Imamate And Caliphate – An Islamic Perspective
This text analyses the issue of Imamate and Caliphate, starting with the importance of researching the true religion, citing relevant verses of the Holy Qur’an and hadiths that prove the importance of the Event of Ghadir and the successorship of the family of the Prophet (S). The discussion continues with a critique on Ahlul–Sunnah claims of attributing the guidance of the Ummah to the Caliphate.

Introduction

As we all know, it is the duty of every human being to research about true religion and then follow it. As Muslims, we have recognized Islam as the true path among all religions. Thus, we need to study various Islamic denominations and schools, each of which considers itself the true Islam, and adhere to the one which is the best according to the verses of the Holy Qur’an and the Prophetic narrations. One of the most important differences between Islamic denominations is the issue of the Prophet’s succession. The Shi’ites believe that the Prophet, according to the Divine command, introduced Ali as his successor in various occasions in his time, and he (S) also introduced 11 people from Ali’s descendants as the Imams after him. Accordingly, the Imamate and the Caliphate were based on the order of God, and the people had no role in the choice.

On the other hand, the Sunnis believe that the Prophet remained silent about the caliphate and the decision in this regard was left to the Islamic Ummah. The Muslims elected the First Caliph, the Second
Caliph was elected by the First Caliph, and the Third Caliph was elected by a six–member council appointed by the Second Caliph.

This book deals with the issue of Imamate and Caliphate from the perspective of Islam. The first chapter describes the importance of researching the true religion and sect and cites Qur’anic verses and narrations for this purpose. The second chapter answers the question why the Shi’ites introduce themselves as the victorious sect. The third chapter proves the caliphate of Ali based on three verses from the Qur’an and six hadiths from Sunni sources.

Since the incident of Ghadir Khumm is one of the most important events related to the Imamate of Ali, the fourth chapter examines this great event in Sunni sources, and after quoting the views of famous Sunni scholars on the authenticity of the hadith of Ghadir Khumm, it narrates the hadith from several well–known Sunni sources. The number of Muslims present in Ghadir Khumm and the method of proving the Imamate of Ali based on this hadith is among other topics dealt with in this chapter.

Chapters 5 to 7 examine the Sunni reasons for proving the caliphate of the first Three Caliphs. Chapter 5 is about the caliphate of Abu Bakr. The Muslim consensus on the caliphate of Abu Bakr is one of the reasons given for the legitimacy of his caliphate. This claim is examined in this chapter to answer the question of whether or not all Muslims really agreed on this. Furthermore, the narrations related to the caliphate of Abu Bakr are reviewed.

The fundamental question raised in Chapter 6 is that if the caliph is to be elected with the opinion of the Muslims, why was the Second Caliph elected by the First Caliph and not by the opinion of the people? Were the Companions of the Prophet influential in choosing ‘Umar or not?

Finally, Chapter 7 is about the Caliphate of ‘Uthman. In this regard, the question is answered whether the election of the members of the six–member council was based on the views of all Muslims or at least the Companions or the personal opinion of the Second Caliph? Did ‘Umar himself believe in this council? The irrationality of the Second Caliph’s order to kill dissidents of the majority opinion is also explained in this chapter.

It is hoped that this book will be a prelude for every Muslim to re–examine, without any prejudice, the issue of Imamate and Caliphate based on the verses of the Qur’an and the Prophetic narrations.

This book is published by Mousa Kalantari Cultural Institute, established in 2020 based on the will of Shahid Kalantari. He was born in 1949 in Marand and after the victory of Islamic Revolution of Iran, he was appointed as the minister of Roads and Urban Development. He was martyred along with 72 top–ranked officials on 28 June 1981 after a bomb explosion by a member of MKO at the headquarters of the Iran Islamic Republic Party in Tehran.

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Chapter 1: Necessity Of Research About Madhhab

According to the verses of the Holy Qur'an and narrations, it is incumbent upon everyone to make efforts, investigate and research about the religion and *madhhab* they are to follow.

**A. The Holy Qur'an**

Regarding those who listen to different schools’ claims and arguments and through their efforts, choose the best, Allah (SWT) says:

قَبْسَ عَبَارَ الْذِّينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُولِ ڤَيْتَبْعُونَ أَحْسَنْهُ أَوْلَيْكَ الْذِّينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللّهُ وَأَوْلَيْكَ مُثَمُّ أَوْلَوا الْأَلْبَابِ

*So give good news to My servants; The ones who listen to what is being said, then follow the best of it. These are the ones whom God has guided, and these are the ones who possess intelligence.* (The Holy Qur'an, 39:17-18).

**B. Narrations**

One of the most important reasons for the necessity of researching the true *madhhab*, which is the correct and valid interpretation of the religion of Islam, is a hadith in the authentic sources of the Sunnis and Shi’a, entitled “*iftiraq al-ummah*” (divisions among Muslim nation). According to this narration, the Prophet Muhammad (S) is quoted as saying:

وَتَفْتَرِقُ أَمْتِي عَلَى ثَلاْثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ فَرْقَةً

“My nation will be divided into 73 sects.”

According to al–Tirmidhi and al–Hakim al–Nayshaburi, both among great Sunnis scholars, it is an authentic narration.
Another version of this hadith reads:

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وَتَفْتَرِقُ أَمْيَرُ عَلَى ثَلاَثِينَ وَسَبْعِينَ مِلَّةٍ كُلُّهُمْ فِي الدَّارِ إِلَّا مِلَّةٌ واحِدَةٌ
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“My nation will be divided into 73 sects, all of whom, except for one, will enter the Hell” ³

Accordingly, as the followers of our Prophet (S), we should read about different Islamic sects and choose and follow the best denomination called by him as “al-firqah al-najiyah” (the sect reaching salvation).

1. Al-Tirmidhi, al-Sunan, vol. 4, p. 381, hadith no. 2640.

Image:
Chapter 2: Why Shi‘a Consider Themselves As Al–Firqah Al–Najiyah

As mentioned, all Muslim sects believe in their legitimacy and consider themselves as *al–firqa al–najiyah*, and basically, if they did not consider themselves right, they would no longer be independent sects and would follow another sect. However, what we are trying to express here is the reason why the Imami Shi‘ism asserts its right to be *al–firqa al–najiyah*. In this section, we will point out some of the most important of these arguments.

**A. Death Without Knowing Imam Is The Death Of Ignorance**

One the most important narrations to prove the beliefs of the Shi‘a is the well–known hadith of “*man mata*”, quoted in *al–Sahis* by Muslim which is the most authentic Sunni source after *al–Sahih* by al–Bukhari. According to Muslim b. Hajjaj Nayshaburi, the Prophet Muhammad (S) said:

> He who dies without paying allegiance [to an imam] dies the death of ignorance.
Also, Ahmad b. Hanbal, the founder of Hanbali school of jurisprudence, has quoted a similar version in his *al-Musnad*:

من مات يغير إمام مات ميتة جاهليّة

He who dies without having an imam dies the death of ignorance.  

According to these narrations, it is the duty of every Muslim to know and follow the true Imam of his time, and among the Islamic sects, it is only the Shi’a that clearly consider knowing and following the Imam of the time appointed by God as a necessary condition for faith.

**B. The Caliphs Of The Prophet Are Exclusively Twelve**

According to a famous hadith in Sunni collections of hadith, the number of the Caliphs after the Prophet Muhammad (S) is twelve. Shi’a are the only Islamic denomination which not only insists on this exclusiveness, but also has their names and characteristics in their books of hadith and history.

This narration has been narrated by several Sunni scholars of hadith, including Muslim in his *al-Sahih*:
Jabir b. Samura narrates: Together with my father, I went to the Prophet Muhammad (S) who said: "This matter (life) will not end, until it is passed by twelve Caliphs." He then whispered a sentence. I asked my father what the Prophet said. He said that the Prophet added: "All of them will be from Quraysh."  

In yet another narration, he (S) is quoted as saying:

لا يزال الإسلام عززاً إلى اثني عشر خليفة

"Islam will continue to be triumphant through twelve Caliphs."  

According to Ahmad b. Hanbal, the Prophet Muhammad (S) added:

لا يضره من فارقه أو خالقه

“Those who separate from or oppose them will not harm them.”

According to some versions, these twelve Caliphs are from Banu Hashim, a clan in Quraysh [all Shi’a Imams are from Banu Hashim]:

لا يزال الإسلام عززاً إلى اثني عشر خليفة
“All of them belong to Banu Hashim.”

While Shi’a have no problem in applying these narrations to their twelve Imams, Sunni scholars have great difficulty in this regard and were not able to explain them in accordance with historical facts, since the number of the caliphs who claimed to be true successors of the Prophet (OBUH) is by far more than twelve. So Sunni scholars have not been able to show this exclusiveness by referring to certain twelve caliphs. This confusion is manifested by the following statement by ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani, a great Sunni scholar, quoting from Ibn al-Jawzi:

Ibn Hajar narrates that Ibn al-Jawzi said: I discussed a lot about this narration and studied and asked about different possibilities for its commentary but I did not find anyone who could understand the meaning of this narration.

C. The Shi’a Of Imam Ali Are Felicitous

Al-Shawkani, a great Sunni scholar, narrates:

The Prophet (S) referred to Ali and said: “I swear by God in Whose hand is my life, verily this man [i.e. Ali] and his Shi’a are felicitous on the Day of Judgment.”
Is there any such explicit narration about the followers of other Islamic denominations?

3. Sahih Muslim, vol. 6, p. 3, hadith no. 4598.
Chapter 3: Caliphate Of Ali In Sunni Sources

During the history of Islam, the Shi’a have provided a bunch of evidence to prove the Imamate of Ali and his immediate successorship after the Prophet Muhammad (S). Such arguments can be convincing for other denominations, if they are based on their books. Therefore, the Shi’a have proved this concept by referring to the Noble Wur’an az well as hadiths from Sunni sources.

A. Wilayah (Guardianship), Imamate And Caliphate Of Ali In The Holy Qur’an

1. Verse Of Wilayah

*Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down. (5:55).*

As for the occasion of revelation (sha’n al-nuzul), al-Tabari, one the most prominent Sunni scholars of *tafsir* (commentary on the Qur’an) writes:
The verse “Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle …”(5:55) was revealed about Ali ibn Abi Talib, when he gave charity in the state of *ruku’* (bowing down) in prayer.  

The same has been quoted by ibn Abi Hatam from ‘Utba b. Hakim.  

Regarding the authenticity of these sources, ibn Taymiyya, the founder of Salafism, writes:

The books of *tafsir* by al-Tabari … and ibn Abi Hatam … contain commentaries relied on in *tafsir*.  

Al–Alusi, a well-known Sunni scholar of *tafsir*, writes about the occasion of revelation of the above–mentioned verse:

Most scholars of hadith hold that this verse was revealed about Ali.
In another part of his commentary, al-Alusi states:

وَالآية عند معظم المحدثين نزلت في عليٍّ كرم الله تعالى وجهه

In the eyes of most scholars of hadith, this verse was revealed about Ali. 5

2. Verse Of Iblagh (Proclamation)

باَيْ أَيْتَا الرَّسُولُ بَلْغَ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتُ رَسَالَتِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَغْصَبُ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقُوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people. Indeed Allah does not guide the faithless lot. (5:67)

Ibn Abi Hatam, narrating from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, a companion of the Prophet (S), writes:

نزلت هذه الآية ... في علي بن أبي طالب
This verse was revealed ... about Ali ibn Abi Talib.6

In his *Ruh al-Ma’ani*, al-Alusi writes:

ابن مسعود قال: كنا نقرأ على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يا أيها الربّ، بلَْغ ما أُنزل إلىك من رَبِّك إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا مَوَلَّى المؤمنين وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا يُلْعَب رِسَالَتِهِ

Ibn Mardawayh narrated from ibn Mas’ud who said: At the time of the Prophet (S), we recited this verse as: O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord “that Ali is the guardian of the believers”, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message.7

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, a prominent Sunni scholar of hadith, explains that:

بَلْغَ مَا أُنزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَبِّكَ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا مَوَلَّى المؤمنين وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا يُلْعَب رِسَالَتِهِ

Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord “that Ali is the guardian of the believers”, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message.8

Therefore, the verse commands the Prophet Muhammad (S) to proclaim openly that Ali is the *Mawla* or *Waliyy* (guardian/leader) of Muslims and the immediate successor of the Prophet (S).

3. Verse Of Ikmal Al-Din (Perfection Of Religion)
Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion. (5: 3)

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi writes about the occasion of revelation:

Abu Hurayra narrates that on the day of Ghadir Khumm, the Prophet (S), taking the hand of Ali ibn Abi Talib, said: “Am I not more authorized and rightful to you than yourselves?” All Muslims replied positively. Then he (S) said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.” Addressing Ali, ‘Umar b. al-Khattab said: “Congratulations to you, O Ali ibn Abu Talib! You became my guardian, and the guardian of all Muslims.” Then Allah (SWT) revealed the verse of Ikmal.
Narrations

1. Hadith Of Wilayah

According to the following narration from the Prophet Muhammad (S), quoted and authenticated by al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi and Shams al-Din al-Dhahabi, Wilayah and Imamate of Ali after the Prophet (S) is clearly proved:

The Holy Prophet (S) said: “Verily, Ali is from me and I am from him, and after me, he is the guardian of all believers.” This is an authentic hadith based on the criteria of Muslim.

Addressing Ali, the Prophet Muhammad (S) said: “You are the guardian of every believer, male and
female.” Al-Albani says: “It is an authentic hadith as mentioned by al-HakiM and al-Dhahabi.” 11

The question usually raised is that how the words “Waliyy” and “Mawla” are translated to mean Imam and Caliph. Here reference is made to some Sunni sources where the same words are applied to mean the same.

قال ابوبكر: قد ولیتْ أمركم ولست بخيركم.إسناد صحيح

Abu Bakr said: “I have been chosen as your Waliyy (i.e. I reached Caliphate), while I am not the best among you.” This is an authentic narration.12

Also choosing ‘Umar b. al-Khattab as the Second Caliph, Abu Bakr said:

وَلْیتْ عَلَیْكُم عَمَّرَ

I make ‘Umar the Waliyy (Imam, guardian) over you.’13

The Second Caliph says the following about his caliphate and that of Abu Bakr:

قال عمر: فلما توفي رسول الله قال أبو بكر: أنا ولی رسول الله . ... ثم توفي أبو بكر و أنا ولی رسول الله و ولی أبى بكر

‘Umar said: When the Prophet (S) passed away, Abu Bakr said: “I am the successor (Waliyy) of the Prophet (S)” ... then Abu Bakr passed away and now, I am the successor (Waliyy) of the Prophet (S) and Abu Bakr.’14
2. Hadith Of Caliphate

Addressing Ali, the Prophet Muhammad (S) said:

وأتت خليفي في كل مؤمن من بعدي

After me, you are my Caliph for all believers.
According to al-Albani, it is an authentic (hasan) narration.

Also, according to al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi and al-Dhahabi, the Prophet Muhammad (S) told Ali:

لا ينبغي أن انعم إلا وأنت خليقي. قال الألباني: صحيح الحاكم والذهبي وهو كما قال.

“It does not behove me to leave [the world] except when you are my Caliph.” Al-Albani says: “It is an authentic narration as confirmed by al-Hakim and Dhahabi”. 16

These narrations explicitly refer to the fact that Ali was the immediate successor of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

3. Hadith Of Imamate

In the following narration, Ali is introduced as the Imam (leader) of the righteous people:

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: علي إمام المتقين. صحيح الاستاد.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) said: “Ali is the Imam of the God–wary.” This is an authentic narration. 17
In yet another hadith, addressing Ali, the Prophet (S) said:

أنت إمام كل مؤمن ومؤمنة

“You are the Imam for every believer, male and female.” 18

4. Hadith Of Wasiyyah (Vicegerency), Also Known As Hadith Yawm Al-Dar

In early Islam, [after 3 years of private preaching of Islam], the Prophet (S) was commanded to invite his close relatives to Islam. They gathered in the house of Abu Talib and in his call, the Prophet (S) introduced Ali as his “brother, vicegerent and caliph”. Al-Tabari, the well-known historian, writes in his history:

عن علي بن أبي طالب لما نزلت هذه الآية على رسول الله: وأنت عمير الكفر وافقين (الشعراء: 24) فأتيت جمع بن أبي طالب الهند: فأخذ مني السرور واتبعوه:

Ali ibn Abi Talib narrates: When the verse, “Warn the nearest of your kinsfolk” (26:214) was revealed on the Prophet (S), in a gathering of the sons of Abd al-Muttalib, he (S) took my neck and said: “Indeed, this [i.e. Ali] is my brother, vicegerent and caliph among you. So listen to and obey him.” 19
Great Sunni scholars including al-Haythami, al-Tabari, al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi and al-Dhahabi have testified to the authenticity of this hadith.\(^{20}\)

In another hadith, the Prophet (S) tells his daughter Fatimah al-Zahra:

> My vicegerent is the best of the vicegerents and the most beloved by Allah (SWT) and he is your husband.\(^{21}\)

According to a Prophetic narration, to have a vicegerent is a feature shared by all prophets:

> إن لكل نبي ووصينا ووارثا وإن عليا وصمي ووارثي

Indeed, every prophet has a vicegerent and inheritor and Ali is my vicegerent and inheritor.\(^{22}\)

The vicegerency and caliphate of Ali was so well-known among people and men of literature that it was considered as a feature of him in the books of philology and lexicography. In his *Taj al-'Arus*, al-Zubaydi, the prominent Sunni lexicographer writes:
Another Sunni scholar of lexicography is ibn Manzur who writes in his *Lisan al-‘Arab*:

وقبل لعلي عليه السلام: وصي

Ali (AS) was called *Wasiyy*.

Al–Mubarrad, one the founders of Arabic literature, commenting on Kumayt’s poems states:

قوله الوصي، فهذا شيء كانوا يقولونه وبطرون فيه.

The word “*Wasiyy*” was used a lot to refer to Ali.

The fact that “*Wasiyy*” was a famous epithet for Ali is more confirmed by its usage by Aram poets. Hassan b. Thabit, the well–known poet of the Prophet’s era, addressing Ali, writes in one of his poems:

أنت أخاه في الهدى ووصي وعلمهم بالكتاب وسنن

 Aren’t you the Prophet’s brother in guidance and his *Wasiyy* and the most knowledgeable among Muslims regarding the Holy Qur’an and narrations?

Also, Fazl b. ‘Abbas composed:
Indeed, the best of people after Muhammad (S) is [Ali who is] the Wasiyy of the Prophet Muhammad (S) before the people of understanding.27

The following verses were composed by al-Mubarrad:

أحبب محمدًا حبًا شديدًا وعباسيًا وحمزة والوصيّا

I enthusiastically love Muhammad, ‘Abbas, Hamza and Wasiyy [i.e. Ali].28

إني أدين بما دان الوصيّ به يوم النخيلة من ققال المحليّا

As for killing those who attended the battle of Jamal, I agree with Wasiyy [i.e. Ali].29

5. Hadith Of Safina (The Ark)

One of the narrations indicating the Wilayah of Ali is the hadith of Safina according to which, the Ahl al-Bayt (progeny) of the Prophet (S) including Ali, are like Noah’s Ark; whoever embarks it will be saved
and those who lag behind will perish. This hadith has been quoted with authentic chains of narration by many Sunni scholars including Ahmad b. Hanbal, al-Tabarani and al-Khatib al-Baghdadi:

Abu Dharr, holding the door of Ka’ba, said: “Those who know me then they know me; those who do not know me, let them know that I am Abu Dharr. I heard the Prophet (S) say: “The similitude of my Ahl al-Bayt among you is like the Noah’s Ark; those who embark it will be saved and those who remain behind will drown.””

According to al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, this is an authentic narration, based on the criteria of Muslim.

6. Hadith Of Opposing The Ahl Al-Bayt

This Prophetic narration which shows the true path of guidance indicates that the Ahl al-Bayt are the haven and place of refuge for Muslims and opposing them is tantamount to entering the party of Satan. Al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi has quoted this hadith with an authentic chain of narration in his al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Sahihayn:
My Ahl al-Bayt are a refuge for my nation to avoid division. If an Arab tribe opposes them, they will fall into differences and disagreements and therefore, enter the party of Satan.32

6. Tafsir Ibn Abi Hatam, vol. 4, p. 1172, hadith no. 6609.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي من الصورة.
لا يوجد نص يمكن قراءته بشكل طبيعي من الصورة المقدمة.
هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد ولم ي гр jak
المريفي له طولان، فلم أخرجه
حدثنا أبو بن حرب بن متلا، رضي الله عنه، عن أبي رميمة
الإمام، نسأه إلى عبد الله بن عبد الله
والأخير، رضي الله عنه، أن قالت: قال رسول الله ﷺ: قال: إنكم تكلتم في كتب
ومستحسنات. هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد ولم يجر

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد ولم يجر

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هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد ولم يجر
لا تذكر قصيدة مرتبطة بهذا الموضوع.

الطريقة في المذهب والمذهب، 3

لا تذكر قصيدة مرتبطة بهذا الموضوع.

في هذا المذهب، 3

لا تذكر قصيدة مرتبطة بهذا الموضوع.

في هذا المذهب، 3

لا تذكر قصيدة مرتبطة بهذا الموضوع.

في هذا المذهب، 3

لا تذكر قصيدة مرتبطة بهذا الموضوع.

في هذا المذهب، 3
سبث الله ين داهر الحازمي تعا عبد الله بن عبد القادر عن الأمش
من أبي اسمح من خليج بن عبد الله رافع بن أحمد بعث النبي باب الكعبة وهو يدعو من موضع
قد يعني من الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

۳۳۳۸ - حديث علي بن عبد المحسن معدنا سلم بن ابي همام
ثنا الحسن بن أبي جعفر عن أبي بكر الصديق عن سعيد بن أبي جبير عن
ابن ميسار رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:
ه مثل أهل بيتي مثل سفينة نوح وبرك فيها نجا ومن تخلف
عنها غرق.

۳۳۳۹ - حديث عبد الله بن عبد الله عن أبي بكر
معنا ثنا عثمان بن يس بن عبد الله بن ميسار عن أبي بكر
عن جده قال:

۳۳۴۸ - قال في المجاهد ۱۹۹/۸ في سنده الحسن بن أبي جعفر وهو خروج
۳۳۲۹ - قال في نسخة مصح愔 الدار إلى الأثر، قد وقع
الشهيد)، فكان هذه نسبات الأثر لا تذكر فأخفف
۳۳۲۶ - قال في نسخة مصح愔 الدار إلى الأثر، قد وقع
الشهيد)، فكان هذه نسبات الأثر لا تذكر فأخفف

۳۳۴۹ - قال في المجاهد ۱۹۹/۸ في سنده الحسن بن أبي جعفر وهو خروج
۳۳۲۹ - قال في نسخة مصح愔 الدار إلى الأثر، قد وقع
الشهيد)، فكان هذه نسبات الأثر لا تذكر فأخفف
۳۳۲۶ - قال في نسخة مصح愔 الدار إلى الأثر، قد وقع
الشهيد)، فكان هذه نسبات الأثر لا تذكر فأخفف

Chapter 4: The Great Event Of Ghadir Khumm In Sunni Sources

Due to its high significance, we dedicate this chapter to the event and hadith of Ghadir Khumm to study all related aspects.

**Hadith Of Ghadir Is Mutawatir (Widely-Transmitted)**

According to many Sunni scholars, the hadith of Ghadir has been quoted through many chains of narration and therefore, it is certainly a *mutiwatir* hadith. Here is the names of some of them:

1. **Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali (D. 505 AH)**

> وأَجْمَعُ الْجَمْهُورُ عَلَى مَتَنِ الْحَدِيثِ مِن حُكْمِهِ فِي يَوْمِ غَدِيرَ خُمٍّ يَا تَفَقَّاحُ الْجَمِيعِ وَهُوَ يُقُولُ مِن كَنْتُ مَوَلَّاهُ فِي إِيَّاهَا مَوَلَّاهُ.

All Muslims agree that the Prophet (S) said on the day of Ghadir Khumm: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.”

1
2. Shams Al-Din Al-Dhahabi

What follows shows that he also believed in this.

3. Ibn Al-Kathir

Analysing the hadith of Ghadir, ibn al-Kathir quotes al-Dhahabi as saying:

وصرح الحديث (من كنت مولاه فعلي مولاه) متواتر، أتى قل أرسل الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) قال، وأما اللهم واأن وآله فزيادة قوية الإسناد.

The first part of the hadith (whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority) is mutiwatir and I have no doubt that the Prophet (S) has said that. As for the phrase “O Allah! Befriend those who befriend Ali”, it is an additional part which has a strong chain of narration.2

4. Shams Al-Din B. Al-Jazari

He has quoted the hadith of Ghadir through 8 chains of narration. He authored a book titled Asna al-Matalib in which he explicitly talks about the tawatur (widely-transmission) of this hadith:
This narration is authentic from many respects and it is widely quoted from the Commander of the Faithful Ali as well as the Messenger of God (S). Many groups have narrated it from many groups. The words of those who have considered it weak without mastering the knowledge of hadith are of no value and should be ignored. This hadith has been authenticated by those whose words give us certainty.

5. Jalal Al-Din Al-Suyuti (D. 910 AH)

As quoted by al–Manawi (see. below), al–Suyuti believed in the tawatur of this hadith.


Commenting on the hadith of Ghadir, al–Manawi quotes al–Suyuti as saying:

حديث متواتر

It is a mutiwatir narration.

7. Al–Simnani (D. 736 AH)

In his book, al–‘Urwah li–Ahl al–Khalwah, al–Simnani writes:

وهو حديث متفق على صحته.

This is a narration all agree on its authenticity.

8. Abu Abd Allah Al–Zarqani Al–Maliki (D. 1122 AH)

As for the authenticity and tawatur of the hadith of Ghadir, al–Zarqani writes:

هو متواتر رواه ستة عشر صحابيًا وفي رواية لأحمد أنه سمعه من النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثون صحابيًا وشهدوا به لعلي لما نزوع أيام خلافته، فلا النتفات إلى من قدح في صحته ولا لمن رده بأن عليا كان باليمن لقبول رجوعه منها وإدراك الحج معه صلى الله عليه وسلم.

This hadith is mutiwatir as it has been narrated by 16 Companions of the Prophet (S) and it is mentioned in a narration of Ahmad that 30 Companions have heard this sermon and speech from the Prophet (S) and according to it, they testified in favour of Ali when he was challenged during his caliphate. Therefore,
the claim of those who have objected its authenticity or rejected the said story, asserting that Ali was in Yemen then, is not accepted, since it has been proven that Ali returned from Yemen and joined the farewell pilgrimage of the Messenger of God (S).  

9. Al-Albani (D. 1420 AH)

He writes in *Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Sahihah*:

> وجملة الفعل أن حديث الترجمة حديث صحيح بشطريه، بل الأول متواتر عنه (صلى الله عليه و سلم)، كما يظهر لمن تبع أسانيده وطريقه.

Both parts of this hadith [the first being “whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority” and the second being “O Allah! Befriend those who befriend Ali and be enemy of those who are his enemies”] are authentic; rather, the first part is *mutiwar* as it is clear for the one who studies the chains of this hadith.

The great number of the narrators of hadith of Ghadir has astonished some Sunni scholars. Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani writes:

> واعتني بجمع طرقه أبو العباس ابن عقدة، فأخرج من حديث سبعين صحابياً أو أكثر.

Abu al-‘Abbas ibn ‘Uqda tried to gather all the chains of this narration. He found the hadith of Ghadir to...
The hadith of “whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority” has been quoted by al-Tirmidhi and al-Nisa'i. It has been narrated through many chains of narration. Ibn ‘Uqda has mentioned all the chains in a special book, many of which are authentic.

This greatness in number is best explained by al-Dhahabi:

I saw a volume written by ibn Jarir (al-Tabari) on the chains of the hadith of Ghadir and was surprised by this book and the great number of the chains.

Explaining the biography of ibn Jarir al-Tabari, al-Dhahabi writes:

وأما حديث (من كنت مولاه فعلي مولاه) فقد أخرجه الترمذي والسائلي، وهو كثير الطرق جداً، وقد استوعبها ابن عقدة في كتاب مفرد، وكثير من أسانيده صاحح وحسن.
Ibn Jarir al-Tabari collected the chains of the hadith of Ghadir in 4 volumes. I saw a part of it and was astonished by widely-transmission of this hadith and was convinced with certainty that this event has occurred.\textsuperscript{11}

In his \textit{al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah}, ibn al-Kathir al-Dimashqi says about the hadith of Ghadir:

أبو جعفر بن جریر الطبري... وقد رأيت له كتاباً جمع فيه أحاديث غدير خم في مجلدين ضخمين

Abu Ja'far b. Jarir al-Tabari ... I saw a book written by him in which he collected the narrations of Ghadir in 2 voluminous volumes.\textsuperscript{12}

### Hadith Of Ghadir In Sunni Sources

Hadith of Ghadir has been quoted in many Sunnis sources in the form of a short narration or long sermon.

1. \textit{Sahih Muslim}

The Messenger of Allah (S) stood up to give us a speech beside a pond known as \textit{Khumm} which is located between Mecca and Medina. Then he praised Allah and reminded Him, and then said: “O people! Behold! It seems the time approached when I shall be called away (by Allah) and I shall answer that call. Behold! I am leaving for you two precious things. The first of them is the Book of Allah in which there is light and guidance ... The other one is my Ahl al-Bayt. I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahl al-Bayt. I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahl al-Bayt. I remind you in the name of Allah about my Ahl al-Bayt.”\textsuperscript{13}
The Holy Prophet (S) said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority”. 14
According to al-Albani in "Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi", this is an authentic narration. He has also narrated it in his "Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Sahihah" which contains only authentic narrations.

Ahmad b. Hanbal has also quoted this hadith with an authentic chain in his "al-Musnad". Al-Haythami writes about this hadith:

رواه أحمد ورجاله رجال الصحيح

Ahmad b. Hanbal has quoted this hadith and all narrators in the chain are trustworthy.

3. Al-Sunan By Al-Nisa'i

Al-Nisa'i has mentioned the hadith of Ghadir in his "al-Sunan" which is one the 6 canonical collections of hadith ("al-Sihah al-Sittah") for Ahl al-Sunna:

أخبرنا قتيبة بن سعید قال أخبرنا بن أبي عدي عن عوف عن ميمون أبي عبد الله قال زيد بن أرقم: قام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فحمد الله وأثنى عليه ثم قال أسلم تعلمون أنى أولئك مؤمن من نفسه قالوا بل نحن نشهد لانه أولئك بكل مؤمن من نفسه قال فأتي من كنت مولاه فهذا مولاه أخذ بيد علي.
The Messenger of Allah (S) stood up to give us a speech. He praised Allah and reminded Him, and then said: “Do you not know that I have more authority over the believer than himself?” They replied: “Yes indeed, we testify that you have more authority over the believer than himself.” Then the Prophet (S), taking the hand of Ali, said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.” 19

4. Al-Sunan By Ibn Majah

Ibn Majah narrates the following with an authentic chain of narration:

Al-Bara’ b. ‘Adhib narrates: We returned with the Messenger of Allah (S) from his hajj he had performed, and we stopped at some point on the road. He (S) commanded that prayer should be performed in congregation, then he took the hand of Ali and said: “Do not I have more authority over the believers than their own selves?” They said: “Yes indeed.” He said: “Do not I have more authority over a believer than his own self?” They said: “Yes indeed.” He said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, this man will be his master and authority. O Allah! Take as enemy those who take him as enemy and befriend those who take him as an enemy.” 20

According to al-Albani, this an authentic narration.

5. Al-Musnad By Ahmad B. Hanbal

Ahmad b. Hanbal, the founder of Hanbali school of jurisprudence, has narrated the hadith of Ghadir with an authentic chain of narration:

Zayd b. Arqam narrates: We stopped with the Messenger of Allah (S) beside a place known as Wadi Khumm. Then he (S) commanded us to say the prayer. He said his prayer and we did in that hot weather. They threw a cloth on a tree for the Messenger of God (S) to shade him. Then he (S) said: “Don’t you know? Don’t you testify that I have more authority over the believer than himself?” They replied: “Yes.” Then the Prophet (S) said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority. O Allah! Take as enemy those who take him as enemy and befriend those who befriended him.”
Great Number Of Muslims Present At Ghadir Khumm

Regarding this, Sibt b. al-Jawzi writes:

All the scholars of history agree that the event of Ghadir took place on the return of the Holy Prophet (S) from the farewell pilgrimage on 18th Dhi al-Hijja, while some of the Companions and Arabs and some from those living around Mecca and Medina numbered 124000, were with him at the farewell pilgrimage, and they heard that the he (S) said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.”

Al–Halabi, the famous Sunni scholar, narrates:

When the Prophet (S) decided to go to his [farewell] hajj, he was accompanied by a large group of people, the number of whom is known only by Allah (AS). According to different views, they were 40,000, 70,000, 90,000, 114,000 or 120,000 and yet some believe they were even more.

In his encyclopaedia, Farid Wajdi writes:

In the year 10 AH, the Prophet (S) performed hajj with Muslims ... About 90,000 people accompanied him (S) in that year.

How Does Hadith Of Ghadir Prove The Imamate Of Ali?

There is a bunch of evidence showing that in the event of Ghadir Khumm, the Prophet (S) meant to appoint Ali as his Caliph and successor.
They heard the Prophet (S) telling Ali on the Day of Ghadir Khumm: “Isn’t it that Allah (SWT) has more authority over the believers?” They answered positively. Then he (S) said: “O Allah! Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority. O Allah, befriend those who befriend him, and take as enemies those who take him as an enemy.”

As the annotation of Ahmad Shakir shows, the chain of narration is authentic. Also, al–Albani writes:

"حديث صحيح"

It is an authentic narration.

Ibn al–Kathir Dimashqi writes with regard to hadith of Ghadir:

روى ابن كثير عن زيد بن أرقم قال: فخطني رسول الله ... فقال: أسلم تعلمون؟ أو أسلم تشهدون أني أولي بكل مؤمن من نفسه؟ قالوا: يلي! قال: فمن كنت مولاه فإن عليا مولاه ... وهذا إسناد جيد رجاله ثقات على شرط السنن وقد صحح الترمذي بهذا السنن حديثا في الربت.
Zayd b. Arqam narrates: The Messenger of Allah (S) delivered a speech ... Then he (S) said: “Don’t you know? Don’t you testify that I have more authority over the believer than himself?” They replied: “Yes.” Then the Prophet (S) said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.” ...

The narrators in the chain are trustworthy based on the criteria of al–Sunan. Also, al–Tirmidhi has authenticated another hadith with the same chain of narration.27

In his al–Musnad, Al–Bazzar has quoted hadith of Ghadir from Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas with an authentic chain of narration:

The Prophet (S), taking the hand of Ali said: “Don’t I have more authority over the believers than their own selves? Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.”28

As for the chain of narration, al–Haythami states:

This is narrated by al–Bazzar and all the narrators are trustworthy.29

Ibn Majah has narrated the following from Bara’ b. ‘Adhib:

Bara’ b. ‘Adhib narrates: We returned with the Messenger of Allah (S) from his hajj he had performed, and we stopped at some point on the road. He (S) commanded that prayer should be performed in congregation, then he took the hand of Ali and said: “Do not I have more authority over the believers than their own selves?” They said: “Yes indeed.” He said: “Do not I have more authority over a believer than his own self?” They said: “Yes indeed.” He said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, this man will be his master and authority. O Allah, befriend those who befriend him, and take as enemies those who take him as an enemy.”30

According to al–Albani, this an authentic narration.

Again, in his al–Mustadrak ‘ala al–Sahihayn, al–Hakim al–Nayshaburi narrates the following hadith with an authentic chain from Zayd b. Arqam:
We set out with Allah’s Messenger (S) until we reached Ghadir Khumm. He commanded that a canopy should be put up. He looked tired on that day and it was a very hot day. He praised Allah (SWT) and then said: “O people, … it seems to me that soon I may be called (to breathe my last) which I shall accept. I am leaving in your midst something that will never let you go astray, and that is the Book of Allah (SWT).” Then he stood up, held Ali’s hand and said: “O people, who is the one who has more authority over you than your selves?” All of them said: “Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (S) know better.” Then he (S) added: “Do I not have more authority over you than your selves?” They said: “Yes!” He said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority.”

According to al–Hakim al–Nayshaburi and al–Dhahbi, this is an authentic narration, although Muslim and Bukhari have not quoted it.

Also, in his al–Musnad, al–Bazzar narrates the following hadith with an authentic chain from ‘Amr Dhi Murr, Sa'id b. Wahab and Zayd b. Yathi:

We heard Ali say: “I ask those who heard [the sermon of] the Prophet (S) on the Day of Ghadir Khumm to proclaim what they heard.” Then 13 men stood up and testified that the Prophet (S) said: “Don’t I have more authority over the believers than their own selves?” They answered positively. Then he (S) took the hand of Ali and said: “Whoever I am his master and authority, Ali will be his master and authority. O Allah! Befriend those who befriend him and take as enemy those who take him as enemy. Love those who love him and hate those who hate him. Help those who help him and forsake those who forsake him.”

Quoting this hadith, al–Haythami states that all the narrators of this hadith are the narrators in Sahih Muslim, except for Fitr b. Khalifa who is a trustworthy narrator. Also Ahmad b. Hanbal has narrated it in his al–Musnad with slight differences and according to Ahmad Shakir, the chain is authentic.

The highlighted phrase mentioned by the Prophet (S) refers to the following verse:
The Prophet (S) is more authorized and rightful to the believers than themselves. (33:6).

Wilayah of the Prophet (S) in this verse refers to his authority over the Muslims’ affairs and this concept has been stressed by great Sunni scholars of tafsir such as al-Tabari who commenting on the verse, writes:

> يقول: أحق بالمؤمنين به من أنفسهم، أن يحكم فيما شاء من حكم، فيجوز ذلك عليهم، كما حدثني يونس، قال:
> أخبرنا ابن وهب، قال: قال ابن زيد: النبي أولى بالمؤمنين من أنفسهم، كما أنت أولى بعبدك، ما قضى فيهم من أمر جاز، كما كلما قضيت علي عبدك جاز.

The verse means that the Prophet (S) has more authority over the believers than themselves, in that he has all right to pass judgment among them as he wills. Ibn Zayd said: “The Prophet (S) has more authority over the believers than themselves, just like you have more authority over your slave. He (S) has the right to pass any judgment among them, just like you have the right to pass any judgment about your slave.’

In his commentary known as al-Kashshaf, Zamakhshari writes:

> وهذه الآية أصرح آية في وولياء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بمعنى أولوته بأمور المسلمين من أنفسهم كما صرح به كبار علماء أهل السنة: قال الزمخشري: (النبي أولى بالمؤمنين) في كل شيء من أمور الدين والدنيا... وحكمه أخف عليهم من حكمها، وحقه أثر لديهم من حقوقها

This verse is the most explicit one referring to the Wilayah of the Prophet (S) requiring that, as mentioned by great Sunni scholars, he (S) has more authority over Muslims’ affairs than themselves. The Prophet (S) has more authority over the believers with regard to all affairs related to religion and the world ... and his judgment is more effective on them than their judgment and his right is preferred over their rights.

Al-Alusi has mentioned the same in his tafsir. Regarding this, al-Bayzawi writes:

> النبي أولى بالمؤمنين من أنفسهم في الأمور كلها، فإنه لا يأمرهم ولا يرضي منهم إلا بما فيه صلاحهم ونجاحهم،)

... يخالف النفس

> “The Prophet (S) has more authority over the believers” in all the affairs as he (S), contrary to one’s carnal desire, only commands for what is in their favour and saves them.
Finally, with regard to the *Wilayah* of the Prophet (S), ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi states:

Allah (SWT) says: “The Prophet (S) is more authorized and rightful to the believers than themselves.” This verse proves that if someone does not believe that the Prophet (S) is more authorized and rightful to him than himself then he is not a believer. This authority requires that firstly, he should love the Prophet (S) more than himself, since the root of this authority is love and one’s self is the most beloved to him. However, faith is realized when he loves the Prophet (S) more than himself. Such authority and love entail full submission, obeyance, satisfaction, surrendering and other requirements of love including satisfaction with his judgment, submission to his orders and preferring him over others; and secondly that he does not pass any judgment about himself; rather, such judgment belongs to the Prophet (PNUH) whose judgment is greater than that of a master over his slave or a father over his child.39

No doubt, according to the Prophet (S), Wilayah of Ali is rooted in his Wilayah. So, the authority of him (S) requires people to obey Ali. In other words, the Prophet (S) explicitly mentioned that the same Wilayah given to him by Allah (SWT) is there for Ali as well.

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17. Sahih Muslim, vol. 4, p. 1873, hadith no. 2408.
19. Sahih Muslim, vol. 4, p. 1873, hadith no. 2408.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي من الصورة. يرجى تقديم النص كنص منصبي أو كنص مكتوب بشكل طبيعي للمساعدة بشكل أفضل.
Chapter 5: An Analysis Of Sunnis’ Arguments For Abu Bakr’s Caliphate

Ahl al–Sunna have presented some arguments to prove the caliphate of Abu Bakr. In this chapter, these arguments are analysed.

A. Consensus

Ijma’ (consensus) is one of the reasons mentioned for the legitimacy of Abu Bakr’s caliphate. However, it is not mentioned clearly if it refers to the consensus of all Muslims, or that of the inhabitants of Medina, or that of the qualified people (ahl al–hall wa al–’aqd) and so forth. Besides, there are some serious questions concerning this claim.

1. Did Consensus Take Place?

The viewpoint of ‘Umar b. al–Khattab, the Second Caliph, is against such claimed consensus:

‘Umar said: paying allegiance to Abu Bakr was a prompt sudden act … but Allah prevented its evil
In his *tafsir*, al-Qurtubi, a great Sunni scholar, implicitly rejecting the consensus of all Muslims, holds that paying allegiance of one person is enough in realizing *Ijma*’ and the reason is ‘Umar’s allegiance to Abu Bakr:

وقد ذكرت سابقاً أنه إذا أنتم عقدتم التراب أو وزارة وما أقرب منكم أو كل منكم أقرب من الآخر في حق الخلافة فأولاً كان ذلك مستند إلى ‘عمر النخعي الذي قال أن عقد رضى الله عنه بعده ‘أبا بكر‘ و ‘عمر‘ و ‘أبي ذر‘ وهو قول ‘النخعي‘.

If caliphate is proved by one of the qualified people then it is established … The reason is that ‘Umar [alone] paid allegiance to Abu Bakr and no companion denied that.2

Is it possible to have consensus with one person’s allegiance?!

**2. Did All The Companions In Medina Pay Allegiance To Abu Bakr?**

According to some, all the Companions living in Medina paid allegiance to Abu Bakr and this shows the legitimacy of his caliphate. However, this claim is rejected by the fact that according to the Sunnis’ authentic sources, many Companions refused to pay him allegiance. Sahih al-Bukhari quotes ‘Umar b. al-Khattab saying:
All the Ansar (helpers, Medinan Companions of the Prophet (S)) opposed us and gathered in Saqifa Bani Sa‘ida. Also, Ali, Zubayr and their followers opposed us.3

Regarding this, ibn Taymiyya, writes:

وكان أكثر بني عبد مناف من بني أمية وبني هاشم وغيرهم لهم ميل قوي إلى علي بن أبي طالب بختارون ولايته.

Most of Banu ‘Abd Manaf, including Banu Umayya, Banu Hashim and others, had a great tendency towards Ali ibn Abi Talib and chose his Wilayah.4

Ibn al–Athir al–Jazari explains that:

فقالت الأنصار أو بعض الأنصار: لا نتبع إلا عليًا.

All Ansar or some of them said: “We do not pay allegiance except to Ali.”5

Again, according to al–Bukhari, Fatimah, who lived for 6 months after the demise of the Prophet (S), did
not talk and pay allegiance to Abu Bakr during this period. Ali also did not pay allegiance to him in the same span of time:

A’ishah narrates: ... Fatimah liver for 6 months after the Prophet (S) ... and Ali did not pay allegiance during these months.6

It is interesting to know that ibn al-Hazm al-Andulusi believes that every consensus without the consent and presence of Ali ibn Abi Talib is cursed:

Ibn Hazm said: Allah’s curse be upon any consensus in which Ali ibn Abi Talib and his companions are absent.7

3. Was There Any Democracy In Choosing Abu Bakr? Was There Any Force?

Some people claim that Abu Bakr was chosen out of democracy since it was the view of people who freely and without being forced, chose him as their caliph. This claim, however, is contradicted by various narrations in the Sunnis’ most authentic sources. Al-Bukhari quotes ‘A’ishah as saying:

‘Umar used to threaten the people.8

In his history book, al-Tabari declares that one of the reasons which helped Abu Bakr reach caliphate was the presence of Aslam tribe who forced people to pay allegiance to him and suppressed those who disagreed:

‘Umar b. al-Khattab says: “As soon as I saw Aslam tribe, I was convinced of victory.”9

B. Narrations

Some Sunni scholars have resorted to some weak narrations to prove the caliphate of Abu Bakr. However, this claim is against the Sunnis’ belief that the Prophet (S) did not choose any successor. Also
it is in contradiction with the narrations stating that no one was chosen by the Prophet (S). One narration in Sahih al-Bukhari reads:

‘Umar said: If I choose a successor, it is what was done by a person who was better than me i.e. Abu Bakr and if I do not choose any successor, it is what was done by a person who was better than me i.e. the Prophet (S). 10

Al-Taftazani, a great Sunni scholar of theology writes:

There is no [Prophetic] narration about the caliphate of Abu Bakr. 11

Therefore, to claim that some narrations prove his caliphate is baseless.

**Does Abu Bakr’s Congregational Prayer, Instead Of The Prophet (S) Prove His Caliphate?**

To prove Abu Bakr’s caliphate, some Sunni scholars have referred to some narrations according to which, the Prophet (S) sent Abu Bakr to lead the congregational prayer on his behalf. According to them, this shows that he (S) trusted Abu Bakr for leading the Muslim nation. However, these narrations are not acceptable for various reasons:

**A. Congregational Prayer With 2 Imams (Leader In Prayer)?!**

An obvious problem in such narrations is that they portray a form of congregational prayer which is invalid according to all Sunni schools:

Abu Bakr said his prayer while standing and the Prophet (S) said his prayer while sitting. Abu Bakr followed the prayer led by the Prophet (S) and people followed the prayer led by Abu Bakr. 12

Clearly, a congregational prayer is led by only one imam and the above–mentioned way is invalid.
B. Was Abu Bakr The Imam Of The Prayer Or Just A Mukabbir?

According to one narration in Sahih al-Bukhari, Abu Bakr did not lead the congregational prayer; rather, he was just a mukabbir:

وَأَبُو بَكْر يُسْمَعُ النَّاسُ التَّكْبِيرَ.

Abu Bakr acted as a mukabbir. 13

C. Is Leading A Prayer A Sign For Caliphate?!

According to various narrations in Sunni sources, different people were appointed by the Prophet (S) in different occasions to lead the prayer. If leading a prayer is a criterion for deserving caliphate, these people too must have been chosen as caliphs:

مَثَلَ اﻹِنْبَارِيَّةِ أُمَّ مُكَلُّومِ يُوْمُ النَّاسِ وَهُوَ أَعْمَى.

The Prophet (S) chose ibn Umm Maktum, who was blind, to act as his deputy in leading the prayer. 14

النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى ﺣَﻠْفَ أَبِي عُمَرٍ بِرْمَانٍ بْن عُوفٍ.

The Prophet (S) followed the prayer led by ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf. 15

Thus, either leading a prayer has nothing to do with caliphate or ibn Umm Maktum and ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf must have been chosen as caliphs by the same token.

D. Leading The Congregational Prayer Does Not Prove Even Justice

According to Sunni sources, leading the prayer does not require that the imam is just and righteous. So how can one claim that leading a prayer is a sign for caliphate?

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﻣِنْ أَصْلِ الدِّينِ الصَّلاةُ ﺧَليْفَ كُلٍّ بِرٍّ وَفَاحِرٍ.

The Prophet (S) said: “A principle of religion is to follow an imam in your prayer, whether he is a righteous person or a sinful one.” 16

So according to this narration, to lead a prayer does not prove liability for caliphate.

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Chapter 6: Caliphate Of ‘Umar B. Al–Khattab

Concerning the caliphate of the Second Caliph, there are many issues and problems, some of which we will mention in this chapter.

If The Caliph Is To Be Elected By The Council, Why Did Abu Bakr Appoint ‘Umar As Caliph?

The fact that Abu Bakr appointed ‘Umar as his successor without the opinion of the Companions is completely inconsistent with the claim that the caliphate is a matter of council; therefore, it was an undemocratic act.

Ibn al–Athir (d. 630 AH) writes:

"قال أبو بكر: إنّي استخلصت عليّم بعد عمر بن الخطاب، فاسمعوا له وأطيعوا"

Abu Bakr said: “I have appointed ‘Umar b. al–Khattab as successor after me, so listen to him and obey
Also, Ibn Abi Hatam, the famous Sunni scholar of tafsir writes:

قال أبو بكر: إن استخلفت عليكم عمر بن الخطاب فإن بعدي فلن نريد بناءً على ما يحكم، وإن يحكم فإن لا أعلم الغيب.

Abu Bakr said: I have appointed ‘Umar b. al-Khattab as my successor; if he does justice, which I think is the case (the benefit of his justice is for himself), but if he oppresses, I have no knowledge of the unseen. “As for those who do wrong, they will know by what overturning they will be overturned” (the Noble Qur’an, 26: 227).

Abu Bakr also stated explicitly that he did this without the order of the Prophet:

فقال (أبو بكر): اللهم ولن يغفر أمر بنيك.

Abu Bakr said: God, I made ‘Umar the guardian of the Muslims without any order from the Prophet.

Furthermore, al-Tabari (d. 390) quotes Abu Bakr as saying:

إني ولت أمركم خيركم في نفس فككلكم وورى أنفه من ذلك يريد أن يكون الأمر له دونه.
I will make the one who is the best of you ('Umar) your caliph. You are all looking for the presidency and all of you want this presidency to be yours and not 'Umar's.  

**Was 'Umar Elected As The Caliph In Consultation With The Companions Or With Their Strong Protest?**

Some claim that although the caliphate of 'Umar was decided by the direct order of Abu Bakr, he consulted with the Companions on this issue and sought their opinion. Historical documents, however, show that this claim is false. Ibn Abi Shayba al-Kufi, the master of al-Bukhari, narrates:

When Abu Bakr was about to die, he sent someone to call 'Umar to introduce him as his successor. People said: "Are you dominating someone who is violent and bad-tempered? If he reaches power, he will be tougher and more violent. What will you answer God when you meet Him while you have dominated him over us?"

Despite this strong protest, can anyone still claim that Abu Bakr has consulted with the Companions?!

In another narration, it is stated that Imam Ali and Talha objected to the appointment of 'Umar to the caliphate in a private meeting with Abu Bakr:
‘A’shah narrates that when Abu Bakr was about to die, he chose ‘Umar as his successor. Ali and Talha came to him and said: “Who have you chosen?” “‘Umar”, he replied. They said: “Then what will you answer your Lord?” Abu Bakr said: “Do you want to help me know God? I know God and ‘Umar better than you.”6

Ibn Taymiyya al-Harrani (d. 728 AH) in a similar narration reveals the Companions' objection to Abu Bakr about the caliphate of ‘Umar:

قال ابن نيمية: وقد تكلموا مع الصديق في ولاية عمر وقالوا: ماذا تقول لربك وقد وليت عليك فذا غليظًا؟ فقال: أباليه؛!

Ibn Taymiyya says: The Companions talked to Abu Bakr about the succession of ‘Umar and said: “How will you answer God while you have chosen a violent and harsh person over the caliphate?” Abu Bakr said: “Do you scare me of God?!7

Chapter 7: Caliphate Of ‘Uthman B. ‘Affan

There are many questions and problems about the caliphate of ‘Uthman, some of which are mentioned below:
Was The 6-Members Council Elected By The People Or By ‘Umar B. Al-Khattab Himself To Elect The Third Caliph?

A. ‘Umar B. Al-Khattab's Disbelief In The 6-Member Council

According to Sunni sources, the Second Caliph did not believe in the council, and he believed that had Salim been alive, he would have chosen him as the next caliph without any council. Ibn ‘Abd al-Birr (d. 463 AH) narrates:

‘Umar said: “Had Salim been alive, I would have not elected the caliph with the council.”

Also, Ibn Qutayba al-Dinawari writes:

‘Umar said: “If Salim were alive, there would be no doubt in me about electing him as the caliph and
guarded for you.”

B. Electing Council Members Without Consulting The Companions

The election of the members of the caliphate council has never been done by the vote or even in consultation with the Companions; rather, the Second Caliph himself directly elected the members of the council, as quoted by al-Bukhari from him:

"I'm not aware of anything being done in the name of God's Prophet who was satisfied with them. So, each of these succeeded me, he is the caliph; follow him and obey him." Then 'Umar named (the members of the council): 'Uthman and Ali and Talha and Zubayr and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf and Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas.

C. The Second Caliph Ordered The Assassination Of Dissidents In The Council

Regarding the caliphate council, the Second Caliph issued a strange order which asked for the killing of those who object the majority vote.

Ibn Shabba, al-Tabari and Ibn al-Athir have narrated this in their books:

"No one is more worthy of the caliphate than these people. The Messenger of God (S) passed away while he was satisfied with them. So, each of these succeeded me, he is the caliph; follow him and obey him." Then ‘Umar named (the members of the council): ‘Uthman and Ali and Talha and Zubayr and ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf and Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas.

‘Umar b. al-Khattab said to Miqdad b. al-Aswad: "When you put me in the grave, gather these 6 people in a house so that they can choose one of them for the caliphate." ‘Umar also said to Suhayb: “Pray for the people for 3 days and gather Ali, ‘Uthman, Zubayr, Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas, ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf and Talha (if available) and Abdullah b. ‘Umar should also be present, but he has no right to vote. You should stand next to these 6 people. If 5 people agree and choose one person for the caliphate and the sixth person opposes them, split his head with your sword or behead him with your sword. If 4 people agree and 2 people disagree, behead those 2 people. And if 3 people agreed on one person and 3 other
people agreed on another person, Abdullah b. ‘Umar is the judge and his ruling regarding the opinions of these 2 groups is the final judgment. If they do not accept the opinion of Abdullah b. ‘Umar, the opinion of the group in which ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf is present should be accepted, and if the others disagree, kill them.”

D. Assigning Arbitration Of The Most Fundamental Issue Of Islamic Society To Abdullah B. ‘Umar, Who Has No Authority To Divorce His Wife

As mentioned in the previous narration, Abdullah b. ‘Umar was chosen by his father ‘Umar b. al-Khattab to make the final judgment. However, according to some Sunni sources, Abdullah b. ‘Umar had no competency to even divorce his wife:

**Ibrahim narrates that ‘Umar said:** “Who should I make the caliph? If Abu ‘Ubayda b. al-Jarrah were alive, I would have made him caliph.” A man said to him: “O Amir al-Mu’minin! Why don’t you make your son Abdullah the caliph?” ‘Umar said: “May God kill you! I swear to God that you have not considered God with this statement. Shall I make a man a caliph who cannot divorce his wife?!”

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