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(2) The Prophet (S) Foretells About The Twelve Imams (a.s.)

We believe that the next leadership of the *Ummah* was an unquestionable matter in the view of the Holy Prophet (S), since the Lord has given him the orders to convey the leadership of his progeny to people. This is the Lord's tradition with all the Prophets whose progenies inherited the Divine Books, judgments and Prophethood. Muhammad, our Prophet (S), is indisputably the best and the seal of the Prophets. After him, no Prophet should come. Hence, the Imamate and the inheritance of the Divine Book should follow. In like manner, his household and progeny are the best of the Prophets' progenies. The Lord has purified them thoroughly and has given them the judgment and the Divine Book exclusively. This is clear in His sayings:

“Surely, Allah chose Adam and Nuh (Noah) and the descendants of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the descendants of `Imran above the nations. Offspring one of the other; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing. 3:34”

“Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants. 35:32”

As he realized that people of Quraysh had envied the Hashimites and planned for taking them away from the position of leadership after him, the Holy Prophet (S) used styles of wisdom and graduality in his frequent announcements of the Progeny's leadership. When they used rude practices and sayings against the Hashimites, he used a style of a Prophetic ire against them. The Farewell Hajj was an excellent opportunity for him to carry the divine commandment regarding his Household's next leadership to his *Ummah* in a massive scope.

After the conveyance of the precepts and rulings, the expansion of the Islamic state, the reduction of dangers and the declaration of the Holy Prophet (S)'s imminent departure, nothing remained save the declaration of the next leadership. In addition to authentic texts, logic proves that the Holy Prophet (S) paid the greatest attention to this question during the Farewell Hajj. People of Quraysh recognized the Holy Prophet (S)'s intention; therefore, they augmented all their activities and spared no efforts to stop

such a declaration. Although there is a good deal of proofs on each point previously mentioned, this discussion is too narrow to cover them all.

We should stop sufficiently at the Holy Prophet (S)'s sermons in the Farewell Hajj. Abreast of the Sermon of Ghadir, reference books have proven that the Holy Prophet (S) delivered speeches on five occasions in that period. Historians should have reported these Prophetic sermons so completely since thousands of Muslims listened to them but, unfortunately, a few parts of them have been excerpted, especially in the reference books authorized by the Qurayshite caliphate.

The following is quoted from al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah 3/333:

During the Hajj, the Holy Prophet (S) addressed five sermons; the first was in Makkah on the seventh of Dhu'l-Hijjah, the second on Day of `Arafat, the third on Day of Slaughtering in Mina, the fourth on Day of the Settlement in Mina and the five on Day of the First Return in Mina.

By reviewing at the texts of these sermons as recorded in more than one hundred reference books of Hadith, one can evidently notice that people of Quraysh put their hands in these texts producing clear contrasts. That was because these sermons narrated the Holy Prophet (S)'s instructing Muslims to comply with his progeny after him and warning them against being engaged in discrepancies out of envy after they had received the knowledge. Finally, the Holy Prophetsubmitted them to an impeccable and thorough proof. Despite the Qurayshite blackout, we could receive some of these texts from reference books authorized by the ruling authorities themselves. However, these texts are adequate for recognizing the Holy Prophet (S)'s instructions and affirmation on the commitment to the leadership of his immaculate progeny after him.

Hadith of the Twelve Imams

All Muslims have unanimously agreed upon the fact that the Holy Prophet (S) had predicted the coming of the Twelve Imams during the Farewell Hajj.¹ They comprise the Hadith of the Two Weighty Things—the Qur'an and the Ahl al-Bayt, Hadith of the Holy Prophet (S)'s Paradisiacal Pool and the Sahabah² whom will be sent to Hellfire and will be deprived of the water of that Pool.

Al-Bukhari, in al-Sahih 8/127, records the following:

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "There will be twelve princes..." Then, he said a word that I could not perceive. So, I asked my father about it. "All will be from Quraysh," asserted my father.

Muslim, in al-Sahih 6/3 records:

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "Islam will be fortified for a period of twelve successors..." Then, he said a word that I could not perceive. I asked my father about it. "All will be from Quraysh," asserted my father.

Muslim records a similar narration in which he states "Then, he said something that I could not conceive," instead of "Then, he said a word that I could not perceive."

According to a third narration recorded by Muslim, the following form is mentioned:

“This religion will be kept in efficacy and power for a period of twelve successors...” Then, he said a word that I could not hear due to the noise of people. I asked my father about it. “All will be from Quraysh,” asserted my father.

Imitated by the majority of reference books of Hadith, al-Bukhari has not referred to even one point indicating that the incident had happened during the sermon of the Farewell Hajj on Mount `Arafat. A number of books, however, have referred to this point. The following is written down in Ahmad ibn Hanbal’s al-Musnad 5/93, 36 and 99: “Jabir ibn Samarah narrated the following: On Mount `Arafat, the Holy Prophet sermonized...” On page 87, “The Holy Prophet said during the Farewell Hajj...” and on page 99, “al-Muqaddami narrated: During his sermon in Mina, I heard the Holy Prophet (S) ...”

Later on, we will prove that this remarkable matter had been repeatedly affirmed on Mount `Arafat, Mina and al-Khayf Masjid before it was declared in a formal, obligatory and decisive form in Ghadir Khumm.

What is the story of those Twelve Imams? What for did the Holy Prophet (S) provide their question before the greatest mass of Muslims who listened to their Prophet (S) while he was bidding farewell? Al-Bukhari answers: Those are not Imams to follow the Holy Prophet (S) in leadership obligatorily; rather they are only virtuous princes who will be in this nation at a certain period of time. The Holy Prophet (S) only conveyed his Lord’s future news to his nation. Indeed, they will be from Quraysh, not only Hashim. They will be from the twenty tribes of Quraysh. None of Ansar, the Arab tribes or the non-Arab people will be among them. This is the whole matter.

What for did the Holy Prophet (S) convey this matter to his people during the Farewell Hajj on Mount `Arafat? What was the practical affair ensued from that?

Al-Bukhari answers: It is a matter of a prediction only. The Holy Prophet (S) wanted to foretell his people so that they would be cheerful. It is only “journalistic” news empty of any practical element.

Concisely, saving that sole narration, which cannot be perceived, al-Bukhari has not referred to this topic at all. On the other hand, he has recorded numerous clear-cut narrations respecting the menstruation of `A`ishah during the Farewell Hajj! He gives in details how the Holy Prophet (S) revered her and sent a nurse for helping her perform the rites of `Umrah.

Muslim –the Hadithist– is a little bit fairer than al-Bukhari in this regard. He has opted for a narration leading to the fact that those twelve successors will be ruling after the Holy Prophet (S). This narration should recuperate Muslims since it settles the problem of the Holy Prophet (S)’s succession. Those are Imams nominated by the Exalted Lord and the Holy Prophet (S). Their legality is derived from this divine nomination. Hence, the matter will not require a secret meeting or discrepancies resulting in a bloody combat on power from the first days of Islam until now causing millions of victims as well as dissensions that led to the accumulation of the *Ummah*’s weakness until it was completely collapsed on the hands of the Ottomans.

Muslim, however, adds, 'No, this problem was not solved. The Holy Prophet (S) had just referred to those successors generally. He did not identify their names and personalities. Any of the ten thousands before whom this serious matter was addressed did not ask for an explanation and none of them asked the Holy Prophet (S) whom they would be. Had the Holy Prophet (S) referred to their names, or only the name of the first one of them, all the clans of Quraysh would have accepted and submitted, since they were too pious to disobey the Lord and His Messenger!'

Muslim thus repeats the same words of al-Bukhari, 'No! They are only godly people by whom Islam will be fortified. They are from Quraysh—Quraysh only!'

Thus and so, al-Bukhari and Muslim would never lead to an acceptable effect in the question of those Twelve Imams. They lock all doors and repeat the same words of people of Quraysh, 'Your Prophet (S) only referred to the smell of those twelve ones during the Farewell Hajj. You should only smell and keep peace!'

At any rate, other reference books of Hadith have paid an attention, less than that of Muslim and al-Bukhari, to policy and politicians during reporting the Holy Prophet (S)'s news. These books have referred to working matters in the question involved. They have thus related the phrase 'after me' in a form referring to the fact that those predicted Imams should be ruling directly after the Holy Prophet (S). In al-Musnad 5/92, Ahmad relates the same narration to Jabir al-Siwa`i in the following form:

I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "After me, there will be..."

On the same page, he refers to another form:

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated that the Holy Prophet said, "After me, there will be twelve successors. All will be from Quraysh." When the Holy Prophet (S) returned home, people of Quraysh came and asked about the age following those successors. "Then, commotion will be befalling," asserted the Holy Prophet (S).

The phrase, 'After me', which refers to the direct stage after the Holy Prophet (S), is mentioned in both narrations. The second, likewise, reveals people of Quraysh's care for the question regarding those twelve godly Imams. It also avers that the story happened in al-Madinah, not during the Farewell Hajj.

The phrase was repeated in various narrations mentioned in other reference books:

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated that the Prophet said, "After me, there will be twelve princes..." As I could not perceive the next sentence, I asked some people... (Ahmad: al-Musnad 5/94.)

Jabir al-Siwa`i narrated that the Holy Prophet said, "After me there will be twelve princes..." As I could not hear the next sentence, I asked the man next to me. "All will be from Quraysh," clarified he. (Ahmad: al-Musnad 5/99, 108)

The Holy Prophet said, "Following me, there will be twelve princes." As I could not understand the next sentence, I asked the one next to me. "All will be from Quraysh," said he. (Al-Tirmidhi: al-Sunan; 3/340)

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "After me, there will be twelve successors..." (al-Bukhari: Tarikh 1/446 No. 1426)

Abu'l-Qasim al-Baghawi narrated that `Abdullah ibn `Umar said: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "After me, there will be twelve successors." (Ibn Hajar: al-Sawa`iq al-Muhriqah 20)

All the previous reports prove that the Holy Prophet (S) discussed the question of the next leadership during the Farewell Hajj and conveyed the Lord's commandment of those twelve ones being the legal leaders of the *Ummah*. This fact cites a number of questions to be answered by the people of Quraysh and their reporters:

First: Why are the narrations of this question almost restricted to a single narrator –Jabir ibn Samarah al-Siwa`i– who was a ten year old boy, maybe, during the Farewell Hajj? Is it reasonable that any other individual could not hear these narrations except this boy? What for did the other companions attending there avoid narrating this occurrence?

Jabir's way of narration might have been attaining satisfaction of the Qurayshite caliphate as it was proved as the most suitable. Therefore, its forms were recorded and admitted under the supervision of the ruling authorities. Most surely, other individuals conveyed this occurrence, but in a way inappropriate to be publicized!

Second: Muslims were wont to ask the Holy Prophet (S) about the most diminutive features of each matter. They even interrupted his speeches for addressing indicative questions. The narrations involved have related the Holy Prophet (S)'s discussing a matter of a high importance—a foretelling about a doctrinal, practical, momentous and futuristic matter. These narrations have claimed the Holy Prophet (S)'s obscuring this most important point of the issue. Finally, they have claimed that none of Muslims asked or wondered about those Imams or people's obligation towards them!

How can one believe that people of Quraysh, who knocked the door of the Holy Prophet (S)'s house in al-Madinah, for asking about those Twelve Imams, as the narrator himself reported, did not ask him about these Imam's identities and ages? Does the word 'Quraysh' stand for Abu-Bakr and `Umar exclusively, in al-Madinah? Likewise, how can one believe that Muslims who attended the Farewell Hajj did not ask the Holy Prophet (S) about those Imams, their ages and people's role towards them?

Third: why could the narrator not perceive the very important word that defined the identity of those twelve ones; he therefore he asked the man next to him? The same word could not be perceived by the narrator who reported the Holy Prophet (S)'s addressing the same sermon in al-Madinah. Why do reference books of Hadith authorized by the Qurayshite caliphate restrict Samarah and `Umar ibn al-Khattab as the only persons who carried the missed word of the Holy Prophet (S)?

Moreover, various questions insist on revealing the hiddens of this narration and urge scholars to check in books of Hadith and history. Hereinafter, we aim at focusing lights on the missed word by providing a number of notes and questions.

(A) The Origin of the Word

Is 'All will be from my household,' the origin of 'All will be from Quraysh?' What is the reason beyond the

absence of the most important statement? Who was that man whom the narrator asked about that word?

Ahmad, in al-Musnad 5/100 and 107, records that the narrator himself could not perceive the statement; therefore, he asked about it:

As I could not perceive the next statement, I asked my father. "He said: all will be from Quraysh," asserted my father.

... He then said a word that I could not perceive. My father was nearer to the Holy Prophet (S) than I was. I asked him about that word. He answered, "He said: All will be from Quraysh." (Al-Hakim's al-Mustadrak; 3/617)

Ahmad, in al-Musnad 5/90 and 98, records that the Holy Prophet (S) himself intended to hide that word: ... He then said a word too silent to be heard. "What did he say?" I asked my father. "He said: All will be from Quraysh," answered my father.

... He then said a word with a silent voice. I asked my uncle who was sitting before me about it. "O son! He said: All will be from Quraysh," answered my uncle. (al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak 3/618)

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated that the Prophet said, "For this nation, there will be twelve custodians who will never be influenced by those who frustrate them." Then he said a word with a silent voice that I could not perceive. "What was that word that the Holy Prophet (S) had spoken quietly?" I asked my father. "It was: All will be from Quraysh," asserted my father. (Al-Tabarani: al-Mu`jam al-Kabir 2/213-4 No. 1794)

According to other narrations, it was people, not the narrator or the Holy Prophet (S), who caused the word to disappear.

This means that people –who were consecrating for their Lord on `Arafat, living the last moments of their Prophet (S)'s life and waiting for any word he would speak of– were noisy as if they were in an auction and some of them disturbed and shouted while the Holy Prophet (S) was articulating the most sensitive word so that the faithful believers would not perceive! People were crying, shouting, speaking loudly, making noise, standing and sitting while the Holy Prophet (S) was addressing his sermon:

... People began to shout 'Allahu Akbar' and make noise. Meanwhile, the Holy Prophet (S) pronounced a word I could not catch. "What did he say, father?" I asked. "He said: All will be from Quraysh," answered my father. (Abu-Dawud's al-Sunan 2/309 and Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/98)

...Then, he pronounced a word that I could not hear because of people's noise. "What did he say, father?" I asked. "He said: All will be from Quraysh," answered my father. (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/98)

...People began to shout... (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/93)

...People then began to make noise and speak aloud. I could not understand the word after "All..." (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/99)

...“This religion will be kept in efficacy and power for a period of twelve successors who will be given victory over their opponents...” Then people began to stand and sit... (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/99)

Regarding those whom Jabir asked about the missed word, most of narrations affirm that he asked his

father Samarah. Hence, the testimony of including all the clans of Quraysh with the Hashimites in the question of the next Twelve Imams depends upon the authenticity of Samarah. Samarah's being Muslim could not be proved; numerous narrations authenticated by Muslim, al-Bukhari and others refer to this fact. However, other forms of the narration prove other things:

... As I asked all people, they answered, "He said: All will be from Quraysh." (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/92, 90)

... I asked people, or the man next to me, "What..." (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/108)

... As I could not perceive that word, I asked the one next to me... (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/99, 108)

Al-Tabarani, however, emphasizes that Jabir confirmed that people said that the Holy Prophet said, 'All will be from Quraysh.'

... I could not understand what he said next; therefore, I asked people. They claimed that he said, "All will be from Quraysh." (al-Tabarani's al-Mu`jam al-Kabir; 2/249, Hadith 2044)

Is it credible that the most important word identifying the Twelve Imams whom the Holy Prophet (S) foretold could be vanished in that quite silent circumstance on `Arafat and none would ask the Holy Prophet (S) about?

A scholar may approach the fact when he looks at the other narrations related by Jabir ibn Samarah himself, regarding the Holy Prophet (S)'s having been riding on his animal and declaring these words. This supports the fact that the Holy Prophet (S) tried to make all the attendants hear and listen:

... Then, the Holy Prophet (S)'s voice vanished. I asked my father who was nearer to the Holy Prophet (S)'s animal... (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/87)

They have also related that the Holy Prophet (S) ordered a man of sonorous voice to repeat his words as aloud as possible so that people would hear:

...Rabi`ah ibn Khalaf al-Jamhi was of sonorous voice; the Holy Prophet (S) ordered him to repeat his words aloud on Day of `Arafat. He was standing before the Holy Prophet (S)'s she-camel. "O people! Do you realize this month?" said the Holy Prophet (S) and ordered Rabi`ah to declare aloud, and Rabi`ah did. "Yes, it is the sacred month," people answered affirmatively. "Allah has surely deemed your blood and assets amongst you as sacred as this month until the day on which you will meet Him," said the Holy Prophet (S) and ordered Rabi`ah to declare aloud...

Ibn `Abbas said: ...When he halted on `Arafat, the Holy Prophet (S) ordered Rabi`ah ibn Umayyah ibn Khalaf, a man with a sonorous voice, to stand just before his she-camel and repeat his words aloud...

Al-Tabarani relates this report to authentic narrators.³

Although they relate the same narration to the same reporter in various forms, the missed word, in all forms, is invariably the same. This supports the claim that the statement was 'All will be from my progeny' or 'All will be from my household', not 'All will be from Quraysh.'

They also narrate that the narrator asserted that the Holy Prophet (S)'s sermon was in al-Madinah, not `Arafat, yet, the missed word was the same—the identity of those Twelve Imams:

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated: My father and I came to the Holy Prophet (S) who was saying, "This affair will be kept in excellence until there will be twelve princes..." Then, he said a word I could not perceive. "What did he say?" I asked my father. "He said: All will be from Quraysh," said my father. (Ahmad's al-Musnad 5/97, 107)

The same narration is moved to the small mosque of al-Madinah and, nevertheless, the missed word is invariably the same. Jabir ibn Samarah could not understand it until he asked `Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Qurayshite caliph, and `Umar answered!

The Holy Prophet (S) was on the minbar⁴ when he addressed, "There will be twelve custodians from people of Quraysh. They will not be influenced by their opponents." `Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah please him, and my father were among people. They all asserted the saying as same as I could perceive. (al-Tabarani's al-Mu`jam al-Kabir 2/256, No 2073).

Al-Bazzar relates this narration to Jabir ibn Samarah alone. He adds:

When the Holy Prophet (S) returned home, I followed him to ask about the stage following those twelve ones. "Commotion will be coming next," said the Holy Prophet (S).⁵

The text became: 'Twelve custodians opposed by people.' A group among whom was `Umar ibn al-Khattab and the narrator's father became the supporters of the text. Hence, place, time and persons of the occurrence were changed. Yet; the missed word is invariably the same.

A more unfamiliar matter is that while they relate the narration to Abu-Juhayfah, the missed word is still invariably the same! Yet, the narrator, here, asks his uncle, not father:

`Awn ibn Abu-Juhayfah narrated the following on the authority of his father: I was accompanying my uncle to the Holy Prophet (S) when he spoke, "The affairs of this nation will be kept in rectitude until twelve successors go on..." He then pronounced a word I could not perceive. "What did he say, uncle? I asked. "He said: All will be from Quraysh," asserted my uncle. (Al-Hakim's al-Mustadrak 3/618)⁶

Eventually, we find ourselves facing an unprecedented phenomenon in all traditions. It refers to a highly exceptional matter that is hidden beyond the statement, 'All will be from Quraysh.'

It is also supposable that the original narrator is `Umar himself; it was he who affirmed and corrected to the boy Jabir ibn Samarah. Al-Khazzaz al-Qummi, in Kifayat al-Athar 90, relates the same report to `Umar only, without referring to Samarah, or his son, or Abu-Juhayfah, or his uncle:

...`Umar ibn al-Khattab narrated the following: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "After me, the Imams will be twelve..." He then pronounced a word so silently that I could hardly perceive. I heard him saying, "All will be from Quraysh."

Depending on this narration, which is the most authentic in our view, the generalization of the identity of those Twelve Imams to include all the clans of Quraysh, not the Hashimites in particular, was invented by `Umar. In addition, it coincides his saying, "People of Quraysh reject that the Hashimites join leadership to Prophethood," which he frequently addressed to the Hashimites during and after the Holy Prophet (S)'s lifetime.

(B) The Divine Promise of Unknown Leadership is Impracticable

The promise of the advent of Twelve Imams is a divine word of the All-wise Lord. It is a traditional promise of Imams to follow a Prophet (S). It was given to the previous nations, as well. Besides, it represents a mercy to this nation by which people can settle the problems that they will certainly face after their Prophet (S). How is it, then, practicable for the Lord to promise His Messenger of unknown leaders?

The Exalted Lord promised the previous nations of the advent of a messenger named 'Ahmad' after five centuries. This was conveyed by Jesus revealing the impracticability to admit that the Lord promised the seal of nations of godly custodians, without naming their leading one at least or naming their clan. It is unacceptable for Him to promise of men coming amongst twenty-three clans that have disagreed with each other on the most trivial worldly affairs. To give credence to such a lie is to impute imprudence to the Glorified Lord and His Messenger, and such a claim is impossibly stated by any Muslim or even any fair Orientalist!

It happened sometimes that the Holy Prophet (S) addressed a general idea or foretelling to people, expecting their inquiry, so that his answer would be more effective. But, in our question, Muslims' inquiries, as well as the Holy Prophet (S)'s answer, are nonexistent. They are found in Shiite reference books of Hadith only.

(C) The Imams are from Quraysh, but from the Ahl al-Bayt

Supposing the problematic points of the narration involved are disregarded and the Holy Prophet (S)'s nominating those twelve godly Qurayshite custodians is acceptable, a question will be aroused: Which tribe of Quraysh is intended? The clans of Quraysh are more than twenty. According to authentic narrations recorded in the major reference books of Hadith, Almighty Allah has preferred people of Quraysh to the Arabs and has preferred the Hashimites to Quraysh. Is it then acceptable that He chooses those Twelve Imams succeeding the Holy Prophet (S) from a clan other than the Hashimites?

The following narration is recorded by Muslim: al-Sahih 7/58:

Wathilah ibn al-Asqa` narrated: I heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "Allah has chosen the tribe of Kinanah amongst sons of Ishmael and chosen the tribe of Quraysh amongst the Kinanah and chosen the Hashimites amongst the Quraysh and chosen me among the Hashimites.

As he relates the same narration, al-Tirmidhi, in al-Sunan 5/245, decides it as one-way qualified narration. On page 243, he decides it as authentically qualified. Following this, he records a number of narrations of the same supposition:

Al-`Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib narrated: I told the Holy Prophet (S) that people of Quraysh discussed their lineages and when they mentioned him, they likened him to a date palm tree planting in a junkyard. The Holy Prophet (S) commented, "When Almighty Allah created things, He made me with the best

party. Then, He made me in the best tribe. Then, He made me in the best house. Hence, I am the best party, tribe and house. (This is a qualified narration.)

Following this, al-Tirmidhi writes a similar narration with another series of narrators deciding it as one-way authentic narration:

Ibn `Abbas narrated: The descendants of `Imran, mentioned in Allah's saying, "Surely Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of `Imran above the nations," are the believers among sons of Abraham, `Imran, Yasin and Muhammad. (Al-Bukhari, al-Sahih 4/138)

Qur'anic texts and Hadiths respecting selecting, preferring, favoring and preceding the Hashimites to the *Ummah* are too many to be covered in this discussion. This preference is by the reason that the Ahl al-Bayt being part of him, as well as being the diamond of the Hashimites and their best. Generally, they are the diamond of sons of Adam.

Taking al-Bukhari's testimony, a scholar can conclude, by processing a simple equation, those twelve men being the progeny of Prophet (S) Muhammad. In the earliest narration, it is proved that the Twelve Imams are chosen amongst people of Quraysh. In the latter, it is proved that Muhammad's progeny, like Abraham's, are chosen. Hence, the twelve expected Imams should be Muhammad's progeny whom are selected by the Lord. At a least criterion, those twelve men should be from Muhammad's progeny. This is also advocated by al-Bukhari's narration that tells `Ali's being the first complainant on the Resurrection Day. This means that Imam `Ali will bear an important issue preferred to all other issues of this nation. This issue, however, can be understood from Imam `Ali's following saying recorded in Nahj al-Balaghah 1/82:

"By Allah I swear, people of Quraysh bear malice against us for one and only reason—the Lord prefers us to them. Then, we permitted them to gain entry into our group. Hence, they are applicable to the poet's saying:

It is we who endowed you this elevation and you were not
Elevated and we encompassed you with swords and spears."⁷

Qays ibn `Abadah narrated: `Ali ibn Abi-Talib, may Allah please him, said, "I will be the first to kneel before the Beneficent Lord for litigation on the Resurrection Day."

(D) Hadiths Explaining the Narration of the Twelve Imams

It is unanimously agreeable that the Holy Prophet (S)'s texts, like the Qur'an, explicate each other. This is a perceptual principle. Naturally, any nation should scrutinize the other practical and articulate texts of their Prophet (S) for recognizing the Twelve Imams of whom he had foretold. A deep look at our Prophet (S)'s words about his progeny (Namely `Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan and al-Husayn) removes any doubt that those persons, whom were frequently praised and acclaimed by the Holy Prophet (S) who never speaks out of desire, are the very intendeds in the text involved. As a matter of fact, Muslims agree that those persons were frequently praised by the Holy Prophet (S) on various occasions; he declared that they

were purified thoroughly by the Lord. This fact is recorded in an evident Qur'anic text. He also ordered Muslims to cherish and bless them during their daily prayers. He deemed unlawful for them to receive alms and, instead, he legislated their enjoying a share of the one-fifth rate (khums) imposed upon Muslims. Finally, the Holy Prophet (S)'s will was to adhere to them besides the Qur'an. He named them as the minor weighty thing after the Qur'an—the major one as proven by authentic reports mentioned in the major reference books of Hadith. The Holy Prophet (S)'s words of praising his progeny and warning against wronging and opposing them are too many to be covered in this discussion. At any rate, these words have been good examples for the mindful and fact-finders.

(E) Twelve Imams and Twelve Months

Narrations appertained to the Holy Prophet (S)'s sermons during the Farewell Hajj have asserted that he referred to the rotation of time to its first creation when he mentioned the Twelve Imams. Thereafter, he recited Almighty Allah's saying:

“Surely, the number of months with Allah is twelve months in Allah's ordinance since the day when He created the heavens and the earth, of these four being sacred. 9:36”

Al-Bukhari, al-Sahih 5/126, 204 and 6/235, records the following:

Abu-Bakrah narrated that the Holy Prophet stated, “Time has rotated to the first creation of the heavens and earth. A year is twelve months among which there are four sacred ones—Dhu'l-Qa'dah, Dhu'l-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. The first three are successive.⁸

In Majma' al-Zawa'id 3/265, the same narration is related in a style more accordant to the Holy Prophet (S)'s eloquence than al-Bukhari's:

...Time has rotated as same as the first day on which the Lord created the heavens and the earth.

“Surely the number of months with Allah is twelve months in Allah's ordinance since the day when He created the heavens and the earth, of these four being sacred. That is the right reckoning; therefore, be not unjust to yourselves.” Do not apostatize from your religion after me killing each other...

Sunni scholars have cited the custom of postponing the sacred months as the meaning suggested by the Holy Prophet (S) in this narration. Hence, he suggests a new beginning of time, which leads to canceling that custom. As a matter of fact, this exegesis is unconvincing since the custom of postponing the sacred month leaves no effect on time or on the universe that its cancellation leads to creating a new beginning to time. Secondly, there is no single indication to any relationship between the rotation of time and the custom of postponing the sacred months. Each is an independent topic.

Hence, scholars are mistaken when they establish such a relationship. As the Holy Prophet (S) was in a situation of bidding his people farewell and providing the next stage of guidance, aberrance, rulings, beliefs and paths to Paradise and Hellfire, it is most likely that he intended to say that a new stage of the divine guidance and aberrance would be beginning on that day. He also intended to say that the material movement of time is based upon the twelve months, while the mental movement is based upon the

consent to the Twelve Imams. Material and mental existence of those Imams coincides with the system of the twelve months, which is effective in the movement of this universe. This view is supported by the sacredness and consecration of number twelve in the Holy Qur'an.

The Lord identifies twelve chieftains for the Israelites and twelve apostles for Jesus Christ. Similarly, the Holy Prophet (S) asked Ansar to elect twelve chieftains in the earlier stage of their homage. He also foretold his people about the advent of Twelve Imams. Moreover, holy texts have asserted that the deviation of this nation is originated by twelve misleading men from the Sahabah. Consequently, in the face of each Imam, there should be a misleading man and in the face of each Prophet (S), there should be a nefarious enemy purposing for inveigling people. Almighty Allah says, 'And the day when the unjust one will bite his hands, saying: O! Would that I had taken a way with the Apostle. Woe is it! Would that I had not taken such a one for a friend! Certainly, he led me astray from the reminder after it had come to me; and the Satan fails to aid man. And the Apostle cried out:

“O my Lord! My people have treated this Qur'an as a forsaken thing. And thus have We made for every Prophet (S) an enemy from among the sinners, and sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and a Helper. 25:27-28”

Muslim, in al-Sahih 8/122-3, writes down:

The Prophet stated: “There are twelve hypocrites among my companions. Eight of them will never see Paradise until a camel passes through the eye of a needle. Eight of them will be killed by an epidemic. And four will...” I could not memorize the rest.

The Prophet stated: “There are twelve hypocrites among my companions. They will never see or smell Paradise until a camel passes through the eye of a needle. Eight of them will be perished by an epidemic. A flaming lamp will be emerging between their shoulders and flowing out of their chests.”

Abu al-Tufayl narrated: A sort of inconsistency arose between Hudhayfah and one of the people of al-`Aqabah Plot. “I adjure you by Allah to answer me about the number of the people of al-`Aqabah Plot,” the man asked Hudhayfah. “You should answer him,” people urged. Hudhayfah spoke, “Well, we were told that they had been fourteen men. They should be fifteen if you were one of them. By Allah I swear, twelve of them are the foes of the Lord and His Messenger in this world and on that day when witnesses will be arising.”⁹

It is thus not unacceptable to say that the Holy Prophet (S)'s intention was to tell people that the Exalted Lord has established humankind on laws of guidance and aberrance since the first day He created the heavens and the earth. These laws are executed by elements of providing evidences and relieving people to choose either guidance or aberrance. Like positive and negative, the elements of guidance and aberrance should befall together. The Lord then has inspired human souls to distinguish the right from the wrong.

As He caused Adam to descend to this earth, the Lord caused Satan to descend with him. With each Prophet (S), there was a single or a number of misleading people. In this nation, the number of the

leading Imams is equal to that of the misleading hypocrites; which is twelve. Hence, a new rotation of guidance and aberrance has begun in the same way as it began with Adam and Satan. This is the meaning of the new beginning of time that leads to the extinction of an age and the beginning of another. This idea is supported by the exegesis of the Qur'anic Verse, "Surely the number of months with Allah is twelve months in Allah's ordinance since the day when He created the heavens and the earth," that the Ahl al-Bayt adopts.

(F) Jabir al-Siwa`i; the Reporter of the Narration

As Sunni major reference books of Hadith have related the narration of the Twelve Imams to `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, Abu-Juhayfah and Jabir ibn Samarah al-Siwa`i, they have depended mainly upon Jabir ibn Samarah ibn Janadah. It has been said that he was son of `Amr ibn Jundab ibn Hujayr ibn Riab ibn Habib ibn Saw`ah ibn `Amir ibn Sa`sa`ah al-Siwa`i. Others have said that he belonged to the tribe of `Amir ibn Sa`sa`ah.¹⁰ Jabir and his father were confederates of the tribe of Zuhrah.¹¹ This strengthens the doubt that Jabir did not belong to Quraysh. If he had belonged to the tribe of `Amir ibn Sa`sa`ah, he would not have confederated the tribe of Zuhrah. I myself read al-Dhahbi's saying that Jabir died during the reign of `Abd al-Malik (ibn Marwan the fifth Umayyad caliph) and that ibn Sa`d alleged that Samarah, the father, had become Muslim only on the Day of the Conquest of Makkah and none else has mentioned anything about his death.¹² This takes us to the fact that Samarah was one of the Tulaqa` 'Released Ones'¹³ and that al-Dhahbi suspects whether Samarah embraced Islam or not.

Therefore, he says, "Ibn Sa`d alleges that..." Al-Bukhari, in al-Tarikh al-Kabir 4/177, has claimed Samarah's being one of the Sahabah. Jabir is the child of a 'released one.' He was an infant during the conquest of Makkah. He died in AH 76. He narrated that after the Day of Conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet (S) passed his hand over the faces of the small boys who were performing prayer in al-Madinah. He was one of those small boys.¹⁴ Jabir might have lived in the custody of Sa`d ibn Abu-Waqqas; his maternal uncle, in al-Madinah. It has been related that he had participated in the conquest of al-Mada`in before he moved in Kufah where he built a house for himself.

All the above proves that Jabir was a teenage during the Farewell Hajj. Hence, the only reliable narrator of this narration is a teenage son of a 'released one' who was a confederate of Quraysh. How strange the chiefs of this nation and the chiefs of the Sahabah were! They had not possessed even the intellectuality of that teenage 'released' boy who cared for the future of his nation and the coming godly Imams! In more accurate words, how firm the Qurayshite ruling authorities who had full control on Hadiths were! They disallowed Sunnis to record and publicize the narrations appertained to the coming Twelve Imams whom the Holy Prophet (S) had foretold, except the narration of this teenage!

(G) Marks of Authenticity Given to the Three Narrations

Three forms and three narrators of the report of the Twelve Imams are found in Sunni reference books of

Hadith. They have agreed upon authenticating Jabir ibn Samarah's narration; some of them have decided the authenticity of Abu-Juhayfah's narration while the majority decided it as a qualified with a rather doubtful narrator. Regarding Ibn Mas'ud, they give opposite marks to his narration since, as they claim, Mujalid ibn Sa'id, whom is decided as trustful by al-Nassa'i and a few specialist scholars while others had judged him as doubtful, is within the series of narrators. Samarah; Jabir's father, and `Umar ibn al-Khattab should be added to the three previous narrators. The majority of narrations affirm that those two men informed Jabir about the missed word. Moreover, `Umar ibn al-Khattab should be regarded as a main narrator according to the foresaid narration recorded in Kifayat al-Athar.

The following is a number of scholars' opinions about Ibn Mas'ud's narration:

Majma' al-Zawa'id 5/190:

The Twelve Successors: Masruq narrated that Ibn Mas'ud was teaching us Holy Qur'an when a man asked whether they had asked the Holy Prophet (S) about the number of the successors who would be ruling this *Ummah*. 'I have never been asked such a question since I was in Iraq,' asserted Ibn Mas'ud, 'It is yes. We have asked the Holy Prophet (S) this question and he answered that they would be twelve, like the number of the Israelites' chieftains.'

[Comment on the narration] This narration is reported by Ahmad, Abu-Ya'li and al-Bazzar. One of its narrators is Mujalid ibn Sa'id. Except al-Nassa'i, majority of Hadithists decides him as unreliable. The other narrators are trustworthy.

The same is recorded in al-Hakim's al-Mustadrak 4/501 who adds, 'I am too short to give my opinion about the narrations of Mujalid and his likes.'

Ibn Hajar, in al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah 20, decides the eligibility of the narration. He records, 'Ibn Mas'ud relates, in a qualified documentation... etc

Al-Suyuti, in Tarikh al-Khulafa' 13, decides the eligibility of the narration, too. He records, 'Ahmad and al-Bazzar records the qualified narration of ibn Mas'ud... etc

Al-Busiri, as quoted from Kanz al-'Ummal 6/89, decides the narrations as eligible. He says: Musaddad, Ibn Rahawayh, Ibn Abu-Shaybah, Abu-Ya'li and Ahmad relate this qualified narration... etc. 15

If the reason of distrusting Ibn Mas'ud's narration is the existence of Mujalid within the series of the narrators, the same narration has been related, in a number of Shiite reference books of Hadith, to a series of other narrators.¹⁶ Nevertheless, this matter makes no change for the judgment issued by Sunni scholars. The narration is given the degree of 'Hasan—qualified with a rather doubtful narrator' whatever is proved! Further, this degree seems to be obscure for Sunni scholars since the original problem of Ibn Mas'ud's narration is to avoid adding 'All will be from Quraysh.' The erasure of this statement makes the readers understand that those coming godly Imams would obligatorily be rulers succeeding the Holy Prophet (S). This fact draws a big red circle on the procedures of al-Saqifah from which the Hashimites were absent and busy in preparing the funeral of the Holy Prophet (S)!

(H) Contradiction of the Contents of The Three Narrations

Sunni reference books of Hadith record Jabir ibn Samarah's narration in two different forms one of which is accordant to Abu-Juhayfah's. Ibn Mas'ud had his own form. On that account, the narration has been in three different forms. The first foreordains that those promised men will be coming after the Holy Prophet (S) and all will belong to Quraysh. This text occurs in the majority of Jabir's narrations. Sunni scholars have decided the authenticity of this form. Al-Albani, likewise, has decided the authenticity of this form and recorded it under No. 1075 of his series of the authentic Hadiths.

The second form foretells that those twelve men will be ruling after the Holy Prophet (S) and all will be from Quraysh. It also tells that Islam will be kept in power and protection as long as those men rule. After that, it will be weak and humble and, finally, collapse. This form is mentioned by a number of Jabir's narrations and all of Abu-Juhayfah's. Most of Sunni scholars have decided its authenticity. Al-Albani has affixed the form narrated by Jabir ibn Samarah under number 376 of his series of authentic Hadiths. Abu-Juhayfah's narration has been decided as qualified. Ibn Mas'ud's narration has been cited as witness on the authenticity of the previous. Finally, al-Albani has refuted Abu-Dawud's additional wording in which he, as well as other scholars, affirms that all people of this nation will be loyal to those coming Imams, and regards it as deniable.

The third form establishes that those Imams will come after the Holy Prophet (S) in a way similar to the situation of the disciples of Prophets Moses and Jesus. This form is however empty of 'All will be from Quraysh.' Most of Ibn Mas'ud's narrations depend upon this form. Divergence and contrast are the most remarkable notes to be recorded on the various forms of the narrations involved. This is not an easy or acceptable matter, especially in such a sort of narrations. In addition, this contrast is hardly answerable since it exists in the different forms of the reports of the same narrator. Distortion in such reports, even said by an ordinary chief of a group, is decisively considered; therefore, we should never accept such reports that assert the Holy Prophet (S)'s foretelling the coming of unknown men, especially if we take in consideration the stage and place of addressing that prediction.

The main accusation is the distortion of the identity of those Twelve Imams. The accused is none other than those who may gain advantage from hiding the names and descriptions of the promised ones. It is the ruling authorities who came to power just after the Holy Prophet (S) and banished his progeny from the field of competition by holding a secret meeting while the Holy Prophet (S)'s family were engaged in his funeral. A fair searcher may approach the fact by conceiving that divergence and contrast in the forms of these narrations are focused on a definite point, which is the descriptions, identity, divine standing, lineage, age and period of those promised Imams. This matter incites doubtfulness of all the forms of the narrations depended by Sunni reference books of Hadith. On the other hand, it involves the authentication of the concordant unanimous forms of the narration accredited by Shiite reference books of Hadith. All these forms have asserted the same matter; those Twelve Imams will be his progeny, and more definitely, they are `Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and nine men from al-Husayn's offspring.

(I) The Twelve Imams are not Nominated According to Means of Election and Homage

This fact is indisputable; since the Lord has chosen them for leadership, people's obligation should be only to comply with them. Allah says, "And it behooves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter."

Those Imams acquire their legality from the Lord—the All-wise and the All-aware of His servants' good. Positively, the Lord's choice is more prosperous and obligatory than His servants' are. Like the selection of Prophets that has not necessitated election or homage, the Twelve Imams are selected by the Lord and, accordingly, to obey them is a divine duty. Similarly, even if people ignore, injure or kill a Prophet (S), this should never harm his being divinely chosen and obligatorily conformed. People's general compliance with a Prophet (S) is no more than an acknowledgment of the obligatory obedience to him, which is divinely commissioned, and is a declaration of corresponding to the Lord's instructions.

On that account, people's homage to the Prophets and their successors is a process of submission and obligation to those persons' right of adherence. People should confirm that right only. They never constitute it. This is the main reason beyond the Holy Prophet (S)'s ordering Muslims to pay homage to him in the most important curve in his nation's history so that he would confirm their obligatory obedience to him in good and bad, war and peace, and favorable and detrimental circumstances.

For the same reason, the Holy Prophet (S), having conveyed the divine commandment of `Ali's coming leadership in Ghadir Khumm, ordered to establish a tent under which `Ali would receive all Muslims who should offer him congratulations on this divine leadership, before they pay homage to him. The divine choice has fallen and it does not require a public consultancy or homage. It only requires admission and congratulations. However, such homage would be obligatory upon people if the Holy Prophet (S) or `Ali asked them to do. For this cause, it is pointless to say that the Holy Prophet (S) asked Muslims only to offer congratulations, not homage, since the issue of the divine commandment of nominating `Ali for the next leadership evacuated the public homage from its effective power and, in the same time, restricted its value to admitting and committing to that divine commandment whenever the Holy Prophet (S) or his successor asked for it.

The general rule in this regard is that people may have the option to choose their leaders and rulers – according to the boundaries of the Islamic legislation– only in case there is no previous divine commandment appertained to this point. In case the Lord has elected a leader, then the whole matter is settled and none has the authority to change or alter. In other words, the choice of the publics is meaningless unless they intend to philosophize before their Glorified Lord or oppose His instructions.

(J) The Narration's Dedication to Quraysh has been Thrown Away by `Umar

There is an important notice in this regard; `Umar ibn al-Khattab was the bearer of the slogan that the Holy Prophet (S)'s succession should be dedicated to Quraysh exclusively. In Saqifah, `Umar disputed Ansar that people of Quraysh, the Holy Prophet (S)'s tribe, were the worthiest of holding his position and authority. He aimed at intercepting Ansar, in whose land and hospitality Muslim Qurayshites lived, from claiming their being the worthiest of holding the Holy Prophet (S)'s position and power since they were his supporters. By such a tribal disputation, `Umar took the round of Saqifah, due to Ansar's discord despite the heavy protestation of Sa`d ibn `Abadah, their chief.

It was `Umar himself who abandoned and threw away the very principle through which he could obtain the leadership of Muslims. In his final hours, `Umar asserted that he would have delivered the leadership to Salim; the Persian slave of Abu-Hudhayfah, had this man been alive!

The following is quoted from Tarikh al-Madinah 3/140:

`Abdullah ibn Buraydah reported that people advised `Umar, while he was in his final hours, to nominate his successor. He said, 'Had one of those two men been alive, I would have certainly delivered him this position with quite tranquility and satisfaction—Abu-`Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah or Salim the slave of Abu-Hudhayfah!'¹⁷

`Umar thus opened the door to Abu-Hanifah and others to cancel the term that a leader of the Islamic State should belong to the tribe of Quraysh. Saljukians and Mamluks used such verdicts to come to power. For the very reason, the Ottomans adopted and publicized Abu-Hanifah's school of jurisprudence and, as a result, named themselves as 'caliphs' –successors of the Holy Prophet (S)–.

Wahhabism and the Condition of Belonging to Quraysh

We—the Shi`ah Imamiyyah¹⁸ specify being one the Ahl al-Bayt as a term of holding the leadership of the Islamic State. Many authenticated Hadiths about the names, as well as number, of those leaders have proven this term. For us, the leadership should be proved by a Divine text only. Hence, the Twelve Imams are testified by the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Since the seal of the Imams, al-Mahdi the Expected, is now absent, yet by appearance only, the leadership of Muslims in this stage should be determined by his commitment. The Imam's representative should enjoy a number of qualifications, such as knowledge, justice and others.

However, it is not a condition that the representative being a descendant of Quraysh. In this point only, we agree practically, not hypothetically, with those who cancel the condition that a leader of the *Ummah* should belong to Quraysh. Shi`ah Zaydiyyah¹⁹ do not dedicate Imamate to those Twelve Imams. they extend it to include any scholar belonging, in lineage, to Imam `Ali and Lady Fatimah al-Zahra`. They hence specify being a Qurayshite and Alawid as a term of holding the position of leadership of the

Ummah.

Among Sunni Muslims, some scholars have agreed with us on this point depending upon verdicts of `Umar and Abu–Hanifah. Other non–Arab Sunnis are more fanatic to Quraysh than `Umar himself. They are the masters of Wahhabism, such as al–Albani who decides the authenticity of the narration reporting the condition that a leader of the *Ummah* must belong to Quraysh. He numbers this narration as 1552 and comments on it in 5/70:

If Muslims are honest enough to work for reviving the glories of the Islamic State, they should repent to their Lord and keep hold on their religion and follow the rulings of the Shari`ah. Among these rulings is the condition that a leader of the *Ummah* must belong to Quraysh. This condition is familiarly unanimous in books of Hadith and fiqh –Islamic jurisprudence–.

In 3/7, he decides the authenticity of a report telling that it is obligatory for a leader of the *Ummah* to belong to Quraysh. He numbers this report as 1006 and then comments:

These authentic narrations refute, clearly, the claims of the old deviate parties, as well as the present authors and Islamic politicians, who invalidate the term that a leader of the *Ummah* must belong to Quraysh and the Arabs.

Moreover, a radical scholar, in a thesis entitled ‘The Islamic State’ begins with specifying the terms of a caliph. He ignores totally the term that a leader must belong to Quraysh and the Arabs and thus takes no notice of all Hadiths and verdicts that authentically emphasize on this term. When I reminded him of this flaw, he just smiled and escaped any discussion. I wonder if he is one of those previously cited or lacking any subjective knowledge in this respect. At any rate, each writer is required to seek the right in his writings without being influenced by any political trend. A writer also should disregard the accordance with the publics.

Under number 1851, al–Albani decides the authenticity of another report telling that, ‘Caliphate must exclusively be to people of Quraysh, judiciary must be to Ansar and propagation must be to the Abyssinians.’ According to this verdict, the leaders of the Muslim governments should belong to any clan of Quraysh, and their ministers should be the descendants of Ansar and the ministers of religious affairs and information should be from Africa or, more specifically, from Ethiopia! The ‘musts’ mentioned in the previous narration, due to which al–Albani issues the verdict that rulers must belong to Quraysh, treat the positions of leadership, ministration and propagations equally. Al–Albani, however, misses the fact that jurisprudence of a narration is more important than the contents. The Holy Prophet (S) is too elevated to issue such illogic laws. This narration and its likes, if authenticated, reveals a definite previous stage of Islam. It is not a perpetual law at all.

(K) Exegetes Blunder in the interpretation of the Twelve Imams

To be honest to the Hadith, it is necessary to say that these Twelve Imams should come directly after the Holy Prophet (S)’s decease. This necessitation comes from the Holy Prophet (S)’s phrase ‘after me.’

However, the Hadith does not include any indication that those Twelve would rule after the Holy Prophet (S) directly; it only foretells about their coming, whether leaders or not. Furthermore, the aforementioned forms of Jabir and Ibn Mas`ud's narrations claim that those Imams would be disappointed and opposed by people as they would be taken away from their positions. This matter, as texts divulge, would not injure them.

In al-Tabarani's al-Mu`jam al-Kabir, the following forms are cited:

'For this nation, there will be Twelve Custodians who will never be influenced by those who will frustrate them.'

'From Quraysh, there will be Twelve Custodians who will never be injured by the enmity of their opposites.'

This involves that nothing stops against applying these forms to the Twelve Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt, even if they could not come to power. However, Imam `Ali and Imam al-Hasan could come to power. Eventually, Imam al-Mahdi; the Expected, will be ruling, as predicted by the Holy Prophet (S)—al-Mahdi's forefather. Furthermore, many narrations have predicted the events to take place after the ages of those Imams indicating that they would last for long ages. Some narrations have mentioned that confusion, bafflement and hypocrisy, which would lead to general collapse of the *Ummah*, would take place after their ages. Others have confirmed that their age should last as long as this earth exists and that with their termination, the earth would founder with its creatures. Hypotheses of the extension of the Imams' age to the termination of this earth confirm the previous predictions, according to a number of Shiite narrations.

Abu-Salah al-Halabi, in Taqrib al-Maarif/173, relates the following:

... Anas ibn Malik narrated that the Holy Prophet stated, 'This religion will prevail as long as there will be Twelve Men from Quraysh. If they pass away, the earth will perish with its inhabitants.'²⁰

This is also accordant to the narrations recorded in our reference books of Hadith regarding the special importance of the existence of the Lord's Representatives on this earth in all ages. Listen to the following reports:

Al-Kafi; 1/179 and 534:

Abu-Hamzah narrated the following: I asked Abu-`Abdullah [Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq] if the earth might proceed to exist without the existence of one of the Imams. 'If the earth may stand without the existence of one of the Imams, it will certainly perish,' answered Abu-`Abdullah.

Correspondingly, the Holy Prophet (S)'s aim beyond providing the question of the next Twelve Imams in the most remarkable congruity of Muslims attending the Farewell Hajj was to attract people's attentions towards those Imams, had they only been lucky and followed them! Furthermore, it is most likely to refer to the Twelve Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt as the only ones intended by the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction. Any other reference is unacceptable for many refuting questions.

Al-Kinji, in Yanabi` al-Mawaddah/ 446, records the following:

A number of scholars have said that the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction of the Twelve Successors is

proved by numerous ways of relation. By identifying the ages and investigating the place, the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction refers to the Twelve Imams of his household. It is impracticable to refer to the rulers who came to power as being intended in the prediction, since their number is less than twelve. In addition, it is impossible to refer to the Umayyad rulers because they were more than twelve and they were excessive unjust and tyrants saving `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz. Besides, they were not Hashimites. According to `Abd al-Malik's narration, which is related to Jabir, the Holy Prophet (S) foretold that those Imams would belong to Hashim.

The Holy Prophet (S)'s lowering his voice gives greater weight to this narration since the Umayyad rulers were too short to resemble the Hashimites in leadership. At length, it is impracticable to identify the `Abbasid kings as the rulers intended. Their number exceeds twelve. Secondly, they did not revere Almighty Allah's saying, 'Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives,' and the Holy Prophet (S)'s Hadith of Kisa` -the cloak-. Likewise, to refer to the Twelve Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt as the intended in that Prophetic prediction is the most suitable since they have been the most knowledgeable, the most religious, the godliest and the most pious. Moreover, they have been of the best lineage and the best family. They are the most favorable to the Lord...

The Hadith of the Two Weighty Things as well as the innumerable Hadiths regarding their merits support this meaning. In Nahj al-Balaghah, `Ali, Allah may honor his face, says, 'Where are those who claimed being exclusively rooted in knowledge? It is we who are firmly rooted in knowledge. They claim such a fabrication due to their envying us, since Allah has raised us and humiliated them, and endowed us and withheld them, and admitted us and dismissed them...

By us, the guidance is sought and by us, blindness is discharged. After me, there will come to you an age during which nothing will be more hidden than the right and nothing will be more evident than the wrong and nothing greater than forging lies against Allah and His Messenger. For people of that age, there will be nothing more slumping than the Divine Book when written in the most appropriate form, and there will be nothing more profitable than distorting it. In the lands, there will be nothing more forbidden than the good and nothing more acceptable than evil.

Be it known to you that you will not realize the right guidance unless you realize its neglecters and you will not keep the covenant of the Divine Book unless you realize its violators and you will not adhere to it unless you realize its scorners. Therefore, look for that with its real people. They are the life of knowledge and the death of ignorance. It is they whose wisdom tells of their knowledge, whose silence tells of their eloquence and whose appearance tells of their hidden. They never transgress the religion nor do they engage themselves in discrepancies about it. Among them, the religion is an incessant, honest witness and silent and speaking.'

Unfortunately, majority of Sunni scholars have rejected this explanation and warned their followers against being convinced by Shi`ah's claiming that the intended men in the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction are the Twelve Imams of his progeny. They confess before their partisans that the prediction is wholly

authentic, but you should never accept Shi`ah's explanation since we, Allah willing, will find an authentic one day! Up to now, Sunnis could not provide any persuasive explanation to the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction. They attempted to apply the Twelve Imams to the caliphs who ruled after the Holy Prophet (S). They referred to the four Rashidite caliphs (namely, Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Ali), `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, and series of kings of the descendants of Abu-Sufyan, Marwan and the `Abbasids... etc. They may refer to the Umayyad rulers who ruled Andalusia, Saljukians, Mamluks and Ottomans...etc.

When they feel that the number exceeded the intended one, they turn their faces towards hypotheses and pick up the best of the Umayyad and `Abbasid caliphs for giving them the characteristics of the Holy Imams. They decide some names and reject others in such a personal way purposed only for befitting the number predicted. As others could not attain the number involved, they claim of coming rulers. Most surely, such applications would never stop or rely upon a ground, and to adopt them is impossible because it is trivial to have the competency of choosing twelve leaders among tens and to claim their being godly leaders selected by the Exalted Lord and predicted by the Holy Prophet (S).

For the following reasons, Sunni scholars should have not born such an unattainable task:

First, in view of the fact that those promised Holy Imams are selected by the Lord, they should be having the same path and goal. They should lead to the same path supported by the guidance of the Lord and His Messenger. The leaders chosen by Sunni scholars were so discordant that they fought each other. It is completely impossible for Prophets or divinely selected leaders to fight each other or to assail, rule of aberrance or atheism, slay or cut the limbs of each other. A view at the history of the struggle for power between the Umayyad and the `Abbasid rulers refutes the Sunni presuppositions.

Second, Sunni scholars have to ascribe some qualities to the rulers, while those rulers did not ascribe such qualities to themselves. In other words, none of the rulers whom Sunni scholars listed under the title of being intended by the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction have ever claimed being holy or divinely selected for leadership. Had any of them been a holy Imam and selected by the Lord as a representative or ruler, they themselves would have referred to this elevated standing for, at least, having pride in it. It is impossible for anyone to be holy and selected while he does not know! None of those caliphs claimed being selected by the Lord, while the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt have always confirmed that they are holy and divinely selected.

Third, we have already referred to the point that the Holy Prophet (S) did not mention that those Imams should rule or come to power after him. Therefore, it is unnecessary for Sunni scholars to commit themselves to opting for the Twelve Promised Imams from among the rulers only. Being bound by an unnecessary question will lead to engagement in an unanswerable matter.

Fourth, most of those recorded in the list of the divinely selected –and predicted– Imams are actually accursed by the Holy Prophet (S). How is it then admissible for the Lord to be represented by individuals that His Messenger accursed on many occasions? Similarly, how is it acceptable for the Exalted Lord to curse individuals and dismiss them from His mercy, for their wickedness, and then He selects them or

their sons as holy Imams whose mission is to guide His servants and rule His lands?

In Sunni reference books of Hadith, it is authentically narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) cursed al-Hakam and his son, Marwan, and banished them out of al-Madinah until the reign of `Uthman who violated the Holy Prophet (S)'s decision. It is also recorded that the Holy Prophet (S) cursed Abu-Sufyan and his two sons when he saw them driving a camel.²¹ In fact, this is a long material full of witnesses and evidences. Yet, the partisans of the Umayyad State cannot stand it and, therefore, we would better leave it. For the previous reasons, Sunni scholars had more than thirty contrary sayings about the identification of the Twelve Holy Imams predicted by the Holy Prophet (S). It seems that the foremost saying in this regard is that of Abu-Hatam ibn Habban, which is recorded in `Awn al-Ma`bud fi Sharh Sunan Abi Dawud 11/361. This Umayyad scholar is repealed by the scholars who have worshipped the `Abbasid State.

They have added some of the `Abbasid caliphs to the Promised Imams and deleted some, if not all, of the Umayyad rulers. This saying noticeably erases the name of al-Mahdi from the list while he is promised by many Hadiths authenticated by Sunni scholars themselves. Besides, al-Mahdi is included in the Holy Prophet (S)'s famous saying, 'After me, there will come Twelve Imams.' They have also erased the name of Imam al-Hasan who ruled for six months and all Muslims, except the Syrian people, paid homage to him. The later scholars, however, have added his name to the list of the Twelve Imams.

Since the Holy Prophet said that al-Hasan and al-Husayn have been Imams whether they declare jihad or choose peace, those scholars should have added their names to the list. On the other hand, ibn Habban's supposition adds the name of Yazid ibn Muawiyah in the list and considers him as holy Imam about whom the Holy Prophet (S) foretold! This standing is not expected by Yazid himself or even his sane adorers who, incessantly, have spared no effort to prove his being Muslim and not apostate, though he himself confessed of apostasy on many occasions. They have also exerted all efforts to convince people that Yazid was not deviant, since he had committed those awful crimes at Karbala`, abused al-Madinah and its people and gave orders to demolish the Ka`bah—the Sacred House of Allah. They have also included the name of Muawiyah ibn Yazid (Muawiyah II) whom was given the leadership after his father.

This man addressed only a unique sermon in which he acquitted himself from the evildoings of his father and grandfather and declared that leadership had been a legal right of Imam `Ali, and that Muawiyah had wronged him and usurped his right. Finally, he declared abdication and, as a result, the Umayyad individuals assassinated him. Had this man realized his being one of the Twelve Promised Imams, he would not have abdicated power and exposed himself to be assassinated by his the tyrant royal family. Likewise, this supposition is contrary to Safinah's narration about restricting the Holy Prophet (S)'s succession (i.e. caliphate) to thirty years that would be followed by despot kingships. Scholars have authenticated this narration. To follow up the scholars' words about this Hadith takes very much time; yet, the similarity of their words makes it easier. All of their words, in fact, have been going round the

pivot of the pro-Umayyad interpretation. The following are models of their words and answers:

Al-Suyuti's Tarikh al-Khulafa`/10:

`Ayyad the judge says: Probably, the Twelve Men mentioned in Hadiths are only those during whose reigns authority has been well preserved, Islam well protected and congruity well kept. Hence, these affairs were achieved until the disorder and sedition that took place in the reign of al-Walid ibn Yazid that continued to the revolution of the `Abbasids who killed the Umayyads.

Ibn Hajar comments: The words of `Ayyad are the best and the most preferable in this regard. They are supported by the Holy Prophet (S)'s saying, 'All -of those Twelve Men- will be unanimously admitted by people.' This narration is related to some authentic series of narrators.

(Al-Suyuti comments) Accordingly, the Twelve Successors are identified—the four Rashidite caliphs, al-Hasan, Muawiyah, `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, and `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz. These are eight. Probably, al-Muhtadi, the just `Abbasid caliph, is included since he was as same as `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz. The two Expected men remain. One of them is al-Mahdi, the offspring of Muhammad.

Al-Suyuti and Ibn Hajar have depended upon the statement, 'All will be unanimously admitted by people,' though it is additional and unproven remark. Al-Albani the Wahhabist and many others have decided the statement as doubtful. Besides, they have violated Safinah's narration, which is completely authentic in their view. In this narration, the Holy Prophet (S) defines the period of thirty years as his succession. Accordingly, eleven rulers in a period of thirty years will be the required and the process of selecting among the Umayyad and the `Abbasid rulers will be void. Furthermore, al-Suyuti's reference to the words of Ibn `Ayyad and Ibn Hajar have been not accurate. Ibn Hajar's words in which he named the first twelve Umayyad rulers as the holy Imams have been neglected. 'The Twelfth one is al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik,' Ibn Hajar decides. Meanwhile, al-Suyuti stops at eight Umayyad rulers only and adds two `Abbasid ones. The errors committed by al-Suyuti in the field of his dishonest excerpt of Ibn Hajar's words are evidently shown in the following sections quoted from Fath al-Bari:

Ibn Battal, on the authority of Ibn al-Muhallab, says:

No single scholar could ever give a definite opinion in this regard. Some scholars however have claimed that the Twelve Promised Successors would come in succession while others have claimed that they would be in the same time, each proclaiming leadership. The most accepted saying in this regard is that the Holy Prophet (S) only wanted to refer to the coming vicissitudes when people would follow twelve men, each claiming leadership, in the same time. Supporting this supposition is that the Holy Prophet (S) did not mention any of these twelve leaders' actions.

[Ibn Hajar commenting] The previous words show that the writer has ignored the various ways of narration and stopped on the briefed form recorded in al-Bukhari's (al-Sahih). We have formerly referred to the different forms of the narration as recorded by Muslim and others, in which it is said that Islam would be fortified and mighty. In other forms, it is said that people, unanimously, would obey those successors.

Abu-Dawud records the following on authority of Jabir ibn Samarah: (The Holy Prophet said) 'This religion will be perpetually kept until the end of the ruling of Twelve Leaders whom will be followed by

people unanimously.’

[Ibn Hajar commenting] al-Tabarani records this form, too, and relates it to al-Aswad ibn Sa`id on the authority of Jabir ibn Samarah, with the following addition: ‘They will not be injured by the malicious ones.’ `Ayyad summarizes this perplexity. Two questions are arisen from the number defined in the Holy Prophet (S)’s saying:

First, the saying is contradicted by the extrinsic meaning of Safinah’s narration admitted and authenticated by grand Hadithists, such as Ibn Habban and others. The narration says, ‘For thirty years after me, there will be my succession. It will be followed by monarchy.’ These thirty years were ruled by the four Rashidite caliphs and al-Hasan ibn `Ali.

Second, more than twelve rulers came to power after the Holy Prophet (S).

As an answer to the first question, it may be said that the succession intended in Safinah’s narration is the Holy Prophet (S)’s, while in Jabir ibn Samarah’s narration, this is not proposed. About the second, the Holy Prophet (S)’s form does not stand out against the fact that more than twelve men would be ruling, since the number mentioned leads to peculiarity of persons, lest the intended ones are the just rulers who are the worthiest of this position. Four of them have passed away. The others will indisputably come before the Judgment Day. Other forms say that those Twelve will come and each will be followed by a group of people. This thing took place in Andalusia in the fifth century (after Hijra) when six men, each claimed leadership, rose in the same time and, meanwhile, the ruler of Egypt, the `Abbasid ruler in Baghdad, the other `Alawid and Kharijite leaders—all were claiming leadership of the *Ummah*. This explanation is also supported by Muslim’s narration, ‘There will be numerous leaders.’ At any rate, it is probable that the Twelve Ones intended would rule in the golden period of Islam. This meaning is supported by some forms of the Hadith, such as, ‘All will be unanimously followed by people.’ Up to al-Walid ibn Yazid’s reign when people were engaged in seditious matters, people followed the caliphs unanimously. The disorder however lasted until the `Abbasids came to power and massacred the Umayyads and, correspondingly, the number was attained. After all, there are other probabilities.

[Ibn Hajar] Al-Muhallab opts for the second probability—the Twelve Rulers would come at the same time. Previously, we have answered this question. Their coming in the same time is sufficiently enough to prove their animosity; therefore, their unanimity would not be active. The following narration opposes Abu-Dawud’s inaccuracy:

Ahmad and al-Bazzar relate the following on the authority of ibn Mas`ud: We asked the Holy Prophet (S) about the number of his successors, and he answered, ‘They will be twelve, just like the Israelite leaders.’ [This is a qualified Hadith with a rather doubtful narrator.]

In *Kashf al-Mushkil*, Ibn al-Jawzi says: ‘I spared no efforts to scrutinize this various-formed Hadith, but, unfortunately, I could not attain a convincing answer. Undoubtedly, the narrators have caused this confusion. Later on, I noticed al-Khattabi refer to an opinion that I have recently decided. Besides, Abu al-Hasan ibn al-Munadi and others had their own opinions.’

This refers to the incidents that took place after the reign of the Holy Prophet (S) and his companions, since both are interrelated. This is a signal to the number of the Umayyad caliphs. This is the meaning of his saying, ‘This religion will be kept fortified until the end of the ruling of Twelve Successors.’ Then, he

moves to a more rigorous characteristic.

The Umayyads begin with Yazid ibn Muawiyah and end with Marwan al-Himar (the donkey). They are thirteen. `Uthman, Muawiyah and Ibn al-Zubayr are omitted since they were Sahabah. Marwan ibn al-Hakam is also omitted since it is doubtful whether he was Sahabah or not, or since he overcame after people had been unanimously following `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr. On that account, the number is concordant. As the Umayyads lost their control over power, seditious matters and massacres took place until the `Abbasids could rule. Thus, manners came into a new stage. This opinion is supported by the narration recorded by Abu-Dawud and related to Ibn Mas`ud: 'The hand-mills of Islam will come around for thirty five –or six or seven– years. If people perish, they will pursue their formers. If their religion is constituted, this will last for no more than seven years.'²² This opinion is repudiated by the fact that the stability of the Umayyad reign lasted for more than ninety years, since it began in AH 41 when Muawiyah came to power unanimously until the beginnings of AH 132 when Marwan ibn Muhammad was assassinated.

In the volume (of his book) in which he compiles reports regarding al-Mahdi, Abu al-Husayn ibn al-Munadi supposes that the Twelve Imams would come after the ruling of al-Mahdi. He adds, 'In the book of Prophet (S) Daniel, I could find the following: When al-Mahdi will be deceased, five men from the offspring of the elder grandson will rule after him. They will be succeeded by five men from the offspring of the younger grandson. Their last will nominate a man from the offspring of the elder grandson as his successor. His son will come to power after him. They will be twelve kings, each al-Mahdi.' Abu-Salih relates the following narration to ibn `Abbas:

'Al-Mahdi's name is Muhammad ibn `Abdullah. He will be a giant reddish man. By him, Allah will relieve every misfortune from this *Ummah*. His justice will dismiss every wrong. After him, twelve men will rule; six from al-Hasan's offspring and five from al-Husayn's. The last will be from another lineage. When he is deceased, matters will be corrupted.'

Ka`b al-Ahbar says, "There will be Twelve Mahdis. Afterwards, the Spirit of Allah (i.e. Prophet (S) Jesus) will descend to kill the Anti-Mahdi."²³

Another probability is that the intended ones are twelve just rulers who will come along the period of Islam, no matter their reigns will be successive or not. This opinion is supported by Abu'l-Jald's narration related by Abu-Bahr and recorded in Musaddad's al-Musnad al-Kabir:

"This Ummah will not be perished before the ruling of Twelve Successors who will act by the Divine guidance and the right belief. Two of them will be from Muhammad's household, one will live for forty years while the other for thirty."

Likewise, the disorder intended to prevail thereafter is the incidents to precede the Judgment Day, such as the coming of the Anti-Mahdi and Gog and Magog until the end of this world. These have been the words of Ibn al-Jawzi in brief.

(Ibn Hajar states) The first and last opinions have been previously discussed by `Ayyad, though it seems that Ibn al-Jawzi has not reviewed them.

From the previous discussion, a number of opinions can be noticed. The third, however, is the most acceptable since it is supported by the authentic forms of the narration containing the phrase, 'All will be

unanimously followed by people.' Unanimity, in the previous phrase, means that everybody would submit to the leadership of those Twelve Imams. People, in fact, obeyed the leadership of Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Ali respectively, until the incident of the two arbiters in Siffin. As a result, Muawiyah was nominated as the caliph. After the armistice of al-Hasan, people followed Muawiyah. They followed Yazid afterwards. Al-Husayn could not attain leadership since he was killed before that. After Yazid, disorder emerged and lasted until the assassination of Ibn al-Zubayr and the ruling of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan. His four sons (namely, al-Walid, Sulayman, Yazid and Husham) were followed by people unanimously. `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz could come to power after Sulayman and before Yazid. Those are seven rulers after the four Rashidite Caliphs. The twelfth is al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik who was unanimously followed by people after the death of Husham, his uncle. He ruled for about four years. Then, people mutinied and killed him. Since then, seditious matters came forth. People did not follow a single caliph after that. Yazid ibn al-Walid who rebelled against al-Walid ibn Yazid could not control leadership for a considerable time. Marwan ibn Muhammad ibn Marwan revolted against Yazid. Ibrahim, who came to power after Yazid, was defeated by Marwan. finally, the `Abbasids revolted and could kill Marwan.

In addition to the great number of the groups who mutinied against Abu'l-`Abbas al-Saffah the first `Abbasid caliph, he could not control power for long. Al-Mansur, his brother, grasped power for a long time despite that he lost the furthest west of his kingdom as it was controlled by the offspring of Marwan in Andalusia. They controlled these territories until they were formally nominated as caliphs. This was followed by a disorder all over the kingdom when the caliph became no more than a name in some territories. This is quite opposite to the reign of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan when he controlled all the lands conquered by Muslims. A look at their history proves these facts.

In due course, the disorder intended in the Hadith stands for the massacres committed due to these seditious incidents and, unfortunately, were increasing.

Al-Husayn ibn al-Munadi's opinion is, indeed, not that clear since it is opposite to al-Tabarani's following narration related to Qays ibn Jabir al-Sudafi on the authority of his father:

"After me, there will be successors followed by rulers. Those rulers will be followed by kings whom will be followed by tyrants. Thereafter, a man from my household will approach. He will fill in the lands with justice as they were filled in with inequity. Then, son of Qahtan will be given the orders. I swear by Him Who sent me with the right that he will not be less than him."

This narration refutes Ibn al-Munadi's narration quoted from the Book of Prophet (S) Daniel. Likewise, Abu-Salih and Ka`b's opinions are extremely untrue.

The most appropriate matter in this regard is to consider the actual meaning of 'after' mentioned in the Holy Prophet (S)'s saying: "After me, there will be Twelve Successors." Thus, all the rulers who succeeded the Holy Prophet (S) were fourteen, beginning with al-Siddiq (i.e. Abu-Bakr) and ending with `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz. Two of them were of illegal leadership and short reign. They were Muawiyah ibn Yazid and Marwan ibn al-Hakam. The others were twelve, as the Holy Prophet (S) had predicted. `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz died in AH 101. After him, the affairs of the *Ummah* were confused. Hence, the first century, which was the best, came to its end.

The Holy Prophet (S)'s saying, 'They will be unanimously followed by people,' does not controvert this opinion, since it fits the majority. Excluding al-Hasan ibn `Ali and `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, all the caliphs met these qualifications. The leadership of these two men was legal. The worthiness (of leadership) of those who dissented from them was still invalid until al-Hasan delivered it and `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr was assassinated. Allah, however, is the most knowledgeable.

Almost, the affairs of the State were normal during the reigns of these twelve leaders despite the fact that some irregular incidents had occurred. These irregular incidents, however, are rare if measured to the normal.

Ibn Habban, discussing the meaning of the narration that 'The handmills of Islam will come around...,' states: "The narration refers to the Umayyads' leadership. The first point at which the Umayyads grasped the leadership of Muslims was during Muawiyah's mutiny against `Ali in Siffin and the arrangements of the arbitration. Since then, the Umayyads came to power for seventy years. In AH 106, the first waves of the `Abbasids appeared in Khurasan... Ibn Habban discusses this point in such further details that he committed many errors. First, he claims the occurrence of the arbitration in the last days of AH 36. This is unlike what historians have agreed upon. In fact, the arbitration occurred a few months after the Battle of Siffin. That was in AH 37... etc.

From the above, we can obviously notice that Ibn Hajar opts for an opinion different from that al-Suyuti ascribed to him. Therewith, we should understand that al-Suyuti had not read all the words of Ibn Hajar; or we should decide that al-Suyuti had forged lies. We have also noticed the perplexity and great number of contrary probabilities they have shown during discussing the Holy Prophet (S)'s words about the Twelve coming Successors. Most of them have betaken the addition, 'they will be unanimously followed by people,' as an axis for their discussions. This addition, however, is not authentic. A good deal of scholars denied it. `Ayyad decides nothing. He uses the idioms 'it is said' and 'it is probable' in referring to the different probabilities of interpreting the Hadith. Ibn Hajar opts for the third probability. He says, 'The third probability discussed by `Ayyad is the most acceptable...'

In abstract, scholars have led the readers to nowhere while they have done their bests to explain the Prophet (S)'s prediction, which is, for them, authentic and carrying the good tidings of the advent of twelve holy Imams, guides and custodians in this nation. They have also insisted on suiting the saying to the Umayyad rulers, mixing it to an additional inauthentic and doubtful statement. Besides, the addition is meaningless and far away from the Holy Prophet (S)'s rhetoric.

For more examples on their misguidance in finding an acceptable exegesis for the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction, readers can kindly notice the book entitled `Awn al-Ma`bud 11/362-4.

Some scholars have stated that four of the Twelve Successors passed away. Before the Judgment Day, the number will be perfected. Others have claimed that those Twelve Imams would come in the same time and that each would be followed by a group of people. Al-Turbashti states that the only way to interpret this prediction and its likes is to consider the just leaders only, since those are the only persons who deserve to be named as caliphs. It is not necessary for them to be successive, lest the metaphorical

meaning should be taken in consideration. The previous words are quoted from al-Mirqat.

In *Qurrat al-`Aynayn fi Tafdil al-Shaykhayn*, Waliyullah, a master scholar, records:

A perplexity occurred during explaining the Holy Prophet (S)'s saying, 'This religion will be kept triumphed until Almighty Allah conveys Twelve Successors from Quraysh.' The problem is that the saying is concordant to the Twelvers²⁴ who decide Twelve Imams as their leaders.

Indisputably, the Holy Prophet (S)'s words are similar to the Qur'anic texts that interpret each other. Ibn Mas`ud, authentically, narrates, 'The handmills of Islam will be coming around for thirty five –or six or seven– years. If people perish, they will pursue their formers. If their religion is constituted, this will last for no more than seven years.'

Many mistakes have been committed during explaining this Prophetic saying. The following is our inferential conclusion:

This period begins with the second year of Hijra, which is the year of jihad. Accordingly, his prediction came true. In the thirty-fifth years of jihad, `Uthman's assassination befell and Muslims were engaged in discrepancies. Allah the Exalted arranged Muslims' affairs afterwards and jihad continued until the coming of the `Abbasid State and the eradication of the Umayyads...

Once, the Holy Prophet (S) foretells about the succession of the prophecy, he dedicates thirty years. The next years are named 'despotic monarchy.' Once more, he foretells about his succession and names it 'the Twelve Successors'...

For attaining the result in this question, it is advisable to consider Muawiyah, `Abd al-Malik, his four sons, `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz and al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik after the four Rashidite caliph. It is said that Malik; the master scholar, considers `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr as worthier of leadership than others. We have our own opinion in this concern. `Umar ibn al-Khattab and `Uthman ibn Affan (Allah please them) mentioned that `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr's revolution and violation against the Holy Precinct should be one of the catastrophes in the *Ummah*. Ahmad reports this saying from Qays ibn Abi-Hazim: As `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr asked `Umar ibn al-Khattab's permitting him to participate in the battle, the latter said, "Sit in your house! You have participated in the Holy Prophet (S)'s campaigns." But `Abdullah insisted until `Umar said, "You should keep yourself in your house! By Allah I swear, I see coming that your companions and you revolt in the boarders of al-Madinah and you will injure Muhammad's companions." This narration is recorded by al-Hakim.

We can conceive that the Battle of the Camel is not intended in `Umar's saying since he signified 'in the boarders of al-Madinah.'

This very meaning was clarified in `Ali's words addressed in the story of the answer of al-Hasan. Hence, he could not manage the affairs of the state.

For the unsettlement of his reign and his ill manners, Yazid ibn Muawiyah cannot be added to the Twelve Successors.

Despite the fact that the author of *Qurrat al-`Aynayn* confesses that the Umayyad reign was despotic monarchy and their state was not the Holy Prophet (S)'s succession, he gives them a role in his interpretation of the saying. He applies the prediction of the Twelve Holy Imams who are divine

custodians on the *Ummah* to the Umayyad tyrants. Secondly, he erases the names of al-Hasan ibn `Ali and al-Mahdi from the list. He also erases the name of `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr while Malik, the master scholar, and others have registered him.

At any rate, the man criticizes those who committed mistakes in interpreting the Hadith. As he promises people to solve the problem, he makes it worse!

Hereinafter, we quote Ibn Kathir's words as recorded in *al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah* 3/248:

The Twelve expected Successors who will be from Quraysh are not those claimed by Rafidites.²⁵ Except for `Ali ibn Abi-Talib and al-Hasan, none of those rulers could attain Muslims' homage. The last of them is, as they claim, al-Mahdi the Expected who is hiding in a vault in Samarra`. He has neither existence nor trace nor pace.

In fact, the Twelve predicted Successors are the four Imams; Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Ali and `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz on whom the two parties of scholars agree.

Probably, Ibn Kathir aims at the two opinions about the consecutive ruling of those successors.

However, each party has many opinions and he has referred to some of them. Thereafter, he refers to the probabilities and focuses lights on al-Bayhaqi's discussions in this regard.

Al-Bayhaqi, supported by a group of scholars, adopts the opinion that the Twelve Successors are those who successively came to power after the Holy Prophet (S). Their seal is al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik the villainous whose bad manners have been already discussed. This is problematic. To discuss it, we should say that the ruling of the first four caliphs; Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Ali are undiscussible on account of Safinah's narration, "My succession will last for thirty years." After them comes al-Hasan ibn `Ali who nominated him as his successor. People of Iraq declared their loyalty to him and accompanied him in the fighting against people of Syria until he signed the truce with Muawiyah. These incidents are proven by the narration of Abu-Bakrah in al-Bukhari's *al-Sahih*. Muawiyah comes next. Yazid ibn Muawiyah, Muawiyah ibn Yazid, Marwan ibn al-Hakam, `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan and al-Walid ibn `Abd al-Malik come next successively. These are fifteen persons. Finally comes al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik. Supposing `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr's period of ruling before `Abd al-Malik is considered, they will be sixteen persons. Anyhow, before `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz, they are twelve. Accordingly, Yazid ibn Muawiyah is added and `Umar is taken out. All Muslims, including Rafidites, agree on the fact that `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz's reign was the best in justice. They praised him eminently and added him to the Rashidite caliphs.

Providing the leaders followed by people unanimously are considered, `Ali ibn Abi-Talib and his son should be taken out. The Syrian refused to pay homage to these two men. Similarly, Muawiyah, Yazid ibn Muawiyah, Muawiyah ibn Yazid, Marwan and `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr should not be considered for the same reason. On that account, Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, Muawiyah, Yazid ibn Muawiyah, `Abd al-Malik, al-Walid ibn Sulayman, `Umar ibn `Abd al-Aziz, Yazid and Husham should be added. These are ten. They are followed by al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik the villainous. This is however unacceptable since it leads to taking `Ali and al-Hasan, his son, out of those twelve predicted successors since it is contrary to Sunni as well as Shiite texts. Furthermore, it is contrary to Safinah's

narration, “For thirty years after me, there will be my succession. It will be followed by monarchy.” Safinah, besides, mentions in detail these thirty years. He defines the reigns of the four Rashidite caliphs. The six-month period of al-Hasan’s reign is considered, too. After that, Muawiyah began the monarchy when al-Hasan ibn `Ali delivered the leadership to him. This narration confirms the fact that Muawiyah should not be described as caliph and that caliphate was sealed after the thirty year period. This does not deny the existence of the Rashidite caliphs thereafter. Jabir ibn Samarah’s narration testifies this fact.

...Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman stated, “After `Uthman, there will be twelve kings from the sons of Umayyah.” “They are caliphs, are they not?” they asked. “No, they are kings,” answered Hudhayfah. ... Abu’l-Jald states, “This *Ummah* will not be perished before the ruling of Twelve Successors who will act by the divine guidance and the right belief. Two of them will be from the household of Muhammad, one living for forty years while the other for thirty.”

Al-Bayhaqi then refutes Abu’l-Jald’s words in unacceptable way and words. This is strange from al-Bayhaqi. A good deal of scholars agrees with Abu’l-Jald. His saying seems to be the most preferable among our opinions. The man was wont to read the ancient books. The meaning has been recorded in the Torah: “Allah the Exalted foretold Abraham about the birth of Ishmael. He foretold that He would grow and increase his progeny and would choose twelve great persons from his offspring.”²⁶

Ibn Kathir refers to what is inscribed in the real Torah:

17:18 And Abraham said to Almighty Allah, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!

17:19 And Almighty Allah said, Sarah thy wife will indeed bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him, for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him.

17:20 And for Ishmael I have heard thee: behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will very greatly multiply him; twelve princes will he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

17:21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to thee at this appointed time in the next year.

Instead of ‘chief,’ Ka`b al-Ahbar translated the word into ‘custodian.’ Others translated it into ‘Imams.’ Hence, the text is in the Torah, Sunni’s books and Shi`ah’s books. It supports the good tidings of our Prophet (S). At any rate, it does not settle the problem of Sunni exegetes. On the contrary, it makes it more complicated.

Ibn al-`Arabi, the Malikite, died in AH 543, is regarded as the smartest and fairest among Sunni exegetes. In `Aridat al-Ahwadhi fi Sharh Sahih al-Tirmidhi, he admits that any application of the Holy Prophet (S)’s prediction takes to a dead-end way. Hence, he confesses that there must have been an addition to the saying since the present text is meaningless.

Jabir ibn Samarah narrated that the Holy Prophet said, “After me, there will come twelve princes; all will be from Quraysh.” This is an authentic Hadith. As we consider the leaders who ruled after the Holy Prophet (S), we find the following: Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, al-Hasan, Muawiyah, Yazid, Muawiyah ibn Yazid, Marwan, `Abd al-Malik, Marwan ibn Muhammad ibn Marwan, al-Saffah, al-Mansur, al-Mahdi, al-Hadi, al-Rashid, al-Amin, al-Ma`mun, al-Mu`tasim, al-Wathiq, al-Mutawakkil, al-

Muntasir, al-Musta'in, al-Mu'tazz, al-Muhtadi, al-Mu'tadid, al-Muktafi, al-Muqtadir, al-Qahir, al-Radi, al-Muttaqi, al-Mustakfi, al-Muti', al-Ta'i', al-Qadir, al-Qa'im and al-Muqtadi whom I caught in the year 484. He nominated al-Mustadhir as his heir apparent. He died in Muharram, 486. al-Mustadhir, however, nominated his son, Abu-Mansur al-Fadl as his heir apparent. That was in AH 495. Supposing twelve of them are intended, the number will stop at Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik. Regarding the meaning, we have only five persons; the four Rashidite caliphs and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. Hence, I cannot perceive a definite meaning for the Hadith. Probably, it is a part of a Hadith.

From the above, we can conclude that Sunni scholars have spared no efforts for sake of applying the twelve men whom are promised in the Torah by Prophet Abraham and predicted by our Prophet (S) to the Umayyad rulers. As a matter of fact, they faced three principle unsolved problems:

First, the number of those (successors) is more than twelve. However, they confess that those men are not the Holy Prophet (S)'s successors. Hence, they had to face the waves of option and selection depending on no objective criterion.

Second, they feel that the divine apparel never fits their acquaintances and that their attempts to defend the acres of those rulers who are not real successors of the Holy Prophet (S) and covering up their deeds are nonsense since some of them committed fatal, hideous mistakes and ill deeds. Thus, it is impracticable to consider such persons as holy leaders and great custodians on this *Ummah* that Almighty Allah has foretold about their advent by the seal of His Prophets.

Third, by this claim, scholars place those rulers in a divine position they themselves did not claim. Hence, they became as same as that who claims somebody's Prophethood while that somebody denies it.

Lastly, Sunni scholars warn their followers not to regard the Shiite scholars. They promise them to find, sooner or later, an exegesis more suitable than the Shi'ah's. Previously, we have seen how Sunni scholars could not forward a single step for finding a convincing exegesis for the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction of the Twelve Imams.

Sunnis have the right to ask their scholars for a persuasive interpretation for the Holy Prophet (S)'s authentic prediction of the coming of twelve holy Imams who will be divinely directed and unique in knowledge, character and behavior, and will be custodians of the same guidance and trend.

In like manner, we are also rightful to depend on our own interpretation, which defines the Immaculate Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt as the persons intended in the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction. Those Imams begin with 'Ali and end with al-Mahdi the Awaited. The Holy Prophet said, "With us the Lord begins and with us He seals." Most truthful are the words of Allah and His Messenger.

Scholars' Involvement in Safinah's Narration

Safinah is the servant of Umm-Salamah, the Holy Prophet (S)'s wife. Scholars have decided him as

trustworthy in communicating the Holy Prophet (S)'s sayings. Like al-Bukhari, a many Hadithists depend on his narrations especially those related to the topic involved. The following is recorded by al-Tirmidhi in al-Sunan 3/341:

Sa'id narrated on the authority of Safinah that the Holy Prophet said, "In my nation, the succession will last for thirty years and will be followed by despotic monarchy."

Safinah commented, "If you account the reign of Abu-Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman and `Ali, they are thirty years."

Sa'id commented, "The Umayyad rulers claim that they are the successors of the Holy Prophet (S)."

Safinah answered, "Liars are the sons of that Zarqa` -blue lady-. They are kings, the most evil kings."

Under the same title, al-Tirmidhi records the following:

`Umar and `Ali said, "The Holy Prophet (S) did not will anything about his succession (next leadership)."

This narration is qualified but with a rather doubtful narrator. It is related by other than Sa'id ibn Jamhan, but we recognize it from this way only.

Ahmad, in al-Musnad 5/220-1, records this narration although he cuts off the last two sentences regarding the Umayyads' reigns. Al-Hakim, in al-Mustadrak 3/71, decides its authentic documentation. As he relates it in al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah 3/198, Ibn Kathir records the following narration after it: `Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi-Bakrah narrated that he heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "For thirty years, there will be the succession of Prophethood. After it, Almighty Allah will give his monarchy to whomever He desires."

Muawiyah commented, "We yield to the monarchy."

Supposing Safinah's narration is authentic, the Holy Prophet (S)'s prediction should be regarded as foretelling about this nation's deviation and illegality after thirty years. As long as the rulers in the period of thirty years were not more than five persons, we understand that the Twelve Imams should be others or, at least, they would not come to power. In other words, Safinah's narration decides evidently the inaccuracy of considering the rulers as the twelve expected custodians. Unfortunately, majority of exegetes have been sick of cherishing the Umayyad rulers; therefore, they commit every contrasting act for sake of changing the Umayyad despotic monarchy into holy custody. Likewise, they have attempted to make the Umayyad tyrant and criminal rulers as divine Imams predicted by the Holy Prophet (S).

As a support for our opinion, we say that Sunnis admit Safinah's narration of defining the Holy Prophet (S)'s succession to thirty years. Safinah himself explains the narration. He denies the Umayyads' being the Holy Prophet (S)'s successors. He describes them as kings; the most evil kings. He also accuses them of bastardy. He accuses them of being the illegitimate sons of a Roman prostitute (sons of that Zarqa`; the blue lady).

Despite, exegetes have decided the Umayyad rulers as holy leaders chosen by the Exalted Lord for leading this nation.

Some scholars, such as al-Albani, aims at denying Safinah's explanation of the narration. They decide it

as an inauthentic redundancy. In the same manner, all the Umayyad rulers' savage deeds that filled the pages of history are not authentic in the view of such scholars.

In `Umdat al-Qari 16/74, al-`Ayni records the following:

Providing some may claims that Safinah's Hadith opposes Jabir ibn Samarah's (The Prophet said, "This religion will be kept in efficacy and power to twelve successors from Quraysh...") that is recorded by Muslim, we say that this refers to the succession of prophesy. It does not mean that there are no others. Others say that this prediction of the coming of twelve just Qurayshite rulers does not guarantee consecution. In thirty years after the Holy Prophet (S), this just leadership fell. Many ages later, just caliphs, such as `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz and al-Muhtadi, could take leadership. Al-Mahdi the Expected is within those promised successors.

For nothing more than defending the Umayyads, scholars have done their best in playing on words. They divide the legal succession into two types. The first is the succession of Prophethood, which lasted for thirty years. The second is not a succession of Prophethood, though legal. This non-Prophetic succession was promised by the Holy Prophet (S) when he predicted the coming of twelve successors or Imams!

The pro-Umayyad exegetes find their lost in this fabrication; therefore, they adhere to it since it enables them to play on the words of the Hadith and make it applicable to their rulers!

Ibn Kathir, in al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah 3/198, says:

As an answer for the question about the way of admitting Safinah's narration and that of Jabir ibn Samarah in the same time, we say: Some people claim that this religion is kept in efficacy and power until Twelve Successors who will hold the leadership. After that, confusion took place during the Umayyads' reigns. Others contradict the previous saying and allege that the Hadith was a prediction of the coming of twelve just Qurayshite rulers, no matter they are successive or not. In a period of thirty years only, the consecutive succession of the Holy Prophet (S) took place. After that, fair caliphs, such as `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, could come to power. A number of master scholars decide the decency of this man to the degree that they reckon him with the Rashidite caliphs. Ahmad ibn Hanbal says, "Except for `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, the opinion of none of Sahabah's followers is admitted." Al-Mahdi, the `Abbasid ruler, is one of those predicted successors. Al-Mahdi the Expected is also one of them, since he will be from the Ahl al-Bayt. He is named Muhammad ibn `Abdullah. He is not that one expected in a vault in Samarra`. This one is originally not existed. Only the ill-minded Rafidites are awaiting him. Hence, Ibn Kathir lacks any logical answer for the problem of Safinah's narration. He ascribes the opinions to 'some' or 'others.' Had he only recorded Safinah's narration completely as it is found in their reference books of Hadith!

His praise for `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz and Al-Mahdi, the `Abbasid ruler, cannot be taken as evidence on their being within the expected holy successors, lest each praised man can be regarded. To regard a person with the predicted and promised men necessitates evident credentials proving his being one of those divine persons chosen by the Lord and given exclusively a standing unattainable by ordinary people.

The repetition of the Shi`ah's waiting for al-Mahdi, the Expected, in a vault in Samarra` is a forged lie. Like him, we the Shi`ah expect al-Mahdi to come forth in Makkah. The vault of Samarra` is no more than his grandfathers, fathers and his house, which is a blessed place where we pray to Allah and seek blessings. Ibn Kathir, however, is blabbermouth!

The following text is quoted from the footnote of `Awn al-Ma`bud 11/361:

Shaykh Ibn al-Qayyim says: As an answer for the question about the way of admitting Safinah's narration, 'After me, the succession will last for thirty years,' and the prediction of the coming of Twelve Imams, we say that the two narrations are not opposite since the thirty years of succession is the succession of Prophethood. This is supported by Abu-Bakrah's narration.

Neither Ibn al-Qayyim nor could anyone else define the succession other than that of Prophethood. Then, what a sort of succession was that? How should such a ruling carry a holy Islamic characteristic after the Holy Prophet (S) had described it as a despotic monarchy? The author of Qurrat al-`Aynayn and others have admitted this; their admitting the fact that the Umayyad reign was no more than a despotic monarchy and that it was not Islamic in any means is an admission of its being a non-Islamic despotic dominion. How is it then applicable for any sane to perceive that the Exalted Lord and His Messenger (a.s.) carry the good tidings of the coming of non-Islamic rulers who will injure the *Ummah* by their despotic actions?

Had Ibn Habban, Ibn Hajar, Ibn al-Qayyim and their likes stopped their fanaticism for the Umayyad rulers, the matter would have been easier. Unfortunately, they insisted on using the Prophetic sayings for their support and aimed at applying the Holy Prophet (S)'s good tidings to their despotic kings.

Al-Albani decides the authenticity of a good deal of Hadiths respecting the deviation of rulers coming to power after the Holy Prophet (S). Under number 2982, he decides the authenticity of the Hadith that 'Some of my companions (Sahabah) will never see me again after my departure.'

Under number 2864, al-Albani decides the authenticity of the Hadith that 'After me, your affairs will be in the hands of men who will extinguish my traditions and inject heresies.'

The Hadith, 'I am holding you from the necks so that you will not fall in Hellfire you are pushing yourselves in like butterflies and locust. I am about to fling your necks,' is given number 2865.

The Hadith, 'A man from sons of Umayyah will be taking initiative in changing my traditions,' is authenticated by al-Albani who lists it under number 1749 of title, 'The Holy Prophet (S)'s Prediction.'

Al-Albani commentates:

This Hadith stands for the change that occurred to the Islamic system from elections into monarchy. Allah, however, is the most knowledgeable.

Under number 744, al-Albani decides the authenticity of the Hadith that "As soon as sons of al-As attain thirty, they will betake the Lord's religion as an instrument and the Lord's servants as slaves and the Lord's fortunes as personal treasures."

As he decides the authenticity of Safinah's narration, al-Albani numbers it 459 under the title, "The

Succession of Prophecy.”

Nevertheless, he defends the Umayyads, saying:

This does not oppose the coming of other caliphs since they are not the Holy Prophet (S)’s successors. Evidently, those only are intended by the Hadith involved. This is supported by the following words of Shaykh al-Islam, ‘It is acceptable to call those who came –to power– after the Rashidite caliphs as caliphs, though they were kings.’

Pursuing Ibn Taymiyah, al-Albani rules that the Twelve holy Custodians about whom the Holy Prophet (S) foretold are Muawiyah, Yazid and sons of al-Hakam ibn Abu al-As at whom tens of frank, decisive and authentic sayings of censure were addressed!

See how fanaticism in cherishing the Umayyads incites this man to put himself in a position deserving the Exalted Lord’s censure and His Messenger’s curse.

Such a person will not find an answer if an Orientalist addresses him that Muslims confess that their Lord and His Messenger are of fluctuating tempers! They curse, censure and condemn persons and then please them and declare before Muslims that those previously accursed persons and their offspring will be the choice among people and will be the divinely sinless custodians of this nation!

The wicked Orientalists, Salman Rushdi, and his likes found themselves a hole for reviling at Islam through such false narrations respecting fanaticism to Quraysh, the Umayyads and Ka`b al-Ahbar.

(L) Models of our narrations About the Twelve Imams

In al-Khisal, Shaykh al-Saduq records the following on pages 466–7:

Ibn Mas`ud’s narration is related in different ways of narration, all related to Mujalid ibn Sa`id. At any rate, in some ways, Mujalid ibn Sa`id is not mentioned.

...Qays ibn `Abd narrated: We were sitting around `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud when a Bedouin came and asked about him. “I am `Abdullah,” answered he. “Did your Prophet (S) tell you about the number of his successors?” asked the Bedouin. “Yes, he did. They are twelve, like the number of the Israelite disciples,” answered `Abdullah.

In the same documentation, the narrations are recorded in Kamal al-Din wa Itmam al-Ni`mah, 271.

Among the comparative objective writings, I can recognize the precious book of Kifayat al-Athar Ala al-A`immah al-Ithny`Ashar, compiled by the mast scholar `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Khazzaz al-Qummi al-Razi; one of the scholars of the fourth century. This work is considered as the most remarkable in the field of Hadiths.

In the introductory of the book, the compiler defines his course. On page 7, he records:

The main reason that urged me to compile the narrators of the Sahabah and the Holy Prophet (S)’s truthful progeny about the texts dealing with the Immaculate Imams is that I found some ordinary people of the Shi`ah perplexed in this regard. They doubted due to the firmness of the anthropomorphists and the Mu`tazilite who aimed at confusing their credits. The matter attained its climax when those people

denied the divine texts regarding Imamate. Some exceeded denying all the traditions of the Sahabah in this regard... Therefore, I committed myself to searching and presenting whatever evidences I can obtain. I intended to repeal the antagonists' heresies. Finally, I seek the Lord's rewarding and the satisfaction of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Imams.

First, let me mention the narrations dealing with this topic that are related to the famous Sahabah, such as `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, Abu-Sa`id al-Khidri, Abu-Dharr al-Ghifari, Salman al-Farisi, Jabir ibn Samarah, Jabir ibn `Abdullah, Anas ibn Malik, Abu-Hurayrah, `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Zayd ibn Thabit, Zayd ibn Arqam, Abu-Umamah, Wathilah ibn Al-Asqa, Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari, `Ammar ibn Yasir, Hudhayfah ibn Asyad, `Imran ibn al-Husayn, Sa`d ibn Malik, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, Abu-Qatadah al-Ansari, `Ali ibn Abu-Talib and his two sons; al-Hasan and al-Husayn (a.s.).

Among women, I compiled the texts related by Umm- Salamah, `A`ishah and Fatimah daughter of the Holy Prophet (S).

Thereafter, I record the Imams' reports concordant to the reports of the Sahabah. I will mention each Imam's nominating his successor. This work is purposed for making people realize the truth and take it as their religion, evading being like those described in Almighty Allah's saying, "And those did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among them."

Such narrations remove doubt and hesitancy and repeal every excuse. In fact, the matter is more genuine than what they thought.

The compiler collates the narration of each companion he has already mentioned under a definite title. He also records the narration and its documentation and series of narrators up to the Holy Prophet (S). This work saved a great deal of narrations that have been, totally or partially, lost in the reference books of our Sunni brothers. The following are models from the book:

On page 23, Title: Narrations of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, the writer records:

... `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud narrated that he had heard the Holy Prophetsaying: The Imams after me will be twelve. Nine of them will be from al-Husayn's offspring. Their ninth is their Mahdi.

On page 37, Title: Narrations of Anas ibn Malik, the writer records:

... Anas ibn Malik narrated the following: After leading a collective prayer, the Holy Prophet said, "O my companions! Whoever loves my household will be grouped with us. Whoever adheres to my coming successors will have adhered to the Firmest Handle." Abu-Dharr stood and asked, "O Allah's Messenger! How many will the Imams be after you?" "Their number is the like of the Israelite leaders'," answered the Holy Prophet (S). "All will be from your household?" asked Abu-Dharr. "All will be from my household. Nine will be from al-Husayn's offspring. Al-Mahdi is one of them," answered the Holy Prophet (S).

On page 133, Title: Narrations of Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari Khalid ibn Zayd, the writer records:

... Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari said that he had heard the Holy Prophetsaying, "I am the master of the Prophets. `Ali is the master of the Prophets' successors. My grandsons are the best grandsons. The

Immaculate Imams belong to us. They are from al-Husayn's offspring. Al-Mahdi of this nation is from us." A Bedouin stood up and asked about their number. "Their number is the like of the grandsons of Abraham and the Disciples of Jesus and the Israelite leaders," answered the Holy Prophet (S).

On page 120, Title: Narrations of `Ammar ibn Yasir, the writer records:

... `Ammar narrated the following: I was with the Holy Prophet (S) during a campaign when `Ali (a.s.) could kill the standard-bearers; `Amr ibn `Abdullah al-Jumjumi and Shaybah ibn Nafi`. I came to the Holy Prophet (S) and expressed that `Ali had fought for sake of Allah in the very proper way. "This is because he is a part of me and I am a part of him," answered the Holy Prophet (S), "He is the heir of my knowledge and the settler of my debts and the keeper on my promises. He is the leader after me. Without him, the pure believers are never recognized. To confront him is to confront me, and to confront me is to confront Almighty Allah. To consent to him is to consent to me, and to consent to me is to consent to Almighty Allah. He is the father of my two grandsons. The Imams are from his offspring. From him, Allah the Exalted will bring the Prudent Imams. Al-Mahdi of this nation will be one of them." I wondered, "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, Allah's Messenger! Who is al-Mahdi?" The Holy Prophet (S) answered, "O `Ammar! Allah the Blessed and Elevated has given me a covenant that He will create nine persons from al-Husayn's offspring. Their ninth will be invisible for them. This is Allah's saying, 'Say: Have you considered if your water should go down, who is it then that will bring you flowing water?' His occultation will take a long time that some people will apostatize while others will be firm. In the last age (of the earth), he will come forth to fill in this world with justice and equity. He will fight for sake of the interpretation (of the Holy Qur'an) in the same way as I fought for sake of the revelation (of it). He will have my name. He will be the most similar to me. O `Ammar! After me, there will come a heresy. When that occurs, you should follow `Ali and his party. He is with the right and the right is with him. O `Ammar! After me, you will be fighting with `Ali two categories of people—the breachers and the deviants. Then, the despotic party will kill you."

I asked, "O Allah's Messenger! Will that satisfy Allah and you?"

The Prophet (S) answered, "Yes, that will satisfy Allah and me. The last meal you will have in this world will be a drink of milk..." etc.

On page 180, Title: Narrations of Ummu-Salamah, the writer records:

... Saddad ibn Aws narrated: On the Battle of the Camel, I decided not to join any of the two parties. To the midday, I did not participate in the fighting. That afternoon, the Lord inspired my heart to fight with `Ali. Therefore, I fought in his lines until the end of the battle. When I was back in al-Madinah, I visited Umm-Salamah. "From where have you come?" asked she. "From Basrah," I answered. "Which party did you join?" she asked. "O Umm al-Mu`minin!" I expressed, "I retired the fighting for half a day. Then, the Lord inspired me to fight with `Ali." "You have done the very right thing," she praised, and added, "I heard the Holy Prophet stating: To fight against `Ali is to fight against me, and to fight against me is to fight against the Lord." "You see that `Ali is the right, do you not?"

I asked. "Yes, by Allah," she affirmed, "`Ali is with the right and the right is with him. By Allah I swear,

Muhammad's people violated their Prophet (S) when they chose those whom are disregarded by the Lord and His Messenger and disregarded those whom are chosen by the Lord and His Messenger. They kept their women in their houses and took out the Holy Prophet (S)'s lady to the deserts. By Allah I swear that I heard the Holy Prophetsaying: My *Ummah* will be in a concordance and in discrepancy. You should join them when they are concordant. And you should choose for the middle situation when they are engaged in discrepancy. You should focus your eyes on my household. If they fight, you should fight with them. If they opt for peace, you should follow them. The right is being with them whenever they are.”

I asked, “Who are his household?” Umm–Salamah answered, “It is they to whom we are commissioned to adhere. They are the Imams after him. Their number is as same as the Israelite leaders’ number. They are `Ali and his two sons and nine persons from al–Husayn’s offspring. They are the immaculate and the sinless Imams.” I said, “What a pity! People are perishing, then!” She commented, “Every sect rejoicing what they had with them.”

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1. Later on, the texts of the sacred sermons of the Farewell Hajj will be cited.
 2. Sahabah are generally the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) and, terminologically, every one, disregarding the age, who saw, heard or witnessed the Holy Prophet (S). Yet, various opinions have been given in this regard. For more information, see Ahmad Husayn Ya`qub: *The Conception of the Sahabah’s Ultimate Decency*; translated by Badr Shahin, Ansariyan Publications – Qum, 1999.
 3. *Majma` al-Zawa`id* 3/270.
 4. Minbar is a small set of steps in a mosque from which the sermons are delivered.
 5. This narration is authenticated. see *Majma` al-Zawa`id* 5/191.
 6. Al–Tabarani: *al-Mu`jam al-Kabir* and *al-Mu`jam al-Awsat* and al–Haythami: *Majma` al-Zawa`id* 5/190.
 7. Al–Bukhari, *al-Sahih* 5/6
 8. Also, Abu–Dawud: *al-Sunan* 1/435 and Ahmad al–Musnad 5/37.
 9. Also, Ahmad: *al-Musnad* 4/320.
 10. Ibn Hajar: *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* 2/35.
 11. Al–Dhahbi: *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala`* 3/187.
 12. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib al-Tahdhib* 4/206
 13. When the Holy Prophet (S) conquered Makkah, he summoned its people who had mistreated him so badly to the degree that they had waged many campaigns against him. Yet, he pardoned them and they were named the ‘Released Ones’.
 14. *Siyar A`lam al-Nubala`* 3/187.
 15. Also, Ahmad: *al-Musnad* 1/398 and 406 and al–Muttaqi al–Hindi: *Kanz al-`Ummal* 6/89 and 12/32 as quoted from Ibn Sa`d: *al-Tabaqat* and Ibn `Asakir: *Tarikh*.
 16. Shaykh al–Saduq: *al-Ikhtisas* 233, al–Khazzaz: *Kifayat al-Athar* 73 and al–Nu`mani: *al-Ghaybah* 106.
 17. Also, *Majma` al-Zawa`id* 4/220.
 18. The Shi`ah Imamiyyah are those who believe in the Twelve Imams as the divinely commissioned leaders of the Ummah to be followed.
 19. Shi`ah Zaydiyyah are those who believe Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al–Husayn as the Imam to be followed after his father, Imam Zayn al-`Abidin.
 20. Also, *A`lam al-Wara* 364.
 21. *Majma` al-Zawa`id* 1/113.
 22. Al–Albani, and none else, has decided the authenticity of this narration.

23. The Anti-Mahdi is as same as the Antichrist who is a great personal opponent of Christ, expected to appear before the end of the world.

24. Twelvers are the (Ithna'ashariyyah) Shi'ah who believe in the Twelve divinely commissioned Imams.

25. According to Sunni definition, the Rafidites (Rejecters) are those who rejected the leadership of Abu-Bakr and 'Umar after the Prophet (S)'s decease. However, the name is said to the Shi'ah in general and the Twelvers in particular. For the Shi'ah, this title is object of pride because, according to an authenticated narration reported from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.), this title was first said to the believers of Egypt who followed Prophet (S) Moses.

26. This is an indication to Genesis, 17:20: "And for Ishmael I have heard thee: behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will very greatly multiply him; twelve princes will he beget, and I will make him a great nation." Derby's Version of the Bible.

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