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Part 5: The one who denies one Imam is like the one who denies all Imams

Kulaini and others have, with reliable chains of narrators, narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that:

One who denied one Imam has denied all Imams.

Ibne Babawayh, Nomani and others have, with reliable chains of narrators, narrated from Aban bin Uqaab that: I asked Imam Sadiq (a.s.) is he a believer who knows all the past Imams but denies (does not recognize) the Imam of his own time? He replied: No. I asked: Is he a Muslim? He said: Yes. Ibne Babawayh says that Islam means confession of three facts whereby his life and property become secure and the reward of the Hereafter depends on Faith. The Holy Prophet (S) has said: The one who testified to the Oneness of Allah and my Prophethood has secured his life and property, (from being executed or confiscation of property) and his accountability is with Allah on the Day of Judgement.

He has also narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that: You should know that if someone denies the Messengership of Isa (a.s.) and believes in the Prophethood of all other messengers is not a believer. Seek the path of Allah by search and want of that Imam whose sign is Haqq (truth) and when your Imam is hidden, search for the signs, writings and words of the Imams, which are before you and perfect your religious affairs. Then you will have believed in your Lord.

He has narrated with authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ridha (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

O Ali! You and the Imams from among your sons are, after me, the Hujjat (proofs) of Allah over the creation and they are the signs of the path of Allah for the people. The one who denied anyone of them denied me and who disobeyed anyone of them disobeyed me and the one who oppressed any of them has oppressed me and the one who behaved nicely and righteously with them has behaved, loved fully and affectionately with me. Whoever obeyed you has obeyed me who befriended you has befriended me and who became your enemy has become my enemy because you are born of me and my loins and I

am from you.

Nomani has narrated from Bin Numaa, that I said to Imam Ridha (a.s.) that such and such person is your slave and a Shia and sends salutation (Salaam) to your honour and says: You please be my surety in Qiyamat and assure that you will intercede in my favor. The Hazrat asked: Is he from our Shias and friends? I said: Yes. Then the Hazrat said: He does not need to make a request for intercession.

Then I said: There is a man who befriends Ali (a.s.) but does not recognize the legatees (Wasis) thereafter. The Hazrat said: He is misguided. Then I said: He believes in all the Imams but the denies the Imam of the last age (Aakhiruz Zaman). The Hazrat said: He is like the man who testifies the Messengership of Isa (a.s.) but denies the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) or believes in Muhammad (S) but denies Isa (a.s.). I seek refuge of Allah against the one who denies any of the Proofs (Hujjats) of Allah. 1

Kulaini and Nomani have narrated with reliable chains of narrators from Muhammad bin Muslim that he said to Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that a Yemeni says that if you know the last Imam of the time (your time) it is enough and that there is no harm if you do not recognize the prior (earlier) Imams. The Hazrat said: Curse of Allah be on him. I look at him, as an enemy even though I do not either knows him or do not recognize him. He cannot know the last Imam but through the earlier Imam.

Kulaini has narrated with authentic chains of narrators from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that the Hazrat said: A servant (anybody) cannot be a believer unless he knows Allah and the Messenger and all the Imams and the Imam of his time and turns towards him for clarification of doubtful matters and obeys him. Then he added: How can he know the last Imam when he does not know the first Imam and is not aware of his Imamate?

Moreover, he has narrated from Zurarah (r.a.) with correct chains of narrators from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that he says: I asked Imam Baqir (a.s.): Will you kindly let me know whether it is compulsory for the entire creation to know the Imam? The Hazrat replied: The Lord of the worlds has appointed Prophet Muhammad (S) with His Messengership over the entire creation and he was the Hujjat of Allah for the entire creation on earth.

So who believes in Allah and His Prophet, obeys him and has testified about him is required to know the Imam. And a man who did not put faith in Allah and does not follow and testify him and does not recognize his right, how can such a person be made incumbent to know the hidden Imam when he neither believed in Allah and His Prophet nor recognized their rights? Zurarah said: Then what do you say about a man who put faith in Allah and His Messenger and testified to all the things revealed to His messenger? Is it incumbent on such person to know you?

The Hazrat said: Yes. Do not the Ahle Sunnat, consider it necessary and compulsory to recognize Abu Bakr and Umar despite their weakness? Zurarah said: Yes, they do. Then the Hazrat said: Do you imagine that Allah has put the recognition of the two in their hearts? No, by Allah, none but the devil has

put it in their hearts and, by Allah, none but Allah has put our recognition in the hearts of the believers.

He has also narrated with reliable chains of narrators from Jabir who says that he heard Imam Baqir (a.s.) saying: No one either knows or worships Allah but the one who knows Allah and knows the Imam of his time from us Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). And the person who does not recognize Allah and Imam of his time from we Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), of course knows [believes in] others than Allah and worships other than Allah and, by Allah, he goes astray due to ignorance and misguidance.

Also he has narrated with reliable chains of narrators from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that the Hazrat said: You people cannot be righteous and good until you know the Imam and you cannot get the required knowledge unless you do not testify and you did not testify until you obey and follow the four things mentioned in the verse.

The four things which are true are repentance, faith, good deeds and the guidance gained through the guardianship (Wilayat) and obedience of the Imams. Then he added....their beginning is not improved but through the end of Imamate and they cannot benefit but through Wilayat and those who do not believe in the said three things are wayward.

Verily Allah does not accept but good deeds but then He does not accept the good deeds but with the completion and fulfilment of the conditions mentioned in the verse. Therefore the one who fulfils the conditions put by Allah and acts upon the things about which Allah has taken an undertaking from them in the Holy Quran, then only he gets the rewards which have been promised to him by the Lord of the world. Verily Allah has made His servants aware of the true path and He has also put signs on that path and has informed them how to proceed on this path saying:

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ.

Allah only accepts from those who guard (against evil). (Sura Maida 5:27)

So the one who fears Allah regarding the matters commanded by Allah meets Allah with Faith in the things brought by Muhammad (S). Alas, alas, how distant this group is from Grace. Many groups passed away before gaining guidance through the obedience and Wilayat of the true Imams and their people were imaging that they had believed in Allah though they had, due to their ignorance, indulged in polytheism by associating others with Allah.

The one who enters the house from its door is rightly guided and the one who enters from any other door treads the path of destruction and the gate of the knowledge of the messenger are the true Imams, as the Holy Prophet (S) has said: I am the city of knowledge and wisdom and Ali is its gate and Allah has said:

وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَأَتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ
أَبْوَابِهَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

And it is not righteousness that you should enter the houses at their backs, but righteousness is this that one should guard (against evil); and go into the houses by their doors and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, that you may be successful. (Sura Baqarah 2: 189)

Allah has connected the obedience of the Ulil Amr (one vested with authority), that is, of the true Imams, with the obedience of the Prophet and joined the obedience of the prophet with His own obedience saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ
فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ
وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا.

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle, if you believe in Allah and the last day; this is better and very good in the end. (Sura Nisa 4:59)

So the one who discards the obedience of the true Walis has obeyed neither Allah nor the messenger. And their obedience is the confession of what Allah has said:

خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ.

Decorate yourself near every mosque... (Sura Araf 7:31)

It is understood from traditions that the mosque means prayer and decoration means both bodily as well as spiritual beauty and among the spiritual beauties, the best is the beliefs of faith without which worships are not accepted and among them the best is Wilayat and obedience of the true Imams. Then added: Seek those houses about which, Allah has said, in Surah Noor, which is revealed in praise of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.):

فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ.

In houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and that His name may be remembered in them; there glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings... (Sura Nur 24:36)

Which, according to the explanation by traditions, means that this Radiance (Noor) is found in those houses in which Allah has allowed it and decided that they should always remain high in fame and rank and that the remembrance of Allah must continue therein. Thereafter the Hazrat said: You have been certainly informed as to which are those houses and who are their residents. It is mentioned:

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ
يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ.

Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of poor-rate; they fear a day in which the hearts and eyes shall turn about... (Sura Nur 24:37)

Then the Hazrat said:

Surely Allah has chosen the messengers and prophets for His affairs, viz for the guidance of the creation and for the explanation of the conditions of Shariat (religion). Then He selected a group from them who may testify to the warning given by the messenger as Allah has expressed through the tongue of his messenger:

There is no community in which Allah did not send a warner of chastisement. The one who is unwise is restlessly wandering and the one who is wise is guided and that here sight means the heart as says the Lord of the universe:

فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ.

Eyes are not blind but blind hearts within their chests. (Sura Haj 22:46)

How can the one get guidance whose heart is blind and how can one be seeing who does not ponder over verses and traditions? Follow the Holy Prophet (S) and his Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and confess what has been revealed by Allah and follow the signs of guidance which are the true Imams. Doubtlessly they are the signs of trust, religiousness and righteousness.

Also it has been reliably narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that Abdullah bin Alkawar, who was a Khariji, went to Ali (a.s.) and requested for the explanation of the verse:

وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَنَادَوْا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ.

And on the most elevated places there shall be men who know all by their marks, and they shall call out to the dwellers of the garden: Peace be on you; they shall not have yet entered it, though they hope. (Sura Araf 7:46)

The Hazrat said: It is we who will be in the elevated planes (Araaf) and who will recognize our friends from the signs on their foreheads. We are the Araaf whom the world-lovers cannot know except through our recognition. We are the Araaf through whom Allah will send our friends and foes to the Sirat bridge. So no one will enter Paradise but the one who will recognize us and whom we know and none will go to Hell but the one whom neither we know nor who knows us. Had Allah so willed He would have Himself made His slaves recognize Him but it is His strategy that He made us the door for His recognition and it the straight road and the path of salvation. We are the cause of Allah whereby one can reach Allah.

So the one who denies our Wilayat or gives preference to others over us has strayed from the true path. Those whom people have begun to follow are not equal to us because those non-Shias have joined muddy ponds who commit envy upon envy and those who have come towards us have come to such a clear springs which are always running by the order of Allah the Lord of the universe. These springs never dry up nor ever interrupted.²

It is also narrated with reliable chains from Abu Hamza Thumali that Imam Baqir (a.s.) told him: Whenever anyone of you goes on a journey of even a few miles he is accompanied by a guide so that he may not go astray. You are less aware of the heavenly paths in comparison with the earthly roadways. So search for a guide from you for your guidance. What is meant by the heavenly paths is that they are some beliefs and deeds whereby man attains higher ranks near Allah and in heavens (Paradise).

Moreover, it is narrated with reliable sources that Imam Sadiq (a.s.) was asked to explain the meaning of the holy verse:

وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا.

Who is given wisdom has been granted a great good. (Sura Baqarah 2:269)

The Hazrat replied that what is meant by wisdom is the obedience of Allah and the recognition of the Imam.³

Moreover, it is reported with authentic chains of narrators that someone had asked Imam Baqir (a.s.) to explain the meaning of the verse:

أَوْمَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي
الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا.

Is the dead man whom We make alive creating a Noor (light) for him wherein he walks among people is like the one who is in the darkness of unbelief and ignorance wherefrom he never comes outs? (Sura Anam 6: 122)

The Hazrat replied: Here dead means the one who knows nothing and who does not obtain the knowledge of true beliefs. The Noor (Light) in which he walks among people is the Imam whom people follow. The man who is in darkness is the one who does not recognize his Imam.

It is authentically narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that Abu Abdullah Jadali went to Amirul Momineen (a.s.). The Hazrat told him: O Abu Abdullah! Do you want me to explain to you the purport of the verse:

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا وَهُمْ مِنْ فَرْعٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ. وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ
فَكَبَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ.

Whoever brings good, he shall have better than it; and they shall be secure from terror on the day. And whoever brings evil, these shall be thrown down on their faces into the fire; shall you be rewarded (for) aught except what you did? (Sura Naml 27:89-90)

Meaning: The one who brings good in the presence of Allah has a reward better than it because (he gets) the higher in place of lower and the everlasting in place of the passing, rather Allah grants him upto ten or even upto seven hundred times more reward and such people will have no feeling of fear and horror on the Day of Judgement. And the one who brings forth evil and sins (many scholars say here evil means polytheism) (should know that) such people will be thrown head down in Hell. Will you not be given the reward of only those deeds, which you were doing?

Abu Abdullah replied: Yes, O Amirul Momineen, may my parents be sacrificed for you. The Hazrat said: Here 'good' means our Imamate and Wilayat and also the love of we Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). And here 'evil' means denial of our Imamate and Wilayat and enmity against we Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), which drives them with disgrace from this world to Hereafter to be thrown in Hell.

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1. The writer says: It is an essential part of Faith to believe in the Prophethood of all the prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran and in those whose Messengership is mentioned continuously in the traditions and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S). One who denies even one of them is a disbeliever. So an overall faith in all the prophets and legatees is essential. It is not compulsory to have specific knowledge. He may believe that all the prophets and their legatees are true.
 2. The writer says: The Hazrat has likened knowledge with water because just as water keeps the body alive, knowledge is the cause of the life of spirit (soul). Similarly he has likened the knowledge of the opponents, because of its being defective and doubtful, with water which is less and jammed in a pit full of mud and other impurities. This is because they have obtained knowledge from one another among themselves which does not reach the source of Allah, the messenger and the true Imams who alone have the true knowledge. The Hazrat has, in his comparison said that they are like the springs which fall into one another and has likened the knowledge of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) with pure water springs which flow from the Omniscient Allah because their knowledge is definite and which flows from the source of Revelation and divine inspiration and there is no scope for any doubt or confusion and also because such knowledge is brought by the holy spirit (Jibraeel) and showered on their holy souls endlessly. This will be explained further on – Insha Allah.
 3. The writer says: By Hikmat is meant the true knowledge which is related with deeds (action). Therefore, it is said that a Hakim (wise person) is always true and of good character. Hence the Hazrat has used the words ‘recognition of Imam’ for explaining the meaning of Hikmat (wisdom), which is the fountainhead of every grace and the true and definite knowledge is available only from the Imam and only it enables obedience of Allah because the aim of obedience is to act according to that knowledge. From this it is understood that Hikmat does not mean those false sciences, which have been derived by wayward people from their imperfect minds naming it as Hikmat. It is on the basis of this false wisdom through which the Shariats (codes) of many messengers and many divine books have been altered thus depriving people of the divine knowledge and the traditions of the messenger and the words of Imams. Such people have, without understanding religion and essential problems declared themselves as Scholars and wise men.

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