

(.The Greatness of the Holy Ahlul Bayt(A.S

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Who are Household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W)?

The Holy Book tells us about the Words of Allah, the Great and Almighty, concerning them:

" Allah only desires to keep away uncleanness from you, O members of the House! and to purify you a (thorough purification)." (XXXIII:33)

It is a virtue for them. No one of all people has this virtue. There is no dignity more precious than keeping away uncleanness from them and purifying them from all defects, that is the purifying which the Most kind (Allah) likes for them with His care, and it is not limited to a certain uncleanness or from a certain thing. So, it implies general purifying from every defect and sin. From this holy verse, we conclude the infallibility of the members of the Prophetic House (Ahlul-Bayt), because every sin is uncleanness and committing sins does not agree with their keeping away from them and their purification from them, so, they are, according to this verse purified from uncleanness and sins. Is infallibility a thing behind this?

Yes, all importance is in the concerned persons with this virtue which no one of the community had, except them. Does this virtue concern those who were in the House when the above-mentioned Holy Verse came down or does it concern every one who belonged to the most purified Prophet because of a certain affinity or ancestry?

If the second question is accepted, then the reality opposes it, because some of the Prophet's wives disobeyed him, and no uncleanness is greater than this disobedience. So, certainly his wives are not concerned with this virtue. Also some of those who belonged to the Prophet because of ancestry committed grave sins and crimes, and it is not right that Allah, the Almighty, wants to do a thing by the creation will, (1) but the thing does not happen. As it is impossible that Allah wants to create a thing and the thing does not happen, so all the Prophet's wives and all the Hashimites are not included in the foregoing verse, because the women and the Hashimites might commit what conflicts with purification, besides no one has said that all his wives and all the Hashimites were infallible. And if the intended meaning in the verse was the legal will, then no sense would the will of purification concerning the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt) have because Allah, the Exalted, wants it from all people. As the verse concerns the outstanding merit of Ahlul-Bayt, it indicates that the creation will is confined to them.

Then the legislation will is related to the acts of creatures, while the verse concerns the act of

Allah. Therefore, if the verse was related to the legislation will, He (Allah) would say: "Go and purify yourself." So, there is no doubt that the concerned persons in the verse are those who have been mentioned in the first question, namely the intended meaning of the verse refers to certain people, and they were those who were in the House of our master Mohammed, may Allah bless him and his family, where he covered them and himself with his cloak (kisa'). So, the verse was sent down to them and concerning them. They were `Ali, Fatima, and their sons, peace be on them. Moreover the correct traditions of the two parties (Shi'a and Sunna) affirm that.

And if there was no religious text that denotes that the verse concerns them (Ahlul-Bayt), then their behavior would be the greatest evidence for the relation between them and the verse, because their actions and sayings force us to admit their honesty. This plain truth has been well known for the clear-headed persons since the revelation of this clear verse till today. They certainly know that the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt) were the people of the cloak (kisa'), who had countless noble qualities of which were purification from defects and taking away uncleanness and sins. Yes, maybe, some of the Hashimites made use of the general sense of the word (Ahlul-Bayt) to achieve their aims and to reach the throne, so all the Hashimites used this verse to convince people to follow them. Also the word 'Shi'ism' (tashayy') maybe used to refer to 'Ali and (the members of the) House (Ahlul-Bayt) in the general sense, not the members of the cloak (kisa') and the Imams from the sons of al-Husayn, peace be on them,

but the persons whom the floods of the rabble do not deviate them from the truth. People knew that Shi'ism (tashayy') was limited to those certain Imams when silence spread over them after the first one-third of the Abbasid dynasty when the revolts of the Alawids were over. Our evidence is that the Abbasids were able to destroy the Marwani dynasty and to take the reins of government by using the words (Ahlul-Bayt). The Abbasids used these words to make the hearts of Shi'a incline to them and to make them a bridge to build an entity for their authority and to destroy the entity of the Omayyad dynasty that resisted the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt) and their followers throughout its' days and colored the surface of the ground with their shed blood. Thus the Abbasids achieved their ambition through the members of the and their the followers House (Ahlul-Bayt).

They used them both as a bridge to achieve their goals. Generally speaking they made use of all parties: the Abbasids, the Talibis, the Alawids, the Ja'farids, the 'Aqilis, the Hassanis, and Husaynis. Then every Hashimite used the same manner to summon people to support his rising. For example, Abd Allah b. Mu'awiya b. Abd Allah ibn Ja'far revolted against Abu Muslim in Kufa then in Persia because they had the followers of the members of the House (Ahlul-

Bayt), but Abu Muslim was able to kill Abd Allah when his followers abandoned him. Besides Zaid and his son, and the two brothers Mohammed and Ibrahim rose to take the authority from the enemies of the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt). After that, people realized that the Abbasids did not belong to the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt) because they pulled out the sword of aggression against the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt), who were the kinship of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. Moreover, people knew that the Abbasids wanted to achieve their aims when they summoned them to overthrow the Omayyad dynasty under the pretext of avenging the blood of those who were killed in (the Battle of) al-Taf and the crucifixion of Kanasah and Jawzjan and the like. That was because the Abbasids had built their authority on the skulls of those who loved the members of the House (Ahlul-Bayt). In other words, they showed the spite of their chests and their evil inner most thoughts to ward Ahlul-Bayt and their followers. Besides, Mohammed and Ibrahim disappeared when al-Safah took the reins of government because they were aware of his intentions toward the close relatives of the Prophet. (Muhammad Al-Husayn Al-Muzaffar, Imam al-Sadiq, p.21-23)

The Rights and Attributes of Ahlul-Bayt, in the Qur'an and Sunnah

The following is a discourse on the rights and attributes of Ahlul-Bayt according to our Holy Book (Qur'an) and the Sunnah (way of life) of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).

"Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying" (XXXIII:33)

By Ahlul-Bayt, we mean the progeny of our beloved prophet (p.b.u.h.) since this is how Ayah 33 of Surah Al-Ahzaab, is interpreted. Discourse can only be logical when first we explore the justification of Ahlul-Bayt and then we introduce their attributes. The Identity of Ahlul-Bayt: Umm Salama, the wife of our beloved Prophet says, "Ayah 33 of surah 33 (Al-Ahzaab) was revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) when he was at my house.

After this revelation, the Messenger of Allah called upon Ali, Fatima, Al-Hasan and Al-Husain to come to him and be under the mantle with him; then he proclaimed "O' Lord, these are my Ahlul-Bayt, I implore thee to cleanse them of all stigmas, and to purify them." Thus, the Prophet made known the identity of Ahlul-Bayt so as to prevent any exploitation of this verse in the future. Umm Salama then remarked, "I asked if I could join them, but the Prophet said "halt" and declared that "I am in goodness", meaning she was not of Ahlul-Bayt as mentioned in the Ayah. No statement could have more clearly identified Ahlul-Bayt than this one.

The Messenger of Allah did not even permit his wife Umm Salama to join the ranks of Ahlul-Bayt, thus by so doing he hindered any claims by his other wives in the future to that honor.

Tibari, the great historian, writes in his interpretation of the Holy Qur'an that Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said, "This Ayah was a revelation about me, Ali, Fatima, Al-Hasan and Al-Husain. It is true that this Ayah is revealed amidst verses referring to the wives of the Prophet, however, references to the masculine gender (words like An'kum and Yu'tahirukum) prevents one from assuming that these verses were referring to the wives of Allah's Messenger, too. On the contrary, according to oft-repeated narrations and testimonials, no one but the daughter of the Prophet and her husband and their two beloved boys, meaning the progeny of the Messenger of God, are intended when references are made to Ahlul-Bayt. Fundamentally, this verse cannot be referring to the wives of the Prophet because the language of the Qur'an in revelations about the spouses of the Prophet is harsh and assertive whereas the references in the aforementioned Ayah are affectionate and benevolent. To clarify these two languages, we point to the following judgments rendered by the Qur'an regarding the wives of the Holy Prophet.

1. At times the Revelation threatens them with distress and declares: "O' Wives of the Prophet, those of you who commit misdeeds will face twice the punishment and this is easy for Allah to do." (XIII:35)

2. At times, the Holy Book forbids them from treading the same course as the women of Jahiliya. When such references are seen in the Qur'an (regarding the spouses of the Prophet), is it fair to attribute the Ayah (which declares God's affection towards Ahlul-Bayt) to no one but the Prophet's Pure Family?

3. In the 3rd Ayah, two spouses of the Prophet (who revealed his secret) are reprimanded. They are told to repent and that repentance is to their benefit since their hearts have veered from righteousness and that if they conspire against the Prophet they will not triumph since Allah and Gabriel, and the righteous and the angels are the protectors and supporters of the Prophet. The nature of the secret that was about to be revealed is not pertinent at this point but the important fact is that such people who are at the verge of openly opposing the Prophet and are asked to repent are not in position to be pronounced immaculate and cleansed. of sin as such.

There is no doubt that all the spouses of the Prophet deserve special respect due to the fact that they are related to the Messenger of God. However, such respect does not mean the Qur'an's judgment about them can be ignored or that if anyone would speak unkindly about them should be condemned. Now that we familiarized ourselves with the meaning and the usage of the term "Ahlul-Bayt" the time has come for recounting some of their attributes

Numerous verses in the Holy Qur'an make it clear that an understanding of the inner-meaning (the implied) and in other words the true test of the Holy Book is specific to certain individuals and that the true status of the Qur'an and the hidden revelations therein will not be known to any but such special individuals whose characteristics include integrity. According to Ayah 80 of Surah Wa'qi'ah, these individuals are the ones who have the ability to come in contact with this fountain of knowledge in the Qur'an. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Ahlul-Bayt of the Prophet who are (according to Surah 33, Ayah 33), free of all ignominy, are the ones who shall witness the true status (meaning) of the Qur'an. It is important to mention here that according to the Holy Verses, the true standing of the Qur'an is the vastness of the knowledge within its revelations. The final meaning thereof, and that of the latent verses or the less than clear content, was to be clarified to become the guidance to mankind. Therefore, those who have access to the true status of the Qur'an, meaning the true knowledge of the firm and unmistakable (Muh'kam) and to the unspecified (Mu'tashaabah), no doubt have full command of the interpretation and allegoric explanation of the Holy Verses. The Qur'an calls the interpreters of the firm and unmistakable (Muh'kam) and the unspecified (Mu'tashaabah) verses as: Al-Rasikhoon fil I'lm. meaning the Deeply Versed in Divine .(Knowledge (of the Qur'an

Ahlul-Bayt(A.S.) are entitled to one-fifth of Ghanaa'em

The Holy Qur'an, in Ayah 41 of Surah Anfaal, considers one-fifth of the Ghanaa'em (livelihood-gains) as the property of Allah and the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), his relatives, the orphans, the poor and the helpless. We do not want to divulge in a discussion of the term Ghanaa'em, whether to mean what is gained in a war (spoils of war), or the normal income of a person attained through any legitimate means. Those who believe that it is limited solely to the spoils of war are deceived by the language of the era after the revelation. In contrast to such a view, the Qur'an and the Sunnah consider Ghanaa'em as the net profit or benefit that one obtains, that can even include heavenly blessings and the benefits of the hereafter. In Ayah 94 of Surah Nisaa' reference is made to those who seek the perishable wealth of this world while the heavenly blessings are with God. Usage of the term Ghanaa'em in reference to heavenly blessings is by itself proof of the truthfulness of the claim that by Ghanaa'em the Qur'an means the total of what man acquires for his livelihood, whether worldly, in the Hereafter, through war or as a result of a business transaction. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Muslim or the Islamic Jurisprudent to use one-fifth of Ghanaa'em for the six-fold uses. These six-fold uses include the needs of the household of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.). The fact that the word (to the Messenger) precedes the term to the kin, (Dhul Qur'ba) is proof

that by "kin" the Qur'an means the relatives of the Prophet, not those related to the benefactors. The three other groups meaning the orphans, the poor and the travelers in special situation, (ibn al-sabeel) are also somehow related to the Prophet. Allah has forbidden payment of zakat to the Hashimites but on the other hand has allowed payment of khums to members of this family so that in addition to covering expenses associated with leadership, they are able to support those who are dependent upon this family for their sustenance. But unfortunately, after the demise of our beloved Prophet (p.b.u.h.), the rights of his progeny to the fifth of Ghanaa'em was among the rights which were trampled upon. Not only were their rights ignored but also their personal possessions were confiscated under the pretext that the Prophet had not granted it to his beloved daughter; and eventually all ended in the hands of Benu Umayya (Benu Sufyan and Aal-Marwan).

In this regard, wrongful justifications and erroneous jurisprudence replaced the command of revelation. The Qur'an orders the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to pay the dues of relatives and the poor and the traveler, and the Prophet grants the land of Fadak to his daughter in accordance to this command. However, after the demise of the Holy Prophet, personal vendetta replaced the laws of the Book. The term kin (Dhul-Our'ba) is mentioned in the Qur'an 16 times, once singularly and 15 times with prefixes like Dhi, Dhawi, and Ulu. At times, it means those close to the Prophet of God. Depending on the Ayah, where the Prophet himself is being addressed, the Ayah is naturally referring to his relatives. According to interpreters of the Holy Qur'an, Fadak was granted to Fatima (A.S.) after the Ayah about Dhul Qur'ba was revealed to the Prophet. Further deliberation about the rights of Ahlul-Bayt is avoided since such discourse is broad and .beyond the means of this work

The Love of Ahlul-Bayt(A.S.) is incumbent upon us

The Messengers of God propagate Allah's Word in order to please the Almighty, and the motto of the final Messenger of God, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), was commanded by the Qur'an in Surah Al-Shoora, Surah 42, Ayah 23: " Declare [O' Muhammad]: "I ask you of no recompense for my toil except the love for my kin (family)." Whose earns good, We shall expand it for him. Verily Allah is oft-forgiving, appreciates good works". Thus, Allah commands the Prophet of Islam to demand from the Ummah the love of his progeny.

In the Arabic language the term "Qur'ba" means kinship, and "Mawad'dat fil Our'ba" means love of Dhul Qur'ba (kin) that we see throughout the Holy Qur'an. As mentioned before, this word has been used with prefixes such as Dhi and Ulu. In addition, numerous narrations clarify the brevity in this Ayah and show that by love and affection toward relatives, the Qur'an means those closely related to the Prophet. Here we bring to your attention some narrations by

believers of the Sunni School of Thought.

Ahmad Bin Hanbal quotes the Prophet in his book "Fadha'il of the Sahaaba" and writes when the above quoted verse, (Surah Al-Shoora, Surah 42, Ayah 23) was revealed, Companions of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asked "O' Prophet of God, who are those close to you and who are those people whose fondness and admiration is incumbent upon us." The Prophet replied, "They are Ali, Fatima and their two children" and he repeated this three times. In his interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, Sayooti quotes Ibn Abbas that the Ayah means that the right of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) must be honored by honoring this family, and that we should love them for his sake. Kumayt Assadi, the poet of the Umawi era has mentioned this Ayah in a poem and writes: "In a Surah that begins with letters Ha-meem, we found an Ayah whose meaning was altered by the dissimulators among us, Yet others (Imams) proclaimed the Ayah in its Rightful Worth.

" Imam Shafi'i himself being a descendant of the Prophet, in his famous works of poetry, calls the love of Ahlul-Bayt an entitlement of the family of the Prophet and writes: "O' Pilgrims! On your way to the House of Allah, pause shortly in the sands of Muzdalifah. At dawn, when the caravans of pilgrims move toward Mina, like a roaring river, call upon them and say: "If love of the Prophet's family means to Refuse, "Rafidhi" then let Mankind know, that surely I am a "Rafidhi." Of course, it must be kept in mind that the love of this family benefits the Ummah more than it does good for Ahlul Bayt, since he who loves one from the heart will follow the path of his beloved and will take steps in such direction in life. When the head of such a great family stresses this issue and declares: (Who dies with the love of Ahlul-Bayt, he will have died as a martyr), he is referring to true love that is inseparable from action.

Of course, this does not mean that he who loves Ahlul Bayt must be absolving Islamic integrity or vindicating Islamic commands. What it means is that a person should attempt to follow their examples and should not be negligent in religious duties or freely engage in what is prohibited.

* * * Ahlul-Bayt are authorities in religious teachings of Usool, (the basics of the faith) and Furoo' (the branches, acts of worship) of Islam. The oft-repeated Hadith of Thaqalain and the Mutawaatir Hadith of Safinah clearly illustrate that Ahlul-Bayt are the authentic source of religious and intellectual reference for Muslims after the demise of the Holy Prophet. According to the Hadith: "I leave after me two pivotal matters for you to cherish. One is the Book of Allah and the other my progeny (Ahlul-Bayt)."

These two are further described in the following Hadith: "As long as you seek refuge in the Qur'an and Ahlul-Bayt in times of trouble, you will not go astray." If the Qur'an is the greatest source of knowledge for the Muslims, the progeny of the Prophet also have such a status and

position. If resorting to the Qur'an is a means of finding guidance and avoiding the Qur'an results in deviation from the path of righteousness, then the same is true for the Ahlul-Bayt." According to the second Hadith: "The similitude of Ahlul-Bayt is the same as that of Noah's Ark. Whoever boards it will be saved and he who avoided it will drown." This hadith proves the religious authority of Ahlul-Bayt in the same manner the hadith of Thaqalain does. Avoidance of Ahlul-Bayt again is considered a deviance or aimlessly straying. Although the system of Khilaafah and Islamic leadership encountered indecision and lack of unity after the demise of the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and individual based jurisprudence and (political) justifications prevailed, however, none of this tainted the image of Ahlul-Bayt and their religious authority. Ali and his sons continuously remained the problem-solvers of the Ummah and covered the roots and branches of the faith in their teachings. Despite this, the Umawi and Abbasi dynasties attempted to create a deep rift between the Ummah and Ahlul-Bayt. Shunning the progeny of Muhammad by Ahlul Sunnah in recent centuries is the result of such ominous policies of the Umawi and Abbasi dynasties. As a result, in Sunni jurisprudence, all scholars and writers of Ahadith are eagerly quoted, yet the progeny of the Prophet are rarely mentioned. This can only be explained by the mischief of the Muslim leadership in the past. Today, the Informed Society of Ahlul-Bayt can bring together all Islamic people around one single axis and end discord. We hope and pray for the culmination of such aspirations, success of the admirers of Ahlul-Bayt and harbingers of harmony and unity and cessation of discord and division among Muslim ranks.

Salawaat is due to the progeny of Hadrat Muhammad(S.A.W.)

Among the rights of Ahlul-Bayt is that salawaat is due to them as well as the Prophet and that one should not separate the Messenger of Allah from his progeny when chanting salawaat. Verily Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O you who believe! send blessings on him [Muhammad] and greet him with the fitting salutation. When the above Ayah was revealed, the Companions of the Prophet inquired about the manner in which salawaat is to be said.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) answered: When saying salawaat, one must say: "O Allah! send Thy peace and blessings upon the Prophet and his progeny in the same manner that You send it upon Ibrahim and his progeny for You are Praiseworthy and Most High." In his book (Sawaa'iq), Ibn Hajr quotes the Prophet saying, "Do not deliver an unfinished salawaat for me." Ibn Hajr adds, when the Prophet was asked what he meant by an unfinished salawaat, the Prophet replied: "Do not say 'O Allah! send Thy peace and blessings upon Muhammad instead say: Allah! send Thy peace and blessings upon Muhammad and upon Aali Muhammad". Regretfully,

this unfinished salawaat is quite popular in writings of Ahlul-Sunnah and the lectures of Sunni preachers.

In a Hadith, the beloved Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) insists that, "Whoever makes prayer and does not declare salawaat for him and his family, his prayer is incomplete and will not be accepted." Imam Shafi'i attests to this Hadith in a famous poem: Roughly translated Al-Shafi'i says: Oh the love of Ahlul-Bayt is such That it is a must since the Qur'an has it established . Suffice it .that their distinction is such That the prayer is invalid if no salawaat is offered for them

Honoring the Homes of Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.)

It is incumbent upon the Muslim Ummah to honor and respect the homes of Ahlul-Bayt and according to the Ayah mentioned earlier: "The light (of Allah) shines upon dwellings that are made to be honored. In those homes men pray to Allah every morning and every afternoon." These homes are honored and endeared both physically by being well-kept, and spiritually by being kept pure. Special respect is due to such dwellings. Sayooti writes in his interpretation of the Qur'an that when this Ayah was revealed, the disciples of the Prophet asked him what was meant by (homes).

He replied, "The homes of the Prophets." Then Abu Bakr asked him if the residence of Fatima (A.S.) was among such homes. Prophet Muhammad replied, "Yes, and it is one of the best among them." Any disrespect towards the homes of the Prophets and the residence of the Final Messenger of Allah is prohibited and considered a transgression upon the person of the Prophet. Such acts lead to apostasy. If paying homage " Tar'fii " refers only to the physical appearance of these homes then their well-keeping is a duty on Muslims. However, if dignifying means doing so in a spiritual capacity, then respecting these dwellings is incumbent upon all Muslims, too. 1. The creation will is related to the Act of the willer (Allah) Himself; .legislation will is related to the acts of human beings, it concerns the religious obligations