

Chapter 2: Peace be on you, O son of the Messenger of Allah

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

Peace be on You, O son of the Messenger of Allah

Commentary

يَا بَنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

O son of the Messenger of Allah

Ibnu Rasulillah is a patronym¹. Imam al-Husayn (AS) in this verse is introduced as the son of the Holy Prophet (S). There has been a controversy in the past about this bond and relationship. The enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) throughout history would try to denounce it and declare that the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) are not from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S) but rather only from the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minin ‘Ali (AS). The Ahl al-Bayt (AS), however, would cogently prove to them the veracity of their relationship with the Holy Prophet (S). In fact the most cogent of all proofs is the well-known verse of *mubahala* (imprecation), where Almighty Allah says to His Apostle (S):

﴿فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ
وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾

Should anyone argue with you concerning him, after the knowledge that has come to you, say, “Come! Let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our souls and your souls, then let us pray earnestly and call down Allah’s curse upon the liars.” (3:61)

This verse speaks of the Holy Prophet (S)’s confrontation with the Christians of Najran in the well-known incident of *mubahala* (imprecation), when just beholding the brilliant faces of the *Ahl al-Kisa* (AS) overwhelmed the Christians and made their bishop say:

إِنِّي لَأَرَى وُجُوهًا لَوْ سَأَلُوا اللَّهَ أَنْ يُزِيلَ جَبَلًا مِنْ مَكَانِهِ لَأَزَالَهُ بِهَا فَلَا تُبَاهِلُوا
فَتُهْلِكُوا وَلَا يَبْقَى عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ نَصْرَانِيٌّ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Indeed I am seeing faces, who if ask Allah to uproot a mountain from its place, He would surely do so. Therefore do not imprecate, for if you do so you will perish, and there would remain no Christian on the face of the earth until the Judgment Day.²

In the aforementioned verse we clearly find the phrase “Let us call our sons (*abna’ana*) and your sons (*abna’akum*)...”. Muslim historians have unanimously narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) had brought Imam al-Hasan (AS) and Imam al-Husayn (AS) as his sons for this event³.

Hadhrat Fatima al-Zahra’ (AS) narrates from the Holy Prophet (S) that:

كُلُّ بَنِي أُمَّ يَنْتَمُونَ إِلَيَّ عَصَبَتِهِمْ إِلَّا وُلْدَ فَاطِمَةَ فَإِنِّي أَنَا أَبُوهُمْ وَعَصَبَتُهُمْ

The son of every mother is [solely] attributed to his paternal relations, save the sons of Fatima, for surely I am their father and paternal relation.⁴

This tradition, which is found with slight variations in so many works of traditions, is vocal enough to specify the exceptional relationship between the Holy Prophet (S) and the sons of Hadhrat Fatima (AS).

Throughout the dark pages of history, however, the illegitimate rulers of the Muslim world, due to their jealousy and hatred, always debated this relationship but did not succeed. Following are some examples worthy of consideration:

1. Al-Arbili in his *Kashf al-Ghumma* narrates:

عَنْ ذَكَوَانَ مَوْلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ قَالَ قَالَ مُعَاوِيَةَ: لَا أَعْلَمَنَّ أَحَدًا سَمَّى هَذَيْنِ الْغُلَامَيْنِ

إِبْنِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ. وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا: ابْنِي عَلِيٍّ. قَالَ ذَكْوَانُ: فَلَمَّا كَانَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ، أَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَكْتُبَ بَنِيهِ فِي الشَّرَفِ. قَالَ: فَكَتَبْتُ بَنِيهِ وَبَنِي بَنِيهِ، وَتَرَكْتُ بَنِي بَنَاتِهِ.. ثُمَّ أَتَيْتُهُ بِالْكِتَابِ، فَنَظَرَ فِيهِ، فَقَالَ: وَيْحَكَ، لَقَدْ أَغْفَلْتَ كِبْرَ بَنِي! فَقُلْتُ: مَنْ؟ فَقَالَ: أَمَا بَنُو فُلَانَةَ - لِابْنَتِهِ - بَنِي؟ أَمَا بَنُو فُلَانَةَ - لِابْنَتِهِ - بَنِي؟ قَالَ: قُلْتُ: اللَّهُ!! أَيْكُونُ بَنُو بَنَاتِكَ بَنِيكَ، وَلَا يَكُونُ بَنُو فَاطِمَةَ بَنِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ؟! قَالَ: مَا لَكَ؟ قَاتَلَكَ اللَّهُ! لَا يَسْمَعَنَّ هَذَا أَحَدٌ مِنْكَ!؛

Dhakwan, a slave of Mu'awiya, reports: Mu'awiya [once] said [to me]: Surely I do not know anyone call these two boys (Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn (AS)) the two sons of the Messenger of Allah (S). Therefore say: "They are the sons of 'Ali (AS)". Later, Mu'awiya ordered me to write down the names of his sons in sequence of nobility. I wrote the names of his sons and the names of the sons of his sons, but did not write the names of the sons of his daughters.

Then I came to him with the written script. He looked at it, and retorted: Woe be unto you! You have forgotten the elders from among my children! I said: Who are they? He said: Aren't the sons of that daughter [of mine] my sons? Aren't the sons of such and such daughter of mine my sons? Dhakwan said: I remarked [in amazement]: God!! Are the sons of your daughters your sons, whereas the sons of Fatima (AS) not the sons of the Messenger of Allah (S)? He said: What is the matter with you? May Allah kill you! No one should hear this from you!5

2. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in his *Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb* narrates the following from Shu'bi:

كُنْتُ عِنْدَ الْحَجَّاجِ، فَأَتَى بِيحْيَى بْنَ يَعْمَرَ، فَقِيهِ خُرَاسَانَ، مِنْ بَلْخِ، مُكَبَّلًا بِالْحَدِيدِ فَقَالَ لَهُ الْحَجَّاجُ: أَنْتَ زَعَمْتَ: أَنَّ الْحَسْنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ مِنَ ذُرِّيَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ؟ فَقَالَ: بَلَى. فَقَالَ الْحَجَّاجُ: لَتَأْتِيَنِي بِهَا وَاضِحَةً بَيِّنَةً مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، أَوْ لِأَقْطَعَنَّكَ عُضْوًا عُضْوًا. فَقَالَ: آتِيكَ بِهَا بَيِّنَةً وَاضِحَةً مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَا حَجَّاجُ. قَالَ: فَتَعَجَّبْتُ مِنْ جُرْأَتِهِ بِقَوْلِهِ: يَا حَجَّاجُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: وَلَا تَأْتِيَنِي بِهِذِهِ الْآيَةِ: نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاكُمْ. فَقَالَ: آتِيكَ بِهَا بَيِّنَةً وَاضِحَةً مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، وَهُوَ قَوْلُهُ: وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ، وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ.. إِلَى قَوْلِهِ: وَزَكَرِيَّا، وَيَحْيَى، وَعِيسَى. فَمَنْ كَانَ أَبُو عِيسَى، وَقَدْ أَحَقَّ بِذُرِّيَّةِ نُوحٍ؟! قَالَ: فَاطْرَقَ الْحَجَّاجُ مَلِيًّا، ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ: كَأَنِّي لَمْ أَقْرَأْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ حُلُومًا وَثَاقَهُ.. إلخ

I was with Hajjaj [bin Yusuf al-Thaqafi] and Yahya bin Ya'mar, the jurisprudent of Khurasan, was

brought from Balkh shackled with iron. Hajjaj said to him: You think that Hasan and Husayn are from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S)? He said: Of course yes. Thereupon Hajjaj said: You must bring me a clear exposition for that from the Book of Allah or I surely will cut your body into parts. He said: I will bring for you a clear exposition from the Book of Allah, O Hajjaj. Shu'bi says: I was surprised at his audacity in responding with the [concluding] words, "O Hajjaj!" Thereupon Hajjaj said to him: But do not bring for me the verse "**let us call our sons...**" (3:61)

He said: I will bring you a clear exposition from the Book of Allah, and that is Allah's speech

"...And Noah We had guided before, and from his offspring, David and Solomon up to the phrase [in the next verse] "...and Zechariah, John, Jesus...(84-85)

Who then was the father of Jesus, while he is attached to the progeny of Noah? Shu'bi says: Thereupon Hajjaj lowered his head for some time, and then raised it and said: It is as if I have not read this verse from the Book of Allah. Release him!6

3. Thiqat al-Islam Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Kulayni narrates in his Al-Kafi:

عَنْ أَبِي الْجَارُودِ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ قَالَ قَالَ لِي أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ يَا أَبَا الْجَارُودِ مَا يَقُولُونَ لَكُمْ فِي الْحَسَنِ وَالْحُسَيْنِ قُلْتُ يُنْكِرُونَ عَلَيْنَا أَنَّهُمَا ابْنَا رَسُولِ اللَّهِ قَالَ فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ اِحْتَجَجْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلْتُ اِحْتَجَجْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بِقَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَمَنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَى وَعِيسَى فَجَعَلَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ نُوحٍ قَالَ فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا لَكُمْ قُلْتُ قَالُوا قَدْ يَكُونُ وَلَدُ الْإِبْنَةِ مِنَ الْوَالِدِ وَلَا يَكُونُ مِنَ الصُّلْبِ قَالَ فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ اِحْتَجَجْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلْتُ اِحْتَجَجْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بِقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لِرَسُولِهِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ قَالَ فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا قُلْتُ قَالُوا قَدْ يَكُونُ فِي كَلَامِ الْعَرَبِ أَبْنَاءُ رَجُلٍ وَآخَرُ يَقُولُ أَبْنَاؤُنَا قَالَ فَقَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ يَا أَبَا الْجَارُودِ لَأَعْطِيَنَّكَهَا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ وَتَعَالَى أَنَّهُمَا مِنْ صُلْبِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لَا يَرُدُّهَا إِلَّا الْكَافِرُ قُلْتُ وَ أَيْنَ ذَلِكَ جُعِلَتْ فِدَاكَ قَالَ مِنْ حَيْثُ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ وَبَنَاتِكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتِكُمْ الْآيَةَ إِلَى أَنْ انْتَهَى إِلَى قَوْلِهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ فَسَلِّمُوا يَا أَبَا الْجَارُودِ هَلْ كَانَ يَحِلُّ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ نِكَاحُ حَلِيلَتَيْهِمَا فَإِنْ قَالُوا نَعَمْ كَذَبُوا وَفَجَرُوا وَإِنْ قَالُوا لَا فَهُمَا ابْنَا لِحُلْبِهِ.

It is narrated from Abu al-Jarud: Abu Ja'far [al-Baqir (AS)] said to me: O Aba al-Jarud, what do they say about al-Hasan A and al-Husayn (AS)? I said: They are against our belief that they are the two sons of the Holy Prophet (S). He (AS) said: Then with what [proof] did you argue with them? I said: With the word of Allah about 'Isa bin Maryam

"...And from his [Noah's] offspring, David and Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron thus do We reward the virtuous; and Zechariah, John, 'Isa..." (6:84-85)

Therefore He placed 'Isa in the progeny of Noah (AS). Imam (AS) said: So what did they say to you? I said: They said: It is possible for a son of a female to be a son, but he would not be from the loin. He (AS) said: So with what [other proof] did you argue against them? I said: We argued against them with the word of Allah, "...***Come! Let us call our sons and your sons...***" (3:61) He (AS) said: And what did they say to you? I said: They said that sometimes in Arabic rhetoric a person may call the sons of another man as "our sons".

Thereupon Abu Ja'far (AS) said: O Aba al-Jarud indeed I will give you a verse from the Book of Allah, the Sublime and Exalted [proving] that they (Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn (AS)) are from the loin of the Holy Prophet (S), and none save the disbeliever would negate it. I said: And where is it, may I be made your ransom? He (AS) said: From where Allah, the Exalted, says

"Forbidden to you are your mothers, your daughters and your sisters, your paternal aunts and your maternal aunts, your brother's daughters and your sister's daughters, your] foster- who have suckled you and your sisters through fosterage, your wives" mothers, and your stepdaughters who are under your care] born [of the wives whom you have gone into but if you have not gone into them there is no sin upon you and the wives of your sons who are from your own loins.." (4:23)

Ask them, O Aba al-Jarud, was it permitted for the Messenger of Allah (S) to marry with the wives of al-Hasan and al-Husayn (AS)? If they say 'yes', then surely they have lied and violated the bounds. And if they say "no", then they [surely] are his two sons from his loin.⁷

We wish to suffice with the aforesaid incidents. Otherwise there are so many other traditions where this relationship is clearly and explicitly mentioned.

يَا بَنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

O product of the Messenger of Allah

The word **بَنَ** 'ibn' etymologically means 'the edifice of' or the 'product of'. Al-Isfahani in his *al-Mufradat* says:

انَّ الْإِبْنَ سُمِّيَ إِبْنًا لِكَوْنِهِ بِنَاءً لِلْأَبِ، فَإِنَّ الْآبَ هُوَ الَّذِي بَنَاهُ وَجَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ بِنَاءً فِي
إِجَادِهِ، وَيُقَالُ لِكُلِّ مَا يَحْصُلُ مِنْ جِهَةِ شَيْءٍ أَوْ مِنْ تَرْبِيَّتِهِ أَوْ بِتَفَقُّدِهِ أَوْ كَثْرَةِ
خِدْمَتِهِ لَهُ أَوْ قِيَامِهِ بِأَمْرِهِ: هُوَ ابْنُهُ...

Surely *al-ibn* was known to be so because it is a building (*bina'*) of the father, for it is the father who built him and Allah made him to be the builder in his existence; and *ibn* is known to be anything that is attained because of another thing or training or guardianship or a lot of service or doing something on one's behalf...8

Therefore it is right to say that Imam al-Husayn (AS) is the product or fruit of the Holy Prophet (S) in terms of spiritual upbringing. It is in the environment of the Holy Prophet (S) that Imam al-Husayn (AS) grew and learnt so many important things. In some traditions the Holy Prophet (S) also addresses Imam al-Husayn (AS) as *thamarata fu'adi* (the fruit of my heart). For example, once 'A'isha seeing the cordial encounter of the Prophet (S) with al-Husayn (AS) who was then a small baby on the laps of the Prophet (S), asked him:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا أَشَدَّ إِعْجَابِكَ بِهَذَا الصَّبِيِّ

O Apostle of Allah, how attached are you to this child!

And the Prophet (S) said:

وَيْلَكَ وَكَيْفَ لَا أُحِبُّهُ وَلَا أَعْجَبُ بِهِ، وَهُوَ ثَمْرَةٌ فُؤَادِي وَقُرَّةُ عَيْنِي...

Woe be to you, and how should I not love him and not get attracted to him, while **he is the fruit of my heart** and the apple of my eyes?9

يَا بْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

O product of the Messenger of Allah

The genitive construction '*Rasulullah*' alludes to a particular identity of the Holy Prophet (S) which is his apostleship (*al-risala*). Therefore *Ibnu Rasulillah* would mean the product of the Messenger of Allah. Specifying this patronym alludes to the reality that Imam al-Husayn (AS) was built to exemplify the

attributes that a Divine Messenger must have. Obviously this does not mean that he (AS) was a Divinely proclaimed Messenger, for the Holy Prophet (S) was the Seal of all the Apostles (*khatam al-rusul*), but alludes to the fact that he manifested the qualities of a Divine Messenger.

In fact the word '*rasul*' when employed in the general sense refers to any kind of Allah's messenger, such as the Angels. When Angel Jibra'il (AS) appears before Hadhrat Maryam (AS) in the form of a handsome young man, and the latter seeks refuge in Allah and advises him to observe piety, Jibra'il (AS) responds saying:

إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكَ لِأَهَبَ لَكَ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

Surely I am only a messenger of your Lord, so that I may gift you a pure male offspring. (19: 19)

And Imam 'Ali (AS) is reported to have said:

الْمَلَائِكَةُ هُمْ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ كَسَائِرِ أَنْبِيَاءِ اللَّهِ إِلَى الْخَلْقِ

...The angels are the messengers of Allah to the creatures like the rest of the prophets of Allah... 10

Sometimes the word '*rasul*' is also used for a destitute who is extremely poor. If he seeks help, then he is in reality spreading the message of being openhanded. Those therefore who shun such people are in reality shunning a messenger of Allah. Imam 'Ali (AS) is reported to have said:

الْمَسْكِينُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ مَنَعَهُ فَقَدْ مَنَعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ أَعْطَاهُ فَقَدْ أَعْطَى اللَّهَ .

The extremely poor is a messenger of Allah unto you; so whosoever refuses to help him, surely he has refused Allah, and whosoever gives him, then surely he has given to Allah. 11

يَا بَنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

O product of the Messenger of Allah

The word 'Allah' here specifies the kind of message that the Holy Prophet (S) bears. As explained earlier, the name *Allah* exemplifies all the perfect attributes of God, and therefore the Holy Prophet is the

bearer of the message of all the perfect attributes. The Holy Qur`an in fact is a written document that calls the human beings to embellish themselves with the attributes of Almighty Allah.

And Imam al-Husayn (AS) being the fruit and edifice of a messenger of *Allah*, qualifies as a caller to all the perfect Divine Attributes. In fact one of the characteristics of the Infallible Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) is that they are *الدعاة إلى الله* 'al-du'at ila Allah'(callers to Allah). This call is not only in the realm of words. Their deeds and actions portray the Divine Attributes. In the well-known *Ziyarat al-Jami'a* we read:

السَّلَامُ عَلَى الدَّعَاةِ إِلَى اللَّهِ

Peace be on you callers unto Allah. 12

In another *Ziyarat* of Imam al-Husayn (AS) declaring our total commitment and harmony with his noble spirit, we repeat the following seven times:

لَبَّيْكَ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ إِنْ كَانَ لَمْ يُجِبْكَ بَدَنِي فَقَدْ أَجَابَكَ قَلْبِي وَشَعْرِي وَبَشْرِي وَرَأْيِي وَ
هُوَائِي عَلَى التَّسْلِيمِ لِخَلْفِ النَّبِيِّ الْمُرْسَلِ وَالسَّبْطِ الْمُنْتَجَبِ

Here I am, O caller to Allah; if my body did not respond to your call [due to its absence during the tragedy of Karbala], then surely my heart, hair, skin, opinion, and desire have responded in submission to the call of the successor of the Divinely sent Prophet (S) and his chosen grandson. 13

Here there is another allusion worthy of contemplation: notice the words "*khalaf al-nabi al-mursal*" which brilliantly manifest the kind of relationship we are trying to declare. In the Arabic, a *khalaf* is "a successor". And when the adjective *al-mursal* follows *al-nabi*, there is a particular implication we are trying to convey. In short, we are declaring that Imam al-Husayn (AS) succeeds the role of shouldering the mission of the Apostle of Almighty Allah.

There are other clear indications also that show that the Infallible Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) possessed attributes that qualified them to be bearers of Allah's message and inviters of the same. In *Ziyarat al-Jami'a* we read:

فَبَلَّغَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ أَفْضَلَ شَرَفٍ مَحَلِّ الْمَكْرَمِينَ، وَأَعْلَى مَنَازِلِ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ، وَأَرْفَعَ
دَرَجَاتِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، حَيْثُ لَا يَلْحَقُهُ لَاحِقٌ، وَلَا يَفُوقُهُ فَائِقٌ...

And Allah made you attain the best sanctimonious station of the ennobled ones, and the highest stations of the near ones, and **the most exalted stations of the *mursalin* (apostles)**, where none can join or transcend... 14

This clearly tells us that the Imams (AS) had qualities to carry out the duty of passing on the message of Allah to the people. And by the phrase “*arfa’a darajat al-mursalin*” we should appreciate the fact that they even transcended messengers of Allah preceding the Holy Prophet (S). This is because they bore the message of *Khatam al-Rusul* (the Seal of the Messengers).

In another *Ziyarat* of Imam al-Husayn (AS) we address him as:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

Peace be on you, O Inheritor of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah. 15

Those who can appreciate the subtle implications of the above statement, understand how vocal it is in revealing the distinction of Imam al-Husayn (AS). We confess that he inherited the Holy Prophet (S)’s duty of conveying the message of Allah. All the components of the above expression such as “*al-salamu*”, “*alayka*”, “*ya*”, “*waritha Muhammad*”, “*waritha Muhammadin Rasulillah*”, “*Rasul*”, “*Rasulillah*”, “*Allah*”, etc. are worthy of reflection. Therefore, read and ascend!

The Relation Between ‘Abd And Rasul

An important point to bear in mind is that in order for Imam al-Husayn (AS) to really be a *rasul* and a conveyer of Allah’s message to the people, it is incumbent on him to be an ‘*abd* (an utterly submissive servant of Allah). Hence it was apt to address him with the teknonym Abu ‘Abdillah in the first verse and thereafter with the patronym *ibnu Rasulillah*. We find a similar case when we recite our *tashahhud* in the canonical prayer. We say:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

I bear witness that other than Allah there is no god, and I bear witness that Muhammad is **His utterly obedient servant and Apostle**.

Notice that the phrase “*abduhu*” precedes “*wa rasuluh*”, which alludes to the sequence we are talking about.

However, this station is even higher than being the servant of “Allah”. Here the third person pronoun

“hu” affixed to ‘abd and rasul refer to the Divine Essence. Discussing this intricacy here is beyond the scope of this commentary.

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1. A patronymic, or patronym, is a component of a personal name based on the name of one’s father.
 2. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Mafatih al-Ghayb, v.8, p. 247
 3. Jar Allah al-Zamakhshari, Al-Kashhaf ‘an Haqa’iqi Ghawamidh al-Tanzil, v. 1, p. 368
 4. ‘Allama Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, v. 43, p. 228
 5. Arbili, Kashf al-Ghumma, v.2, p. 176
 6. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Mafatih al-Ghayb, V.2, p. 412
 7. Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, v.8, p. 217
 8. Al-Isfahani, al-Mufradat, p. 147
 9. Ibnu Qulawayh, Kamil al-Ziyarat, p. 144
 10. Al-Shaykh al-Tabrasi, al-Ihtijaj, v.2, p. 266
 11. Imam ‘Ali (‘a), Nahj al-Balaghah, v.4, p. 74
 12. Al-Mashhadi, Al-Mazar, p. 525
 13. ‘Allama Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, v.98, p. 168
 14. ‘Allama Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, v.99, p. 130
 15. Sayyid Radhi al-Din bin Tawus, Iqbal al-A’mal, v.3, p.70

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