

Scientific Quarterly  
Journal of Ahl al-Bayt (as) Teachings  
Vol. 2, Issue 2, Summer 2024

**Authentication of the Text and Document: Imam Sadiq's Response to Mofazal's Letter Concerning the Introduction of the Batiniyya Sect**

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(Received: June 05, 2024, Accepted: September 20, 2024)

**Abstract**

In response to a letter from Mofazal, a distinguished companion and scholar of Imam Sadiq (as), concerning the Batiniyya sect, Imam Sadiq addressed doubts and misconceptions. He stated that divine laws and regulations can only be understood through the guidance of righteous men who determine the boundaries between the lawful and the unlawful. He emphasized that knowing these men is equivalent to knowing God and His religion. By examining textual and documentary evidence, using a descriptive-analytical approach, it has been established that the content of the letter is authentic and has been widely corroborated. The term "men" in the letter refers both to the infallible Imams, whose knowledge and obedience are obligatory upon all believers in every era, and to the unjust rulers. What Allah has declared lawful in the Qur'an has an apparent meaning, which is the external aspect, and a deeper, esoteric meaning that refers to the Infallible Imams (as) Conversely, what Allah has prohibited has a literal, apparent meaning, but its inner, esoteric significance pertains to the unjust leaders.

**Keywords:** Imam Sadiq (as), Mofazal's Epistle, Batiniyya, Knowledge of the Imam, Authentication.

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## Introduction

The letter in question was penned by Mofaddal ibn Umar, born around 100 AH, during the lifetime of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him). While the original letter is no longer extant, Imam Sadiq's response to it is preserved in authoritative Shi'a works such as *Basair al-Darajat* by Al-Saffar al-Qumi (1404 AH, pp. 526-536) and *Mukhtasar al-Basair* by Saad ibn Abdullah al-Ash'ari al-Qumi (299 AH, p. 6), among other Shi'a sources. This letter contains Imam Sadiq's advice and guidance regarding the Batiniyya sect, a group that outwardly appeared pious and devout but, according to their beliefs, the essence of religion lay in the recognition of specific individuals. They argued that once one recognizes and loves such a person, any action becomes permissible. In their view, acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, zakat, Hajj, and Umrah, as well as other divine obligations, are merely symbolic, and true devotion lies in recognizing and loving these individuals."

Given the lack of consensus among scholars of both sects regarding this letter, it is imperative to verify its authenticity. This paper aims to answer the question of whether, based on the evidence and supporting hadiths, the text of the letter is authentic from both a documentary and textual standpoint. To answer this question, we must establish the authenticity of the letter's issuance and text through various indicators such as its compatibility with the Qur'an, rational arguments, established traditions, and the consensus of the Imamiyya sect. Therefore, we will cite hadiths with similar meanings as supporting evidence for the text in question. Based on the following reasons.

**Methodology** This research employed a library-based approach for data collection, relying on documentary evidence. The analysis is qualitative and descriptive-analytical.

### **1. The letter's authenticity is supported by the following evidence and corroborating hadiths found in Shi'a sources:**

#### **1.1 Evidence and corroborating hadiths in Shi'a sources with verbal agreement:**

\* *Basair al-Darajat*, by Al-Saffar, pp. 526-536.

\* *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 24, p. 286, hadith 1, and fragments in vol. 27, p. 175, hadith 21.

\* *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, vol. 21, p. 55, under 26520.

\* *Mustadrak al-Wasa'il*, vol. 14, p. 107, hadith 16222, and p. 375, hadith 17001.

\* *Mukhtasar Basair al-Darajat*, by Saad ibn Abdullah, 299 AH, p. 6.

## **1.2 Evidence and corroborating hadiths in Shi'a sources with agreement in meaning:**

\* *Basair al-Darajat*, p. 33.

\* *Usul al-Kafi*, vol. 1, p. 181.

\* *Tafsir al-Qumi*, vol. 1, p. 227.

\* *Al-'Ayyashi*, vol. 2, p. 16.

\* *Al-Ghaybah*, by al-Nu'mani, p. 131.

\* *Sharh al-Maqasid*, vol. 2, p. 275.

\* *Tawil al-Ayat al-Zahira*, p. 177.

\* *Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 23, p. 83, hadith 22.

\* *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, vol. 25, p. 10.

\* *Mir'at al-Uqul*, vol. 4, p. 220.

\* *Al-Burhan*, vol. 3, p. 185.

\* *Nur al-Thaqalayn*, vol. 4, p. 204.

\* *Tafsir Ahl al-Bayt*, vol. 5, p. 114.

Therefore, there is abundant textual and contextual evidence for this letter in Shi'a sources."

## **"2. Documentary and Textual Authentication of the Letter from Muffazal ibn Umar to Imam Sadiq (a.s.)**

To establish the documentary and textual authenticity of the letter attributed to Muffazal addressed to Imam Sadiq (a.s.), a comprehensive analysis of both its chain of transmission (isnad) and its content (matn) is necessary.

### **2-1- Isnad Analysis**

In this section, the narrators of the hadith will be listed in their respective order, followed by a general evaluation of the isnad based on the assessments and reliability evaluations of earlier and later traditionists (*rijāl*).

Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah In the book *Basair al-Darajat*, he narrates from 'Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim, al-Qasim ibn al-Rabi' al-Warraaq, Mohammad ibn Sanan, Sabah al-Madaini, and ultimately Muffazal ibn Umar, who in turn attributed the statement to Imam Sadiq (as). (Saffar Qumi, 1404 AH, p. 164).

### 2-1-1- Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah al-Ash'ari

Abu al-Qasim Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah al-Ash'ari al-Qumi (d. ca. 301 AH), was a prominent hadith scholar and jurist among the Imamiyyah in the third century AH. He was highly regarded by traditionists, who often praised him and even bestowed upon him the title "Sheikh al-Ta'ifah" (Leader of the School) before Sheikh Tusi became famous by that title. His father, 'Abdullah, was also an Imamiyyah narrator but was not as renowned as his son (Amin, 1406 AH, p. 104).

Ibn Dawood al-Hilli, in the early 8th century AH, mentioned Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah's name in two different places in his book, seemingly intending to categorize him as a weak narrator (Hilli, 1392 AH, p. 104). However, some scholars of rijal defended Sa'd, such as Ayatollah Khu'i in *Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith* and Allameh Mamqani in *Tanqih al-Maqal*. Khu'i stated that Sa'd narrated from 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha and Abu Ja'far (Khu'i, 1410 AH, p. 62).

*Tarikh Qom* (History of Qum) mentions that Mohammad ibn Hasan Abi Khalid al-Ash'ari al-Qumi was designated as Sa'd's successor in both narration and other matters, and this has been cited by rijal scholars as evidence of Mohammad ibn Hasan's reliability.

Among Shi'a sources, Sa'd ibn Sa'd al-Ash'ari al-Qomi is considered one of the Ash'ari family, a companion of the Imams, and a trustworthy narrator (Qomi, 1363 AH, p 582). Moreover, Dawari, a Shi'a scholar of rijal, refers to Sa'd ibn Sa'd as a representative of the Imams in his book *Usul 'Ilm al-Rijal* (Dawari, 1416AH, p 487). Najashi, a renowned scholar of rijal, reports that Sa'd narrated from 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha and Mohammad al-Taqi (Khu'i, 1410AH, p 62). Atarody emphasizes that Sa'd ibn Sa'd narrated more than 40 hadiths on various topics such as imamate, tafsir, supplication, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, marriage, divorce, jihad, and wills from 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha (Atarody, 1367AH, p 206).

The Shi'a scholar Barqi, in his book of rijal, considers him among the companions of Musa ibn Ja'far (Atarody 1367AH, p 205; Khu'i, 1410AH, p 63). Sheikh Tusi writes in *al-Fihrist*: "He was a highly respected and trustworthy hadith scholar, a narrator of hadiths, and the author of several books" (Tusi, 1417AH, p. 75). In his book of rijal, Sheikh Tusi also speaks highly of Sa'd: "Sa'd al-Ash'ari was a companion of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) and a contemporary of his, but I have not found any narrations from

him attributed to the Imam" (Tusi, 1415AH, p. 431). For this reason, he includes Sa'd among those who have not narrated from the Infallible Imams (ibid., p. 475).

Najashi writes about him: "Abu al-Qasim Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah al-Ash'ari was a knowledgeable jurist and a trustworthy hadith scholar, one of the great figures of the Ash'ari family and a teacher of his time." Najashi then lists Sa'd's books, stating that he authored approximately 36 works (Najashi, vol. 1, p. 401; Amin, 1421 AH, vol. 7, p. 225).

Shahid Thani, in his marginalia on Ibn Dawood's Rijal, states that there is a consensus among Shi'a scholars regarding Sa'd's trustworthiness, greatness, and knowledge. Many other scholars of rijal, such as Kashi (Kashi, p. 528), Ibn Shahr Ashub (Ma'alim al-Ulama, p. 54), and Allameh Majlisi (al-Wajiza, p. 50), have also spoken highly of Sa'd. Therefore, based on the evidence presented, Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah al-Ash'ari can be considered a trustworthy narrator.

### **2-1-2- Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim**

Ali ibn Ibrahim lived during the latter half of the 3rd and the early 4th centuries AH, although the exact dates of his birth and death are unknown (Sabhani, 1419 AH, p. 282). He is counted among the companions of Imam Hadi (a.s.) (Tusi, 1415 AH, p. 390). Ali ibn Ibrahim was alive during the time of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.) and also during the Minor Occultation. Traditionists have considered him trustworthy (thiqat) in narrating hadiths (Tusi, 1417 AH, pp. 152-153). Najashi described Ali ibn Ibrahim as a reliable person in narrating hadiths, possessing a firm and steadfast faith, and being trustworthy with sound beliefs and a correct religious understanding (Qomi, 1404 AH, Introduction, Part 1, p. 8). His name appears in the isnads of numerous Shi'a hadiths (Khu'i, 1372 SH, vol. 12, p. 213).

Kulaynī has narrated more than seven thousand hadiths from him (Sabhani, 1419 AH, p. 283). Tabarsi considers Ali ibn Ibrahim one of the greatest Shi'a narrators (Tabarsi, 1376 SH, vol. 1, p. 120). Among Ali's teachers was his father, Ibrahim ibn Hashim al-Qumi, who was highly regarded among Shi'a traditionists (Sabhani, 1414 AH, p. 310). Some sources have recorded the names of 48 teachers and 23 students of Ali ibn Ibrahim. Mohammad ibn Ya'qub Kulinī and Ali ibn Babawayh al-Qumi (the father of Sheikh Saduq) were among his students (Qumi, 1363, p.

1776). Even Sunni sources mention him (Qumi, 1363, p. 1776). Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, a renowned Sunni scholar of rijal, mentions Ali ibn Ibrahim in his book and states that he was a staunch Shi'a (Hajar al-Asqalani, 852 AH, vol. 4, p. 191). Umar Ridha Kahala, another Sunni scholar, states that Ali ibn Ibrahim was a jurist, Qur'anic commentator, and a muhaddith (one who narrates many hadiths), and that Kulinī had narrated from him (Kahala al-Dimashqi, 1408 AH, vol. 7, p. 9). Therefore, Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim is considered a trustworthy narrator.

### 2-1-3- Al-Qasim ibn al-Rabi' al-Warraq

This individual is mentioned over two hundred times in the Four Books (*al-Kutub al-Arba'a*), and major figures such as Ibn Abi 'Umayr, Ibn Fadhal, Ibrahim ibn Hashim, Safwan, and Hammad ibn 'Isa have narrated from him. However, there is no specific attestation of his trustworthiness, and this person is often confused with Qasim ibn Mohammad al-Isfahani, Qasim ibn Mohammad al-Jawhari, and several others (Khu'i, 410 AH/1369 SH, p. 128).

Najashi states, "لم يكن بالمرضى" meaning he was not considered reliable (Najashi, 1407 AH, p. 429). Ibn Ghada'iri also states, "يعرف تاره و ينكر اخرى," meaning he is sometimes known and sometimes unknown, which neither praises nor criticizes him; it simply means that strange and unusual narrations have been attributed to him, and therefore he is neither weakened nor strengthened (Ghada'iri, 1364 AH, p. 265). Allama Hilli places him in the second section of his book on the reliability of narrators, indicating that he is weak, seemingly relying on the opinion of Ibn Ghada'iri. He concludes, "فعدى فى حديثه توقف، و لا اعمل بروايته" (Hilli, 726 AH, p. 95). Kashi states that he was a Waqifi. Allama Mamqani, however, considers him trustworthy, although this attestation is not certain (Mamqani, 417 AH, vol. 16, p. 44).

In conclusion, there is a debate among the scholars of rijal regarding the reliability of Al-Qasim ibn al-Rabi'. The confusion arises primarily due to the existence of multiple individuals with similar names. However, given that Mohammad ibn al-Husayn ibn Abi al-Khattab (whose trustworthiness is not disputed) has relied on him, there is no need for further proof of his reliability, and the transmitted texts can be considered acceptable.

#### 2-1-4- Mohammad ibn Sanan

Mohammad ibn Sanan, also known simply as Ibn Sanan, is frequently mentioned in Shi'a hadith literature. His name appears as an authority in the chains of narration for 797 hadiths in the Four Books of Hadith (Khu'i, vol. 17, p. 148). It is noteworthy that rijāl (scholarly works on the reliability of narrators) mention two individuals named Mohammad ibn Sanan, distinguished by their lineages and grandfathers. The one we are discussing is Mohammad ibn Hasan ibn Sanan al-Zahri. The other, Mohammad ibn Sanan ibn Zarif al-Hashemi, is likely the brother of Abdullah ibn Sanan, a companion of Imam Sadiq, based on the statements of Shaykh Tusi (Tusi, 1415 AH, p. 283) and al-Kashshi, who stated: "...Ibn Sinan, and he is not Abdullah."

Many scholars have questioned the reliability of Mohammad ibn Sanan. Najashi, in his assessment, cites Ibn 'Iyash who states, "He is Mohammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Sanan. His father, al-Hasan, died when he was a child, and he was raised by his grandfather, Sanan, and thus was attributed to him." Consequently, due to being raised by his grandfather, Sanan, he was named after him.

Shaykh Tusi has also criticized him in several works, such as *Al-Fihrist* where he states, "And he has been criticized and his reliability has been questioned" (Tusi, 1417 AH, p. 219). In *Tahdhib al-Ahkam*, he describes him as "weak according to the critics of news" (Tusi, 1417 AH, vol. 7, p. 361), and in *Al-Rijal*, he simply labels him as "weak" (Tusi, 1415 AH, p. 364).

Al-Kashi narrates from Fazl ibn Shazan that Mohammad ibn Sanan was one of the well-known liars. Al-Kashi also categorizes him among the extremists. Ibn Ghada'iri says about him, "He is weak, an extremist who fabricates, and one should not pay attention to him" (Khu'i, 1410 AH, vol. 17, p. 168). Shaykh Mufid, in his treatise on numbers, refutes the proponents of numerology, stating, "Mohammad ibn Sanan is a highly criticized figure, and his weakness is undisputed. Therefore, his methods should not be followed in religious matters..." (Wahid Behbahani, 1117 AH, vol. 3, pp. 277-249). According to *Qamus al-Rijal*, all those who have criticized him, except Ibn Ghada'iri, have also praised him elsewhere. It adds that even if Ibn Ghada'iri's book of praise were to be found, he might have praised Mohammad ibn Sanan in it. Furthermore, it states that al-

Hamdawi has not criticized him but merely said that he does not narrate his hadiths, and not narrating someone's hadiths does not necessarily indicate their unreliability (Shushtari, 1410 AH, p. 189).

Many people have relied on the narrations of Mohammad ibn Sanan and have trusted his reports. Al-Najashi initially states that he is weak but then quotes a statement from al-Safwan ibn Yahya, saying that Mohammad ibn Sinan initially had extremist tendencies but later, after discussions with him, he agreed with them. Therefore, if al-Kashshi considers him weak, it is likely due to Mohammad ibn Sinan's earlier stance. However, Mohammad ibn Sinan later became more steadfast in his beliefs. Shaykh Tusi, who has criticized him in several books, considers him among the praiseworthy in his book *Al-Ghayba* and highly praises him (Tusi, 460 AH, p. 257). Mufid, who has spoken so harshly about him in his treatise on numbers, has praised him in his *Al-Irshad* and considered him among those whose status and authority are unquestionable (Mufid, 413 AH, vol. 2, p. 248). Al-Kashshi, who has categorized Ibn Sinan among the extremists in his commentary on Mufazal ibn Umar, appears to have relied on him in two other places.

Therefore, al-Kashshi's criticism does not seem to have been consistent. According to Ayatollah Khu'i, Ibn Qulawayh and Ali ibn Ibrahim have considered him reliable, as Mohammad ibn Sanan is mentioned in the chains of narration in their books (Khu'i, 410 AH, p. 237). Allama Hilli has retracted his earlier assessment of Mohammad ibn Sanan as weak and has instead affirmed his reliability (Hilli, 1413 AH, vol. 7, p. 8). Allama Majlisi and Sayyid Nimatullah al-Jazayeri have also considered him among the special companions of the Imams. Sayyid ibn Tawus, one of those who have criticized him, has expressed surprise at such assessments. (Khaqani, 1362 SH, p. 162). Individuals like Ibn Tawus and Ibn Shu'bah have vouched for his reliability, and some of the great Shi'a scholars, including the late Kullini, have preferred to affirm his trustworthiness, which is indeed the correct position (Khu'i, 1410 AH, vol. 17, p. 169). In conclusion, we can conclude that Mohammad ibn Sanan was a special companion and one of the inner circles of the Imams. Not only is his reliability not questionable, but his trustworthiness and the reliance on his narrations are also proven.

### 2-1-5- Sabah al-Madaini

In *rijāl* (scholarly works on the reliability of narrators) literature, there is no explicit attestation of the reliability of an individual named Sabah al-Madaini. However, a plausible argument can be made for his trustworthiness based on the potential identity of this individual with Sabah ibn Musa al-Sabati. Sabah ibn Musa is considered reliable in *rijāl* works, and given that al-Sabati and al-Madaini were contemporaries, and al-Sabati was from a village near Madain, it is possible that these two narrators are one and the same. Shaykh Tusi, in his *rijāl* work on the companions of Imam Sadiq, mentions both Sabah ibn Musa al-Sabati and Sabah al-Madaini (Kashshi, 1348 SH, pp. 226, 3044, and 3048). This suggests that these two names might refer to the same person, as Ayatollah Khu'i has also hinted in his *Ma'ajim al-Rijal*, stating, "If you ask about the companions of Imam Sadiq mentioned in Shaykh Tusi's *rijāl*, it can be weakly suggested that [Sabah al-Madaini] is the same as Sabah ibn Musa al-Sabati..." (Khu'i, 1410 AH, vol. 10, p. 106).

The multiple mentions of these two names in Shaykh Tusi's and other *rijāl* works do not necessarily indicate that they refer to different individuals. If the *rijāl* scholars had been certain that the two names referred to different people, they would not have included both in their works. For instance, Shaykh Tusi, upon encountering the *isnads* (chains of narration) of both Sabah al-Madaini and Sabah ibn Musa al-Sabati, and not being certain of their identity, included both in his *rijāl* work. The inclusion of two names in *rijāl* works only indicates that the scholars were uncertain about their identity, not that they were definitely different people. Even if the *rijāl* scholars considered the two names to be distinct, this would not be definitive proof of their difference, as there is always the possibility of error on their part. However, to counter the opinion of the *rijāl* scholars, we would need very strong evidence indicating their identity. Therefore, there is no obstacle to considering Sabah al-Madaini and Sabah ibn Musa al-Sabati as the same person and accepting his trustworthiness.

### 2-1-6- Mufazal ibn Umar

#### 2-1-6-1- Views of Rijal Scholars

Scholars of *rijāl* (the study of the reliability of hadith narrators) have presented varying opinions regarding the trustworthiness of Mufazal ibn Umar. These viewpoints can be categorized into three groups:



1. **Unreliability:** Early rijāl scholars such as Ibn Ghada'iri, Ibn Dawud Hilli, al-Najashi, and Allama Hilli have labeled him weak, deviant in belief, unreliable in narration, extravagant in his claims, and associated with the Khattabiyyah (a sect). They cite certain narrations found in al-Kashshi's book as evidence for their assessment (Ibn Ghada'iri, 1380 SH, p. 87; Hilli, 1392 AH, vol. 1, p. 280; Najashi, 1421 AH, vol. 1, p. 416; Hilli, 1392 AH, vol. 1, p. 412).
2. **Reliability:** Scholars such as Shaykh Mufid in *Al-Irshad* (Mufid, 1413 AH, vol. 2, p. 216) and Shaykh Tusi in *Al-Ghayba* consider Mufazal to be one of the great companions of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), one of his close associates, and a righteous scholar. Many later rijāl scholars also consider him trustworthy and hold sound beliefs. By citing narrations praising Mufazal ibn Umar and comparing them to those criticizing him, as well as gathering various pieces of evidence, they have cleared him of accusations such as exaggeration, association with the Khattabiyyah, and unreliable narration. Among these rijāl scholars are Abu Ali al-Ha'iri in *Muntaha al-Maqal* (Mazandarani, 1416 AH, vol. 6, p. 310), Mulla Ali Aliyari Tabrizi in *Bahjat al-Amal fi Sharh Zabdat al-Maqal* (Aliyari Tabrizi, 1412 AH, vol. 7, p. 70), Mamqani in *Tanqih al-Maqal* (Mamqani, 1351 AH, vol. 3, p. 238), Mohammad Taqi Shushtari in *Qamus al-Rijal* (Shushtari, 1410 AH, vol. 9, p. 93), Ali Namazi Shahrudi in *Mustadrakāt 'Ilm al-Rijal al-Hadith* (Namazi Shahrudi, 1412 AH, vol. 7, p. 477), and Sayyid Abu al-Qasim Khu'i in *Ma'ajim al-Rijal al-Hadith* (Khu'i, 1372 SH, vol. 19, p. 315). Additionally, Muhaddith Nuri, at the end of *Mustadrak al-Wasa'il* in the section on the "isnād" (chain of transmission) of those mentioned in *Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih*, discusses Mufazal's trustworthiness in detail and presents evidence to support his claim (Nuri, 1429 AH, vol. 22, pp. 95-135). Shaykh Asad Haydar in *Al-Imam al-Sadiq wa al-Madhahib al-Arba'a* argues that there were two Mufazal ibn Umars: Mufazal ibn Umar al-Ja'fi, who was trustworthy and reliable, and Mufazal ibn Umar al-Safiri, who was deviant in belief and associated with the Khattabiyyah. He suggests that perhaps opponents have intentionally confused the



two (Asad Haydar, 1422 AH, vol. 2, p. 104). Evidence for this claim is found in Shi'a hadith books where narrations are attributed to Mufazal ibn Umar ibn al-Qasim al-Safiri (Tarabi, 1423 AH, vol. 1, p. 367).

3. **Silence on Trustworthiness:** Some scholars have not explicitly stated their opinion on Mufaddal ibn Umar's trustworthiness or unreliability. For example, Shaykh Tusi, in *Al-Fihrist*, only mentions Mufazal's will and book (Tusi, 1415 AH, p. 251). In his *rijāl* work, he lists Mufazal as a companion of both Imam Sadiq and Imam Kazim, but does not comment on his trustworthiness (Tusi, 1415 AH, p. 307). Al-Kashshi, in his *rijāl* work, simply narrates both the narrations praising and criticizing Mufazal without offering a conclusion (Kashshi, 1404 AH, vol. 2, pp. 612-621).

#### 2-6-1-2 - Evidence of Mufazal ibn Umar's Reliability

1. **Narrations Praising Mufazal:** There are numerous narrations from the Infallible Imams praising Mufaddal ibn Umar.
2. **Explicit Attestation by Shaykh Mufid:** In his book *Al-Irshad*, the late Shaykh Mufid (may Allah have mercy upon him) considers Mufazal ibn Umar to be one of the special companions of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) (Mufid, 413 AH, p. 159).
3. **Attestation by Shaykh Tusi:** In his book *Al-Ghayba*, Shaykh Tusi mentions Mufazal ibn Umar as one of the trusted emissaries (Mufid, 1411 AH, p. 138).
4. **The Title of "Bab":** Some scholars have bestowed the title of "Bab" upon the closest and most trusted companions of the Imams. This title signifies someone who possesses deep knowledge of the Imam's secrets and teachings in political, social, and intellectual matters. Ibn Abi al-Thalj Mohammad ibn Ahmad al-Kathib al-Baghdadi, Shaykh Tabrizi, and Mamqani in *Tanqih al-Maqal* have all considered Mufazal ibn Umar to be the "Bab" of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) (Sadr, 1420 AH, p. 144; Mamqani, 1351 AH, vol. 1, p. 190). Al-Kaffami also considers him the "Bab" of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) (Kaffami, 1349 SH, p. 523). However, Ibn Shahr Ashub in *Manaqib Aal Abi Talib* considers him the "Bab" of Imam Kazim (peace be upon him) (Mazandarani, 1405 AH, vol. 4, p. 325).

5. **The Book of Tawhid:** Another significant piece of evidence is the book of *Tawhid* (Unity of God), which Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) dictated to Mufazal ibn Umar. The sentences in this book begin with the phrase "Think, O Mufazal," indicating the Imam's high level of trust in him. Al-Najashi refers to this book as the "Book of Thought" (Najashi, 1365, p. 416).
6. **Mufazal's Agency:** In *Muntaha al-Maqal*, there is a reference to Mufazal ibn Umar acting as an agent (Ha'iri, 1416 AH, vol. 6, no. 3029, p. 314). In *Al-Ghayba* by Shaykh Tusi, there are two narrations that attest to Mufazal's agency. For example, Hisham ibn Ahmad narrates that he took some money to Musa ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) and was instructed to return it to Mufazal ibn Umar (Tusi, 1411 AH, p. 347).

Therefore, based on the consensus of several scholars that agency from an Infallible Imam is a strong indication of trustworthiness, along with the other evidence presented, Mufazal ibn Umar can be considered a reliable narrator and one of the special companions of the Imams (Astrabadi, 1416 AH, p. 45; Hasan ibn Zayn al-Din, 1362 SH, vol. 1, p. 18; Ha'iri, 1416 AH, vol. 7, p. 474; Mamqani, 1411 AH, vol. 2, p. 258; Nuri, 1415 AH, vol. 5, p. 263).

## 2.2 Textual Analysis

In this section, we will engage in textual verification of Imam Sadiq's (as) response to Mufaddal's letter and through signs and indications such as...

**Concordance with the Qur'an:** The text is examined for consistency with the Qur'anic verses.

- **Alignment with authentic and unanimous traditions:** The epistle is compared against well-established hadiths that corroborate its content.
- **Agreement with rational arguments:** The textual claims are assessed for their logical coherence.
- **Conformity with the consensus of the Twelver Shi'a:** The text is evaluated against the established beliefs and doctrines of the majority Shi'a sect.

Through this rigorous analysis, we aim to dispel any doubts surrounding the authenticity and reliability of the letter's contents.



### 2-2-1- Thematic Analysis of Mofazal ibn Omar's Letter

The guidance and advice proffered by Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) in his epistle to Mofazal can be broadly categorized into two primary themes:

**a. The essence and truth of religion is the knowledge of men (of religion).**

**b. "The evils prohibited in the Qur'an, such as alcohol, gambling, and those inherent in tyranny ("Khalifah Jorr"), can be categorized.":**

Here, the Imam delves into the grave sins prohibited in the Qur'an, such as the consumption of alcohol and gambling. Moreover, he warns against the dangers of associating with individuals who outwardly profess piety but harbor malicious intentions and tyrannical inclinations.

Given this thematic framework, the subsequent analysis will present excerpts from Mofazal's original query and Imam Sadiq's corresponding response. By meticulously comparing these passages with the Qur'anic text, authentic hadiths, and employing rigorous textual analysis, we aim to substantiate the authenticity and reliability of this significant correspondence.

### 2-2-2- The Essence of Religion Lies in Knowing *rejal*.

أَنَّ الدِّينَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ مَعْرِفَةُ الرِّجَالِ ثُمَّ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ إِذَا عَرَفْتَهُمْ فَاعْمَلْ مَا شِئْتَ وَ ذَكَرْتَ أَنَّكَ قَدْ عَرَفْتَ أَنَّ  
أَصَلَ الدِّينِ مَعْرِفَةُ الرِّجَالِ فَوَفَّقَكَ اللَّهُ وَ ذَكَرْتَ أَنَّهُ بَلَغَكَ أَنَّهُمْ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّ الصَّلَاةَ وَالزَّكَاةَ وَصَوْمَ  
شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ وَالْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ وَالْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْمَشْعَرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ هُوَ  
رَجُلٌ وَأَنَّ الطُّهْرَ وَالْإِغْتِسَالَ مِنَ الْجَنَابَةِ هُوَ رَجُلٌ وَ كُلُّ فَرِيضَةٍ افْتَرَضَهَا اللَّهُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ هُوَ رَجُلٌ؛

Religion is nothing but the knowledge of men. When you know a man, then do whatever you wish, remembering that you know the foundation of religion is the knowledge of men." In your letter, you mentioned that you know the essence of religion is knowing men, but they say: Prayer, zakat, fasting the month of Ramadan, Hajj, Umrah, the Sacred Mosque, the Kaaba, the Sacred Sanctuary, and the sacred month are all a man.



Purification and ablution from jenabat are also a man. And every obligation that God has imposed upon His servants is a man. In essence, Mofazal ibn Omar states in his letter that there is a group (the Batiniyya) who believe that whoever knows those men (the Infallible Imams) completely and with certainty in their hearts, can dispense with performing external actions and striving in deeds. According to them, if one knows them, these actions are accepted from them without being performed at the prescribed times.

### Imam Sadiq's response to the first statement

ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَخْبَرْتُكَ أَنَّ الدِّينَ وَاصِلَ الدِّينِ هُوَ رَجُلٌ وَ هُوَ الْيَقِينُ وَ هُوَ الْإِيمَانُ وَ هُوَ إِمَامٌ أُمَّتِهِ وَ أَهْلُ رِمَانِهِ فَمَنْ عَرَفَهُ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ وَ مَنْ أَنْكَرَهُ أَنْكَرَ اللَّهَ وَ دِينَهُ وَ مَنْ جَهَلَهُ جَهَلَ اللَّهَ وَ دِينَهُ وَ حُدُودَهُ وَ شَرَّائِعَهُ بِغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ الْإِمَامِ كَذَلِكَ جَرَى بِأَنَّ مَعْرِفَةَ الرَّجَالِ دِينُ اللَّهِ . فَمَنْ رَعَى أَنَّ ذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا هِيَ الْمَعْرِفَةُ وَ أَنَّهُ إِذَا عَرَفَ اكْتَفَى بِغَيْرِ طَاعَةٍ فَقَدْ كَذَبَ وَ أَشْرَكَ ذَلِكَ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ وَ لَمْ يُطِيعْ وَ إِنَّمَا قِيلَ اعْرِفْ وَ اعْمَلْ مَا شِئْتَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُقْبَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكَ بِغَيْرِ مَعْرِفَةٍ فَإِذَا عَرَفْتَ فَاَعْمَلْ لِنَفْسِكَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ قَلَّ أَوْ كَثُرَ فَإِنَّهُ مَقْبُولٌ مِنْكَ؛

"I caution you that the root and foundation of religion is an individual, a single person. That person is certainty and faith. He is the leader of the people and the people of his time.

Whoever knows him, knows God and His religion. And whoever denies him, denies God and His religion and is ignorant of the Imam, ignorant of God and His religion. Religion, faith, and the boundaries of the Lord cannot be known except through that Imam. For this reason, I say that knowing specific men is the knowledge of God's religion. Whoever thinks that only knowledge and understanding are necessary and that after knowing, there is no need for action, has lied and is a polytheist. Such a person has neither gnosis nor obedience.

It has been said: 'Know and have gnosis, then do whatever good deeds you wish,' because good deeds are not accepted without knowledge. When you find gnosis, whatever obedience and submission you do for yourself, whether little or much, is accepted (provided you have not abandoned the obligatory duties)."



## 2-2-2- Concordance with the Book of God and Agreement with Definitive Traditions and the Imamiyyah Sect

Numerous verses in the Glorious Qur'an employ the terms "religion," "knowledge," "love," and "obedience," each with distinct roots, all of which are related to the concept of *wilāyah*. In the following section, we will briefly examine a few examples of verses and hadiths concerning these terms.

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

"And whoever chooses a religion other than Islam will never have it accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." (Al-Imran 3:85)

Terms such as "Islam," "religion," and "loss" are Qur'anic terms (i.e., terms whose specific meaning is determined by the infallible Imams). Therefore, we cannot independently define the exact connotations of these words. In the traditions of the Infallible Imams (peace be upon them), Islam is defined as submission to the *wilayah* (divine guardianship) of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him). Consequently, one who chooses a religion other than Islam is, in fact, rejecting *wilayah*.

The term "din" (religion) in this context refers to the perfection of religion, which was completed on the Day of Ghadir. Anyone who rejects this perfected religion will suffer loss on the Day of Judgment. The true interpretation of this verse has not yet fully materialized. The necessary conditions for its complete realization will only be met when all people have accepted the religion of Islam.

This will only occur during the time of the Mahdi, when the interpretation of the verse will be fully realized. At that time, anyone who does not accept Islam will be a loser. The aforementioned interpretation can be inferred from the following hadiths.



## Hadith 1:

الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى وَ مَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَ هُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ فَقَالَ غَيْرَ النَّسْلِيمِ لَوْلَا بَيْنَانَا"

And whoever seeks other than Islam as a religion will never have it accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." (Al-Imran 3:85)

Imam Sadiq (as) interpreted this verse to mean: "Whoever does not submit to our wilayah (divine guardianship) will not have his religion accepted, and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter." (Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 23, p. 358; Ibn Shahr Ashub, Manaqib, vol. 4, p. 283).

Therefore, Islam is understood as submission to the wilayah of Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) (as narrated by reliable scholars), which is equivalent to submission to God. Submission, in this context, implies affirmation and recognition. Thus, the essence of faith lies in affirming, submitting to, and recognizing the Imams.

## Hadith 2:

عَنْ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ) حَدِيثٌ طَوِيلٌ يَقُولُ فِيهِ: حُبُّ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي وَ ذُرِّيَّتِي اسْتِكْمَالُ الدِّينِ وَ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ) هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ أَنْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَ رَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ...؛

"Imam Hassan (as) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said: 'Love for my family perfects one's religion.' Then, he recited this verse: 'This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as 1 a religion...' (Ma'idah 5:3).

According to this verse, loving the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and the Prophet's progeny perfects one's religion. As a result, this love leads to knowledge, and knowledge of the Imams is the essence of religion."

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me." (Qur'an 51:56)

This verse clearly states that the purpose of creation is to worship God. However, numerous hadiths narrated by the Imams indicate that this worship is intrinsically linked to the knowledge of the Imams.



Without this knowledge, worship becomes incomplete and devoid of its true essence. As Imam Reza (peace be upon him) stated in the well-known Hadith of the Golden Chain, "La ilaha illallah is My fortress, and whoever enters My fortress will be safe from My punishment." This hadith highlights the significance of tawhid (monotheism) as a protective fortress and emphasizes the role of the Imams in attaining true monotheism.

Hadith 1:

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عليه السلام) قَالَ: خَرَجَ الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ (عليه السلام) عَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَلَّ ذِكْرُهُ مَا خَلَقَ الْعِبَادَ إِلَّا لِيَعْرِفُوهُ فَإِذَا عَرَفُوهُ عَبَدُوهُ فَإِذَا عَبَدُوهُ اسْتَعْتَمُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِ عَنْ عِبَادَةِ مَنْ سِوَاهُ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ يَا ابْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ بِأَيِّ أَنْتَ وَ أُمِّي فَمَا مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَعْرِفَةُ أَهْلِ كُلِّ زَمَانٍ إِمَامُهُمُ الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِمْ طَاعَتُهُ؛

"Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) said: 'O my companions! God created people to know Him. When they know Him, they worship Him, and when they worship Him, they cease to worship others.'

A man asked, 'O son of the Messenger of God, may I be sacrificed for you! What is the meaning of knowing God?' The Imam replied, 'For the people of each era, knowledge and recognition mean knowing their Imam of the time, whose obedience is obligatory upon them.' (Saduq, 1413 Q, vol. 1, p. 9; Huwaizi, 1412 Q, vol. 3, p. 194; Barazesh, 1396, vol. 15, p. 154).

The components and characteristics of wilayah (divine guardianship) are knowledge, love, and obedience. Obedience is one of the pillars of wilayah, alongside knowledge. First, we must know, and then we can obey. Knowledge, combined with obedience, leads to love. Therefore, the essence of religion is love, knowledge, and recognition of the Imam of the time, and knowing the Imam (the Imams) is the same as knowing God."

وَيَبْيَهُمَا جِجَابٌ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَتَادُوا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ

"And between the two groups is a barrier and a curtain (from a good nature and a bad one that prevents them from seeing each other) and on the A'raf are men who recognize all by their faces, and they call out to those of Paradise who have not yet entered Paradise and still hope to enter, saying, 'Peace be upon you.' (Al-A'raf 7:46).



The atmosphere conveyed by this verse paints a picture of a judgment that God Almighty has prepared for each individual on the Day of Resurrection.

However, what can be inferred from this verse is that the judge on the Day of Resurrection is not God Almighty Himself, but rather His fully authorized representatives, referred to as 'rijal' (men) who recognize all men by their faces. Based on the hadiths that follow, these men are meant to be the Infallible Imams (peace be upon them)."

Hadith 1:

عَنْ مُفَرِّقٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَاعَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عليه السلام) يَقُولُ: جَاءَ ابْنُ الْكَوَّاءِ إِلَى أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (عليه السلام) فَقَالَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (عليه السلام) وَ عَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَقَالَ تَحْنُ عَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ نَعْرِفُ أَنْصَارَنَا بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَ نَحْنُ الْأَعْرَافُ الَّتِي لَا يُعْرِفُ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ إِلَّا بِسَبِيلِ مَعْرِفَتِنَا وَ نَحْنُ الْأَعْرَافُ يَعْرِفُنَا اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ فَلَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ عَرَفَنَا وَ عَرَفْنَاهُ وَ لَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَنْكَرْنَا وَ أَنْكَرْنَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَ تَعَالَى لَوْ شَاءَ لَعَرَفَ الْعِبَادَ نَفْسَهُ وَ لَكِنْ جَعَلْنَا أَبْوَابَهُ وَ صِرَاطَهُ وَ سَبِيلَهُ وَ الْوَجْهَ الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مِنْهُ مَنْ عَدَلَ عَنْ وَ لَا يَبْتِنَا أَوْ فَضَّلَ عَلَيْنَا غَيْرَنَا فَأَبْهَمَ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنَاكِبُونَ فَلَا سَوَاءَ مَنِ اعْتَصَمَ النَّاسُ بِهِ وَ لَا سَوَاءَ حَيْثُ ذَهَبَ النَّاسُ إِلَى عُيُونٍ كِدْرَهُ يَفْرَعُ بَعْضُهَا فِي بَعْضٍ وَ ذَهَبَ مَنْ ذَهَبَ إِلَيْنَا إِلَى عُيُونٍ صَافِيَةٍ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا لَا نَفَادَ لَهَا وَ لَا انْقِطَاعَ

"Mugharen narrated: I heard Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) say: Ibn Kawa'a came to Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) and asked him, 'O Amir al-Mu'minin, what is the interpretation of the verse: "And on the A'raf are men who recognize all by their faces"? He replied, "We are on the A'raf, and we recognize our supporters by their faces.

We are the A'raf, and God Almighty is not known except through our knowledge and recognition. We are the A'raf, and God will keep us on the Straight Path on the Day of Judgment. No one will enter Paradise except those who have known us and we have known them, and no one will enter the Fire except those who have denied us and we have denied them.

Indeed, God, the Exalted, could have made people familiar with Himself so that they might know His limits and turn to Him. God has made us the door, the path, the way, and the gate of entry to His presence. Whoever deviates from our wilayah or prefers others to us has deviated from the straight path. Those to whom people have resorted are not equal, nor is it the same for people to go to muddy springs that empty each other or to come to us. Whoever comes to us has gone to clear and pure springs that flow by the command of the Lord, springs that never end and are

always flowing." (Barazesh, 1396, vol. 5, p. 138; Kulini, 1365 SH, vol. 1, p. 184; Majlisi, 1037, vol. 3, p. 253; Saffar, 1404 Q, p. 497; Kufi, 352 Q, p. 142; Astarabadi, 2015, p. 182; Majlisi, 1037 Q, vol. 8, p. 339; Huwaizi, 1412 Q, vol. 3, p. 184).

Hadith 2:

عَنْ ابْنِ أُدَيْنَةَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا غَيْرٌ وَاحِدٍ عَنْ أَحَدِهِمَا ع أَنَّهُ قَالَ: لَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مُؤْمِنًا حَتَّى يَعْرِفَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَ الْأَيُّمَةَ كُلَّهُمْ وَ إِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ وَ يَرُدَّ إِلَيْهِ وَ يُسَلِّمَ لَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ كَيْفَ يَعْرِفُ الْأَخْرَجَ وَ هُوَ يَجْهَلُ الْأَوَّلَ

"One of the two Imams, Baqir or Sadiq (as), said: 'A believer will not be a true believer unless he knows God, His Messenger, all the Imams, and his Imam of the Time, and consults his Imam of the Time in his affairs and submits to him.' Then he said, 'How can he know the last Imam while being ignorant of the first?' (Kulayni, 1365 SH, Kitab al-Hujjah, Bab Ma'rifat al-Imam wa al-Radd ilayhi, vol. 1, p. 336)."

Hadith 3:

عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) فِي قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ مَنْ يُؤْتِ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا فَقَالَ طَاعَةُ اللَّهِ وَ مَعْرِفَةُ الْإِمَامِ

Abu Basir narrated: Imam Sadiq (as), in interpreting God's saying (Bagharah, 2:273): "And whoever is given wisdom, indeed he has been given much good," said: "It means obedience to God and knowledge of the Imam." (Kulaini, 1365 SH, vol. 1, p. 185).

In other words, whoever has a better understanding of the position of the Imam (as) has, in fact, been given wisdom. In the aforementioned verse, the singular form of "much good" is used, but in verse 77 of Surah An-Nisa, it states, "The enjoyment of this worldly life is but little." This means that even if one possesses all the wealth of the world, it is considered little, whereas whoever is given wisdom (knowledge) is given much good. In the second part of the textual analysis, we will address a statement made by Mufazal and Imam Sadiq's (as) response. In this section, it is mentioned that Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has identified the essence of all vices such as wine, gambling, and adultery as *rajul* (man).

To prepare the audience for understanding this topic, we will first present Mufazal's statement and Imam Sadiq's (peace be upon him) response, and then proceed to analyze and examine the relevant verses and hadiths.



## 2-2-2- Vices prohibited in the Qur'an, such as wine, gambling, and others

وَيَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّ لِهَذَا ظَهْرًا وَبَطْنًا يَعْرِفُونَهُ فَالظَّاهِرُ يَتَنَاسَمُونَ (ما يَتَنَاهَوْنَ) عَنْهُ يَأْخُذُونَ بِهِ مُدَافِعَهُ عَنْهُمْ وَالبَاطِنُ هُوَ الَّذِي يَطْلُبُونَ وَ بِهِ أُمُرُوا

They say that there is an outward and an inward aspect to the prohibitions of religion. The outward aspect is what is avoided and is done for the sake of self-defense, but the inward aspect is what they seek and are commanded to do. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), in response to Mufazal ibn Amr's question regarding the prohibitions mentioned in the Qur'an, said: Imam Sadiq's (peace be upon him) response to the second statement..."

فَعَدُوُّهُمْ هُمُ الحَرَامُ المَحْرَمُ وَ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الدَّاخِلُونَ فِي أَمْرِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ القِيَامَةِ فَهُمُ الفَوَاحِشُ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَ مَا بَطَّنَ وَ الحَمْرُ وَ المَيْسِرُ وَ الرِّزَا وَ الرِّبَا وَ الدَّمُ وَ المَيْتَةَ وَ لَحْمَ الخِنْزِيرِ فَهُمُ الحَرَامُ المَحْرَمُ وَ أَصْلُ كُلِّ حَرَامٍ وَ هُمُ الشَّرُّ وَ أَصْلُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ وَ مِنْهُمْ فُرُوعُ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ وَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الفُرُوعُ الحَرَامُ وَ اسْتِخْلَالُهُمْ إِيَّاهَا وَ مِنْ فُرُوعِهِمُ تَكْذِيبُ الأنَّبِيَاءِ وَ جُحُودُ الأَوْصِيَاءِ وَ رُكُوبُ الفَوَاحِشِ الرِّزَا وَ السَّرْقَةِ وَ شُرْبِ الحَمْرِ وَ المُسْكِرِ وَ أَكْلِ مَالِ اليَتِيمِ وَ أَكْلِ الرِّبَا وَ الخُدْعَةَ وَ الخِيَانَةَ وَ رُكُوبِ الحَرَامِ كُلِّهَا وَ اتِّهَابِ المَعَاصِي وَ إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُ اللهُ بِالعَدْلِ وَ الإِحْسَانِ وَ إِبْتِئَاءِ ذِي القُرْبَى بِعَنْ مَوَدَّةِ ذِي القُرْبَى وَ ابْتِغَاءِ طَاعَتِهِمْ وَ يَنْهَى عَنِ الفَحْشَاءِ وَ المُنْكَرِ وَ البَغْيِ وَ هُمُ أَعْدَاءُ الأنَّبِيَاءِ وَ أَوْصِيَاءِ الأنَّبِيَاءِ وَ هُمُ المُنْهَى عَنِ مَوَدَّتِهِمْ وَ طَاعَتِهِمْ بِهَذِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَذَكَّرُونَ

"The enemies of the Prophet are the true harams (prohibited things), and their followers are involved in their affairs until the Day of Judgment. They are the manifest and hidden indecencies: wine, gambling, adultery, usury, blood, carrion, and pork.

They are the true haram and the root of all haram, the true evil and the root of all evil; all evils have sprung from them. From this same branch, prohibitions and the permissibility of indecent acts have emerged, including the denial of the prophets (peace be upon them) and the denial of the successors, as well as the commission of evil deeds such as fornication, theft, wine, intoxicants, consuming the property of orphans, usury, deceit, betrayal, and all other haram and wicked acts.

Although God commands justice, kindness, and maintaining kinship ties, which refers to the kinship of the Prophet and following them, and forbids evil deeds, corruption, and wickedness.

They are the enemies of the prophets and the successors of the prophets; God has forbidden friendship and obedience to them. God gives you this



advice, perhaps you will understand. (Saffar, 1404 Q, pp. 526-536; Majlisi, 1037 Q, vol. 24, p. 286, h1; Barazesh, 1396 SH, vol. 4, p. 632).

Many verses in the Qur'an refer to manifest and hidden indecencies. We will briefly mention a few examples of these verses:

### 2-2-2-1- Concordance with the Book of God

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ

"And do not approach evil deeds, openly or secretly." (Qur'an 6:151). Before delving into the interpretation of this verse, it is essential to provide a historical context. Throughout Islamic history, various groups and sects (theological, philosophical, mystical, etc.) have emerged.

One such sect is the Zahiris, who strictly adhered to the literal meaning of the Qur'an and Sunnah, while their counterparts, the Batinis, emphasized the esoteric or inner meanings.

This verse aligns with Imam Kazim's (peace be upon him) assertion that religion has both an outward and an inward aspect. The outward appearance of indecencies is what is commonly known, but the inward reality of indecency is the tyrannical ruler who assumes power. Due to their corruption, incompetence, and injustice, such a person leads to the proliferation of all forms of indecency in society. Therefore, the root of all indecency is the tyrannical ruler himself.

The hadiths presented below support this claim and can be found in numerous reliable Shia sources.

Hadith 1:

الامام الكاظم (عليه السلام): إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ فَقَالَ إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ لَهُ ظَاهِرٌ وَبَاطِنٌ فَجَمِيعُ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ عَلَى ظَاهِرِهِ كَمَا هُوَ فِي الظَّاهِرِ وَالبَاطِنِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَيْمَةُ الجُورِ وَ جَمِيعُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِي الكِتَابِ فَهُوَ حَلَالٌ وَ هُوَ الظَّاهِرُ وَ البَاطِنُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَيْمَةُ الهُدَى

Imam Kazim (as) said: "The Qur'an has an outward and an inward meaning. What God has forbidden refers to the outward meaning, while the inward meaning of prohibitions refers to tyrannical leaders.

And what God has permitted in His Book refers to its outward meaning, while its inward meaning refers to the true Imams." (Majlesi, 1037 Q, vol. 24, p. 189; Ayyashi, 1380 Q, vol. 2, p. 16; Saffar, 1404 Q, p. 33; Astrabadi, 2015, p. 177; H<sup>1</sup> ٤١٢ ويزى, Q, vol. 4, p. 184; Bahrani, 1100 Q, vol. 3, p. 201; Kulini, 1365 SH, vol. 1, p. 374; Saffar, 1404 Q, p. 53).



(Qummi, 1404 Q, vol. 1, p. 227; Majlesi, 1037 Q, vol. 24, p. 303; Bahrani, 1100 Q, vol. 3, p. 189; Barazesh, 1396 SH, vol. 5, p. 114).

Hadith 2:

"Imam Sadiq (as) said regarding the verse 'And He has made faith pleasing to you and beautified it in your hearts': 'The meaning is Amir al-Mu'minin (Ali ibn Abi Talib).

And He has made disbelief, wickedness, and disobedience hateful to you': 'The meaning is the hatred and enmity of us, the Ahl al-Bayt, towards those who opposed the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and opposed us (the unjust caliphs).' (Majlisi, 1037, vol. 23, p. 358; Ibn Shahr Ashub, 1376, vol. 4, p. 214; Bahrani, 1100, vol. 3, p. 195).

"According to the above narration, the root of wickedness, disbelief, disobedience, and rebellion are those men (the unjust caliphs).

Hadith 3:

الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): نَحْنُ أَصْلُ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَ مِنْ فُرُوعِنَا كُلِّ بِرٍّ وَ مِنَ الْبِرِّ التَّوْحِيدُ وَ الصَّلَاةُ وَ الصِّيَامُ وَ كَطَمُّ الْعَيْظِ وَ الْعَفْوُ عَنِ الْمُسِيءِ وَ رَحْمَةُ الْفَقِيرِ وَ تَعَاهُدُ الْجَارِ وَ الْإِقْرَارُ بِالْفَضْلِ لِأَهْلِهِ وَ عَدُوْنَا أَصْلُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ وَ مِنْ فُرُوعِهِمْ كُلُّ قَبِيحٍ وَ فَاجِشَةٍ فَمِنْهُمْ الْكُذِبُ وَ النَّمِيمَةُ وَ الْبُخْلُ وَ الْقَطِيعَةُ وَ أَكْلُ الرِّبَا وَ أَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّهِ وَ تَعْدِي الْحُدُودِ الَّتِي أَمَرَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَ رُكُوبُ الْفَوَاحِشِ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَ مَا بَطَّنَ مِنَ الرِّئَا وَ السَّرْفَةِ وَ كُلُّ مَا وَافَقَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْقَبِيحِ وَ كَذَبَ مَنْ قَالَ إِنَّهُ مَعَنَا وَ هُوَ مُتَعَلِّقٌ بِفُرْعٍ غَيْرِنَ

Imam Sadiq (as) said: "We are the root of all goodness, and every good deed sprout from us. Among these good deeds are: monotheism, prayer, fasting, controlling one's anger, forgiving sinners, being compassionate to the needy, visiting one's neighbors, and acknowledging the merits of those who deserve it.

Our enemies are also the root of all evil, and every bad and ugly deed sprout from them. Among these are: lying, backbiting, stinginess, cutting off family ties, usury, consuming the orphan's property unjustly, transgressing the limits set by God, and committing both apparent and hidden indecencies, such as fornication, theft, and other evil acts. It is a lie for someone to claim to love us while engaging in the actions of our enemies. (Barazesh, 1396, vol. 5, p. 112; Majlesi, 1037 Q, vol. 2, p. 303)."

In explaining and analyzing this narration, we can refer to verse 24 of Surah Ibrahim, which introduces the root of the religion of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). "Have you not seen how Allah has made a beautiful

similitude: a good word is like a good tree whose root is firm and its branches are in the sky?" (Ibrahim 14:24).

Therefore, the root and origin of all goodness is the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), and its branches are goodness, prayer, patience, and so on. The root and origin of all evil is the unjust caliphs, who are referred to as "men" in the hadiths, and their branches are aggression, slander, arrogance, and so on.

### **Conclusion**

The results obtained from this research can be summarized as follows: The thematic agreement of the letter with Qur'anic verses and authoritative narrations, reason, the consensus of the majority of scholars, and the acceptance of this letter as authentic, the citation of the narration with multiple chains in a single book, the presence of the narration in reliable Shiite hadith books, and historical reality are all evidence that confirms the authenticity of this letter. This knowledge demonstrates that the knowledge of religion is only obtained through the recognition of men, and by "men" is meant the Prophet and the Infallible Imams. By obeying them, one obeys God, and by disobeying and rebelling against their commands, one disobeys and rebels against the commands and decrees of God. Moreover, the true nature of the ugly and hidden indecencies forbidden in the Qur'an is the leaders and ringleaders of disbelief and the roots of atheism, whose call is nothing but a call to the Fire. And the inner meaning and interpretation of the Fire is the acceptance of their tyrannical caliphate.



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