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## Chapter 3: Concerning the ahl al-bayt (A.S)

### The Third Question: Who are the ahl al-bayt?

Allah, the most Glorified and High says: ***"Allah wishes to remove all impurity from you, O members of the household, and to purify you completely"*** (33:33).

The *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* maintains that this verse was revealed for the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.). They derive their proof from the context of the preceding and following verses. According to their claims, Allah therefore removed impurity from the wives of the Prophet and purified them completely.

Among them are those who add to the [list of the] wives of the Prophet, 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. But the truth, according to what has been transmitted, as well as according to reasoning, logic and history, refutes this explanation. [This is] because the *ahl al-sunna* narrate in their *Sahih*s that the verse was revealed regarding five people namely: Muhammad, 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) identified them and his noble self as being referred to by the noble verse when he gathered 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn with him under the cloak. He said: "O Allah! These are my household, so cleanse them of all impurity and purify them completely."

This narration has been reported by a large majority of Sunni scholars. I've listed [some of] them:

1. Muslim in his *Sahih*, in "The Chapter on the Merits of the Prophet's household": Vol. 2, p. 368.
2. Al- Tirmidhi in his *Sahih*; Vol. 5, p. 30.
3. *Al-Musnad*, Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal; Vol. 1, p. 330.
4. *Al-Mustadrak*, al- Hakim; Vol. 3, p. 123.
5. *Al-Khas'ais*, Imam al-Nasa'i; p. 49
6. *Talkhis*, al-Dhahabi; Vol. 2, p. 150.
7. *Mu'jam*, al-Tabrani; Vol. 1, p. 65.
8. *Shawahid al-Tanzil*, Hakim al-Haskani; Vol. 2, p. 11.
9. Al-Bukhari in his Greater History; Vol. 1, p. 69.

10. *Al-Isaba*, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani; Vol. 2, p. 502.
11. *Tadhkira al-Khawas*, Ibn al-Jawzi; p. 233.
12. *Tafsir* of al-Fakhr al-Razi; Vol. 2, p. 700.
13. *The Fountains of Love*, al-Qanduzi al-Hanafi; p. 107.
14. *Manaqib* of al-Khawarizmi, p. 23.
15. *Al-Sira* of al-Halabi, Vol. 13, p. 212.
16. *Al-Sira* of al-Dihlaniya; Vol. 3, p. 329.
17. *Asad al-Ghaba*, Ibn al-Athir; Vol. 2, p. 12.
18. *Tafsir* of al-Tabari; Vol. 22, p. 6.
19. *Al-Dur al-Manthur*, al-Suyuti; Vol. 5, p. 198.
20. *Ta'rikh* of Ibn Asakir; Vol. 1, p. 185.
21. *Tafsir al-Kashshaf*, al-Zamakhshari; Vol. 1, p. 193
22. *Ahkam al-Qur'an*, Ibn al-Arabi; Vol. 2, p. 166.
23. *Tafsir* al-Qurtubi, Vol. 14, p. 182.
24. *Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa* of Ibn Hajar, p. 85.
25. *Al-Isti'ab*, Ibn Abd al-Barr; Vol. 3, p. 37.
26. *Al-'Aqd al-Farid*, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih; Vol. 4, p. 311
27. *Muntakhab Kanz al-'Ummal*; Vol. 5, p. 96.
28. *Masabih al-Sunna*, al-Baghawi, Vol. 2, p. 278.
29. *Asbab al-Nuzul*, al-Wahidi; p. 203.
30. *Tafsir* of Ibn Kathir; Vol. 3, p. 483.

Other Sunni scholars [who have reported the *hadith*] are numerous, we have not mentioned them [all], being content with these as [the list] was compiled in haste.

If all these scholars admit that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) had clarified the purport of the verse, of what value are the words of the other companions or the successors of the companions, or commentators who wish to construe its meaning contrary to what Allah and His Prophet desire, seeking instead, to please Mu'awiya and desiring [to attain] what he has?

Similarly, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) also identified them on other occasions, specifying that they were the *ahl al-bayt*, not others. This occurred when the verse of Allah, the Glorified and the Highest, was revealed stating: **"Say: 'Come and let us call our children and your children, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, and let us take pray, invoking Allah's curse on those who lie'"** (3:61).

Thereupon, he called 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn and said: "These are our children, ourselves, and our women: So now bring yourselves, your children, and your women". According to Muslim's narrative, he said: "O Allah, these are my household."

The *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* scholars, whom I referred to in the preceding sources, also agree

unanimously that the verse was revealed concerning the five [figures] mentioned above, may Allah's blessings be upon them all.

Moreover, the wives of the Prophet all knew the intent of the noble verse, and, consequently, not one of them claimed to be from the *ahl al-bayt*. At the head of these [wives] were Umm Salama and 'A'isha. Every one of them narrated that the verse was specifically for the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Tabari, al-Suyuti, al-Dhahabi, Ibn al-Athir and others, have all reported their (the wives') acceptance of this.

I would add to this the fact that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) removed any confusion and resolved this problem, for he knew that the Muslims might read the Qur'an and construe the [term] *ahl al-bayt* in the context of the preceding and following verses, which [actually] warned the wives of the Prophet.

He immediately hastened to teach the *umma* the meaning of the removal of all impurities and complete purification by continuing, for a period of six months, (after the revelation of the verse) to pass by the door of 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn before starting the prayer and reciting: "Allah wishes to remove all abomination from you, *ahl al-bayt* and to completely purify you, so come to the prayer, may Allah have mercy on you."

This immediate action performed by the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) has been reported by:

*Al-Sahih*, al-Tirmidhi, vol. 5, p. 31

*Al-Mustadrak*, al-Hakim, vol. 3, p. 158

*Al-Talkhis*, al-Dhahabi

*Al-Musnad*, Ahmad b. Hanbal, vol. 3, p. 259

*Asad al-Ghaba*, Ibn al-Athir, vol. 5, p. 521

*Shawahid al-Tanzil*, al-Haskani, vol. 2, p. 11

*Al-Dur al-Manthur*, al-Suyuti, vol. 5, p. 199

*Tafsir*, al-Tabari, vol. 22, p. 6

*Ansab al-Ashraf*, al-Baladhuri, vol. 2, p. 104

*Tafsir*, Ibn al-Kathir, vol. 3, p. 483

*Majma' al-Zawa'id*, al-Haythami, vol. 9, p. 168

When we add to the above list the Imams of the *ahl al-bayt* and the Shi'a scholars, who do not doubt that the noble verse was restricted to Muhammad, 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, there can remain absolutely no regard for those who disagree with them from the enemies of the *ahl al-bayt*, as well followers of Mu'awiya and the Banu Umayyads who wish to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths. Allah has perfected His light, even though the disbelievers hate that.

Those who interpret the verse differently to the explanation of the Prophet have shown that, in the past, they were merely the flatterers of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid rulers, and that today they, even though disguised in the garb of jurists and scholars, are amongst those who hate 'Ali.

Furthermore, reasoning shows that the verse (i.e. cleansing of abomination) could not include the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.).

1. Let us, by way of example, take the case of the mother of the believers, 'A'isha, who alleged that she was the most beloved wife of the Prophet (P) and the closest one to him, to the extent that the rest of the wives envied her and sent [a delegation] to the Prophet (P) imploring him to show justice regarding the daughter of Abu Quhafa, as previously discussed.

The verse then seems discordant. None of her aides or those who loved her, neither from the earlier generations nor the later ones, can dare to claim that 'A'isha was under the cloak on the day the verse was revealed. How great Muhammad (S.A.W.) was in his sayings and actions and how truly sagacious he was when he gathered the members of his *ahl al-bayt* with him under the cloak, and even when the mother of the believers, Umm Salama, the wife of the Prophet (P), sought to enter with them under the cloak and asked the Prophet of Allah's (S.A.W.) permission, he prevented her and said: "You are on the right path."

2. The general and specific purport of the verse indicates infallibility. For the removal of abomination covers all sins, [acts of] disobedience, major and minor vices. This is especially so if we add the purification from the Lord of Power and Glory. If Muslims purify themselves with water and dust physically, a purification which does not exceed the outer body, then Allah purified the *ahl al-bayt* with a spiritual purity wherein the intellect, hearts, and their minds were cleansed, leaving no room for the insinuations of neither the devil nor any act of disobedience. Their hearts became absolutely clean, pure, sincere, devoted solely to their creator and sustainer in every activity and inactivity.

3. In all cases, every one of these purified souls was an example to all humanity, in [the fields of] asceticism, piety, sincerity, knowledge, forbearance, bravery, manliness, chastity, free from blemishes, shunning the world, seeking nearness to Him, the Glorified and most High. History has not recorded any wrongdoing or sin from any one of them during their entire lives.

This being the case, let us return to the first example, the wife of the Prophet (P), 'A'isha, who attained a lofty and elevated position and [achieved] great popularity which none of the other wives of the Prophet (P) has been accorded. Even if we were to combine all their merits, they would not be able to reach a tenth of the standing of 'A'isha, the daughter of Abu Bakr.

This is what the *ahl al-sunna*, and those who claim that half the religion can be learnt from her alone, say regarding her.

If we devote ourselves to the truth without any prejudice or bias, is it reasonable to think that she was purified from sins and disobedience? Or that Allah, Glory be to Him, withdrew His protection from her, after the death of her husband, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.)? Let us examine the reality together.

## 'A'isha during the life of the Prophet (S.A.W.)

If we examine her life with her husband, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), we will find lots of sins and [acts of] disobedience, for she used to frequently conspire with Hafsa against the Apostle until they compelled him to declare as unlawful for himself what Allah had permitted for him, as reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim. They also argued with him, as has been established in all the *Sahihs* and books of *tafsir*, and even Allah has mentioned the two incidents in His glorious Qur'an.

Envy so controlled her heart and her mind that she conducted herself in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) without respect or manners. On one occasion, she said to the Prophet (P), when he mentioned Khadija in her presence:

"How can Khadija be compared with me! She was a red cheeked old woman and Allah has given you [someone] better than her." The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) became very angry at this until his hair stood. And, on another occasion, one of the mothers of the believers sent to the Prophet a dish (he was in her house) that he really loved. She destroyed the dish, together with the food in it. On another occasion, she said to the Prophet (P): "You are the one who claims to be Allah's Prophet." Another time, she became angry with him and said: "Be just!"

Her father, who was present, struck her so hard that blood flowed. Her envy reached a point whereby she lied to Asma' bint al-Nu'man, when she had come as a bride to the Prophet (S.A.W.). She said to her: "The Prophet (S.A.W.) loves a woman, who, when he approaches her, says to him: "I seek refuge in Allah from you."

Her underlying aim was to have the Prophet (S.A.W.) divorce this innocent, naive woman, and who the Prophet (S.A.W.) did divorce due to these words. Her evil conduct in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) reached a point that while he was praying, she would spread her feet towards his direction of prostration. When he prostrated and pinched them, she retracted them. When he stood up for the rest of the prayer, she would spread her feet out again.

On one occasion, she plotted with Hafsa against the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), causing him to isolate himself from his wives for a period of one complete month, and to sleep on a rough straw mat. When the words of Allah: **"Take back those of them that you please, and leave aside those whom you please."** were revealed, she said to the Prophet unabashedly: "I only see Allah as [one] who hurries to [satisfy] your desires." If 'A'isha got angry – which she did quite often – she would avoid [uttering] the name of the Prophet (S.A.W.). She would not mention the name of Muhammad, but would say: "By the Lord of Abraham."

'A'isha often used to offend the Prophet (S.A.W.) and caused him distress, but the Prophet (P) was compassionate and kind, his character lofty, his patience deep, therefore he frequently said to her: "Your Satan has confused you, O 'A'isha." Quite often, he used to be sorry because of Allah's threat to her and

Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar. On many occasions the Qur'an came down regarding her! Allah said to her and to Hafsa: "You two turn in repentance to Allah, your hearts are so inclined," i.e., she had departed and deviated from the truth.

His words: ***"If you support each other against him, Allah is his protector, as well as Gabriel and the righteous believers, after this, the angels too are his supporters"*** is a clear threat from the Lord of Power to her and to Hafsa, who used to frequently help her and act according to her commands. Allah also said to both of them: ***"Perhaps if he divorces you, his Lord will give him wives who are better than you, who submit and believe."***

This verse was revealed concerning 'A'isha and Hafsa as testified by 'Umar b. al-Khattab and reported by al-Bukhari. The verse, in itself, indicates that there were believing women among the Muslims who were better than 'A'isha.

Once, when the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) wanted to propose to Sharraf, the sister of Dihya al-Kalbi, he asked 'A'isha to go and look at her. When she returned, her heart was filled with envy, and the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) asked her: "What have you seen O 'A'isha?" She responded: "I did not see anyone worthy." The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said to her: "You have certainly seen someone worthy. You have seen her and your saliva soured in your mouth." She said: "O Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), no secret is unknown to you. Who is able to hide anything from you?"

All of the plots which 'A'isha instigated against the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) were most frequently with the complicity of Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar. The strange thing is that we find there was mutual understanding and complete harmony between the two women, 'A'isha and Hafsa, like the harmony and mutual understanding between their two fathers, Abu Bakr and 'Umar. The difference was that, with the women, 'A'isha was always the instigator and stronger one and would undertake things and would tug Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar, behind her in everything.

Whereas her father, Abu Bakr, was weaker than 'Umar, the instigator and stronger party and would undertake things. We have observed from the previous discussion that even in [the matter of] the Caliphate, Ibn al-Khattab was the actual ruler. Some historians have reported that when 'A'isha decided to leave for Basra to rise against Imam 'Ali in what has become known as the "battle of the Camel", she sent a message to the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.), the mothers of the believers, asking them to go with her.

None of them responded except Hafsa bint 'Umar, who prepared herself and decided to leave with her. Her brother, 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, however, stopped and rebuked her, and she cancelled her trip. Allah, the most Glorious had warned 'A'isha and Hafsa jointly in His words: ***"If you two support each other against him, Allah is his protector, as well as Gabriel and the righteous believers, and after that the angels too are his supporters."***

Allah also said: ***"You two turn in repentance to Allah, if your hearts are indeed so inclined."*** Allah

provided for both of them a significant parable in *Sura al-Tahrim* (66), to teach both of them and the rest of the Muslims who believe that the mother of the believers will enter heaven without any reckoning or punishment, simply because she is the wife of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). Most Certainly not!

For Allah has informed His servants, male and female, that mere spousal relationship will neither harm nor benefit [a person], even if the husband is the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). What benefits or harms [a person], in the eyes of Allah, are an individual's deeds. Allah said: ***"Allah has set forth an example to the disbelievers, the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were both married to two servants from among our righteous servants. They were deceitful to their husbands. And they profited nothing before Allah due to that. Instead they were told: 'Enter the Fire with those who enter'"*** (66:10).

***Allah cited an example for the believers, the wife of Pharaoh when she said: "O my Lord, build for me a house in paradise, and save me from Pharaoh and his deeds; and save me from the people who do wrong". And Mary, the daughter of Imran who guarded her chastity and We breathed Our spirit into her. She testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and of His scriptures and she was one of the devout [servants]"*** (66:11–12).

By this it becomes clear to all that spousal relationship and companionship, even though they both have a lot of merits, do not, in themselves, prevent the punishment of Allah unless they are accompanied by righteous deeds. If they are not, punishment is, in fact, increased. Allah's justice dictates that he does not punish the distant one who does not hear the revelation like [he punishes] the close one in whose house the Qur'an was revealed. A man who knows the truth and yet opposes it is like an ignorant person who does not know the truth.

Now, O reader, we will cite a few narrations in some detail so that you may know the personality of this woman who played the greatest role in distancing 'Ali from the Caliphate, and summoned all strength and resources to rise up in arms against him.

It should be further known that the verse of the removal of filth and purification is as remote from her as the sky is from the earth, and that most of the *ahl al-sunna* are the victims of lies and forgery for they follow the Umayyads without realizing it.

## **'A'isha, Mother of the Believers, testifies against herself**

Let us listen to 'A'isha speak about herself and how, due to jealousy, she lost her sense of probity and conducted herself in the presence of the Prophet (S.A.W.) without manners. She said: "Safiyya, the wife of the Prophet (S.A.W.), sent a dish she had made for him when he was with me. When I saw the maidservant, I trembled with rage and fury, and I took the bowl and hurled it away."

She further said: "The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) then looked at me; I saw the anger in his face and I

said: 'I seek refuge from Allah's Apostle cursing me today.'" 'A'isha said: "He said: 'Undo it'. I said: 'What is its expiation, O Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.)?' He said: 'The food like her food, and a bowl like her bowl.'"

And on another occasion, speaking of herself, she said: "I said to the Prophet (S.A.W.) 'Enough for you about Safiyya is such and such.' The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said to me: 'You have uttered words which, if they were mixed with the waters of the sea, would color it.'"

Glory be to Allah! How far was the mother of the believers from the ethics and basic rights which Islam has enjoined concerning forbidding of backbiting and slander? No doubt her speech: "Enough for you about Safiyya is such and such" and the response of the Prophet of Allah: (S.A.W.) "You have uttered words which, if they were mixed with the waters of the sea, would color it" shows what 'A'isha said regarding Safiyya was a grave thing and of immense concern.

I believe that the narrators of the *hadith* found it repulsive, but respected her, and therefore changed the words to "so and so" as is their normal practice in such issues.

And here is 'A'isha, the mother of the believers, narrating, once again, of her envy of the [other] mothers of the believers. She said: "I have never been as jealous of any woman as I have been of Marya. That was because she had beautiful ringlets and the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was captivated by her.

When he first brought her, she used to stay in the house of Haritha b. al-Nu'man. We frightened her and I became concerned. The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) sent her to a higher place and he would visit her there. That was very hard upon us, and then Allah blessed him with a boy through her and we shunned him."

'A'isha's jealousy went beyond the person of Marya, her co-wife and was directed even against Ibrahim, the innocent, newly born suckling baby. She said: "When Ibrahim was born, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) brought him to me and said: 'Look how much he resembles me'. I said: 'I do not see any resemblance.' The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: 'Don't you see how robust and fair he is?'" 'A'isha said: "I said: 'Whoever is fed with the milk of sheep becomes fair and robust.'"

When she was overcome by suspicion and devilish insinuation, her jealousy crossed all boundaries and was beyond the expression of words, leading her to suspect the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). Quite often, she used to pretend to be asleep when the Prophet stayed the night at her house, but, in fact, she would closely observe her husband, spying upon him in the darkness, following behind where he went. Here is a report, in her own words, which was narrated by Muslim in his *Sahih*, and Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* and other [scholars].

She said: "When it was the night which the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) spent with me, he came in and put away his upper garment, took off his shoes and put them near his feet, then spread out his lower garment over the bed and lay down. He did not stay long until he assumed that I had fallen asleep, whereupon he took his upper garment quietly and slowly, put on his shoes, opened the door, went out

and closed it behind him quietly.

I put the upper garment over my head, covered myself, put on my shawl and veil and I followed his tracks until he came to the Baqi cemetery. He stood there for quite a long time, then raised his hands three times, and then turned back. I also turned back. He quickened his pace and I also quickened my pace. He moved faster and I also moved faster and he reached home and I also arrived there. I preceded him and went into the house.

No sooner had he entered the house he said: 'What is the matter O 'A'isha, I see that you are dressed up?' She said: 'I said: 'Nothing is the matter.' He said: 'Either you will tell me or the Gracious and Omniscient Lord will inform me.'" 'A'isha said: 'I said: 'O Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.), my mother and my father be sacrificed for you, and I informed him.' He said: 'You were the black figure which I saw in front of me?' I said: 'Yes'. So he pressed me on my chest and it hurt me. He then said: 'Did you think that Allah and His Messenger will be unjust to you?'"

On another occasion, she said: "I lost track of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), and I suspected that he had gone to another of his wives. I went looking for him and I found him in prostration, saying: 'O My Lord! Forgive me.'" On another occasion, she said: "One night, when he was with me, the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) went out."

She said: "I became jealous. When he came and saw what I had done he said: 'What is the matter, O 'A'isha? Are you jealous?' I replied: 'And why should not those like me be jealous of those like you?' The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) then said: 'Has your devil taken possession of you?'"

This last narration proves clearly that when she was jealous, she would exceed her bounds and would do strange things like break dishes or tear clothes. Due to that, she says in this report "When he came and saw what I had done, he said: 'Has your devil taken possession of you?'"

No doubt 'A'isha was quite often overcome or confused by her devil, for he found a way to her heart through jealousy. It has been narrated that the Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "Jealousy for a man is faith and for a woman disbelief", meaning that a man may get jealous concerning his wife, for it is not, according to law, allowed for him to share her with anyone else.

The woman, however, does not have the right to be jealous of her husband, because Allah, Glory be to Him, has allowed him to marry more than one wife. An upright and believing woman who submits to the rulings of Allah, Glory be to Him, accepts her co-wife whole heartedly, especially if her husband is just, upright and fears Allah. [That being the case] how about the leader of humanity, the symbol of perfection, justice and the most noble character?

Furthermore, we find a clear contradiction in the (alleged) special love of the Prophet (S.A.W.) for 'A'isha, and what the *ahl al-sunna wal-Jama'a* say about her being the most beloved and affectionate wife. They [even] report that some of his wives gave up their turn [of visitation] for her when they came to

know that the Prophet (S.A.W.) loved her and could not wait [for her turn].

This being the case, can we find any justification or explanation for 'A'isha's excessive jealousy? One would have assumed that the opposite would have been the case, i.e., that the rest of the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.) would have been jealous of 'A'isha due to his intense love for and inclination towards her, according to what they report and claim. If she was pampered by the Prophet of Allah (P), what was the need for the jealousy?

History reports only her traditions, while the biographical works are replete with her praises, [they report] that she was the beloved of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), and that he could not be separated from her.

I believe that all these [reports] are from the Umayyads who loved 'A'isha and gave her the highest preference when she served their interests. She narrated for them what they loved [to hear], and she fought against their enemy, 'Ali b. Abi Talib.

I also believe that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) could not love her when she did [things] which we have reported. How could the Prophet (S.A.W.) love someone who would lie, backbite, slander and would doubt Allah and his Prophet, suspecting them of injustice? How could the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) love someone who spied upon him, going out of her house without his permission to find out where he had gone?

How could the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) love someone who, in his presence, insulted his wives even though they were dead? How could the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) love someone who hated his son Ibrahim, and accused his mother Marya of lying? How could the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) love someone who once came between him and his wives by lying, driven by malice, causing him to divorce her?

How could the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) love someone who hated his daughter, al-Zahra, and who hated his brother and cousin, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, to the extent where she could not mention his name and think any good of him? All this and more [occurred] during the life of the Prophet (S.A.W.), and after his death, [even] more occurred, discuss it without any restraint.

All these deeds are detested by Allah and His Prophet (P), and they do not love those who perpetrate them, for [with] Allah is the truth, and His Messenger (S.A.W.) is the personification of truth, so it is not possible for him to love one who is against the truth.

We will learn during the forthcoming discussions that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) did not love her; indeed, he warned the nation against her seditions.

I once asked some of our teachers the reason for the Prophet's (S.A.W.) excessive love for 'A'isha, specifically to the exclusion of the other wives. They came up with numerous answers, all of them false: One of them said: "Because she was beautiful and young, and she was the only virgin he had, for no man had [taken] her before him". Another said: "Because she was the daughter of Abu Bakr, the truthful

one, his companion in the cave.”

A third said: "Because she memorized half the religion from the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) and was a learned jurist (*faqih*)." A fourth said: "Because Gabriel came to him in her form, and he never used to visit the Prophet (S.A.W.) unless he was in her house.”

As you can see, O reader, every one of these claims has no basis and is not acceptable to either the intellect or to reality. We will refute these answers with [indubitable] proofs. If the Prophet loved her because she was beautiful and the only virgin that he had, what prevented him from marrying the beautiful virgins who excelled her in charm and beauty, and were the role models among the Arab tribes, and who were at his beck and call? The historians, on the other hand, also mention 'A'isha's jealousy towards Zaynab bint Jahsh, Safiyya bint Huyayy and Marya the Copt, because they were more beautiful than her.

Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Kathir report that the Prophet (S.A.W.) married Malika bint Ka'b who was known for her outstanding beauty. 'A'isha went to see her and said to her: "Aren't you ashamed to marry your father's killer?" She then sought refuge from the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), whereupon he divorced her. Her people came to him and said: "O Prophet of Allah, she is young and lacking in perception. She was deceived, so take her back." The Prophet (P) refused to do so. Her father was killed on the day of the conquest of Mecca; his killer was Khalid b al-Walid al-Khandama.

This narration clearly proves that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was not concerned with youth and beauty in his marriages, otherwise, he would not have divorced Malika bint Ka'b when she was young and of outstanding beauty. This narration, and others like it, also shows us the methods which 'A'isha adopted in deceiving the innocent believing women, and prohibited them from marrying the Prophet of Allah (P).

We have already discussed [how] she caused the divorce of Asma' bint Nu'man, due to her envy of the latter's beauty. She said to her: "The Prophet (S.A.W.) loves a woman to say to him when he approaches her: 'I seek refuge in Allah from you.'"

Now we have [the case of] Malika, with ('A'isha) instigating in her feelings for her father's death, and that the killer was the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.), saying to her: "Aren't you ashamed to marry your father's killer?" What could this poor woman do but seek refuge against the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.)? Perhaps she said more than that, at a time when people still had traits of *jahiliyya* in them, which instigated [people] to retaliation and reproached whoever did not exact revenge against his father's killer.

It is now left for us to ask and it only right that we ask, why did the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) divorce these two innocent women, who both fell victim to the plotting and deception of 'A'isha?

Before anything else, we must realize that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was infallible, he would not oppress anyone nor do anything which was not right. In divorcing the two women therefore, there must have been some wisdom known to Allah and His Prophet (S.A.W.). Similarly, in spite of her deeds, there

must have been [some] wisdom in him not divorcing 'A'isha. We shall hopefully touch upon this in the forthcoming discussions.

As far as the first woman is concerned, i.e., Asma' bint al-Nu'man; her [naive] disposition became apparent when 'A'isha's tricks captured her, and the first words that she greeted the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) with, when he stretched out his hand to her were: "I seek refuge in Allah from you."

Despite her excessive beauty, the Prophet (S.A.W.) did not let her remain due to her simple mindedness. Along with some other narrators, Ibn Sa'd, in his *Tabaqat*, vol. 8, p. 145, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas, said: "The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) married Asma' bint al-Nu'man, and she was among the most beautiful and complete [women] of her time." Perhaps the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) wanted to teach us that the importance of intelligence outweighs that of physical beauty, for how many a pretty woman has been led by her foolishness towards corruption?

As for the second woman, i.e., Malika bint Ka'b, who 'A'isha incited by telling her that her husband was her father's killer, the Prophet (P) did not want this poor girl (who was young and lacked perception as her people testified) to live in fear and terror which would cause great problems for her, especially since 'A'isha would never let her live in peace with the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). No doubt there are other reasons known to the Prophet which are not known to us.

The important thing to realize is that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) did not crave for beauty or physical and sexual desires, as some ignorant persons and Orientalists assume. They claim that Muhammad was preoccupied with beautiful women. We have observed how the Prophet (S.A.W.) divorced these two women despite their tender age and beauty. They were the most beautiful and complete women of their times, as documented in the historical and *hadith* books.

The claim of those who say that the Prophet (S.A.W.) loved 'A'isha for her youth and beauty is baseless and unacceptable. As for those who allege that he loved her because she was the daughter of Abu Bakr, this is also untrue.

We can say that he married her for Abu Bakr's sake, because the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) married into several tribes for political reasons so as to placate their hearts and foster affection and feelings of mercy between those tribes, replacing rancor and hatred.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) married Umm Habiba, the sister of Mu'awiya and the daughter of Abu Sufyan, the foremost enemy of the Prophet (S.A.W.). That was because he harbored no ill feelings, and [because] he was a mercy to all the worlds. His compassion and love for the Arab tribes led him to marrying Jews, Christians and Copts so that the people of the scriptures could get closer to each other.

This is especially so if we realize, from our readings of the biographical works, that it was Abu Bakr who asked the Prophet (S.A.W.) to marry his daughter 'A'isha, just as 'Umar had asked him to marry Hafsa. The Prophet (S.A.W.) accepted these [proposals] because his heart encompassed all mankind.

Allah, the Exalted, says: **"And if you were harsh and severe of heart, they would have deserted you"** (3: 159).

If we return to the narration reported by 'A'isha, she said that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) did not wait for long before he thought she was asleep, then he took his upper garment, slowly opened the door, went out and then closed it, we can perceive the lie of the claim that he could not do without her.

This deduction is not a spontaneous assumption, which I have conjectured. Most certainly not, for they are supported by proofs from the six *Sahih* works. Muslim, like other Sunni *Sahih* works, has reported in his *Sahih* that 'Umar b. al-Khattab said: "When the Prophet (S.A.W.) separated himself from his wives, I entered the mosque and the people were scratching the ground with stones and saying: 'The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) has divorced his wives.'"

This was before they had been ordered to wear the *hijab*. 'Umar said: "I said: 'I will certainly know that today.' So I went to 'A'isha and said: 'O daughter of Abu Bakr! Have you reached the point of offending the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.)?' She replied: 'My [affair] has got nothing to do with you, O son of Khattab! Look at your own defects.'"

He continued: "So I called upon Hafsa bint 'Umar and said to her: 'O Hafsa! Have you reached the point of offending the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.)? By Allah! You know that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) does not love you, had it not been for me, he would have divorced you.' Whereupon she wept bitterly..."

This narration clearly illustrates for us, without doubt, that the Prophet's (S.A.W.) marriage to Hafsa was not due to love, but rather, for the political needs that circumstances dictated.

What makes us certain of our deduction is the fact that 'Umar b. al-Khattab swore by Allah that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) did not love Hafsa. 'Umar further increases our certitude by saying that his daughter also knew this painful truth, for he said to her: "By Allah! You know that the Prophet of Allah does not love you."

Therefore, not even the slightest of doubt is left in our minds about the marriage to her being for political considerations when he said to her: "Had it not been for me, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) would have divorced you."

This narration also gives us some idea about the Prophet's (S.A.W.) marriage to 'A'isha bint Abu Bakr, and that, despite all her troubles, he exercised patience and perseverance for the sake of Abu Bakr. Otherwise, Hafsa was more worthy of the love and affection of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), for she did not do a tenth of the things that 'A'isha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, did to offend the Prophet (S.A.W.).

If we study the actual events [which occurred], ignoring the spurious narrations which the Umayyads composed on the merits of 'A'isha, we will observe that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was, on many occasions, troubled and angered by her. Here we relate a narration which al-Bukhari and several others

of the *ahl al-sunna hadith* transmitters have reported. It speaks of the extent of aversion which 'A'isha felt towards her husband, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.).

Al-Bukhari reports in volume 7 of his *Sahih*, in "The Chapter on the Expression of a Sick Person: 'I am in pain' or 'my head hurts'". He said: "I heard al-Qasim b. Muhammad say: 'A'isha said: 'My head hurts.' The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: 'If that were to happen when I am still alive, I would seek Allah's forgiveness for you and would pray for you'. 'A'isha said: 'A likely story! By Allah, I think you would love to see me die. And that if that occurred, you would spend the other part of the day marrying another of your wives.'" Does this narration indicate that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) loved 'A'isha?

Lastly, we summarize by pointing out that the Banu Umayyad, foremost amongst them Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan, hated the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). From the time the Caliphate fell into their hands, they strove to distort the truth and turn everything head over heels. They thus elevated to the zenith of power people who were, during the life of the Prophet (S.A.W.), ordinary, with no special standing, while they ignored others who were at the acme of honor and nobility during the lifetime of the Prophet (P).

I believe that their sole criterion in according honor or ignoring, was their intense enmity and excessive hatred for Muhammad and the members of his household, 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. They (the Umayyads) elevated the status, and fabricated false *hadiths*, on the merits of every person who opposed the Prophet (S.A.W.) and his *ahl al-bayt* whom Allah has purified and from whom He removed all abomination.

They sought nearness to them (those who opposed the Prophet), accorded them high positions and grants so that they enjoyed favors and respect among the populace. They sought to denigrate, fabricate defects, falsify reports that denied the superiority and merits of anyone who used to love the Prophet (S.A.W.) and [would] defend him.

Thus 'Umar b. al-Khattab, who used to dispute every command of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), even accusing the latter of hallucination in his last days, became the hero of Islam amongst the Muslims during the time of the Umayyad dynasty.

On the other hand, 'Ali b. Abi Talib who was, to him, what Aaron was to Moses, and who loved him, and who was loved by Allah and His Prophet, he who was the guardian of every believer, was cursed from the pulpits for eighty years.

Similarly 'A'isha, who caused the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) much torment and disobeyed his instructions and the instructions of her Lord, rose against the successor of the Messenger of Allah and caused the worst strife known to the Muslims, [a strife] which resulted in the death of thousands of Muslims, became the most famous lady in Islam, with religious rulings being accepted from her.

But Fatima al-Zahra, the leader of the women of this world, she for whom the Lord of Glory gets angry if she becomes angry, and she for whom the Lord is happy when she is happy, became a forgotten

woman, and was buried in the secrecy of the night, after they had threatened to burn her, after they forced the door of her house against her stomach, causing her to lose her child. Not one amongst the *ahl al-sunna* Muslims knows a single *hadith* which she reported from her father.

Similarly, Yazid b. Mu'awiya, Ziyad, the son of his father, Ibn Marjana, Ibn Marwan, al-Hajjaj, Ibn al-'As, and others from the accursed evildoers cursed in the text of the Qur'an and by the tongue of the Prophet (S.A.W.), they became the commanders of the believers and the guardians of their affairs. As for al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the masters of the youths of paradise, the delights of the Prophet of this nation, the Imams from the progeny of the Prophet (S.A.W.), the custodians of this *umma*, they were banished, imprisoned, murdered, and poisoned.

In this way, Abu Sufyan the hypocrite, the leader in every battle that was waged against the Prophet, came to be praised and thanked, until it was said that whoever entered his house was secure.

As for Abu Talib, the protector and defender of the Prophet (S.A.W.) with all that he had, [who] passed his life in hostility with his people and relatives for the sake of his nephew's call, so much so that he spent three years in the enclave with the Prophet in the valley of Mecca, keeping his belief secret, for the benefit of Islam, so that some bridges were still open with the Quraysh and so that they would not persecute the Muslims as they wished (he was like the believer from the family of Pharaoh who hid his belief), his (Abu Talib's) [supposed] reward was a pair of slippers in the hellfire, his feet placed into it and his brains popping out from the pain.

In this way, Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan, who was the freed man, son of the freed man, the accursed one, and the son of an accursed one, he who used to play with the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet, not attaching any importance to it, he who used to murder the upright and innocent [ones] so as to pursue his vile goals and [would] revile the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) whilst the Muslims would see and hear, became known as the scribe of revelation. They say that Allah entrusted His revelation to Gabriel, Muhammad and Mu'awiya. He came to be described as a man of wisdom, political acumen and reflection.

As for Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, the earth did not carry and the sky did not put its shadow on anyone more truthful in his speech than him; he was treated as a mischief monger. He was beaten, exiled and banished to Rabdha. Salman, Miqdad, 'Ammar and Hudhayfa and all the sincere companions who took 'Ali as their leader and followed him, they met with punishment, banishment and murder.

Similarly, those who followed the school of the Caliphs, the followers of Mu'awiya and the companions of the schools founded by the tyrannical rulers, they became the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* and they represented Islam. Whoever opposed them was judged to be a disbeliever. If only they had followed the Imams of the *ahl al-bayt*, the pure ones.

As for those who followed the school of the *ahl al-bayt* and followed the gate to the city of knowledge and the first one to accept Islam, he whom the truth revolved around wherever he was, those who

followed the *ahl al-bayt* and the infallible Imams came to be [seen as] the people of innovation and misguidance, and whoever opposed and fought against them came to be [seen as] a Muslim.

Surely there is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Highest, and the most Powerful. Allah surely spoke the truth when He said: ***"If it is said to them: 'Make not any mischief on earth,' they say: 'We are the righteous ones.' Certainly they are indeed the corrupt ones but they do not realize it. And if it is said to them: 'Believe as other people have believed' they say: 'Shall we believe as the stupid ones believe'? They are the stupid ones, though they know it not"*** (2: 13).

If we return to the subject of the Prophet of Allah's (S.A.W.) [alleged] love for 'A'isha, as she had memorized half the religion from him, and that he used to say: "Take half your religion from this Humayra," [we realise] that this *hadith* is false, it has no basis of truth. Neither is it consonant with the ridiculous and sorrowful rulings that have been reported from 'A'isha. It is not fitting that the Prophet (S.A.W.) should have mentioned them.

It is sufficient for us to refer to the incident of the suckling of an adult, which she used to report from the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), and which was narrated by Muslim in his *Sahih* and by Malik in his *Muwatta*.' We have fully discussed this matter in our book "So that I may be with the Truthful ones." Whoever wishes a detailed account of the matter should refer to it.

It is sufficient for us [to note] regarding this detestable tradition, that all the [other] wives rejected it and refused to act according to it. Even the reporter of the *hadith* remained [silent for] a complete year, scared to mention it, due to its repulsive and shameless nature.

Let us refer to *Sahih* al-Bukhari in the chapter on: "Whoever Leaves his Place of Residence Must Shorten the Prayer." He narrated: "On the authority of al-Zuhri, from 'Urwa, from 'A'isha (R) [who] said: 'The prayer was first decreed as two *rak'a*. Then this ruling was retained for the prayer on journey, and the prayer in residence was made complete.' Al-Zuhri said: 'I said to 'Urwa: 'So how come 'A'isha completes the prayer [during the journey]?' He replied: 'She interpreted [the ruling] as 'Uthman interpreted it.'"

Muslim also reported it in "The Chapter On The Prayer [recited by] the Travelers and Shortening It" in more explicit words than those [expressed] in al-Bukhari. He narrated on the authority of al-Zuhri from 'Urwa from 'A'isha, that: "The prayer was first decreed as two *rak'as*.

Then this ruling was preserved for the prayer during a journey, and the prayer at [a person's town of] residence was made complete." Al-Zuhri said: "I said to 'Urwa: 'So how come 'A'isha [recites the] complete prayer on a journey?' He replied: 'She interpreted [the ruling] as 'Uthman interpreted it.'"

There is a clear contradiction. For she is the one who reports that the prayer of a traveller was decreed as two *rak'as*, but she opposes what Allah has made obligatory, and what the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) followed, and instead interpreted it so as to change the ruling of Allah and His Prophet, reviving the

practice of 'Uthman.

Due to this reason, we see a lot of rulings in the *Sahihs* of the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a*, but yet they do not follow them, for, in most cases, they adhere to the interpretation of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'A'isha, Mu'awiya b. Abu Sufyan and other companions.

If al-Humayra, from whom half the religion is supposedly taken, can interpret the rulings of Allah how she wishes, I do not believe that her husband, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), would be pleased with her and would order the people to follow her. In fact, it has been related in *Sahih* al-Bukhari, Muslim and the other *Sahihs* of the *ahl al-sunna*, that obedience to her is disobedience to Allah. God willing, we will deal with this at its [proper] time.

As for those who say that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) loved her because Gabriel used to come to him in her form before he married her, and that he only came to him in her house, these narrations would make a mad person laugh. I do not know whether the form which Gabriel came to him was in photographic or oil paint. In fact, the *Sahihs* of the *ahl al-sunna* relate that Abu Bakr sent 'A'isha with a plate of dates to the Prophet (P) so that he could see her, and that he asked the Prophet (P) to marry his daughter.

Was there any need then for Gabriel to come in her form when she lived just a few meters away from the residence of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.)? I believe that Marya, the Copt, used to live in the land of Copts, in Egypt, far away from the Prophet (S.A.W.), and since no one expected her to come, it was more appropriate that Gabriel descend in her form and to give the Prophet of Allah (P) the good tidings that Allah would give him Ibrahim from her.

These narrations are from the forgeries of 'A'isha who had nothing with which she could take pride over her co-wives except tales which her imagination created. Alternatively, these are due to the forgeries of the Banu Umayyads, and attributed to her, in order to elevate her standing with those of simple minds.

And as for the allegation that Gabriel did not visit Muhammad (P) when he was reclining except in 'A'isha's house, this is worse than the preceding claim, since it is well known from the Qur'an that Allah threatened her when she demonstrated against His Prophet. Allah threatened her with Gabriel, the righteous believers, and the angels would [also] support [the Prophet].

So the claims of our teachers and scholars are mere conjectures and imaginations. "Indeed, conjectures do not lead to the truth. Say: 'Do you have true knowledge with you? Then bring it forth. You follow nothing but conjecture, you merely guess.'"

## **'A'isha after the Prophet (S.A.W.)**

If we study the life of the mother of the believers, 'A'isha, daughter of Abu Bakr, after her husband met his Supreme Maker, may my soul be sacrificed for him, we find that after the atmosphere had settled

and her father had become the Caliph and leader of the Islamic *umma*, she became the foremost lady of the Islamic state because her husband was the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) and her father was the Caliph of the Prophet of God.

She believed – or rather, she led herself into believing – that she was the best of the Prophet's (S.A.W.) wives simply because he had married her when she was a virgin, and that he had not married any other virgin. When the Prophet (S.A.W.) died, she was in the full splendour of her youth and the prime of her life. According to the best known reports, she was eighteen years old at the most when her husband passed away. She had not lived with the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) for more than six to eight years, according to different reports.

She spent the first years of this period playing games that children play whilst she was the wife of the Prophet (S.A.W.). She was, as Barira, the slave girl of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), described her: "A young girl, who sleeps leaving the dough (unguarded) that the goats come and eat."

Yes, eighteen years for a girl who has become a teenager as is said today. She had spent half her life with the bearer of Allah's message with nine or ten other co-wives. Yet there was another woman during the lifetime of 'A'isha, whom we have failed to mention, a woman who was harder for 'A'isha [to accept] than all the wives because the love of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) for this woman transcended all imagination.

This woman was Fatima al-Zahra, the daughter of the Prophet (P) through Khadija and step daughter of 'A'isha. Do you know who is Khadija? Khadija, the foremost believer, to whom Gabriel gave *salaams*, and gave her glad tidings of a house [built] for her in paradise, a house which has no noise or trouble.

The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) never lost an opportunity to mention Khadija. This used to tear apart the liver of 'A'isha. Her heart would burn with jealousy, and she would lose control of herself and forget her manners. She would abuse (Khadija) as she liked, with no respect for her husband's feelings. Let us listen to 'A'isha talk about herself, especially concerning Khadija, as al-Bukhari, Ahmad, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Maja report.

She said: "I have never been as envious of any wife of the Prophet as I have been of Khadija. That was because of the Prophet's frequent remembrance and praise of her. I said to him: "Why do you mention that old woman of the Quraysh? She who had reddened cheeks that time had destroyed! Certainly Allah has given you [someone] better than her".

She said: "The face of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) changed. I never saw it change like this except when he was receiving revelation. He said: 'No! Allah did not give me better than her. She believed in me when others rejected me. She believed in me when others disbelieved me. She gave me the wealth she had when others deprived me. Allah gave me children through her whereas he did not through the other women.'"

There is no doubt that the retort of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) refutes the contention of those who allege that 'A'isha was the most beloved and the best of the Prophet's (S.A.W.) wives. I am convinced too that 'A'isha's jealousy and hatred increased when the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) scolded her with this reprimand and informed her that His Lord had not given him [someone] better than Khadija.

Once again, the Prophet (S.A.W.) teaches us that he did not have any sort of inclination for base desires, and had no inclination towards beauty and virginity, because Khadija (P) had been previously married twice and was older than him by fifteen years. Despite this, he loved her and never ceased to praise her. By my life, this is the true character of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), who loved for Allah's sake and hated for Allah's sake.

There is a huge difference between this authentic *hadith* and the forged one which claims the Prophet preferred 'A'isha, so much so that his wives sent to him [someone] imploring him to show fairness with regard to the daughter of Abu Quhafa.

Dare we ask 'A'isha, *Umm al-Mu'minin*, who never saw Khadija for a single day in her life nor ever met her, how did she know that she was an old woman with red cheeks? Is this the conduct of the average believer who is forbidden to speak ill of anyone in their absence if that person is alive?

How about if that person is dead and has been taken up to the Lord? And how [severe is the crime] if the person being backbit is the wife of the Prophet (P), the lady in whose house Gabriel came down and gave her the tidings of a house in paradise, a house without noise or trouble?

Certainly, the hatred and envy for Khadija that was kindled in 'A'isha's heart had to have an outlet; otherwise they would have exploded inside her. 'A'isha did not find anyone [on whom to vent her fury] except Fatima, Khadija's daughter, and her ('A'isha's) stepdaughter, who was, according to various reports, about her own age or a little older.

The deep love that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) felt for Khadija was certainly rooted and strengthened in his daughter, his unique one, Fatima al-Zahra. She was the only one who lived with her father and carried within her the qualities which the Prophet used to love in Khadija; he used to call her "the mother of her father".

'A'isha's envy was further increased when she saw the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) extolling [the virtues of] his daughter, calling her the leader of the women of the world and leader of the women in paradise. Furthermore, Allah bestowed to him, through her, the two masters of the youths of paradise, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. She saw that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) used to sleep at Fatima's place, watching over the upbringing of his grandchildren.

He used to say: "My two children here are my fragrance of this *umma*," and he used to carry them on his shoulders. This further added to her envy, as she was barren. Her envy increased until it covered Fatima's husband, the father of al-Hasan and al-Husayn. This was for no other reason than the love that

the Prophet of Allah (P) showed towards him, preferring him above her father Abu Bakr in all places. There is no doubt that she was living through fateful times.

She saw that the son of Abu Talib way excelled her father on every occasion and that the Prophet (P) continued to love him and preferred him above everyone else. She also knew that her father had returned in defeat with the forces who were with him on the day of Khaybar, and that the Prophet (S.A.W.) was pained by this and said: "I will give the standard tomorrow to a man who loves Allah and his Prophet, and who Allah and his Prophet love, [a man] who will be steadfast and will not flee." That man was 'Ali b. Abu Talib, the husband of Fatima. After 'Ali had captured Khaybar, he returned with Safiyya bint Huyayy who the Prophet (P) married. This descended like a flash of lightning upon the heart of 'A'isha.

She also knew that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) had sent her father to proclaim the *Sura al-Bara'a* (chapter 9) to the pilgrims, but then had sent 'Ali after him, to take [the responsibility] from him. Her father returned in tears and asked the reason for this action, whereupon the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) responded: "Allah commanded me that none should proclaim [this] except me or someone from my *ahl al-bayt*."

She also knew that the Prophet (P) had appointed his cousin, 'Ali, as the Caliph over the Muslims after him and had ordered his companions and his wives to congratulate him for this leadership over the believers. Her father was among the first people to say: "Congratulations, Congratulations to you, O son of Abu Talib. You have become and will remain the guardian of every believing man and woman."

She also knew that the Prophet (S.A.W.) had put in command over her father a youth with no hair [growing] on his cheek, for he was only seventeen years old, yet he commanded him to go on military expeditions under his leadership and to pray behind him.

There is no doubt that 'A'isha was influenced by these events. Deep inside she was concerned for her father, and his competing for the Caliphate, and the conspiracy that was among the leaders of the Quraysh. Her envy and hatred for 'Ali and Fatima grew; she tried her best to intervene at all costs to change the situation to her father's advantage.

We have seen how she sent for her father, supposedly on behalf of her husband, ordering him to lead the people in prayer, after she learnt that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) had summoned 'Ali for this duty. When the Prophet (P) learnt of this plot, he was forced to come out, remove Abu Bakr from his place and lead the people in prayer while he was sitting. He was angry at 'A'isha and said to her: "You women are like the companions of Yusuf (meaning that their plots were great)."

A researcher of this event will find clear contradictions in several different and discordant reports. The Prophet had called her father to join the army and commanded him to embark under the leadership of Usama b. Zayd three days before that prayer. It is known logically that the leader of the army also leads the prayer. Usama b. Zayd therefore was the Imam of Abu Bakr on that expedition. 'A'isha sensed this

disdain and understood the Prophet's motive, especially as he had not drafted 'Ali b. Abi Talib into that army in which even the notable emigrants and Ansars, leaders and people of stature from the Quraysh, had been drafted.

She further perceived, as did most of the companions, from the Prophet (P) that his days were numbered. She possibly shared 'Umar b. al-Khattab's view that the Prophet had now begun to hallucinate, not knowing what he did. Her burning envy incited her to behave in the way she wished, elevating the status and esteem of Abu Bakr against his rival, 'Ali. Because of all this, she denied that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) had appointed 'Ali as his successor.

Therefore she tried to convince the simple minded people that the Prophet (P) had died in her chambers lying between her lungs and chest. She narrated that the Prophet (P) said to her when he was ill: "Call your father and brother to me so that I may write a behest for them, maybe someone might make an allegation which Allah and His Prophet and the believers will refute unless it is [in favor of] Abu Bakr." Did anyone ask her as to what prevented her from summoning them?

## **'A'isha's position against 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful**

The researcher of her views regarding Abu'l-Hasan finds a strange, surprising thing. There is no explanation for it except her envy and enmity to the household of the Prophet. History has recorded her incomparable hatred and malice towards Imam 'Ali. She reached the point where she was not even able to utter his name, not able to stand the sight of him.

When she heard that the people had paid allegiance to him for the Caliphate after the murder of 'Uthman, she said: "I wished that the skies had become like the earth before 'Ali had attained it." She exerted every effort into causing problems for him, leading troops against him to wage a war of insurrection, and when the news of his death reached her, she prostrated in thanks to Allah.

Like me, are you not surprised at the *ahl al-sunna wal-Jama'a* who report in their *Sahih*s that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "O 'Ali! none but a true believer loves you, and none but a hypocrite hates you". Then they also report in their *Sahih*s, *Musnads* and history books that 'A'isha hated Imam 'Ali so much that she could not mention his name.

Is this not a testimony from them regarding the nature of the woman? Just as al-Bukhari has reported in his *Sahih* that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "Fatima is a part of me. Whoever angers her angers me, and whoever angers me angers Allah." Then al-Bukhari himself relates that Fatima died whilst she was angry with Abu Bakr, not speaking to him to the time she died.

Are these traditions not [enough] testimony from them that Allah and His Prophet are both angry at Abu Bakr? This is what all intelligent people understand. I always say, therefore, that the truth will surface, no matter how much the falsifiers try to hide it, no matter how much the helpers of the Umayyads try to

misrepresent and fabricate it. For the proof of Allah is evident upon His servants from the day of the revelation of the Qur'an until the final hour [of reckoning]. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

Imam Ahmad reports that Abu Bakr once came to the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), and sought permission to enter. Before he went in, he heard 'A'isha's voice raised, saying to the Prophet (P): "By Allah! I surely know that 'Ali is dearer to you than me and my father", she repeated this twice or three times."

'A'isha's hatred for Imam 'Ali was so much that she always tried to distance him from the Prophet (P) whenever she could find the means to do so. The Mu'tazili Ibn Abi al-Hadid, in his commentary on the *Nahj al-Balagha* said the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) beckoned to 'Ali to come close. He came close until he sat between him and 'A'isha, and he and the Prophet (S.A.W.) were clung together. She said to him: "Can you not find a seat for this one except [on] my thigh?"

He also narrated that one day the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was walking with Imam 'Ali and the conversation became prolonged. 'A'isha approached as she was walking from behind until she came between them saying: "What is it between you two that you are taking so long?" Upon this the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) became angry.

It is also reported that she once came upon the Prophet (S.A.W.) whilst he was conversing quietly with 'Ali. She screamed and said: "What is it with you and me, O son of Abu Talib? I have [just] one day with the Prophet of Allah (P)." Thereupon the Prophet (P) became angry.

How often did she anger the Prophet (S.A.W.) with her conduct, which arose due to her intense jealousy and furious nature and her offensive words? Would the Prophet (S.A.W.) be pleased with any believing man or woman whose heart was filled with hatred and malice towards his cousin, the leader of his progeny, he of whom he said: "He loves Allah and His Prophet, and Allah and His Prophet love him?" He also said about him: "Whoever loves 'Ali has loved me and whoever hates 'Ali has hated me."

## **And remain in your houses and do not venture forth**

Allah, Glory be to Him, ordered the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.) to remain in their houses and not to go out from them, displaying their ornaments. He also ordered them to read the Qur'an, to undertake the prayer, to pay *zakat* and to obey Allah and His Apostle (P).

All the wives of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) obeyed the injunctions of Allah, and the commands of His Prophet, who forbade and warned them before he died: "Which one of you will ride the camel and have the dogs of al-Haw'ab bark at her?" All of them [obeyed] with the exception of 'A'isha. She disobeyed all his orders and scoffed at all the warnings. Historians relate that Hafsa bint 'Umar wanted to go with her (for the battle of the Camel).

But her brother, 'Abd Allah reproached her and recited the [aforementioned] verse to her. Hafsa then cancelled her plans. 'A'isha, however, rode the camel and the dogs of al-Haw'ab barked at her.

Taha Husayn says in his book "*The Great Sedition*" (*al-Fitna al-Kubra*): "On her route, 'A'isha passed by some water and some dogs barked at her.

She asked about the water and was told that it was al-Haw'ab. She was greatly shocked and said: 'Take me back! Take me back! I have heard the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) saying while he was with his wives: 'Which one of you will the dogs of al-Haw'ab bark at?' 'Abd Allah b. Zubayr came, having been instructed to pacify her, bringing fifty men from the Banu 'Amir who falsely swore that the water was not that of al-Haw'ab."

I believe that this narration was fabricated during the time of the Banu Umayyad to reduce the severity of *Umm al-Mu'minin's* disobedience, thinking that *Umm al-Mu'minin* would be exonerated after her nephew, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, deceived her, coming with fifty men who swore by God and gave false testimony that the water was not that of al-Haw'ab.

It is truly a foolish joke; they wanted to delude, through such reports, those of shallow perception and to convince them that 'A'isha was fooled because, when she passed the water and heard the barking of the dogs, and enquired about the water, it was said that they were at al-Haw'ab. She was distressed and said: "Take me back! Take me back."

Do the idiots who forged this narration search for an excuse for 'A'isha's disobedience of the order of Allah, and what was revealed in the Qur'an regarding the incumbency for her to stay in her house? Or do they seek for an excuse for her disobedience to the order of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) to stay within her house and the prohibition of riding a camel before arriving at the well of al-Haw'ab, the watering place of the barking dogs?

Do they find an excuse for *Umm al-Mu'minin*, after she rejected the advice of *Umm al-Mu'minin* Umm Salama? Historians have recorded the incident in which she said to her: "Do you remember the day the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) proceeded and we were with him and he turned left from [a place called] Qadid and sat alone with 'Ali and whispered to him for a long time? You wanted to force yourself on them; I tried to prevent you, but you disobeyed me and intruded. It wasn't long before you returned in tears. I asked: 'What happened to you?'

And you replied: 'I approached them and they were in conversation, so I said to Ali: 'I get with the Prophet of Allah one day out of nine, so can you not, O son of Abu Talib, leave me with him on my day?' The Messenger of Allah came towards me and he was red with anger, and said: 'Go back! By Allah, none except those who have abandoned faith can hate him.' I returned repentant and sad.'" 'A'isha said: "Yes, I remember that."

Umm Salama continued: "I will also remind you too that you and I were with the Prophet of Allah and he said to us: 'Which one of you will be the rider of the trained camel, at whom the dogs of Haw'ab will bark, and she will have deviated from the right path?' We said: 'We seek refuge from Allah and His Prophet from that.' He touched your back and said: 'Don't be that one, O Humayra.'" 'A'isha said: "I remember

that.”

Umm Salama said: "Do you not remember that day when your father came with 'Umar, so we put on our veils. They came in and spoke about what they wanted to, until they said: 'O Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) we do not know how long you will be with us. If only you were to tell us who will succeed you as Caliph over us, so that there will be after you a place we can turn to.' He said to them: 'As for me, I have seen his position [infront of you].

Were I to do this, you would all fall into disunity as the Israelites dispersed from Aaron.' They remained quiet and left. After they had departed, we came out to the Prophet of Allah and you said to him, as you were more forthcoming with him than all of us: 'O Messenger of Allah who did you appoint as Caliph over them?' He said: 'The wearer of the mended shoe.' We went out and we saw it was 'Ali.

You said: 'O Prophet of Allah, I do not see anyone apart from 'Ali'. He replied: 'He is the one.'” 'A'isha said: "Yes, I remember that." Umm Salama said to her: "So then, 'A'isha, how can you go ahead after this"? She replied: "I venture forth to reconcile the people.”

Umm Salama sought to prevent her from the uprising, using strong words, saying: "The pillars of Islam, if they lean, are not set erect by women; and if they crack, are not joined by women. The praiseworthy things for women are lowering their gazes and protecting their chastity.

What would you say if the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) appeared before you in one of these deserts and finds you driving your camel from one watering place to another? By Allah, if I were to embark upon this journey of yours, then it was said to me: 'Enter paradise' I would be ashamed to face Muhammad after having thrown off the veils he has placed upon me.”

Just as *Umm al-Mu'minin* 'A'isha did not accept the advice of many sincere companions, al-Tabari in his history related that: "Jariya b. Quddama al-Sa'di said to her: 'O mother of the believers, by Allah, the murder of 'Uthman is less despicable than you going out on this accursed camel from your house and bearing arms. Allah has imposed on you the veil and sanctity you have destroyed your cover and defiled your respect. Surely, whoever sees your uprising sees your destruction. If you come to us obeying, then go back to your house. If you have come to us in coercion, then seek the help of the people.'”

## **The mother of the believers was the leader**

Historians have recorded that she was the general leader, supervising, separating [people] and issuing commands. Even when Zubayr and Talha argued as to who should lead the prayer, and when both of them wanted to lead, 'A'isha intervened and removed them both and ordered 'Abd Allah b. Zubayr, her nephew, to lead the people in prayer.

She would dispatch messengers with letters which she sent to several regions, requesting their assistance against 'Ali b. Abi Talib and urging them with the *jahili* zeal. She even recruited twenty

thousand or more rabble and greedy Arabs to fight and depose the Commander of the Faithful. Her urging resulted in zealous discord, where large numbers of people were killed in the name of defending and aiding the mother of the believers.

The historians say that when the companions of 'A'isha came to 'Uthman b. Hanif, the governor of Basra, they took him along with seventy of his officers who were in charge of the public treasury as prisoners. They brought them to 'A'isha who ordered that they be put to death. They were slaughtered as sheep are slaughtered. It is [even] reported there were 400 men in all and that they were the first Muslims whose heads were cut off whilst they were patient.

Al-Sha'bi reported from Muslim b. Abi Bakra from his father: "When Talha and Zubayr reached Basra, I put on my sword as I wanted to help them. I visited 'A'isha, she was ordering, prohibiting; she was in command. I remembered a *hadith* from the Prophet of Allah (P) which I used to hear him say: 'A community which has its affairs administered by a woman will never succeed.' I [therefore] withdrew from them and left them."

Al-Bukhari has reported from Abi Bakra: "Allah benefited me by a word during the days of the [battle of the] Camel. For when the Prophet (S.A.W.) heard that the Persians had made the daughter of Chosroes their Queen, he said: 'The people that have their affairs administered by a woman will never succeed.'"

One of the things that makes us laugh and weep at one time is that 'A'isha, *Umm al-Mu'minin*, went out of her residence in disobedience to Allah and His Prophet and then ordered the companions to remain in their houses. This is surely a strange thing. How, dear Lord, could this occur?

The Mu'tazili Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, in the commentary on the *Nahj al-Balagha*, reported, along with historians, that 'A'isha sent a letter when she was in Basra to Zayd b. Sawhan al-'Abdi in which she said to him: "From 'A'isha, the mother of the believers, daughter of Abu Bakr, the truthful one, wife of the Prophet. To her devoted son, Zayd b. Sawhan. Remain at home and make the people abandon the son of Abu Talib. I hope to hear what I would love from you, since you are the most trustworthy of my family...Wasalaam."

This righteous man replied to her thus: "From Zayd b. Sawhan to 'A'isha bint Abi Bakr: Allah issued a commandment to you and He also issued a commandment to us. He ordered you to remain in your residence, and He ordered us to fight. Your letter has come to me instructing me to do contrary to what Allah has ordered me to do, [You have asked me] to do what Allah has ordered you to do and that you do what Allah has asked me to do. Your order to me is [something] that I cannot obey, therefore there is no reply [necessary] to your letter."

From this, it becomes clear to us that 'A'isha was not content with leading the army of the Camel, but rather, she craved for absolute control over the believers in all the corners of the land. In all matters, she would command Talha and al-Zubayr, who had been nominated for the Caliphate by 'Umar. Due to this, she made it lawful for herself to correspond with the chiefs of the tribes and with the governors, enticing them and seeking their help.

Due to this, she attained the status and fame among the Banu Umayyads, to the point where she became the protégé and the source of reverence for all of them, and [she became one] whose power and rebuke they all feared.

If the heroes and men, famous for their courage, abandon and flee from the lines of battle [when] facing 'Ali b. Abi Talib and would not stand in front of him, she stood, inciting, screaming and arousing [the people].

The mind is perplexed at all of this, the historians are bewildered, for they knew her stance in the smaller battle of the Camel before the arrival of Imam 'Ali, and in the greater battle of the Camel after the arrival of Imam 'Ali. [They all know that] he summoned her to the book of Allah and that she refused, obstinately insisting on the battle. There is no explanation [for this], unless we understand the depth and extent of the envy and hatred which the mother of the believers felt towards her children, who were devoted to Allah and his Messenger.

## **The Prophet's (S.A.W.) warning against 'A'isha and her sedition**

The Prophet (S.A.W.) sensed the depth and danger of the schemes that revolved around him from all sides. No doubt he knew the influence and discord women could generate on the men, as he also knew that their plot was great enough to almost move mountains. He knew specifically that his wife, 'A'isha, was the instigator of the dangerous role because of the hatred and rancor that she felt towards his successor 'Ali in particular and his family in general.

How could he not know, when he lived observing her role and her enmity towards them? He sometimes got angry; sometimes his face would change color and he would try to placate her at all times, informing her that one who loved 'Ali loved Allah, and the one who hated 'Ali was a hypocrite, whom Allah hated. Unfortunately those *hadiths* do not permeate the depth of those souls which never accept the truth to be true, unless it be for her ('A'isha's) benefit, and they do not recognize anything to be correct unless it comes from her.

As a result, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was patient when he realised that she was the test that Allah had sent to the *umma*, to examine it as He had tested the previous nations. ***"Do the people think that they will be left alone when they say: 'We believe' and they will not be tested" (29:2)?***

The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) warned the *umma* against her on several occasions. He even stood one day and pointed towards her house saying: "From there is the mischief, from there is the mischief from where the horns of the devil will rise." Al-Bukhari has reported in his *Sahih*, in "The Book Concerning the Houses of the Wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.)," on the authority of Nafi' b. 'Abd Allah (R) who said: "The Prophet (S.A.W.) stood up, addressing [the people] and pointed towards the residence of 'A'isha and said three times: 'From there is mischief from where the horns of the devil will arise.'"

Muslim has also related in his *Sahih* from Ikrima b. 'Ammar from Salim from Ibn 'Umar who said: "The Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) emerged from the house of 'A'isha and said: 'The pivot of disbelief is from here, where the horns of Satan will rise.'"

There is no need to pay attention to the additions they have made [to the *hadith*] by their explanation: "That means the east." This is clearly a fabrication to dilute [the accusation against] the mother of the believers and to remove any accusation against her.

Al-Bukhari also reported: "When Talha, al-Zubayr and 'A'isha travelled to Basra, 'Ali sent 'Ammar b. Yasir and al-Hasan b. 'Ali who met us in Kufa. They ascended the pulpit, with al-Hasan ascending to the top while 'Ammar was standing below al-Hasan. We gathered towards him. I heard 'Ammar say: 'A'isha has journeyed to Basra and, by Allah, she is the wife of your Prophet (S.A.W.) in this life and in the hereafter; but Allah, the most blessed and exalted, is now testing you [to see] whom you obey, Him or her.'"

Allah is the Greatest. This *hadith* also indicates that obedience to her is disobedience to Allah, and to oppose and disobey her is to obey Allah. We can also note in the *hadith*, that the Umayyad narrators have added the phrase "and the hereafter" when saying "she is the wife of your Prophet in this life and the hereafter" so that they may lead the masses into thinking that Allah has forgiven her every sin she committed, and allowed her to enter His heaven, and her husband is His beloved Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.). Otherwise, how did 'Ammar know that she will be his wife in the hereafter?

This is another trick which the falsifiers of *hadith* narrators resorted to during the time of the Banu Umayyad. When they found that a *hadith* was widespread amongst the people, and there was no way to deny or refute it, they decided to add a paragraph or words, or to change some phrases so as to dampen the impact [of the *hadith*] or to [make it] lose its intended meaning. Just as they did with the *hadith*: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate," they added: "and Abu Bakr is its foundation, 'Umar its walls and 'Uthman its roof."

This [trick] is not hidden to the objective researchers who refute these additions which, most of the time, indicate the lack of intelligence of the falsifiers and their lack of wisdom and light of the Prophetic traditions. For they can observe the saying that Abu Bakr is its foundation means the knowledge of the Prophet (P) is derived from the knowledge of Abu Bakr, and this is disbelief. Likewise, the statement 'Umar is its walls means 'Umar prevents people from entering the city, i.e., prevents them from getting to the knowledge.

The saying 'Uthman is its roof is necessarily absurd since there is no city which has a roof, this is impossible. The researchers note too that 'Ammar swore by Allah that 'A'isha is the wife of the Prophet (P) in this world and in the hereafter. This is a shot in the dark. How could 'Ammar take an oath about something he did not know? Did he have a verse from the book of God? Or was it a covenant promised to him by the Prophet (P)?

So we are now left with the true *hadith*, i.e., that 'A'isha travelled to Basra, and that she is the wife of your Prophet, but Allah is testing you through her to know whether you obey Him or her.

All praise is due to the Lord of the Worlds, who has given us intelligence through which we can differentiate between the truth and falsehood, and has made clear to us the [right] path and then tested us by several things so that they can bear witness on the Day of Judgment.

## Conclusion

The important thing from what we have covered in our discussion, although in a concise manner, is that 'A'isha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, the mother of the believers and wife of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), was not counted amongst the *ahl al-bayt* from whom Allah removed all abomination and purified completely. He preserved them from all errors and purified them from every kind of filth. Due to this, they became infallible.

Suffice it to say that 'A'isha spent the last days of her life in tears and wailing, sadness and repentance, remembering her acts with her eyes full of tears. Maybe Allah will forgive her errors, for He alone knows the secrets of his servants and knows the truth of their intentions. He knows the deception of the eyes and what is hidden in the hearts.

Nothing in the world nor in the sky is hidden from Allah, and it is not for us or for any person to pass the judgement of heaven or hell for His creatures. This is an imposition and intrusion on Allah. The exalted one says: ***"All that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah. Whether you exhibit what is in your souls or hide it, Allah will [make you] account for it. He forgives whomsoever He wishes and punishes whomsoever He wishes. Allah has Power over everything"*** (2:284).

Based on this, it is not for us to be pleased with her or to curse her. We cannot, however, follow her nor [can we] condone her deeds. We speak of all this so as to enlighten the people about the truth; maybe they will be guided on the right path.

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali said: "Do not be amongst those who curse and swear, but rather say: 'They did so and so, for this is more potent as a proof.'"

## What the ahl al-dhikr believe about the ahl al-bayt

The Imam, Commander of the Faithful (A.S.), master of the progeny of the Prophet (S.A.W.), said: "By Allah! I have learnt the proclamation of the messages, the fulfillment of promises and perfection of words. With us, the *ahl al-bayt*, are the doors of wisdom and the lights of all things. Where are those who claim that they, instead of us, are deeply rooted in knowledge? They do so lying and rebelling against us.

Allah has elevated us and degraded them, and has bestowed upon us and deprived them, made us

enter and expelled them. It is through us that guidance is sought and blindness removed. Certainly, the Imams will be from the Quraysh, they have been planted in the line of Hashim. The Imamate is not right for others, neither is it for the governors to the exclusion of others.”

"We are the close ones and the companions, the treasures and the doors. Houses are not entered except by their doors; whosoever enters them in any other way is called a thief." Then he mentioned the *ahl al-bayt* and said: "Within them is the nobility of the Qur'an, and they are the treasures of the Merciful one. When they speak they utter the truth, and when they are silent, none should speak before they do."

"They are the life of knowledge and death of ignorance; their forbearance tells you of their knowledge and their silence the wisdom of their speaking. They do not go against the truth nor do they differ about it. They are the pillars of Islam and the asylums of protection. Through them the truth has returned to its rightful position, falsehood has vanished and its tongue severed from its root. They have understood religion attentively and carefully, not from hearsay or from relaters, because the relaters of knowledge are many, but few observe it.

His progeny is the best of progenies and his family the best of families. His tree is the best of trees, grown in sanctity and excelled in generosity, for them are long branches and fruits that cannot be reached.

We are the tree of prophethood, the station of divine message and the place where angels visit. We are the mines of knowledge, the fountain-heads of wisdom. Those who support and love us, can expect mercy, our enemies and one who hates us, await the wrath [of God].

We are the noble ones, and our progeny is the progeny of the Prophets. Our party is the party of Allah, the most Glorious and Majestic. The rebellious group is the party of Satan. Whoever equates us with our enemy is not from us."

"Where do you go and how [much] do you lie? The standards are raised and the signs clear. The minarets have been erected, so where are you wandering? How can you wander blindly, when among you is the progeny of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and they are the pillars of truth, standards of religion, the truthful tongues? Accord to them the same position as you do to the Qur'an and come to them as thirsty camels approach water springs.

O people take it from the seal of the Prophets (S.A.W.), that he who dies from amongst us is not dead, and he who decays from amongst us does not really decay. Do not say what you do not understand, because most of the truth lies in what you deny. Accept the argument of one against whom you have no argument. It is me. Did I not act according to the weightier thing (the Qur'an) and did I not leave for you the less weighty thing (the descendants of the Prophet) and did I not fix for you the standard of faith?"

"Examine the *ahl al-bayt* of your Prophet and follow their character and footsteps and they will never lead you astray. They will never make you return to destruction; if they lie down, then you lie down, and

if they arise, then you arise. Do not precede them otherwise you will go astray. Do not lag behind them as you will be ruined.”

These are the words of Imam 'Ali (A.S.), especially regarding the purified household from whom Allah has removed all filth and purified thoroughly.

If we followed the speech of his progeny (A.S.) who delivered the sermons to the people, for example Imam al-Hasan, Imam al-Husayn, Zayn al-'Abidin, Ja'far al-Sadiq, and Imam al-Rida (A.S.), we find them all saying the same thing and rejecting the same object, guiding the people at every time and place to the book of Allah and to the family of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) so as to save them from error and to bring them towards guidance.

I would add that history is the best witness to the infallibility of the *ahl al-bayt*. Nothing but knowledge, piety, virtue, asceticism, generosity, nobility, forbearance and forgiveness has been recorded about them. [They were also known] for every deed that Allah and His Prophet love.

History is also the best witness that the righteous ones from this *umma* and the Sufi ascetics and shaykhs of the different paths, the Imams of the different schools and the upright past and contemporary scholars all profess to their excellence and superiority in knowledge and deeds, and place them closest to the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) in nearness and honor.

Therefore, it is not proper for a Muslim to mix the wives of the Prophet (S.A.W.) with the *ahl al-bayt*, those from whom Allah has removed all filth and purified them thoroughly, and those whom the Prophet gathered under his cloak.

Do you not see that the Imams of the *hadith*, scholars like Muslim and al-Bukhari, al-Tirmidhi, Imam Ahmad, al-Nasa'i and others, when relating *hadiths* of merits in their books and their *Sahih* works, differentiate between the merits of the *ahl al-bayt* and [those of] the wives of the Prophet?

Muslim reports in his *Sahih*, on the merits of 'Ali b. Abi Talib, from Zayd b. Arqam that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "I am leaving behind [me] two weighty things among you. One of them is the book of Allah, Glorified and Honored be He. It is the rope of Allah and whoever follows it is guided right and whoever abandons it is misguided".

Then he said: "And my *ahl al-bayt*. I remind you in Allah's name of my *ahl al-bayt*. I remind you in Allah's name of my *ahl al-bayt*, I remind you in Allah's name of my *ahl al-bayt*." We asked: "Are his wives amongst the *ahl al-bayt*?" He (Zayd b. Arqam) replied: "No! By Allah, a woman remains with a man for a while then [when] he divorces her, she returns to her father and her people. The *ahl al-bayt* are his roots, his group to whom *sadaqa* is forbidden after him".

Similarly, the testimony of al-Bukhari and Muslim has come to us that 'A'isha is from the family of Abu Bakr and not from the family of the Prophet, in the incident of the verse of *tayammum*.

So why this persistence by some obstinate persons who attempt to revive discord at any price and to distort the truth of which there is no doubt? They curse the Shi'as only because they do not accord this

distinguished position to *Umm al-Mu'minin* 'A'isha. Why don't they curse their own *Sahihs* and scholars who exclude the wives of the Prophet from the *ahl al-bayt*? ***"O You who believe! Fear Allah and say that which is correct, so that He may make your deeds pure and forgive your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Prophet has surely succeeded"*** (33:71).

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