

Taharah & 'Ismah of The Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', And Imams (Peace Be Upon Them)

Authors(s):

Dr. Hatem Abu Shahba [3]

Translator(s):

Jerrmein Abu Shahba [4]

Translator's Preface

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful the Compassionate

One of the most hotly debated topics among the different schools of thoughts of Islam is the concept of Taharah (purification) and 'Ismah (infallibility) of the Holy Prophets, Messengers, Successors, and divine guides. Each of these divine roles have its own scope of responsibility, however, they all share one thing in common and that is, divine selection as the representative of God to the people. In such critical role for mankind, it is inevitable that those who assume these fateful roles *must* be infallible and purified from committing any sin, error, mistake, or inappropriate act. After all, the prophets, messengers, and successors are sent to the people to set the correct standards for them and serve as exceptional role models and a perfect template for them to emulate. Hence, Allah (SWT) directs this command in the Holy Quran to all believers, ***"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those vested with authority (Ulul-Amr) from among you."*** (4:59). This verse indicates the supreme authority given to the prophet and divine guides because they are sinless (Ma'sum) and free from all types of errors and sins. Otherwise, Allah would not have ordered us to obey them unconditionally. Without the existence of this safety margin for these selected divine guides, there is no guarantee that

they deliver the message exactly the way that Allah (SWT) intended, or that our obedience to them would be aligned with the obedience of Allah (SWT). There is no way that one can be assured with complete confidence that these prophets and successors don't order us to disobey God or that they themselves become misguided due to personal or worldly interests. Also from verse 4:59 it is clear that Ulul-Amr have been given exactly the same authority over Muslims as that of the Messenger, and that the obedience of Ulul-Amr has the same standing as the obedience of the Messenger. It naturally follows that Ulul-Amr *must* also be sinless (Ma'sum) and free from any type of error, otherwise, their obedience would not have been joined with the obedience of the Prophet and **without** any condition. Sure enough, the famous narration of the Cloak (Hadeeth Al Kisaa') confirms the fact that Allah (SWT) willed and desired that His beloved Prophet (SA) and his AhluBayt (AS) be purified a thorough purification as revealed in verse 33 of Surat Al Ahzaab: ***"Surely Allah desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O' Members of the Household and to make you pure and spotless."*** [33:33] As we know, whenever the divine Creator wills something, He simply says to it, ***"Be, and it is!"***[36:82] In order for us to observe and abide by the command given in this ayah, we must *first* understand the implications of the above-mentioned verses, and that is, the imperative and essential purification and infallibility of the divine representatives on earth. Without instilling and securing this belief within our minds, our devotion, obedience, and love towards these divine guides will be questioned and uncertain. After all, if we don't have 100% confidence in the infallibility of those whom we follow and take as our role models, then how can we be sure that the path we tread is really the correct one? How can we propagate the teachings of the Imams from the descendants of the Holy Prophet (SA) to our children when we haven't established to ourselves or to them their immaculate personalities and perfect characters? This paper is a humble attempt to proceed in that path of recognition of the essential attributes of purification and infallibility that **must** be present in all the divinely appointed representatives. May Allah (SWT) guide us to the conviction and certitude of the great divine status and impeccable positions of the Infallible Imams from the purified household of the Holy Messenger!

Introduction

In The Name of Allah, The Compassionate The Merciful

May His Peace and Blessing Be Upon the Most Dignified of Messengers, Muhammad and His Purified Progeny

Dear respected brothers and sisters: In this endeavor, we will attempt to research a very important and doctrinal topic which is one of the fundamentals of true belief and faith that should be present in the hearts and minds of every believer in Allah (SWT), such that his *Iman* (إيمان, faith) is completed and his 'Aqeeda (عقيدة, belief) is perfected. This controversial topic is about the Taharah and 'Ismah (purification and infallibility) of the Prophets, Messengers, *Awsiyaa'* (أوصياء, executors of will), and Imams who are specifically appointed by the command of Allah (SWT). These divine guides are all part of **one** chain that does not separate or deviate from each other. They complete one other in their roles and mission, even if their individual role and specific place differs from each another. There has been a heated discussion

surrounding this topic, and so, it is incumbent on us to research and carefully study it in an objective, reasonable, and inclusive manner. This research should be done under the light and guidance of what has been revealed by Allah (SWT) in His Wise Book, and through the words of His Seal of Prophets (SA) and the authentic narrations that are present in the most common books. Sound judgment should be made with an open and thoughtful mind, and Allah (SWT) is our Helper, God-willing! We seek and pray for His Guidance and Knowledge, for He is the Hearing and All-Knowing.

Research Question no. 1

Let us begin our research by posing this question: **What is Taharah? And what is 'ismah?** *Taharah* – طهارة, by its linguistic definition, refers to the process of cleansing and the removal of anything that may pollute that object (e.g. dirt, spots, odor, germs) with things that are unwanted or harmful to that person. As for the religious or spiritual connotation of *Taharah*, it means the purification and cleansing of the bodies, objects, soul, and heart from the things which Allah (SWT) ordered that they be purified from and with the way that He (SWT) ordered and specified. The process of *Taharah* (purification) can be carried out by yourself to yourself, or to others just like people can do it on you. There exists a strong correlation between the efficiency of purification and the proficiency of that person who carries that procedure, who is referred to as the *Mutahir* – مُطَهِّر. The more knowledgeable, experienced, and competent that individual is in achieving purification and cleansing, the more efficient and complete the results of purification will be. In other words, if the proficiency of the *Mutahir* is approximately 60%, we can also predict that the efficiency of the process of *Tat-heer* will also be approximately 60%. We have three things three components: *Mutahir* – مُطَهِّر, *Mutahar* – مُطَهَّر, and the process of *Tat-heer* – تطهير. *Mutahir* is the person or thing which attempts to purify, while *Mutahar* is the person or thing that is sought to be cleansed and purified. *Tat-heer* is the process by which the purification takes place. For instance, if you send your clothes to be washed at a laundromat, your clothes are the *Mutahar*, the laundromat is the *Mutahir*, and the method or procedure that the Laundromat undertakes to wash the clothes is the process of *Tat-heer* (purification). Logically-speaking, the cleanliness of your clothes will depend on the proficiency and competence of the *Mutahir*. As for the spiritual meaning of *Taharah*, you can also carry it out on yourself, or someone else could carry it out on you, and the same logic applies to the rules of relationships, as mentioned earlier. Spiritual *Tat-heer* is of two types: **1)** Physical cleansing and purification of materialistic things which you can see and feel, such as clothes or bodies. **2)** Spiritual cleansing and purification of moral things which you cannot see or touch, such as your heart, spirit, or mind. It is logical that the 2nd type of purification be more abstract and difficult to accomplish since you would be attempting to purify something that is not seen or felt. This process of *Tat-heer* is non-specific and the experience and proficiency of the person who carries it out could be limited too. That is because the proficiency and experience of the *Mutahir* depends on the proficiency and experience of the original teacher. So, if the original teacher lacks the expertise and experience, the purifier (*Mutahir*) will also lack it. And if the proficiency and knowledge of the teacher is minimal, it will also be minimal in the student who is learning from his teacher. This type of *Tat-heer* that is not felt or seen could also be carried out

by yourself as you may try to purify and cleanse your heart, spirit, mind, and soul through worship and remembrance of Allah (SWT) (ex: prayer, supplication, fasting, Samara, Hajj, good deeds, reading, etc.). Others may also carry out this process on you, like the sheikhs, U'lama, spiritual teachers, religious institutions, and seminaries. As for the meaning of *'Ismah* – عَصْمَة, it simply means protection and safeguarding. *Ya'sim* refers to the act of protecting, while *'Asim* – عَاصِم is the person or thing that protects. *Ma'soom* is the person or thing that is sought to be protected by the *'Asim*, whose occurrence and efficiency of *'Ismah* is 100% guaranteed. Now, if the person seeks protection, but the efficiency or approval for protection is not guaranteed by the *'Asim*, he is not anymore called *Ma'soom* – معصوم. Rather, he is called *Mu'tasim* – مُعْتَصِم since he is not sure if the *'Asim* will approve or is capable of protecting him or not. Furthermore, if the person actively and relentlessly seeks the protection and exerts lots of effort to attain it, which is also not guaranteed, he is called *Musta'sim* – مُسْتَعَصِم. Hence, not every *Mu'tasim* is a *Musta'sim*, and not every *Musta'sim* or a *Mu'tasim* is *Ma'soom*. That is because the *Ma'soom* is the only one whose process of protection is successfully completed by the *'Asim* with 100% efficiency. If we analyze the use of the word *'Ismah* (and its derivatives) by Allah (SWT) in the Qur'an, we will find the following: 1) Ayat Al-Balagh:

وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

“**Wallahu ya'semuka min al-naas**” **“And Allah will protect you from the people.”** [5:67] In this verse, Allah (SWT) is the *'Asim* and since He is the *'Asim*, there is no doubt in the efficiency of His protection which is 100% guaranteed. The Holy Prophet (SA), in this case, would be considered *Ma'soom* since the process of purification was approved and completed by the Almighty Creator. 2)

قَالَ سَأُوِي إِلَى جَبَلٍ يَعْصِمُنِي مِنَ الْمَاءِ

“**Qala sa-awy illa jabalen ya'semuni min al-maa'**...” **“He said: I will betake myself for refuge to a mountain that shall protect me from the water.”** [11:43] The *'Asim* in this verse is the mountain, while the son of Prophet Nuh (AS) is *Mu'tasim*, since the ability of the mountain to protect him is doubted and in fact proved to be a failure as indicated by the verse,

وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا الْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُغْرَقِينَ

“**...And a wave intervened between them, so he was from among those who drowned.**” [11:43]. 3)

وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدْتُهُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ

“**Wa la-qad rawadtuhu ‘an nafsih, fasta’sam...**” “**And certainly I sought his yielding himself to me, but he abstained** [12:32]. In this example, Yusuf (AS) is *Musta’sim* according to Al-‘Azeez’s wife, since she witnessed Yusuf exert strong effort with great concern to attain the protection of His Lord. Due to her lack of belief in Yusuf’s God (‘*Asim*), she doubted the ability of the ‘*Asim* in protecting him. So, she referred to him as *Musta’sim* and this in itself is a testimony from her to his persistence in refusing what she asked, and his seeking the protection of his God from her. 4)

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا

“**Wa’tasimu be-hablullah jamee’an...**” “**And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together...**” [3:103] Here, Allah (SWT) orders us to ask and seek His protection, which is represented by the “rope” of Allah. If we obey His order and seek His protection, we will be considered *Mu’tasimeen* with the rope of Allah, but **not** *Ma’sumeen*. This is not to doubt the ability of Allah (SWT) in protecting. Rather, it is because we don’t know if Allah (SWT) will accept to protect us due to a deficiency or defect in us. Therefore, not every *Mu’tasim* with the rope of Allah is considered to be *Ma’soom*, except whom Allah (SWT) accepts and completes His protection. Otherwise, he is considered to be a *Mu’tasim* who seeks the compassion and acceptance of Allah (SWT) in granting him protection. Let us now try to relate between the meaning of the words **Taharah** and **‘Ismah**: So far, we have clarified that Taharah is the process of cleaning and purifying the thing itself, while ‘Ismah is the protection of that purified thing from getting sullied or polluted again and from losing its state of purification (which was achieved after the process of Tat-heer). Thus, ‘Ismah is the process of protecting the *Mutahar* from losing its state of purity (that was carried out by the *Mutahir*). The *Mutahir* attempts to purify, while the ‘*Asim* tries to maintain that state of purification and keep it constant. If it is not for the ‘*Asim*, the purified thing would not stay pure and clean. So, if we say that there is an object or thing that is always clean, it is logical then to believe in the presence of a ‘*Asim* who maintains the state of cleanliness for that object at all times. This object will therefore be considered to be *Ma’soom* due to the presence of continuous and ongoing protection that is carried out by the competent and skillful ‘*Asim*. So, Taharah and ‘Ismah are two processes which complete one another and cannot be separated from each other, *if* we indeed desire the purified state of something to continue and be constant. Again, the more competent and knowledgeable the ‘*Asim* is, the more efficient will the ‘Ismah be, as in the case of the *Mutahir* and the process of Taharah. For example, a street cleaner or a custodian is considered to be a *Mutahir* (since he cleans the street or office), while a policeman or security guard is referred to as ‘*Asim* (one who try to prevent impurification from taking place and the loss of Taharah, which is achieved by the *Mutahir*). Every one carries out his role in order to accomplish constant and cleanliness and purification. Based on

that, 'Ismah cannot be present without prior existence of Taharah, and the opposite is not true.

Research Question no. 2

Now, we come to the second question in our research and that is: **When we speak of Taharah and 'Ismah for the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya' (executors of will), and the Imams (AS), we ask ourselves...Taharah and 'Ismah from what exactly?** In other words, what will they be purified from and what will they be protected from? Thus, the question here is composed of two parts: **a) What will they be purified and cleansed from? b) What will they be protected from?** In the end of our 1st research question, we identified the relationship between Taharah and 'Ismah, and we reached the conclusion that 'Ismah is the protection of something from being polluted again and from losing its clean state after its purification. Based on that, we can logically deduce that 'Ismah will be from the same thing that Tat-heer (purification) is from. For example, if you sanitized something from the germs and microbes, you will also try to protect it from contamination with germs and so on and so forth. Therefore, 'Ismah will be from the same thing that Tat-heer is from, and it will be subsequent to it. Based on this idea, the answer to question (a) will be the same as the answer to question (b). So, our question is really one: **What will the Prophets, Messengers, and Imams (AS) be purified from?** In answering this question, the Imamiya scholars and Fuqaha' (jurists) of the AhlulBayt School of Thought have differed and every group has its own opinion and support for it. It is to be noted that our U'lama are all respectable and honorable, and they don't speak except with what they think to be closest to the truth, and they don't fear except Allah (SWT). Therefore, it is not appropriate for us, neither is it our goal to ridicule their ideas or opinions. Rather, we aim to make an effort by thinking and using our God-given intellect and this will not at all decrease their rewards and high rank, even if we disagree in some opinions and thoughts. We return to our question which we would like to answer in a logical and reasonable manner; Taharah for the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya' and Imams is from what exactly? We should take a closer look at our daily routine in life in order to apply the human logic that will enable us to answer this question. For example, if you want to clean the clothes that you will wear to meet an important personality or to attend a wedding or an inauguration ceremony, what exactly will you clean that outfit from? There is no doubt that you will clean and purify it from dirt, spots, wrinkles, odor, and its like so that the outfit will be ready and in the best shape possible. Another example: If you want to clean a knife or a pair of scissors that will be used in a surgical operation on a human body, what will you clean that knife or scissors from? In this case, you will be sanitizing it from germs, microbes, and viruses. This will be your main concern so that the wound of the patient does not get contaminated and lead to death of the patient due to his contaminated wound. Thus, after the process of sanitization and purification, the knife or scissors will become qualified to perform its duty, which requires a great amount of efficiency and care as possible. We can present lots of similar examples from our daily lives from which we can draw the conclusion that there is a definite and direct relationship between the task that will be carried out by the *Mutahar* and the things that it will be purified from. In other words, the process of Tat-heer is essentially for the purpose of making the *Mutahar* more fit and proficient in carrying out its

ask in the best form possible. This is logical, reasonable, and very clear as we use it many times in our daily lives. We clean and purify an object from the things that may hinder its performance, and therefore, it will be more successful at doing its job. Let us now apply this same logic to our proposed question, as we will find that the purification of our Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams (AS) should be from the things that may prevent or hinder their performance of their God-given roles. This purification should result in them being more proficient and capable of successfully fulfilling their jobs and responsibilities. So, in order for us to know what they will be purified from, we must first identify and specify their jobs and responsibilities. We must know what its consequences and implications are so that we can logically deduce the answer based on our expectations. Now, what exactly are the roles and responsibilities of the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams? **First:** Relay and convey the orders and commands of Allah (SWT) to the people. **Second:** Advise and urge the people to follow and obey the orders of Allah (SWT) and to carry out the instructions and teachings of the divine message. **Third:** Obey and carry out the orders of Allah (SWT) with absolute care in the individual and specific roles that are assigned to each one of them, in addition to their general responsibilities, without any addition or subtraction. **Fourth:** Set a good example and become roles models for the people in obeying the rules of Allah (SWT) and not disobeying Him under any circumstances (such that the people imitate and follow their example). **Fifth:** Rule justly between the people according to what Allah (SWT) revealed and His orders, and thereby set the example to the people how to judge between others in that same manner. **Sixth:** Specify the guidelines and foundations which the human society will be built on including its relation with its surroundings and its interior (exactly as Allah commanded), and to execute it out to the best of their abilities. **Seventh:** Teach the people the wisdom, the lessons, and the laws of the religion as Allah (SWT) commanded, with what Allah (SWT) instructed, and with what they received from Him. After quickly and briefly displaying the roles and responsibilities of the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams (AS) on Earth, what do *you* think are the things that they should be cleansed and purified from in order for them to perform their jobs in the best way possible? And if their responsibilities is of highest degree of importance and vitality...and certainly it is of great and critical importance since it deals with the fate of a person in his Hereafter and his life of this world...then there is nothing more important and vital than that! Therefore, it is incumbent and necessary that their success in their responsibilities and roles is guaranteed to a percentage that might very well reach 100%. And for that to happen, they must be cleansed and purified from anything that might cause their failure or hinder their success. Furthermore, this purification must reach almost or equal to 100%. Now, if the responsibilities and work that they will carry out is for the Great Creator, and is by the order and assignment from Him, it becomes logically necessary that He becomes the *Mutahir* in a direct way, due to the critical importance of the responsibilities and because it is for Him and from Him. And if Allah, the Almighty, the Knowledgeable, the Capable, and the Creator is Himself the *Mutahir*, then there is absolutely no doubt that the purification will be completed and accomplished with a guarantee of 100%. This purification will also be constant and continuous so long as the Prophet is still a Prophet, the Messenger is still a Messenger, the Wasi is still a Wasi, and the Imam still assumes his role as an Imam. And if this purification is constant and continuous, it then becomes necessary (as mentioned in the end of the 1st research

question) that there exist a 'Asim who protects, maintains, and guarantees the persistence of that purification state, which thereby indicates the presence of 'Ismah (protection from losing its Taharah). So long as the *Mutahir* is Allah (SWT), it becomes logically necessary that the 'Asim too, is Allah (SWT). Thus, He alone with His absolute ability have purified and protected in order to maintain the state of Taharah and to guarantee its persistence. The Taharah and 'Ismah here is guaranteed 100% without any doubt since the *Mutahir* and 'Asim is Allah (SWT). **Therefore, the purified individuals have become Ma'sumeen since the certainty of achieving successful completion of 'Ismah has been established!** We now return to our rephrased question: What are the things that Allah (SWT) should purify and protect His divinely-appointed guides with 100% guarantee such that their performance of their roles can be ensured in the best way possible? Let us use our brains, focus, examine, and make a sound judgment to answer this question. If we take a closer look at the seven responsibilities mentioned earlier, we will find that the common ground or factor between all of them is: the command of Allah (SWT). Hence, the Tat-heer and 'Ismah should be from the thing(s) that may interfere, hinder, or obstruct the meaning of this word. Naturally, what interferes with a word is always its opposite and what hinders it is always what's against it. An order is an action that can be responded to with either obedience *or* disobedience. If the response to an order is obedience, then the action and order will be accomplished. And if the response is disobedience, then the action will be prevented and opposed. Whoever counters or contradicts the orders of Allah (SWT) is really opposing the order and thereby disobeying it. If we realize and understand this point, it will become easy for us to draw the conclusion that the most important thing that the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams *MUST* be purified and protected from is: **disobedience of the orders and commands of Allah (SWT)**. This is exactly what Allah (SWT) mentioned in the Qur'an Al-Kareem,

بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ.

"Bal 'ebadun mukramoom. La yasbeqoonaho bil qawl wa hom bi amrihi ya'maloon." *"Nay! They are honored servants. They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His Commandment do they act."* (21:26-27) So, Allah's testimony for them regarding their inability to disobey Him, is equivalent to the meaning of purification and indicates that He is the *Mutahir*. This also indicates the presence of 'Ismah, which makes Him the 'Asim as well since the tenses used in this verse are continuous present tense. Furthermore, it is from Allah (SWT) which means eternity. Hence, Tat-heer and 'Ismah are essentially from the disobedience of Allah (SWT) in anything. If their *1st responsibility* is to pass on and convey the orders and commands of Allah (SWT), then it becomes logically necessary that they be purified and protected from lying, unfaithfulness, treason, and forgetfulness. Forgetfulness here means forgetting the contents of the Message and its details, **not** the normal human forgetfulness that is indicated in Prophet Musa's statement to Al-Khidr (AS):

قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ

"Qalla la to-akhedhni bema naseet." **"Blame me not for what I forgot."** (18:73) This is an example of typical human forgetfulness and is not relevant to the topic of 'Ismah. If their *2nd responsibility* is to incite and urge the people to follow and obey the orders of Allah (SWT) and His Message, then it becomes logically necessary that they be purified and protected from negative and indecent behavior and anything that may contradict good manners, ethics, etiquette, and decent behavior. Hence, the people develop a liking towards them and so these divine guides become accepted by them and so they will be able to encourage and urge the people to obey Allah (SWT) and carry out His orders. If their *3rd responsibility* is to obey and carry out Allah's orders in their individual and specific roles that has been assigned to each of them, without addition or subtraction, then it becomes logically essential that they be purified from disobedience to Him in any way or form, no matter what role they're assigned even if it looks strange, deviant, or rejected by the people of this world, and no matter how much they suffer because of it. It also becomes necessary that they be purified against laziness, boredom, naivety, recklessness, negligence, cowardliness, stupidity, obliviousness, weakness, fragility, lack of wisdom, lack of insight, and lack of reflection. If their *4th responsibility* is to serve as good examples and role models for the people in observing the rules of Allah (SWT), then it becomes logically essential that they be purified and protected from foolishness, inferiority, solicitation, having ignoble roots and shameful ancestry, bad and nefarious origin, severe poverty, physical defect, ugly appearance, chronic illness (except in obedience to the orders of Allah just like what happened to Prophet Ayoob [Job]), ignorance, and anything that may belittle their reverence or sully their reputation. If their *5th responsibility* is to rule justly among the people with what Allah (SWT) revealed, then it becomes logically necessary that they be purified and protected from injustice and unfairness, the love of oneself, arrogance, hastened judgment, deviating from the orders of Allah (SWT), following their own desires and personal thoughts in making judgments, using personal opinion (except within the limits that Allah Himself has allowed), flattery, hypocrisy, ignorance, lack of knowledge, seeking the opinion of those who are not Ma'soom, bribery, weakness of the heart, and lack of experience and wisdom. If their *6th responsibility* is to establish and specify the guidelines and foundations which the human society will be built on (by the command of Allah) and to execute it if they're capable of it, then it becomes logically necessary that they be purified and protected from the lack of presence of political and military skills that is needed, lack of eloquence in speech, lack of coordination and organization, lack of concentration, love of carnal desires and ornaments of this world, lack of seriousness, lack of honesty, weakness in front of the people, love of appearing and appearance, conceitedness, self-admiration, arrogance, lack of smartness and knowledge and experience, lack of intelligence and cleverness and wisdom, carelessness, recklessness, lack of confrontation, lack of strength, and from betrayal and evil. If their *7th responsibility* is to teach the people the wisdom, lessons, and laws, then it becomes logically necessary that they be purified and protected from everything that has been previously mentioned, especially ignorance, foolishness, lack of patience, lack of clemency, lack of insight, hiding the truth, excessive care for the Dunya, forgetting the

remembrance of Allah (SWT), lack of worship and worshipping, fruitless and endless talk, lack of linguistic eloquence, exaggeration and magnification, de-emphasizing and embellishment, ambiguity, vagueness, complication, and complexity. However, the most important thing here is the purification and protection against the disobedience of Allah (SWT) in what He orders them with. This is the judgment of the mind and the human logic in what these divine guides should be completely purified and always protected from by Allah (SWT) who is both the *Mutahir* and *'Asim*. This will be the case so long as they are appointed in their roles in order for their performance of their responsibilities be complete and successful. After all, the fate of humans in this life and the Hereafter will depend on their performance and fulfillment of their roles and responsibilities.

Research Question no. 3

We now reach our third question which poses itself to us: **What is the meaning of “Sin”?** “Sin” is the lack of obeying and fulfilling the orders of Allah (SWT). There are two kinds: There exists unintentional sin and disobedience that is due to ignorance, lack of ability to obey due to weakness of the brain, self, or body, like the disobedience of Prophet Adam (AS) before his prophethood, and also like many of the people. There also exists intentional sin and disobedience that occurs with the presence of knowledge, and perfect ability to obey, like the sin and disobedience of Iblees (Shaytan) and his followers from the human beings and Jinn. Allah (SWT) may forgive the first type of sin and disobedience with His compassion and generosity if the sinner regretted and repented from his sin with a sincere intention. As for the second type of sin, its consequences are the expulsion of the sinner from the mercy and compassion of Allah (SWT), and the eternal punishment and damnation of that person. The Prophets, Messengers, *Awsiya'*, and Imams are purified and protected from committing both kinds of sins and disobediences. When Adam (AS) “disobeyed” Allah (SWT), this happened when he was still in Paradise before he descended to Earth and before he became a Prophet. When he was appointed as Prophet, he became purified and protected, and so, we never saw from him any kind of disobedience after that. Here, we need to clarify and stress an important thing, which many people fail to recognize and understand. Disobedience is the act of not obeying and not executing the command of Allah (SWT). And *Taharah* and *'Ismah* of the Prophets is from this act of disobedience to the orders of Allah (SWT) that are directed to them in any matter. The meaning of disobedience here is not what the minds are used to when they think of a sin because some behaviors are generally considered to be a sin. The most important thing that one has to keep in mind is that the meaning of disobedience is specifically not obeying and carrying out the orders of Allah (SWT). It is not what comes to your mind from specific actions which we are used to calling a sin. It is important to differentiate between these two scenarios even if they coincide in most cases. For example, lying, killing, stealing, and wrongly accusing others are all actions which we consider to be a sin, and they indeed are. However, they are not considered to be a sin due to the bad nature of the action in itself. Rather, they are considered to be sins because Allah (SWT) forbid and prohibited them. So, killing in itself is not a sin, but Allah's forbiddance is what makes it a sin if committed. This is a very important concept that we need to understand and recognize to avoid

confusion and so that we can later understand the meaning of Taharah and ‘Ismah, like Allah (SWT) willed. So, if a person does not lie, in adherence or accordance to good behavior and commendable traits, this would not be considered “obedience to Allah (SWT)”, and he would not be characterized as “obedient” to Allah's order in this case. He is certainly not equal to one who does not lie because of his adherence to Allah's prohibition to lying. In general, Allah (SWT) orders us to be truthful and honest. However, in certain and specific situations, He permits us to lie, and may even order us to do so. For example, lying on the enemies of Allah (SWT) and the enemies of the Muslims at the time of war is permissible, in order to avoid revealing the secrets of the Muslim army to the enemy. You are allowed to mislead them, and the appearance of this action is lying. However, its reality is obedience to Allah (SWT) and what's important here is the obedience of Allah (SWT). For instance, a person may lie in order to bring two angry and conflicting believers together, and this lie is justified and encouraged, as Allah (SWT) says in the Qur’an,

وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ

"Wa aslehooh dhata baynekom." “*..And adjust matters of difference among you...*” [8:1]. So, the action in its outward appearance is a lie and a sin, but it is permissible since Allah (SWT) allowed for that in such an exceptional situation. Furthermore, in its outward appearance, Taqiyya (dissimulation) may be interpreted as lying, but Allah (SWT) has ordered us to observe it in special cases in order to protect ourselves, our money, property, and our family. Allah (SWT) and the Holy Prophet (SA) have excused ‘Ammar ibn Yasser (RA), when he was forced by the nonbelievers to curse the Prophet (SA). ‘Ammar thought that he was doomed by committing that act. So, Allah (SWT) revealed the following verse,

إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ

"Ilaa wa qalboho motma-enon bil imaan." “*...Except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with fait...*”, [16:106]. So in these special situations, the order of Allah (SWT) is separated from the typical connotations of the act. In such cases, we are to abide by the orders of Allah (SWT) even if we commit that sin-like act. That is because the only important thing that matters is the obedience of Allah's orders, not what our minds and traditions accept or not. This way, we will be able to interpret many of the events/incidents that occurred without conflicting with the meaning of ‘Ismah. For example, Allah (SWT) ordered Prophet Ibraheem (AS) to deceive his people by claiming to be sic, in order for him to have an opportunity to demolish their idols after their departure. Here, the appearance of his act seems to be a lie and therefore a sin. However, its reality is in abidance and obedience to the order of Allah (SWT) to him, which is what matters most. Prophet Yusuf (AS) falsely accused his brothers of stealing the drinking cup of the king, and this, in the eyes of any person, is considered to be a sin.

However, Allah (SWT) ordered him to do so and He (SWT) said in the Qur'an,

كَذٰلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوْسُفَ

"Kadhaleka kedna li Yusuf" "...*Thus We did plan for Yusuf...*" [12:76]. Yusuf (AS) is purified and protected from disobeying Allah (SWT), even if his act seems wrong in front of the common eye. Once again, what matters most is the absolute obedience to the orders of Allah (SWT). Hence, there is a big difference between the orders of Allah (SWT), and the typical connotations of actions even though they may coincide in most cases. We must realize that the orders of Allah (SWT) is the most important, not the act in itself. And the examples in this regards are many. Eating is permitted, however during the days in the month of Ramadan, it is forbidden. Killing a human life is forbidden, however, Allah (SWT) orders us to use the Law of Equality in certain cases and He permitted us to kill His enemies. Sexual relations with the opposite gender is forbidden except with marriage or with the slaves whom your right hand possesses...and so on and so forth. We see actions that are permitted in some cases and forbidden in others. And in certain times, they're allowed while in others, they're prohibited. The line to be drawn here and the determiner, is the obedience of Allah's commands because that is our ultimate goal and the desired aim. This is what Allah (SWT) always tests us with even if His order contradicts the desires and traditions of the people. In fact, these are from among the important choices that a believer has to make. For example, Ameer Al-Mu'mineen (AS) did not stand to take arms in seeking his divine right of Caliphate from those who confiscated it from him. This was in accordance to the orders of Allah (SWT) and Rasulullah (SA), even if the people and history blame him for that, for he is purified and protected from ever disobeying Allah (SWT). Imam Al-Hasan (AS) agrees to make a peace treaty with Mu'awiya in accordance to the orders of Allah (SWT) and Rasulullah (SA), even if the people and history blame him, for he does not care because he is purified and protected from ever disobeying Allah (SWT). Imam Al-Husain (AS) rises up to face Yazeed (LA) and he takes his family with him (while he knows that his sons, companions, and himself will be killed), in accordance to the order of Allah (SWT). He also knows without a doubt that his women will fall as captives under the hand of the enemy. However, he is purified and protected from disobeying Allah's orders, and he takes that decision no matter how much the people or history blame or criticize him. Imam Al-Sajjad (AS) stays at home and engages in worship, while Banu Ummaya widely spreads corruption in the Islamic nation. He doesn't leave his house in accordance to the orders of Allah (SWT) even if the people and history blame him. That is because he is purified and protected from disobeying Allah (SWT) not even for a blink of an eye, even if obeying Allah's order will seem strange, unusual, or contradicting to the mind and traditions. Al-Khidr (AS) slaughtered a young boy and scuttled the ship. In its outward appearance, these actions are considered to be sin such that Prophet Musa (AS) could not bear it. However, Al-Khidr carries out the orders of Allah (SWT) whether or not the people like it, and whether or not it coincides with their logic, habits, and opinions. As the verse in the Qur'an says,

وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي

"**Wa ma fa'altoho 'an amry...**" "**....And I did them not of my own accord...**" [18:82]. These are all lessons for us so that we can realize that's what is important is obeying the commands of Allah (SWT), not the appearance or connotations of the actions! Taloot goes out with a small and limited number of a small army to face a huge army of tyrants. Regardless of that difference in number, the orders of Allah (SWT) come to him (which he obeys) that leads to the decrease in the quantity of the army. Here, the appearance of the situation contradicts the human logic in both military and political smartness. However, Taloot simply carries out the orders of Allah (SWT), even if it leads to the decrease of the number of his army or their defeat, because that is what matters most and that is the reason for the creation and its presence. As Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"**Wa ma khalaqto al ens wal jenn illa liya'bodoon**" "**And I created not the Jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me**" [51:56]. In sum, the main and true essence of worshipping is the absolute and complete obedience and submission to God's commands regardless of what you like and what you don't like, or what the people like or don't like. What matters is the obedience of Allah's orders and commands wherever you are and in whatever condition you are in. The Taharah and 'Ismah of the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams is in essence *from* the disobediences of Allah (SWT), regardless of the appearance or connotation of the actions and words, and of the opinions and desires of the people. Thus, the commands of Allah (SWT) are on top of everything, before everything, and apply to everything. After all, did the angels become angels except by their absolute obedience to Allah (SWT)? And did the creations and kingdoms get created, except by the order of Allah (SWT)? And could any good come or rise, except by obeying the orders of Allah (SWT)?

Research Question no. 4

We continue our research by posing the following question: **Why is it necessary that the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya' and Imams be purified and protected?** The answer to this question is simple and clear if we review the conclusions from the last three questions. Their Tat-heer and 'Ismah is logical and necessary in order for them to perform their roles and jobs in the most complete and perfect way possible. It is needed due to the criticalness, vitality, and importance of their responsibilities towards all mankind. After all, how is it possible that a Messenger be appointed to convey a message which urges people to obey Allah (SWT), while *he* himself is capable of disobeying Allah (SWT)? If that were the case, all of the message would fall in great danger and that is not logical at all! How will the Messenger present the very important and great message while he himself is exposed to lying, dishonesty,

forgetting parts of the message, foolishness, lack of wisdom and mind, weakness, physical defect, and the negative aspects of the creations, etc? This will cause his message to be surrounded by doubts and suspicions in its authenticity and validity. It will place a big question mark on the messenger himself and will give the enemies of the Message an opportunity to attack Islam and question its divinity. That is because the mind will ask itself: Was not God—the Creator able to make His Messengers purified and protected from these negative aspects before He appointed and assigned them with this grave responsibility? This question is logical to ask and may stand as a proof of a forged and invalid message along with its messenger. For example, is it possible that a doctor sends a sick and crippled person to deliver a message on his behalf to one of his patients or customers? Is it possible that a police department sends a limping, one-eyed criminal with a tattooed face to claim that he is a police officer who carries a message to you on behalf of the Chief of Police? Is it possible that the service people of a laundromat send your clothes to you after being washed, with an ugly-looking person who is wearing filthy clothes? Surely, this can never happen in our normal life and if it did, you will immediately doubt, suspect, and question the truthfulness of the message *and* the messenger. Each one of us carefully chooses those who may represent him or carry his message, and if we could pick the best of people, we would certainly do so. For instance, the workplaces and employers take extra care in selecting the most qualified candidate who will be representing them in every aspect. Take a look at any job application and the questions it contains in which their purpose is to determine the extent of your “purification” in order to suit the type of work that you will perform. Then they examine and review the applications and select the most purified and qualified candidate to perform the job. So, why don't we apply the same principle in this case too? Why do you give yourself the right to choose, select, and purify and protect those who might represent you or your company....yet, you don't give Allah (SWT) the right to choose, purify, and protect His Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams? This is a very grave mistake that is certainly not committed by one who has wisdom and uses his intellect! The Taharah and 'Ismah of the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams is in itself a logical proof on the authenticity and validity of the Message that they deliver, just like the physical appearance (uniform, badge, etc.) and behavior of a representative of the police department verifies to you the truthfulness and sincerity of his message and representation. After clarifying this key point, it is not possible for an ignorant person to question: Why is it necessary for the Prophets, Messengers, Awliyaa', and Imams appointed by Allah (SWT) to be purified and protected from disobeying him? Therefore, it is a logical thing that is expected to happen and if it actually happened, it is not a surprise to us! Furthermore, if the verses of the Holy Qur'an and narrations mention and verify that, then it is not appropriate nor is it our right to pose questions such as “How is this?” Except if we abandoned our minds and surrendered to what the foolish, silly, and ignorant minds say.

Research Question no. 5

We now face another frequently-asked question: **Does the Tat-heer and 'Ismah of the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams conflict with their roles as humans?** We answer this with another

question: If someone from the humans take or has something that no one else ever took or had except him, does that make him non-human? Without a doubt, the Taharah and 'Ismah of the Prophets and Awliyaa' of Allah (SWT) is an exceptional gift and bounty from Him that is unique to them. He did not bestow it to anyone else, not before them nor after them. So, from this aspect they were distinguished, chosen, and granted something that no other human was granted. However, does this reality make them non-human? Let us think logically! If a person is given lots of money which was not given to anyone else before him, does that make him nonhuman? If a person is given power that was not ever given to anyone else before him, does that make him nonhuman? When Neal Armstrong and his colleagues were the first to place foot and land on the moon, did that make them not human beings anymore just because what happened to them did not ever happen to anyone else? Did anyone ever claim that? We are human because of our physical nature which is composed of flesh, blood, cells, nerves, and anatomical structure, and because we are able to speak, think, eat, drink, feel happy, and feel sad just like the rest of humanity. This is only what makes us human. As for what Allah (SWT) may distinguish us with or make us unique and exceptional in compared to others, even if it makes us extraordinary and singular in it, that does not take us out of the boundaries of humanity and will not make us inhuman. For example, if you installed a program in your personal computer which protects it from electronic viruses, is it right for a person to claim that your computer is not a computer anymore just because it became distinguished from the other computer devices that may not have that virus protection? We present this question to you so that the extent of foolishness and absurdity of the person who says that becomes clear to you. Should Dolly, the sheep that was recently cloned, not be called a sheep anymore just because it became unique and exceptional compared to the rest of the sheep? Should the egg in which the cholesterol was extracted and removed from not be called an egg anymore, just because what happened to it never happened to any other egg. We think that the matter is now clear and there is no need for more explanation than what has already been given. So, the Taharah and 'Ismah of the Prophets and Imams does not remove the human aspect from them. As Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an,

قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا

"QoI subhana rabi hal konto illa basharan rasoola?" "...Say: *Glorified (and Exalted) be my Lord. Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger...*" 17:93]. And did any of the Muslims ever ask: Is Prophet 'Isa ibn Maryam (AS) considered to be non-human just because he is unique in being born without a father? This is the naïve and confused logic that Christians use to prove the divinity of 'Isa and that he is the son of God. May Allah (SWT) curse them and curse those who think and believe like them!

Research Question no. 6

The next question that poses itself to us is: **Does the Taharah and 'Ismah of the Prophets and Imams make them divine individuals whom we cannot relate to, compared to the rest of the people? And**

does it prevent them from communicating with and meeting the rest of the human beings? There are many types and ways of dealing and relating between the people, and it is not only one type, as it may be indicated from the question. For example, your way of relating with your parents will differ from the way you relate with your siblings. And the way that you may relate to your school and its Principal, will be different from the way that you relate to your friend or colleague. And the way that you conduct yourself with the President of your country will surely differ from the way that you do so with the boss in your work, or your servant. Furthermore, the way that you relate to the Sheikh of your Masjid or your religious and spiritual mentor will certainly be different from your relation with your neighbor or son! Thus, for every position, there is a way of dealing that is specific to it, and for every person, there is a certain type of relationship which will differ with the type of person you're dealing with. The Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams (AS) are special individuals who perform divine roles and jobs that are assigned to them by God. Hence, their respect is derived from the respect of Allah (SWT) and their position is derived from the position of Allah (SWT), regardless of whether they are purified and protected, or not. It is not at all expected that your relationship and way of dealing with them will ever be the same as that of your friend, teacher, neighbor, or colleague. That is because the way that you deal with them will have a special sacredness that is derived from Allah (SWT) whom they represent. For example, do you treat and relate to the messenger of your friend to you in the same way that you do with the messenger of the President of your country to you, or the messenger of the police to you? Of course not! That is because your way of dealing with the messengers of both the President and police, without a doubt will be affected by whom they represent. You will certainly deal with the messenger of the President with more respect and veneration, while you will deal with the messenger of the police with more fear, safeguarding, and carefulness. This is what people usually do; they change and adjust their way of dealing with others and their type of communication, depending on the person in front of them and whom he/she represents. Hence, from the very start you will not relate and deal with the Prophets and Imams (AS) the same way that you do with the rest of the people because the relationship here is *very* different, and whom they represent *is* the Great Lord and the King of Kings. It is rather desired that you keep your relationship with them in a unique and specific form with specific boundaries that differs from the rest of your relationships and communications. It is unacceptable and illogical for you to expect that your relationship with them will be similar to your relationship with your brother or friend. As a matter of fact, this difference in relationship is in itself desired and recommended. After all, did not Allah (SWT) say in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Hujuraat:

وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ

"**Wa la tajharoo lahu bil qawl ka jahr ba'dekom liba'd**", "...**Do not speak aloud to him in talk, as you speak aloud to one another.**" [49:2], This basically means that you should not deal with Rasulullah (SA) in the same way that you deal with others. Allah (SWT) willed that there exist a certain distance of

respect and reverence between them and us. However, this “distance” will not prevent or hinder the Prophets from carrying out their jobs, for if Allah (SWT) knew that it would, He wouldn't have ordered us to keep that distance. This “distance” will also not hinder the revelation of the divine message and their instructions and guidance for us. Neither will it prevent them from teaching us, judging over us, and judging on us. It will never impede them from performing their roles which is what is required and desired. It is not their position to be our buddy or entertainer. Does not every king or leader of a country, or manager of workplace, leave a certain distance between him/her and the people or employees? And does that obstruct them from carrying out their responsibilities and roles? Is it the case that the President of the United States will not be able to perform his job and carry out his responsibilities except if he opened the door of the White House for me so that I can go to him whenever I want, talk to him about whatever I want, to waste his time however I want, and to contact him via phone whenever I want? If he does and allows that, will that make him a good President? And if he doesn't, will he be considered incapable of performing his duties simply because I am not able to relate and deal with him, and just because I cannot contact and communicate with him the same way that I do with my neighbor, friend, or son? Of course not!! The nature of your relationship and communication with the Prophets and Imams (AS) *should* differ from others, not because they're purified or not, nor because they're protected or not. Rather, since they represent Allah (SWT), with all His divine sacredness, highness, and greatness. You yourself will respect and give great regard and veneration to the Sheikh of your Masjid or any 'Alim (scholar), and you will communicate with them in a way that you don't with others. Why?! It is because they represent and signify the religion and Allah (SWT) in your eyes. Then imagine how you should relate and communicate with the holy Prophets, Messengers, and Imams!! It is to be noted that the presence of their Taharah and 'Ismah has nothing at all to do with this matter. For example, you give great respect and regard to the police messenger of the Chief of Police to you due to what he represents and whom he represents to you. It does not really matter to you whether this policeman has a good record or whether he is efficient in his work or whether he is close to the Chief of Police or not, or whether his clothes are tidy or not. Regardless, you will leave a distance between you and him because of what he represents and not for any other reason. As for the argument that you will be able to maintain and keep a relationship with the companions of the Prophet (SA) while you will not be able to keep that same relationship with the Imams of Ahlul-Bayt (AS) and that is due to their Taharah and 'Ismah, this is absolutely true and is even desired and recommended! Again, the reason here is not because of their purification and protection. Rather, it is because of their roles and what they represent. The companions of Rasulullah (SA) are not appointed by Allah (SWT) nor are they Awsiya' and Imams, nor do they have divine roles to execute. Therefore, they are not Mutahareen and Ma'sumeen. Thus, there is a big difference between your relationship and communication with them, compared to that of the Imams and Awsiya' who are appointed by Allah (SWT). It is imperative to keep in mind that there may exist reverence and high regard in my heart for the companions of Prophet Musa (AS). However, my reverence and high regard for Yosha' ibn Noon, the Wasi of Musa (AS), will be much greater, not because of his Taharah and 'Ismah, but rather because of his role and position and what he represents. Therefore, my relationship and way of dealing with the companions of Musa (AS) will be easier than my

relationship with Yosha' ibn Noon, and there is absolutely nothing wrong or shameful in that. It is rather intended that there exist a certain distance between you and the Imam of your time and the rest of the Imams, more than that which you keep between you and others. For example, if your son came to you and told you, "I am able to relate and communicate with my friends at school, but I am not able to relate and deal with the Principal of the school with the same easiness and same way because I feel that there exist a distance between me and the Principal that is greater than the one between me and my friend." How will you answer your son? The explanation that you will give to your son which will remove his wonder and puzzlement will indeed be the same one as what we will tell you in order to erase your confusion, doubts, and wonder. Hence, the Taharah and 'Ismah has nothing to do with this matter. Imagine for a second that you had the honor of meeting Imam Husain (AS) this moment, will the way that you greet, relate, and deal with him make any difference to you, as to whether he is Ma'soom or not? We leave this question for the reader to answer and make up his mind regarding this matter. Also, it is to be noted that the Christians worship and sanctify Prophet 'Isa (AS) and they claim that he is God Himself which therefore makes him Ma'soom in their eyes. Rather, he is more than that since according to them, he is God. However, did that type of thinking prevent them from making and maintaining a relationship with 'Isa (AS), relating with him and integrating him in all aspects of their lives, whether big or small? This is just a question...so, why then do we then claim that the concept of Taharah and 'Ismah will hinder with relating, communicating, and dealing?

Research Question no. 7

Finally, the question that some people pose is: **Why didn't the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya', and Imams mention or announce that they are Ma'sumeen?** The answer for this question is simple. **First:** The truth that is proven by logic does not need to be assured or verified by a testimony, so long as there is nothing in the divine books that contradicts it and as long as it is a truth that is accepted by the mind and intellect. For example, logic says that Prophet Yunis (AS) used to fast for Allah (SWT). However, do we find any statement in the Qur'an or narrations that specifically states that? However, we also do not find any statement that denies or contradicts that idea. Therefore, it is a reality so long as the brain and logic accepts it. Riding a car, for instance, is logically permissible without any doubt. So long as there is no statement in the Qur'an or prophetic narrations that boldly and specifically state that riding a car is not permissible, the permissibility of riding a car becomes valid without any confusion around it. Using that same logic and utilizing our intellect, we have drawn the conclusion about the necessity of the presence and occurrence of Taharah and 'Ismah. If we did not find any statement supporting that in the Qur'an or hadeeths (and that is not true), there is also no quote or statement that contradicts it specifically by saying that the Prophets are **not** Ma'sumeen and **not** Mutahareen. Therefore, it is a reality that has no doubt or confusion around it, so long as the mind accepts and deduces it. **Second:** Is it required or is it from the ethics that a normal person talks positively about himself and praises himself and mentions his unique characteristics and high position? This is not accepted and is rejected from any normal person. Then imagine if that behavior is exhibited by the *peak* of humanity...the Prophets, Messengers, and

Imams (AS)!! Being that they are extremely humble and bashful people, is it expected that they should stand among the people and say to them, “We are Mutaharoon and Ma’sumeen!” Furthermore, if it was not for the revelation of Ayat Al Tat-heer, do you think that Rasulullah (SA) or Ameer Al-Mu’mineen (AS) would say to the people, “Allah (SWT) has kept the "rejs" (رجز , sin) away from us and have purified us an absolute and complete purification!” Absolutely not! Their asceticism, bashfulness, and modesty will have prevented them from saying that. That's why Allah (SWT) carried out that mission for them and on their behalf. So, how is it that we want or expect them to behave in that manner and tell us what is clear and bright as the sun...a reality that we are able to see without them even acknowledging or insinuating it to us?!! **Third:** Did not Allah (SWT) reveal Ayat Al Tat-heer which all its verbs are in the present tense and indicates the continuity? [*Yudh-hib* (يُذْهِبُ , keep away) & *Wa Yutahir*, وَيُطَهِّرُ purify)] And if this continuity of purification became certain, ‘Ismah would also have to be present, as we explained in the first research question. Therefore, without any doubt or debate, the verse of purification also indicates the presence of ‘Ismah. After the words of Allah (SWT), is there any need for more proofs or talk as He is the Most Wise? We are satisfied with this explanation and there is not need for us to present the numerous traditions narrated by Rasulullah (SA) and the Imams (AS) which indicates and points to their purification and protection. History itself and their personal autobiographies are enough to stand as witnesses and proofs to that. Thus, since Ahlul-Bayt (AS) are purified and protected, is there any doubt left regarding the purification and protection of the Prophets and Messengers? And did we read or take a look at the Message and Book of every Prophet and Messenger that previously came, such that we can confidently say that the Message and divine books lack any clear statement or verse which indicates Tat-heer and ‘Ismah of every Prophet and Messenger? Do we not find many verses in the Holy Qur’an that describe the Prophet and Messengers in such a way that makes us understand and believe in their purification and protection by Allah (SWT)? Otherwise, what are the implications of verses such as: **“Verily, he was true to what he promised [19:54]”**. **“Verily, he was a man of truth, a Prophet [19:41]”**. **“How excellent a slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance [38:30,44]”**. **“...owners of strength (worshipping Us) and (also) of religious understanding [38:45]”**. **“And most surely they are with Us of the chosen and best! [38:47]”**. **“Verily, We did choose them by granting them (a good thing), the remembrance of the final abode [38:46]”**. **“Nay! They are honored servants. They speak not until He has spoken, and they act on His Command [21:26-27]”**. Furthermore, take a closer look and analyze Surah Mariam, Surah Al-Anbiya¹, Surah Ibraheem, Surah Yusuf, Surah as-Safaat, Surah Saad, Surah Ghafir, Surah Al-‘Araaf, Surah ash-Shu'ara, and most of the Surahs in the Qur’an. Thereafter, the matter will be clear for every wise, thoughtful, faithful person! In conclusion, the Prophets, Messengers, Awsiya¹, and Imams (AS) are all **one** chain that does not separate, divide, or deviate. Allah (SWT) has chosen it, purified it, and protected it. All praise be to Allah (SWT) for His unfathomable blessings and perfected bounties!

Topic Tags:

Taharah [5]

Purification [6]

Infallibility [7]

Prophets [8]

Inerrancy ('Ismah) [9]

Category:

Prophethood & Imamate [10]

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/articles/taharah-ismah-masumeen-dr-hatem-abu-shahba>

Links

[1] <https://www.al-islam.org/user/login?destination=node/18547%23comment-form>

[2] <https://www.al-islam.org/user/register?destination=node/18547%23comment-form>

[3] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/dr-hatem-abu-shahba>

[4] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/jerrmein-abu-shahba>

[5] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/taharah>

[6] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/purification>

[7] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/infallibility>

[8] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/prophets>

[9] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/inerrancy-ismah>

[10] <https://www.al-islam.org/library/prophethood-imate>