The Holy Prophet's Succession

THE PROPHET'S SUCCESSION IS A SUBJECT PROVIDED DURING HIS LIFETIME

There are tangible evidences prove that the Prophet provided question of his succession since the first stages of the divine mission up to the last of his honorable life. In addition. logic asserts so. It is also perceptible that the subject of succeeding the Prophet was very acceptable and normal. This is contrasted to the Sunni reference books that claim the Prophet's shunning nominating any for his succession and the Muslims' evading providing such a topic for discussion or inquiry before him. Besides, there are various prophetic texts regarding the Prophet's referring to imamate of his progeny.

First evidence is the uninterrupted texts regarding the Prophet's soliciting his advocacy before tribes in the beginning of his divine mission, and asking them to protect him in conveying his Lord's epistle. Some of these tribes admitted so provided that they would have the leadership after him. The Prophet's answer was that he had been no more than an apostle who had not had that matter in hands. It was God's concern to nominate anyone He desires.

The most evident matter in this regard are stories of the Amir Bin Sa'saa and the Kinda. Both occurred in the first stages of the Prophet's solicitation. Story of Amir Bin At-Tufeil occurred in the last days of the Prophet's lifetime.

STORY OF THE AMIR BIN SA'SAA

Ibn Husham's As-Sira, 2/289:

The Prophet (peace be upon him) came to the Amir Bin Sa'saa and offered his mission before them. A man called Baihara Bin Firas adressed at him, "By God I swear, I will overcome the Arabs if I assent to this Quraishi young man. Providing we will swear allegiance to you in this matter and God will give you victory over your opponents, will you hold us your position thereafter?" "This is God's affair," answered the Prophet, "He holds it to whoever He desires." "We will make our necks the target of whatever is thrown at you, and when God gives you triumph it goes to others? Nay, we are not in need for your affair," rejected they.

They used to provide what occurs to them during seasons of pilgrimage before a man who was too old to accompany them. When they were back, they told him that a man from Quraish and the Abdul-Muttelib had come to them and sought their support in his claim of prophecy, but they rejected. The old man stroke his head with both hands and shouted, "O the Amir! Can you catch him and change your situation? I swear by Him Who prevails my soul, no single son of

Ishmael can lie in this affair. It is the real truth. Where were your minds when you rejected?!" The same story is related in At-Tabari's Tarikh; 2/84 and Ibn Kutheir's As-Sira; 2/158. In Al-Ghadir; 7/134, the story is related to Ibn Husham's As-Sira; 2/32, Ar-Rawdul Enif; 1/264, Imaduddin Al-Amiri's Bahjetul Mehafil; 1/128, As-Siretul Halabiya; 2/3, Zeini Dehlan's As-Sira; 1/302 (In the Margin of As-Siretul Halabiya) and Heikel's Hayatu Mohammed.

STORY OF THE KINDA

Ibn Kutheir's As-Sira; 2/159:

Abdullah Bin Al-Ajlah:

My father related the story of the Kinda to his chiefs. He said:

As the Prophet sought the Kinda's support in his advocacy, they stipulated that he should hold them his position of authority after his death. "Authority is God's. He hands it over to whoever He desires," answered the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Therefore, they rejected his solicitation.

STORY OF AMIR BIN AT-TUFEIL, HEAD OF THE GHATAFAN

Ibn Kutheir's As-Sira; 4/114:

Ibn Abbas: Arbed Bin Qeis… and Amir Bin At-Tufeil… came to Al-Madina and sat before the Prophet (peace be upon him). "O Mohammed! What will you give me if I embrace Islam?" asked Amir. "You will be given what the Muslims are given, and forbidden from what the Muslims are forbidden," answered the Prophet (peace be upon him).

"Will you hold me your position after you if I embrace Islam?" asked Amir. "This position is not yours or your people's. I may give you leadership of battles," said the Prophet (peace be upon him).

"Now, I am the commander of armies of Najd. You may give me the leadership of the Bedouins exclusively," Amir said, but the Prophet rejected. "I will fill in your area with horses and fighters," Amir threatened while he went out.

"God will protect against you," commented the Prophet (peace be upon him).

On page 112, Ibn Kutheir records:

When Amir Bin At-Tufeil came to the Prophet, he asked for one of three matters; either governing the Bedouins, being the Prophet's successor or invading the Prophet with a two thousand horse army.

Thereafter, Amir was diseased with plague at a house of a woman. He said, "Will I have a gland like that of a camel and die at a house of a women of (Salul)? Nay." He asked for his horse to ride. He was dead on the back of that animal.

The second evidence is that Ansar declared fealty to the Prophet on three terms:

First, protecting the Prophet against matters they protect themselves against.

Second, protecting his people and progeny as same as they protect their peoples and progenies.

Third, avoiding contending with the meritorious of leadership since Muslims are not to elect for their leadership.

This stands for complying with the man elected by the Lord; the Exalted, for leading after the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family). The third term shows obviously that the principal of the divine election of the imams following the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) was admissibly settled since the first stages of the Prophet's mission.

Ansar did keep the first term. Unfortunately, they breached the other two terms very badly.

The most reliable reference books of hadith mentioned these three terms.

Al-Bukhari's Sahih; 8/122:

Ebada Bin As-Samit: We swore allegiance to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) on listening and obeying him in good and bad conditions, and avoiding contending with the meritorious of leadership, and practicing and uttering the right wherever we are, and scorning any blame for the sake of Allah.

The same is related in Muslim's Sahih; 6/16, and An-Nisa'i's As-Sunan; 7/137, in various narrations. He compiles them under the title 'Swearing on avoiding contending with the meritorious of leadership'.

It is also recorded in Ibn Madga's As-Sunan; 2/957 and Ahmed's; 5/316.

On page 415, Ahmed added:

Sufian: Some people added the following statement to the narration: "Unless you see notorious violation."

Al-Beihaqi records it in his As-Sunan 8/145.

Hadithists relate other narratives with the addition Sufian suggested.

Al-Bukhari, in 8/88, records:

…The Prophet (peace be upon him) solicited us to swear allegiance. We did. We submitted to his stipulations of listening and compliance with him in auspicious and misfortunate situations, preferring him to ourselves, avoiding contending with the meritorious of leadership unless we see a notorious evidential atheism.

The same is recorded in Al-Beihaqi's As-Sunan; 8/145.

In Ahmed's Al-Musnad; 5/321, the following narrative is recorded:

Ebada Bin As-Samit: The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: "You should listen and obey in

auspicious and misfortunate situations, prefer me to yourself and avoid contending with the meritorious of leadership even if you conceive it is your right." These two additions are suspicious since swearing of allegiance occurred before the Prophet's immigration when there was no single exception from obedience. The question of preference of the Qurasishis was provided only after declaration of fealty to Abu Bakr, and Sa'd Bin Ebada's objection, and the following incidents.

This proves that the two additions were established because of the new climate of the relation between Ansar and the Quraishi leadership after the Prophet's decease. Moreover, no single narrative refers to the Prophet's stipulating the term of avoiding contending the meritorious of leadership, on the other Arab tribes.

Majma'uzzawa'id; 6/49:

Ebada Bin As-Samit: As'ad Bin Zurara shouted, "O people! Do you realize what you are giving Mohammed (peace be upon him)? You are swearing you will battle the Arabs and the foreigners and the jinn and mankind."

"We are rivals of his foes, and friends of his adherents," declared Ansar. Then they asked the Prophet to show his stipulations. He spoke, "You are asked to admit there is no god but Allah and I am the messenger of Allah, and perform prayers, and defray the poor rate, and listen and obey, and avoid contending the meritorious of leadership, and protect me as same as you protect your souls and people."

Hussein Bin Ali: In Aqaba, Ansar came to swear fealty to the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him).

Ali was ordered of receiving their swearing. "What should they swear for, God's messenger?" asked Ali. "You should stipulate obedience of the Lord, protecting the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his household and progeny as same as they protect their souls and progenies," instructed the Prophet.

It is noticeable that the Quraishi books of hadith affirm the point of avoiding contending with the meritorious of leadership, so that they would use it as a proof on depriving Ansar of having any share in the Quraishi leadership. On the other hand, they avoid recording the term of protecting the Prophet and his household and progeny as same as they protect their souls, households and progenies, since this contradicts the good of the Quraishi leaders who attacked the house of Fatima and Ali (peace be upon them), and set fire on it for blazing it with its abiders if they insist on denying declaring fealty to the imposed leadership.

In chapter of 'The Prophet's mission of conveyance', narrations of other reference books will be cited.

Third evidence is the famous narrative of 'Dar'. The reference books of Tafsir and Sira,* refer to this narrative during passing through God's saying: (And warn your nearest relations.)

This holy Verse indicates that the Lord; the Exalted, gave His orders of soliciting the Hashemites exclusively in the first stages of the Prophet's solicitation. So, what procedures did the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) take in this stage? (There is an important topic to be minded in this regard. Recorders of Sira attempt to obscure the stage of soliciting the Hashemites exclusively, and invent the stage of pre-Arqam's house and post-Arqam's house, instead, by recording doubtful and authentic, and irrational and reasonable reports.)

How long did that private solicitation last? Was it a number of months, or years, till a divine mandate of expanding the solicitation was revealed?

What is the purport of the divine mandate of dedicating Mohammed's prophecy to the Hashemites before it was extended to include the Quraishis, the Arabs and the entire mankind?

What is the purport of the Quraishi's decision of blockading the Hashemites who, after enforcement of this decision, encompassed the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and tolerated that six-year blockade totally? They, despite their various classes of faithfulness, showed no signal of weakness.

What is the purport of the fact that except for the Hashemites, none could endure the entire misfortunes the Muslims had suffered? In the battle of Uhud, the entire Muslims absconded. But the Hashemites struggled alone.

In the battle of Khandaq, no single Muslim had the courage to face that champion who challenged them, except that Hashemite hero. In the battle of Hunein, they were ten thousand Muslims when they absconded, while the Hashemites stood alone.

These facts and events can suggest a satisfactory explanation for the prophetic texts related in the Shiite reference books of hadith: "I have been sent to my household in private, and people in general."

The holy Verse points out that warning the Hashemites was a matter outlined by the Lord; the Exalted. It refers also to the fact that the Prophet's nominating his successor from among them was a step within that divine plan.

As-Suyouti's Ad-Durrul Manthour; 5/97:

… Ali (God be pleased to him): When the Verse, (And warn your nearest relations,) was revealed, the Prophet summoned me. "O Ali!" said he, "As Allah ordered me of warning my nearest relations, I was depressed since I realized they would show me disgraceful matters whenever I provide this affair before them. Hence, I tried to shun the matter till Gabriel; the angel, came and threatened my Lord's chastisement if I kept on shunning. Now, I ask you to

prepare some food on which you should cook a leg of a sheep, and make us a canteen of milk. Then, you should invite sons of Abdul-Muttelib entirely so that I will speak to them and convey this missive."

I carried out the Prophet's orders completely and invited sons of Abdul-Muttelib who were about forty men. Abu Talib, Hamza, Al-Abbas and Abu Lahab were among that group. As they all were present, the Prophet asked me to serve them the food I had prepared. With his teeth, the Prophet incised that piece of meat and threw its parts on the edges of that trencher, and said, "Have it, by the Name of Allah."

They all ate to excess. By God I swear, each one ate what I had provided to the entire. Then, the Prophet asked me to serve them with that milk. They all drank from that canteen. I swear by God, each one drank a full canteen milk.

As soon as the Prophet tried to speak, Abu Lahab interrupted and said, "See how your man cast witchcraft on you." Therefore, they left before the Prophet spoke to them.

The next day, the Prophet said to me, "You saw, Ali, how that man preceded me in speaking. Today, you should prepare food as same as yesterday, and invite them again."

I did the same and invited them. They ate and drank.

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) spoke, "O sons of Abdul-Muttelib! By God, I do not know an Arab man who can bring to his people a matter better than what I am bearing to you. I am conveying to you the welfare of this world and the Hereafter. God has ordered me of soliciting you to this affair. Who will support me in this affair?"

I was the youngest among them when I shouted, "I will."

People began to laugh at me as they left the place.

As-Suyouti relates the same to another series of narrators. He records:

… Al-Bera Bin Azib: When the Verse, (And warn your nearest relations) was revealed, the Prophet invited sons of Abdul-Muttelib, who were about forty men…etc.

Hence, As-Suyouti interrupts the report at this point, so that he would not mention the rest of the Prophet's words. This style is commonly followed by the pro-Quraishis reporters during referring to narrative of 'Dar', since the narrative shows that the Lord and the Prophet did elected the successor from among the nearest clan, since that day.

Al-Amini's Al-Ghadir; 1/207:

The following is a literal quotation of At-Tabari's narration which distinguishes the right from the wrong.

In his Tarikh; 2/217 (first edition), At-Tabari mentions:

"…Who will support me in this affair, and he will be my brother, successor and inheritor

amongst you?" said the Prophet. The entire group kept silent when I, the youngest among them, said, "I will, Prophet of God! I will be your backer in this affair." Hence, the Prophet took me from the neck and stated, "This is my brother, successor and inheritor. You should listen and comply with him."

The group went out laughing and saying to Abu Talib, "Well, he orders you of listening and complying with your son." Al-Amini's Al-Ghadir; 2/279:

In this very form, Abu Jafar Aliskafi; the Mutazilite Baghdadi theologist, died in 240, records the report in his Naqdhul Othmaniya. He affirms authenticity of the narrative.

It is also recorded in Burhanuddin's Anbau Nujeba Al-Abna; 46-8, and Ibnul-Athir's Al-Kamilu Fit-Tarikh; 2/24, and Abul-Fida Imaduddin Ad-Dimeshqi's Tarikh; 1/116, and Shihabuddin Al-Khafaji's Sharhu Shifa; 3/37 (This compiler interrupts the last sentences of the narrative, and says: It is recorded in Al-Beihaqi's Delailun Nubuwwa and other reference books in authentic documentation), and Aladdin Al-Baghdadi's Tafsirul Khazin; 390, and As-Suyouti's Jam'u Jawami; 6/392. On page 397, he also relates the narration to the six famous hadithists; Ibn Isaaq, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatem, Ibn Merdawayih, Abu Na'eem and Al-Beihaqi. Ibn Abil Hadid's Sharhu Nahjil Belagha; 3/254, records the same report.

Compiler of Al-Ghadir, then, protests against those who distort this narrative for the sake of seeking the Quraishis' satisfaction. At-Tabari, who records the narrative in his Tafsir, relates it in his Tarikh, but he confuses the last words of the Prophet regarding Ali (peace be upon him).

At-Tabari records:

… he then said. "This is my brother…" and so on.

Ibn Kutheir imitates At-Tabari. He mentions the narrative in the same previous form, in his Al-Bidaya Wen-Nihaya; 3/40, and Tafsir; 3/351.

From the margin of Biharul Anwar; 32/272, the following is quoted:

In addition to his bond of fraternity with the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family), which was concluded according to a divine mandate in the beginning of approach of Islam when God revealed, (And warn your nearest relations.)

This bond of fraternity was concluded according to a divine mandate, and was fallen in a form of a covenant. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) would not betake a brother, vizier, associate and successor other than Ali. Likewise, Ali would not show any blemish in supporting, backing and advising for the Prophet and the religion. It is as same as Aaron's support to Moses (peace be upon him), in the way mentioned in the Holy Quran. When the Prophet held bonds of fraternity between each couple of his companions, he took in his consideration the relationship linking each two. He fraternized Omar and Abu Bakr, Othman

and Abdurrahman Bin Awf, Az-Zubeir and Abdullah Bin Masud, Ubeida Bin Al-Harith and Bilal, Musab Bin Omeir and Sa'd Bin Abi Waqas, Abu Ubeida Bin Al-Jarrah and Salim; the bond of Abu Hutheifa, Hamza Bin Abdul-Muttelib and Zeid Bin Haritha Al-Kalbi.

At these moments, he says to Ali, "I swear by Him Who sends me with the truth, I delayed you so that you will be dedicated to me. For me, your standing is as same as Aaron's to Moses. Yet, no prophet comes after me. You are my brother and inheritor. You shall be with me in my palace in the Paradise. If any disputes you, say: I am the servant of Allah, and the brother of His Apostle.

Except fabricators and liars, none should claim of so after you."

Likewise, when the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) provided his advocacy before the tribes, none admitted him except the Amir Bin Sa'saa. Their spokesman; Beihara, stated, "By God I swear, I will overcome the Arabs if I assent to this Quraishi young man. Providing we will swear allegiance to you in this matter and God will give you victory over your opponents, will you hold us your position thereafter?"

"This is God's affair. He holds it to whomever He desires," answered the Prophet.

"We will make our necks the target of whatever is thrown at you, and when God gives you triumph it goes to others? Nay, we are not in need for your affair," they answered.

As a result, supposing the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) had not concluded bond of fraternity and inheritance with Ali (peace be upon him) according to a divine mandate, he would not have wasted this opportunity and refuted them in such despairing words, while he was in need for support of such tribes.

An-Numan Al-Maghribi's De'amul Islam; 1/15:

We have already recorded the following narrative of Ali (peace be upon him):

When God revealed, (And warn your nearest relations), the Prophet invited sons of Abdul-Muttelib to a leg of a sheep and a cup of milk. They were more than forty men. Among them, there were at least ten men who used to have a whole slaughtered animal and drink a large pot of drinks. They ate and drank to excess.

After that, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) addressed at them, "O sons of Abdul-Muttelib! Comply with me and you shall be kings and rulers of the lands. The Lord selected a successor, vizier, inheritor, brother and supporter for each prophet He sent. Which one of you should be my successor, vizier, inheritor, brother and supporter?"

They all kept peace. He passed by them individually, but they all rejected. I was the youngest among them when he provided the affair before me. "It is I, God's messenger!" I said. "Yes, it is you, Ali!" answered the Prophet. When they left, Abu Lahab addressed at them, "He served you

with a single leg of a sheep and a cup of milk, and you had to excess. This is an enough proof on his sorcery."

They also laughed at Abu Talib when they addressed at him, "See how he preferred your son to you."

Inevitably, the news of the Prophet's invitation was publicized among the Quraishis and the Arab. They told each other that the new prophet gathered his relations and warned them as he solicited them to the new religion. He also asked for a supporter and successor, but none accepted so except his young cousin; therefore, he betook him as a supporter and successor.

The previous three evidences undiscussibly assert that the Prophet's succession was a matter widely common for people since the earlier stages of his divine mission up to the last moments of his life. Furthermore, all people recognized that Mohammed's prophecy was a practical contrivance of formation of a state governed by him (peace be upon him and his family), and was in need for a successor. Hence, the entire tribes, from a material viewpoint, conceived his advocacy as a desirable plan that they should take a part in by gaining his promise of handing his leadership over after him. These were Yemeni, Adnani and Najdi tribes.

This leads to the supposition that within the foremost Muslims there were hypocrites attracted by that contrivance and prophetic movement which seemed to be achieving victory in the future. Each of them might look forward to obtaining a leading position in that state.

This is the only way by which we can find a suitable interpretation to God's saying, (And We have not made the wardens of the Fire other than angels, and We have not made their number but as a trial for those who disbelieve, that those who have been given the Book may be certain and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have been the Book and the believers may not doubt, and that those in whose hearts is a disease and the unbelievers may say: What does Allah mean by this parable? Thus does Allah makes err whom He pleases, and He guides whom He pleases, and none knows the hosts of your Lord but He Himself; and this is naught but a reminder to the mortals), which was revealed in Mecca.

From the above, it is irrational for the sane to believe chiefs of Quraish who claim the Muslims' avoiding providing the question of the Prophet's succession during his lifetime, even in a form of a lawful question and their obligation towards such an issue.

Correspondingly, it is unacceptable to conclude that Muslims, who asked the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) frequently about their future and narrated several reports in this regard, did not ask him about their next leader and leadership.

Source:

AYATUL GHADIR(Verses of Ghadir)

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