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The Verse of Purification in Shia Sources

The Revelation of the Verse of Purification

(a) Tradition of Ummul Momineen Umm Salma

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Shahar Bin Hoshal says: I came to Umm Salma the wife of the Holy Prophet (S) and after salaam said: 'Have you seen this verse, O mother of believers, 'Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying'?' She said: 'I and the Messenger of Allah (S) were upon the bed and under the cloak of Khyber when Fatima (s.a) came with Hasan and Husain (a.s).

The Holy Prophet (S) said: 'Where is your cousin?' she said, 'at home'. He said: 'call him', she called him. Then he took all of them under the cloak and raised up his hands (in prayer) saying: 'O Allah these are my Ahlul bayt (a.s). So remove from them the impurity and purify them a thorough purification.' I was sitting opposite the Messenger of Allah (S). I said, 'O Messenger of Allah (S), may my parents be sacrificed upon you, and what about me?' He replied, 'You have a good future.' And the Verse descended, 'Allah only desires to ...'. It concerned the Prophet (S), Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain (a.s).

Another reference

There is another narration of Umm Salma which states that the following verse was revealed for the Prophet (S), Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain (a.s)[2]

Umm Salma says: The verse of "Allah only desires ..." was revealed in my house. And that the Holy Prophet (S) covered them with the cloak, raised his hands (in prayer) and said: "O Allah, these are my Ahlul Bayt (a.s) so remove from them uncleanness like You removed it from the progeny of Ismail, Ishaq and Yaqoob and purify them from the uncleanness like You purified the progeny of Lut, progeny of Imran and progeny of Haroon (a.s).

From Abi Abdullah Al Jalali

From Abi Abdullah Al Jalali[3]

He said: I came to Ayesha and asked, 'where did the verse "Allah only desires ..." descend?' She said: "It descended at the house of Umm Salma." But Umm Salma said that if Ayesha is asked concerning this, she will say that it descended at her house. The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Is there any one who will call for me Ali, Fatima and their two sons?" She said, "Who is there other than me?" He said, "Then do as I say." So they all came and sat: Ali (a.s) between his hands, Husain (a.s) on his right, Hasan (a.s) on his left and Fatima (s.a) opposite him. The Prophet covered them with the cloak of Khyber and said thrice, "May the fire never approach you, you are my soul, my progeny, my Ahlul Bayt from my flesh and my blood."

Umm Salma said, "O Prophet of Allah! Can I enter with you?" The Holy Prophet said, "O Umm Salma you are from my righteous wives." Then the following verse of Quran was revealed:

"Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying."
(Sura al-Ahzaab, 33:33)

From Abdulla Ibn Moeen, the slave boy of Umm Salma

From Abdulla Ibn Moeen, the slave boy of Umm Salma[4]

In this tradition also Umm Salma says that the verse: "Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O People of the House!" was revealed in my house.

The Holy Prophet (S) ordered me to send Ali (a.s), Fatima (s.a), Hasan (a.s) and Husain (a.s). Then they came and seated with him. The Messenger of Allah (S) said: 'O Allah these are my household, my progeny, so remove uncleanness from them and purify them a (thorough) purifying.' He repeated this thrice. I said, 'And I, O, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'You shall have a good future Insha Allah.'

From Imam Reza (a.s)

Umm Salma said, "On the day the verse of purification was revealed at my house the Messenger of Allah summoned Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s). When they all gathered Jibraeel (a.s) came. The Messenger of Allah (S) prayed, 'O Allah these are my Ahlul Bayt, O Allah remove uncleanness from them and purify them a (thorough) purifying.'

Jibraeel (a.s) said, 'And am I from you, O Muhammad?' The Prophet (s.a) replied, 'You are from us O Jibraeel.'

Umm Salma asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, am I from your Ahlul Bayt?' and moved forward to enter the

cloak. The Messenger of Allah (S) said, 'Stay in your place O Umm Salma, You are on the good and you are from the wives of the Messenger.'

Then Jibraeel (a.s) said: 'Recite O Muhammad! Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.'

(b) Tradition of Al Husain Ibn Ali (a.s)

From Zaid[5] bin Ali from his father from his grandfather, He said: The Messenger of Allah (S) was at the house of Umm Salma when she served a dish of Harira. He called Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s) and they ate from it. Then he covered them with the cloak of Khyber and said: 'Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.' Umm Salma said: 'And am I one of them O Messenger of Allah?' He (S) said, 'You have a good fortune.'

(c) Tradition of Abu Saeed Khudri

(i) From Abu Saeed Khudri

(i) From Abu Saeed Khudri[6]

He says: The Verse of Purification was revealed when the Messenger of Allah (S) had collected Fatima, Ali, Hasan and Husain (a.s) in the cloak and prayed 'O Allah these are my Ahlul Bayt so keep away uncleanness from them and purify them a (thorough) purifying.' Umm Salma asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! Am I included in them?' He said, 'And you have a good fortune.'[7]

(ii) From Atiyya

Atiyya says that he asked Abu Saeed Khudri about the holy verse: 'Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying." Abu Saeed Khudri said that it was revealed for the Messenger of Allah, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s).

(d) From Abu Jafar

(d) From Abu Jafar[8]

Regarding the Quranic verse***, 'Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying'*** he says that this verse was revealed for the Messenger of Allah (S), Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s). It was revealed at the house of Umm Salma the wife of the Prophet (s.a). The Messenger of Allah (S) called Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s) and covered them with the cloak of Khyber. Then he said, 'O Allah! These are my Ahlul Bayt regarding whom you have promised me whatever you promised. O Allah keep away the uncleanness from them and purify them a (thorough) purification.' Then the above verse was revealed.

Umm Salma said: ‘And am I included in them?’ He said, ‘I give you glad tidings that you shall have a good future.’

What Did the Holy Prophet (S) Do After the Revelation of this Verse?

(a) From Abu Saeed Khudri

(a) From Abu Saeed Khudri[9]

He says, ‘The Messenger of Allah (S) used to come at the door of Ali and Fatima for forty days and say, “Peace be upon you and the Mercy of Allah and His Blessings, O Ahlul Bayt. Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying. I am at war with the one who makes war on you and peace at the one who is at peace with you.”’

(b) From Abu Humra

(b) From Abu Humra[10]

He says that I was in the service of the Messenger of Allah (S) for nine or ten months, nine months to be sure. I used to see that every day the Prophet (S) came out from his house in the morning and knocked at the door of Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s) saying, “Peace be upon you and the Mercy and Blessings of Allah. Rise up for prayers that Allah may have mercy on you.”

They replied, “And Peace be upon you and the Mercy and Blessings of Allah, O Messenger of Allah.” Then the Messenger of Allah (S) said, “Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the house and purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

The above tradition has been recorded with a slight variation also.

(c) From Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s)

Ali (a.s) said[11], “The Messenger of Allah came to us every morning and said, “Prayers! May Allah have Mercy on you, Prayers! Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O People of the House and purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

(d) From Abu Jafar (a.s)

(d) From Abu Jafar (a.s)[12]

He narrated from his father Imam Sajjad (a.s) that he said regarding the holy verse,

“And enjoin prayer on your household and steadily adhere to it…” **(*Sura Taha 20: 132*).**

It was revealed for Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s). The Messenger of Allah (S) came to the door of Fatima (s.a) every morning and said, “Peace be upon you, O Ahlul Bayt and Mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you. Prayers! May Allah have Mercy on you.”

“Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

Moreover, in Tafsir of Furat[13] the exegesis of the verse, “And enjoin prayer on your household, and steadily adhere to it....” is as follows:
Allah certainly ordered the above for the people of every household. However, it was necessary to show the superiority of the Prophet’s household over that of the common people. Thus when this verse was revealed the Messenger of Allah (S) approached the door of Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s) every day before the morning prayers and said, “Peace be upon you and the Mercy of Allah.”

“Peace be upon you (too), O Messenger of Allah.” replied Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s). Then the Messenger of Allah knocked at the door and said, “Prayers! Prayers! May Allah have mercy on you. Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O People of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

He continued with this practice till his last days.

(e) From Imam as-Sadiq (a.s)

Imam Sadiq (a.s) narrates from his forefathers: Every day at the time of dawn the Messenger of Allah (S) approached the door of Ali and Fatima and said, “Praise be to Allah the best of the benevolents, the greatest bestower of bounties, One by Whose blessings we achieve righteousness, One Who listens to those who praise Him. May we receive the best of His bounties. We seek refuge in Allah from the fire. We seek refuge in Allah from the day of the fire and the night of fire. Prayers! O Ahlul Bayt. Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

It has also been recorded from Abu Saeed Khudri that he said: When this verse was revealed the Messenger of Allah (S) came to the door of Fatima and Ali for nine months at the time of every prayer and said, “Prayers! May Allah have mercy on you. Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you. O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.”

Allama Majlisi says that this tradition has been narrated through many chains of narrators.

Those Who Relied on this Verse

(a) Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s)

(a) Amirul Momineen Ali (a.s)[14]

Ali (a.s) says: "Certainly Allah the Almighty raised the status of us, Ahlul Bayt. And why not when Allah the Great and Mighty has mentioned in His book, "Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you. O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying."

Thus He purified us from every impurity, external and internal and we are at the pinnacle of truth."

(b) Al Hasan Ibn Ali (a.s)

(i) Imam Hasan (a.s) addressed the people after the martyrdom of his father Imam Ali (a.s) and said during his speech: 'O people! Whoever knows me, knows me and whoever does not know me should know that I am Hasan bin Ali. I am the son of the Holy Prophet (S) and of his successor. I am the son of the giver of good tidings and the warner. I am his son who invited people to Allah and warned them of the torture of His hell-fire. I am the son of the Luminous Lamp. I belong to the house upon where Jibraeel used to descend and from there ascend to heavens. I belong to the family from whom Allah has removed all impurities and made them pure."[15]

(ii) At the time of the Peace Treaty with Muawiya.

'And I tell this to the gathering of men, so listen to me. You possess hearts as well as hearing, so pay attention. We are the Ahlul Bayt whom Allah honoured with Islam. He exalted us and raised our status and kept every impurity away from us and purified us with a thorough purification. And one of the impurity is doubt. And we have no doubt that Allah is the truth. And that His religion is forever. Allah has purified us from every infamy and bestowed us with His bounties since the time of Adam (a.s) till He said, "Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying."'

'So when the Verse of Purification was revealed the Messenger of Allah (S) took me with him, and my brother, and my mother, and my father under the Cloak of Khyber, taken from Umm Salma, and it was in the house of Umm Salma. On that day he (S) said: "O Allah these are my Ahlul bayt (a.s) and my Progeny. So remove from them the impurity and purify them with a thorough purification." Then Umm Salma said, "Can I also enter (the Cloak) with you?" The Messenger of Allah (S) told her, "May Allah have Mercy upon you, you are upon the right and you have a good future, but you are not allowed (to enter), this is (only) for me and for them (the Ahlul Bayt).'

'From that day onwards the Messenger of Allah (S) used to approach our door every day at dawn and say, "Prayers! May Allah have Mercy on you. Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying.'[16]

(c) Umm Salma

The following narration has been recorded in the Tafsir of Furat, Al Khisaal and Amaali of Sadooq, and Behaarul Anwaar from Umratul Hamadania binte Afaai: Umm Salma said, “Are you Umra?” “Yes”, replied Umra. Then Umra requested Umm Salma, “Tell me about this man who is amongst you, who is loved by some and hated by others.” Umm Salma asked, “Do you love him?” Umra said, “I neither love him – that is Ali (a.s) – nor hate him.” Umm Salma said, “The Almighty Allah has revealed, ‘Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the House and to purify you a (thorough) purification.’ And there was no one in the house except Jibraeel, Mikaeel, Muhammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain (a.s) and myself. And I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (S), am I also from the Ahlul Bayt?’ He (S) said, ‘You are from my righteous wives.’ O Umra if he (S) had said ‘Yes’, it would have been more loved by me than anything on which the sun shines (more than anything in the world).”[17]

(d) Ali Ibn Husain al-Sajjad (a.s)

The given tradition has been recorded in the Amaali of Sadooq, Ihtejaaj of Tabarsi and Behaarul Anwaar:

When the prisoners belonging to the House of the Holy Prophet (S) were carried to Damascus and stationed in the prison opposite the Jama Masjid, an old man approached them and said: “Praise be to Allah who killed you and annihilated you and relieved the people from your mischief.”

Imam Sajjad (a.s) said, “O old man! Have you read the Holy Quran?” He replied, “Yes.” Then the Imam (a.s) said, “Have you read the verse: ‘No reward do I ask for this except the love of those near of my kin’?” The old man said, “Yes I have read it.” The Imam (a.s) said, “It is us!”

Then he (a.s) said, “Have you read the verse, ‘So give what is due to kindered...’?” The old man said, “Yes.” Imam (a.s) told him, “It refers to us.”

Then he (a.s) asked, “Have read the verse, ‘Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you O people of the House and to purify you a (thorough) purifying’?” The old man replied, “Yes, I have read it.” The Imam (a.s) said, “We are those referred to in this verse.”

The old man said, “By Almighty Allah! Are you of the same family?” The Imam (a.s) replied, “Yes.” The old man raised his hands towards the sky and said, “O Allah! I apologize for what I have said, (he repeated this thrice) and forsake the enmity against this family and hate the enemies of the Progeny of Muhammad (S). I had certainly recited the Quran but I did not understand this before this day.”[18]

(e) Zaid bin Ali bin Husain

Abul Jarood says that Zaid Ibn Ali has mentioned:
‘Those people are ignorant who think that Allah only intends by this verse the wives of the Prophet (s.a).

They lied and sinned. If Allah had intended to mean the wives of the Prophet (s.a) He would have said, 'Le yudheba a'nkunnarrijsa wa yutahherakunna tatheera' like He had used the female gender in the verse, 'wadkurna maa yutla fi buyootekunna...'.'

1. Tafseer of Furat bin Ibrahim Al Kufi, page 21
2. Tafseer Furat Pg. 126
3. Tafseer Furat Pg. 124
4. Al Amaali of Shaykh Sadooq, Vol.1, Pg. 270
5. Jame al Fawaid, Pg. 203
6. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol. 25, Pg. 212, 213
7. Behaarul Anwaar Vol.35, Pg. 208
8. Behaarul Anwaar Vol.35, Pg. 206
9. Tafseer Furat, Pg. 122
10. Tafseer Furat, Pg. 123, 124
11. Amaali of Shaykh Sadooq, Pg. 55
12. Behaarul Anwaar Vol.25, Pg. 220
13. Tafseer Furat Pg. 530,531
14. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol. 25, Pg. 213, 214
15. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol. 25, Pg. 214
16. Behaarul Anwaar Vol.10, Pg. 141,142
17. Behaarul Anwaar Vol.25, Pg.214
18. Al Ihtejaaj of Tabarsi, Pg. 157

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