu Bakr had returned back Fadak to her that day, Fatimah would have come to him the following day and claimed the caliphate (for ‘Ali) and Abu Bakr would not have had any excuse and evidence against her. If he would have accepted the truthfulness of Fatimah for Fadak, then he also would have had to accept her claim for caliphate and he would have had no choice but to accept it.’
133. Noble Qur'an, Surah Muhammad (47): 24
134. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Mutaaffifin (83): 14
135. Refer to the Qur'anic verse:

“And there shall appear unto them, from Allah, that which they had not been reckoning.” Suratul Zumur (39): 47

136. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Mu'min (40): 78
137. ‘Allamah al-Majlisi writes in his work, Biharul Anwar that, “People say regarding it (this speech) that even though Fatimah was an infallible personality, she spoke with such harshness with Imam ‘Ali. Was not ‘Ali, the Imam and the ‘one in authority’ and thus, no one should speak with such harsh tones with an Imam? What Sayyidah Fatimah meant was that Imam ‘Ali should reveal to the people the bad deeds of those who had taken hold of the reins of the caliphate and how they had become guilty of a great offense. Due to this reason she spoke harshly, for when a person would like to reveal the gravity of the situation, one uses harsh words though one does not mean to insult the one whom they are addressing. What was intended here was to reveal the gravity of the situation. This can be proved by an example. Suppose a king or a ruler of a country sees that the businessmen of his kingdom have committed a grave error, he scolds his Finance Minister and warns him. The king is aware that the Finance Minister is innocent of the situation, but he would like to straighten the businessmen of his kingdom through this warning. A second example is that when Prophet Musa returned back from the mountain of Tur, he saw that the Children of Israel were involved in worshipping a golden calf. He scolded Prophet Harun for it and warned him by grabbing him by beard and saying, “What have you done?” Prophet Harun replied, “O son of my mother! Seize me not by my beard nor by my head, I was afraid lest you say: You have caused a division among the Children of Israel and they did not respect my word.” (Surah Taha (20): 94).

The attitude of Prophet Musa towards Prophet Harun was not because of any doubt against the stand taken by him against the Children of Israel, but rather, he wanted the matter to be exhibited to the public, and he wanted that Harun should explain his stand so that no room be left for accusing him of joining hands with the Children of Israel or neglecting his duty. Sayyidah Fatimah too desired this as well and wanted to exhibit the tyranny of the oppressors, and thus she used harsh

words to reveal to the people of that age and also to the people who would come later as to what oppression has been meted out upon the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet.” [Here ends the discourse of ‘Allamah al-Majlisi.]

It is human nature that when a person faces oppression one turns to nobody except his most beloved ones and those whom one trusts most, and often uses harsh words to complain about the matter. Surely Allah knows best.

138. Umme Tahhal was an adultress in the days of ignorance with whom the men of her own family were fond of committing adultery with! Thus Abu Bakr used such offensive language for Imam ‘Ali. The scholars have, in slightly different words, reported from the Noble Prophet that, “One who reviles ‘Ali, really reviles me; and one who reviles me, really reviles Allah.” (Imam Ahmad b. al-Hanbal, “al-Musnad”; Imam al-Nisa’i, “Khasaisul ‘Alawiyah”; Imam al-Dhahabi and Fakhruddin al-Razi in their Tafsir; Ibn Abil Hadid, “Shahr Nahjul Balaghah”; Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Ganji al-Shafi’i, “Kifayatut Talib”; Sibti Ibn Jawzi, “Tadhkirah Khawasul Ummah”; Imam al-Muslim, “al-Sahih”; Muhammad b. Talhah Shafi’i, “Matalibus Su’ul”; Hakim al-Naishapuri, “al-Mustadrak.” Muhammad b. Ganji Shafi’i in Kifayatut Talib reports that once, ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abbas and Sa’id b. Jubayr saw a group of Syrians sitting on the edge of the well of Zamzam (in Mecca) insulting ‘Ali. They went to them and said, “Who among you was abusing the Noble Prophet?” They replied, “None of us were abusing him.” Then the two of them said, “Well, who among you was abusing ‘Ali?” They replied, “All of us have been abusing ‘Ali.” They said, “Bear witness that we heard the Prophet of Allah saying to ‘Ali, one who abuses you really abuses me; one who abuses me, really abuses Allah and if someone abuses Allah, He will throw him headlong into the fire of hell.”

139. Noble Qur’an, Suratul Shu’ara (26): 125

140. It is related that during his caliphate, ‘Uthman gifted the property of Fadak to his son-in-law Marwan b. Hakam – one may question under what justification did he do this?

141. It is strange that when other claims of this nature came before Abu Bakr, he allowed them in favour of the claimant merely on the basis of the claim while the claimant was neither asked to furnish any proof of claim, nor to produce witnesses. In this connection, Imam al-Bukhari writes: “It is related from Jabir b. ‘Abdullah al-Ansari that he said, ‘The Prophet of Allah had told me that when the spoils of war from Bahrain would arrive, he would allow me such and such out of it, but the spoils of war did not reach us until after the Prophet’s death. It arrived in the days of (the caliphate) of Abu Bakr, so I went to him and told him that the Prophet had promised to give me such and such property out of the spoils of war from Bahrain, whereupon he gave me all of what (was promised to me).’” (al-Sahih, vol. 2, part 27, pg. 190).

In the annotations of this tradition, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani has written: “This tradition leads us to the conclusion that the evidence of one just companion can also be admitted as full evidence, even though it may be in his own favour, because Abu Bakr did not ask Jabir to produce any witness or proof for his claim. Thus, if it was lawful to grant property to Jabir on the basis of a good impression (of him) without calling for witnesses or any evidence, then what stopped allowing Sayyidah Fatimah’s claim on the basis of a similar good impression?

Firstly, her known truthfulness and honesty was enough for holding her truthful in her claim, in addition to the witnessing of ‘Ali and Umme Ayman in her favour which was also available.

It has been said that the claim could not be decided in favour of Sayyidah Fatimah on the basis of these two witnesses because the Qur’an lays down the principle of evidence that,

“Then call to witness two witnesses from among you men and if there not be two men, then (take) a man and two women.” (Suratul Baqarah (2): 282).

If this principle is universal and general, then it should be taken into regard for every occasion, but on some occasions it was not found to have been followed.

Consequently, neither the generality of the verse about evidence was hit by this action, nor was it deemed to be against the canons of evidence. So if here, in view of the Prophet’s truthfulness, one evidence in his favour was deemed to be equal to two, then could not the evidence of ‘Ali and Umme Ayman be regarded enough for Sayyidah Fatimah in view of her moral greatness and truthfulness? This verse does not show that there can be no other way of establishing a claim other than these two ways.

In this connection, Shahid al-Thalith Sayyed Nurullah al-Shustari has written in Ihqaqul Haqq in the chapter of Mataen that:

“The view of the objector that despite the evidence of Umme Ayman the requirement of evidence remains incomplete is wrong on the grounds that from certain traditions it is seen that it is lawful to give a decision on the basis of one witness, and it does not necessarily mean that the injunction of the Qur’an has been violated, because this verse means that a decision can be given on the strength of the evidence of two men or one man and two women, and that their evidence is enough. From this it does not appear that if there is some other ground besides evidence of witnesses, that would be unacceptable and that verdict cannot be given on its basis, unless it is argued that this is the only sense of the verse. But since the very sense is not a final argument, this sense can be brushed aside, particularly because the tradition clearly points to a contrary sense and ignoring the sense does not necessarily mean violation of the verse. Secondly, the verse allows a choice between the evidence of two men or of one man and two women. If by virtue of the tradition, a third choice is added, namely that the verdict can be passed by means of another evidence as well, then how does it necessitate that the Qur’anic verse should stand violated.”

In this connection, Mulla ‘Ali Muttaqi writes: “The Prophet of Allah, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar used to decide cases on the strength of one witness and swearing by the Qur’an.”

When decisions were passed on the strength of one witness and swearing, then even if in Abu Bakr’s view the requirement of evidence in this case was incomplete, then he should have asked her to swear (on the Qur’an) and he could have passed judgement in her favour. But here the very object was to tarnish the truthfulness of Sayyidah Fatimah so that in the future the question of her testimony should not arise.”

142. One of the numerous concocted stories of the non-Shi’a historians who allege that the Prophet had three daughters through Sayyidah Khadijah b. Khuwaylid apart from Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra. The names of these ‘daughters’ are stated as Zaynab, Umme Kulthum and Ruqayyah – while in reality they were the daughters of Hala b. Khuwaylid (the wife of Amr b. Hadam), who after her death, were brought up by their aunt Sayyidah Khadijah and Prophet Muhammad. The Shi’a scholars have put forward several evidences in refutation of this alleged claim, which was raised simply to compete with Sayyidah Zahra’s personality and also because two of them were later married (consequently) to the caliph, ‘Uthman b. al-Affan.

143. Some of the defenders of the ‘Caliphs’ claim that Fadak was nothing more than a few palm trees, with an intention of lessening the crime. But it is a proven fact of history that it was a large property whose annual income was either twenty-four thousand or seventy thousand dinars. When Abu Bakr confiscated it, he said he wanted to use it to mobilize the army and guard the frontiers! Thus, if it was only a ‘few palm trees’, then what use would it have been? It is related in al-Manaqib of Ibn Shahr Ashub that, “Harun al-Rashid once asked Imam Musa al-Kadhim, ‘You may determine the four boundaries of Fadak so that it can be returned to you.’ The Imam refused to do so for he knew that if he related to Harun the four boundaries of Fadak, he would never return it to him. But Harun insisted and thus the Imam pointed out to him the four boundaries of Fadak, upon hearing which Harun said, ‘It seems that you desire the entire Caliphate on the pretext of Fadak!’”

It is quoted in Majma’ul Bahrain from Imam ‘Ali regarding the four boundaries of Fadak in which he said that one part stretches from the hill of Uhud; the second is in Arish in Egypt, that was probably a town in the area of Sinai; the third being the Red Sea and Armenia; and the fourth being Dawmatul Jundal, which is probably a town in between Kufah and Sham (present day Syria).

144. At one place, al-Naqib says that the Caliphs should have returned Fadak back to Fatimah following the customs (sunnah) of the Prophet, but then immediately he says that, “as per the religious rules, they acted fairly.” He immediately defends their case and comes up with one excuse or another, as is found in this book.

When the Prophet of Allah passed away, everyone – young or old, man or woman, were deeply affected and the entire city of Madinah fell into mourning, grief and lamentation. Floods of tears flowed from the eyes of the people, and from every quarter of the city the voices of weeping and lamentation could be heard. The sound of people wailing was similar to the pilgrims who adorn the ihram and recite the

praises of Allah. There was no man or woman, except that they wept, and this heart-rending sorrow bore heavily upon the family of the Prophet – particularly for the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali, the Prophet’s cousin and brother.

The grief of separation from the Prophet weighed down upon Imam ‘Ali to such an extent that if these sorrows had descended upon the mountains, they would not have had the power to bear them! Some of his family members were in such a bad state that they could not take care of themselves; grief and restlessness had worn away their patience and intellect and had deprived them of the power of hearing and speech. Others too, apart from the progeny of ‘Abdul Muttalib, also wept while some others became restless.

Among all of the people however, none could equal the grief and sorrow of Sayyidah Zahra. Her sorrow ran so deep that no one except Allah had the power to perceive it. Her sorrow would increase each hour and day, and her lamentation would become severe, while the voice of her wailing would not stop, the scorching of her heart did not cool, and each day that dawned saw an increase in her lamentation more than the previous day.

Heart-Rendering Sigh of Fatimah by the Grave of her Father

It is related that Fatimah did not step out of her house for seven days after the death of the Prophet. On the eighth day, she stepped out to visit the grave of the Prophet and in a state of intense lamentation and wailing.

Her clothing was dragging upon the ground and her veil was coiled up in her legs (due to her intense sorrow). She could not see anything due to the constant flow of tears and it continued in this same fashion until she reached the grave. As soon as her sight fell upon the grave, she fell upon it and lost consciousness.

The women of Madinah hastened towards her and sprinkled water on her face to bring her back into consciousness. She regained consciousness and lamented while addressing the Prophet saying, “My strength has parted away and my patience has left me, I have turned restless while my enemies rejoice (due to it). Heart-rendering sorrow has taken hold of me. O respected father! I have been left lonely, in perplexion and without an aid. My voice has become silent and my back is broken, my life has overturned and has become dark. After you O father I do not have any companion in these times of fright and there is no one to pacify me.”

She then recited the verses of poetry with a touching lamentation, “O dear father! Verily my sorrow is (everyday) a new sorrow, and my heart by Allah, has turned restless; there is an increase each day in my grief, and your separation has not been easy for me; O father, who remains for the widows and indigent, and who remains for the nation until the day of Resurrection? O father, we have been weakened after you; O father, we have awoken in such a state that the people have turned their faces

away from us; which tears are there that do not flow upon your separation, what sorrow is there that does not continue after you; what eye is there that shuts (into sleep) after you, O father, upon you came a gracious revelation.”

Then she said, “O father! Your sorrow is not less, your pulpit lies in perplexity after you and the voice of praises (of the Lord) does not come from the prayer-niche. But your grave is rejoicing after having acquired your sacred body. Woe upon my days until I unite along with you.”

Then Fatimah gave such a grievous cry that it was almost as if her soul was parting from her. She then said, “My patience has worn away and mourning has taken hold upon me, after the parting away of the seal of the messengers. Eyes, O eyes, shed tears abundantly, woe be to you, your flow should be blood instead of tears. O Prophet of Allah! O the chosen one of Allah! O the refuge of the orphans and the weak ones! The pulpit that you alighted beholds that darkness has descended upon it after the passing away of the light. O Lord! Hasten my end soon, for my life has turned dark, O my Master!”

Lamentation of Zahra During the Day and Night and the Complaining of the People of Madinah

Fatimah then returned back to her house, however kept weeping day and night. Her lamentation did not subside nor did the flow of tears end. A group of the elders of Madinah came to the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Ali and said, “Fatimah weeps day and night! We cannot sleep at night due to it and we cannot find respite during the day. We want you to tell Fatimah that either weep at night and remain silent during the day, or weep during the day and remain silent at night.” Imam ‘Ali replied, “I shall convey your message to her with due respect.”

‘Ali came to Fatimah and saw her engrossed in immense sorrow and when her sight fell upon him, she became calm. Imam ‘Ali said, “The elders of Madinah have requested me to ask you to either weep at night or during the day.”

Fatimah replied, “O Abul Hasan! My life among these people is very short, and soon I will be departing. By Allah! I shall weep constantly until I unite with my father the Prophet of Allah.”

Imam ‘Ali said, “You are at liberty, you may do as you wish.”

Imam ‘Ali then built a house for Fatimah at the cemetery of al-Baqi’, far away from the houses of the people and he named it ‘Baytul Ahzan’ (The House of Sorrows). Everyday, Fatimah would dispatch (Imam) Hasan and (Imam) Husayn before her to al-Baqi’ and then she would proceed towards it weeping. Then she would sit and weep among the graves, and when night would fall, Imam ‘Ali would come and take them back home.

Touching Verses of Poetry by Fatimah Beside her Father's Grave

It is related that when the Prophet of Allah passed away and Fatimah faced oppression by the people, she became bed-ridden and sick. Her sacred body turned weak and feeble and the skin of her body withered away such that it stuck to her bones and appeared as an engraving upon a wall.

It is also related that Fatimah always tied a handkerchief upon her head as a sign of mourning for her father and day-by-day, she became more weak. Her tears constantly flowed due to his separation and her heart burned (in his remembrance). She would remain conscious for an hour and then fall unconscious another hour and would always tell her sons Hasan and Husayn, "What happened to your father (meaning the Prophet) who cherished you so much? The one who sat you upon his back and was most affectionate towards you, where is he? What happened to your father who did not allow you to even place your feet upon the earth (but rather always lifted you up with affection)? He will never ever open the door of the house again to lift you two up and carry you in the way that he used to lift the both of you up."

She always remained grief-stricken, just as her father had informed her (she would) and she often remembered that the revelation had stopped coming into her house, and would also recall the separation of her father. At night, she no longer heard the sweet voice of the Prophet reciting the Qur'an which she used to hear until midnight. Not hearing this (and only the sound of the deafening silence), she would become frightful. She (now) found herself to be full of sorrow, whereas during the days of the Prophet she lived with happiness and honour.

She came to her father's grave and recited the following verses: "What will happen to the one who smells the sweet fragrance of the grave of Ahmad, then he would never smell any other fragrance of the world; such sorrows flowed upon me that if, it had descended upon the days they would have turned into nights (due to extreme sorrow)."

She would also say: "When someone dies, his remembrance lessens day by day, but by Allah the remembrance of my father increases everyday; I remember that death has made a separation between us, I console myself upon Prophet Muhammad; then I say to myself that death is our path; and if one does not die today, then he will die tomorrow."

She would also say: "When I desire to see you I come to your grave, I weep and I complain, but you do not answer me; O the one occupying the grave! You have taught me weeping and your remembrance has parted away all other sorrows; and although you are concealed under the earth; you are not concealed from my grievous heart."

When the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali gave the ceremonial bath to the body of the Prophet, he was wearing a shirt. Fatimah told him, "Give me the shirt of the Prophet." When she smelled the shirt, she fell down unconscious and when Imam 'Ali saw this, he hid the shirt from her.

Call to Prayer by Bilal al-Habashi and the Lamentation of Fatimah

It is related that one day Fatimah said, “I want to hear the call to prayers by Bilal, my father’s Muazzin (the person who calls the Adhan for prayers).” When Bilal al-Habashi was informed about this request, he decided to fulfil the desire of Fatimah and raised his voice in the call to prayer.

When he said, “Allahu Akbar (Allah is Great)”, Fatimah remembered the days of her father and could not control her tears. When Bilal said, “I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah”, Fatimah screamed out and fell down upon the earth unconscious. The people told Bilal, “Stop the call to prayer – Fatimah has passed away”, and they thought that Fatimah had died. Bilal stopped offering the call to prayer and when Fatimah regained consciousness, she told him to complete it. Bilal did not do so and said, “O Mistress of the women! I believe that your life is in danger when you hear my voice (therefore pardon me).” Then Fatimah excused him.

Fatimah Beside the Grave of the Martyrs of Uhud

Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq says, “Fatimah remained alive for seventy-five days after the death of the Prophet of Allah and during this period, no one saw her happy or smiling. Twice a week, on Monday and Thursday, she would go to the graves of the martyrs of Uhud. She would point and say, “Here was the Prophet and here were the polytheists (during the battle).”

It is related that Fatimah would say her prayers there and recite supplications and this weekly act continued until her death.

In a narration from Mahmud b. Lubayd it states that when the Prophet of Allah passed away, Fatimah would come to the grave of the martyrs of Uhud and stand at the grave of Hamzah and weep. He states that, “One day I went to the grave of Hamzah and found Fatimah weeping there. I left her alone until she had calmed down then I went to her, greeted her and said, ‘O Mistress of the women! By Allah! The cords of my heart break due to your lamentation and sorrow.’

She replied, ‘O Aba ‘Umar! It is befitting that I weep, for I have lost one who was the best of fathers, the Messenger of Allah. Alas! How I crave to have a glimpse of him!’ Then she recited the following verses, “When someone dies their remembrance lessons day by day, but by Allah, the remembrance of my father increases everyday.”

Prayer of Fatimah and Her Will

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says, “Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet of Allah, fell sick sixty days after the death of the Prophet and her illness increased. Her prayer and complaints against the oppressors

was:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ. بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ فَأَغْنِنِي. اَللّٰهُمَّ زَحْزِحْنِيْ عَنِ النَّارِ وَ ادْخِلْنِي
الْجَنَّةَ وَ اَلْحِقْنِيْ بِاَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ.

‘O the Alive! O the Upright! I seek help by Your Mercy, thus help me. O Lord! Keep me away from the fire (of hell) and enter me into paradise, and join me with my father Muhammad.”

The Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali told her, “May Allah grant you well-being and keep you alive.”

Fatimah said, “O Abal Hasan! It is very soon that I will meet my Lord.” She willed to ‘Ali saying, “After my death you may marry Amamah, the daughter of ‘Abul ‘As, she is the daughter of my sister Zaynab¹ and will be affectionate towards my children.”

It is related in another tradition that Fatimah told ‘Ali, “I want something from you.” Imam ‘Ali said, “Your desire is fulfilled, O daughter of the Prophet of Allah.” Fatimah said, “I request you in the name of Allah and the right of my father Muhammad the Prophet of Allah that Abu Bakr and ‘Umar should not pray over me (after my death), you know that I have never concealed anything from you and the Prophet of Allah told me, ‘O Fatimah! You will be the first one among my Ahlul Bayt to join me, and I dislike informing you about it (about your death).”

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says, “Fifty nights had passed after the death of the Prophet of Allah that the illness of Fatimah resumed and she perceived that this illness will lead up to her death. Thus she willed to Imam ‘Ali so that he may act upon it and requested him to implement it without fail. Imam ‘Ali, who was extremely grievous and restless promised that he would act upon every request of Fatimah. Fatimah said, ‘O Abal Hasan! The Prophet of Allah promised me that I would be the first one among his family to join him, and there is no other way than this, thus bear patiently the command of Allah and be pleased with the Divine decree. Give me the funeral bath (after my death) at night, shroud me and bury me.” Imam ‘Ali followed the will of Fatimah.

Ibn ‘Abbas says that Fatimah said, “I saw the Prophet of Allah in a dream and I related to him all that befell me after his death and complained to him (about what had occurred after his passing away). He told me that there is an everlasting abode for me in the hereafter that has been created for the pious ones, and that very soon I will join him.”

Last Days of Fatimah, Her Age and Her Speeches and the

Discourse Between Fatimah, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar

As Fatimah lay on her deathbed, she willed to Imam ‘Ali that he should conceal the events of her life and not inform anyone about her illness, and Imam ‘Ali accepted her requests.

‘Ali looked after Fatimah alone and Asma b. Umays (wife of Abu Bakr) would help him in secret to look after her so that the will of Fatimah (to conceal her illness) may be fulfilled. The Prophet of Allah had informed (her) about this illness, just like he told her about the oppression that she would face.

When the illness of Fatimah increased, Allah sent Sayyidah Maryam to look after her and accompany her.

Abu Bakr and ‘Umar came to know about the illness of Fatimah and they came to the door of the house on the pretext of visiting her. They asked permission to enter, however Fatimah refused to let them in.

‘Umar met Imam ‘Ali and told him, “Indeed Abu Bakr is an old man with a soft heart, he is the one who accompanied the Prophet in the cave and is among his companions. I came here many times with him and asked permission to enter however Fatimah refused to see us. If you deem it right, take permission for us from Fatimah so that we may come and visit her.” ‘Ali replied, “Alright I shall seek permission.”

Imam ‘Ali then came to Fatimah and said, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! You know that these two men have requested to come to your presence many times and you refused them. They have requested me to ask you to permit them to visit you.”

Fatimah replied, “By Allah! I shall not permit them, nor even utter a word with them until I meet my father the Prophet of Allah and I will complain to him regarding how they dealt with me.”

‘Ali said, “I have assured them that I shall seek permission.”

Fatimah said, “If you have assured them, then the house is your house, and women should obey their husbands, I will not disobey you in anything – you may permit whomsoever you desire.”

Imam ‘Ali came out and permitted Abu Bakr and ‘Umar to enter therein. They came in and when they saw her, they greeted her however Fatimah did not reply their greeting. She turned her face away from them and they came and faced her, but again she turned her face away from them and this was repeated several times.

Then she told ‘Ali, “Cover me (my face) with (another layer) of clothing” and she told the women present there, “Turn away my face”, and when her face was turned away (from them), they again came facing her and requested her to be pleased with them and forgive their past mistakes. Fatimah said, “I ask you in the Name of Allah! Do you remember the day my father the Prophet of Allah had asked you to come to visit him at midnight regarding what would come forth for ‘Ali?” They replied in the affirmative. Fatimah

continued, “I ask you in the Name of Allah, did you not hear the Prophet say that Fatimah is from me and I am from her, the one who hurts her hurts me, and the one who hurts me hurts Allah and that the one who hurts her after my death is the same as one who hurt her when I am alive, and the one who hurts her during my lifetime is the same as one who hurt her after my death?” They replied in the affirmative.

Then she continued: “Praise and thanks to Allah”, then she directed her focus towards Allah and said, “O Lord! I hold you witness, and O those who are present here you too bear witness that these two men have hurt me in my life and during the time of my death. I swear by Allah! I will never speak to them even to the extent of a word until I meet my Lord, and I will complain to Allah regarding the oppressions that befell me at their (Abu Bakr and ‘Umar’s) hands.”

According to another tradition, Fatimah lifted her hands towards the heavens and said, “O Lord! These two men have hurt me, I complain in Your audience and that of Your Prophet regarding them. By Allah! I will never be pleased with you (two) until I meet my father the Prophet of Allah and inform him regarding your actions, then He may judge between me and you.”

Hearing this, Abu Bakr cried, “Woe be to me! Oh the punishment of Allah! I wish my mother had not given birth to me!” ‘Umar rebuked him, “I wonder how men chose you as their guide! You are an old and feeble man that turns restless upon the rage of a woman and rejoices at the pleasure of a woman, so what happens if one displeases a woman?” Then they stood up and left. Fatimah then told Imam ‘Ali, “Now did I fulfil your desire?” Imam ‘Ali replied in the affirmative after which Fatimah said, “Now if I desire anything from you, will you do it?” Again he replied in the affirmative and so Fatimah continued, “I request you in the Name of Allah, do something that these two men may not pray upon me (after my death) and not even stand near my grave.”²

A Concealing Bier

It is related that Fatimah told Asma b. Umays, “I do not like how they carry the corpse of women, they place a cloth upon their beir and their body is visible from underneath it. Whoever sees it, knows that it is the body of a man or a woman. I have turned feeble and the flesh of my body has melted, then will you not make something to conceal my body?” Asma replied, “When I was in Abyssinia, the people had a beir that would conceal the body, if you desire I shall make it for you.” Fatimah said, “Make it for me.”

Asma called for a plank and placed it down, then she called for some wood of the palm-tree and fixed it upon the plank. Then she placed a cloth upon it and said, “The beir of the people of Abyssinia was similar to this.” Fatimah was pleased and said, “May Allah save you from the fire of hell. Make a similar kind for me and conceal me in it (after my death).”

It is also related that when the sight of Sayyidah Zahra fell upon the beir, she smiled though she had never smiled after the death of the Prophet of Allah. Then she said, “What a fine beir is it that it prevents

from recognition whether it (the body) is of a male or a female.”

Visit of the Women of the Muhajirin and Ansar to Fatimah and Her Speech

It is quoted in the book Al-Ihtijaj of Shaykh al-Tabarsi from Suwayd b. Ghafilah that, “As Fatimah lay on her death-bed, the women of the Muhajirin and Ansar came to visit her and said, ‘O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! In what state do you find yourself with this illness?’

Fatimah praised and glorified Allah and sent salutations upon her father and then said, ‘I entered into the morning, by Allah, while detesting this world of yours, displeased with your men. I tested them under my teeth and spitted them out, then I assessed them and hated them. How ugly is that a sharp thing (sword or dagger) may turn blunt (meaning that their fervour during the initial days of Islam and their present sluggishness)! How ugly is the game after great endeavour (their resistance in the beginning and their indifference now). How ugly is the striking (of a sword) upon a smooth stone (they are striving futilely and wasting their energy). How ugly is the breaking of the point of the lance. How ugly is the entering of doubt and falsity in one’s views. How ugly is the lapse (wasting of time) in desires. ***Surely evil is that which their own selves have sent ahead for themselves, for Allah’s wrath is on them and they will abide in torment.***³ There was no other way except to forego the reins (of caliphate and Fadak) into their necks, and its heavy load has been cast upon their backs, and I put its usurpation upon them. Thus, may devastation and destruction be upon them and away with the unjust people.⁴

Woe be to them! To where have they shifted the caliphate – from the firm and strong status of prophethood and the basis of apostleship and its proofs? This (the caliphate) is a place of the descending of the Trustworthy Spirit (Jibra’il)! The caliphate has been snatched away from the one who the was most experienced regarding the affairs of the world as well as the hereafter. ***That is a loss (which is) manifest.***⁵ What was the reason for taking revenge upon Abul Hasan ‘Ali? They have revenged, by Allah, his sword that was lifted upon the fallacious ones, and because of the fact that he did not fear death and that he swept the deceptive ones off of their feet and due to the fact that he destroyed the enemies in the battlefield and for his valour in the way of Allah.

By Allah! If he (Imam ‘Ali) had attained this position (of caliphate), the people would not have declined to accept the right path and the apparent evidences of Allah, and he would have returned them back to the (straight) path and he would have prepared them to pave that road. He would have dealt with them with kindness and gentleness and people would never have faced difficulty, nor would they have been tired or dejected. He would have taken them to a pleasant and pure stream where they could have drank the water to their utter satisfaction, whose both banks are filled with abundant water free from any filth and he would have returned them satiated.

He would have counselled them both openly and in secret and he would have become their well-wisher

and he would not have even spent the least amount from the treasury, nor multiplied his own wealth (through the wealth of others). He would not have gained any benefit from the world except to the extent (of a quantity needed) for quenching his thirst, and eating a morsel of food like a caretaker of the orphans (he would only have contended himself by utilising such water and food that would be necessary to quench his thirst and satisfy his hunger, as a caretaker of an orphan does).

It would have become clear who is abstinent and who is inclined towards the world and the honest person (would have been made clear) from the liar. If only the people of the towns had believed and guarded (themselves against evil), ***We would have opened up for them blessings from the heavens and the earth; but they belied, so We seized them for what they did earn.***⁶ ***As (for) those of them who did injustice, soon shall befall upon them the evils of what they reaped.***⁷

Then come and listen! The world shall show you vanity until you are alive, then if you doubt, it is because their talks are wonderful. I wish I knew upon what strong basis did these men act and upon what they relied and upon what pillar they rested on, and what rope have they clung to and towards whose family they committed disrespect and oppression. ***Verily evil is the lord, and evil certainly is the associate.***⁸ ***Evil for the unjust will be the exchange!***⁹

By Allah! They have clung to the low and base people and left the worthy and competent ones. May they be humiliated! They think that they have done something good after spreading mischief – be aware! ***Verily they are the mischief-mongers but they perceive (it) not.***¹⁰ What then has befallen you, how (ill) you judge.¹¹ Be aware! By my life! This evil character of yours has matured, then wait and watch the consequences thereof! Then you will milk blood and poison instead of milk, and here the evildoers will be the losers. Those to come will witness and realize the consequences of those who had established this (injustice and oppression).

Thus rejoice at this attainment of yours and await the advent of mischief and have the good news of the sharp swords and the severe oppression of the mighty ones and the pranks. I give you good news of the tyrants who will take control over the public property and leave but a little for you and because of them being wretched, no one will be able to spend from it! They will unleash a wave of mass slaughter,¹² ***Alas upon you! Where are you wandering? It has been made obscure unto you, how can we compel you to (accept) it, while you detest it?***¹³

Conveying the Message of Zahra via the Women of the Muhajirin and Ansar

Suwayd b. Ghafalah relates, “When the women who came to visit Fatimah related her message to their husbands and men, a group from among the chiefs of the Muhajirin and Ansar came to her seeking an apology, ‘O mistress of the women of the world! If ‘Ali had presented himself earlier for the leadership, we would have pledged allegiance to him and would not have turned to anyone else! However Abu Bakr

took the lead and we swore allegiance to him.’

Fatimah replied, ‘Get away from me, there is no other excuse for you. After transgression and negligence there remains no place for an apology.’”

Reply from Fatimah Upon the Enquiry of Umme Salama

It is related in Biharul Anwar from the Tafsir of al-’Ayyashi that Umme Salama came to visit Sayyidah Zahra and said, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! How did you begin the day with this illness of yours?”

Fatimah replied, “I began the day seeing myself between two sorrows. My heart has turned into a cloth of blood due to the sorrow of separation from my father; and my heart is ablazed after witnessing the oppression meted out to the vicegerent of the Prophet of Allah. By Allah! They disrespected the holy presence of the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali and he entered into the morning in a manner that the position of caliphate and Imamatus was snatched away from him. They opposed the book of Allah and the traditions of the Prophet. The motive of their deviation is that their hearts were full of envy and enmity towards ‘Ali, for he had killed their men in the battles of Badr and Uhud. Thus they quelled the flames of rancour and envy by taking revenge upon ‘Ali by usurping his rights.

After the passing away of the Prophet, the arrows hit the target. The hidden and suppressed anger came to light and they arose to oppose us by aiding the seditious and slanderers. They made us the target of their revenge and at once they cut the rope of faith and severed the bow of faith with the arrow of (supposed) faith. They stumbled over the prophethood of the master of the Messengers and the guardianship of the Commander of the Faithful. After they had secured the interests of the charms of the world for themselves, they did not pay attention to the call of help from ‘Ali for he had killed their fathers in the battlefields.”

The Testimony of Fatimah to ‘Ali

It is related in Rawdhatul Wa’izin that Fatimah lay on her bed in illness for forty days and thereafter passed away. When she realized that her end was near, she called for Umme Ayman, Asma b. ‘Umays and the Commander of the Faithful. They came to the side of her bed and she told ‘Ali, “O cousin! News of (my) impending death has reached me and I perceive that I will meet my father very soon. I will to you whatever is in my heart.”

‘Ali said, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! You may will whatever you desire.” Saying this, he sat near her bed and said to those who were present in the house, “You may go out.”

Then Fatimah said, “O cousin! All throughout my life with you, you have never heard falsehood or (witnessed) betrayal from me, nor have I ever disobeyed you.”

‘Ali replied, “No, never. You are more informed, virtuous and honourable, while your fear of Allah is more than anyone else that I could reproach you for any disobedience. Your separation is very severe upon me but what can one do for there is no escape from death. By Allah! You have renewed the sorrow of the (separation from the) Prophet of Allah and your parting and bereavement is grand and hard upon me. Verily we are Allah’s and verily unto Him we shall return, upon the calamity that is tragic and heart-rendering. This is an adversity that has no comfort and is so serious that there is no replacement for it.”

Then they wept together for sometime, ‘Ali pressed the head of Fatimah to his chest and said, “You may will whatever you desire, certainly you will find me such that I shall fulfil your desire with goodness and endear your behest upon that of mine.”

Fatimah said, “O cousin! May Allah reward you fairly! Marry Amamah, my niece and daughter of Zaynab; create for me a beir, and ensure that whosoever has oppressed me and usurped my rights does not stand at my corpse, nor that they perform prayers upon me, nor should their followers be present there¹⁴ and bury me at night when the eyes are absorbed in sleep.”

It is quoted in Misbahul Anwar from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq who relates from his fore-fathers that, “When Fatimah’s end drew near, she willed to the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali saying, ‘When I pass away, you yourself give me the ceremonial bath, shroud me, pray upon me and bury me. Build my grave and sprinkle earth upon it, then sit at the head of my grave opposite my face and recite the Qur’an abundantly and supplicate, for it is at that moment when a dead person requires affection of the living ones, and I entrust you to Allah and request you to deal with fairness towards my children.’ She then pressed her daughter Umme Kulthum to her heart and said, ‘And when this daughter of mine reaches maturity, the household articles are for her, and may Allah be her support.’”

It is also related that when the end of Sayyidah approached she wept for sometime. The Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali asked, “Why do you weep?” She replied, “I weep upon the sufferings and persecutions that will befall you after me.” Imam ‘Ali said, “Do not weep. For by Allah, these sufferings are nothing for me in the way of Allah.”

It is also related that Fatimah told ‘Ali, “And when I pass away from this world, do not inform anyone except Umme Salama, Umme Ayman and Fidhdhah. And among men, inform my two sons, ‘Abbas (b. ‘Abdul Muttalib), Salman, Miqdad, Abu Dharr and Hudhayfah. I make it lawful for you (only) to see me after my death, then you may bathe me with the help of the above mentioned women and bury me at night and do not inform anyone so that they do not come to my grave.”

Suggestion of ‘Abbas – Uncle of the Prophet

Shaykh al-Tusi relates that when the illness of Fatimah increased, ‘Abbas (b. ‘Abdul Muttalib) made a visit to their house. He was informed that the state of Fatimah was quite bad and that no one was permitted to enter the room where she lay in her bed. ‘Abbas returned back to his house and sent a note

to ‘Ali thru a messenger. The messenger came and related the communication saying, “O nephew! Your uncle sends you greetings and says that by Allah, this illness of the beloved of the Prophet of Allah and the light of his eyes and the light of my eyes, Fatimah, has aggrieved me to such an extent, that my existence is crushed. I perceive that she will be the first one among us to join the Prophet of Allah and he has chosen for her the best position of paradise and will take her to the presence of Almighty Allah. If you perceive that Fatimah has passed away, permit me tomorrow to gather the Muhajirin and Ansar to take part in her funeral proceedings and attend the prayers upon her and thus they may be rewarded for it, for this task is better for the grandeur of Islam.”

Imam ‘Ali replied to the messenger of ‘Abbas, who according to the narrator was ‘Ammar b. Yasir, saying, “Convey my greeting to my uncle ‘Abbas and tell him that, ‘May Allah not lessen your love for us! I understand your suggestion and your view is fair. But you know that they have oppressed Fatimah and usurped her rights and repressed her inheritance that she received from her father, and that they did not honour the recommendations of the Prophet regarding her nor did they consider the rights of Allah, and Allah is sufficient as a Judge and He will exact revenge from the oppressors. I, O uncle, seek apology from you and ask that you excuse me from neglecting your suggestion, for Fatimah has willed that I should keep her task (death) a secret.”

Martyrdom of Zahra and Her Burial

Tragic Moment of the Martyrdom of Fatimah

The Ahlus Sunnah and Shi’a narrators relate from Umme Salama, the wife of Abu Rafi’ that, “During the last days of Fatimah, I was attending to her. One day, her state became fine and her illness lessened. The Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali went out of the house to attend to some work and during this time, Fatimah told me, ‘Bring me some water so that I may take a bath and purify myself.’ I brought water and helped Fatimah, she rose up and took a bath and changed her clothes. She then told me, ‘Spread my bed in the middle of the room.’ Saying this, she lied down on the bed facing the Qiblah and told me, ‘I shall leave this world today, I have purified myself and no one should uncover my face.’ Saying this she put her hand underneath her head and passed away.”

It is related that Fatimah passed away between the time of Maghrib and ‘Isha and when her end drew near, her eyes turned red and she said, “Peace be upon Jibra’il! Peace be upon the Prophet of Allah! O Lord, (I am accompanying) Your Prophet! O Lord! (I will be) In Your garden (paradise) and in Your audience, and Your abode, the Abode of Peace.” Then she told those present, “Do you see what I see?” They asked, “O daughter of the Prophet of Allah! What do you see?” She replied, “I see the dwellers of the heavens along with their procession and forms, I see Jibra’il and I see the Prophet of Allah who tells me, O daughter! Come to us, for whatever has been reserved for you is the best.”

Zayd b. ‘Ali relates that Fatimah greeted Jibra’il, the Prophet of Allah and the Angel of Death – Izra’il.

Those present could hear the elegant voices of the angels and smelt the fragrance that was the best of fragrances.

An Account from Asma' b. 'Umays Regarding the Death of Fatimah

Asma' b. 'Umays relates that, "When the last days of Fatimah drew near she told me, 'When Jibra'il came to the Prophet during his final moments, he brought along with him some camphor and the Prophet divided it into three parts. He kept one part for himself, the second for 'Ali, and the third one for me and its weight was equal to four dirhams.' Then she said, 'O Asma'! Bring that camphor which is kept at such place and keep it near my head.' She said this and pulled her dress over her face and then said, 'Wait for some time and then call me and if I do not answer you, know that I have been united with my father.'"

Asma' says, 'I waited for some time and then called out to Fatimah but received no reply. I called out, O daughter of Muhammad al-Mustafa! O daughter of the most generous one borne by any woman! O daughter of the best one who treaded upon this earth! O daughter of the one who was near his Lord by the measure between two bows or closer still!¹⁵ I did not receive any reply. I uncovered her face, kissed her and said, O Fatimah! When you reach the presence of your father, the Prophet of Allah, convey my greetings to him.'"

Hasan and Husayn Beside their Mother's Sacred Corpse

Then Asma' tore her collar and came out of the house in a disturbed state and met Hasan and Husayn. They asked her, "Where is our mother?" Asma could not say anything and they ran towards the house and saw that their mother was laying down with her face towards the Qiblah.

Husayn shook his mother and understood that she had passed away and thus he turned towards his brother Hasan and said, "O my brother! May Allah reward you due to our mother!" Hasan threw himself upon his mother, kissed her for sometime and said, "O mother! Speak to me before my spirit leaves my body." Imam Husayn stepped forward and kissing her feet said, "O mother! I am your son Husayn, speak to me before my heart breaks and I die."

'Ali is Informed about Fatimah's Death

Asma' told Hasan and Husayn, "Go to your father 'Ali and inform him about your mother's death." Hasan and Husayn stepped out of their house calling, "O Muhammad! O Ahmad! Today your death has become more severe upon us as our mother has (just) died." Then entered the Masjid and found Imam 'Ali and shared the tragic news about the demise of Fatimah. Hearing this news, 'Ali was so stunned that he fell down unconscious. Water was sprinkled on his face and when he regained consciousness, he called out in a grievous voice saying, "How should I console myself, O daughter of Muhammad! I found comfort in you while you were alive, but now where will I find comfort?"

‘Ali Beside the Sacred Corpse of Fatimah

The renowned historian al-Mas’udi relates, “When Fatimah passed away, Imam ‘Ali was extremely restless and wept bitterly and recited the following elegy, ‘For every companion there is untimely separation, and every sorrow is forbearing after death; the departure of Fatimah after that of Ahmad, proves that (now) there is no companion left (for me).’”

The narrator says that Imam ‘Ali lifted up Hasan and Husayn and entered the room in which the body of Fatimah lay. They saw Asma’ seated near the bedside, weeping and she said, “O orphans of Muhammad! We were consoling ourselves with Fatimah after the passing away of the Prophet, but now who can we find solace with?”

The Will of Zahra

The Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali uncovered the face of Fatimah and found a letter underneath her head. He lifted it up and read the following, “In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful! This is the will of Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet of Allah. Fatimah bears witness that there is no other deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; paradise and hell are truth and there is no doubt regarding the arrival of the resurrection and Allah will raise the dead ones from their graves.

O ‘Ali! I am Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, whom Allah had united in marriage with you so that I may be linked to you in this world as well as in the hereafter, while you are more worthy of me than anyone else. Give me the ceremonial bath, shroud me, and give me the hunut¹⁶ at night, then recite prayers upon me and bury me at night, and do not inform anyone else.”

People in Intense Mourning over Fatimah

It is related that the people of Madinah raised a cry and the women of Bani Hashim came to the house of Fatimah weeping and wailing such that it was near that Madinah would shake due to their weeping. They were calling out, “O mistress! O daughter of the Prophet of Allah!”

In multitudes, the people of Madinah, which was around the number of hairs on a horse, came to Imam ‘Ali who was seated, while Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were facing him and crying and everyone else was also crying due to their lamentation.¹⁷

Umme Kulthum stepped out of the house with her face covered by a veil and also had a covering on her head whose end was stretched until it touched the ground, while weeping had turned her restless. She was calling out, “O Father! O Prophet of Allah! Verily today we have lost you such that there is no meeting after this!”

The people gathered and were weeping and wailing and they were awaiting the beir of Fatimah to be brought out so that they could pray over her. At that moment Abu Dharr came out of the house and said, "You may leave, for the funeral of Fatimah has been postponed until the night." Hearing this, the people rose up and dispersed.

Ceremonial Washing of the Body, Shrouding, and the Prayer upon Her Sacred Corpse

When night drew near, 'Ali gave the ceremonial washing to the body and no one was present at that moment except for Hasan, Husayn, Zaynab, Umme Kulthum, Fidhdhah and Asma' b. 'Umays. Asma' said, "Fatimah had willed that no one should perform the ceremonial washing of her body except 'Ali and myself and I assisted him in doing so."

It is related that while giving the ceremonial washing, Imam 'Ali said, "O Lord! Fatimah is Your maid and the daughter of Your Prophet and chosen one. O Lord! Inspire her with her evidences and increase her reasoning, elevate her position and unite her along with her father."

It is also related that Imam 'Ali wiped the body of Sayyidah Zahra with the same cloth that he had used to wipe the body of the Prophet, and when he completed bathing the body, 'Ali placed the body in the beir and told Imam Hasan, "Tell Abu Dharr to come here." Imam Hasan informed Abu Dharr and both of them lifted the beir until the place of prayers. Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn were also with them and Imam 'Ali led the prayers.

Hasan and Husayn in a Last Embrace with their Mother

Al-Waraqah relates that the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali said, "I was busy washing the body of Fatimah and had bathed her with her shirt on and by Allah, Fatimah was pure and chaste. Then I anointed her with the leftover camphor of the Prophet of Allah, shrouded her and just before tying the cord of the shroud I called out, 'O Umme Kulthum! O Zaynab! O Sakinah! O Fidhdhah! O Hasan and O Husayn! Come and behold your mother for the time of separation has approached."

Hasan and Husayn came and heaved a sigh and said, "O grief! The heat (of grief) for our grandfather Muhammad al-Mustafa and our mother Fatimah al-Zahra shall never diminish. O mother of Hasan! O mother of Husayn! When you meet our grandfather, convey our greetings to his presence and tell him that we have become orphans with your passing away."

Imam 'Ali said, 'Allah is witness, she gave a cry and stretched her hands and pressed them to her chest. Suddenly I heard a caller from the heavens saying, "O Abal Hasan! Lift them up, for by Allah, their weeping makes the angels of the heavens weep." Imam 'Ali then lifted Hasan and Husayn off of her chest.

Shrouding of Zahra

It is related that Kathir b. ‘Abdullah wrote the following on the shroud of Zahra, “She bears witness that there is no other deity worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

It is quoted in Misbahul Anwar that the shroud of Fatimah was coarse and thick. It is related (in the same book) that when the end of Fatimah drew near, she called for some water and took a bath, then she called for a scent¹⁸ and anointed herself with it. Then she called for some cloth, they brought a coarse and thick cloth and she wore it.

It is also related that she was shrouded in seven pieces of cloth.

Prayer and Burial of Fatimah

It is quoted in Rawdhatul Wa’izin that when night came and the people were deep in sleep and a part of the night had passed, Imam ‘Ali along with Hasan, Husayn, ‘Ammar, Miqdad, ‘Aqil, Zubayr, Abu Dharr, Salman, Buraydah and a few chosen men among the Bani Hashim brought out the bier of Fatimah and recited the prayers upon it and buried her in the middle of the night, and Imam ‘Ali built seven more graves around the real grave so that her place of burial would not be known.

It is related in Misbahul Anwar that a man asked Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq, “How many takbir did the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali recite in the prayers upon Fatimah?” The Imam replied, “‘Ali would recite one takbir, Jibra’il would then recite the second one, followed by the angels near to Allah, thus Imam recited five takbir.” Another man asked, “Where did they pray?” Imam al-Sadiq replied, “In her house, then they brought the bier out of the house.”

‘Ali Greets the Prophet after the Burial of Fatimah

Shaykh al-Tusi relates, “Imam ‘Ali buried Sayyidah Zahra, smoothed the dirt over her grave making it level, and then cleaned his hands from the earth of the grave. He was in a deep state of grief and sorrow and tears rolled down his cheeks and in this state, he turned towards the grave of the Prophet of Allah and said, ‘Peace be upon you O Prophet of Allah, from myself and your daughter that has been laid (to rest) in your neighbourhood and who has united very quickly with you. My patience has parted away due to the separation of your daughter and my strength has faded. However, after facing the heart-rending grief of your separation, all sorrow that reach me are less (in comparison to that of yours). I cannot forget the moment when I laid your sacred body into the grave with my own hands, and at the time of death your head was lying on my chest and your sacred soul parted. Indeed we are Allah’s and indeed we will return back to Him. O Prophet! The trust (Fatimah) that you had bestowed me with has been returned to you, but my sorrow has become everlasting. I will spend my nights, sleepless until I too am united with you. Very soon your daughter will relate to you how the nation united to oppress us, and you may ask

her (how this occurred) when a very short period of time had elapsed after your passing such that your remembrance had not even been forgotten.

Salutations upon you both, a farewell salutation – not from weariness or seeking respite. If I return away from you (your grave) it is not due to tiredness and if I remain at your grave it is not due to lack of belief in what Allah has promised the forbearing ones. Verily patience is more auspicious and fairer. If I had not feared the prevailing of those who have gained power upon us, I would have stayed near your grave and would have performed the spiritual sojourn (i'tikaf)¹⁹ near your tomb. Then I would raise a sorrowful cry similar to a woman who has lost her son!

Allah is witness that I have buried your daughter in secret fearing the enemies – the daughter whose rights had been usurped and whose inheritance was kept from her when after only a short time (after your passing away) and your remembrance had not yet worn out. I complain in your presence, O Prophet of Allah and in your obedience lies consolation of the heart, patience and fair fortitude. Allah's benediction, blessings and abundance be upon you and your daughter.”

A poet has rightfully stated, “Due to what circumstances should be buried in secret, the piece of al-Mustafa and her grave ne flattened; her sorrow was more than any other sorrow of men, and in the age her grave be in concealment, so that people may not find track of it, where is the sacred place that contains her grave?”

Imam ‘Ali’s Words Beside the Grave of Fatimah

It is related in Misbahul Anwar from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq that when the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali put the sacred body of Fatimah in the grave he said, “In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. In the Name of Allah and by Allah, and upon the nation of the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad b. ‘Abdullah! O the honest one (referring to Fatimah)! I submit you to the one who is better than me, and am pleased upon what Allah has chosen for you. ***From it (the earth) We created you, and into it will We return you.***”²⁰

When he prepared the grave and sprinkled water upon it, he sat down besides the grave with intense grief and was weeping. ‘Abbas (b. ‘Abdul Muttalib) came forward, and taking hold of his hand, took him home.

Strong Presence of Imam ‘Ali Against Exhuming the Grave of Fatimah

It is related that on the night when Fatimah was buried, forty (false) graves were made in the graveyard of al-Baqi’, and when the people were informed of the death of Fatimah, they hastened to al-Baqi’ and found forty fresh graves present. They did not find the grave of Fatimah and started weeping and wailing

and reproached one another.

They said to one another, “The Prophet did not leave among you except one daughter and she passed away from the world and was buried, but you could not participate in her burial and funeral, nor can you recognize her grave!”

The elders of the community said, “Go and bring some believing women that they may come and exhume these graves so that we may find the grave of Fatimah. We may then pray upon her and visit her grave.”

When Imam ‘Ali was informed about their plan, he came out of his house in a rage wearing a yellow cloak which he would normally only wear during times of difficulty. He was in such rage that his eyes had turned red and the vein of his neck had swollen with blood! He was leaning upon his sword Dhulfiqar until he entered the graveyard of al-Baqi’ and warned the people about not exhuming the graves.

The people said to one another, “This is ‘Ali b. Abi Talib who has come in such a (mental) state that he swears that if even one stone is turned from upon these graves, he will kill all of you!”

At that moment ‘Umar, accompanied by a group of his adherents, met ‘Ali and said, “O Abal Hasan! What is this that you have done! We will indeed exhume the grave of Zahra and pray upon her!”

Imam ‘Ali grabbed him by his collar, twisted it, and threw him upon the ground. ‘Umar fell down and ‘Ali told him, “O son of the black Abyssinian! I left my right due to fear that men may leave the religion. But in case of the desecration of the grave of Fatimah, I swear by Allah in Whose Hands lies my life, if you do so, I will quench the thirst of the earth with your blood! Do not do it and save yourself!”

Abu Bakr came forward and said, “I request you, due to the right of the Prophet of Allah and by the right of the One who is upon the High Heavens, leave ‘Umar, we will not do that which displeases you.”

Hearing this, ‘Ali released ‘Umar and the people scattered away and resisted from desecrating the grave.

‘Ali’s Explanation to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar

It is related in ‘Ilalush Sharayi’ that a man questioned Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq regarding the decision to desecrate the grave of Fatimah and he replied, “Imam ‘Ali brought the beir out from the house at night and lit some branches of a palm-tree and paved the way in its light. Then they recited the prayers over Fatimah and buried her at night.

In the morning, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar met a man from the Quraysh and asked him where he came from. He replied, ‘I came from the house of ‘Ali. I went to offer condolences to him upon the death of Fatimah.’ They asked, ‘Has Fatimah passed away?’ He replied, ‘Yes and she was buried in the middle of the

night.'

Hearing this, both of them were distressed and feared the reproach of the people. They came to 'Ali and said, 'By Allah! You did not refrain from any deceit and enmity with us, and all of this is due to the rancour that you hold in your heart against us. This action of yours is similar to when you bathed the body of the Prophet alone and did not inform us. Then you instructed your son Hasan to come to the Masjid and address Abu Bakr saying, come down from the pulpit of my father?'

Imam 'Ali replied, 'If I call you to witness in the Name of Allah, will you confirm my words?' They replied in the affirmative and then Imam 'Ali continued by saying, 'The Prophet had willed to me that I should not let anyone participate in the ceremonial washing of his body and had said that no one except my cousin 'Ali should look at my body. Thus I gave him the bath while the angels turned his sacred body, and Fadhl b. 'Abbas gave me water while his eyes were blind-folded. When I wanted to remove the shirt of the Prophet from his body, I heard a caller saying, while I could not see him, 'Do not remove the shirt!' I heard this voice over and over again but did not see anyone, and thus I bathed him in his shirt. Then the shroud was brought and I shrouded the Prophet with it and only then did I remove his shirt from his body. In regards to my son Hasan coming to the Masjid and rebuking Abu Bakr, all of the people of Madinah are witness that (before the Prophet passed away) Hasan would pass by the ranks of men in the congregational prayers and reach the Prophet of Allah. He would then climb upon his back (while the Prophet was in the state of prostration) and when the Prophet would rise up from the prostration, he would place one hand upon the back of Hasan and another on his legs and would thus take care (not to let him fall) upon his back until he ended his prayers.'

They replied, 'Yes we have witnessed this episode.'

Imam 'Ali continued, 'Then you, the people of Madinah, are witness that one time, the Prophet was seated upon the pulpit and Hasan entered the Masjid. The Prophet stopped his sermon in between and rose up from the pulpit and seated Hasan upon his neck and put his feet on his chest and concluded the sermon while the people seated at the back of the Masjid could see the glitter of the anklet on the leg of Hasan. When Hasan had witnessed this sort of love from the Prophet and he entered the Masjid and saw someone else seated upon that very pulpit, it was hard for him and he said those words, and by Allah, I had not instructed my son to do so! As for Fatimah, she was the one from whom I took permission for you to visit her. You came to her and heard her words and became aware of her fury towards you. By Allah! She had willed to me that I should not allow you to attend her funeral, nor pray upon her, thus I fulfilled her desire.'

'Umar said, 'Keep aside these vain talks! I myself will go and dig the grave of Fatimah, remove her corpse, and then pray upon her!' Imam 'Ali said, 'By Allah! If you do so or even think about doing so, I will remove your head, then the sword shall prevail between us and nothing else!'

Heated arguments took place between 'Ali and 'Umar and it was near that they would have attacked one

another when a group from among the Muhajirin and Ansar approached and separated them and said, 'By Allah! We are not pleased that such words are uttered to the cousin, brother and vicegerent of the Prophet.'

Had they not intervened, a major commotion would have erupted; however after this, everyone went their own ways."

Verses of Poetry by Qadhi Abu Bakr

The eminent traditionist, 'Ali b. 'Isa al-Irbili writes in his book *Kashful Ghummah* that, "Some of my companions related the following verses of poetry by Qadhi Abu Bakr Abi Qari'ah (a scholar from the Ahlus Sunnah) to me, "If I had not feared the enmity of the subjects and the politics of the caliph, and the swords of the enemies that would roll off the heads – I would have propagated the secrets of Ale Muhammad word by word, so as to make you independent of the narrations of Malik and Abu Hanifah (two Imams of the Ahlus Sunnah); I would have informed you that verily (the martyrdom of) Husayn was initiated on the day of Saqifah, and under what circumstances was the honourable Fatimah buried at night; and why your two Shaykhs were not permitted (by her) to enter her room; Alas! the daughter of Muhammad died in rage and sorrow."

Testimony of Fatimah from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq

The eminent traditionist, Shaykh al-Kulayni relates from Abu Basir who said: "Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq told me, 'Do you not wish that I should read to you the testimony of Fatimah?' I replied in the affirmative. Imam as-Sadiq pulled out a trunk and took a letter from it and read the following: 'In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This is the testimony willed by the daughter of the Prophet – Fatimah. I give the right of custodianship of the seven gardens: al-'Awaf, ad-Dallal, al-Burqah, al-Maythab, al-Husna, al-Safiyah and al-Mashrabah Umme Ibrahim to the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali. After the death of 'Ali, I will that it go to my son Hasan and after him to Husayn and after him it should be under the possession of the most eminent among my progeny. Allah is witness upon this testimony as is al-Miqdad and al-Zubayr – they are also witness and this testimony is written at the hands of 'Ali b. Abi Talib.'"

The eminent scholar, Sayyid Ibn Tawus in his book, *Kashful Mahajjah* writes, "The Prophet of Allah and the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali were not indigent – for it is not necessary that indigence should be among the qualities of piety." He addresses his son and says, "Your grandfather (Prophet) Muhammad handed over Fadak and the other gardens to your mother Fatimah willingly." Know that the annual income and output of Fadak and the other gardens, according to the narration by Shaykh 'Abdullah b. Hammad al-Ansari, was twenty-four thousand dinars, while other traditions relate that the income was seventy thousand dinars."

Fatimah after the Death of the Prophet

There is a difference of opinion among the historians regarding the time period which Fatimah lived after the death of the Prophet. The majority of scholars state that she lived for a maximum of six months and a minimum of forty days; however the opinion that we accept is that Fatimah remained alive for fifty-nine days after the death of her eminent father and passed away on the third of Jamadi'ul Akhar, eleven years after the migration.

Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari al-Imami relates through reliable sources from Abu Basir that Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq said that Fatimah passed away on the third of the month of Jamadi'ul Thani in the eleventh year of the migration and that the reason for her death was that Qunfudh, the slave of 'Umar b. al-Khattab, struck her with the handle of his sheath at the order of 'Umar and that her child, Muhsin, was mis-carried. Thus Fatimah became severely ill, and when she lay on her bed, she did not permit anyone from among those who had troubled her to come and visit her."

1. One of the numerous concocted stories of the non-Shi'a historians who allege that the Prophet had three daughters through Sayyidah Khadijah b. Khuwaylid apart from Sayyidah Fatimah az-Zahra. The names of these 'daughters' are stated as Zaynab, Umme Kulthum and Ruqayyah, while in reality they were the daughters of Hala b. Khuwaylid (wife of Amr b. Hadam), who after her death, were brought up by their aunt Sayyidah Khadijah and Prophet Muhammad. The Shi'a scholars have put forward several proofs in refutation of this alleged claim which was raised simply to compete with Sayyidah Zahra's personality and also because two of them were later married (consequently) to the caliph, 'Uthman b. al-Affan.

2. Ibn Kathir al-Damishqi, a student of Ibn Taymiyyah (the forerunner of Wahhabism) writes in his book al-Bidayah wal Nihayah in vol. 5, pg. 289 that, "If by denying the Prophet of Allah's inheritance and the estate of Fadak, Fatimah became angry, one should point out that Fatimah was just an ordinary woman, and she got angry in the same way that ordinary women do, after all she was not infallible." One can expect such bigotry from a student of Ibn Taymiyyah whose only aim was to lower the prestige of the Ahlul Bayt. Had Ibn Kathir not heard the numerous traditions of the Prophet in praise of Sayyidah Fatimah that are reported by numerous traditionists of the Ahlus Sunnah including the authors of the six authentic collections (Sihah as-Sittah)? However their rancour towards the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet of Allah blinded their eyes to the truth. Allah says in the Qur'an,

"Say (O Muhammad) O Allah! Master of the Kingdom, You give the kingdom unto whomsoever You like and take away the kingdom from whomsoever You like, You exalt whomsoever You like and abandon whomsoever You like, in Your hands is all good, verily You are Powerful over all things." (Surah Ale Imran (3): 26)

3. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ma'idah (5): 80

4. Noble Qur'an, Surah Hud (11): 44

5. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hajj (22): 11

6. Noble Qur'an, Suratul A'raf (7): 96

7. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Zumar (39): 51

8. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hajj (22): 13

9. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Kahf (18): 50

10. Noble Qur'an, Suratul Baqarah (2): 12

11. Noble Qur'an, Surah Yunus (10): 35

12. How true Sayyidah Fatimah predicted – the Muslims from amongst the Muhajirin and Ansar remained silent spectators while the rights of Ahlul Bayt were being usurped! They did not oppose the tyrants either by word or deed, and willingly

accepted their rule, but very soon they realized the error of their deeds. After the passing away of the first two caliphs, the Bani Umayyah came to power and gradually the period of bloodshed and slaughter of Muslims started and continues until today. One should not forget the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Naharwan and the command by Mu'awiyah to Busr b. Artat to slaughter the Muslims in Kufah and Basrah. Then the most heart-rending episode of Karbala, followed by the incident of Harrah where seven hundred memorizers of the Qur'an from amongst the Quraysh, Muhajirin, Ansar and ten thousand common people were slaughtered under the orders of Yazid b. Mu'awiyah! The same policy was adopted by the rulers of Bani Marwan and Bani 'Abbas who shed the blood of many Muslims without any legal justification. This tyranny and bloodshed continues upon the earth until now and the responsibility of it lies on the neck of the foremost ones, who willingly accepted the rule of the tyrants and flung themselves into the pit of everlasting perdition and disgrace.

13. Noble Qur'an, Surah Hud (11): 28

14. These words of Sayyidah Fatimah should be pondered upon. She willed to Imam 'Ali that those who oppressed her should not say the prayers upon her corpse or even stand near it – not only those two, but even their followers and adherents!

It should be noted that although their followers did not hurt her directly, they certainly hurt her by following and supporting them with their tongues, hearts, or their silence. Thus it can be said that the followers of the oppressors stand in the same status as the oppressors themselves, are equal participants in the crime, and on the Day of Resurrection, they will shall be treated as oppressors themselves.

In regards to this belief, refer to the Qur'anic verse,

“Remember the Day (of Judgement) when We will summon all of the people with their Imam (Leader).” (Suratul Bani Isra'il (17): 71).

Thus we recite in Ziyarat al-'Ashura, “O Allah! Curse the foremost tyrant who oppressed the rights of Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad, and the last one who followed him on that.”

15. Referring to the Prophet's mi'raj (ascension), refer to the Qur'anic verses of Suratul Najm (53),

“While he was in the highest horizon, Then he drew nigh, and became pending, Thus was (he) the measure between two bows (facing each other) or closer still.” (v. 7–9)

16. After bathing a dead body, it is obligatory to apply hunut – camphor – to the parts of the body which a person places on the ground during the prostration (Sajdah) meaning the forehead, both the palms, both the knees and the toes of both feet.

17. When the daughter of the Prophet of Allah passed away, all of the wives (of the Prophet) except 'Ayesha came to console the Bani Hashim. She said that she was not feeling well and the message that she sent to 'Ali clearly depicts her joy at this sad occasion. (Ibn Abil Hadid, “Sharh Nahjul Balaghah”, ch. 2, pg. 439)

18. Probably camphor.

19. Literally mean seclusion; applying oneself zealously for the service of Allah, for a given period, usually in a Masjid.

20. Noble Qur'an, Surah Taha (20): 55

By the grace of Allah, the English translation of Baytul Ahzan, concerning the life of our virtuous lady, Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra (Allah's abundant blessings be upon her, her father, her husband and her sons), was completed on Tuesday 3rd of October 2006 ad – 10th Ramadhan 1427 ah, corresponding to the death anniversary of her virtuous mother, Sayyidah Khadijah, at the hands of the humble-most adherer to the threshold of the Ahlul Bayt, Aejaz-Ali Turab-Husayn (al-Husaynee).

Ziyarah for the Mistress of the Women of the Worlds, Lady Fatimah al-Zahra, may Allah's peace

and blessings be upon her

Translated by Badr Shahin

زِيَارَةُ سَيِّدَةِ النِّسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ (سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا)

While standing in the area between the Noble Prophet's tomb and minbar (i.e. Garden of Paradise – al-Rawdah), you may visit the tomb of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra, although there is a disagreement about the place of her tomb. Some say that she was buried in the al-Rawdah; others say that she was buried in her house; others say that she was buried in the cemetery known as Jannatul Baqi'. However, the majority of our scholars agree that she should be visited within the area of al-Rawdah, although to visit her at all three of these places is more preferable.

When you stand for the ziyarah of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra's tomb, recite the following:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

يَا مُمْتَحَنَةً

O the carefully examined one:

إِمْتَحَنَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَكَ

Allah had tried you before He created you (for this worldly life),

فَوَجَدَكَ لِمَا امْتَحَنَكَ صَابِرَةً،

And thus He found you successfully enduring in that trial.

وَزَعَمْنَا أَنَّا لَكَ أَوْلِيَاءُ وَمُصَدِّقُونَ

We claim that we are your loyalists and believers,

وَصَابِرُونَ لِكُلِّ مَا أَتَانَا بِهِ أَبُوكَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

and standing as regards all that which has been conveyed to us by your father – peace of Allah be upon him and his Household,

وَأَتَى بِهِ وَصِيِّهِ،

And all that which his successor has brought to us.

فَإِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ إِن كُنَّا صَدَقْنَاكَ

We thus ask you, if we have truly believed you,

إِلَّا الْحَقَّتْنَا بِتَصَدِّقِنَا لَهُمْ

That you may include us with those who believe in them all,

لِنُبَشِّرَ أَنْفُسَنَا بِأَنَّا قَدْ طَهَّرْنَا بِوِلَايَتِكَ.

So that we may feel happy that we have been purified on account of our loyalty towards you.

It is recommended to add the following:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the Messenger of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ نَبِيِّ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the Prophet of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ حَبِيبِ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the most beloved of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ خَلِيلِ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the intimate servant of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ صَفِيِّ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the chosen one of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ اَمِيْنِ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the trustee of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ خَيْرِ خَلْقِ اللهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of Allah's creations.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ اَفْضَلِ اَنْبِيَاءِ اللهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of Allah's Prophets, Messengers and angels.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بِنْتَ خَيْرِ الْبَرِيَّةِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of created beings.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا سَيِّدَةَ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ،

Peace be upon You; O the Doyenne of all women of the world, including the past and the coming generations.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا زَوْجَةَ وَلِيِّ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O the lady of the intimate servant of Allah and the best of all created beings after the Messenger of Allah.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أُمَّ الْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ

Peace be upon You; O the mother of al-Hasan and al-Husayn,

سَيِّدَيِ شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ،

The two masters of the youth of Paradise.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقَةُ الشَّهِيدَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the veracious, the martyred one.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الرِّضِيَّةُ الْمَرْضِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the content, the pleased one.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْفَاضِلَةُ الزَّكِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the virtuous, the pure one.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْحَوْرَاءُ الْإِنْسِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the Paradisical human being.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا التَّقِيَّةُ النَّقِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the pious, the immaculate one.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمُحَدَّثَةُ الْعَلِيْمَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the one talked to by the angels, the knowledgeable one.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمَظْلُومَةُ الْمَغْصُوبَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the oppressed lady whose right was usurped.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمُضْطَهَدَةُ الْمَقْهُورَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the persecuted, the maltreated one.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ

Peace be upon You; O Fatimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah.

وَرَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ،

So upon you be the mercy and blessings of Allah.

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكَ

May Allah bless you,

وَعَلَى رُوحِكَ وَبَدَنِكَ،

And your soul, and your body.

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ مَضَيْتِ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ،

I bear witness that you have spent your life with full awareness of your duty towards your Lord;

وَأَنَّ مَنْ سَرَّكَ فَقَدْ سَرَّ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And (I bear witness) that one who pleases you, will have pleased the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ جَفَاكَ فَقَدْ جَفَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And one who displeases you will have displeased the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his

Household.

وَمَنْ آذَاكَ فَقَدْ آذَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And one who harms you will have harmed the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ وَصَلَكَ فَقَدْ وَصَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

And one who respects you will have respected the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ قَطَعَكَ فَقَدْ قَطَعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

And one who disrespects you, will have disrespected the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

لَأَنَّكَ بِضْعَةٌ مِنْهُ

This is because you are an inseparable part of him (i.e. the Noble Prophet),

وَرُوحُهُ الَّذِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْهِ،

and you are his soul with which he lives.

أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَرُسُلَهُ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ

I ask Allah, His Messengers, and His angels to be the witnesses

أَنَا رَاضٍ عَمَّنْ رَضِيتَ عَنْهُ،

that I am verily pleased with one whomsoever you accept,

سَاخِطٌ عَلَى مَنْ سَخِطْتَ عَلَيْهِ،

and I am displeased with one whomsoever you detest,

مُتَبَرِّئٌ مِمَّنْ تَبَرَّأْتَ مِنْهُ،

and I disavow the one whomsoever you disavow,

مُؤَالٍ لِمَنْ وَالَيْتَ،

and I am loyal to the one who you support,

مُعَادٍ لِمَنْ عَادَيْتَ،

and I am an enemy of the one who you betake as enemy,

مُبْغِضٌ لِمَنْ أَبْغَضْتَ،

and I am hateful to the one who you hate,

مُحِبٌّ لِمَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ،

and I like the one who you like.

وَكَفَى بِاللّهِ شَهِيداً وَحَسِيباً

Verily, Allah is Sufficient as a Witness, and a Reckoner,

وَجَازِياً وَمُنِيباً

and a Punisher, and Rewarder.

You may then pray to Almighty Allah to send blessings upon the Noble Prophet and the Imams.

Within the recommended acts on the third of Jamadi al-Akhir (the martyrdom day of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra'), another form of ziyarah for Lady Fatimah al-Zahra has also been cited by some scholars whose statements are similar to the statements of the aforementioned ziyarah that has been quoted from Shaykh al-Tusi. However, the complete form of this ziyarah is as follows:

أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the Messenger of Allah.

أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the Prophet of Allah.

أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ حَبِيبِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the most beloved one of Allah.

أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the intimate servant of Allah.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ صَفِيِّ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the chosen one of Allah.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ أَمِينِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the trustee of Allah.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ خَيْرِ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of Allah's creations.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ أَفْضَلِ أَنْبِيَاءِ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of Allah's Prophets, Messengers and angels.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا بِنْتَ خَيْرِ الْبَرِيَّةِ،

Peace be upon You; O daughter of the best of created beings.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا سَيِّدَةَ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ،

Peace be upon You; O the Doyenne of all women of the world, including the past and the coming generations.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا زَوْجَةَ وَلِيِّ اللَّهِ وَخَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ،

Peace be upon You; O the lady of the intimate servant of Allah and the best of all created beings after the Messenger of Allah.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا اُمَّ الْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ

Peace be upon You; O the mother of al-Hasan and al-Husayn,

سَيِّدَيِ شَبَابِ اَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ،

the two masters of the youth of Paradise.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ اَيَّتُهَا الصِّدِّيقَةُ الشَّهِيدَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the veracious, the martyred one.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ اَيَّتُهَا الرِّضِيَّةُ الْمَرْضِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the content, the pleased one.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ اَيَّتُهَا الْفَاضِلَةُ الزَّكِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the virtuous, the pure one.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ اَيَّتُهَا الْحَوْرَاءُ الْاِنْسِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the Paradisical human being.

اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ اَيَّتُهَا التَّقِيَّةُ النَّقِيَّةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the pious, the immaculate one.

الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمُحَدَّثَةُ الْعَلِيْمَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the one talked to by the angels, the knowledgeable one.

الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمَظْلُومَةُ الْمَغْصُوبَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the oppressed lady whose right was usurped.

الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيَّتُهَا الْمُضْطَهَدَةُ الْمَقْهُورَةُ،

Peace be upon You; O the persecuted, the maltreated one.

الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

Peace be upon You; O Fatimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah.

وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ،

So upon you be the mercy and blessings of Allah.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ

May Allah send His prayers upon you,

وَعَلَى رُوحِكَ وَبَدَنِكَ،

And your soul, and your body.

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ مَضَيْتَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ،

I bear witness that you have spent your life with full awareness of your duty towards your Lord;

وَأَنَّ مَنْ سَرَّكَ فَقَدْ سَرَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And (I bear witness) that one who pleases you will have pleased the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his Household

وَمَنْ جَفَاكَ فَقَدْ جَفَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And the one who displeases you will have displeased the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ آذَاكَ فَقَدْ آذَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

And the one who harms you will have harmed the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ وَصَلَكَ فَقَدْ وَصَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

And the one who respects you will have respected the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him and his Household.

وَمَنْ قَطَعَكَ فَقَدْ قَطَعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

And the one who disrespects you will have disrespected the Messenger of Allah – peace be upon him

and his Household.

لَأَنَّكَ بِضَعَةٌ مِنْهُ

This is because you are an inseparable part of him (i.e. the Noble Prophet),

وَرُوحُهُ الَّذِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْهِ.

and you are his soul with which he lives.

أَشْهَدُ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ أَنِّي وَلِيٌّ لِمَنْ وَالَاكَ،

I ask Allah and His angels to be the witnesses that I am the friend of one who adheres to you,

وَعَدُوٌّ لِمَنْ عَادَاكَ،

and I am the enemy to one who is an enemy of you,

وَحَرْبٌ لِمَنْ حَارَبَكَ،

and I am in war against one who wages war against you.

أَنَا يَا مَوْلَاتِي بِكَ وَيَا بَيْتِكَ وَبِعَلِّكَ وَالْأَيْمَةَ مِنْ وَلَدِكَ مُوقِنٌ،

O my master! I have full faith in you, your father, your husband, and your sons – the Imams;

وَبِوَلَايَتِهِمْ مُؤْمِنٌ،

and I believe in their (divinely commissioned) leadership;

وَلِطَاعَتِهِمْ مُلتَزِمٌ،

and I commit myself to the obedience of them.

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ الدِّينَ دِينُهُمْ،

I bear witness that their religion is the true religion;

وَالْحُكْمَ حُكْمُهُمْ،

and their command is the true command;

وَهُمْ قَدْ بَلَّغُوا عَنِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ،

and they have conveyed on behalf of Almighty Allah (flawlessly);

وَدَعَوْا إِلَى سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ،

and they have called to the Way of Allah with wisdom and fair exhortation.

لَا تَأْخُذُهُمْ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةٌ لَائِمٌ،

They have never feared the blame of anyone concerning carrying out their duty towards Almighty Allah.

وَصَلَّوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى آبِكَ وَبِعَلِّكَ

Blessings of Allah be upon you and upon your father, your husband,

وَذُرِّيَّتِكَ الْأَيْمَّةَ الطَّاهِرِينَ.

And your descendants – the Immaculate Imams.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ

O Allah: (please do) send blessings upon Muhammad and his Household,

وَصَلِّ عَلَى الْبُتُولِ الطَّاهِرَةِ

And upon the immaculate, the pure lady:

الصِّدِّيقَةِ الْمَعْصُومَةِ

The veracious, the sinless one,

التَّقِيَّةِ النَّقِيَّةِ

The pious, the immaculate one,

الرَّضِيِّيَّةِ الْمَرْضِيَّةِ

The content, the well-pleased one,

الزَّكِيَّةِ الرَّشِيدَةِ

The chaste, the rightly guided one,

الْمَظْلُومَةُ الْمَقْهُورَةُ،

The oppressed, the wronged one,

الْمَغْصُوبَةُ حَقُّهَا،

The one whose right was usurped,

الْمَمْنُوعَةُ إِرْثُهَا،

(The one) whose right of inheritance was violated,

الْمَكْسُورَةُ ضِلْعُهَا،

(The one) whose rib was broken,

الْمَظْلُومُ بَعْلُهَا،

(The one) whose husband was persecuted,

الْمَقْتُولِ وَلَدُهَا،

(The one) whose son was slain;

فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ رَسُولِكَ،

(she is) Fatimah: the daughter of Your Messenger,

وَبَضْعَةٍ لَحْمِهِ،

The part of his flesh,

وَصَمِيمِ قَلْبِهِ،

The essence of his heart,

وَفِلْذَةِ كَبِدِهِ،

The piece of his innermost,

وَالنَّخْبَةِ مِنْكَ لَهُ،

The choice of You for him,

وَالْتُّحْفَةِ خَصَصْتَ بِهَا وَصِيِّهِ،

The gift that You gave exclusively to his successor,

وَحَبِيبَةِ الْمُصْطَفَى،

The most beloved of the Preferred Prophet

وَقَرِينَةِ الْمُرْتَضَى،

The wife of the Pleased Successor,

وَسَيِّدَةِ النَّسَاءِ،

the Doyenne of all women,

وَمُبَشِّرَةِ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ،

the conveyor of good tidings to the intimate servants (of Almighty Allah),

حَلِيفَةِ الْوَرَعِ وَالزُّهْدِ،

the inseparable one from piety and asceticism,

وَتُفَّاحَةِ الْفِرْدَوْسِ وَالْخُلْدِ

the Apple of the Heaven and Eternity (in Paradise);

الَّتِي شَرَّفْتَ مَوْلِدَهَا بِنِسَاءِ الْجَنَّةِ،

the lady through whose birth You have honoured the women of Paradise,

وَسَلَّلْتَ مِنْهَا أَنْوَارَ الْأَئِمَّةِ،

from whom You pulled the Lights of the Imams,

وَأَرْخَيْتَ دُونَهَا حِجَابَ النَّبُوَّةِ.

and fixed the Veil of Prophethood

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَيْهَا صَلَاةً تَزِيْدُ فِي مَحَلِّهَا عِنْدَكَ،

O Allah: (please do) confer upon her with blessings that raise her standing,

وَشَرَفَهَا لَدَيْكَ،

and her honour with You;

وَمَنْزَلَتَهَا مِنْ رِضَاكَ،

and raise her position in Your Pleasure,

وَيَلِّغْهَا مِنَّا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا،

and convey to her our greetings and compliments;

وَآتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ فِي حُبِّهَا فَضْلًا وَإِحْسَانًا وَرَحْمَةً وَغُفْرَانًا

and give us favour, kindness, mercy, and forgiveness from you on account of our love for her.

إِنَّكَ ذُو الْعَفْوِ الْكَرِيمِ.

Verily, You are the All-Generous Lord of pardon.

Ziyarah of Lady Fatimah on the third of Jumadi al-Akhir

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا سَيِّدَةَ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ،

Peace be upon you; O the Doyenne of the women of the world!

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا وَالِدَةَ الْحُجَجِ عَلَى النَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ،

Peace be upon you; O the mother of the proof over all people!

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ أَيَّتُهَا الْمَظْلُومَةُ الْمَمْنُوعَةُ حَقُّهَا.

Peace be upon you; O the wronged one whose right was usurped.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى أُمِّتِكَ وَابْنَةِ نَبِيِّكَ وَزَوْجَةِ وَصِيِّ نَبِيِّكَ

O Allah: send blessings upon Your servant, the daughter of Your Prophet, the wife of the Successor of Your Prophet –

صَلَاةً تُزَلِّفُهَا فَوْقَ زُلْفَى عِبَادِكَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ

Such remarkable blessings that approach her nearer to You than the steps (of proximity taken by) Your honoured servants

مِنْ أَهْلِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِينَ.

From among the inhabitants of the Heavens and the Earth.

Ziyarah of Lady Fatimah on Sunday

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكِ يَا مُمْتَحَنَةً

Peace be on you, O the carefully examined,

إِمْتَحَنَكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَوَجَدَكَ لِمَا امْتَحَنَكَ صَابِرَةً

Tried and measured by Him who created you, and found you, in your test, cool and compact, steady and stable.

أَنَا لَكَ مُصَدِّقٌ صَابِرٌ عَلَى مَا أَتَى بِهِ أَبُوكَ وَوَصِيَّهُ

I believe in you; and I bear patiently all that which has been conveyed by your father and his successor

صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ

Blessings of Allah be on them.

وَأَنَا أَسْأَلُكَ إِنْ كُنْتُ صَدَقْتُكَ إِلَّا الْحَقَّتَنِي بِتَصَدِيقِي لَهُمْ

I beseech you, (if I have stated the truth), to bind me together with the testimony, concerning both of them,

لِتُسَرَّ نَفْسِي

In order to give joy and satisfaction to my soul.

فَاشْهَدِي أَنِّي طَاهِرٌ بِوَلَايَتِكَ وَوَلَايَةِ آلِ بَيْتِكَ

So bear witness that truly I, by heart, made evident your, and your children's leadership

صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

Blessings of Allah be upon them all.

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