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Part 8: Trust denotes Imamate

Trust (Amanat) denotes Imamate in Quran. There are two verses on this.

First verse

The Almighty Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا.

Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing. (***Sura Nisa 4:58***)

Commentators have differed about the circumstances of the revelation of this verse. There are several opinions. The first is that it is about every person to whom anybody entrusts something. The trust of Allah is his commands and prohibitions and the trusts of people are the things like property for which some make others their trustees. This has been mentioned in a number of traditions of Imams Baqir and Sadiq (a.s.). So much so that in some narrations it is mentioned that: Even if the murderer of Amirul Momineen entrusts me the killer sword to me, I will return it to him (on demand).

Secondly, Shaykh Tabarsi (r.a.) has said about Caliphs and the people (rulers) in charge (Vaaliyaan-e-Amr) that Allah has ordered them to rule the masses with justice and to keep them obedient to the Religion and the Shariah. People have quoted Imams Baqir and Sadiq (a.s.) that: Allah has ordered every Imam to hand over the Imamate to his successor Imams and it is so because Allah has ordered the masses to obey those in authority and the Imams have said that there are two verses: One is for us and the other for you. One is the aforesaid verse and another is:

O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you. 4:59

Tabarsi says that this statement is also included in the first statement because this also is from among the things on which Allah has made the truthful Imams (a.s.) the trustees.

Likewise Imam Baqir (a.s.) has said that the offering of Prayer, Fasting, Zakat and Hajj also come under trusts and so also the distribution of booty and charities as well as all the things concerning the rights of the public as orders by Allah to the rulers-in-charge.

Thirdly, that the Holy Prophet (S) is being addressed to hand over the key of the Ka'ba to Uthman bin Talha from whom it was taken when Mecca was conquered and which was intended to be given to Abbas (r.a.).

In *Basairud Darajat* it is mentioned from reliable chains of narrators that Imam Baqir (a.s.) said that this verse is revealed in our praise (regarding us) and we seek help from Allah.

Likewise he is quoted that: It is obligatory for the Imam to hand over Imamate to the next Imam and that he should not take it back from him to pass it to another one.

According to another true narration he said that it means: We, the Imams, and it is obligatory that the former Imam must hand over to his successor the books which are with him and also the arms (weapons) of the Holy Prophet (S): *and that when you judge between people you judge with justice,* meaning 'when you are appointed as Imam decide according to the just commandments which are with you.

It is reported with reliable chains of narrators that Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said, while explaining the verse: *Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their* that it means handing over of the trust of Imamate and the carrying out of legateeship.

It also is authentically reported that Imam Baqir (a.s.) asked Malik Jahni as to about whom this verse has been revealed, he replied that the people say that it is about all the people. The Hazrat said: Then all can decide for (and issue orders) to all because, in this verse the address is being made in plural, but it is not so, you must know that it is revealed in our praise.

With authentic chains Imam Sadiq (a.s.) is reported to have said that the Imam can be recognized due to three virtues.

Firstly, from the aspect of lineage he should be better and nobler than all like the Imam before him. Secondly, he must have Zulfiqar, which is the weapon of the Holy Prophet (S). Thirdly, the previous one should have made him his legatee (Wasee) as regards this the Almighty Allah has said: *Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts* and said that the weapon is with us like the Chest (Taboot) of Bani Israel and that the Imamate and kingship is with the weaponry of the Prophet of Allah. The Imamate is exclusively for him who has the weapons of the Holy Prophet (S) as was the chest (Taboot) with Bani

Israel and that to whomsoever the Taboot went he became the ruler.

Imam Moosa Kazim (a.s.) is quoted in *Maniul Akhbar* in reply to people's query the meaning of this verse that: This is an address to us alone. Allah has ordered all of us Imams that we must hand over the Imamate to our successor Imam and to make him our legatee. Then this verse applied to all the trusts of the people. My great father heard from his father Ali bin Husain (a.s.) that the Hazrat told his companions that making over trusts is a must for you so much so that had my father, Imam Husain's killer given me that killer sword as a trust I would have returned it to him unhesitatingly.

Nomani has quoted Imam Baqir (a.s.) from authentic chains of narrators that: This verse has been revealed in our praise. Allah has ordered all of us, Imams, to entrust Imamate to his successor Imam. He should not give it to anyone else. Have you not heard that after this, Allah says: *and that when you judge between people you judge with justice* which shows that the address is about orders (Ahkam).

Furat has quoted Shoba in *Tafsir* that he said about the meaning of *Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts* that: I say without anyone's fear (other than Allah) that by Allah, this means the Wilayat of Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.).

Second Verse

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا.

Surely We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to be unfaithful to it and feared from it, and man has turned unfaithful to it; surely he is unjust, ignorant. (***Sura Ahzab 33:72***)

There are many traditions in the explanation of this verse.

The first: It points to the previous verse:

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِعْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا.

He will put your deeds into a right state for you, and forgive you your faults; and whoever obeys Allah and His Apostle, he indeed achieves a mighty success. (***Sura Ahzab 33:71***)

The obedience to Allah and His messenger has been called 'Amanat' (Trust) because its carrying out is

compulsory and that the meaning (or aim) is that the greatness of obedience is so high (and weighty) that if it is put on huge bodies (like mountains) having intelligence, they would deny to carry it fearfully.

Yet despite his weakness and inability, man took it up. Therefore, its reward is very much both in this world and in the hereafter. Doubtlessly he has oppressed himself, as he did not do as he should have and he was unaware of the consequence. This attribute (of weakness) refers to the majority of people.

Secondly, 'Amanat' (trust) means obedience be it natural or intentional and presenting, means demanding, be the demand addressed to the man in power or otherwise and 'Haml' (carrying) means dishonestly concerning the trust and its non-fulfilment. He who misappropriates the trust and does not fulfil its conditions is called the Hamil-e-Amanat. It also includes not doing the needful despite being able to do and to misbehave by way of injustice, oppression and ignorance.

Thirdly, when Allah created these (celestial) bodies, He endowed them also with intelligence and said: I am making a thing obligatory, I have created Paradise for the one who obeys Me and I created Hellfire for one who disobeys Me. All said: We are under the thing for which You have created us and we have no ability to fulfil the duty and (therefore) we do not require either reward or punishment. Therefore when He created Adam and proposed to him the same things, Adam accepted and he was to oppress himself, because he was loaded with a burden which was hard for him to bear and he was unaware of its evil consequences.

Fourthly 'Amanat' means intelligence along with the responsibility and the meaning of offering it to him is the consideration or taking into account his ability to perform that job. The meaning of his refusal is the natural disinclination, meaning inability and disqualification. Man's 'Haml', 'Juhool' means his being subject to passion and anger. Some have said that 'Amanat' is indicating 'Muhabbat' (love). Sufis have mentioned other causes and some of its explanations found in traditions are like this; In *Kafi* and other books Imam Baqir (a.s.) is quoted as saying that 'Amanat' means the Wilayat of Amirul Momineen (a.s.).

It is reported in *Uyoon* and *Maniul Akhbar* that when people sought the meaning of this verse the Imam said that 'Amanat' means Wilayat and that the one who claims it falsely (without entitlement) is a disbeliever.

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) with reliable chains of narrators in *Maniul Akhbar* that 'Amanat' means Wilayat and that man is very naughty and a hypocrite who made a false claim.

Ali Ibne Ibrahim has reported that 'Amanat' means Imamate and commands and prohibitions, and the proof of its meaning Imamate is that Allah has addressed the Holy Imams (a.s.) saying: *Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners...* therefore its meaning is 'Amanat' was offered to the skies and earth but all of them declined to claim it falsely or to snatch it from the one who has its right.

So they feared its rightful possessor and man took it up (means snatched it unlawfully) because he was

an oppressor and ignorant so that the Lord of the universe may punish the polytheist men and women and He may accept the repentance of believer men and women and Allah is the Forgiver and the Kind. This is the translation of the subsequent verse.

In *Basair* and *Kafi* with reliable chains of narrators it is reported that Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: 'Amanat' mean the Wilayat of Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s.).

It is also mentioned in *Basair* that Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said that the meaning of 'Amanat' is Wilayat. The sky, earth and mountains denied to carry it and thereby to become disbelievers. And the man who took it up without his right was that same notorious hypocrite.

Ibne Shahar Aashob has reported from *Maqatil* in *Manaqib* that Muhammad bin Hanafiya heard from Imam Ali (a.s.) that he, explaining this verse said the Almighty Allah presented my Imamate to all the seven skies with conditions of reward and punishment. They replied: O Lord! We cannot bear it with the conditions of reward and punishment. We are ready to carry it without reward and punishment. Then my Imamate and Wilayat was presented to the birds. The first of the birds who believed were while eagles and falcons and the first who refused were owls and phoenix.

Therefore the owl cannot come out during the day due to the jealously of all other birds for him and the phoenix hid himself in seas and hence nobody sees it. And doubtlessly Allah presented my Imamate to the earths. So the lands which believed have been made holy and pure by Allah and He made their fruits and vegetable, sweet and made its water also pure and sweet. And He made those parts the land which desired my Imamate and Wilayat, barren arid and their fruits distasteful and bitter and also made their water salty.

Then He said: *and man has turned unfaithful to it;* meaning: O Muhammad! Your community has taken up Amirul Momineen and his Imamate and Wilayat together with all its rewards and punishment. No doubt man was very cruel (unjust) to himself and unaware of the order of his Lord, that is, he did not honour the right of Wilayat along with its obligations as he aught to have. So he was an oppressor who did injustice to himself.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) has been quoted in *Basair* that our Wilayat was presented to the skies, earths, mountains and cities but they refused like the people of Kufa.

It is mentioned in *Tafsir Furat* that Fatima (s.a.) said that the Holy Prophet (S) said: During the Night of Ascension I was taken to the skies and I passed through the farthest lote tree (Sidratul Muntaha) and reached the stage of two bows (Qaabe Qausain) and I did not see Allah with my physical eyes but saw Him through the internal eyes of my heart and I heard the voice of Azan (call for prayer) and Iqamat and I also heard an announcer saying: O My angels, and the residents of My skies and earths and the bearers of My Arsh! All of you give witness that I am the only one Allah and that I have no partners. All said: We give witness and confess.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) says that whenever Ibne Abbas mentioned this verse, he used to say that this is the Amanat (trust) which has been mentioned by Allah in the verse: *Surely We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains* meaning, by Allah (in Amanat) Allah did not give to anything from dinar or dirham or any of the underground treasures before He created Adam and He revealed that I am making the progeny of Muhammad (S) the Caliph so what will you do when he calls you?

You should accept and help him in confronting his enemies and obey his orders. Hearing this, the sky, earth, mountains all became afraid of the obedience ordered by Allah but the progeny of Adam accepted it and so this responsibility was imposed on them. Then Imam Baqir (a.s.) said that though the children of Adam did accept it they did not fulfil it.1

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1. The translator says: The explanation of this tradition and other traditions could be based on some reasons. Firstly 'Amanat' may mean absolute duty and that Wilayat might have been mentioned particularly in the meaning or sense that Imamate is the greatest of all conditions. Also the cause of dispute or difference or disagreement in the Ummah and the specific mention of Abu Bakr and others could be from the viewpoint that though they gave allegiance in a hypocritical manner and then broke it before all others and also became the cause of the breaking by others, that is, their giving allegiance and the breaking of Amirul Momineen's allegiance became the cause of such breaking by others. Therefore lifting, or carrying or taking up means the acceptance of Wilayat. What support this is that Amanat means responsibilities and Haml means accepting it as has been narrated by Ibne Shahr Aashob and other writers that Amirul Momineen (a.s.) was shivering at the time of every Prayer and his face was becoming pale. In reply to people's question about the cause of it, he used to say that the time of repaying of the Amanat (the trust) had arrived which, when it was presented to the skies and the earths, all had declined to lift it and they feared but man accepted it and I do not know whether I will be able or will not be able to repay this burden (trust) which I have taken up. Secondly: The Alif and Laam in Al-Insan are that of Ahd (oath) and it may mean Abu Bakr and that Wilayat may be with Kasra (i) which may denote asking whether you lay a false claim of Imamate and then bear Allah's chastisements; and that they feared and denied and, despite being aware of the punishment, took up the burden on that day.
Thirdly, due to both the reasons, Haml (acceptance) might mean betrayal of trust i.e. not to accept as has been mentioned earlier. But the second reason is more appropriate.

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