



**In the Name of Allah,  
the Entirely Compassionate,  
the Especially Merciful.**



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- 1- Helping to spread the culture of Ahl al-Bayt (as) research in scientific and research centers;
- 2- Promoting and deepening Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and knowledge;
- 3- Promoting and presenting scientific products of Imam Mobin Research Center;
- 4- Publishing an authentic and reference Quarterly with scientific-research validity in the field of Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and education.

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Dr. Mohammad Reza Aram  
Editor-in-Chief







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## **Various Forms of Specific Designation (*Tanṣīṣ*) of Amīr al-Mu'minīn Imam 'Alī (as) in the Words of the Prophet (pbuh)**

Sayyid Hasan Sabzavari<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

The process of designating an Imam stands as one of the most pivotal and contentious issues in the context of Islamic leadership, serving as a primary locus of discord throughout Islamic history. Not only have diverse methodologies regarding the selection and appointment of an Imam underscored the unique character of Islamic sects, denominations, and doctrinal orientations but they have also engendered intricate debates within the Muslim intellectual tradition. Within this discourse, the Imamiyah School, drawing upon rational, Qur'anic, and Sunnah sources of knowledge, accentuates the significance of appointment and grants a privilege to textual sources (*naṣṣ*) as the exclusive conduit for discerning and expounding this perspective. Hence, one of the paradigms employed by the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in both the paramount aspect of his mission and in explicating the succession of Imam 'Alī to his prophetic legacy is characterized by a specific form of designation (*tanṣīṣ*). Through this approach, the Prophet not only corroborated the appointment but also elucidated and authenticated the essence of this pivotal issue, thereby substantiating his argument for the community. The research findings expound upon a linguistic framework utilized to convey the concept of Imamate, addressing seven titles such as Imamate, caliphate, successorship (*wiṣāyah*), wilāyat (lit. guardianship), vizieryship (*vizārat*), emirate (*imārat*) and commandership of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Imam 'Alī (as), citing examples of these expressions in the Prophetic sayings.

**Keywords:** Designation, Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Prophetic Sayings, Imamate, Caliphate.



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## Introduction

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is regarded as the foremost guide and educator of humanity, exemplifying the pinnacle of moral and instructional leadership. As articulated in the tradition, "He (God) educated his Prophet, and then He perfected his manners" (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 1, p. 266), his character, teachings, and normative conduct, imbued with divine nurture, epitomize the profound wisdom of the Qur'an.

When the Prophet (pbuh) speaks of the bestowal of *Jawāmi' al-Kalim*<sup>1</sup> by God as an honor bestowed upon him (Ṣadūq, 1993, vol. 11, p. 240), it does not imply that all virtues and knowledge are encompassed within his words. Rather, it signifies a portion of his knowledge that he articulates in accordance with the intellectual capacity and comprehension of his audience. (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 1, p. 23)

Such constraints on divine proofs (*hujaj*) have been inherent in their interactions with humanity, necessitating diverse methodologies and linguistic approaches to convey truths and reveal mysteries. Even the Quraysh tribe, renowned for their eloquence and rhetoric among the Arabs, found themselves captivated not only by the divine discourse but also by the eloquence, expressions, and rhetorical strategies inherent in the words of the unlettered Prophet (pbuh).

In the critical task of guiding the community, particularly concerning the succession of Imam 'Alī, the Prophet (pbuh) employed various linguistic frameworks to elucidate this pivotal matter conclusively. This strategic utilization of language served to leave no room for ambiguity, ensuring the clarity of his message and removing any pretext for dissent within the community.

Considering the structure and content of the Prophet's speech, as well as his audience engagement, his rhetorical patterns in elucidating the Imamate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Imam 'Alī (as) can be classified into three types, e.g. thematic content, rhetorical styles, and linguistic and

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1. *Jawāmi' al-Kalim* is a prophetic term referring to a collection of comprehensive, concise, and meaningful sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. The term "kalima" in this expression refers to a collection of words, such as a sermon or a poem. Therefore, "Jawāmi' al-Kalim" refers to a comprehensive collection of sentences and speeches. In the terminology of Hadith, "Jawāmi' al-Kalim" refers to the comprehensive, concise, and meaningful sayings of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family.

communicative devices. This study specifically focuses on one of these types in the words of the Prophet (pbuh).

The most influential aspect through which the speaker guides his audience is the content and theme upon which his discourse is organized. Thus, a crucial pillar of speech, in addition to rhetorical style, linguistic devices, and language usage, is the substance and content of the discourse.

In his discourses, the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, employed various rhetorical occasions to explicate and affirm the doctrine of Imamate, particularly emphasizing the pivotal role of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Imam 'Alī (as). On numerous instances, he unequivocally addressed the issue of succession, thereby precluding alternative interpretations from the consciousness of his audience. Moreover, the Prophet (pbuh) often dedicated segments of his orations to extolling the eminence of Imam 'Alī (as), urging Muslims towards discerning judgment in favoring the most qualified individual and elucidating criteria of superiority, including erudition, valor, renunciation, and precedence over revered figures such as prophets, angels, and other companions. Additionally, his speeches were structured to encompass three thematic dimensions: exegesis, appraisal, and informational elucidation, catering to the comprehension of his listeners.

This research endeavors to delve into the Imami perspective, acquainting the reader with the conceptual framework and doctrinal significance of explicit textual references (*naṣṣ*), and subsequently scrutinizes exemplars of prophetic texts elucidating the Imamate of Imam 'Alī (as).

### **Concept and Position of Textual Evidence (*Naṣṣ*)**

In linguistic terminology, "naṣṣ" denotes stability, elevation, and the explicit articulation of something (Ibn Athīr, 1989, vol. 5, p. 65). In other words, it refers to a term that signifies a specific meaning in a manner that precludes the possibility of alternative interpretations (Farāhīdī, 1989, vol. 7, p. 86). Considering the literal meaning of this term, *naṣṣ* in speech and discourse refers to conveying the intended speaker's message clearly, leaving no room for alternative interpretations.

However, with regard to the degrees of assertion and explicitness, *naṣṣ* can be divided into two types: *naṣṣ ṣāḥir* (explicit textual evidence), which unequivocally indicates the intended meaning without requiring additional

context, and on the contrary, there is *naṣṣ khafī* which is the implicit textual evidence.

It is worth noting that one of the most significant points of contention between the Imamiyyah and other schools of thought concerns the appointment (*intiṣāb*) or selection (*intikhāb*) of the Imam. Within this discourse, the Imamiyya School's belief hinges on the issuance and denotation of textual evidence in determining the Imam after the Prophet Muḥammad's (pbuh) demise. Conversely, Mu'tazilites and the majority of Ahl al-Hadith and Ash'arites deny the realization of textual evidence in this matter, considering the appointment of the Imam to be the prerogative of the community's consensus and the decision made by the elites of the Muslim Ummah (for further understanding of the concept of *Ahl al-Ḥall wa al-'Aqd* [lit. people of Resolution and Settlement] and its conditions and duties, see: Sabzavari, Sayyid Hasan, "The Meaning and Position of Consensus of *Ahl al-Ḥall wa al-'Aqd* Imamate Studies, 10, pp. 35-86). However, another approach called "establishing dominion through subjugation and overpowering" has been proposed as a third alternative (Farā', 1969, p. 23).

Given the unique process of determining the Imam through specific designation and in view of the illegitimacy of other methods within the Imamiyyah School, it is natural for this approach to be more evident in the utterances of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), and for the role of explicating divine appointment in the Imamate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (as) to be derived from this method. Additionally, the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) repeatedly affirmed the process of determination and appointment of the Imam by the Almighty God when dealing with various tribes. The Prophet (pbuh) emphasized his role in this matter as merely that of proclamation and clarification. The Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) explicitly stated when encountering the Banū Walī'ah tribe: "The matter of succession is in the hands of God, and He places it wherever He wills." (Ibn Hishām, 1963, vol. 2, p. 289). Similarly, in a meeting with the Kindah tribe, after their request for succession, he stated: "Verily, sovereignty and dominion belong to God, and He gives it to whomever He wills." (Ibn Kathīr, 1976, vol. 2, p. 159).

Hence, the formation of belief in textual evidence regarding the Imamate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī (as) dates back to the time of the

Prophet Muḥammad himself (pbuh). Claims suggesting the emergence of this idea in earlier centuries, as proposed by some opponents, have been refuted and criticized by eminent Shi'i scholars such as Shaykh Mufid (Mufid, 1993, p. 5), Sayyid Murtaḍa ('Alam al-Hudā, 1990, vol. 2, p. 108), Muḥaqiq Ḥillî (Ḥillî, 1994, p. 247), and other Imamiyya scholars and theologians. In terms of determining the successor, explicit and implicit textual evidence has been issued from the perspective of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). These texts have been classified as *naşş qawlî* (verbal evidence) regarding the subject-matter (Nawbakhtî, 1993, p. 80).

### **Types of Textual Evidence in Prophetic Utterances on the Imamate of Imam 'Alî (as)**

One of the rhetorical methods employed by the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) to elucidate the Imamate of Imam 'Alî (as) is the method of textual evidence. The frequency of this method in his utterances has dispelled any doubts or uncertainties regarding the divinely appointed leadership of Imam 'Alî (as). The evidence for this claim lies in the formation of the foundation of belief in the process of specific designation concerning the appointment of the Imam during the time of the Companions who acknowledged this matter and articulated it on numerous occasions, both publicly and in their protests.

It should be noted that in some of the prophetic utterances, the name and person of the Imam are explicitly mentioned, while in others, the attributes of the Imam are explicitly stated, thus clearly elucidating and manifesting the identity of his successor for the community. This research refers to seven titles of the prophetic texts regarding the Imamate of Imam 'Alî, peace be upon him:

#### **1. Title of Imamate**

The word "Imam" in its linguistic sense derives from the root "amma, ya'ummu" and denotes anything or anyone followed in actions (Rāghib, 1984, vol. 1, p. 87). Considering the various usages of "Imam," multiple instances of its usage can be found in the Qur'an, such as the Preserved Tablet (Sūrah Yā-Sîn: 12), the clear and manifest path (Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 79), the heavenly book (Sūrah Hūd: 17), the divine prophets and guides (Sūrah al-Anbiyā': 73), leaders of misguidance (Sūrah al-Qaşaş: 41), and the weakened (Sūrah Al-Qasas: 5).

In the terminology of Shia theologians, Imamate has been defined in two ways. Some theologians, relying on Prophetic traditions, define Imamate as a divine covenant, authority, and divine sovereignty derived from the sovereignty of God over His servants. Accordingly, they maintain that it is a prerogative of God to appoint His vicegerent and successor among His servants on earth (Shaftī, 1991, pp. 12-23). However, others, with an extrinsic and comparative approach, define it as "universal leadership in religious and worldly affairs as the successorship and representation of the Prophet (pbuh)" (Mufid, 1993, p. 39).

Therefore, it is evident that the term *Imam* is one of the most explicit terms signifying the succession of the Prophet (pbuh), which he explicitly stated on numerous occasions, inviting everyone to the Imamate and leadership after himself. This term is often used in conjunction with other terms in the Prophet's utterances, indicating his consideration of such specific designation (*tanṣīṣ*).

In his books *Al-Yaqīn bi-Ikhtiṣāṣ Mawlānā 'Alī (a) bi-Imrat al-Mu'minīn* and *Al-Taḥṣīn fī Asrār Mā Zāda 'Alā Kitāb al-Yaqīn* which serves as a supplement to the first book, the late Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664 AH) has narrated dozens of traditions indicating the designation of Imam 'Alī (as) by Allah and the noble Prophet (pbuh) as the "Imam."

"You are the Imam of my Ummah," "The Imam of the Muslims," "The Imam after me," "The Imam of the recipients of divine mercy," "The Imam of the nation," "The Imam of creation," "The Imam of every Muslim," "The Imam of guidance," "The Imam of the God-fearing," and so on, are titles mentioned in the traditions. Some of them will be discussed further.

### **1-1. You are the Imam of my Ummah**

Ibn 'Abbās narrates from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) addressing Imam 'Alī (as) as follows:

"O 'Alī! I am the city of wisdom, and you are its gate. No one can enter that city except through its gate. It is a lie for someone to think they love me while they harbor enmity towards you, for you are from me and I am from you... You are the Imam of my Ummah, and after me, you are their leader. Blessed is the one who obeys you, and wretched is the one who disobeys you..." (Ṣadūq, 1975, p. 241)

Considering the text of the narration, the addition of the word "Imam" to "my Ummah" is a common usage. The explanatory phrases following it,

such as "leader after me" and "the happiness being contingent upon absolute obedience to him," specify and affirm the succession and Imamate of Imam 'Alī (as) and eliminate any possibility of absolute leadership and caliphate other than his after the Prophet (pbuh).

### 1-2. Imam of the Muslims

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "I am the leader of the first and the last, and 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) is the chief of my successors. He is my brother, inheritor, and the successor to my community. His leadership is an obligation and duty, obedience to him is a virtue, and love for him is a means to approach Allah... He is the Imam of the Muslims, the master of the believers, and their commander after me." (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 679)

### 1-3. The Imam after Me

In a lengthy narration, the Prophet (pbuh) addresses his companions and, with an oath, mentions the aforementioned epithet for Imam 'Alī (as) as follows: "I swear by Allah, he is the Imam after me, my successor, and the executor of my affairs. Therefore, obey him, do not oppose him, honor him, and do not precede him, for after me, he is the Caliph of Allah on earth." (Baḥrānī, 2001, vol. 4, p. 235)

### 1-4. Imam of the Recipients of Divine Mercy (al-Marḥūmīn)

While holding the ring of the Ka'ba's door, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī stood before the people and elaborated on the verse of the selection of prophets, referring to some of the virtues of Imam 'Alī (as) based on the words of the Noble Messenger. One of the attributes mentioned in this narration for Imam 'Alī (as) is the Imamate over individuals who are recipients of divine mercy. (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1993, p. 609)

## 2. Title of Caliphate

The term *Khalīfa* (caliph) derives from the root *kh-l-f* and the original word is *khalīf* while the addition of *ah* is for emphasis, similar to 'Allāma and its plural form is *khulafā'* and *khalā'if* (Rāghib, 1984, vol. 1, p. 294). The root word *khalf* refers to something that comes after another thing and replaces it (Ibn Fāris, 1995, vol. 2, p. 212). Thus, the person who comes after another and assumes his position is called a caliph. Also, as per the Qur'an, women who remained in the city while their husbands engaged in trade and warfare were referred to as *khawālif* (Sūrah al-Tawbah: 87) (Farāhīdī, 1989, vol. 4, p. 267). *Istikhlāf* means placing someone as a successor, and there is a sense of "seeking" in the word as well (Sūrah Al-

An'ām: 133). The concept of "one thing coming after another" is employed in this term, indicating that the caliph shares similarities and qualities with the one they succeed, and their absence is compensated by the presence of the caliph (Muṣṭafawī, 1990, vol. 3, p. 110).

Considering the meaning of this term, we find conformity between the concepts of Imamate and Caliphate; because just as Allah Almighty introduces Imamate as His covenant and attributes it to Himself (Surah al-Baqarah: 124; Surah Saba': 18), He has exclusively reserved the process of appointing a caliph for Himself (Surah al-Baqarah: 30; Surah Ṣād: 26) and considers the appointment of a caliph and successor to be contingent upon His decision (Surah al-A'rāf: 142). Therefore, the title caliph, given the clarity it holds in the context of Imamate and succession to the Prophet, is a clear indication of Imamate in various contexts and numerous occasions, issued by the Prophet (pbuh), eliminating any doubts or ambiguities regarding the Imamate of Imam 'Alī (as) (Ibn Ḥamza Ṭūsī, 1998, p. 118).

The incident of *Bad' al-Da'wa* or *Yawm al-Dār* is an event mentioned in the sources of hadith, history, and exegesis. Its occurrence followed the revelation of the noble verse "and warn your closest kindred" (Surah Ash-Shu'arā: 214), in which the Prophet (pbuh), by the command of the Lord, warned his closest relatives and invited them to Islam. The Prophet (pbuh), publicly and openly, announced his prophethood and pointed to the issue of his succession by raising this question, "Which one of you will support me in this mission, so that he will be my brother, my successor, and my caliph among you?" and the positive response from Imam 'Alī (a) introduced him for the first time as his caliph (Ṭabarī, 1963, p. 39).

In another narration, Ibn 'Abbās quotes the Prophet (s) as saying: "Indeed, 'Alī (as) is my successor and caliph" (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 112). In a narration transmitted from the Prophet (pbuh), he mentions Imam 'Alī's traits and characteristics as follows:

"Truly, the one who has sent me forth as prophet and has chosen me over all people, I and these individuals are the most beloved creatures to Allah on earth. There is no one more beloved to me than them. But 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (as), who is my brother, my companion, the successor after me, the standard-bearer of my banner in this world and the Hereafter, the possessor of my pool and my intercession, is the leader of every Muslim,

the Imam of every believer, and the guide of every pious person. He is my successor and caliph over my family and community, both in my lifetime and after my death. Whoever loves him loves me, and whoever hates him hates me. Because of his authority, my Ummah receives mercy, and due to enmity and opposition to him, some of my Ummah are cursed" (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 112).

### 3. Title of Succession

The terms *wiṣāyah* (literally, successorship) and *waṣī* (successor) derive from the trilateral root *w-ṣ-y* signifying the conveyance of a responsibility or authority from one individual to another (Ibn Fāris, 1995, vol. 6, p. 116). Consequently, *waṣīyat* adopting the morphological pattern of *fa ṭla* denotes verbal communication directed towards another individual (Ibn Fāris, 1995, vol. 6, p. 116). This is because the testator or will-maker (*mūṣī*) establishes a link between the trusteeship and administration, posthumously delegated through the executor, and the period preceding his demise (Ṭurayḥī 1997, vol. 1, p. 440).

*Waṣāyat* or *wiṣāyat* encompasses the act whereby the testator authorizes an individual to act as his proxy subsequent to his demise, typically involving matters such as settling debts, claiming dues, and assuming guardianship over minors or individuals of unsound mind over whom he exercised control and guardianship (Ṭurayḥī 1997, vol. 1, p. 440). *Waṣī* structured according to the *fa ṭl* pattern, functions semantically as an object rather than a subject, with its plural form being *awṣiyā*. Ibn Manẓūr elucidates:

"Alī is designated *waṣī* due to the intertwining of his lineage, cause, methodology, and approach with those of our master, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him [and his family]. I assert: May the Almighty exalt the countenance of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī, and bestow blessings upon him..." (Ibn Manẓūr, 1988, vol. 15, p. 394.)

Thus, the act of designating a successor to undertake specific responsibilities and exercise discretionary powers entails granting him precedence over others. Essentially, the same authority and control vested in the testator are delegated to the successor, who assumes this role. Furthermore, the successor must possess the requisite qualifications for the position of succession and oversight, enabling him to effectively discharge

his duties and prevent any complications from arising. Given the authority vested in him, he must also issue commands and prohibitions pertaining to relevant matters.

The aforementioned principles (the precedence of the successor over others, the conferral of guardianship upon the testator, the eligibility criteria for the successor's position, etc.), derived from the conceptual framework of "waṣī" and "waṣāyat" (successorship), elucidate the intrinsic alignment between this term and the notion of "Imamate." Thus, what is inherent in Imamate and caliphate finds resonance within the concept of successorship.

Hence, one of the terms expressly articulated by the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) concerning the Imamate of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (a) is the title "*waṣāyat*," which, akin to the term caliphate has been invoked independently or in conjunction with the caliphate across diverse contexts and epochs. Expressions such as *Waṣīyyī* denoting "my successor" (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 62), *Sayyid al-Awṣiyā*’ signifying "Leader of the Successors, *Waṣī Sayyid al-Anbiyā*’ meaning "Successor of the Chief of Prophets" (Ṣadūq, 1998, p. 61), *Sayyid al-Waṣīyīn* denoting "Leader of the Successors" (Ibn Babawayh, 1984, p. 21), *Waṣī Sayyid al-Nabīyīn* (Ṭabarī, 1963, p. 66), and others, are indicative of the investiture of Imamate and succession upon ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (as). These appellations are recurrent across various textual sources.

#### 4. Title of *Wilāyah*

The etymology of the terms *walī* (guardian), *mawlā* (master), and *wilāyah* (guardianship) traces back to the root *w-l-y* connoting closeness and proximity (Ibn Fāris, 1995, vol. 6, p. 140). In other words, "walā" and "tawālī" (successiveness) are used when two or more entities are in such a relationship that there is nothing intervening them (Rāghib, 1984, vol. 2, p. 533). Hence, whoever has authority over a matter or undertakes its execution, will be the guardian and patron thereof (Ibn Athīr, 1989, vol. 5, p. 228), and he will have priority in that task or matter. Therefore, he is more deserving of that task or thing than others (‘Alam al-Hudā, 1990, vol. 2, p. 219).

In customary usage, *walī* and "mawlā" signify guardianship and being entrusted with the affairs of others, and the guardian has the right to intervene and make decisions regarding the affairs of an individual or others. This notion is applicable to expressions such as *walī al-marʿa*

(guardian of the woman) and *walī al-dam* (guardian of the blood). The intended meaning in the term "walī" in the context of the Holy Prophet's saying "If a woman marries without permission of her guardian, her marriage is null and void", is someone responsible for a woman's marriage (Ibn Athīr, 1989, vol. 5, p. 229).

Commentators interpret the noble verse "And whoever is killed unjustly - We have given his heir authority" (Qur'an 17:31) as referring to an individual who has guardianship and authority over the blood of the wronged and can seek retribution or compensation from the oppressor or pardon him (Ṭabarī, 1995, vol. 6, p. 248).

The terms *walī* and *mawlā* are also used in various contexts such as lord, owner, cousin, neighbor, freed slave, slave, son-in-law, emancipator of a slave, supporter, lover, confederate, etc., and in all cases of their usage, there exists a kind of kinship that stems from a form of control and ownership. Based on this, the application of these terms to different contexts is a form of semantic relationship, and in all contexts, there is a common denominator which is the kinship and specific closeness between the guardian and the person or thing under guardianship. It is worth mentioning that some scholars consider the commonality among the contexts as *awlā bil-shay'* meaning someone is more deserving of that thing than others (Mufīd, 1993, pp. 27-29; Ibn Baṭrīq, 1987, pp. 113-115; Amīnī, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 640-650).

Considering the meaning of these terms, the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) designated Imam 'Alī (as) as a guardian and master of the believers after him in various contexts pointing to his guardianship and emphasizing it on various occasions. Some of these instances are elaborated upon below:

#### 4-1- The Term *Mawlā*

Among the significant texts worth mentioning is the noble hadith *Ghadir Khumm*. Most Sunni scholars consider this hadith authentic and have cited numerous chains of transmission for it, with many acknowledging its frequent occurrence (Ālūsī, 1995, vol. 3, p. 361; Hindī, Mīr Ḥāmid Ḥusayn, 1988, vol. 1). In *Ghadir Khumm*, the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) addressed the Muslims before stating the phrase "Whoever I am his *Mawlā* (master), 'Alī is his *Mawlā* saying: "Am I not more entitled to your affairs than yourselves?" After their acknowledgment and recognition of

this precedence and priority, he immediately declared the precedence of Imam 'Alī (as).

The articulation of these statements in such combination and context serves as a clear and eloquent indication that the intended meaning of *Mawlā* in the Ghadir tradition is none other than leadership and caliphate. Because the intended meaning of the precedence that the Prophet wanted Muslims to acknowledge and which he, then, affirmed for Imam 'Alī (as) is that whenever he makes a decision regarding the Muslims that contradicts their desires, it is incumbent upon them to follow the Prophet's decision. (Baghwī, 1987, vol. 3, p. 608). Interpreting the noble verse "The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves" (Qur'an 33:6), Zamakhsharī writes:

"This verse is absolute and unrestricted, and the Prophet enjoys precedence and superiority over the believers in all matters of the world and the Hereafter. Therefore, it is incumbent upon them to hold the Prophet dearer to themselves than their own selves, and his command and decree regarding them should be more binding than their own command, and his rights should take precedence over their rights, and their affection towards the Prophet should exceed their affection towards themselves. They should sacrifice themselves for him, protect him by sacrificing themselves in times of war, and follow whatever he commands, for obedience to whatever he commands results in the salvation and prosperity of both parties, and he does not forbid anything except that its commission would bring about misery and lead to entering the fire." (Zamakhsharī, 1966, vol. 3, p. 523).

From the above, it is evident that the meaning of *awlā* in the noble verse implies guardianship and priority in discretion over matters, and in the event of Ghadir, the Prophet (s) affirmed this meaning for Imam 'Alī (as), and this would be nothing other than the designation of Imamate and caliphate. Sayyid Murtaḍā clearly writes about this:

"The Prophet's words on the Day of Ghadir were explicit inasmuch as they referred expressly to Imamate and succession for the community, and no other possibility is plausible besides this meaning." ('Alam al-Hudā, 1985, vol. 3, p. 252).

Other indications such as the congratulations of the companions to Imam 'Alī (as) as a guardian and supervisor, the general pledge of allegiance to him obtained by the Prophet (pbuh) from everyone, the

understanding and reliance of the companions on the statements of the Prophet and their chanting of poems, and other contextual and verbal indications mentioned in their proper places, indicate that the term *Mawlā* in the Ghadir hadith signifies Imamate. The late Allāmah Amīnī, may Allah bless him, refers to twenty pieces of evidence and testimonies in his book *Al-Ghadīr*; indicating that the meaning of "precedence and guardianship" is implied in the term *Mawlā* (Amīnī, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 370-382).

In another narration, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), while describing some qualities, addressed Imam 'Alī (as) as follows:

"O 'Alī! You are the owner of my Pond, the bearer of my standard. You are the clear path and the straight path, the leader of the pure-hearted, and the guiding star of the believers. You are the master of every individual whom I am a master of, and I am the master of every believing man and woman." (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 307).

In another discourse, the Prophet, by explicating and entrusting the position of guardianship after himself to him, underscores the purport the previous hadith: "'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (as) is the guardian of every male and female believer, and after me, he is your guardian." (Ṭabarī, 1963, vol. 2, p. 120).

#### 4-2- "The Guardian of Every Believer after Me"

This statement, considering the meaning of the term *walī* explicitly denotes guardianship and caliphate. Coupled with the qualifier "after me," it indicates the direct designation of Imam 'Alī (as) as the successor. This title has been bestowed by the Prophet (pbuh) in various instances, some of which are mentioned below.

One of those instances is the recurrent hadiths known as the Hadith of *Wilāyah* narrated by Ibn 'Abbās, where the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "'Alī is the guardian and supervisor of every believer after me." (Kūfī, 1992, vol. 1, p. 490).

Moreover, when the Verse of Completion was revealed, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, exclaimed and said: *Allahu Akbar*, for the completion of blessings and the perfection of my prophethood, and the religion of Allah Almighty, and the guardianship of 'Alī after me." Abū Bakr and Umar arose and asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Is this verse specifically for 'Alī?" The Prophet replied: "Yes, it is for him and my

successors until the Day of Judgment." They said: "Introduce your successors to us." He said:

"Alī is my brother, my minister, my heir, my successor, and my caliph over my nation, and the guardian of every believer after me. Then Hasan, and..." (Ṣadūq, 1975, p. 276).

In another incident, the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) dispatched an army under the command of Imam ‘Alī (as) to a battle, and after the victory, he assigned the spoils to him. This act troubled four of the prominent companions to the extent that they confronted him. They made a pact to complain to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) upon their return. Each of them rushed to him and presented their grievances, but the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) remained silent. After they finished speaking, while anger and displeasure were apparent on his face, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) repeated this statement three times: "What do you want from ‘Alī?" and then explicitly stated the position of leadership and guardianship of ‘Alī over every believer after him. (Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1960, vol. 3, p. 212).

#### 4-3- "The Guardian of the Believers"

This title, which clearly denotes Imamate and guardianship, has been expressed on the tongue of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on various occasions. Below are some statements from him:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) addressed Imam ‘Alī (as), saying: "The first thing that every servant will be asked about after his death is bearing witness to the oneness of Allah the Almighty and the affirmation that Muḥammad (pbuh) was the Messenger of Allah and that you are the guardian of the believers after me. It concerns what Allah has decreed for you and what I have designated for you. So, whoever acknowledges this and believes in it will attain Paradise and endless blessings." (Ṣadūq, 1959, vol. 1, p. 137).

Furthermore, when some companions were doubtful about the conduct of the Prophet (pbuh) at Ghadir, they sent some individuals to inquire from him. The Prophet (pbuh) responded to them, saying:

"Tell them: ‘Alī is the guardian and supervisor of the believers after me, and he is the most compassionate person towards my community." (Ṭabarī, 1983, vol. 1, p. 103).

In another narration, the Prophet (pbuh) acknowledged the actions of three of his prominent companions, Abū Dharr, Salmān, and Miqdād, saying:

"Bear witness that 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is the successor of Muḥammad (s), and he is the commander of the faithful, and obeying him is obeying Allah and His Messenger. The Imams are from his descendants, and loving his Ahl al-Bayt is obligatory for every man and woman. Also, bear witness [to their acts of] praying at the prescribed times, giving *Zakat* from their lawful earnings, spending from their wealth, and paying one-fifth of all their wealth to the guardian of the believers and their ruler, and after him, his descendants." (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1989, vol. 9, p. 553).

#### 4-4- "The Guardian of the Pious"

One of the achievements of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) during his journey to the heavens (*Mi rāj*) is as follows:

"Allah the Almighty has commanded me concerning 'Alī (as) with three things: That he is the master and leader of the Muslims, the guardian of the righteous, and leader of the people with radiant foreheads." (Rāzī, 1988, p. 58)

It is clear that considering the importance and explicitness of the term *Wilāyat* in designating the Imamate and Caliphate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (a), one can find other instances through searching in the Prophet's speeches.

#### 5 - The Title of Viziership

The terms *Wazīr* (vizier) and *Wizārat* (viziership) are of Qur'anic origin and bear conceptual resemblances to the notions of "Caliphate" and "Imamate." According to linguistic analyses, these terms denote both a place of refuge and sanctuary (Farāhidī, 1989, Vol. 7, p. 380) and a sense of weight and gravitas (Ibn Fāris, 1995, Vol. 6, p. 108). These principles underpin the semantic breadth of the term. In light of these foundational concepts and the multifaceted applications of the term, *Wazīr* signifies one who shoulders the weighty responsibilities of his superior's directives and provides support and counsel (Farāhidī, 1989, Vol. 7, p. 380). In essence, the vizier assumes the substantial duties of governance, becoming a trusted confidant whose advice and judgment the ruler relies upon (Ibn Manẓūr, 1988, vol. 5, p. 283).

The Qur'an employs the term *Wazīr* to refer to Hārūn (s) in two verses, clearly indicating his role as a successor (Ṭā-Hā: 29 and al-Furqān: 35).

Additionally, in a separate instance, the term *Rid'* conveys the same connotation of viziership (al-Qaṣaṣ: 34). *Al-Rid'* denotes one who aids and supports another, encapsulating the essence of mutual assistance and collaboration (Rāghib, 1984, vol. 1, p. 350). The portrayal of Hārūn's viziership in the Qur'an underscores his shared responsibility in the prophetic mission alongside Prophet Mūsā (pbuh), illustrating his active involvement in preaching and fulfilling the obligations of prophethood.

The discourse surrounding viziership elucidates certain facets and roles of the Imam and caliph as the "vizier of the Prophet." These roles encompass various administrative and advisory functions, including:

A) Viziership, like caliphate and Imamate, is contingent upon divine appointment, and seeking viziership for an individual depends on the permission of the Lord, and its realization and determination are not within the purview of any of His servants. Therefore, in the Qur'an, the appointment to viziership is an act of Allah the Almighty and attributed to Him only. Phrases such as "We appointed with him his brother Hārūn" (al-Furqan: 35), "Appoint for me" (Ṭā-Hā: 29), and "Then send him with me" (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 34) serve as evidence for this claim.

B) The vizier assumes full responsibility for all the duties that the Prophet entrusted to him, including guidance, adjudication among people, administrative affairs of the Islamic society, etc. The verse "And associate him with me in my affair" (Ṭā-Hā: 32), following the request of Prophet Mūsā (as) regarding the viziership of Hārūn (as), indicates the important and heavy responsibility of the vizier. Based on this responsibility of the viziership, Hārūn (as) is questioned and held accountable by Prophet Mūsā (as) (Ṭā-Hā: 92-93).

It is worth mentioning that the vizier shares in the duties and positions of the Prophet, except for what may be allocated to him due to a separate rationale, just as the position of the viziership of the Noble Prophet (pbuh) was assigned to Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī (as) due to his being the seal of prophethood, and besides the matters of prophethood, all other aspects, duties and responsibilities are established for his vizier.

C) Another characteristic is that the vizier, in addition to sharing the burden and responsibility of the commander, assists and supports him in various personal and social matters, enhancing his performance in fulfilling his duties. Because it is beneficial for an individual to share a divisible

allowing each person to perform his own part. However, partnership is discussed where the vizier undertakes all the affairs and responsibilities of the commander and strengthens him. The Noble Qur'an also emphasizes this point after appointing Hārūn (as) to the position of vizier, stating: "We will strengthen your arm through your brother" (al-Qaṣaṣ: 35) and "Strengthen me with him" (Ṭā-Hā: 31). Therefore, in addition to the position of partnership in command, one of the privileges of the vizier is to support and strengthen his commander in various undertakings and duties.

D) The individual who assumes the position of vizier acts according to his own opinion and interests, thereby assisting the commander. Therefore, like a prince and commander, he holds authority and sovereignty over the matter. Lexicographers often point out that the personal opinion and judgment of the vizier contribute to the assistance and strengthening of the ruler, as his judgment lifts the burden of responsibility from the ruler, and the vizier becomes a refuge and support for the ruler. (Ibn Athīr, 1989, vol. 5, p. 180) Consequently, the recognized duties and functions of the vizier include sovereignty, authority, and reliance on his expression of opinion and interests.

After bestowing the glad tidings of the appointment to the deputyship and vizierate of Hārūn (as) to Prophet Mūsā (as), Allah states that He establishes effective sovereignty for him (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 35). In other words, considering the unity of divine sovereignty, the sovereignty and authority of Prophet Mūsā and Hārūn have been placed on the same basis and direction.

The Noble Prophet (pbuh) designated Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī (as) as a "vizier" on numerous occasions, making the reality of this position evident to others. Some of these instances are mentioned below:

During the event of *Yawm al-Dār* the Prophet (pbuh) declared, "Who among you will support me in this matter on the condition that he will be my brother, successor, and caliph among you?" The Prophet (pbuh) posed the general question calling on the close relatives to accept Islam and whoever accepted it, he would be entitled to viziership (*yu āzirunī*), which would elevate him to the "position of brotherhood, guardianship, and caliphate." He classified these three positions among the ranks of the vizierate, declaring their importance and confirming them for Amīr al-Mu'minīn (as). This event is mentioned in the sources of hadith, history,

and exegesis of both branches of faith. This occurred after the revelation of the noble verse "And warn your nearest kinsfolk" (al-Shu'arā: 214), in which the Prophet (pbuh) warned and invited his closest relatives to Islam by the command of the Lord. (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 112)

Jābir b. Abdullah Anṣārī narrates that the Prophet (s) said: "Truly, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, selected me, empowered me, entrusted me with prophethood, and revealed the Master of Books upon me. So I said: 'O my Lord! O my Master! You sent Moses to Pharaoh and asked him to accompany his brother Hārūn with him, who was his vizier, to strengthen his arm and confirm his speech. Likewise - O my Master and my God - I request You to appoint a vizier from my family for me, to strengthen my arm with him.' So Allah made 'Alī (as) my vizier and my brother, instilled courage in his heart, cast awe of him into the hearts of his enemies, and he is the first person to believe in me and confirm me, and the first person to worship the One God alongside me..." (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 22)

It has been narrated that Umm Salama (as) defending the position of Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī (as) referred to the words of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) where the Imam (as) is introduced as the vizier of the Prophet (pbuh) in this world and the Hereafter:

"O Umm Salama! Listen and bear witness, this is 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, my vizier in this world and my vizier in the Hereafter." (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 381)

Hence, upon contemplation of the two fundamental principles underlying the semantic domain of the term "vizier" and the consequent implications derived from its usage, it becomes evident that the status of caliphate, Imamate, and vizierate exhibit significant parallels when applied to the successor of the Noble Prophet (pbuh). Consequently, the utilization of these terminologies to describe an individual can be interpreted as a distinct and unambiguous attribution.

## 6 – Title of Emirate

The terms "imārat" and "emir" in the lexicons refer to a person in authority and a ruler. (Jawhārī, 1984, vol. 2, p. 581) Since this term is used in the context of someone being an emir (commander), the realization of the meaning of emirate is contingent upon the existence of an individual or group. (Shartūnī, 1983, vol. 1, p. 70) The usage of this term denotes the executive status of the emir who, as a leading figure, assumes the

administration and policymaking of the people based on the authority vested in him. (Jawharī, 1984, vol. 2, p. 581) The people follow him based on the authority he holds over them. (Muṣṭafavī, 1990, vol. 4, p. 161) During the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), this term was used for military commanders and rulers of a region. (Ibn Khaldūn, 1981, vol. 1, p. 227)

In light of the foregoing, the designation "Dār al-Imāra" (lit. administrative seat or house of princes) refers to the locus where an individual opts to administer and govern. This term is frequently modified by suffixes that delineate the extent of the emir's jurisdiction, thus refining the concept of emirate beyond mere absolutism and imparting a specific connotation to the compound term. Examples such as *Emir al-Jaysh* and *Emir al-Hājj* prevalent among the Arabs in the formative period of Islam, illustrate this semantic elaboration.

It is pertinent to note that while initially conceived to encompass administrative and secular concerns, the notion of emirate transcends this realm to encompass religious matters as well, blurring the distinction between emirate and the concept of Imamate.

Throughout Islamic history, this term has frequently served as a rhetorical device wielded by usurpers and ambitious rulers. By appending qualifiers, they laid claim to the title of emir and assumed responsibility for the Islamic emirate, endeavoring to validate and portray their rule as inherently Islamic. This phenomenon underscores the conceptual resonance between emirate, Imamate, and caliphate in the collective consciousness of early Muslims.

The Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), driven by his deep concern for the guidance of the Ummah following his departure, unequivocally designated the leadership of Imam 'Alī (as) and addressed this matter through various oral expressions.

The statements such as "the Imam after me and the commander" (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 101), "Amīr al-Mu'minīn", "the emir after me" (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1993, p. 477), "the commander of all believers after me" (Ṣadūq, 1975, p. 260), "the commander on earth and the commander in the heavens" (Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1960, vol. 2, p. 247), and "the commander of the righteous" (Ṭabarī Āmulī, 1995, p. 622) signify the pervasive authority of the emirate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (as) over the believers in heaven and on

earth. They also signify his uninterrupted leadership after the Prophet (pbuh), forging an inseparable bond between prophethood and emirate. Given that the establishment of the emirate of Imam ‘Alī—much like the nature of Imamate—is a divine decree, the alignment of these two concepts becomes more apparent.

In the journey of Ascension, the Almighty addressed the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) regarding the introduction of the emirate and rulership of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (as) and cursed those who disobeyed his command. (Ibn Shādhān, 1987, p. 50) In another narration, the Prophet (pbuh) has explicitly stated that he had received revelation that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (a) is the emir and ruler of the believers. (Ibn ‘Uqda al-Kūfī, 2003, p. 194)

Among these references, the epithet "Amīr al-Mu’minīn" stands as an exclusive title reserved for the Imam, symbolizing his role as the commander and leader of the faithful—a designation conferred upon him by the Almighty (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 1, p. 412), and reiterated by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on numerous occasions. Noteworthy instances include the Prophet's instruction to Umm Salama to acknowledge and testify to him as the "Amīr al-Mu’minīn" (Mufīd, 1993, vol. 1, p. 47) the Prophet's prophecy to Anas b. Mālik regarding the arrival of someone holding the esteemed title of *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* prompting Anas to express his wish for the arrival of one of his kins (Mufīd, 1993, vol. 1, p. 47). Additionally, the historical context and timing of this designation, along with numerous corroborative narrations found in the literature of both branches of faith, lend credence to this assertion.

The prophetic declaration and insistence on this title unequivocally affirm the Imamate of the Imam to such an extent that no alternative interpretation remains viable. Moreover, observing the longing and aspiration of others to confer this name and status upon their own kin serves as additional evidence reinforcing this reality.

The late Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664 AH), in response to those who contested the leadership of Amīr al-Mu’minīn, ‘Alī meticulously compiled over a hundred chapters in his works *Al-Yaqīn bi-ikhtiṣāṣ mawlānā ‘Alī bi-imrat al-mu’minīn* and *Al-Taḥsīn fī Asrār Mā Zāda ‘alā Kitāb al-Yaqīn*, the latter serving as an addendum to the former. Within these works, he extensively cites numerous narrations that attest to the designation of the

title "Amīr al-Mu'minīn" to Imam 'Alī by both the Almighty and the Noble Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him and his family.

It is worth mentioning that, in addition to the meaning of "commandership" derived from the compound phrase "Amīr al-Mu'minīn" as discussed above, in narrations based on another meaning of *Amīr* a different concept is elucidated for *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* namely, that the Imam nourishes the believers with his knowledge and wisdom. (Şaffār, 1984, vol. 1, p. 512)

### 7. The Title of Leadership (*Qiyādah*)

Another term synonymous with the concepts of caliphate and Imamate is the word *qā'id* or *qiyādat* generally denoting leadership and command. *Qawd* means to lead or pull something along, in contrast to "steering" which means to drive something forward. *Yaqūd al-dāba* means to lead the camel along. *Qiyād* is a rope by which a camel or something is pulled along. (Farāhīdī, 1989, vol. 5, p. 196 and Ibn Manẓūr, 1988, vol. 3, p. 3770)

*Qiyādat* is the act of leading, in contrast to "steering" which entails guiding from behind. Hence, Imam 'Alī (a) said, "I am the forerunner and leader of my Shia towards Paradise and the driver (steerer) of my enemies towards Hell." (Ibn Shādhān, 1987, p. 59) The terms *qiyādah* and *inqiyād* respectively, denote leadership and obedience.

The application of this term in line with the concept of Imamate entails that the individual upon whom this title is conferred takes precedence over others, who follow in his path and must submit to him. Realizing this meaning fosters a sense of affinity and harmony between the leader and his followers. Thus, the definition of *qiyādat* is stated as follows: "It is a method through which one influences others and guides them towards a specific goal through a particular manner, leading them along." (Mubārak Bāşbūş, 1988, p. 28)

The Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) has introduced Imam 'Alī (as) as a *qā'id* in numerous narrations, emphasizing the imperative of obedience inherent in this term and making a clear declaration and designation of his caliphate. Titles such as *qā'id al-ghurr al-muḥajjalīn* (Leader of the Radian Ones) *qā'id al-barara* (Leader of the Righteous) *qā'id ummatī ilā al-jannah* (Leader of My Nation to Paradise) *qā'id al-mu'minīn ilā al-jannah* (Leader of Believers to Paradise) *qā'id al-nās ilā al-jannah* (Leader of the People

to Paradise) *qā'īd al-muslimīn ilā al-jannah* (Leader of Muslims to Paradise) and others, elucidate the significance of leadership and guidance by Imam 'Alī (as) both in this world and the hereafter. Below are some excerpts from these titles:

### 7-1- Leader of the Radiant Ones (*al-Ghurr al-Muḥajjalīn*)

The word *al-ghurr* is derived from *ghurrah* which refers to the whiteness on the forehead. And *al-Muḥajjalīn* is derived from the root *ḥajal* which refers to the whiteness on the hands and feet of a horse. (Farāhīdī, 1989, vol. 3, p. 79)

This combination of titles is used metaphorically for those with intellect, knowledge, good deeds, and honor. Therefore, in some sources of Prophetic traditions, it is mentioned that "the whiteness of the faces is on account of ablution," (Baghwī, 198, vol. 2, p. 280) and the intended meaning is the honor and respect with which one is treated on the Day of Resurrection as a reward for the Hereafter. (Ibn Athīr, 1989, vol. 3, p. 354)

In the Imami narrations, the title "Leader of the Radiant Ones" is specified for the Shiites and supporters of Imam 'Alī (as). The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, while reporting about his journey of Ascension (*Mi'rāj*) to Imam 'Alī, said: "... The believers, O 'Alī, are on thrones of light, while they are radiant-faced, and you are their Imam." (Ṣadūq (B), 2004, p. 36)

The description "Leader of the Radiant Ones" implies being the leader of those with luminous faces, an appellation chosen by the Almighty for Imam 'Alī, peace be upon him. Ibn 'Abbās narrates that the Prophet, peace be upon him, while sitting in the courtyard, had Diḥya b. Khalīfa al-Kalbī sitting beside him. At that moment, 'Alī (as) entered and greeted the Prophet (pbuh). 'Alī asked Diḥya how the Prophet (pbuh) was feeling that morning. Diḥya replied: "The Prophet (pbuh) was good, O brother of the Messenger of Allah!"

Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Alī (as) said, "May Allah reward you on behalf of us, the Ahl al-Bayt (as)." Diḥya said to Amīr al-Mu'minīn, "I love you. Surely, you are adorned with praise and commendation, which I give as glad tidings to you. You are Amīr al-Mu'minīn and the leader of the luminous ones. You are the chief of the children of Adam, except for the prophets and messengers. The banner of praise on the Day of Resurrection

is in your hand, as you will bring it joyfully, along with your Shia, towards Paradise with Muḥammad and his party. Whoever holds your guardianship in their heart will prosper, and whoever turns away from you will suffer. The lovers of Muḥammad are your lovers, and the enemies of Muḥammad are your enemies, whom the intercession of Muḥammad will be denied. O chosen one of Allah! Come close to me."

Subsequently, he gently cradled the head of the Holy Prophet and tenderly placed it within the embrace of Imam 'Alī. Inquisitive, the Prophet inquired, "What transpires in this discourse?" Imam 'Alī, respectfully, informed him of the occurrence. To this, the Prophet responded, elucidating, "It was not Diḥya al-Kalbī, but rather Gabriel, who addressed you by the appellation designated by God. This appellation engenders affection for you within the hearts of the faithful and instills apprehension in the hearts of the unbelievers" (Ibn Ṭāwūs (B), 1993, p. 440).

Moreover, beyond the textual references that affirm this epithet for Imam 'Alī, there exists a plethora of prophetic traditions on this theme, a selection of which is delineated below: Once the Messenger of Allah asked for water for ablution and then held 'Alī's hand and placed it on his chest, and then said, "You are the Warner." Then he placed the same hand on 'Alī's chest and recited the verse: "And for every people is a guide" (Qur'an 13:7). Then he said, "O 'Alī! You are the foundation of the religion, the guiding light, and the culmination of guidance, and you are the leader of the radiant ones. I bear witness to this for you." (Şaffār, 1984, vol. 1, p. 31)

Furthermore, in a lengthy address to Imam 'Alī, describing the Shiites and his supporters, the Prophet (pbuh) said: "O 'Alī! Give glad tidings to your brothers, as Allah has chosen them, as they have chosen you as their leader. O 'Alī! You are the Leader of the Radiant Ones. O 'Alī! Your Shiites are the chosen ones. If it were not for you and your Shiites, the religion of Allah would not have been upheld." (Şadūq, 1988, p. 561)

The renown of this title for Imam 'Alī had become so widespread that he himself, during a gathering, invoked the companions adjuring them in the name of Allah, and making them acknowledge this epithet. (Ṭabarī, Āmulī, 1995, p. 346)



## 7-2- Leader of the Righteous

The term *al-barara* [plural of *al-bārr*] refers to the righteous and noble individuals, which the Holy Prophet (pbuh) used on various occasions to describe Imam 'Alī as the "leader of the righteous." 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is the leader of the righteous and the vanquisher of the disbelievers. Whoever assists him will be assisted, and whoever opposes him will be vanquished. Doubting 'Alī (as) is doubting Islam, and the best individual whom I will appoint as my successor and the best among my companions is 'Alī (as). His flesh and blood are my flesh and blood, and he is the father of my two grandchildren, and from the lineage of Husayn (as), the twelve Imams will emerge, and the Mahdi of this community will be among them. (Khazāz Rāzī, 1981, p. 97)

## 7-3- Leader of My Community to Paradise

"Leader of my community to Paradise" is another title that, in addition to elucidating the status of Imam 'Alī in the Hereafter, illuminates his leadership and Imamate from this world to the Hereafter.

The Messenger of Allah addressed Imam 'Alī (a) saying: "O 'Alī! I asked my Lord for five things concerning you, and He granted them to me: Firstly, I asked that when my grave is dug up, and the earth is poured over my head, you will be with me, and this was accepted by God. Secondly, I asked that when I am placed next to the scales of deeds, you will be with me, and this too was accepted. Thirdly, I asked my Lord to appoint you as the bearer of my banner, which is the great banner of Allah the Almighty, inscribed with the words: 'Successful are those who attain Paradise,' and God accepted. Fourthly, I asked Him to grant you the task of giving my community water from my Pool, and it was accepted; and fifthly, I asked Him to appoint you as the leader of my community to Paradise, and He accepted. I thank Allah the Almighty for bestowing this favor upon me." (Ṣadūq (A), 2004, p. 314)

In addition to what has been mentioned in this title, similar examples can be found such as "Leader of the Believers to Paradise" (Ṣadūq, 1988, p. 486), "Leader of the People to Paradise" (Shūshtarī, 1989, vol. 4, p. 218), and "Leader of Muslims to Paradise" (Shūshtarī, 1989, vol. 4, p. 272).

Furthermore, in the final sermon delivered by the Noble Prophet (pbuh) in his mosque, Imam 'Alī (as) is introduced as the "Leader and Guide to

Qur'anic Guidance" ('Alam al-Hudā, 1986, p. 75; Majlisī, 1984, vol. 22, p. 487).

This title is also evident in the words and poems of the companions of the Ahl al-Bayt. 'Amr b. Ḥamq praised Imam 'Alī (as) in the following poem: *This is 'Alī, the leader whom we are satisfied with, the brother of the Messenger of Allah among his companions, Whose spear and sword are swift.*" (Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1960, vol. 2, p. 346)

### **Conclusion**

Given the exclusive nature of the process of appointing the Imamate through divine designation and miraculous interventions, one of the most noteworthy aspects of Prophet Muḥammad's teachings concerning the Imamate of Imam 'Alī (as) was the method of explicit designation. Within the doctrinal framework of Imamiyya beliefs, where textual evidence holds paramount importance, diverse expressions of explicit designation can be discerned in the pronouncements of the Prophet. These encompass references to Imamate, caliphate, succession, guardianship, leadership, viziership, and commandership. This study embarks on an examination of the lexical nuances and methodologies employed in discerning explicit designation, followed by an exploration of the various terminologies employed in the Prophet's discourse. The narrative discourse of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), distinguished by its well-structured organization, substantive depth, meticulous explication, and clear elucidation tailored to the audience, serves as a potent rhetorical device in expounding upon the Imamate of Imam Ali. This discourse underscores the pivotal significance of succession and Imamate, serving to perpetuate the continuum of prophethood through the institution of Imamate. Through the symbolic enactment of this revered figure, the Almighty has metaphorically aligned the finalization and perfection of religion, alongside His satisfaction therein, with the acceptance of the pivotal doctrine of Imamate, thereby underscoring its paramount importance. Conversely, to disregard this doctrine is tantamount to rejecting the very essence of prophethood.



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## Allah's Days from a Religious Perspective of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth (Indicators and Examples) and its Role in Giving Meaning of Human Life

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### Abstract

Allah's Days (*Ayyāmullah*) are remarkable days that represent milestones in the life of humanity and mark the turning point in the history of nations and individuals that bring them closer to Him through His remembrance and worship. This study demonstrates the necessity of discovering these days in history and in the current context of time. It utilizes the contextual study of Qur'ānic exegesis of Surah Ibrāhīm and Surah al-Jāthiyah and authentic narrations from the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Infallible Imams (as) to deduce indicators from the selected examples depicting Allah's Days in the Qur'ānic stories and incidents. Our results show that Allah's Days are categorized into three interpretations which are the days that God's bounty is manifested for the believers, the days in which the divine punishment is manifested for the nonbelievers, and the days when the divine traditions are manifested across nations and time. This research presents practical examples of different types of days under each category that can be identified and extrapolated from indicators within the current time that humans can relate to in their daily life. By recognizing Allah's Days in history and in our current lives, practical lessons can be applied to seek proximity to Him.

**Keywords:** Allah's Days, *Ayyāmullah*, Divine Bounties, Divine Retribution, Divine Traditions.



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## Introduction

In the Holy Qur'ān, sometimes there are phrases that are rarely repeated, but at first glance, they catch the eye of every reader. Among such phrases, this study seeks to analyze the phrase '*Ayyāmullah*' based on the noble text of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

Given the ambiguities in the exact meaning of the phrase *Ayyāmullah* and the aspect of innovation and novelty of the subject, as well as its efficiency in the present era, this topic was studied using various prominent exegeses. Much of the literature, whether books, articles, or research papers that speak about the phrase *Ayyāmullah* is available in either Arabic or Persian language (Sa'dī, d. 786/1384, 69–71).

However, there is none available in the English language, hence, this thesis aims to bridge the gap in language to cater to the English-speaking audience. Till now, this term has not been addressed as an independent study.

There are memorable days in every nation. Some of which marks the turning point in the history of those nations as they construct the historical, social, and political identity of that nation. In fact, such days and related events keep alive religious, national, and ethnic sentiments and revive and guide political thoughts and social behaviors and construct their national and ethnic identity. The Holy Qur'ān has interpreted the crucial and influential days of history as 'the Days of Allah' (*Ayyāmullah*).

However, it did not say anything specific about their instances and evidence obviously and left it to its addresses. It is mentioned only twice in the Qur'ān, one in 14:5, and its remembrance is considered obligatory on the prophets, including Prophet Mūsā (as), and the other in 45:14 in the case of those who do not believe in the Days of Allah.

In different traditions, the Days of Allah has been interpreted to: days of Allah's blessings to His servants, days of Divine experiment for human beings by posing different bounties and disasters, Day of Doom, the day of man's death, Day of Mahdī's coming back, Day of *Ghadīr Khum*, etc. This research tries to find the exact meaning of this holy phrase: Days of Allah (*Ayyāmullah*) by surveying its instances and evidence (*maṣādiq*) all over the Qur'ān to find its exact meaning, meanwhile it takes the help of relative sources, such as reliable Prophet's and Infallibles' quoted narrations and

the right history reports in this regard. The questions that will be addressed in this research are:

What does the phrase: Days of Allah (*Ayyāmullah*) mean in the text of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth?

What are the indicators of the Days of Allah in the text of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth?

What are the examples of the Days of Allah in the text of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth?

The purpose of this research is to clarify one of the Qur'anic terms based on the text of the Qur'an and Islamic traditions and cite its examples in the Qur'an and its characteristics from the perspective of the Qur'an and Ḥadīths. Also, the objective of this research is to generalize the examples of *Ayyāmullah* in the Qur'ān to the daily life of Muslims and believers to obtain the Qur'anic lifestyle.

### **The Days of Allah**

Time is a precious commodity and an extremely important trust that the Almighty Creator blessed human beings to utilize in the most productive and useful way. The Holy Qur'ān stresses the importance of time by presenting different aspects of time in different situations such as *al-Fajr* (dawn), *al-Layl* (Night), *ad-Ḍuḥā* (Morning hours), and *al-'Aṣr* (Time). Furthermore, we have Surahs that are '*Zamāniyah*' which are the Surahs that begin with the word *إِذَا* (when) and they are seven. The seven Surahs (السور الزمانية) are Surat *al-Wāqī'ah*, *al-Munāfiqoon*, *Takwīr*, *al-Infīṭār*, *al-Inshiqāq*, *al-Zalzalah*, and *al-Naṣr*.

In these Surahs, Allah the Almighty speaks about great events that will happen in the future, such as the victorious Conquest of Makkah in Surat *al-Naṣr*, or the earthquake that takes place marking the advent of the Day of Resurrection, in Surah *al-Zalzalah*.

In an effort to better understand the literal and technical meaning of the word 'day' and its similar terms in the Arabic language and the different contexts it is used in, prominent Qur'ān vocabulary texts were used in this research. There are two literal meanings of the word 'day'. A day is the interval of light between two successive nights, it is the time between sunrise and sunset (al-Farāḥīdī, 1428/2007, 8: 433).

A day is also defined by the amount of time it takes for the earth to orbit the sun which is 24 hours (Muṣṭafā et al, 828/1425, 1067).

Astronomically, يوم/*yawm* is the time it takes for the earth to orbit the sun. (Ibid) From an Islamic jurisprudence perspective, يوم/*yawm* is the time that extends from Fajr/dawn to *maghrib*/sunset, as Muslims observe fasting in the holy month of *Ramaḍān*. Allah the Almighty specifies the duration of fasting in this verse, "وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ" (Q. 2:187) "مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ"

The plural form of يوم/*Yawm* is أيام/*Ayyām*. Exegetes have commented that the term *Ayyām* was previously associated with 'the days of the Arabs' (*Ayyām al-Arab*) in the time of ignorance when the Arabs used to engage in battles of vengeance, and later, the term *Ayyāmullah* emerged with the emergence of Islam (McAullife, d. 1427/2006, pp. 270 –290).

Arabs call the war events, which often end quickly and last only one "day", as "yawm" (Bayati, 1/61–62). Following this definition and citing Jahili poems, lexicographers have also brought *Yawm* to mean "event" and it seems that such a term has also been used in the literature of the Semitic peoples (Ibn Manzoor, under *Yum*; Bayati, 1/61-62, 65).

*Ayyām* in the Qur'ān is typically used in either descriptive combinations or additional combinations, as in *Ayyāmullah*, or as an adjective. The term *Ayyām* is mentioned 26 times in the Qur'ān, while the term *Ayyāmullah* is used in the Qur'ān in only two verses, in Surah Ibrāhīm and Surah al-Jāthiyah, which are both Meccan chapters. The term *Ayyāmullah* emerged with the advent of Islam as people were already familiar with the specialization of days related to their battles and victories. This replace of terminology from Days of Arabs to Days of God facilitated their understanding of the greatness of the divine events which happen in history.

In comparison to Medinan chapters where most of the verses are regarding the obligatory duties and Islamic laws, the Meccan verses place more emphasis on the foundation of religion and the principles of faith, based on unification.

These revelations were aimed at destroying polytheism and engrossing the hearts with good morals, as the people were practicing idolatry during the first years of Prophethood, an era in which both ignorance and deviation were at a peak. In the Meccan chapters, there are stories and examples of

past communities to provide lessons for learning and avoiding repeating mistakes of history. Faith-building involved ترهيب (warning) and ترغيب (glad tidings) for the believers and nonbelievers, respectively.

Both concepts of warning and glad tidings are directly related to *Ayyāmullah* since the interpretations of this phrase, as discussed earlier, involve the divine bounties to the believers and divine punishment to the nonbelievers.

### A. Allah's Bounties, Examples, and Indicators

The first instance in which *Ayyāmullah* is mentioned in the Qur'ān is verse 14:5:

"وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ."

The entire chapter of Surah Ibrāhīm indicates that the phrase *Ayyāmullah* refers to divine bounties and blessings which Allah the Almighty grants specifically to the righteous believers. Thematic analysis of Surah Ibrāhīm presents a series of divine bounties directed towards believers which include the divine transition from the state of darkness to light, the concept of patience and thankfulness exhibited by believers, the 'good word' versus the 'evil word', the gift of monotheistic belief, security, being granted a blessed progeny, the blessing of prayer and attaining divine forgiveness which all invites the believers to experience *Ayyāmullah*.

The Qur'ān presents many examples of *Ayyām* that are associated with God such as the Day of Qur'ān's Revelation, Day of sending the Seal of Prophets, Day of Migration, Day of Divine Miracles, Day of Thanksgiving, Day of Repentance, Day of Hope, Trust and Victory, Day of Steadfastness on Truth, Day of Sacrifice, *Laylat ul-Qadr* and *Mi'rāj*, Day of Abundance, and Doomsday Show. Such significant days of God can be determined using indicators extrapolated based on existing examples in Qur'an and Ḥadīth, and these indicators have been presented in this research.

We find that the Qur'anic interpretation and authentic narrations related to days support one another and provide further clarification to the contexts in which the word *yawm* is used. For example, in the Qur'an, we have *Hajj Al-Akbar* Day, which is the Lord's Day (يوم ربي).



Similarly, in Surah Sajdah, verse 5 indicates that a day of God is equal to a thousand years, and likewise in Surah Ma'araj, which is equal to 50,000 years. Three theories arise here: the days of Allah are the same as the Lord's Day (يوم ربي); The days of God do not refer to time, but are figuratively used for divine blessings, rewards, and traditions. The third opinion is to combine these two theories and say that time is a container for the manifestation of divine blessings, rewards, and traditions.

Through these days in history and in the stories of the Prophets, we can apply practical lessons in our current daily lives.

Due to the limited scope of this paper, only a few selected examples of divine bounties will be cited below.

a. Reappearance of Imam Mahdi: The agenda of the universal government of Imam Mahdi (afs) will be to establish peace, security, and justice everywhere, and to eliminate all traces of corruption, oppression, and tyranny; as has been the goal of all prophets; the only difference being that they weren't able to accomplish those goals fully and wholly, nevertheless they all foretold of a day that would come that such would take place.

b. *Laylat ul-Qadr* and *Mi'raj*: The Night of Power which falls in the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan is mentioned in *Surah al-Qadr* to be better than a thousand months where angels descend during the duration of that blessed night till the time of dawn.

On such a great night which is described in Surah al-Dukhaan as ليلة مباركة also has other key significance as it is the night when the will of God is made clear in every affair, فيها يفرق كل أمر حكيم (Q. 44:3). The Night of Isrā' and Mi'rāj is another example of a bountiful time that is observed on the 27<sup>th</sup> night of the holy month of Rajab, which is marked by Prophet Muhammad's miraculous journey in one night from Makkah to Jerusalem and then ascension to the heavens.

Such night is described in narrations to be one of the four days that are specified for highly recommended fasting during the whole year. The reward of observing fasting on this day is mentioned to be equal to seventy years fasting. Within Islam, it signifies both a physical and spiritual journey and on this same night, the Prophet greeted all other prophets and led them in prayer, he spoke to God and brought back instructions about the

obligatory prayer. The journey and ascent are marked as one of the most celebrated dates in the Islamic calendar.

c. Holy Month of Ramaḍān: This is a great event for Muslims to celebrate during the holy month of Qur'ān and according to traditions, Imam al-Bāqir (as) said, 'For everything, there is a spring, and the spring of the Qur'ān is the month of Ramaḍān.' (Ibn Bābawayh, nd, 115) God distinguishes the days of Ramaḍān as أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ (Q. 2:184)

Muslims should be thankful for this great divine gift of guidance and celebrate the holy month of Ramaḍān as *Ayyāmullah*. As Imam al-Ṣadiq (as) said to *Abi Baṣeer* regarding the sanctity of this month:

*'Oh Aba Muḥammad, the holy month of Ramadan has sanctity that does not resemble any other month, the companions of the Prophet used to recite the entire Qur'ān in one month or less; the Qur'ān is not to be recited quickly, rather it should be recited in a manner of Tartīl.'* (al-Āmilī, 1429/2008, 6: 216)

In practical terms, every day that a Muslim recites the Qur'ān with humility and mindfulness that leads to self-purification is a day of God. And every that Muslims cultivate mosques by reciting the Qur'ān, saying prayers, addressing the problems of their kind with their constant presence is a Day of God.

The Prophet (pbuh) has said in this regard, مَنْ كَانَتْ الْمَسَاجِدُ بَيْتَهُ ضَمِنَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، الرُّوحَ وَ الرِّاحَةَ وَ الْجَوَارِ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ. "Whoever has the mosques in his house, God will guarantee for him the spirit and comfort, and the permission to pass the Sirat." (al-Ṭabresī, 1408/1987, 3:362)

How is recitation of Qur'ān and performance of Salah associate with days of God? It is narrated that Imam Zainul 'Abideen (as) stated, إنا لله يوما "There is a day of God where those who engage in falsehood are the losers." (al-Āmilī, 1429/2008, 12:216)

This day is specified as the Day of Resurrection as Allah the Almighty says, وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُؤْمِنُ الْمُبْطِلُونَ "To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and the Day that the Hour of Judgment is established, that Day will the dealers in Falsehood perish!" (Q. 45:27)



The word مبطلون comes from the word باطل which means falsehood, so مبطلون refers to those whose deeds, speech, and/or life revolves around falsehood and dishonesty. We find that Allah (SWT) states in the Qur'an about the Qur'an that لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ *"Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it."* (Q. 41:96)

Here, the connection between Qur'an and باطل is that falsehood does not come to or affect the Holy Book, nor does it affect those who hold on steadfastly to the Book through practical application and following the teachings of the Qur'an. As we know that the Qur'an and AhlulBayt does not separate from each other, it follows also that falsehood is not associated to AhlulBayt.

As for the recitation of the Qur'an, we comprehend from verse 107 to 109 of Surah al-Isra presented as follows that those who bear knowledge, when they recite the Qur'an, it leads them to reach a state of خشوع (reverence and humility). قُلْ آمَنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا. وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا. وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ لِلَّذِينَ يُخِرُّونَ لِأَذْقَانِ وَيُزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا. *"Say: Believe in it or believe not; surely those who are given the knowledge before it fall down on their faces, making obeisance when it is recited to them. And they say: Glory be to our Lord! most surely the promise of our Lord was to be fulfilled. And they fall down on their faces weeping, and it adds to their humility."* (Q. 17:107)

This state of خشوع can be directly connected to Salah by the following verse: "And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones." (Q. 2:45)

Sabr (patience) and salat (prayer) curb vain desires, pride and self-indulgence and lead to humility, acceptance and obedience. Those who pray with humility and reverence to God has surely performed Salah with ease and they are the victorious believers as Allah states, الَّذِينَ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ. *"Successful indeed are the believers, Who are humble in their prayers."* (Q. 23:1-2)

In sum, we can create a logical connection via the verses of the Qur'an that the day of God is a day associated with truth and not with falsehood or those who associate with falsehood, and one example is the Qur'an.

The recitation of Qur'ān upon pure hearts lead to the state of humility and reverence which is associated with Salah. Therefore, we can conclude that the day of God is associated with both recitations of Qur'ān and performance of Salah and every day a believer performs his prayer with humility and mindfulness, is a day of God.

d. Day of Migration: One of the general principles of Islam is the legitimacy to migrate for the sake of God, as He states: وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ... يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاعِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً (Q. 4:100)

Prophet Ibrahīm's migration to build the holy House of God and set the foundation for worship in the holy land of Makkah was a journey to bring people out of ignorance to the light of guidance. In the life of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), his migration from Makkah is a significant day of victory in the history of Islam when he escaped the persecution of the Makkans, إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ، (Q. 9:40) We also have an example in Prophet Ibrahīm (as) who migrated to another land after being persecuted by his own people, so he made the intention and said, إني مهاجر إلى ربي إنه هو العزيز الحكيم (Q. 29:24).

Prophet Nūh (as) also migrated to his Lord when God commanded him: فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنْ اصْنَعْ الْفُلَکَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحَيْنَا فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ (Q. 23:27) The Arc of Salvation of Prophet Nūh (AS) saved the handful of believers from the fatality of the flood as he prayed for the safe arrival which God granted him, وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبَارَكًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ (Q. 23:29)

We may not have had the opportunity to board Prophet Nūh's ark of salvation; however, we have the arc of salvation of the *Ahlulbayt* (as) whom it is compulsory for us to follow. The Prophet (pbuh) has said, 'The similitude of my Household among you is that of the ark of Nūh: whomever boards it is saved, and whoever lags behind it is drowned' (al- Mūsawī, 1436/2015, 82) likening them with the ark of Nūh implies that whoever resorts to them in matters related to the creed, deriving the branches and basics of religion from their virtuous Imams, will certainly be saved from the fire of hell, and whoever lags behind them is like one who seeks shelter during the flood with a mountain so that it may save him from Allah's destiny, but he will eventually be drowned in water.



On the day of migration to preserve religion and protecting oneself like Prophet Nūh did is a duty upon every human being.

e. Day of Lady Maryam's Delivery of Jesus: The miraculous conception and delivery of Prophet Jesus by his mother is one of the days of God which is considered a bounty to mankind.

The Qur'an gives glad tidings to this event as the angels appeared to Lady Maryam addressing her,

*'O Mary! Verily Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word from Him, his name shall be the Messiah Jesus the son of Mary held in honor in this world and in the hereafter and will be one of those near to Allah. He will speak to the people in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.'* (Q. 3:45–46)

The same God who had made his barren mother pregnant and has been feeding her with heavenly fruits has now decreed to miraculously make her conceive a baby boy who would be a Messenger of God.

f. Days of Muslim Victory over Infidels: In the life of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), there are many instances that signify the victory of Muslims over the infidels. The Prophet's migration from Makkah is a significant day of victory in the history of Islam when he escaped the persecution of the Makkans, *إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِي اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ* (Q. 9:40)

There is the victory achieved in the day of *Ḥunayn* where Allah confirms that day as a day of victory, *لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۗ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ*. (Q. 9:25) On the day of the Battle of *Aḥzāb*, Allah provided support via angels to help the Muslims, as mentioned in Verse 33:9. Same divine aid took place in the Battle of *Badr*, as told about in verse 8:9. According to Imam al-Bāqir,

*'The angels who helped the Prophet (pbuh) during the Battle of Badr have not yet returned to heaven in order to help Hazrat Ṣahib al-Amr (afs) and their number is five thousand.'* (al-Ṭabarsī, 1408 AH, 2: 448)

Divine victory to Muslims is not limited to the time of the Prophet (pbuh) and extends itself across time to all ages and places.

And most notably, the Conquest of Makkah signified the victory of Islam over idol worshipping, and the sign of divine victory is that people embrace the religion, as God says, *”ورأيت الناس يدخلون في دين الله أفواجا”* (Q. 110:2)

## B. Allah's Vengeance, Examples, and Indicators

The second instance where *Ayyāmullah* is mentioned is in Surah al-Jāthiyah, Verse 14: " قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْمًا بِمَا كَانُوا " يَكْسِبُونَ" The interpretation of *Ayyāmullah* in Surah al-Jāthiyah refers to the divine retribution (*Niqmah*) that is directed to the nonbelievers, based on exegete opinions, traditionalists, and textual analysis. Textual review of the phrase لا يرجون أيام الله shows that all the instances in the Qur'an where Allah the Almighty uses the phrase لا يرجون are in reference to nonbelievers not desiring to meet God, through death, which transitions them to the Day of Resurrection which they don't believe in. Since they don't believe in the Day of Resurrection, they don't anticipate or prepare for that fateful day, and this is reflected in their actions of transgression and rejecting truth. The Days of God mentioned in لا يرجون أيام الله is referring to the Day of Judgment and any day where the punishment of God is manifested.

Thematic analysis of the entire chapter of Surah al-Jāthiyah carries many more verses which focus on the context of divine punishment and vengeance to nonbelievers compared to verses that speak about divine bounty. This is an indication that the interpretation of *Ayyāmullah* in this Surah is specifically the divine *Niqmah* and not divine *Ne'mah*. Even the verses which speak about the divine bounty are to show contrast for those who don't follow the way of the nonbelievers.

Furthermore, the title of the Surah carries a strong hint to the context of the entire Surah since the word 'al-Jāthiyah' (kneeling one) is a description of the state of nonbelievers as they await their dreadful fate on the Day of Judgment. The breakdown of the classification of verses in Surah al-Jāthiyah is approximately twice as many verses that speak of divine *Niqmah*, compared to those which speak about divine *Ne'mah*, which is another indication that *Ayyāmullah* in Verse 14 means divine *Niqmah*. Upon analyzing the phrase *Ayyāmullah* in Surah Jāthiyah (Verse 14), the thematic analysis and context of the verses in this chapter suggest that the interpretation of *Ayyāmullah* here refers to divine retribution (*Niqmah*) that is directed to the nonbelievers.

Textual review of the phrase لا يرجون أيام الله shows that all the instances in the Qur'an where Allah the Almighty uses the phrase لا يرجون are in reference to nonbelievers not desiring to meet God, through death, which transitions them to the Day of Resurrection which they don't believe in.

Even the verses that speak about the divine bounty are to show contrast with those who don't follow the way of the nonbelievers.

Due to the limited scope of this paper, only a few selected examples of divine vengeance are cited below:

a. Day of Arrogance: The Prophet of Islam has said, 'The remotest of you to me on the Day of Resurrection will be the bigmouth and the proud.' (Al-Majlisī, 1403/1983, 15: 209) One of the first spiritual diseases and sins that creation committed is arrogance, as Satan refused to obey the command of God in prostrating to Prophet Adam. The root cause of disobedience was the feeling of pride and arrogance which Satan felt since he was created from the fire which he thought made him better than Adam who was created from clay. Allah the Almighty says: *وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ (Q. 2:34) أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ*

Al-Qummī cites in his exegesis that the angels thought that *Iblīs* was among them as 'angels', but when the ugly reality of *Iblīs* came out when God tested him with envy towards Adam, they came to know that *Iblīs* is not like them. (Al-Qummī, 1363/1944, 1: 36) If it were not for the test which God placed him in, *Iblīs* would've continued to enjoy the high status he earned due to his worship etc. However, Allah knew best what his reality was, and He willed for that reality to come out by presenting a situation that would reveal his arrogance. In our practical life, when everything is going well, we are in our best behavior, and we think are doing well.

The worst that is inside of us does not come out since there is no stress or pressure to bring it out. However, when we face a tribulation, then our patience is tested and that is the real test. Allah the Almighty states that He created the life and death to evaluate us based on our deeds, *لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ (Q. 67:2) عَمَلًا*

b. *Wilayah* to Nonbelievers and Unjust people: Many verses of Qur'an stress this point not to take the nonbelievers as *awliyā* (friends), as God says, *يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (Q. 4:144)* It is natural that people who are like-minded become friends with each other. Hence, the *Kuffār* are *awliyā* of each other (Q. 8:73) and the believers are *awliyā* of each other (Q. 9:71) Even if our own family member becomes an enemy of God, then we shouldn't take them as friend or guardians, otherwise we become from the unjust people.

People shouldn't take them as *awliyā* because the Shayṭan is wali to them and by associating with them, you are associating with the Shayṭan as well. Allah the Almighty describes such people as unjust, as mentioned in verse 9:23. Allah the Almighty reminds us that dignity and honor is with God and not with the nonbelievers, أَيْبَتُّوْنَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا (Q. 4:139)

In our personal lives, we should be very selective of who are friends are, whom we spend time with and associate with. There are many narrations which focus on selection of companion or friend. The Prophet of Islam has said: 'A man follows the faith, ways and habits of his friend.' (Al-'Āmilī, 1429/2008, 11: 502)

c. Day of Divine Recompense: Allah the Almighty says that whatever calamity befalls is often due to our own action, and He pardons in a lot of things, وما أصابكم من مصيبة فيما كسبت أيديكم ويعفوا عن كثير (Q. 42:30) The system of reward and punishment is directly related to the following commands and avoiding the forbidding, and this is applicable in everyday life, such as stopping at a red light, etc. Typically, the reward is a motivator to do good, and bad consequences is deterrent to doing bad. Allah the Almighty says, إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا (Q. 17:7) Higher level of faith is to understand that the commands and prohibitions of God is for human guidance and perfection, as Allah the Almighty says, ولولا فضل الله عليكم (Q. 24:11) ورحمته ما زكى منكم من أحد أبدا

When the transgression reaches a certain limit and when much time has passed in allowing the opportunity to repent and return to God, He could decide to inflict His punishment on them. The timing of the divine recompense and retribution can take place in the life of this world, and/or in the next life which is the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

d. Taking Lower Desires as God: In the common language, the word *هو* (*hawa*) is applied where something takes man from a high to a low state. Lustful desires of the lower self also cause a fall from greatness to degradation. The worship of God elevates man to spiritual heights, and opposite to it the pursuance of low and lustful desires leads to a degraded state. He who bows before his lower desires fall from a high to a low state. To 'worship' means to bow before something and may reach a stage where one submits before their low and lustful desires. That is called 'taking your low desires for god'. Allah the Almighty uses the expression "اتخذ إلهه هواه"

multiple times in the Qurʾān, as in the verse 25:43–44 where He describes those who follow their own lower desires as worse than even cattle and as those who do not comprehend. He says:

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا  
(Q. 25:43–44). أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَ هُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنَّ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

Such was the condition of Arabia at the time of the coming of our Holy Prophet. People merely followed their low desires and cared not for the path of truth towards which the Holy Prophet invited them. They had lost all the qualities which distinguish human society from animals. They had no morals or spiritual qualities left in them, and they had lost the true principles of statecraft, civilization, and society.

There remained only greed and base desires (*Hawa*), which became their gods. If you ponder, you will find that the same is the condition of the world today. The word *Hawa* is comprehensive, including all desires which bring down the man. It includes love of wealth, love of honor, love of fame, and love of acquiring political power. It also includes the pursuance of wrong traditions and customs. People are taking their low desires for God and are thus falling from a high to a low state.

e. Day of Resurrection: This day signifies the return which is referred to in the verse *إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون* (Q. 2:156). It is one of the clear manifestations and interpretations of *Ayyāmullah*. It is narrated that Imam al-Bāqir (as) said that the Days of God is the Day of Resurrection, the day when the 12th Imam (the Awaited Mahdi) will return, and the day of Karrah (the second coming which is the day when certain individuals who embodied pure good will be brought back to life along with those who embodied pure evil for a final battle of good against evil). (Al-Kāshānī, 1373 AH, 80–81)

They are the Days of God that the apparent bounty becomes manifest and announced to all and stamped in history. The Qurʾān speaks a lot about the afterlife with different titles and descriptions of the types of punishment that will be given to different types of sinners, which we can take a lesson from. It is narrated that Imam ‘Ali said, ‘*Today is the time of deeds and no accounting, while tomorrow is the day of accounting and no deeds.*’ (Al-Qusṭalānī, 1441/2020, H. No. 6080. <<http://www.al-ilmiyah.com>>)



Indicators of the Days of God through divine vengeance and retribution can be extrapolated from Qur'anic verses and Ḥadīth to identify days of God in our current time.

### C. Allah's Traditions, Examples, and Indicators

The third interpretation of the phrase '*Ayyāmullah*' in the Qur'ān refers to Sunnatullah which are the divine traditions that do not change with time or place. Allah the Almighty mentions the concept of *Sunnatullah* numerous times in the Qur'ān. His Sunnah does not change with time, "سُنَّةٌ" مَنْ قَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا وَلَا تَجِدُ لِسُنَّتِنَا تَحْوِيلًا (Q. 17:77)

A divine tradition is characterized by being consistent, universal, and steadfast with time. There are two types of divine traditions, absolute and restricted. Absolute traditions are universal and are applied to all creation, regardless of ethnicity, background, creed, or color. Examples of absolute traditions from the Holy Qur'ān are discussed in this research including the tradition of creation in the best way, the tradition of formative guidance, the tradition of divine pre-ordainment, the tradition of preaching and warning, the tradition of removing burden, the tradition of reflecting actions (karma), the tradition of a social disposition, the tradition of defending truth and opposing falsehood, the tradition of divine victory and aid to the prophets, the tradition of death, the tradition of trials and tribulations, the tradition of completing the proof, and the tradition of transformation from one state to another.

In contrast, restricted traditions are specific to a certain group of people, and these traditions manifest under certain criteria or preconditions. There are specific step-by-step traditions that are specific to non-believers and the stages they tread as they go deeper in their state of sin and disobedience to God. Allah's tradition is that goodness will beget more goodness, and transgression without repentance and without any regard to God will beget more transgression. Examples of restricted traditions are the tradition of punishment, decoration of evil deeds, excessive misguidance, the tradition of *Imlā'* and *Istidrāj* (divine deception and fall from Allah's grace by a hidden chain of events, tradition of giving chance and opportunity for repentance, the tradition of suffering from calamities, the dominance of criminals, and tradition of eradication.

Among all prophets, the story of Prophet Mūsa presents phenomenal examples of absolute and restricted traditions of God from which we can benefit from and apply in our own lives. Such traditions demonstrate the step-by-step journey of both a believer and a non-believer, and it is through these traditions that we can recognize the manifestation of the Days of Allah.

For brevity, a couple of selected examples of absolute traditions from the story of Prophet Musa are depicted below:

1. One of the divine traditions of the prophetic mission is to establish proof to the people who are receiving the divine message, and this is from divine mercy and justice. Once إتمام الحجة is accomplished, people have no excuses and are accountable in front of God. Every prophet presented established proofs for their people and Prophet Mūsa is no exception.

There are many instances in the biography of Prophet Mūsa where إتمام الحجة took place and the following are a few examples, supported by Qur'ānic verses:

a. We afflicted the people of Pharaoh with hard times and with the poor harvest that they may heed. (Q. 7:130) However, when prosperity came their way, they forgot the hard times that befell them, and they attributed the misfortune to Mūsa and those who followed him. They said it to وَقَالُوا (Q. 7:132) مَهْمَا تَأْتِنَا بِهِ مِنْ آيَةٍ لِنَسْحَرَنَّ بِهَا فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

b. Pharaoh's courtiers obstinately persisted in branding Mūsa's signs as sorcery although they knew well that sorcery had nothing in common with the miraculous signs granted to Mūsa. It is for this reason that God said, فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ. وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (Q. 27:13–14) فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالْدَّمَ آيَاتٍ مُفَصَّلَاتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُجْرِمِينَ (Q.7:133)

Each of these consecutive tribulations stood as a *Hujjah* (proof) for the Egyptians and an opportunity to return back to God. However, the cycle repeated itself again and again in that they would promise and plead to Prophet Mūsa that they would believe in God and repent. But as soon as the trial was lifted, they would forget and return to their previous apostate ways. Then God would send them another test of punishment. Allah describes this in the Qur'ān, وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ طَلِّينُ كَشَفْتِ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ (Q. 7:134)

2. Tradition of removing burden: God the merciful does not impose a burden on any of his creation with more than they can handle, and the prophets and messengers are not an exception to this divine tradition. When Prophet Mūsa was given the command to go to Pharaoh and deliver the message of warning and the word of God to him, Mūsa asked God to appoint his brother Aaron as his helper to aid in his mission since his brother was eloquent in speech. He said,

وَأَجْعَلْ لِي وَزِيرًا مِنْ أَهْلِي. هَارُونَ أَخِي. اشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي. وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي. كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا. وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا. (Q. 20:29–34)

Harūn was a gifted speaker and would often speak for Mūsa who suffered from a speech impediment.

Allah the Merciful granted Mūsa his request and Harūn became his aid in his mission to Pharaoh as Allah the Almighty knew that this would alleviate his burden and a combination of both their talents combined would alleviate worry and is better for the overall mission.

In our personal lives, we often face many challenging situations that we think we cannot overcome. We should always return to God and never hesitate to pray to Him for help, for even a prophet wasn't shy to ask for help. If we keep in mind that God wants ease for us and not hardship, it will encourage us in our path of worship and good deeds.

Selected examples of restricted traditions from the story of Prophet Musa are related below:

1. Tradition of decorating evil deeds: God tested the followers of Prophet Mūsa (AS) with Samiri who aimed to misguide them, as mentioned. فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ. When Prophet Mūsa went to Mount Sinai for his divine appointment, al-Sāmīrī took the opportunity to misguide the people. He built a golden calf and fooled the people in worshipping it as God, claiming it is the God of Mūsa and Harūn. Allah describes this state وَلَكِنَّا حُمَلْنَا أَوْزَارًا مِنْ زِينَةِ الْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنَاهَا فَكَذَلِكَ أَلْقَى السَّامِرِيُّ. The evil deed of worshipping other than God and committing shirk was beautified in their eyes. Not only that, but God willed that the calf emits a mooing sound (فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عَجَلًا جَسَدًا لَوْ خَوَارَ), so the people fell into the trap and believed in falsehood. It was an act of *istidrag* as well that God facilitated their misguidance by decorating their deeds.

2. Tradition of eradication: When a nonbeliever continues in his state of transgression and flagrant disobedience of God and challenges Him

again and again, and when Allah the Almighty has given him multiple opportunities to repent and return Him, and he still refuses to do so, then the last stage of this journey is eradication and final divine punishment. We have seen eradication of different groups by Allah the Almighty such as the people of Prophet Nūh by the grand Flood, or the people of ‘Ad by the drought followed by a large storm. Allah the Almighty also eradicated Pharaoh and his followers who kept on insisting in polytheism and refusing to believe in Prophet Mūsa or the God of Mūsa, even after all the proofs, evidence, and miracles that they witnessed.

Finally, the divine will is manifested and Allah the Almighty saved the Israelites from the persecution of Pharaoh. said, *وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمْ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ* (Q. 2:50) *وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ* (Q. 2:50) With eradication, Allah willed to make Pharaoh an example to all those who are arrogant and insistent in disobeying God. He says in the Qur’ān, *فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِدَبِّكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلَقَ آيَةً وَإِنَّ* (Q. 10:92) *كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ*

Likewise, eradication also happened to the people of Prophet Shu’āyb whom Prophet Mūsa met and married his daughter. Allah the Almighty send Prophet Shu’āyb to the people of *Madaīn* who used to cheat in business transactions. The Prophet told them to give up their evil deeds, but they refused to obey him. He warned of a painful punishment and eventually, Allah the Almighty destroyed the people of Madaīn.

#### **D. Ayyāmullah in Personal Lives**

Whether we are reflecting on divine bounties, retribution, or traditions with respect to *Ayyāmullah*, we can certainly create a connection with the Days of Allah in our current lives and contemporary events. Through the Days of Allah identified in the stories and events narrated in the Qur’an, we can deduce the indicators of *Ayyāmullah* which give us general guidance to identify and highlight the Days of God in our current time and personal lives, history of nations, and in any time of humanity.

Every human being has his/her own life journey with its unique ups and downs, challenges, and successes. Two persons may experience the same exact event in their lives, however, the method or course of how the event takes place may create special significance and *Ijāz* (inimitability) to one person that ultimately stamps this day as the day of God for that person due to the connection that creates with God. Furthermore, we may interpret a day or event in our life to be disliked or good for us, however, it may

appear later in life to be the opposite, as Allah the Almighty says, وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ" (2:216) This realization that dawns to a believer as he recognizes the blessings of Allah in each aspect of his life, even though the seemly negative events, manifest the Days of Allah due to their realization of His amazing power and authority over creation.

Aside from reflecting on the divine bounties, retribution, and traditions in the past and current time, it is inevitable that humanity must also reflect on the current technological advancements and rapidly increasing scientific discoveries that progressed over time. Through current and future discoveries, man must recognize and appreciate that God is the powerful One who granted us the ability to discover this knowledge and led us to understand and develop new useful methods that advance humanity. This stage or phase of recognition signifies remembrance of God and His ultimate authority, thereby manifesting His days on earth. God says, سَتُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ (Q. 41:53) Hence, God urges humanity to reflect and contemplate over His signs in many verses of the Qur'an. He exhorts humanity to reflect and wake up from the state of neglectfulness and slumber, using different words, أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ (Q. 47:24) and أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ (Q. 36:68) so that we 'see' Him in all aspects of our lives, our surroundings, our daily events, and perhaps every moment of our day!

Furthermore, divine remembrance (ذكر) in all its forms is directly related to *Ayyāmullah*; believers live their every moment in the way of Allah with a sense of God-consciousness, and they validate their word and actions by living the presence of Allah in their lives, hence experiencing *Ayyāmullah*. Every time we remember the bounties of God, it is a Day of God.

Some blessings must always be remembered, like thanking God for your health and wealth; but other blessings must be highlighted from time to time such as on day when victory or salvation is achieved. Human being must remember these blessings according to his ability and capacity, it is God's abundant divine mercy which accepts the simple utterance of '*Alḥamdulillah*' from His servant.

When we analyze the concept of patience, we find that there is a direct relationship with the current time (*yawm*). It is narrated that Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) said, اصبروا على الدنيا فإنما هي ساعة فما مضى منه فلا تجد له ألما ولا سرورا وما لم

يجبى فلا تدري ما هو وإنما هي ساعتك التي أنت فيها فاصبر فيها على طاعة الله واصبر فيها عن معصية الله. *“Have patience on the life of this world (dunya), for it is a period of time; you will not feel pain or happiness from whatever passed from it, and whatever did not yet come, you don't know what awaits you. It is your current time so have patience in the obedience of Allah and have patience in avoiding sinning and disobeying Allah.”* (Al-Kulaynī, 1342/1923, 2:454)

From this narration, we understand that a believer should observe patience and perseverance every day of his life since this life is a place of trial and tribulations, as Allah says, *وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ* (Q. 2:155). And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient. When a believer experiences a loss or calamity, they remember Allah (in the state of dhikr) and say *إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون* as a sign of their patience. The best examples of those who exercised the peak of patience are *فَأَصْبِرْ* as Allah the Almighty says, *كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولَا الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ* (Q. 46:35). Therefore, bear up patiently as did the messengers endowed with constancy bear up with patience. Their days of patience are Days of God and when we follow their path of patience and perseverance, we also experience the Days of God. We see an example in the story of Prophet Mūsa (as) in many occasions including the miracle of splitting of the ocean, as mentioned in Surah Ibrahīm. Patience and endurance in the way of God can lead a believer to experience days of God.

The days of God can be different for different individuals depending on their degree of faith and piety. For infallible personalities, the days of God are the most prominent and extraordinarily significant days such as the miracles which take place in the life of the prophets and Imams, or the day of revelation of the Qur'an and other divine scriptures. However, as explained by Ayatullah Naṣer Makārim in his exegesis of verse 6 of Surah Ibrahim, the meaning of days of God cannot be limited. Not only does it include all of the great days in the history of mankind, it also includes every day when the divine commands are obeyed, exemplified and take effect on other aspects of life. This is very relevant for the average fallible believer and is consistent with the tradition by Imam 'Ali (as) in which he said, *كل يوم لا يُعصى فيه فهو يوم عيد* *“Every day that a believer does not disobey God is a day of Eid.”* (al-Majlisī, 1403/1982, 88:136) Every day that a new chapter of life opens which brings a new lesson or wisdom is a day of God.

In essence, every day where truth and justice is being practiced and observed while eradicating injustice and innovation, is a day of God.

The true meanings of *Ayyāmullah* are the great and significant day in history, not the ordinary ones; however, we as believers try to get closer to those great days in every day and moment of our lives so that at the end of the night and after daily accounting of our selves (*Muḥasabat al-Nafs*), we get a good feeling that we have been able to turn a normal day into a day of God or as close to it as possible.

### E. Conclusion

When something is associated with a creation or created thing, it is limited in scope and restricted to the materialistic and worldly aspects. However, when a thing is associated with the divine realm and belongs to the Almighty Creator, it carries a different and much higher level of greatness, meaning, and status which minds cannot possibly comprehend, measure, or imagine its scope. When we speak about the 'Days of Allah', referred to as *Ayyāmullah* in the Holy Qur'an in two instances (Q. Q14:5 and Q45:14), such days are immensely honoured and recognized due to its direct association with Allah. The Qur'an has left the interpretation of the phrase 'Days of Allah' open-ended without specifying the number of days or minimum or maximum. This discussion is important and relevant today because anything associated with God is of interest to us if we desire to seek His proximity and worship, and the day of Allah is a concept that can be identified and recognized in our own lives. If we understand what the characteristics of the Days of Allah are and what qualifies them to be associated to God, we will be able to practice the remembrance of God and seek proximity to Him through His days, as He says, *وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا*, 'And remember Allah much' (8:45).

Interestingly, Allah has mentioned this phrase only twice and chose these two Surahs specifically for a greater wisdom. If we look at Surah Ibrahim as a coherent collection of concepts and contents, we can see that it is trying to express "divine traditions". Traditions and fixed laws and methods that God has established about the currents in the system of existence. Traditions that will never be defeated or changed, and their circle has covered the world and the hereafter.

As for Surah al-Jāthiyah, if we consider the pivotal point as "Days of Allah" and take a look at the whole of it, we will find that, like Surah

Ibrahīm, it refers to the laws governing the world of nature, human societies, and the world of the hereafter, and as the example refers to the behavior and destiny of the people of Israel. The contents of the two Surahs of Jathiyah and Ibrahīm are very similar to each other.

The three common interpretations of *Ayyāmullah* in Surah Ibrahīm and Surah al-Jāthiyah as presented by various Qur'anic exegetes indicate that the Days of Allah are either Allah's blessings (*Ni'mah*), His vengeance (*Niqmah*), or his divine traditions (*Sunnah*). The key points from this research can be summarized in the following:

1. Days of God are all the bountiful days that have greatness in the history of human life and that God has selected for a promised event or command or worship to take place due to its significance. As mentioned in Qur'anic exegesis, the Day of Resurrection, the Day of *Karrah* or *Raj'ah* (the Second Return), and the day of reappearance of 12<sup>th</sup> Imam are Days of Allah because any day where believers triumph over nonbelievers and the promise of Allah and position of truth manifests itself and oppression is defeated. Furthermore, the Prophets and Imams as divine representatives are directly associated with Allah the Almighty, hence anything related to them is also associated with the Almighty. Hence, the Days of Allah become their days and their days are also His Days. Surah Ibrahīm which carries the phrase *Ayyāmullah*, provides multiple examples of days and events which serve as blessings to the believers specifically. From these types of days, we can extrapolate similar days in our own lives.

2. The Days of God, while they can be used as divine revelations to bring peace and strength to the hearts, can also be the cause of the cruelty of the hearts. The opening of the door of the cruelty of heart to human beings; that is, the opening the door for unbelief, oppression, ignorance, and in short, entering darkness. Ignoring the days that are like divine revelations shows its effect on the cruelty of the heart. The vengeance and calamities that have been sent by God on unjust people, oppressors, nations, and civilizations, are also the manifestation of His Justice. One of the aims of divine vengeance is to teach human beings a lesson from the past to prepare them for the future and guide them from the darkness of misguidance to the light of guidance. Surah al-Jāthiyah which carries the phrase *Ayyāmullah*, provides multiple examples of days and events which serve as punishment and vengeance to the nonbelievers specifically. From

these types of days, we can extrapolate similar days in the lives of the nonbelievers today.

3. Divine traditions is the third interpretation of the phrase *Ayyāmullah* in the Qur'an. God has ironically used the term *Ayyāmullah* interchangeably. Among the divine traditions and *Sunnah* of Allah the Almighty is the bestowal of bounty (*Ni'mah*) and the infliction of punishment (*Niqmah*) by divine command. Through examples of absolute and restricted traditions presented in the Qur'an in the stories of prophets and messengers, we can deduce similar examples of traditions in our own lives and anticipate them for the journey of the believers and nonbelievers, through which *Ayyāmullah* can be experienced.

4. *Ayyāmullah* can be identified and experienced in our own personal lives and current affairs whether social, economic, political, or other forefronts. It is not a concept related to the past only, the days of God is not limited to a specific time or group of people. A true believer can relate to such divine days by its indicators which has been deduced in this research through an in-depth study of this phrase and the context of the verses surrounding the term *Ayyāmullah*.



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## Qur'an on Mahdiyyism

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### Abstract

This research explains the viewpoint of Qur'an regarding the belief in Mahdiyyism. The approach of this study is interpretative and narrative, and by adopting the descriptive analytical method based on library studies, the view of the Qur'an regarding Mahdiyyism has been examined. In this research, after explaining the intended method, the meaning of Mahdiyyism as well as its instances in the verses and hadiths have been examined and analyzed. The findings of this research illustrate that in Holy Qur'an, there are five groups of verses regarding imam Mahdi (as) including verses that introduce the righteous and the oppressed as the main inheritors of the earth, the verses that promise the final victory of Islam over other religions, the verses that declare the succession of the righteous believers in the future, the verses that state the complete realization of the truth and the complete destruction of falsehood, and finally the verses that declares the end of history for those who are virtuous and pious.

**Keywords:** Mahdiyyism, Qur'an, Hadith, Ahl al-Bayt (as), Imam Mahdi (as), Islamic Belief.



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### Problem statement

Belief in Imam Mahdi (as) and his role in the future of the world and human life is one of the main and certain beliefs of Muslims. Therefore, how can the Qur'an, which is responsible for the expression of all issues related to the guidance and salvation of mankind, remain silent and not say anything about such an important belief. There is no doubt that the Qur'an has mentioned this important belief of Muslims in various verses that to understand the Qur'an one must refer to the real interpreters of the Qur'an, i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt (as). Studying the explanatory traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) regarding Mahdiism, not only leads us to deep layers of new and fresh understanding of the Qur'an; Rather, they teach us a different way of understanding the Qur'anic teachings, in the light of splitting the knowledge of the prophets by Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (as). In this method, how to adapt and interpret the verses that have a mysterious and complex meaning, especially about the events of the end of time and the appearance of the savior of the human world, is taught by these two honorable imams.

For instance, in the Holy Qur'an, sometimes the fulfillment of some promises of the Qur'an is emphasized, which is not possible except in the shadow of the realization of the Qāim (as) and his sovereignty, and sometimes orders have been issued to the Messenger of Allah and his Ummah that the fulfillment of which was not possible in the past and it must be accomplished in the future with an upright uprising. Also, in the Holy Qur'an, issues such as 1) the realization and complete victory of truth and the destruction of falsehood; 2) traditions, rules and events related to the prophets of the past, which have an apocalyptic aspect, and 3) the conditional statements of the Qur'an, which had no scope for fulfillment in the past and present so they must be fulfilled in the events of the end of time, are mentioned that all of them beautifully explained in the narrative interpretations of the Ahl al-Bayt (as).

According to what was said, in the classification of verses related to Mahdiism, we come across five important categories of verses that will be examined in this research. The first category is the verses that introduce the righteous and the oppressed as the main inheritors of the earth, the second category is the verses that promise the victory and final victory of Islam over other religions, the third category are the verses that announce the caliphate and the succession of the righteous believers in the future, The

fourth category is the verses that state the victory and the complete realization of the truth and the complete destruction of falsehood, and finally the fifth group is the verses that declares the end of history for those who are virtuous and pious.

### 1) **The righteous and the Oppressed are the Final Inheritors of the Earth**

*Verily We did write in the Psalms after the reminder (Torah): 'My righteous servants shall inherit the earth (21/105)*

Regarding the above verse, Imam Sadiq (AS) said, "Verily We did write in the Psalms after the reminder (Torah): 'My righteous servants shall inherit the earth". Allah has mentioned (this) in all of His Books. "The righteous servants" are the Qāim (as) and his companions. Imam Baqir (as) said, Allah's words in this verse, "My righteous servants shall inherit the earth" refer to the companions of Mahdi (as) at the end of time. (See: Kulayni, 1407; Vol. 1, 407; Ayashi, 1380, Vol. 2, 35; Qomi, 1367, Vol. 2, 77.)

Considering the lack of reference to the righteous servants, before the earth, it should be understood as the whole earth, not the land for the righteous servants or any other specific land; and inheritance here means the complete domination of righteous people over oppressive and unrighteous rulers.

This Qur'anic promise is not limited to the time of the Prophet of Islam and has a history since the time of Prophet David; Because the Qur'an quotes from David's psalm and since this promise has not yet been fulfilled, its complete fulfillment will be realized with the uprising of the righteous at the end of time and the uprising of the leader of the family of Muhammad.

*We wish to favour those who were deemed weak in the land, and make them the Imams and make them the heirs and establish them in earth; and to show Firoun and Hamaan and their soldiers to see from them that which they dreaded. (28/5)*

Mohammed bin Hasan Al-Shaibaani narrated from both Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as), who said: "Firoun and Hamaan" in this verse refer to two oppressors from the Quraysh whom Allah will resurrect at the time of the rising of the Qāim (as), and He will take revenge against them for what they did. (See: Sharif Razi, 1414, 506; Sadouq, 1403, 79.)

In this verse, although Pharaoh's atrocities and his conversation with Moses are mentioned, the Qur'an's expression in such cases is general and it speaks of God's universal will for the victory of the oppressed over the oppressors, and ultimately God has blessed the oppressed making them lead the people of the earth. This successorship and inheritance indicates a recurring divine tradition in history, which will mark the end of history.

## 2) The Ultimate Victory of Islam over Other Religions

*It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, even though the polytheists may detest it (9/33)*

Imam Sadiq (as) explained the verse by saying, I swear to Allah that the Taweel (hidden interpretation) of this verse does not apply yet, and it will not apply until the rising of the Qāim (as). When the Qāim (as) rises, there will not remain any disbeliever in Allah nor any polytheist in Imamate who will not “detest” the rising of the Qāim (as). (Sadouq, 1380, vol2, p 670) Abu Baseer said, I asked Imam Sadiq (as) about the above verse. Imam (as) replied, after the rising of the Qāim (as) there will not remain any disbeliever in Allah nor any polytheist in Imamate who does not “detest” the rising of the Qāim (as). (See: Kulayni, 1407; Vol. 8, 287)

Regarding the verse *He is who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, even though the polytheists may detest it (9/ 33)*. Amīrul Mominīn (as) said, has this verse applied yet!? I swear to He who has my life in His hands, which it has not. This verse will not apply until (the people) in every village testify at all times that there is no god but Allah and Mohammed (pbuh) is the Messenger of Allah.

It is also narrated from Imam Kazim (as) about the verse, which Imam said this will apply at the time of the rising of the Qāim (as), when the “religion of truth” will prevail over all religions” (Kulayni, 1407, vol1, 432) Imam Baqir (as) said, the (above verse) will apply at the time of the rising of Mahdi (as) from the family of Mohammed (pbuh)” when everyone will believe in Mohammed (pbuh) (See: Ayashi, 1380, vol. 2, 85; Qomi, 1367, vol. 1, 289.)



### 3) Caliphate and the Rule of Believers on Earth

*Allah has promised to appoint those of you who believe and do good deeds, successors in earth, as He had appointed those before them, and He shall certainly establish their religion which He has chosen for them, and He will give them in exchange security after their fear. They shall worship Me and not associate anyone with Me (24/55)*

Imam Sadiq (as) explained the above verse as follows, “This verse was revealed about the Qāim (as) and his companions.” (Nomani, 1397, p.126) Imam Sadiq (as) was asked about the verse, he replied, (This part of the verse) was revealed about Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) and the Imams from his sons (as). “And He shall certainly establish their religion ...” refers to the reappearance of the Qāim (as).

In reply to a question about the above verse, Imam Sajjad (as) said, I swear to Allah that this (verse) refers to our Shia. Allah will make them (the successors and He will replace their fear with security) through a man from us, the Ahlul Bayt.

He is the Mahdi of this nation and he is the one about whom the Messenger of Allah (S) said, even if only one day remains from the life of this world, Allah will extend that day long enough for a man from my family, who bears the same name as mine, to rise. He will fill the earth with justice and equity, just as it will be filled with oppression and inequity. (Ayyashi, 1380, vol 3, p 136)

### 4) Complete Victory of Right and Defeat of Falsehood

*And declare, the truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Indeed, falsehood is bound to vanish. (17/81)*

This verse considers the complete destruction of falsehood and the victory of truth as God's definite promise, which will be fulfilled in the end. Therefore, the meaning of this verse cannot be limited to occasional victories of right over wrong in the past; because replacing falsehood with falsehood is incompatible with the philosophy of creation and the system of existence, and such a thing is not mentioned in this honorable verse.

This verse actually speaks of the complete destruction of falsehood and its definitive defeat in the world and the definitive victory of truth, which will happen with the promised uprising of the nations at the end of time, and in fact this verse heralds the appearance of the promised Mahdi at the end of history.

It is one of the definitive promises of God in the Holy Qur'an. It has been narrated from Imam Baqir (AS) that this verse refers to the realization of the rule of truth with the rise of Hadhrat Qaim and the complete destruction of the false governments. (Tusi, vol. 1411, 472; Kulayni, 1407, vol. 8, 287.)

### 5) The Ultimate Outcome Belongs to the Righteous

*Moses reassured his people, "Seek Allah's help and be patient. Indeed, the earth belongs to Allah 'alone'. He grants it to whoever He chooses of His servants. The ultimate outcome belongs 'only' to the righteous."* (7/128)

In this noble verse, Hadhrat Musa called his people to seek help from God and to be steadfast in his path and promised that God will dominate his good servants on earth and he will be among the righteous and pious ones. According to the explanatory narrations about the inheritance of the earth, which lists the earth as the inheritance of the pious and the righteous as the inheritors of the earth, as well as the final salvation of history by the pious in this verse, it can be understood that God Almighty will leave the power to his good servants and they will dominate the earth.

In fact, this verse presents a hopeful and liberating picture of the end of history, an end that began with the Prophet and will be realized with the supremacy of his religion over all religions. On the way to the fulfillment of this divine promise, worthy servants of God will take over the leadership of the people and will sit in the place of those who did not appreciate God's blessings and turned their backs on the truth, and this means that falsehood will not remain and will eventually be vanished, and the truth will be dominant instead.

Imam Baqir (as) said, my family and I are those who have inherited the earth and we are "the pious ones." All of the land belongs to us. Therefore, those of you who have access to any Muslim land should develop it and give the land tax to the Imam from my family; it is permissible to use the remainder of the earnings for living expenses.

However, (if someone who has access to a land) leaves it unattended or undeveloped, and then another Muslim gains control of this land after him, and then cultivates the land and develops it, then he will have more rights on this land than the man who abandoned it.

He should give the land tax to the Imam from my family, and the remainder of the earnings can be used for living expenses until the reappearance of the Qāim (as), which will take place by sword. On that day, he will take control of all of the land and will not give any land to anyone.

He will revoke the land from the people, just as the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) used to, except for the land that is in the hands of our Shia. The Qāim (as) will leave their land in their hands. (Kulayni, 1407, vol. 1, 407; Ayashi, vol. 2, 24)

### **Conclusion**

What the Holy Qur'an undoubtedly and clearly points to is the final victory of truth over falsehood and the domination of the people of piety and faith over the earth and its people. The realization of this rule of right over wrong is not possible except with the rise of the promised savior of religions and the Imam of the Age (as).

For this reason, referring to the narrative interpretations of these verses clearly shows that the Ahl al-Bayt (as) as the true interpreters of the Qur'an has introduced Hadhrat Hujjat and his companions as a clear example of this final ruler on earth. Since the fulfillment of these divine promises is inevitable and so far nothing like this has been realized, it must be realized at the end of time by the hand of the savior of the world and humanity, and this is in complete accordance with the philosophy of creation and the creation of man and the world.



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**Principles and Methods of Education  
from the Perspective of Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as)**

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**Abstract**

One of the important points in explaining of methods and principles of education is to meditate on the verses of holy Qur'an and precious sayings of Ahl al-Bayt (as). Since the revealing of the Qur'an from Allah, the Almighty to the sacred heart of the Prophet (pbuh) and quality notification of the revelation by the Prophet (pbuh) to the people is counted a kind of education so the verses of Qur'an are imagining a kind of dynamic education in which man is student and the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as) as the inner aspect and its flowing spirit are his teacher for ever. Therefore, the present research by the Qura'nic approach and narratives of Ahl al-Bayt (as) are going to make clear some of the methods and principles of education from the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt (as) point of view. Undoubtedly, researching in details needs so much more space.

**Keywords:** Qur'an, Ahl al-Bayt (as), Qur'an Training, Auditory (Listening) System, Graduation, Taking Easy and Tolerance.



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## Problem Statement

The Qur'an has capacity to rescue the Islamic community from present standstill of education and make it advance and dynamic. Disregarding the Qura'nic culture is the root of backwardness of the World of Islam. The verse:

«من احياها فکانما احيا الناس جميعاً» (and he who saves man's life shall be considered as one who has saved the life of mankind as a whole) says that the purpose of saving man's life is not only saving their body but reviving their soul and spirit as well and one of the methods of saving is education and training which has based in the Qura'nic culture.

What attracted our attention in this subject is educational system of Qura'n which is used as a prophetic tradition and has been emphasized on it. The Prophet began to teach the Qura'n since the Qura'n is transmitted from God. Although conceiving and understanding the quality of revelation is impossible but since the divine revelation was a factor for sending down of holy Qura'n from the preserved tablet (لوح محفوظ) to the heart of Prophet so this transporting has been counted as a kind of education.

The verses of Qur'an which related with the sending down of Qura'n, indicate the conception of Qura'nic education which is very similar to the scenes of mankind education.

The verses of sending down of Qura'n present the method of teaching by the God who is the first teacher such as: سنقرئك فلا تنسى (we shall recite Qura'n to you in a way that will be engraved in your memory and you shall not forget.)

لا تحرك به لسانك لتعجل به، ان علينا جمعه و قرأناه. فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرأه، ثم ان علينا بيانه

(Do not repeat hastily the word of revelation while it is in the process of being sent down [make sure that you have heard it completely]; verily, it is our undertaking to compile and to recite it; and after we have recited the word of revelation then you repeat it ; also it is our undertaking to explain it in detail.)

ورتلناه ترتيلا ( we reveal it gradually and with the necessary pause )

انا نحن نزلنا عليك القرآن تنزيلا ( verily , we have sent down the Qura'n to you [ and what the disbelievers say about it is but idle talks ]

Fundamentally, one of the reasons for reciting of these verses is to make use of them in the methodology and understanding of principles of the education.

Investigate in the prophetic traditions presents obviously that he had followed step by step revival samples of education and had made use of them in teaching the people as he sent down the Qura'n again which has been sent down to him.

Needless to say presenting the samples and methods of education from the Qura'n point of view cannot be discussed in an article and this discussion could go on at length and there are many questions and answers related to it which cannot be considered in the present context.

### **Graduation in education**

One of the most important discussions in teaching is gradual and step by step training in which teacher let the students to understand training subjects. God, the most exalted has said in his book:

«و قرآنا فرقناه لتقرأه علي الناس علي مكث و نزلناه تنزيلا»

(And we divided this Qur'an into parts so that you may recite it to the people at intervals and with necessary pauses. and we have sent down its words of revelation by stages.)

### **Listening system**

The Prophet learned the Qur'an from God the almighty through listening and saying, by heart, clearly and distinctly (LXXV: 16-19), word by word, and character by character (al-Halabiy, 1/260). Then He taught early Muslims similarly, faithfully, exactly, and literally, so that everybody around Him was able to repeat the words of God's speech after the Prophet, learn it by hearing-saying several times, and recite what had learned by themselves afterwards. Besides, they were able to teach other Muslims as easy and exact as they had been learning (al-BuKhari, 1981, 6/108; al-Tirmithi, 4/246, N.3072, 3074; al-Imam Ahmad, 1/57, 69, 153; al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Majlisi, 89/189, N.13; al-Fadli, 13-21; Ma'rifat, 2/31-45).

Thus, whenever a *sura* or a group of *ayas* were revealed, the former simple educational system became activated. The newly revealed part of the Qur'an was to be recited, heard/listened and repeated over and over, until it could join the previous part of Qur'an and get combined with early *suras* and *ayas*.

In this manner, and by applying this simple system of teaching-learning, Muslims taught each other and at the time of Prophet's departure from this world, a large number of Muslims had totally taught the whole text of the Qur'an who were given the title of "Qārī" or "Muqrī" i.e. a

person who is perfect and expert at teaching the Qur'an (al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Fadli, 13-22).

Question is a resulting of exact hearing then whatever the education is based on auditory system we come nearer to the goal of education.

(ما على الرسول الا البلاغ) the messenger's duty is but to convey the message. And you should be only a good hearer and listen with care. God says:

[ يا ايها الناس ضرب مثل فاستمعوا له) (o' people listen with care to the parable which suits you best ]

The first step in learning is listening with care.

«قل اعوذ برب الناس» و «قل اعوذ برب الفلق» و «قل هو الله احد»

[Say O' Messenger! I seek refuge with the creator of mankind...]

[Say O' Messenger! I seek refuge in the creator of the down...]

[Say O' Messenger! Allah is the one the only creator...]

In these verses messenger is saying and you Qura'n learner should be hearer

[ O' People! and when the holy Qura'n is recited, give you ear to it]

Such that the Prophet in the receiving of revelation only listen with care to what has been sent down to him: [I have chosen you so listen to what will be revealed to you] (و انا اخترتك فاستمع لما يوحى)

[we shall recite Qura'n to you in a way that will be engraved in your memory and you shall not forget.] سنقرئك فلا تنسي

لا تحرك به لسانك لتعجل به، ان علينا جمعه و قرأه. فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرأه، ثم ان علينا بيانه

[Do not repeat hastily the word of revelation while it is in the process of being sent down (make sure that you have heard it completely) ; verily, it is our undertaking to compile and to recite it ; and after we have recited the word of revelation then you repeat it ; also it is our undertaking to explain it in detail.]

### Listening role in education

Qura'n is not speaking clearly about the role of Listening in learning but explains it in a way that to present to us the importance of listening in education. One of the methods of Qura'n is precedence of Listening to the vision.



The Prophet founded His Qur'an teaching on listening and speaking, similar to natural training of mother tongue. Nowadays, we continuously observe all various languages as being taught and learnt through hear-say-see methods, just like what the Prophet who his guidance is named in the Qur'an as "*Uswat-on hassana*" did to His early learners, Arabs and non-Arabs, with no differentiating, a full fourteen centuries ago. The main difference or contrast is that all other methods have considered the Qur'an as a book to be read, and hence they tried to teach its reading. But from the Prophet's viewpoint, the Qur'an is a language which should be taught to everyone, next to mother tongue, parallel to it or afterwards, taking into consideration that Qur'anic language is not any human being's mother tongue, so that even for the Prophet Himself the special Arabic of the Qur'an is not a native language and needs to be taught by God the almighty. In this manner, and by applying this simple system of teaching-learning, Muslims taught each other and at the time of Prophet's departure from this world, a large number of Muslims had totally taught the whole text of the Qur'an who were given the title of *Qārī* or *Muqrī* i.e. a person who is perfect and expert at teaching the Qur'an (al-Thahabi, 1/33; al-Fadli, 13-22).

Allah the almighty says in His book:

قل هو الذى انشاكم و جعل لكم السمع و الابصار و الافئدة قليلا ما تشكرون

[Say O' Messenger! Allah is the one who created you and made for you the ears, the eyes and the hearts (to hear and see and comprehend the truth) but you people express your gratitude very little]

One of our reasons for the importance of hearing influence in the learning is the Qura'n states listening by the side of wisdom and intellect. God says:

و قالوا لو كنا نسمع او نعقل ما كنا فى اصحاب السعير

[And they shall say: had we listened to their admonitions and had we used our reason we would not be among the inhabitants of hell]

Some verses use listening as a meditation and understanding such as:

و انا لما سمعنا الهدى آمنا به [and verily , when we listened to Allah's

Guidance we believed in it.]

و نطبع على قلوبهم فهم لا يسمعون [and we put a seal on their hearts in order that they would not hear ( the Truth)]

### Role of teacher words in education

Presence of teacher in educational circumference and hearing the teaching context from the teacher is more effect than others. In some verses Reading is precedence and Qura'n expresses the reciting before education and training. God says:

هو الذى بعث فى الاميين رسولا منهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم و يعلمهم الكتاب و الحكمة و ان كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين

[Allah is one who sent among the *Ommiyien* (الاميين) a messenger from among themselves to recite to them his words of revelation, in order to purify them from the dirt of disbelief and polytheism and to teach them the book of Truth and wisdom, though they were before that in an apparent error.]

### Observing Simplicity and Clearness

Another important point in education is to regard Simplicity and Clearness in educational subjects. Doubtlessness, Qura'n is divine words but because of being understandable for the mankind, presents its educational subjects in a way of simplicity and clearness. God almighty in his book says: «هذا بيان للناس» [this (holy Qura'n) is a clear statement for mankind]

«و لقد يسرنا القرآن للذكر فهل من مدكر» [and we have revealed the holy Qura'n easy and simple to be understood and to be guiding to the people]

### Education with full of welfare and goodness (كوثرى) instead of pilling up worldly things (تكاثرى)

Observing Quantity and neglect (disregard) Quality in education and training is a negative result of modern technology and sciences. Qura'n prohibit merely observing Quantity and pilling up worldly things and on the other hand express the importance of Quality witch is full of welfare and goodness. God says: (الهالك التكاثر) [the vein effort of pilling up worldly things].

So the useful method of education is observing Quality Not Quantity.

### Being lenient and severity in teaching

The educational modern technology regards simplicity and severity in teaching, and balances each of them. Qura'n refer to balance in this verse:

«واقصد فى مشيك» [and be moderate in your walking]



God almighty regards simplicity and taking easy in teaching. He says in his book:

فانما يسرناه بلسانك لعلمهم يتذكرون [(O' Messenger) we have made this Qura'n easy in your tongue in order that people understand the meaning and be reminded by it]

One can not find even one example for strictness, pedantry and severity in the subject under discussion, during Prophet's guiding life. On the contrary, He behaved so flexibly that occasionally caused "something" in the heart of His loyal disciples (al-Tabari, 1/11; al-Khuei, 172-173).

The Prophet repeated His very wondrous speech each time and on each occasion emphasizing that "The Qur'an has been revealed/sent down on seven types; thus, read it as easy as you may read" (al-Bukhari, 25/235; Muslim, 1/560; al-Khuei' 171-193; al-Fani, 42-46) clearly referring to recitation of the Qur'an as being limitless, not confined to seven or seventy types; as was indeed witnessed afterwards (al-Tabari, 1/18-20; Abushama, 148-152; al-Zarkeshi, 1/469470; Ibn al-Jazari, 1/40-44). Also, whenever He heard or listened to anyone reciting a sura or an aya of the Qur'an, He already approved them in advance before the reciter or others could hesitate or doubt about their recitation of Qur'an as it would have been questionable (al-Tabari, 1/16; Ibn al-Jazari, 1/52; al-Zurqani, 1/178-183; al-Fani, 46-50).

On the other hand, opposite to unbelievers, Mussa presses hard up on them and says:

ربنا اطمس على اموالهم واشدد على قلوبهم فلا يؤمنوا حتى يروا العذاب الاليم

[Our Creator! Please perish their wealth and splendor and make their hearts so hard that they shall not believe until they encounter the Grievous Torment]

### **Encouragement and Punishment**

Qura'n full of encouragements in which the believer, patient, beneficent and pious because of their goodness has been designed to be encouraged and living in happiness and bounty in the proximity of those who are pure and close to the divine presence. God says:

اولئك يجزون الغرفة بما صبروا و يلقون فيها تحيه و سلاما

[Such believers will be rewarded an excellent chamber in the garden for their patience and steadfastness in their faith and therein they shall receive greeting and respect]

On the other hand, we find out some verses speaking of Unbelievers who is subjected to live in affliction and pain. God the most exalted, has said in his book:

فاما الذين كفروا فاعذبهم عذابا شديدا فى الدنيا و الاخره و ما لهم من ناصرين

[As to the disbelievers, I will chastise them with a severe chastisement in this world and in the hereafter; and they shall have not protectors and helpers]

### **Characteristics and particulars of teacher**

From the Qura'n point of view, the teachers and instructors should practice what they are saying to be patterns for the others. God says;

تامرون الناس بالبر و تنسون انفسكم و انتم تتلون الكتاب افلا تعقلون

[Do you enjoin right contact and piety on the people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves, and yet you recite the scripture? Will you not use your reason?]

يا ايهاالذين آمنوا لم تقولون ما لا تفعلون كبير مقتاً عندالله ان تقولوا ما لا تفعلون

[O' You who believe! Why do you say that witch you do not do? It causes Allah's wrath gravely that you say and promise something that you do not fulfill]

### **Educational method based on presenting pattern**

The holy Qura'n presents many patterns for the all aspects of the mankind life. Surly presenting the patterns and models in training makes the educational subjects to be understood and not to be forgotten. Qura'n relates educational methods witch based on patterns and says:

ضرب الله مثلا للذين كفروا امرات نوح و امرات لوط كانتا تحت عبدين من عبادنا صالحين فخانتاهما فلم يغنيا عنهما من الله شيئا و قيل ادخلا النار مع الداخلين . و ضرب الله مثلا للذين امنوا امرات فرعون اذ قالت رب ابن لى عندك بينا فى الجنه و نجنى من فرعون و عمله و نجنى من القوم الظالمين و مريم ابنت عمران التى احصنت فرجها فنفخنا فيه من روحنا و صدقت بكلمات ربها و كتبه و كانت من القانتين

[And Allah has set forth examples among those who believed (of women): The wife of firown when she prayed; O' my Creator! Please construct for me a home in the paradise in your presence and save me from Firown and his wrongdoings and save me from this people who are all Wrongdoers. And also Maryam daughter of Imran who was a chaste woman and we breathed in her a spirit from our own presence and she testified to the truth of her creator's word of revelation and his books and she was of the obedient worshippers of Allah]

نحن نقص عليك نبأهم بالحق انهم فتية آمنوا بربهم و زدناهم هدى

[We relate to you (O' messenger) their true story: they were a group of young men who believed in their creator so we increased the guidance for them]

### **Educational method based on rationality**

The Qura'n repeatedly uses the expressions: why do they not reflect? Why do they not ponder? It constantly encourages the use of intellect and invites people to think, investigate and analyze. To conclude, we quote just a few of the verses to give the reader a taste of how the Holy Qura'n emphasizes the role of reason, rationality and solid evidence in the realm of ideas and beliefs

هل يستوى الذين يعلمون و الذين لا يعلمون

[Are those who know equal to those who do not know?]

فبشر عبادالذين يستمعون القول فيتبعون احسنه اولئك الذين هداهم الله و اولئك هم اولوالالباب

[Give the good news to my obedient worshippers! Those who listen to different speeches and preaching and follow the best among the variety, those are the one whom Allah has guided and they are indeed men of wisdom]

كذلك يحيى الله الموتى و يريكم آياته لعلكم تعقلون

[Thus, Allah brings the dead to life, (on the day of resurrection) and shows you his miracles so that you may use your reason]

افلا يتدبرون القرآن ام على قلوب اقفالها

[Do they not ponder about the words of revelation of the holy Qura'n? Or are their hearts locked up and the truth does not reach them?]

The number of verses exhorting Muslims to make the best use of reason, rationality and scientific investigation even when they are reminded by Creator's signs and they should not accept without meditation on them. God almighty says in holy Qura'n:

والذين اذا ذكروا بايات ربهم لم يخروا عليها صما و عميانا

[And the believers of *Ar Rahman* are those who when reminded of their Creator's signs they do not pretend as blind and deaf from seeing and hearing the truth]



### Comprehensive and various methods

The holy Qura'n in some numbers of his verses speaks about a kind of way which is effective in education and calls people to emigrate and travel the land and observe the creation. God the most exalted says in his book:

قل سيروا فى الارض فانظروا كيف بدا الخلق ثم الله ينشئ النشاه الاخره ان الله على كل شىء قدير

[Say (o' messenger!) Travel through the land and observe the creation of the creatures of all sorts; and think about the issue that how Allah has started creation; and thus He will create the last world; verily, Allah is powerful over all things]

And in another verse refers to the various methods of education in the lifetimes of messengers and introduces Nuh and Mohammad as a prophet who called the people publicly and privately and with the hard attempting. So this kind of calling can be used as a pattern in education and training.

God says:

ثم انى دعوتهم جهارا . ثم انى اعلنت لهم و اسررت لهم اسرارا

[Then I called them to faith publicly; then I conversed with every individual publicly or privately]

In the some number of verses, God almighty refers to effort and hard attempting of the prophet in education and training the people and says:

قال رب انى دعوت قومى ليلا و نهارا

[Nuh said: o' my Creator truly I called my people by night and day constantly

لعلك باخع نفسك الا يكونوا مومنين

[You may kill your self (o' messenger) with grief for the very reason that they do not believe].



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## Analytical Study of the Concept of Imamate in Verse 124 of Surah Bagharah

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### Abstract

Using the analytical method in library-based research, this article examines verse 124 of the second chapter of the Qur'an regarding the issue of the prophet Ibrahim being raised to the position of Imamate. According to the verse, after "the words" of Allah were fulfilled about Ibrahim, he was raised as an Imam. Understanding the context of this verse is very helpful in finding out the proper meaning of Imamate which has been the most controversial issue in the history of Islam. The findings of this article show that Imamate is something precious granted to Ibrahim and it is higher than being a prophet. Thus, interpretations suggested by Sunni scholars to define the "Imam" as a political leader, a role model in general, a role model for all men, or a prophet, is not acceptable. Ṭabātabāī has suggested "a special guidance" for Imamate. Even though we do not limit Imamate to it, it can be one distinctive edge of it.

**Keywords:** Ibrahim, Abraham, Imamate, Imam, Verse 124 Surah Bagharah, Infallibility, The words.



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## 1. Introduction

According to verse 124 of the second chapter, Al-baqarah Allah tested Ibrahim (Abraham) with certain words, and after he fulfilled them, He appointed him as an Imam of mankind. This is a library-based article applying analytical methods to discuss the question of what the position of Imamate is. There are different views for the Sunni and Shia scholars that will be studied to achieve a reasonable understanding of this term.

### 1.2. Problem statement

As Al-Sharistani correctly declares; the greatest dispute among the Muslims has been the dispute over Imamate, since no sword has been drawn in Islam on a religious basis like it has been drawn over the Imamate in every era (Al-Sharistani, n.d., vol.1: 22). Thus, it is of vital importance to define the proper meaning of the term “Imam” based on its Qur’anic usage. The application of the term in the Qur’an clarifies the extent of the position of Imamate and whether it can be achieved by others or it is only a gift to be granted by Allah to some chosen individuals from among His servants. Hence, clarification of the conditions and qualifications of a person to be an Imam, as well as his duties and rights, depend on a proper definition derived from the Qur’anic application of the term. Here, before getting to study different views concerning the concept of Imamate, we need to clarify some other terms and phrases mentioned in the verse that can work as indicators and clues for a better understanding of the concept of Imamate:

### 1.3. Some key indicators in the verse

#### 1.3.1. The words

“The words” referred to in the verse are difficult tests that Ibrahim went through and the completion of the tests was at the old age of Ibrahim. He held the position of being a prophet before the fulfillment of the tests so the Imamate was a new gift to be bestowed on him. This claim was already discussed in the previous article I published. It was elaborated that “the words” were difficult tests Ibrahim went through. It was established that the completion of the tests was at the old age of Ibrahim. It was shown that Ibrahim was gifted Imamate at old age; after he was a prophet already (Agha Mohammadi, 2023).



### 1.3.2. “From among my descendants”

Some have suggested that “And from among my descendants?” is a prayer for his descendants to follow in his footsteps. This interpretation is not compatible with the appearance of the verse because this phrase comes after his appointment to Imamate and it appears that Ibrahim asked this position of Imamate for his descendants. (Al-Tabarī, 2000, vol.2: 19); (Al-Khatīb al-Sharabyīnī, 1868, vol.1: 90) The phrase “And from among my descendants?” is the answer to the question that may come to the listener's mind that is what did Ibrahim do when such good news was given to him? The answer is that he asked for the position of Imamate to be amongst his descendants. His request was “from among my descendants?” not "my descendants" because he knew according to the divine wisdom all his generation could not be qualified to be Imams (Sayyid Tantāwī, 1997, vol.1: 266); (Al-Samīn Al-Halabī, n.d., vol.2: 100). Hence when he reached the position of Imamate, he wanted this position to be granted to his descendants as well.

### 1.3.3. The divine pledge (covenant)

Some have suggested that “And from among my descendants?” is a prayer for his descendants to follow in his footsteps. This interpretation is not compatible with the appearance of the verse because this phrase comes after his appointment to Imamate and it appears that Ibrahim asked this position of Imamate for his descendants. (Al-Tabarī, 2000, vol.2: 19); (Al-Khatīb al-Sharabyīnī, 1868, vol.1: 90) The phrase “And from among my descendants?” is the answer to the question that may come to the listener's mind that is what did Ibrahim do when such good news was given to him? The answer is that he asked for the position of Imamate to be amongst his descendants. His request was “from among my descendants?” not "my descendants" because he knew according to the divine wisdom all his generation could not be qualified to be Imams (Sayyid Tantāwī, 1997, vol.1: 266); (al-Samīn Al-Halabī, *ibid*). Hence when he reached the position of Imamate, he wanted this position to be granted to his descendants as well. 1.3.3. The divine pledge (covenant) although the verse is sufficiently apparent about the meaning of the “pledge” (covenant), Sunni scholars still hold different views about it: First, it means the covenant of a believer with others. According to some narrations al-Ṭabarī quotes from Ibn Abbas, the verse means that man should not make a

covenant with oppressors and if he made such a covenant, then he does not have to fulfill it. (Al-Tabarī, *ibid*: 22) Second, the covenant means "safety" and the meaning of the verse is that the oppressors will not be subject to divine protection and will be punished in the Hereafter. (*ibid*) Third, the covenant refers to the "religion of Allah." (*ibid*: 23) Fourth, Wāṣil ibn Sā'ib says that I asked 'Aṭa about it. He replied that the covenant of Allah means His mercy which only the believers will reach in Paradise while His mercy in this world includes everyone. (Al-Rāzī Ibn Abī Hātam, 1419, vol.1: 223) Fifth, the covenant is prophethood (Al-Rāzī Ibn Abī Hātam, *ibid*: 223; Ibn Kathīr, 1998, vol.1: 289). Sixth, it means that the enemies of Allah cannot obey him, and obedience towards Allah is limited to the servants of Him. (Al-Rāzī Ibn Abī Hātam, *ibid*) According to this view, the covenant means carrying out Allah's commands and obeying Him. Seventh, the meaning is that one should only obey others in good deeds, and if a person is ordered to do evil, he should not accept it. (Ibn Kathīr, *ibid*) By paying attention to the context of the verse and its appearance, none of these views suit the verse. Allah mentioned Imamate as the reward for Ibrahim. Then Ibrahim requested this position for some of his decedents. However, this request was followed by the response: "My pledge does not extend to the unjust (the oppressors)." Thus, logically, Allah should answer the very request of Ibrahim. Thus, the pledge and the covenant mentioned here is the very Imamate. According to Qurṭubī, Ibrahim requested the Imamate for his descendants, and Allah replied that from his descendants the unjust and the oppressors do not have such authority (Al-Qurtubī, 1946, vol.1: 107). Al-Rāzī says: Regarding the covenant, there are some views however, the best concept is Imamate, because "And from among my descendants?" was the request for Imamate, and the answer must be commensurate with this request (Al-Rāzī, 1999, vol.4: 37). Al-Tantāwī says: "My pledge does not extend to the unjust" is a positive response of Allah to the request of Ibrahim meaning that Imamate will be given to some of his descendants, provided that they are not unjust (Sayyid Tantāwī, *ibid*). Imamate, which is a divine covenant, does not reach the oppressors who have wronged themselves, because the Imam rises up to protect the religion and the people of religion and to abandon oppression from them, and if he oppresses himself, he can no longer repel oppression (Al-Hijāzī, 1413, vol.1: 74).



### 1.3.4. Incompetence of the unjust for Imamate

It became clear that the Imamate does not reach the unjust. Now we have to see what injustice means in the verse. Ibn Kathīr has narrated from Sa'īd ibn Jubayr that what is meant by unjust is polytheist (Mushrik) so, a polytheist cannot be an Imam (Ibn Kathīr, *ibid*: 288). But Ṭabarī considers any type of disobedience to be oppression and to make one incompetent for Imamate. Rashīd Ridhā also considers the view of those who have limited injustice to polytheism to be a baseless claim (Rashīd Ridhā, 1990, vol.1: 374-375). According to Sayyid Qutb, oppression has various types, including oppression against one's soul with polytheism and oppression against people with rebellion, etc. On the other hand, there are different types of Imamate, and all types of Imamate, including prophethood, caliphate, Imam of prayer, etc., are forbidden to oppressors (Sayyid Qutb, 1991, vol.1: 112.).

Whoever commits any kind of oppression, whether oppression against himself or others, hidden or overt, whether minor or major, will be an example of an unjust and according to the declaration of the verse cannot be an Imam, because the title "unjust" would be true about him. Therefore, if oppression is universal and includes all sins, then one can be an Imam who is free from all kinds of oppression and sin. Therefore, such a person must have the status of infallibility ('Ismah). This in itself is proof that, firstly, the one who is not infallible does not have the authority of Imamate, and secondly, it is Allah who can discern the one who is so pure and free from any oppression, because people are not aware of the hidden and secret acts of others and it is only Allah who can choose Imams, not people.

## 2. Meaning of Imamate

About the meaning of Imamate which Prophet Ibrahim was rewarded, several opinions have been expressed by Sunni scholars:

### 2.1. A role model

Many Sunni commentators believe that the term Imam is used in the same literal sense of it that is someone who is followed by others and is considered as their role model. Thus, Imam is the role model of others in good deeds (Al-Zujāj, 1988, vol.1: 205); (Ibn 'Āshūr Al-Tūnesī, 1984, vol.1: 701); (Sayyid Tantāwī, *ibid*: 266, Al-zamakhsharī, 1986, vol.1: 184); (Al-Samīn al-Halabī, *ibid*, al-Qurtubī, *ibid*) Al-Māwardī after preferring this universal concept, has considered the Imamate of Salat (leading

prayers) as an example of this Imamate (Al-Māwardī, n.d, vol.1: 185). Sayed Qutb considers Imamate in a universal sense, which includes prophethood, caliphate, Imam of the prayers, and other matters (Sayyid Qutb, *ibid*). Al-‘Uthaymīn has also said that Imam means role model, whether in good deeds or in evil, but undoubtedly in the case of Ibrahim, Imamate in good deeds is meant (Al-‘Uthaymīn, 2002, vol.2: 42).

#### Analysis

Ṭabātabāī believes that this kind of interpretation is because the terms used in the Qur’an have become cheap and worthless in the eyes of people. Since these terms have been used a lot over time, they thought that they knew the meaning of them, and that thought has caused them to ignore the true concept of the Qur’anic terms. If Imamate means that a person is a role model for others, then it does not make sense to raise a Prophet who already enjoys being a role model, to the position of being a role model again. Hence, it is meaningless for a man who is a role model and is obeyed due to him being a prophet, to tell him that he is going to be chosen as a role model (Tabātabāī, 1995, vol.1: 409-410).

As it is clear, being a role model and an exemplar is one of the popular characteristics of prophets; this meaning has been realized about all the prophets. Allah said in this regard: “We did not send any apostle but to be obeyed by Allah's leave.” (Qur’an 4: 64) Thus, Ibrahim was also included in the universal concept of this verse in being obeyed and being a role model so he did not need to get it by ascending to Imamate (Javādī Amulī, 2022, vol.6: 442).

It has been said before that according to the available pieces of evidence, Prophet Ibrahim was raised to Imamate in old age, and before that, he was a prophet. Now, how is it possible that someone who is sent as a prophet to people not to be their role model in good deeds? Therefore, it is not reasonable for Imamate to simply be considered in its literal meaning because in this case nothing more has been given to Ibrahim and it is against the appearance of the verse that Allah is narrating a special dignified gift to be bestowed to Ibrahim.

In addition, to be a role model, one does not need to be a prophet, non-prophets can be role models in good deeds. As Allah said about Ibrahim and his companions:



“There is certainly a good exemplar for you in Ibrahim and those who were with him ....” (Qur’an 60: 4) According to this verse, not only Ibrahim but even his companions are role models, and it is clear that the companions of Ibrahim were not necessarily prophets. Allah also mentions two women as examples for all believers:

“Allah draws another example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh ... And Mary, daughter of Imran ....” (Qur’an 66: 11-12)

The wife of Pharaoh and Mary mother of Jesus are examples and role models for believers while they were not prophets and they were not introduced as Imams. Therefore, the Imamate, which was the reward of the struggles of prophet Ibrahim, cannot be reduced to being a mere role model and an exemplar.

## 2.2. A prophet

Some of them have considered being a messenger or prophet as the best example of Imamate (Al-Māturīdī, 2005, vol.1: 555); (Ibn ‘Āshūr Al-Tūnesī, *ibid*). Being a messenger is the perfect form of Imamate because they are the role models for people in the moral virtues. Hence, asking Imamate for his progeny is another way of requesting prophethood for them (Sayyid Tantāwī, *ibid*) as he did in another place calling:

“Our Lord, raise amongst them an apostle from among them, who should recite to them Your signs, and teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Indeed, You are the All-mighty, the All-wise.” (The Qur’an 2: 129), (Al-Makkī al-Nāserī, 1985, vol.1: 82) According to al-Rāzī, there exist several proofs for the term Imam to be the same as a prophet:

First: “Imam of mankind” means that Allah has made him Imam for all people, and such a person must be a Messenger who brings a new Sharia, otherwise if he follows the Sharia of another prophet, he will be the follower of that prophet, not his Imam, and in this case, the universality of his Imamate will be negated.

Second: An Imam is a role model in everything and such a person must be a prophet.

Third: Prophets are considered Imams because they are leaders and it is obligatory for people to follow them. As verse 73 of chapter 21 reads: “We made them Imams, guiding by Our command.” (Al-Rāzī, *ibid*: 36)



## Analysis

The first drawback of the statement made by al-Rāzī is equating Imamate with being a prophet or a messenger while, it is contrary to linguistic principles; That is, every term and title is coined to convey its own meaning. Therefore, to use the term “Imam” and to intend a prophet or a messenger is against the appearance of the verse and such a claim cannot be made unless with an acceptable proof. al-Rāzī’s first proof for this claim is the universal meaning of Imamate; namely, Ibrahim is the Imam of all mankind. Hence, if he follows the Sharia of another prophet, he will be a follower of him, and this is contrary to being an Imam for everyone.

Actually, this statement is the same as the claim and not a proof to support the claim; That is, he believes that Imam means a messenger of a new sharia. Now he is asked; what is the proof for this claim? His answer is that if Ibrahim was not a messenger of Sharia, then he would be a follower and not an Imam who is followed. Pondering upon this argument indicates that this proof is the same as the claim, because as it will be mentioned, the term “Imam” may have a meaning other than a messenger of a sharia, which at the same time does not require Ibrahim to be a follower of others. In other words, the only option for Ibrahim not to be a follower of others and to be an Imam is not to be a messenger of a Sharia. Thus, it makes sense to imagine that Ibrahim, as a prophet, was a messenger of a Sharia as well and did not follow any other prophet in his Sharia, but at the same time, in addition to being a prophet, he was appointed to Imamate a position different from prophethood, as the verse declares. So, for him not to be a follower of anyone else, the only way is not to be a prophet or a messenger. Now, if someone wants to confine Imam to a messenger, he needs proof for it. Besides, there is basically no problem for Ibrahim to be a follower of someone else in reference to his past life. However, at the same time, he can be the Imam of the people of his time and people who will come after him, as Allah introduces him as one of the Shia and followers of Noah: “Indeed Ibrahim was among his (Noah) followers.” (The Qur’an 37: 83).

Moreover, this claim of al-Rāzī is refuted by the Imamate of prophets such as Isaac, and Jacob, who, according to the Qur’an, were Imams but were not messengers of their own Sharia, they followed the Sharia of

Ibrahim; “And We gave him Isaac, and Jacob as well for a grandson, and each of them We made righteous. We made them Imams, guiding by Our command,” (The Qur’an 21: 72-73). Therefore, the term “Imam” cannot have the same meaning as prophet and messenger.

In his second argument, al-Rāzī said that Ibrahim is an Imam in all matters and such a person should be a prophet. There is no proof for this claim either; because there might be a meaning for the term “Imamate” that it does not require being a prophet. Therefore, his claim is nothing but mere speculation. In other words, a prophet can be an Imam as well but one cannot claim that any Imam must be a prophet.

The third argument of al-Rāzī was appealing to the literal meaning of Imam, which means “leader”, and naturally the prophets are also leaders, so they are Imams in this regard.

Ṭabātabāī has argued that if Imam means a prophet or a messenger, then it will not make sense that after a lifetime of struggle and after being a prophet and messenger for many years, to be granted the good news of rising to the very position again. Ibrahim was a messenger when he was tested: “And mention in the Book Ibrahim. Indeed, he was a truthful one, a prophet. When he said to his father, "Father! Why do you worship that which neither hears nor sees, and is of no avail to you in any way?"” (The Qur’an 19: 41-42). This story is related to the time when Ibrahim was a youth and at that time he was a prophet according to the verse. Thus, he certainly could not have reached prophethood again in his old age. As mentioned before, the Imamate of Ibrahim was after completing the difficult tests, hence he was certainly a prophet and messenger at that time, and it does not make sense for him to be chosen as a prophet or a messenger again.

Ṭabātabāī has highlighted a literary point in “إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا” (I am appointing you as Imam of mankind). The word “Imam” is the second object of the active participle (جَاعِلُكَ) and it can only have two objects when it is used in either the present or the future tense, not in the past. According to this rule, the phrase “I am appointing you as Imam of mankind” is a promise to Ibrahim to make him an Imam in the future, not narrating his being chosen in the past (Al-Tabarī, *ibid*, vol.1: 409). Consequently, if the term “Imam” means a prophet, the meaning of the phrase is that “I will make you a prophet now or in the future”, and the meaning that will be

insinuated is that Ibrahim was not a prophet before; while this revelatory conversation is a sign of his prophethood. So Imam cannot mean a prophet (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 441). In addition, this promise was communicated to Ibrahim through revelation, so it turns out that before this promise reached him, he was a Prophet who received this revelation. Hence, the Imamate that was given to him was not the prophethood that he already had at a prior time.

### 2.3. A role model for other prophets and people

Al-Ṭabarī considers the term “Imam” to mean a role model not only for people at his time; Ibrahim was and is Imam, meaning one who is followed in good deeds, and this Imamate is universal and eternal because Allah did not send any prophet after him unless he must follow Ibrahim. This point is understood from the command of Allah to the prophet of Islam “Follow the creed of Ibrahim, a Hanif” (The Qur’an 16: 123) Just as Lot, although he was a prophet, he believed in Ibrahim at the same time and followed him; “Thereupon Lot believed in him” (The Qur’an 29: 26) ; (Al-Ṭabarī, *ibid*, vol.2: 18)

Tantāwī says; Instead of saying, “I am appointing you as a messenger to mankind” Allah said, “I am appointing you as Imam of mankind” to indicate that his message is useful to the nation he was sent to as a prophet and to other nations as well. Ibrahim traveled to various places in the lands of Chaldea, Iraq, Syria, Hejaz, and Egypt, and in all of those lands, he was a model of goodness for others (Sayyid Tantāwī, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Wasīt lel-Qur’an Al-Karīm*, vol.1, p.266). Al-Marāghī interpreted the Imam as a messenger who is a role model till the Day of Judgment i.e. Ibrahim invited people to Hanafiism which is monotheism and having faith in one God. (Al-Marāghī, 1946, vol.1: 209-210)

### Analysis

Criticizing this view, Javādī Āmolī says: Prophet Ibrahim asked for the same position of Imamate to be bestowed on his descendants saying “And from among my descendants?”; And Allah responded positively to this request by making Imamate possible for some of his descendants who are not unjust; While such an aspect, i.e. Imamate over all the prophets, is not conceivable and correct about those descendants of Ibrahim (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 443). It should also be noted about “اتبع ملة إبراهيم حنيفاً” (Qur’an 16: 123) (Follow the creed of Ibrahim, who Was Upright) that the Holy Prophet

of Islam and the infallible Imams after him were not followers of any of the previous prophets; meaning that man is sometimes a follower of a prophet and sometimes a follower of his religion, and Allah Almighty commanded the Holy Prophet to follow the nation and religion of Ibrahim, not to follow Ibrahim himself; as in a more comprehensive statement, Allah commanded his last prophet to follow common guidance that has reached all the prophets “أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدِيهِمْ أُقْتَدَ” (They are the ones whom Allah has guided. So follow their guidance) (The Qur’an 6: 90). In this verse, Allah has commanded to follow the guidance of the prophets, not to follow themselves. Hence, the verse does not talk about being a follower of Ibrahim, but it is about following a religion that has been common to all prophets (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 446).

In addition, it can be said that there are good examples in the lives of all divine prophets and righteous people, and that is why the Qur’an has mentioned the stories of the prophets and the righteous servants for us to follow the example of their good deeds. The purpose of telling the story of their lives was not merely for the sake of telling stories. Moreover, as it was mentioned, Allah said about the companions of Prophet Ibrahim: “There is certainly a good exemplar for you in them for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day” (Qur’an 60: 6)

Thus, the companions of Prophet Ibrahim are role models for us as well and were not just role models for the people of their time, while they were not necessarily Prophets or Imams. Allah says about Ibrahim: “And We gave him Isaac and Jacob and guided each of them. And Noah We had guided before, and from his offspring, David and Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron thus do We reward the virtuous. And Zechariah, John, Jesus, and Ilyas, each of them among the righteous. And Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah, and Lot each We graced over all the nations.” (The Qur’an 6: 84-86) After these prophets are mentioned, Allah instructs the Prophet that “They are the ones whom Allah has guided. So follow their guidance.” (Qur’an 6: 90). The Prophet should follow their guidance, while it is not known that all of them were Imams, although they were all prophets. So being a role model for others, even at other times, does not necessarily mean that the person must have reached Imamate. Hence, to interpret the Imam as a role model for all people is not accurate either.

## 2.4. A political leader

Al-Zamakhsharī defines Imamate as being a role model. Then, in explaining it, he applies it to religious and political leadership and goes further to say that this Imamate does not reach oppressors. He asks how can an oppressor be an Imam (in the political sense) when the ruling and bearing witness of an oppressor as well as his reports are not accepted and there is no obligation to obey them. For this reason, Abu Hanifa secretly encouraged people to help Zaid ibn Ali and he financially supported him against Umayyad thieves who claimed Imamate (Al-zamakhsharī, *ibid*). Qurtūbī says; that some scholars by appealing to this verse have argued to reject the leadership of oppressors, and for this reason, Husain Ibn Ali (A.S) and Abdullah bin Zubayr went out against Yazīd (Al-Qurtubī, *ibid*: 109).

### Analysis

If these scholars consider the term “Imam” to mean a role model and later on, they observe political leadership to be an example and an application of it, then we already reviewed this claim. However, if they argue that the term “Imam” means a political leader, then there are some loopholes in it. The first drawback of this interpretation is that the prophets like other people can be political leaders one can even claim that the prophets generally have priority in achieving such a position as it is mentioned about them in verse 25 of surah 57: “Certainly We sent Our apostles with manifest proofs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that mankind may maintain justice; and We sent down iron, in which there is great might and uses for mankind, and so that Allah may know those who help Him and His apostles in their absence. Indeed, Allah is all-strong, all-mighty.” According to Javādī Āmolī, in this verse, Allah explains the common attributes of the prophets are among other things, He has equipped the prophets with cultural and military forces: one is a book, to invite people to justice, and the other is iron, to prevent chaos and to deal with aggressors. Iron which was in the hands of some prophets in the form of a sword and in the hands of others such as Ibrahim in the form of an axe, is to support that book. The fact that “helping the religion of Allah and His messengers” came along with the expression of “We sent down iron”, is proof that this iron is meant as a means of defense and war. Of course, iron also has many industrial benefits (منافع للناس) for people; but its “great might” (باس شديد) that the verse declares, appears in the face of defending

the essence of religion and repelling the invaders (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 448). So, it is not conceivable that Ibrahim did not have the right to lead the ummah in the past and then it was given to him.

Second, If Ibrahim was appointed as a political leader in his old age, then Allah should have quoted signs of his rule and leadership to be followed by others as a practical example; as it was in the case of David beside the statements like “We made his kingdom firm” (Qur’an 38: 20), Allah quotes his way of judgment (The Qur’an 38: 22). However, no trace of the rule of Ibrahim at his old age over territory has been mentioned in the Qur’an (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 454). Thus, if Imamate is political leadership, we should ask the question of which land and region was Ibrahim sent to lead? While there is no mention of such a place.

If it is said that Allah gave him the legitimacy of political leadership without him having the opportunity to rule, then what kind of grace would be in such an Imamate that is not actualized, while this was achieved for David and Solomon even though they were not given such a promise to be raised as Imams and they were not subjected to difficult tests like Ibrahim? Third, political leadership has no higher value than prophethood, to assume that he was given such a position after being a prophet, it does not make sense to consider Ibrahim to be so surprised by that political position to the extent that he requested it for his children as well. The divine prophets were not fascinated by power and the political responsibility was only a heavy burden on them.

Fourth, Allah speaks about the Imamate of prophets such as Isaac and Jacob and emphasizes on their guiding role (Qur’an 21: 72-73), but He does not express their rule and political leadership, and in history, there is nothing that confirms their political rule. So if Imamate meant political leadership, these prophets should have had well-known kingdoms like David.

Fifth, Javādī Āmolī adds: “I am making you Imam of mankind” indicates that appointing an Imam is only by Allah. Therefore, if we accept that Imamate in that verse refers to political leadership, then according to “I am appointing you Imam of mankind” and “My pledge” the installation of the Imam is the duty and the right of Allah, and people do not have the right to choose a political leader, and the political caliphate of a person who has not been chosen by Allah will not be permissible (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*:

439). Then what will the Sunni scholars say about the legitimacy of the caliphs after the Prophet? The caliphs did not attribute their political leadership to Allah and never claimed to be appointed by Allah, but on the contrary, they claimed that the messenger of Allah did not introduce anyone on behalf of Allah to succeed him and he left it to the ummah. As Sahih Bukhari narrates from Ibn Abbas that some people said; “paying allegiance to Abu Bakr was a sudden and heedless act without consulting the people’s opinion and without reckoning.” ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattāb replied to them, “Yes, it is true that this allegiance was sudden and unaccounted for, but in any case, Allah protected us from its evil.” (Al-Bukhārī, 1422, vol.8:168)

What emphasizes the necessity of appointing an Imam by Allah is the issue of the infallibility of the Imam, and this is expressed by the phrase “My pledge does not extend to the unjust” in the verse. Imamate reaches only those whose souls are free from the harm of any temptation and the bite of any sin. Infallibility is required in Imamate, and infallibility is an unknown secret to anyone but Allah. Such a position cannot be proved without a divine command and it is never available for any ordinary individual and it is not up to society to elect someone for this position. The Qur’an has separated the boundary between the positions that are through appointment by Allah and the ones in the realm of people’s choice. Imamate is the covenant of Allah (My pledge), not the covenant of people, so people cannot choose Imam. However, in other cases which are left to people they can choose as the famous verse declares “and their affairs are by counsel among themselves” (Qur’an 42: 38) Thus, the covenant of Allah is different from that of the people and the covenant of Allah is proved only by a valid text from Him.

Sixth, another proof of the fact that Imamate must be gifted by Allah and it is not through people’s choice, is the popular recitation of the term “الظالمين” (the oppressors) instead of “الظالمون” that is a rare recitation of the verse. According to the popular recitation, “عهدي” (My pledge) is the subject of the verb “لا ينال” (does not extend), and “الظالمين” (the oppressors) is its object. Then, the sentence means “the divine covenant must reach just man, not that man can acquire it”. Hence, how can this Imamate be reduced to a political leadership that is due to people’s choice? Therefore, although political leadership can be one of the duties and rights of the Imam, Imamate is not limited to it.

Seventh, Javādī Āmolī refers to another literal point in the verse, that instead of saying “علي الناس اماما” the verse said “للناس اماما”. Mentioning Imamate with the letter “ل” indicates closeness, intimacy, and priority (Wilayah) that Imam has over people, rather than using “على” that could imply superiority and sovereignty that is for a Sultan and a political leader. In other terms, Imam is “for” people not “over” people and this implies that Imamate is something beyond political leadership. Hence, Imamate in that verse is of the same nature as Wilayah, not political leadership (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 469).

### 2.5. A special guidance

This definition has been proposed for the Imam by Ṭabātabāī. Before expressing his view, it should be known that guidance is of three types: First, the general creational guidance (Al-Hidāyah Al-Takwīnīyah). According to the Qur’an, “He who gave everything its creation and then guided it” (Qur’an 20: 50), Allah has created everything and set an end for it to move in its path.

Second, the instructional guidance (Al-Hidāyah Al-Tashrīyah) is by showing the way to people so if they choose to take and follow the right way they might reach the destination. It is as if someone is given an address that leads towards a destination if he moves according to that address. The guidance delivered by the divine prophets is of this type if people obey their commands, they will be successful, but if they disobey the teachings of the prophets, they will go astray.

Third, delivering to the destination (Al-īṣāl ela al-Maṭlūb), which is creational and developmental guidance. In this type of guidance, the instructor does not give the address of the destination but he takes the hand of the guided man and accompanies him to the desired destination. According to Ṭabātabāī, one should first of all know that whenever the Holy Qur’an mentions Imamate, continues by referring to the issue of guidance, as if it (guidance) comes to interpret Imamate. For instance, in the story of Ibrahim, it says:

“And We gave him Isaac, and Jacob as well for a grandson, and each of them We made righteous. We made them imams, guiding by Our command.” (Qur’an 21: 72-73). He also says: “And amongst them, We appointed Imams to guide the people by Our command when they had been patient and had conviction in Our signs.” (Qur’an 32: 24)

According to the above two verses Imam is a guide. On the other hand, Allah has bound this guidance to “Our command”, and with this condition, he has made it clear that Imamate is not in the absolute sense of guidance, but it is a guidance that is done by the command of Allah, and this command is what has been described as: “All His command when He wills something, is to say to it “Be,” and it is. So immaculate is He in whose hand is the dominion of all things and to whom you shall be brought back.” (Qur’an 36: 82-83). And also said: “And Our command is but a single (word), like the twinkling of an eye.” (Qur’an 54: 50)

The divine command, which the first verse also called “the kingdom”, is another aspect of creation with which the Imams face Allah Almighty. It is a pure creation free from the constraints of time and place, and free from change and transformation. The command is what is meant by the word “Be” (كن) and it is nothing but the objective existence of things. “The command” versus “creation” (خلق) is one of the two aspects of everything. The creation is the aspect of everything subject to change, quantization, and the laws of motion and time, but the command of the same thing is not subject to these rulings (Al-Tabarī, *ibid*, vol.19: 143-143). In the realm of creation, a camel can be born after a couple mates and the mother carries the semen in her womb for a specific period waiting for different stages of development to come one after the other, but in the realm of command, in less than a blink of an eye, a camel with its baby come out of a mountain for the people of prophet Salih.

Therefore, the nature of “to guide the people by Our command” is a creational guidance, not an instructive one, and the guidance of the Imams that is by the divine command is the manifestation of the name of Allah; “Muqallib Al-Qulūb” (the reformer of hearts/the mover of hearts). Just as the Imam has a worldly position to take care of the worldly affairs of the people, he also has a heavenly position to guide the hearts of the people with “كن فيكون” (Be! and it is) and by connection with the souls. Hence, if such a position is proven for a prophet, it is through his Imamate not his prophethood (Javādī Amulī, *ibid*: 463).

Contrary to it, is the guidance of the prophets that is just through good advice and preaching: “We did not send any apostle except with the language of his people so that he might make] Our messages [clear to them. Then Allah leads astray whomever He wishes, and He guides whomsoever

He wishes, and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise.” (Qur’an 14: 4). The prophets just taught people the book but Imams guide by a special creational impact on the hearts and they do it for those who believed and acted in accordance with their faith, so this is a divine reward for them. To whatever spiritual degree man reaches, he needs a guide to go to a higher level and he needs a guide to hold his hand and lift him up. This means being a mediator of grace, and this is the position the descendants of Ibrahim as Imams were given. Thus, even if Imam is absent he has this influence on others.

### **Conclusion**

All in all, from the aforementioned discussion a few points become vividly clear that Imamate was given to Ibrahim after he was a prophet already. Therefore, Imamate cannot mean leadership in worldly or religious affairs, because these are some of the duties fixed for the Prophets. The Imam can enjoy these authorities as well, that is, he can be the people’s role model in religious, political, and worldly affairs, he can teach them the divine rules, he can be the Imam of the congregation, etc. But since all these qualities also exist in Prophets and raising to the position of Imamate for Prophet Ibrahim must be a different privilege and gift it would be reasonable for Allah to grant such a reward to Prophet Ibrahim. According to the verse, although the Imam is not necessarily a prophet, it is a higher authority than the position of prophethood and unlike the prophethood that was given to Ibrahim years ago, the Imamate was given to him in his old age after difficult trials and tests. Imamate is a divine pledge and covenant, and whoever is the Imam must be chosen by Allah, and the appointment of the Imam is not assigned to people. For this reason, the verse declared that the Imamate does not reach the unjust people to state that the Imamate cannot be obtained, but it is a position that must come to the Imam from Allah. The verse indicates that a person who is unjust in any sense of injustice is not qualified to be an Imam, and this is proof of the Imam's infallibility, this makes it clear that the Imamate does not mean political Leadership that is merely leading the society in political affairs.

On the other hand, Allah did not limit the Imamate to a specific time, and the Imam can be present at any time. In addition, being a prophet is not a condition in Imamate, and the person who is an Imam doesn't need to be a prophet, Allah did not make the Imamate of the descendants of Ibrahim

conditional on them being prophets, but conditioned it on infallibility and avoidance of injustice. Therefore, the infallible from the descendants of Ibrahim can have the Imamate at any time, and there is no reason that there will be no Imam after the last Prophet. However, the first Imam must be introduced by the divine command through the Prophet as for the others the previous Imam can introduce them.

According to the reliable hadiths in Shia and Sunni sources, no one except Ali ibn Abī Tālib has been introduced as Imam after the Prophet, and none of the caliphs other than him claimed to have been appointed to Imamate by the Prophet. As it is stated in Sahīh Bukhari ‘Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb himself confirmed it about allegiance to Abu Bakr. In this narration, which is from Ibn Abbas, it is narrated that some people said that allegiance to Abu Bakr was “Faltah”, meaning sudden and without consulting the people’s opinion and without reckoning. ‘Umar replied, “Yes, it is true that this allegiance was sudden and unaccounted for, but in any case, Allah protected us from its evil.” (Al-Bukhārī, *ibid*) Thus, according to ‘Umar the appointment of Abu Bakr happened in haste by people, and it was not from Allah and His Messenger. They considered themselves merely caliphs in political and worldly affairs. However, the prophet on different occasions like the event of Ghadīr Khum introduced Imam Ali as his successor and as Imam and guardian after him (Ibn Abī Shaybah, 1988, vol.2: 682 & vol.6: 368); (Ibn Hanbal, 1983, vol.2: 610 & 682); (Ibn Mājah, n.d., vol.1: 43.); (Abu Ya’lā, 1952, vol.1: 428 & vol.11:307); (Ibn Hibbān, 1993, vol.15: 375).

Thus, if one rejects the Imamate of Ali after the prophet, then he has to believe that there is no one after the prophet to be considered an Imam in its Qur’anic sense.



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## Role of Prayer in Establishing Family Foundations and Dealing with Social Disasters, Based on the Teachings of Ahl al-Bayt (as)

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### Abstract

Prayer is the establishment of values and the prevention of the disintegration of the personality of individuals and members of society. Prayer should be sought more in its capacity and constructive effects in various educational and social dimensions, and not limited to individual supplication. The family system, as the first social rule and the best place for preserving human dignity and ensuring the psychological tranquility of its members, has now suffered from various moral disorders and social misconduct, the most important factor of which must be sought in the element of weakness of faith and neglect of prayer and remembrance of God. Therefore, deep and comprehensive attention to the most important requirements of prayer can be considered highly effective in strengthening faith and reducing moral and behavioral damages, especially in the realm of the family. The elucidation of the relationship between prayer and the family, with an emphasis on highlighting the role of prayer in strengthening the family system and combating moral and social offences, can be deemed as the most important issue of this article.

**Keywords:** Ahl al-Bayt (as), Deviations, Family Foundations, Functions, Prayer, Social Disasters.

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## 1. Problem Statement

Prayer is the practical ideology of Muslims in which they express their beliefs, thoughts, desires and patterns. Prayer is a routine of every morning and evening. The first obligatory duty in the morning is prayer and in the evening the last obligatory act is also prayer. Prayer is the most fundamental need of man in life, in which the celestial soul, trapped in his earthly body, connects him with the heavens and places him in a space of peace and security, free from all the worries and concerns of life on the earth. In Islamic culture and knowledge, prayer is referred to as the pillar of religion, the flag of faith, the flag of Islam, the remembrance of religions and prophets and the central axis for the acceptance of all human actions. Therefore, the Holy Religion of Islam, in order to reform human society and for the cultivation and purification of souls and refine their spirit and body from impurities and moral vices, has introduced prayer as the best constructive factor for the spirit and the psyche of mankind and the strongest deterrent against moral and behavioral corruptions and imperfections, as it is stated: "... إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَ لَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ" (Surah Al-Ankabut/45).

Therefore, with such a comprehensive perspective on the capacities and constructive and evolutionary functions of prayer, Imam Khomeini (May God's Mercy be Upon Him) also referred to it as a center for refining and nurturing human souls, stating: "Prayer is the factory of humanization, good prayer removes obscenities and denials from a nation. Those who have been drawn to centers of corruption are the ones who do not pray." (Imam Khomeini, 1368: 7/289). However, as expressed by Martyr Motahhari, "Not every prayer and worship, but rather the correct, genuine and fully qualified one. Worship in which its essence is directed towards God, seeking forgiveness, help, and refuge in God, such prayer and worship is the greatest factor in human upbringing." (Motahhari, 1359: 9104).

Therefore, the most significant and tangible effects of prayer should be considered as the human's deterrent against moral corruption and social deviance, as well as the reformation and training of individual and social behaviors of the members of a religious community. Unfortunately, today, Islamic societies, despite having rich religious teachings in the realm of personal and social life, are facing significant moral damages, ethical threats, and social abnormalities from both software and hardware aspects.

It can boldly be admitted that these threats have entirely targeted the family nucleus as the most important and fundamental center of the religious-social training system of the Islamic community; because if the family, as the primary social nucleus and the best platform for preserving human dignity and ensuring the mental tranquility of society members, suffers from moral crises and behavioral wrongdoings, naturally, other social institutions and systems will also be affected by weakness and decay, leading to rapid deterioration and disintegration in a short period of time.

In such circumstances, the most fundamental strategy to strengthen the family system against ethical damages and deviations is to reinforce the belief and faith structure of individuals in the society (family) through the means of prayer, remembrance of God, and combatting negligence and despair. This is because all the diverse educational and social functions and capacities of prayers and worshipping have not been adequately examined and recognized in the studies, research, opinions, and works of Islamic scholars as they should have been. Primarily, attention has been focused on its individual aspects and religious dimensions. Therefore, this article seeks to examine the importance and status of prayer, as well as its capacities in the realm of personal and social interactions. It aims to elucidate the effects and functions of prayer in strengthening the family system and combating ethical deviations and social crimes.

## 2. Importance and Position of Prayer:

Looking at the teachings of the Islamic religion, it can be clearly understood that among Islamic prayers, after divine recognition and submission to the Creator of existence, prayer is introduced as the greatest Islamic obligation, the highest educational institution for human upbringing, and the strongest bridge of communication between the Creator and the created. No act of worship can compare to its significance, and neglecting it, is considered disbelief. The Qur'an refers to prayer as a fixed obligation and a prescribed duty: "إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا..." (Qur'an, An-Nisa/103). The commentator of Al-Mizan also considers the interpretation of "كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا" as a fixed obligation (prayer) that is not changeable and will not be waived under any circumstances for a responsible individual (Tabatabaee, 1417:5/102).

The position of prayer in Islam is such that the Qur'an, in a general statement about prayer, mentions it as the common official program of all

divine prophets and praises it as follows: " وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا " (Al-Anbiya/ 73). According to the interpreter of the exemplary commentary, the mention of " كَانُوا " in the above verse, which implies continuity and permanence, may indicate that even before reaching the station of prophethood and leadership, the prophets were righteous servants of God to whom He bestowed new blessings (Makarim Shirazi, 1379:13456). On the other hand, in providing a detailed account, it is worth mentioning some details regarding the history of the prayer program in the curriculum of the chosen ones and divine ambassadors. It quotes as follows:

- a) The Prayer of Abraham (peace be upon him): " رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ " (Qur'an, Abraham/40) " ... وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي "
- b) The Prayer of Ishmael (pbuh): " ... وَ كَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ " (Qur'an, Maryam/55)
- c) The Prayer of Shuayb (pbuh): " يَا شُعَيْبُ أَصَلَاتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ نَتْرُكَ مَا يَعْجُبُ " (Qur'an, Hud/87) " ... أَبَاؤُنَا "
- d) The Prayer of Moses (pbuh): " إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ " (Qur'an, Taha/14) " لِذِكْرِي "
- e) The Prayer of Zechariah (pbuh): " فَنادته الملائكة و هو قائم يصلي في " (Qur'an, Al-Imran/39) " ... المخراب "
- f) The Prayer of Jesus (pbuh): " وَ أَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَ الزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ... " (Qur'an, Maryam/31)
- g) The Prayer of Luqman (pbuh): " ... يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ " (Qur'an, Luqman/17)
- h) The Prayer of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh): " وَ أَمُرُ أَهْلِكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ " (Qur'an, Taha/132) " ... وَ اصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا "

In the third instance, the Holy Qur'an introduces prayer in the context of establishing the religion and the fundamental beliefs of true believers: " ...إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَ أَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ " (Qur'an, At-Tawbah/18); " ... وَ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ " (Qur'an, Ash-Shura/13); " ... أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَ لَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ... " (Qur'an, An-Nur/56). Similarly, in the Prophetic hadith, emphasis is placed on the direct connection between prayer and strengthening the foundations of the religion: " افزعوا إلى قوام دينكم بإقام الصلاة " (Majlisi, 1403: 78/35). "Strive with full attention in establishing the pillars of your religion through complete observance of prayer." Then, in the fourth instance, the establishment and revival of prayer are considered as primary duties and

priorities for the leaders and officials of the Islamic system: "الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ... فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ" (Qur'an, Al-Hajj/41). Therefore, in the above verse, the three key and essential pillars of worship, economic, and social aspects - namely prayer, zakat, and public supervision - are specified as the foundations of the Islamic government, each of which constitutes a pillar of Islamic rulings in its own right. (Tabarsi, 1408: 7/).

In addition to the statements of the Holy Qur'an regarding the importance and position of prayer, which has dedicated more than 80 verses to it, the infallible leaders (as) have also explained and outlined the significance and status of this indispensable monotheistic obligation as interpreters and teachers of the Qur'an. They have highlighted the essence of prayer from various perspectives. Some of their statements include:

### **2.1. Prayer, the pillar of religion and divine covenant:**

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) introduced prayer as the covenant of Allah: "الصلاة عهد الله" (Muttaqi Hindi, 7/279). Imam Ali (pbuh), in his advice emphasizing the importance of observing prayer, described it as the pillar and foundation of religion: "الله الله في الصلاة فأبها عمود دينكم" (Nahj al-Balagha, Letter 47; Nuri, 1382: 1/).

### **2.2. Prayer, the symbol of the school and flag of Islam:**

The Noble Prophet (pbuh) in explaining the importance and position of prayer among other acts of worship and schools, has designated prayer as a symbol of the Islamic school and as its emblem and raised flag: "وجهه" ووجه "علم الإسلام الصلاة" (Kulayni, 1363: 3/270) He also said: "علم الإسلام الصلاة" (Muttaqi Hindi, 7/279).

### **2.3. Prayer, the guardian of God and the divine policy of the prophets**

Imam Sadiq (pbuh) considered prayer as a form of divine guardianship on earth: "أَنَّ الصَّلَاةَ حُجْرَةٌ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ" (Majlisi, 1403: 78/999). The Noble Prophet (pbuh) also regarded prayer as the definitive practice of the prophets of God that manifested in their conduct and traditions: "الصَّلَاةُ... مِنْهَاجُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ" (Majlisi, 1403: 82/231).

### **2.4. Prayer, the ascension of the believer and the guide on his path:**

The Noble Prophet (pbuh) mentioned in a hadith that prayer is the ladder of ascension for the believer towards God and also the provision and compass for the way of the believers in worldly and hereafter life: "الصلاة معراج المؤمن" (Imam Khomeini, Surah al-Salat, 1357: 7).

### **2.5. Prayer, the most superior act and means of divine proximity:**



Imam Sadiq (as) mentioned prayer as the most beloved act to Allah in His presence: "أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الصَّلَاةُ" (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 5/297) Imam Ali (pbuh) also listed it as the greatest act and a means for the God-fearing individual to draw closer to the divine court of the Lord: "أَوْصِيَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَحِفْظِهَا- فَإِنَّهَا خَيْرُ الْعَمَلِ" (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 5/367); "الصَّلَاةُ قُرْبَانٌ كُلُّ تَقِيٍّ" (Majlisi, 1403: 78/999).

## 2.6. Prayer, the means of expelling Satan and purifying sins:

In the monotheistic perspective of Imam Ali (pbuh), prayer is a strong tool for combating and suppressing Satan and his objectives. As he said: "الصَّلَاةُ مَدْحَرَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ" (Amadi, 1378: 2/222), and in another statement, he describes prayer as the cause of Satan's blackening: "الصَّلَاةُ تُسَوِّدُ وَجْهَ الشَّيْطَانِ" (Amadi, 1378: 2/223). Furthermore, in another hadith, he considers prayer as a stronghold and fortress against Satan and his temptations: "الصَّلَاةُ حِصْنٌ" (Amadi, 1378: 2/223). Imam Ali (pbuh) in another saying, refers to the position of prayer as a means of cleanliness from impurities and sins and as a cleanser of human existence from sins: "الصلوة صابون" (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1404: 2/313) and "الصَّلَاةُ... إِنَّهَا تَحْتُ الدُّنُوبَ حَتَّى" (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 199) (Har'ami, 1409: 3/7).

## 2.7. Prayer, the scale of measurement and the key to Paradise:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on one hand, in a hadith, considers prayer as the measure and scale of people's actions, and on the other hand, he introduces it as a means of granting prayers and the basis for accepting other acts and worship of Muslims: "الصَّلَاةُ مِيزَانٌ" (Kulayni, 1375: 1/267); "الصَّلَاةُ إِجَابَةٌ لِلدَّعَاءِ وَ قَبُولٌ لِلْأَعْمَالِ" (Kulayni, 1375: 1/270). He also, in other hadiths, explains the importance and eschatological position of prayer in the other world and the resurrection, saying: "الصَّلَاةُ مِفْتَاحُ الْجَنَّةِ" (Payande, 1378: 270); prayer is the key to Paradise and also the companion of the worshiper in the grave: "الصلوة انيس في قبره" (Majlisi, 1403: 82/1). Just as in another hadith, prayer is the first question in the resurrection: "أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ" (Payande, 1378: 208), which is included in the series of worship acts and religious rulings: "موضع الصَّلَاة من الدين كموضع الرأس من الجسد" (Kulayni, 1375: 1/).

## 3. Obligations and Essentials of Prayer

Just as the wise teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) emphasize the necessity of understanding and awareness of the status and position of prayer in detail, obligations and essentials regarding the right and truth of

prayer have also been mentioned. It is clear that the comprehensive understanding and observance of all aspects of these obligations will undoubtedly have a direct and significant impact on the growth and increasing development of the worshippers. It is evident that these obligations, apart from the essential requirements related to the prerequisites and outward etiquettes of prayer such as ablution, attire, and the place of prayer, which of course have their own validity and importance, are crucial. Therefore, the most important obligations and essentials of prayer that have been emphasized and focused on in the statements of the infallible (as), are as follows:

### 3.1. Avoidance of negligence in prayer and abandoning it

One of the most important teachings of religious scholars regarding the requirements of prayer is to avoid any kind of negligence or abandonment of the prayer. If performing the prayer is likened to the pillar of religion, the flag of Islam, and the key to Paradise, then surely any laxity in establishing prayer and also leaving it aside has severe, heavy, and irremediable consequences and punishments as explicitly warned by the teachings of the school of divine revelation and emphasized by the Imams (as). The Holy Qur'an warns those who show arrogance and disdain towards worship and servitude to God, promising them the fire of Hell, stating: "إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ..." (Surah Al-Mu'min, 60) This is while, according to the Qur'an, the most significant reason for sinners and criminals to end up in Hell is neglecting prayers and staying away from the ranks of worshippers as they are confessing in front of the questioning of the inhabitants of Paradise, they said: "يَسْأَلُونَ \* عَنْ ... \* " (Surah Al-Muddathir, 4340). "الْمُجْرِمِينَ \* مَا سَأَلَكُمْ فِي سَفَرٍ \* قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ"

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has also, in explicit hadiths, considered intentional abandonment of prayer as the boundary between faith and disbelief, and has deemed the one who neglects prayer as a disbeliever: "بين الايمان والكفر ترك الصلوة" (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 5/403); "مَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ" (Tawisrkani, n.d., 394). In another statement, he equated the abandonment of prayer by the negligent individual with the destruction of his religion, holding such individuals accountable for their indifference towards those who do not pray and expressing indifference and apathy towards them, considering their death equivalent to the death of a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian even if they

are in an Islamic state: " مَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ لَا يَرْجُو تَوَابَهَا وَ لَا يَخَافُ عِقَابَهَا فَلَا أَبَالِي أَنْ " يَمُوتَ يَهُودِيًّا أَوْ نَصْرَانِيًّا أَوْ مَجُوسِيًّا (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 5/403).

Therefore, attention to and valuing of prayer is a sign of reverence for religion and remembrance of God, while neglecting and belittling it is a sign of weak faith and a source of joy for Satan. Hence, the Prophet of God (pbuh) stated in another hadith: " مَنْ ضَيَّعَ الصَّلَاةَ فَهُوَ لِغَيْرِهَا أَضْيَعٌ " (Har Ameli, 1409: 3/19). He also said: "The one who ruins his prayer will be alongside Qarun and Haman on the Day of Judgment. Woe to the one who does not take care of his prayer." (Har Ameli, same source). He then said: "Whoever belittles prayer is not of my nation" (Har Ameli, 1409: 3/15). Imam Ali (pbuh) also considers the biggest thief to be the one who neglects and steals his prayer: " إِنَّ أَسْرَقَ النَّاسَ مَنْ سَرَقَ صَلَاتَهُ " (Majlisi, 1403:84/242).

### 3.2. Establishing prayer at the earliest time and having the presence of heart:

In accordance with the ethical and religious teachings derived from the words of revelation and the sayings of the Ahl-al Bayt (as), the mere performance of prayer in any form and at any time or place has not been valued. In addition to fulfilling the prayer, observing the prayer times along with attention and presence of heart has also been repeatedly emphasized and referenced by them. Imam Sadiq (pbuh) considered one of the criteria for evaluating the Shiites to be the extent of their protection of prayer times, stating: " اَمْتَجِنُوا شِيَعَتَنَا عِنْدَ مَوَاقِيَتِ الصَّلَاةِ كَيْفَ مُحَافِظَتُهُمْ " (Qummi, n.d., 244).

The virtue and importance of praying at the earliest time is to such an extent that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in another hadith has described the virtue of praying at the earliest time as being like the virtue of the Hereafter over the world, saying: " فَضْلُ الْوَقْتِ الْأَوَّلِ عَلَى الْأَخِيرِ كَفَضْلِ الْآخِرَةِ عَلَى " (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 15/401). In another hadith, he has considered this virtue better for a believer than his wealth and children: " فَضْلُ الْوَقْتِ الْأَوَّلِ عَلَى الْأَخِيرِ خَيْرٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ مِنْ وُلْدِهِ وَ مَالِهِ " (Mohammadi Reyshahri, same source). According to his statement, when the time for prayer arrives, the doors of heaven are opened, and the deeds and invocations of the believer ascend towards the Lord, and this ascension of deeds is better for him than any wealth and children: " إِذَا دَخَلَ وَقْتُ الصَّلَاةِ فَتُحْتَبَأُ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ لِصُعُودِ " (Hur Ameli, 1409: 3/87). Therefore, in Islamic teachings, delaying prayer times is strongly discouraged, and severe consequences are outlined for it, to the extent that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in his hadith deprives

those who delay their obligatory prayers from his intercession, saying: " لَا يَنَالُ شَفَاعَتِي غَدًا مَنْ أَخَّرَ الصَّلَاةَ الْمَفْرُوضَةَ بَعْدَ وَقْتِهَا " (Saduq, 1376: 326). Imam Reza (pbuh) also considers 'Sahoon' as the ones who are negligent of their prayer times as mentioned in the verse " فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ \* الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ " (Al-Ma'un/5-4): " يَقُولُ عَنْ وَقْتِهِمْ يَتَعَاْفَلُونَ " (Majlisi, 3: 83/20).

In addition to observing the prayer times, having presence of heart and focusing on the remembrances and actions of prayer are also among the other necessities of this important divine obligation. The Holy Qur'an mentions the believers who are humble and present in their prayers, emphasizing that through this humility of the heart and mental presence in prayer, they are the people of felicity and salvation: " قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ \* الَّذِينَ " (Al-Mu'minun/2-1). The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasizes the importance of having presence of heart in prayer, saying: " إِذَا قَامَ الْعَبْدُ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَكَانَ هَوَاهُ وَ قَلْبُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى انْصَرَفَ كَيَوْمٍ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ " (Fayz Kashani, 1383 AD: 1/382). Then, in another hadith regarding the quality of achieving presence of heart in prayer, he advises as follows: " صَلِّ صَلَاةَ مُوَدِّعٍ " (Majlisi, 1403: 84/264); In addition to introducing the component of the farewell prayer, he speaks in another hadith about a method that helps to achieve more humility and presence of heart in prayer, which is to see God and be seen by God: " اَعْبُدِ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ " (Majlisi, same source); Therefore, in his advice to Abu Dharr regarding the necessity of humility and awe in prayer, he says: " يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ رَكَعَتَانِ مُفْتَصِدَتَانِ فِي التَّفَكُّرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ قِيَامٍ لَيْلَةٍ وَ الْقَلْبِ سَاهٍ " (Tabarsi 1397 AD: 2/467); In this regard, Imam Sadiq (pbuh) says to his companion Fazayl ibn Yasar: "The extent to which a servant's prayer is elevated towards God is when it is performed with a present heart and focus. If the presence of the heart is half, then half of the prayer is accepted; if it is one-third, then one-third; and if it is one-fifth, then one-fifth ascends." (Imam Khomeini, Forty Hadith, 1368: 362).

### 3.3 Praying in congregation (congregational prayer)

By examining the statements and practices of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) regarding prayer and congregational prayer, it can be explicitly claimed that the importance of praying in congregation and establishing congregational prayers, if not more important and emphasized than other prerequisites in prayer such as praying at the earliest time and having the presence of heart, will certainly not be less. This is because the Islamic ritual is significant

from a social aspect and, considering its blessings and abundant effects in creating unity, cohesion, and solidarity, it emphasizes and relies on this aspect in many of its programs.

Indeed, the performance of obligatory daily prayers in congregation and as a group is one of these programs. The Holy Qur'an commands the establishment of congregational prayers: "وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكُعُوا مَعَ" (Al-Baqarah/43). On the other hand, it highlights the prominent qualities of the hypocrites as their laziness and excessive indifference during prayers: "وَ إِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى" (An-Nisa/142). The importance of congregational prayer can be understood from the Islamic narrations which state that the reward of a person who leaves their home or waits in the mosque for congregational prayer is equal to the one who was engaged in prayer during that time (Mutaqqi Hindi, 1419: 8/326). It is narrated from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) that praying in congregation, even just for one day, is better and superior to a prayer that is performed at home for forty years (Har Ameli, 1409: 5/374).

In the school of Islam, congregational prayer serves as a means to promote unity among the rows, bring hearts closer, strengthen the spirit of Islamic brotherhood, facilitate social cooperation among Muslims and is considered as one of the most exceptional aspects of human gatherings. On the other hand, congregational prayer demonstrates the immense power of Muslims, discourages hypocrites, and strikes fear in the hearts of disbelievers in a way that congregational prayer is a display of presence in the political and social scene and a deep bond between the Imam and the community. Despite all the effects and functions that congregational prayer has in Islamic societies, some individuals remain indifferent to its importance and effects, missing out on the opportunity to participate. This is while the consequences and irrefutable outcomes of neglecting and absenting oneself from congregational prayer have been elucidated in the theoretical views and practical logic of the infallible (as).

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "Greet the Jews and Christians, but do not greet the Jews of my nation! It was asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, who are the Jews of your nation?' He said: 'Those who hear the call to prayer and the call to establish prayer but do not attend congregational prayer (without a valid excuse).'" (Majlisi, 1403: 84/260). He also said: "مَنْ حَفَرَهُ فَإِنَّمَا يُحَوَّرُ اللَّهُ" (Saduq, Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih, 1404: 1/377).

Additionally, a narration informed Imam Ali (pbuh) that there are some people in Kufa who reside near the mosque but do not attend the congregational prayers of the Muslims in the mosque. Imam became very angry and said: "They must either join our congregation or pray with us in the mosque, or they must move away and distance themselves from the vicinity of the mosque in a way that they are neither our neighbors nor we are theirs." (Hur Ameli, 1409: 3/86). This is despite Imam Sadiq (as) stating: "هم رسول الله باحراق قوم في منزلهم لا يصلون بالجماعة" (Toserkani, n.d.: 4/205).

### 4.3 Prayer and Family

In Islamic teachings, just as prayer is mentioned as the pillar of religion and the divine covenant, the family system and the bond of marriage are also mentioned as a strong and firm covenant. The Qur'an explicitly states: "وَ أَخَذْنَا مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا" (Qur'an, An-Nisa/21). Therefore, the Qur'an, by using the term covenant with the verb "أَخَذْنَا" and the descriptor "غَلِيظًا" that is used for the covenant of the prophets, also employs it for the covenant of marriage. This is while sociologists, psychologists, jurists, and scholars of educational sciences have had various definitions of the concept and term of family, indicating the breadth and effects and multifaceted functions of this remarkable phenomenon in various aspects of individual and social life.

In Islamic culture, the family serves as a means for the production and upbringing of generations, creating intimacy and understanding, unity and harmony, completion and evolution, and spiritual and mental tranquility for humans. In fact, the family acts as the center of gravity for all human teachings and upbringing from childhood to the end of one's life, and a person, by virtue of their social nature, will never be separate or independent from the embrace of the family and the core of personality formation and growth; otherwise, they will lose their primary and essential identity and essence and will not have a refuge or shelter for themselves. From this perspective, one can acknowledge the mutually beneficial relationship and constructive interaction, as well as the shared mission of the two inseparable phenomena of prayer and family, by considering the positive effects and functions of each on the personal and social life of a Muslim. This is while prayer, as the first divine obligation, serves as a source of tranquility for all hearts "أَلَا يَذْكُرُ اللَّهُ تَطْمِئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ" (Qur'an, Ar-

Ra'd/28), and the most important means of remembrance of God “أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ” (Qur'an, Taha/14), the most beloved acts to God “أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ” (Saduq, Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih, 1404: 1/210), and the cornerstone of worship “مَوْضِعُ الصَّلَاةِ مِنَ الدِّينِ كَمَوْضِعِ الرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ” (Payande, 1378: 624), and has been introduced as the center for reforming and educating the deviant behaviors of humans “إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَ...” (Qur'an, Al-Ankabut/45).

Family is introduced as the first social foundation for individuals, a source of tranquility and a bond between all its members, an identity provider, a creator of happiness, a tutor, and a reformer. In summary, prayer and family, as trustworthy and sacred mentors, and solid and secure shelters, have a common mission in training and guiding the human race towards achieving desired and real happiness and perfection. Therefore, the direct and reciprocal relationship between prayer and family is established among fewer social phenomena and religious rituals; prayer and its constructive effects, directly and indirectly, play a role in strengthening and reinforcing the foundation of the family, enhancing the interaction and cohesion of its elements and members. In return, the family system also strives to develop and promote the culture of prayer and its practical effects and functions more effectively. Thus, it is humans who are constantly learning and experiencing, but the role that is inscribed on the book of the chest and the clean page of this ritual in childhood and within the family nucleus is a lifelong companion and soulmate until the last breath of life. Therefore, wise men have likened learning in childhood to engraving on a stone, saying: “العلم في الصغر كأنقش في الحجر” (Ghazali, 1319: 38).

Imam Ali (as) writes to his dear son, Imam al-Mujtaba (as): "The heart of a child is like a barren land, it accepts whatever is presented to it. For this reason, I have disciplined you more so that your heart does not become hard and your mind does not become preoccupied" (Nahj al-Balagha, letter 31). Imam Sadiq (as) also emphasizes the necessity of teaching religious matters to children at the appointed time, saying: "Teach your children about religious matters before others (like the Murji'ah sect) influence them (Al-Kafi, 1363: 6/47). Therefore, the family is the best environment for raising children, and the relationship between children and the family is the strongest and most important relationship. Satisfying the inner desires and nature of the child, as well as their growth in various dimensions, is only

possible in the warm and loving embrace of the family. Indeed, no school or kindergarten can replace the place of the family. On the other hand, parents should engage children's minds in seeking answers from within themselves by creating questions about God, the Day of Judgment, worship, and other topics. This will lead them to think about important matters and reach significant conclusions. Later, when they share these conclusions with us, let us present our teachings to them in a new, pleasant, and understandable form.

We should allow children to freely engage with religious matters in the spiritual environment that we create for them. Observing the worship and prayers that older family members perform regularly day and night leaves an impression in the child's mind. This is because, considering the imitative nature of children, it is usually observed that from the age of two, a child imitates the movements of the parents and repeats some words incompletely. These actions gradually become complete, and eventually, the child stands for prayers alongside the parents. Furthermore, parents should create the background for their child's worship. Families that do not take advantage of the opportunities during childhood for this purpose usually face serious problems in adolescence and youth because delaying the performance of religious duties until adolescence or adulthood, even if one believes in religious principles, may make it difficult to follow religious teachings due to lack of knowledge and spiritual readiness. Most individuals who do not fulfill their religious duties at older ages are not necessarily disbelievers in religious principles; rather, they have not acquired the necessary training and readiness beforehand. Therefore, their will is not necessarily in line with their beliefs unless they have a stronger faith and firmer convictions. Hence, the argument of those who believe that a child should choose their own path after reaching the age of discernment and adolescence is not entirely correct (Shariati, 1384: 36).

### 5. Family Oriented Functions of Prayer

According to the Holy Qur'an, each act of worship has specific and unique effects. For instance, the effect of fasting is described as: "كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ... لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ" (Al-Baqarah/183) The effect of giving Zakat is purification and refinement of the human soul from materialism: "خُذْ مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتَ مِنْ صَدَقَاتِهِمْ تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا" (At-Tawbah/103) And the effect of Hajj is the utilization of material and spiritual blessings: "لِيَسْتَهْذُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ" (Al-

Hajj/27) On the other hand, the effect of prayer is stated as restraint and protection for the worshipper against indecency and evil: " إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَتُذَكِّرُ اللَّهَ أَكْبَرُ " (Al-Ankabut/45) Yes, the special quality of prayer is that it prevents a person from sins and indecencies. However, it is observed that many worshippers, despite performing their prayers, still commit sins and disobedience. In response, it is explained that prayer naturally entails abandoning sins and disobedience, rather than being the cause of abandoning them. In other words, the prohibition in prayer is legislative, not constitutive, and it does not forcibly prevent a person from sinning but rather provides the groundwork for abandoning sins (Tabatabai, 1417: 16/209). Just as God commands people to act with justice and excellence, to be kind to relatives, and forbids indecency and transgression: " ...إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ " (Al-Nahl/90), yet some people still commit crimes. Overall, it can be boldly claimed that the most important effect and function of prayer should be sought in its preventive and restraining aspect in the educational-ethical system of worshippers, where the family system and its members are not exempt from this rule.

If prayer is performed with all its etiquettes and conditions, with full attention and presence of heart, and without any neglect or trivialization, and if the worshipper, by participating in congregational prayers continuously, shows the religious, social, political, economic, and defensive dignity and honor of Muslims to the malicious enemies, then this prayer will prevent many moral and social abnormalities and crimes. The family system, as the most fundamental social institution in Islamic society, will be the center for reforming and educating the behavior of its members and the foundation for the upbringing and advancement of future generations. Especially if the worshipper comes to believe and understand that in the light of prayer, they are in the presence of the unique Creator and are engaged in conversation with Him.

It is noteworthy that the Holy Qur'an, in mentioning the extensive functions of prayer in preventing indecency and immorality in various aspects, uses general and absolute terms, avoiding specific examples or particular domains. This broad application of the term indicates the comprehensive and extensive scope of prayer in various aspects of personal and social life, both in terms of negation and affirmation. The realm of

home and family is also one of the fundamental functions of prayer, which will be further examined and elucidated in this article.

### 5.1 Kindness to Parents

Above all rights is the right of God, and after that is the right of the parents; because after God, no one has endured as much hardship and shown as much kindness towards us as our parents. There is no sacrifice greater than serving and sacrificing for one's parents, as the existence of a person, at a certain stage of life, is indebted to the efforts of these two unique and selfless mentors. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the conscience to show affection, love, and respect towards them. For this reason, God, in His revealed book, has mentioned kindness to parents after His own worship: "... وَ قَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَ بِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا" (Al-Isra/23); "وَ اعْبُدُوا" (An-Nisa/36). The Qur'an portrays the spiritual and moral significance of parents in such a way that it places gratitude towards God and gratitude towards parent side by side, commanding obedience and gratitude towards both: "وَ وَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ" (Luqman/14).

The Qur'an, in the context of emulating the Prophets and chosen ones such as Prophet Noah, Prophet Abraham, and Prophet Solomon, mentions that they prayed to God for forgiveness and mercy for their parents: "Noah/28; Abraham/41; An-Naml/19". The Qur'an considers goodness towards parents obligatory and deems opposition to one's parents as forbidden unless they call to associate partners with God, in that case obedience is not required: "وَ إِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ" (Luqman/15). The duty of kindness towards parents does not end with their passing; it is a religious and ethical obligation that continues until the end of one's life and even after the parents' death. Therefore, the Messenger of God (pbuh) regards the most honorable and virtuous person on the Day of Judgment as one who shows kindness to his parents, even after their death: "سَيِّدُ الْأَبْرَارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ بَرٌّ وَالِدَيْهِ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهِمَا" (Qummi, n.d.: 2/687) And Imam Ali (pbuh) also considers the greatest obligation to be in showing goodness and kindness to parents: "بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ أَكْبَرُ فَرِيضَةٍ" (Aamidi, 1378: 3/132).

The Prophet of God (pbuh) has identified kindness towards parents as the factor that saves a person from destruction and the fire of Hell, saying: "If you nurture the love of Paradise in your heart, be kind to your parents,

and if you detest the fire of Hell, refrain from causing distress to your parents." (Qummi, n.d., 2/687). He also believed that kindness towards parents leads to a person's longevity, increased sustenance, and blessings in life (Majlisi, 1403: 74/85). Imam Sadiq (pbuh) also stated about the worldly and spiritual effects of kindness towards parents: "Whoever wishes for Allah to make the agonies and hardships of death easy for him, should maintain family ties and show kindness his parents." (Majlisi, same source).

Of course, the precise and deep understanding of the relationship between prayer and kindness towards parents in the family system, especially as the family-centered function of prayer, is well understood when the issue of harsh and angry looks (disobedience towards parents) is introduced as one of the main obstacles to the acceptance of prayer. Therefore, Imam Sadiq (pbuh), about having respect towards parents and its impact on the acceptance of prayer, states that: " مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَىٰ أَبِيهِ نَظَرَ مَا قَبِلَ " وَ هُمَا لَهُ ظَالِمَانِ لَمْ يَقْبَلِ اللَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ لَهُ صَلَاةَ " (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1377: 5/387).

How can someone who does not show gratitude for the efforts of their parents and behaves rudely and harshly towards them claim to be thankful and seek closeness to the Creator through their prayer? Is it not the case that a correct relationship with the Creator goes through constructive relationships with His creation? Surely, a worthy and acceptable prayer cannot have a function other than spreading the wings of humility and prostration towards parents and other family members. Therefore, with such a perspective, prayer transcends from mere individual worship to playing a key role in attracting divine love and satisfaction in the direction of honoring and strengthening the family system and social interactions among its members. In other words, an accepted and effective prayer nurtures a healthy and influential family.

### 5.2 Strengthening the Friendship between Spouses:

Prayer, as the highest and most formal manifestation of a servant's worship with his Creator and also a symbol of the Creator's mercy towards the servant, possesses such a high and extensive capacity and subtlety that while being designated as the place of worship and pure devotion to the worshipped and the ascension of the faithful believer, it will also lead to the elevation and strengthening of marital relationships, love, and friendship between husband and wife within the family unit.

Where the Holy Qur'an introduces one of the most important characteristics and privileges of sincere and righteous prayer performers in observing trusts and adhering to their commitments and covenants: " وَالَّذِينَ " وَ الَّذِينَ " هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَ عَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (Al-Ma'arij/32; Al-Mu'minin/8).

If in accordance with the verse: " أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي " (Ta-Ha/14); and this remembrance and divine recollection that bring tranquility to the hearts and soothe the souls of the believers. " أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ... " (Ar-Ra'd/28) and the Messenger of God (pbuh) who also introduces prayer as a divine covenant and commitment: " الصلوة عهد الله " (Muttaqi Hindi, 1419: 7/279), then the sacred covenant of marriage and the marital relationship, and consequently, the formation of the family system, must also be considered as one of the important manifestations of commitments between husband and wife, in which their children are also placed as divine trusts in front of parents, while the Holy Qur'an among the signs and manifestations of the divinity, introduces the sacred bond of marriage between man and woman and the creation of the institution of marriage, and considers this sacred and heavenly bond as the source of peace for the spouses, where God has placed love and affection between them: " وَ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا " "إِلَيْهَا وَ جَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَ رَحْمَةً (Ar-Rum21).

In the Islamic monotheistic perspective and worldview, marriage is not merely a normal marital relationship aimed at satisfying the desires and instincts between two opposite sexes, but rather marriage is considered a sacred covenant and a deep and pure relationship with lofty and flourishing goals for the formation of an exalted and progressive family that provides tranquility.

In this sacred bond, the husband and wife act as parents to their children, engage in childbearing and procreation, and are committed to nurturing and raising a healthy, dynamic, purposeful, law-abiding, and unified society.

Therefore, if we consider this purposeful and exalted relationship between spouses as a divine and heavenly covenant and commitment, where each member of the family, namely the father and mother, is committed and loyal to each other, and each participant in this covenant has rights and responsibilities towards the other, and in this regard, they consider their children as divine trusts and gifts, where each is obligated to educate and nurture them to carry some important social and religious

burdens of the future to the hands of their children and the future builders of their country, then we witness a religious and responsible family where no one shirks their responsibilities and mission, and divorce and separation are not sought.

Yes, all these are the fruits of an accepted and responsible prayer, a prayer in which the worshippers receive tranquility and positive energy from their worship and supplication, and they spend this tranquility and positive energy in their homes and families. In this prayer, there are such loving and intimate relationships based on affection and love between parents that, in the face of divine trust, namely their children, they fulfill their roles and effectiveness out of commitment and responsibility, and this love and affection will illuminate the warmth of their family.

This is while the relationship between a person and their parents is a relative relationship that springs from deep roots of kinship, the bond between spouses is a contractual and legal bond, and sometimes the affection between spouses even surpasses the affection for one's parents, which is what God has mentioned in Surah Ar-Rum: " وَ جَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَ رَحْمَةً"

In this verse, it speaks of the friendship and affection between husband and wife. These two sentences that come together are cohesive and coherent because if the marital relationship is not based on affection and mercy, it will not endure and will not bring peace and tranquility. (Makarem Shirazi, 2000: 16/406).

Imam Ali (pbuh) advises his son, Muhammad Hanafiyyah, as follows: "Make peace with your wife completely, avoid imposing more work on her, and keep your life constantly warm, because this will bring joy and vitality to the family." (Tabarsi, Makarim al-Akhlaq, 2018:218).

Briefly, one of the effects and functions of prayer in the family system is the spirit of commitment and responsibility that sincere worshippers diligently care about, fulfilling their roles and responsibilities towards their spouse and children as a common covenant of life and divine trust for the formation and development of the family foundation, and through this sense of duty, they prevent any crises, deviations, and distortions in their family system.



### 5.3 Chastity and Control of Physical Instinct

Another function and effectiveness of prayer in the realm of home and family can be found in the issue of protecting and safeguarding chastity and controlling sexual instinct, where the Holy Qur'an depicts the clear image of true and sincere believers, portraying them as characterized by numerous ethical virtues, including the virtue of chastity and modesty, which is blended with the element of faith and righteousness: "إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ... \* وَالَّذِينَ " إِيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مُلُومِينَ \* إِيْمَانُهُمْ حَافِظُونَ \* إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مُلُومِينَ (Surah Al-Mu'minun: 6-5; Surah Al-Ma'arij: 30-29).

It is important to note that the Holy Qur'an, in describing the prominent qualities of believers, places chastity after prayer, charity, and avoiding vain talk, and even prioritizes it over the issue of trust and loyalty to covenants and agreements (Makarem Shirazi, 2000: 12/323).

Therefore, claiming faith in God and divine piety and performing prayers without observing chastity is a form of self-deception and falsehood that will have no connection with the principles of monotheism and the concept of resurrection. Indeed, chastity should be considered as the source and treasury of all valuable Islamic and ethical virtues, as all goodness and virtues emanate from it, and a person, by adhering to the essence of chastity, achieves liberation and freedom from the prison of desires and worldly and materialistic temptations.

Thus, the Master of the Pious, Imam Ali (pbuh), says: "الْعَفَافُ بِصُونِ النَّفْسِ وَ يَنْزَاهِهَا عَنِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْعَفَافِ فَإِنَّهُ أَفْضَلُ شَيْمِ الْأَشْرَافِ" (Mohammadi Reyshahri, 1998: 8/328). On the other hand, Islamic teachings explicitly mention chastity as the highest and noblest form of worship for a believer and consider the capital of chastity and purity as the most enduring asset for a person throughout their life. Imam Hussein (pbuh) also quotes his honorable father, Imam Ali (pbuh): "أَفْضَلُ الْعِبَادَةِ الْعَفَافُ" (Naraq, n.d., 22).

While studies conducted on the verses of the Qur'an and Islamic traditions indicate that chastity has various dimensions and types, encompassing different aspects of human personality, including verbal, behavioral, and even visual and auditory aspects, observing and applying the adornment of chastity in all these aspects can be a step towards inner reformation and combating obscenity and social abnormalities.



One of the most important and effective solutions in the Islamic religion for controlling sexual instincts and taking steps towards chastity is getting married and having a family, which is considered equivalent to fulfilling half of a person's religious duties, as the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) said: "مَنْ تَزَوَّجَ أَحْرَزَ نَصْفَ دِينِهِ فَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِي النِّصْفِ الْآخَرَ" (Payandeh, 1378: 56).

Therefore, prayer, with its inhibitory and preventive effects, while universally advocating the observance of the principle of chastity and control of sexual instincts, presents the concept of marriage and the formation of a family as a tangible means to restrain carnal desires.

On one hand, the educational and moral developmental approach of prayer in the human and religious community can be more pronounced, and on the other hand, the backgrounds for the emergence and spread of moral and sexual corruption within families can be blocked. This is the effectiveness and efficacy of prayer within the realm of the family, as stated in the Qur'an: "... وَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُفْرُوجُهُمْ حَافِظُونَ \* إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ" (Qur'an, 23:5-6).

In summary, sexual chastity is one of the important and key subjects that the infallible leaders (as) have emphasized and warned about, indicating the need for extreme vigilance and complete awareness, especially for the believers who perform prayers, against the traps of Satan and the sexual desires resulting from satanic temptations. Imam Ali (pbuh) has described desires as the traps of Satan: "الشَّهَوَاتُ مَصَائِدُ الشَّيْطَانِ" (Amadi, 1378: 1/99).

In another hadith, he said: "May you be ruined! Beware of letting desires enter your hearts, because it starts with servitude and ends with destruction and perdition." (Adi, 1378: 1/160).



## Conclusion

Prayer encompasses a wide range of individual and societal aspects of Islamic society to the extent that, as a worship that has social dimensions, it covers many aspects and spheres of family institution and serves as a healing remedy for addressing many flaws and difficulties prevalent in the household and family system. Based on this foundation, prayer, with its preventive and protective role against indecencies and wrongdoings, always leaves a remarkable and effective mark in serving the family system and strengthening its foundation.

On one hand, it contributes to reinforcing and strengthening the unparalleled position of parents among their children in line with the strict religious recommendations of showing utmost kindness and respect towards parents, and on the other hand, it promotes the enhancement of intimate, emotional, and marital relationships between the parents as spouses, thus preventing weakness and fragility in the common covenant between them.

The unique role and impact of prayer in reducing moral and social corruption such as identity crises, despair, and lack of hope and peace, on the one hand, and in enhancing modesty and controlling sexual instincts, on the other hand, should be considered among the functions of prayer in the realm of the family.



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