

Station of The Yememite Cloak

فَقَالَ : يَا فَاطِمَةُ ائْتِينِي بِالْكِسَاءِ الْيَمَانِيِّ فَغَطَّيْنِي بِهِ .

What is the significance of the *Kisaa* (cloak)? It is a piece of cloth or sheet which the Prophet (SA) requested to cover him to ease his discomfort. Here, one may think that it is so insignificant that history records the Prophet (SA) experiencing exhaustion or discomfort and requesting a cloak. Furthermore, why is the Prophet (SA) specifically asking for a cloak to cover him when he could've asked for something to eat or drink?

As believers, we are to be reminded that the wisdom of the Almighty Creator (SWT) is greater than what our minds perceive and He (SWT) does not do anything in vain. If it were not for the Yeminite Cloak (*Kisaa*) which the Prophet (SA) requested, the *Tradition of the Cloak* would not have existed, and the purification verse (Ayat Al Tat-heer) which is the ultimate result of this event wouldn't have been revealed in this incident. The *Kisaa* is the means by which the members of his household are gathered to set the stage for the revelation of the Purification verse (33:33).

As we will discuss later, it is narrated in the *Tradition of the Cloak* that the total individuals who were granted permission to enter under the cloak with the Prophet (SA) were four: Ali ibn Abi Talib, Lady Fatima, and their sons Hasan and Husain. In addition, archangel Jibrael (AS) was also given divine and prophetic permission to join the holy five in this exceptional setting. With the knowledge that all these divine personalities were under the cloak and didn't enter its protection without the permission of the Prophet (SA), we can better appreciate the significance of the cloak. Though it may be a materialistic item, the *Kisaa* is a symbol of protection, a sign of unity and purity, and the representation of the infallibility of the Holy Five.

The cloak can be seen as analogous to the "Cave of Refuge" (كهف الوري) as they are described in the beautiful invocation of *Salawat Sha'baneyah*. It is similar to the Arc of Prophet Nuh (AS) which the Prophet (SA) resembles to his purified household, as narrated in the famous *Hadith As-Safinah* by Anas

ibn Malik that the Messenger of Allah (SWT) said:

"مثل أهل بيتي كمثل سفينة نوح من ركبها نجا ومن تخلف عنها غرق"

Surely the likeness of my AhlulBayt is similar to Noah's Ark, whoever boards it will attain salvation and whoever remains behind is drowned. (Al Durr Al Manthur) Whoever rides the Arc of Noah or more appropriately the Arc of the AhlulBayt (AS) of Prophet Muhammad (AS) will be saved and will attain salvation in both worlds.

In this context, we can view the Cloak of the Prophet to be similar to the Arc of the Prophet (SA) in that whoever recognizes the significance behind the immaculate personalities *under* the cloak who have been *purified* by divine command, will also attain the blessings of the cloak! An example of such blessings is demonstrated at the conclusion of this narration where Imam Ali (AS) asks the Prophet (SA) what is the significance of this blessed gathering under the cloak and he replies back with the rewards that the Shi'as and lovers of AhlulBayt (AS) will attain if they recite and appreciate this gathering. We shall discuss this aspect in detail later.

Even though only the infallible guides are admitted entrance under this purified cloak, we as the lovers and devotees of the Prophet (SA) and his holy household can also aim to seek permission from Allah (SWT) and the Messenger (SA) to join them under the cloak. We can follow the example of Archangel Jibrael (AS) who recognized that his station was no were close to that of the AhlulBayt (AS) despite his high rank in Allah's eyes, yet he still expressed his devotion to them by seeking their unity and proximity.

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