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Question 30 : Do the Shi'ah think that Jibra'il (Archangel Gabriel) has committed treachery when he conveyed the message {risalah} to Muhammad instead of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib?

Reply: Before proving the groundlessness of this loathsome accusation made against the Shi'ah by some ignorant or spiteful people, it is appropriate to trace its origin.

The origin of this accusation

The noble verses of the Qur'an and some relevant *hadiths* show that Jews were of the opinion that Jibra'il ('a) has committed treachery while conveying the message {risalah} claiming that God had ordered him to entrust the prophethood {nubuwwah} to the progeny of Isra'il (Ya'qub or Jacob) from the line of Ishaq (Isaac), but he did not comply with that divine order by entrusting it to the offspring of Isma'il (Ishmael)!

Thus, a group of Jews regard Jibra'il ('a) as an enemy¹ and assume that "The truthful {al-amin} (Jibra'il) has betrayed!" Therefore, in reproaching them and proving the groundlessness of their claim, the Qur'an refers to Jibra'il ('a) in the verse below as truthful {al-amin} and honest angel:

نزل به الروح الأمين على قلبك لتكون من المنذرين.

"{It (Qur'an) was} brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit, upon your heart, so that you may be one of the warners."²

In another verse, the Qur'an states:

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

“Say, ‘Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel {should know that} it is he who has brought it down on your heart with the will of Allah.”³

From the quoted verses and their commentaries, we realize that a group of Jews were hostile to Jibra'il (‘a) for some reasons, branding him as the “angel of tribulation” {*mala'ikah al-'adhab*} and accusing him of treachery in conveying the message {*risalah*}.

Therefore, the slogan, “The truthful (Jibra'il) has betrayed” originates from the superstitions of the Jews. Some ignorant writers who have ancient enmity toward the Shi'ah make use of the Jews' statement to dastardly attribute it to the Shi'ah.

Prophethood {nubuwwah} from the Shi'ah viewpoint

Following the Book (the Qur'an) and the *Sunnah*, and relying on the explicit traditions of the Prophet's *Ahl al-Bayt* (‘a), the Shi'ah not only consider Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah (S) as a prophet in truth appointed by God as a universal messenger, but also regard him as the Seal of the Prophets {*khatam al-anbiya'*} and the greatest divine envoy.

'Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a), the great leader who is followed by the Shi'ah testifies to this truth in these eloquent words:

"وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن محمد عبده ورسوله خاتم النبيين حجة الله على العالمين."

And I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One and Only, Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, the Seal of the Prophets and the Proof of Allah to the worlds.⁴

Imam as-Sadiq (‘a) also says:

"لم يبعث الله عز وجل من العرب إلا خمسة أنبياء: هوداً وصالحاً وإسماعيل وشعيب ومحمد خاتم النبيين."

“From among the Arabs, God appointed only five prophets: Hud, Salih, Isma‘il, Shu‘ayb, and Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets (S).”⁵

This noble *hadith* which proves the groundlessness of this repulsive accusation against the Shi‘ah refers to Hadrat⁶ Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah (S) as the last and final Prophet of God.⁷

Accordingly, the Shi‘ah all over the world think that Jibra‘il (‘a) was truthful and honest in conveying the message, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah (S) is the Prophet in truth and the last and final Messenger of Allah, and ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) is the Prophet’s successor and executor of his will.

Here, it is appropriate to quote a tradition on whose authenticity all the Sunnis and the Shi‘ah agree and which can be found in their reliable books. In this tradition known as the *Hadith al-Manzilah*, after announcing his being the Seal of the Prophets, the Holy Prophet (‘a) introduces ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) as his successor and the executor of his will when he says to him:

أما ترضى أن تكون مني بمنزلة هارون من موسى إلا أنه لا نبي بعدي؟

“Are you not satisfied that you are to me as Harun (Aaron) is to Musa (Moses) except that there shall be no prophet after me?”⁸

This tradition whose chain of transmission is approved by great scholars of *hadith* {*muhaddithun*}—both Sunni and Shi‘ah—is a clear testimony to the soundness of the Shi‘ah’s view on the following:

1. Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah (S) is the most beloved prophet of God and the seal of the prophets who by the decree of God was sent as the final and universal messenger after whom no prophet will come.
2. ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) is the Prophet’s successor and executor of his will, and the caliph of the Muslims after him.

1. Al-Fakhr ar-Razi (Egypt, 1308 AH), vol. 1, p. pp. 436–437.

2. Surah ash-Shu‘ara’ 26: 193–194.

3. Surah al-Baqarah 2:97.

4. Nahj as-Sa‘adah (Beirut), vol. 1, p. 188; Al-Kafi (Tehran, 2nd Edition, 1389 AH), vol. 8, p. 67.

5. Bihar al-Anwar (Beirut, 2nd Edition, 1403 AH), vol. 11, p. 42.

6. Hadrat: The Arabic word Hadrat is used as a respectful form of address. {Trans.}

7. For more information on the abundant hadiths indicating the Shi‘ah’s view concerning the finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet (S), see Prof. Ja‘far Subhani’s *Mafahim al-Qur’an*.

8. This hadith can be found in many references, some of which are the following: Sahih al-Bukhari (Egypt), vol. 6, “Bab Ghazwah at-Tabuk,” p. 3; Sahih Muslim (Egypt), vol. 7, “Bab Fada’il ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib,” p. 120; Sunan Ibn Majah (Egypt), vol. 1, “Fada’il Ashab an-Nabi,” p. 55; Mustadrak al-Hakim (Beirut), vol. 3, p. 109; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, pp. 170, 177, 179, 182, 184–185; vol. 3, p. 32; Sahih Tirmidhi (Beirut), vol. 5, “Bab Manaqib ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib,” p. 21; Ibn

Maghazali, Al-Manaqib (Beirut, 1403 AH), p. 27; Bihar al-Anwar (Beirut, 2nd Edition, 143 AH), vol. 37, p. 254; Shaykh as-Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar (Beirut, 1399 AH), p. 74; Kanz al-Fawa'id (Beirut 1405 AH), vol. 2, p. 168.

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