



## Critical Analysis of "Ninth of Rabī'" Narration

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### Abstract

In a number of Shi'a hadith sources, there is a narration known as "*Ninth of Rabī'*" which refers to the event of the murder of the second caliph on the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*. Unfortunately, this narration, which has also gained the title "*Raf'i Qalam*," has been misused by some lesser individuals to justify holding celebrations under the title "*'Īd al-Zahrā'*" in these days by claiming to dissociate from the enemies of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS). They use the text of the narration to justify certain inappropriate behaviors and statements over three days, considering them permissible. 'To what extent can such narrations truly possess authority and authenticity?' The present study, using a critical analysis method, aims to examine this narration. The findings indicated that the mentioned narration is significantly flawed from various source, history, document and content's perspectives: 1) This narration lacks a credible background in earlier Shia sources and its earliest reference can be traced back to the fifth century in a book belonging to the *Nusayrites* sect titled "*Majmū' al-A'yād*." This raises the probability that it was fabricated by

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the *Nusayrites* extremists and transferred to Shi'a sources in the sixth century. Additionally, in earlier sources, the name "*Abul Khaṭṭāb*" is mentioned, but this name has been changed to "*Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*" in later Imamiyya sources; 2) The prevailing opinion among historians and most Shi'a scholars is that the murder of the second caliph occurred in late *Dhul Ḥijjah* of the 23rd year of hijra, not on the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*; 3) From a chain of transmission perspective, the narration is *Mursal* (a type of weak narration), and all its primary narrators are unknown and deemed distorted; 4) Content-wise, the text of the narration includes discussions such as the assertion of alterations in the Quran, the lifting of obligations for three days, and the permissibility of cursing and insulting, all of which contradict the text of the Quran, the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the practices of the impeccable Imams (AS), thereby undermining the principle of preserving the unity of Muslims.

**Keywords:** "*Ninth of Rabī'*" Narration, *Raf'i Qalam*, Critical Analysis, Document Critique, Content Critique, Murder of the Second Caliph, Nusayrites Extremists.

## Introduction

Since the past, a group of Shi'a Muslims has believed, based on the narration known as "*Ninth of Rabī'*" or "*Raf'i Qalam*," that the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* coincides with the murder of the second caliph. Therefore, they have named it "*Īd al-Zahrā*" and, under the pretext of disassociating from the enemies of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS), they hold celebrations with inappropriate themes. Today, with the proliferation of virtual spaces, this issue does not remain hidden from the eyes of the world and leads to a degradation of the Shi'a faith and creates division and enmity among Muslims. It is noteworthy that, according to this narration, God has lifted obligations from everyone from the ninth of *Rabī'* for three days and considered every action permissible.

The main question of this research is: ‘What criticisms are there regarding the "*Ninth of Rabī*" narration from the perspectives of its document (*Sanad*) and content (*Matn*)?’

To address this research issue, one can utilize critical analysis to critique and examine this narration from the perspectives of its sources, historical context, document, and content.

## 1. Background

Research conducted thus far critiquing the "*Ninth of Rabī*" narration has often focused on its historical aspects, rejecting the date mentioned in the narration for the murder of the second caliph (cf. Najafi and Vakili, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 51-84; Moshkani and Sadeghi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 77-90; Masa'eli, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 6-49) and emphasizing the coincidence of the ninth of *Rabī* with the beginning of the Imamate of Imam Mahdī (AJ) (cf. Sadeghi Kashani, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 41-52; Mousavi Nasab, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 52-72).

Thus, the weaknesses and shortcomings in a comprehensive critique of this narration, as well as its clear contradictions with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah increase the necessity for a re-evaluation in the critical analysis of the mentioned narration and also for elucidating its pathology.

## 2. Method

Critique, in its literal sense, means placing something under a test to discern what is genuine from what is not. The purpose of criticizing an individual or an idea is also to engage in dispute about it (Ibn Manẓūr,

1994 AD/1414 AH: 3, 425). "Critical analysis" is an innovative and proposed method for adopting a critical approach to social phenomena (Bagheri and Ghaffari, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 77).

Since the result of adhering to the contents of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" narration leads to the emergence of anomalies such as the holding of the fictitious "*Īd al-Zahrā'*" ceremonies and the promotion of permissiveness in society, it is necessary to utilize a comprehensive "Critical Analysis" method for critiquing and examining the aforementioned narration.

By "Critical Analysis," we mean wise critique; that is, one must carefully evaluate all aspects of the subject through a reasoned process and by utilizing critical thinking. Therefore, in addition to a comprehensive critique and examination of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" narration from a source, chain-of-narration, and content perspective, it is also essential to pay attention to the root cause and pathology of its contents.

### 3. Content of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" Narration

In the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" narration, on the pretext of the death of one of the most notorious enemies of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS), it is stated that from the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* for duration of three days until the eleventh of *Rabī' al-Awwal*, Muslims are granted freedom of action and relieved of obligations. Regarding the lengthy nature of the text, only a brief description of the narration's subject matter and its main textual components will be provided. Relevant excerpts from the narration will be cited from the book "*al-Anwār al-Nu'mānīyyah*,"<sup>1</sup>

1. *al-Anwār al-Nu'mānīyyah* written by Sayyid Ni'matullāh Jazā'irī, is one of the greatest shī'a scholars in the 11th and 12th century of Hijrah.

which has a more complete chain and text compared to other sources (cf. Jazā'irī, 1984 AD/1404 AH: 1, 108-113).

This narration has been reported in several sections: In the first section, it is mentioned that two narrators disagree about "*Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*" (or *Abul Khaṭṭāb*) and, to clarify the matter, they go to *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī* and find him performing the ceremonies of the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*. He refers to an account of his meeting with Imam *al-Hādī (AS)* on such a day and discusses the special practices observed in the house of the Imam and the virtue of that day as expressed by him.

In the second section of the narration, the words of the Imam (AS) are referenced, as narrated from their esteemed father, who recounts the words of *Hudhayfah ibn Yamān*, who witnessed the celebration of the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* in the presence of the Messenger of God (AS). He conveys the Imam's statements about the virtue of the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*, considering the significant event that occurred on that day, addressing *Ḥasan* and *Ḥusayn (AS)* as follows:

*"Kulā Hanī'an Marī'an lakumā bi Barakati Hādhal Yawm wa Sa'ādatihī fainnahū al-Yawmulladhī Yaqbiḍullāhu fīhi 'Aduwwahū wa 'Aduwwa Jaddikumā wa Yastajibu Du'ā'a Ummikumā... Kulā fainnahū al-Yawmulladhī Yufqidu fīhi Fir'awnu Ahli Baytī wa Zālimum wa Ghāṣibu Ḥaqqihim..."*

Then, quoting from that Imam, it is said that he asked God to make the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* a day of virtue for the Shi'a of my household, to which God responded with divine revelation:

"*Yā Muḥammadu wa Amartul Kirāmal Kātībīb anna Yarfa'ū al-Qalama 'an al-Khalqi Kullihim fī Dhālikal Yawm wa lā Yaktubūna Shay'an min Khaṭāyāhum Karāmata laka wa li Waṣṭyyika. Yā Muḥammadu innī qad Ja'altu Dhālikal Yawma 'Īdan laka wa li Ahli Baytika wa liman Yattabi'uhum minal Mu'minīna wa Shī'atihim... wa La'aj'alanna Sa'yahum Mashkūran wa Dhanbahum Maghfūran wa 'Amalahum Maqbūlā.*"

In the third section, it is mentioned that *Hudhayfah*, after the assassination of the second caliph, goes to congratulate Imam Ali (AS). The Imam, in an extensive statement, regards this day as a source of joy and enumerates seventy-two names for it (cf. Ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī, 1991 AD/1370 AH: 44-55; Jazā'irī, 1985 AD/1404 AH: 1, 108-113). Among them:

"...*Yawmul Istirāḥati wa Yawmu Tanfīsil Hammi wal Karbi... wa Yawmu Raf'il Qalami wa Yawmul Hudā wa Yawmul Barakati wa 'Īdillāhil Akbar... wa Yawmun Qabilallāhu A'mālal Shī'ati... wa Yawmu Qatlil Munāfiqi wa... Yawmu Surūri Ahlil Bayti (AS).*"

Additionally, in this narration, the term "*Kulā*" is mentioned several times from the Prophet (PBUH) addressing *Hasan* and *Husayn* (AS), which is why it is popularly known among some Shi'a laypeople as the "Hadith of *Kulā Kulā*" (Ma'ruv Hasani, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 234).

#### 4. The Concept of "Raf'i Qalam" in the Narrations of the Impeccable Imams (AS)

One of the crucial issues raised in this narration is the matter of "*Raf'i Qalam*," so it is necessary to explain this concept a little. The meaning

of "*Raf*" in the language of scholars is the opposite of "Waḍ'." (Ibn Manzūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 8, 129) "*Raf*" refers to taking something away from its place along with its movement (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1992 AD/1412 AH: 360). Thus, "*Raf'i Qalam*" means being removed from a position and status (Fayyūmī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 2, 232) or lacking responsibility and being free from punishment in the hereafter (Ṭurayhī, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 4, 338). However, the concept of "*Raf'i Qalam*" in jurisprudential terminology is addressed as a general rule in many chapters of jurisprudence (Islamic Jurisprudence Encyclopedia Institute, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 3, 262). According to the jurists and *Uṣūlīs*, there are several possibilities regarding the meaning of *Raf'* (Mohammadi Rey Sharhi, 2014 AD/1393 SH). However, the prevailing view holds that "*Raf'i Qalam*" only includes those commandments that entail punishment (Anṣārī, n.d.: 3, 284).

It is worth noting that the origin of this jurisprudential term comes from the well-known prophetic hadith titled "*Raf'i Qalam*," in which three categories are exempted from responsibility: a child, an insane person, and a sleeping individual (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 2, 175; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1990 AD/1409 AH: 1, 45). Accordingly, if the aforementioned individuals commit a *Ḥarām* act or neglect an obliged duty before the obstacles to responsibility are removed, they are not considered sinful and will not be punished (Najafī, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 26, 10).

It is worth noting that in hadith sources, there are several narrations with similar titles known as "*Raf'i Qalam*" or "*Hadith Raf'*," which

differ in content from the narration in question in this research.<sup>1</sup> In these kinds of narrations, there is an explicit mention of the exemption from duty for a specific group under special conditions. For instance, in some hadiths, in addition to the three individuals mentioned in the referenced jurisprudential narration, there is also an exemption for the sick (Ibn Bābawayh, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 193; Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 402). These narrations align with the meaning of verses that indicate the removal of hardship and the prohibition of imposing burdensome acts on individuals with limited ability (al-Baqarah: 286; al-Mā'idah: 6; al-Fath: 17). Sometimes, the principle of "*Raf'i Qalam*" is extended to include more individuals, such as a narration from Imam Riḍā (AS) which indicates exemption for all Shi'ahs (Ibn Bābawayh, 1999 AD/1378 AH: 2, 236). This case, like the previous ones, can also be justified by the mention of the reason for exemption, namely, enduring the numerous hardships in the path of love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) and defending their oppression.

Therefore, it can be observed that the concept of "*Raf'i Qalam*" in the narrations of the impeccable Imams (AS) refers to the removal of

1. The text of *Hadith Raf'* is: "*An Abī 'Abdillāh Qāla, Qāla Rasūlullāh: Rufi'a 'an Ummatī Tis'atul Khaṭa' wa al-Nisyānu wa mā Akrahū 'alayhi wa mā Akrahū 'alayhi wa mā lā Ya'lamūna wa mā lā Yuṭīqūna wa maḍ Ṭurrū ilayhi wal Ḥasadi wal Ṭiyaratu wal Tafakkuru fil Waswasati fil Khalqī mā lam Yanṭiq bi Shafatin.*" Nine things have been removed from the Muslim Ummah, including error, forgetfulness, what they are forced to do by oppression, what they do not know, what they are unable to do, what they do out of necessity, being jealous, casting bad omens, and thinking about creation out of temptation (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 2, 417).



obligations and accountability from a specific group based on determined conditions and criteria.

## **5. Critique of the "Ninth of Rabī'" Narration**

In order to defend against accusations directed at the Shi'as, it is essential to examine this narration using a comprehensive method for evaluating the authenticity of the sanad (to determine whether there is a connection or lack thereof between the sanad and the impeccable Imam (AS), as well as the evaluating the narrators in the chain of narration) and a content critique (to assess the validity of the issuance of the narration's content from the impeccable Imam, as well as the implications of the narration regarding the exemption). Additionally, investigating the primary and earlier sources of this narration is necessary in the field of Shi'a studies.

### **5.1. Critique of the Narration Source**

The sources of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" narration can be traced in two categories: the sources of the Imamiyyah and the non-Imamiyyah sources.

#### **5.1.1. Imamiyyah Sources**

Despite extensive searching, no trace of this narration was found in the Four Books and other first-rate and credible Shia hadith sources. However, the sources of this narration, listed chronologically, are as follows, along with reports of the documents mentioned in each of them up to the first narrator (i.e., Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī).

### A) Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār (6<sup>th</sup> Century)

This work was written by *Shaykh Hāshim ibn Muḥammad* (6th Century) to discuss the virtues of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn (AS)*. In the remaining manuscript of this book, there is no evidence of this narration. The basis for referencing here is the statement of *Muḥshī al-Muḥtaḍar* (Ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 45), who narrates: "*Qāla Akhbaranā Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-Qummī bil Kūfah Qāla Ḥaddathanā Abūbakr Muḥammad ibn Ja'dawīyyah al-Qazwīnī wa Kāna Shaykhan Ṣāliḥan Zāhidan Sinata Iḥdā wa Arba'īn wa Thalāthumi'ata Ṣā'idan ilal Ḥajji Qāla Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Qazwīnī Qāla Ḥaddathanā al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan al-Khālidī bi Mashhai Abil Ḥasan al-Riḍā (AS) Qāla Ḥaddathanā Muḥammad ibn al-'Alā' al-Hamdānī al-Wāsiṭī wa Yahyā ibn Jurayḥ al-Baghdādī Qālā: Tanāza'unā fī Amri (Abil Khaṭṭāb) (Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab) al-Kūfī wa Ishtabaha 'alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣadnā Jamī'an Abā 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī.*"

### B) al-'Iqdul Naḍīd and Durrul Farīd (7<sup>th</sup> Century)

This work, written by *Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Qummī*, one of the hadith scholars of the 7th century, discusses the virtues of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn (AS)* and the *Ahl al-Bayt (AS)* (Qummī, 2003 AD/1422 AH: 6-7). The sanad of the "Ninth of Rabī" narration in this book is as follows (Qummī, 2003 AD/1422 AH: 60-65): "*An al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Sāmīry Qāla: Kuntu Ana wa Yahyā ibn Aḥmad ibn Jurayḥ al-Baghdādī fa Tanāza'unā fī Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, fa Ishtabaha 'alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣadunā Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī.*"

**C) Zawā'id al-Fawā'id (7<sup>th</sup> Century)**

This book was authored by *Sayyid Raḍī al-Dīn 'Alī*, the son of *Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs*, which transmits supplications, deeds, and recommended etiquette from his father. This book has not been published, but a manuscript is available at the University of Tehran Library (Tehrani, 2008 AD/1408 AH: 12, 59-60). The basis for citation here is the book *Bihār al-Anwār* by *Majlisī*, where it is narrated from "Zawā'id al-Fawā'id" (Majlisī, 1984 AD/1403 AH: 95, 351-355): "Rawā Ibn Abil 'Alā' al-Hamdānī al-Wāsiṭī wa Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥuwayj al-Baghdādī Qālā Tanāza'unā fī ibn al-Khaṭṭā wa Ishtabaha 'Alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣḍunā Jamī'an Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī."

**D) al-Muḥtaḍar (8<sup>th</sup> Century)**

This book was written by *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī*, a student of the *Shahīd Awwal*, and it discusses the topic of death and the narrations regarding the presence of the Imams (AS) at the bedside of the dying (Tehrani, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 20, 143). The sanad of this book is as follows (Ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī, 1950 AD/1370 AH: 44-55):

"*Mā Naqalathu al-Shaykh al-Fāḍil 'Alī ibn Mazāhir al-Wāsiṭī bi Isnād Muttaṣilun 'an Muḥammad ibn al-'Alā' al-Hamdānī al-Wāsiṭī wa Yaḥyā ibn Jurayḥ al-Baghdādī Qālā: Tanāza'unā fī Amri Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb wa Ishtabaha 'alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣḍunā Jamī'an Abā 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī.*"

**E) al-Anwār al-Nu'māniyyah (11<sup>th</sup> Century)**

The book *al-Anwār al-Na'māniyyah fī Ma'rifati al-Nash'atil Insāniyyah* was authored by *Sayyid Ni'matullāh al-Jazā'irī*, a

contemporary of 'Allāmeḥ Majlisī (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 2, 336). The chain of narration present in this book is as follows (Jazā'irī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 108-113):

"*Akhbaranā al-Amīn al-Sayyid Abū Mubārak Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ardashīr al-Dastānī Qāla Akhbaranā al-Sayyid abul Barakāt ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī Qāla Akhbaranā Hibatullāh al-Qummī wa Ismuhū Yahyā Qāla Ḥaddathanā Aḥmad ibn Ishāq ibn Muḥammad Baghdādī Qāla Ḥaddathanā al-Faqīh al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan al-Sāmīry annahū Qāla Kunta wa Yahyā ibn Aḥmad ibn Jurayḥ al-Baghdādī fa Qaṣḍunā Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī.*"

#### F) Biḥār al-Anwār (11<sup>th</sup> Century)

Among the later hadīth collections, only 'Allāmah Majlisī, in volume 31 and page 95 of *Biḥār al-Anwār*, has narrated the "Ninth of Rabī" with some variations. Although he opened the fourteenth chapter in volume five of *Biḥār al-Anwār* titled "Man Rafa'a 'anhu al-Qalam wa Nafyul Ḥaraj fiddīn, "which includes 29 narrations (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 5, 298-308), he did not mention the aforementioned narration in this chapter. Instead, he reports it in other chapters of his book as follows:

1) In the continuation of the book *al-Miḥan wa al-Fitan*, in the twenty-fourth chapter under the topic "The Time and Quality of the Killing of the Second Caliph," he presents the narration along with its chain from "al-Muḥṭaḍar." (ibid: 31, 120-129)

2) In the chapters regarding the deeds of the month of *Rabī' al-Awwal*, in the thirteenth chapter titled "*The Virtue of the Ninth Day of the Month of Rabī' al-Awwal and Its Deeds*," he cites the narration

from the book "Zawā'id al-Fawā'id." (ibid: 95, 351-355)

He also conveys this narration with the same chain in the book "*Zād al-Ma'ād*," in the eighth chapter titled "*On the Virtues of the Days of the Month of Rabī' al-Awwal and Their Deeds*." (Majlisī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 253)

According to research findings, it has been noted that the antiquity of the narration *Ninth of Rabī'* in Shi'a sources dates back at most to the sixth and seventh centuries. Among contemporary hadith collections, in the book *Jāmi' al-Aḥādīth*, under the chapter on recommended *Ghusl* (washing), only the first part of the narration—that is, the story of the *Ninth of Rabī' Ghusl* performed by *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq Qummī*—is mentioned, citing it from *Zawā'id al-Fawā'id* (Khu'ī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 3, 60-61).

### 5.1.2. Non-Imamiyyah Sources

An important point regarding the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" that also impacts its critique and analysis is the existence of this narration in an ancient hadith book belonging to the Nusayrites<sup>1</sup> extremists'

1. The Nusayrite sect is also referred to as "Ansari" and "Alawite." This group officially separated from the Imamiyya Shia in the fifth century AH and settled in the northwestern region of Syria. The teachings of the Nusayrite are a mixture of elements from Shia Islam, Christianity, and pre-Islamic Iranian beliefs (Mashkoor, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 442). This community changed their name to Alawites during the French occupation of Syria in the early twentieth century (Boroumand Alam, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 42-43). There are various opinions regarding the etymology of the name "Nusayri" (cf. the same source, pp. 38-43; Hariri, 1984: 23-24). Overall, it seems that this term is derived from the name of its founder, as the Ghulat sect known as the Nusayris or Numairis followed a person named Muhammad ibn Nusayr Numairi, who was one of the deviant companions of Imam Hasan al-Askari (AS) (Mashkoor, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 450-451). In this case, their history dates back to the third century AH.

sect. The book, *Sabīl Rāḥtul Arwāḥ wa Dalīl al-Surūr wal Afrāḥ ilā Fāliq al-Aṣbāḥ*, commonly known as *Majmū' al-A'yād*, was written by *Abū Sa'īd Maymūn ibn al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarānī* (358-426 AH). He was a significant figure and leader of the *Nusayrite* in the fifth century in the region of Aleppo and the Levant and authored multiple works promoting the *Nusayrite* faith (Ḥarīrī, 1984: 27). In fact, he is the third notable figure in the history of the *Alawites* who was able to play a crucial role in establishing the position of the *Nusayrite* in Syria and in codifying and strengthening their beliefs and principles at the beginning of the fifth century AH; this led to the first time the name *Nusayrite* appearing as an official and independent sect in the sources on sects (Boroumand Alam, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 54).

In this work, which includes an introduction to the collection of holidays in Arabic and non-Arabic related to the *Nusayrite* faith, along with mentioning their virtues and etiquette, in the chapter on *Maqṭal Dalām*, two narrations are presented introducing the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwa* as the date of the killing of the second caliph and discussing its virtues. In the course of these narrations, special prayers for this day are mentioned (cf. Ṭabarānī, 1946: 133-153).

The first narration, which is quoted at the beginning of the chapter on the *Maqṭal Dalām*, is more detailed. However, this narration differs slightly in text from the narration of the *Ninth of Rabī'* found in Imamiyya sources, as it does not mention the *Raf'i Qalam*. Nevertheless, in terms of describing the biography of Imam *Hādī* (AS) in performing the specific rituals for the holiday on the *Ninth of Rabī'* and emphasizing and instructing the audience to commemorate this

day, it has a similar theme to the aforementioned narration. A portion of the sanad and matn of this narration is as follows (cf. Ṭabarānī, 1946: 133-143):

*Mā Ruwwāhul Amīr Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Abil ‘Abbās Raḍīyallāh ‘anhu bi Isnādihī ‘an Rijālihī ilā Abil Ṭayyib Aḥmad ibn Abil Ḥasan Qāla Ḥaddathanī Abū ‘Abdillāh al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad innal Khaṣībī<sup>1</sup> Naḍrullāh Wajhuh fī Baghdād fī Manzilihī bi Shāri‘ Bāb al-Kūfa Qāla Ḥaddathanī Aḥmad ibn Ghālib ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Aṭīyyah ‘an Qāsim ibn Salamah Qāla Ghadawtu Alyabī Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Ayyūb al-Qummī wa Ma‘īya Jamā‘atun min Ikhwānī As’aluhū I‘rāḍun Ruq‘atun ‘alā Sayyidī Abil Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad Ṣāḥibil ‘Askar.*

However, Ṭabarānī also narrates another account titled "The Report of the Last Day of the *Ninth of Rabī‘ al-Awwal* and Its Virtue" after the specific supplications for the *Ninth of Rabī‘* at the end of this chapter, which has more evidence and documentation. The chain of this narration is as follows (cf. *ibid*: 147-153):

*Ḥaddathanā Muḥammad ibn al-‘Abbās al-Khurāsānī Qāla Akhbaranā Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Sulaymānī Qāla Ḥaddathanā al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad ibn Shaybān al-Qazwīnī Qāla Ḥaddathanī Abū Aḥmad Ibn ‘Alī al-Kahamjashī Qāla Ḥaddathanā Muḥammad ibn al-Hamdānī al-Wāsiṭī wa Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad ibn Jid‘il Baghdādī Qālā Tanāza‘nā fī Bābi Abil Khaṭṭāb wa Ishtabaha ‘alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣḍunā Jamī‘an Abā ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī.*

1. Khaṣībī (358 AH or 346 AH) is one of the most influential leaders of Nasyrite. His more complete personality will come in the section on the narrators' situation.

According to the research of some scholars, the narration of "*Ninth of Rabī*" has also been reported in an older book titled "*al-Akwār al-Nūrānīyyah wa al-Adwār al-Rūḥānīyyah*" from *Abū Muḥammad Janbalānī* (d. 278 AH), one of the leaders of the Nusayri extremist (cf. Fallahy Qahrudi et al., 2022 AD/1401 AH: 32). However, the sources of Imamiyya hadith for the narration of "*Ninth of Rabī*" do not go back earlier than the sixth century AH, and what is currently available mainly dates back to the seventh and eighth centuries AH. It is noted that the background of this narration in non-Imamite sources (i.e., Nusayri) is older. Therefore, it is likely that the narration of "Ninth of Rabī" was initially mentioned in Nusayri sources and gradually entered Imamiyya sources. This does not necessarily imply doubt about the certainty of the issuance of this narration from the impeccable Imams (AS).

A noteworthy point is that in more recent compilations, the main source for this hadith is "*Bihār al-Anwār*." *Allāmah Majlisī* was a scholar and prominent figure of the Safavid era, and in this hadith encyclopedia, his focus was solely on gathering and recording hadiths and preserving religious texts, without personally evaluating the hadiths or extracting their authentic ones. As a result, weaker reports can also be found amidst various chapters of the work (Ma'ārif, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 376). It can also be imagined that *Majlisī*'s orientations in his numerous works may have been influenced by historical factors, as well as intellectual and cultural elements coinciding with his lifetime (Fiqhizadeh, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 82). Indeed, during the Safavid period, religious prejudices and distrust towards Sunni



individuals had become a firm belief among the people (Bastani Parizi, 1978 AD/1357 SH: 219). Therefore, the narration of reports such as "*Ninth of Rabī'*" in disparaging the leaders of the Sunni community in the hadith compilations of that era does not seem unlikely.

## 5.2. Historical Criticism

Among the most significant criticisms of this narration is its contradiction with the historical evidence of Islam. The text of the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" indicates the date of the second caliph's assassination as the *Ninth of Rabī' al-Awwal*: "*Hādhal Yawm al-Tāsi' min Shahri Rabī' al-Awwal... al-Yawmulladhī Yuhlikullāhu fīhi 'Aduwwahū... al-Thānī.*"

Therefore, it is necessary to critique this narration in light of historical realities by providing precise evidence and documentation. Most historians, with slight variations, have stated that the date of 'Umar's murder by *Abū Lu'lu'* (a slave of *al-Mughayra ibn Shu'ba*) was the 26th or 27th of *Dhū al-Hijjah* in the year 23 AH (cf. Ibn Khayyāt, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 87; Ibn Sa'd, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 3, 278; Ibn A'tham, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 2, 329; Ibn Qutaybah, 1992: 183; al-Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 304; Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 4, 193; al-Ya'qūbī, n.d.: 2, 159). Thus, there is a difference of at least seventy days between the date mentioned in the narration and what the major historical reports state.

Most Shi'a scholars and prominent figures also agree with the prevailing view and consider the claim of the ninth of *Rabī'* to be incorrect (cf. Ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥillī, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 6, 195; Ibn Idrīs,

n.d.: 1, 418-419; Ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥillī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 328; Ibn Ṭāwūs al- Ḥillī, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 2, 379; *ibid*: 3, 113-114; al-Kaf'amī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 511). Only 'Allāmah Majlisī has attributed the claim of the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* to Shaykh Mufīd through Kaf'amī (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 31, 119), while Shaykh Mufīd himself explicitly supports the claim of the 26th of Dhūl Ḥijjah (Ibn Nu'mān, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 42). However, 'Allāmah Majlisī, despite acknowledging the consensus of scholars from both sects on the 26th of Dhūl Ḥijjah, chose this view regarding the prominence of the ninth of *Rabī'* among contemporary Shi'a in Isfahan (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 31, 119-120). It should be noted that the Shi'as of Kashan celebrated the holiday of *Bābā Shujā' al-Dīn*<sup>1</sup> at the end of Dhū al-Ḥijjah. However, during the Safavid era, it was established on the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* based on the kings' orders. The Safavid kings held this holiday in high regard and made many charitable donations on that day (Jafariyan, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 475-476).

An examination of the background of this view shows that the mention of the second caliph's death on the ninth of *Rabī'* entered sources from the sixth century without any citation (Qazvini Razi, 1979 AD/1358 SH: 353) and after a period of silence, became prominent again during the Safavid era, even becoming part of the Shi'a community's culture (Sadeqi Kashani, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 42). However, scholars like Kaf'amī (d. 905 AH), who lived during this

1. He is the same Fīrūz, known as Abū Lu'lu', from the people of Kashan, who, according to the false popular culture, Imam Ali (AS) gave him the title Shujā'uddīn after killing 'Umar and helped him escape. It seems that he lived in Kashan until the end of his life.

interval, rejected the claim of the ninth of *Rabī'* in favor of the more established view (cf. Kaf<sup>amī</sup>, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 510-511).

It is worth mentioning that according to the belief of some scholars and researchers, what has caused the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* to be known as the day of the assassination of the second caliph is the killing of 'Umar ibn Sa'd by Mukhtār al-Thaqafī on this day (Majlisī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 258; Jafariyan, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 1, 475). Apparently, regarding the similarity of his name with that of the second caliph, this day was later incorrectly recognized as the day of the murder of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

The aforementioned historical reports indicate that during two historical periods—the era of the Buyid dynasty and the Safavid period, under the rule of powerful and fanatic Shia rulers—many Shi'a Muslims resumed certain specific religious ceremonies. It seems that the events of the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* also fall under this principle.

### 5.3. Document (Isnād) Criticism

The reference to the document criticism here includes matters such as verifying the authenticity of the attribution of the hadith to the impeccable Imams (AS), the continuity of the chain of narration, and the conditions of the narrators of the hadith.

#### 5.3.1. Evaluating the Attribution of the Hadith to the Impeccable Imams (AS)

Although the narration of "*Ninth of Rabī'*" apparently reaches the impeccable Imams (AS) through a chain of transmission in three forms—first attributed to Imam al-Hādī (AS), then referencing the tradition of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and finally based on a

statement by Imam ‘Alī (AS)—the manner of this attribution is unconventional and involves repeated disconnections, which raises more doubts about the attribution of the narration to the impeccable Imams (AS) rather than providing certainty regarding its issuance.

### 5.3.1. Evaluating the Continuity of the Sanad

The chain of transmission that *Majlisī* quotes from the author of *Zawā'id al-Fawā'id* and also from the author of *al-Muḥtaḍar* clearly exhibits interruption. This is because the intermediaries between those authors, who lived in the 7th and 8th centuries, have been omitted from the first narrators of the narration who were contemporaries of *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq*.

However, the author of *al-Muḥtaḍar* explicitly states at the bottom of the chain that the chain attributed to the one narrated about, namely *‘Alī ibn Mazāhir al-Wāsiṭī*, is continuous (Ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī, 1950 AD/1370 AH: 44); but considering the incomplete transmission of this chain, it cannot be definitively stated whether it is continuous or interrupted. The chain of *Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār*, cited from the commentary of *Muḥshī al-Muḥtaḍar*, which apparently has a more complete route than *al-Muḥtaḍar* (ibid: 45), is still incomplete and *Mursal*; because it states that *Muḥammad ibn Ja‘dawīyya al-Qazwīnī* narrated the hadith for the last narrator in the year 341 AH, whereas the author of the book *Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār* lived in the 6th century, thus it is unlikely that there was only one intermediary between him and *Muḥammad ibn Ja‘dawīyya*.

seems to be more complete than previous chains (Jazayeri, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 108). Therefore, it is not possible to definitively conclude about the connection or disconnection of the chain in all accounts of the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*."

### 5.3.3. Examination of the Narrators Status

Upon reviewing the biographical and hadith sources of Shi'a Islam, it appears that none of the narrators mentioned in the above chains are listed. Among them, only the figure "*Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī*," a narrator of the words of Imam *Hādī* (AS), and "*Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān*," a narrator of the sayings of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and Amīr al-Mu'minīn (AS), are recognized.

*Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Ash'arī al-Qummī*, known by the nickname *Abū 'Alī* (Ṭūsī, n.d.: 63), was one of the companions and narrators of Imam *Jawād* (AS), Imam *Hādī* (AS), and a distinguished companion of Imam 'Askarī (AS) (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 91). According to some sources, he is said to have seen Imam *Mahdī* (AJ) (Ibn Yūsuf Ḥillī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 15; Ibn Dāwūd Ḥillī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 24). He is described as trustworthy (Ṭūsī, 1961 AD/1381 AH: 397), highly esteemed, a Shaykh, and a representative of the people of Qum (Ṭūsī, n.d.: 63) and is the author of the books "*Ilal al-Ṣawm*" and "*Masā'il al-Rijāl*," cited from Imam *Hādī* (AS) (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 91). In the chains of narrations, he is mentioned under different names, including *Aḥmad ibn Sa'd* and *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq* with titles such as *Abū 'Alī*, *al-Ash'arī*, and *al-Qummī* (Khu'ī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 2, 50).

*Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān al-'Abasī*, known by the nickname *Abū 'Abdullāh* (Ibn Dāwūd Ḥillī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 101), was among the companions and supporters of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) (Barqī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 2) and is considered one of the reputable pillars and close companions of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) (Ibn Yūsuf Ḥillī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 60). He passed away forty days after the allegiance to Imam Ali (AS) (Ṭūsī, 1961 AD/1381 AH: 35).

Although these two individuals have been authenticated, it should be noted that their names do not appear at the end of the narration chain but are merely mentioned within the text. Therefore, considering the unknown status of all narrators, the authenticity of this narration is weakened and lacks necessary credibility. Additionally, the contradictions and discrepancies among the names of the narrators in these chains, for example, between "*Jurayḥ*" and "*Ḥuwayj*," "*Juda'*," or "*Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan al-Sāmīrī*" instead of "*Abul 'Alā' Hamdānī*," further contribute to the weakness of the chain.

It is noteworthy that in the Naṣīrīyān source, a character named "*Khaṣībī*" appears in the chain of narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*." *Khaṣībī* (d. 358 AH or 346 AH) is considered one of the most influential leaders of the Nusayri sect and is regarded as the second founder of the religion (Ḥarīrī, 1984: 25). However, he has been introduced by most of the earlier Rijālīs of the Imami sect as a heretic and a liar (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 67; Ibn Ghada'irī, 1944 AD/1364 AH: 1, 54; Ibn Dāwūd Ḥillī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 444).

However, some later Shia *Rijālīs* have praised him and attempted to rehabilitate his image (Amīn, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 490-491). The

most significant work attributed to *Khaṣībī* is the book "*al-Hidāyah al-Kubrā*" on the issue of the Imamate of the Imams (AS), which, in the final section of the original manuscript, introduces each chapter concerning the Imams (AS) from *Salmān Fārsī* to *Abū Shu'ayb Muḥammad ibn Nuṣayr Numayrī*, and discusses their esteemed position among the Shi'as (Safari Forushani, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 27). This reflects one of the core beliefs of the Nusayris, namely the existence of representatives known as "Bāb" for each of the impeccable Imams (AS) (Ḥarīrī, 1984: 20-21).

#### 5.4. Content Critique

Following this, based on the criteria commonly accepted among scholars of hadith, the most significant content critiques pertaining to the essence of the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī*" will be analyzed and examined.

##### 5.4.1. Opposition of the Narration's Content to the Holy Quran

Undoubtedly, comparing the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī*" with the Quran can reveal the degree of its connection with the Holy Quran. The central theme of the "*Ninth of Rabī*" narration is the raising of the pen, meaning forgiving all people's sins for three days, which is mentioned multiple times under various titles within the narration. For example, it is reported from *Hudhayfah* that the words of the Prophet (PBUH) from God say: "*Wa Amartul Kirāmal Kātibīn an Yarfa'ū al-Qalam 'anil Khalqī Kullihim Thalāthatu Ayyāmin min Ajli Dhālikal Yawmi wa lā Yaktubūna 'alayhim Shay'an min Khaṭāyāhum.*" Additionally, according to Imam Ali (AS) in listing the names of the

day of the ninth of Rabī', he states: "*Yawmul Istirāḥati... Yawmu Rafa'al Qalam.*"

However, numerous verses of the Quran affirm that even the smallest actions of humans are under scrutiny: "*Faman Ya'mal Mithqāla Dharratin Khayran Yarah wa man Ya'mal Mithqāla Dharratin Sharran Yarah.*" (al-Zilzāh: 7-8)

The Quran also refers to the recording and documenting of all actions and their consequences: "...*Naktubu mā Qaddamū wa Āthārahum wa Kulla Shay'in Aḥṣaynāhu fī Imāmin Mubīn.*" (Yāsīn: 12) The level of precision in recording human deeds in the Book of Deeds is such that on the Day of Judgment, all of a person's good and evil actions will be presented before them: "*Yawma Tajidu Kullu Nafsin mā 'Amilat min Khayrin Muḥḍaran wa mā 'Amilat min Sū'in...*" (Āli 'Imrān: 30)

Therefore, the text of the Quran indicates the recording, documenting, and precise and continuous accountability of actions, which contradicts what is stated in the narration of the "Ninth of Rabī'" about the *Raf'i Qalam*, implying absolute freedom for the general populace and no recording of their sins over three days. Furthermore, in the Holy Quran, forgiveness and pardon for sins are contingent upon repentance and seeking forgiveness by the sinner: "...*Wa Udkhulul Bāba Sujjadan wa Qūlū Ḥittatun Naghfir lakum Khaṭāyām.*" (Cf. al-Baqarah: 58; al-A'rāf: 161; al-Shu'arā': 51; Tāhā: 73)

"Khaṭāyā" is the plural of "Khaṭī'ah" and is interpreted as intentional sin, synonymous with disobedience (Ṭabrisī, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 1, 245-246; Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1993 AD/1412 AH: 228). Accordingly, the concept



of "Raf'i Qalam" in the aforementioned narration, in light of "Wa lā Yaktubūna ‘alayhim Shay’an min Khaṭāyāhum," refers to overlooking any type of disobedience by humans on such a day. As a result, the intended meaning in the "*Ninth of Rabī’*" narration is in no way compatible with the explicit verses of the Quran. The major harm caused by adhering to the implications of such narrations is the promotion of permissiveness in society. Although some Quranic verses indicate the lifting of hardship and the prohibition of performing burdensome acts for humans (cf. al-Baqarah: 286; al-Mā'idah: 6; al-Fath: 17), in these cases, the rule of lifting the burden and, consequently, the absence of accountability in the Hereafter is conditional upon the incapacity and inability of individuals, not applying to all of humanity.

#### 5.4.2. Conflict of the Narration's Content with Valid Tradition

As discussed in the section on the "Concept of *Raf'i Qalam* in the narrations of the impeccable Imams (AS)," the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī’*," known as "*Raf'i Qalam*," clearly contradicts other narrations of lifting. On the other hand, this narration is incompatible with numerous authentic hadiths recorded in hadith sources, which invite Muslims, especially Shi'as, to observe piety and strive in obedience and worship. For instance, there is a chapter in *Wasā'il al-Shī'a* titled "*Bābu Ta'akkadi Istiḥbābil Jiddi wal Ijtihādi fil 'Ibādat*," which includes 22 narrations. Thus, the continual recommendation of the Imams (AS) to the Shi'as is to observe piety (cf. Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 2, 76; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1989 AD/1409 AH: 1, 85). They refer to the Shi'as as "*Anṣārullāh*" and introduce the path of Vilayat as

striving in worship and piety (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 8, 212-213); specifically, Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) warns the Shi‘as against lowliness and describes the prominent characteristics of his Shi‘as as chastity, abundance, and purity in worship (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 295). Based on the totality of the mentioned narrations, the opposition of the impeccable Imams (AS) to the subject of "*Raf‘i Qalam*" for the general public is quite clear.

#### 5.4.3. The Existence of Corruption (Taṣḥīf) and Distortion (Idṭirāb) in the Text of the Narration

The existence of corruption and distortion is one of the aspects that should be considered when evaluating the content of the hadith. The text of the relevant narrations has, in several instances, experienced confusion or distortion, including:

1) In the source of the Nusayri (*Majmū‘ al-A‘yād*), the mention of "*Abil Khaṭṭāb*" instead of "*Ibnul Khaṭṭāb*" has been noted, and it has been stated that the disagreement and dispute were between two narrators regarding "*Abil Khaṭṭāb*"<sup>1</sup> (Ṭabarānī, 1946: 147). Therefore, this serves as an indication that the original narrator may have been

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1. Muḥammad ibn Maqlāṣ Asadī Kūfī, known as Abul Khaṭṭāb, is one of the cursed Ghalis and liars in the view of Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) (Kashshī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 546, 555). He established the most significant and extravagant sect of the Ghalis, namely the Khaṭṭābīya. Subsequently, many Ghalis derived their beliefs from him. It is well-known that Abul Khaṭṭāb was entirely libertine, considering all prohibitions permissible and perceiving sensual desires as light (cf. Safari Forushani, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 104-106). Therefore, it can be said that the characteristic commonality among all Ghalis, including the Nusayri and Khaṭṭābīya, is the issue of libertinism.

*Abul Khaṭṭāb* (d. 138 AH) and, regarding the distortion, this name has changed from the narrator to the subject of discussion. Of course, the text of the mentioned narration itself contains many indications related to the concerns of *Abul Khaṭṭāb*, the extremists, and also the Nusayris in later periods. On the other hand, it seems that the source "*Abil Ḥasan*" referring to Imam Ali (AS) also changes to "*Abil Ḥasan al-‘Askarī*" (AS) (cf. Fallahi Qahrudi et al., 2022 AD/1401 SH: 32-33). It must be mentioned that in the report of the earliest source of the Imami hadith, namely "*Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār*," this issue is also explicitly stated: "*Tanāza‘unā fī Amri (Abil Khaṭṭāb) (Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab) al-Kūfī*." (cf. Ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 45) However, later sources than "*Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār*" have introduced "*Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*" as the disputed figure among the narrators (cf. *ibid*; Qummī, 2003 AD/1422 AH: 60; Majlisī, 1984 AD/1403 AH: 31, 120; *ibid*: 95, 355; Majlisī, 2004 AD/1423 AH: 253). Meanwhile, in "*al-Anwār al-Nu‘mānīyyah*," none of the above individuals are mentioned (Jazāyerī, 2023 AD/1404 AH: 1, 108). Therefore, it seems that in later sources, due to a distortion, the term "*Abil Khaṭṭāb*" has changed to "*Ibnul Khaṭṭāb*," leading to the assumption that it refers to the second caliph!

2) The narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī‘*" also has contradictions and semantic discrepancies. Initially, it proclaims the greatness of the ninth of *Rabī‘* by asking: "*Ayyu Yawmin A‘zamu Ḥurmatan ‘inda Ahlil Bayti min Hādhal Yawmi?!*" and further refers to it as "*‘Īdullāhil Akbar*." This raises the question of ‘Whether, in light of significant holidays like the *Mab‘ath* and *Ghadīr*, such terminology is suitable for this day based on the event in question?’ Also, ‘How does the mention

of several unrelated names for this day, such as "*Yawm al-Waqtil Ma'lūm*," "*Yawm Sabīllāh Ta'ālā*," "*Yawm al-Fiṭr al-Thānī*," and "*Yawm al-Mubāhalah*," hold any justification or interpretation? Furthermore, 'The inclusion of some contradictory titles in naming this day, like "*Yawmu Raf'il Qalam*," "*Yawmul Istirāḥati*," and "*Yawmul 'Āfiyati*," alongside "*Yawmul Tawbati*," "*Yawmul Inābati*," "*Yawmul Tazkīyati*," and "*Yawmul 'Ibādati*," reflects what virtue for this day?' Generally, 'Does mentioning numerous names for a day serve as evidence of its virtue and merits?' On the other hand, 'What relationship exists between a specific festival for the believers and Shi'as and the lifting of the pen from all people on that holiday?'

3) Considering that many Shi'a narrators have mentioned the date of the martyrdom of Imam Ḥasan 'Askarī (AS) as the eighth of *Rabī' al-Awwal* (cf. Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 503; Ṭūsī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 6, 92; Ibn Bābawayh, 1975 AD/1395 AH: 2, 434; Ibn Nu'mān, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 313), the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*, which coincides with the beginning of the Imamate of Imam Mahdī (AJ), is regarded as a joyful and blessed occasion among the Shi'a and the followers of Imam Mahdī (AJ). Therefore, holding celebrations and festivities on the ninth of *Rabī' al-Awwal*, if aligned with the theme of his Imamate and worthy of the status of the Shi'a Twelver faith, is certainly valuable and defensible. However, the issue here is that some earlier scholars (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 3, 113-114) and some contemporary researchers have attempted to interpret the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī'*" in such a way as to connect the theme

of joy on that day with the aforementioned topic (Mousavi Nasab, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 72; Sadeqi Kashani, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 45-49). However, in this narration, there is no explicit mention or reference to this matter, and fundamentally, it is not a relevant topic.

#### 5.4.4. Opposition to the Principle of Islamic Unity and Cohesion

Among the issues arising from the content of the narration of the "Ninth of Rabī'" is its use as a pretext for those organizing insulting gatherings during *Īd al-Zahrā*, involving excommunication and cursing of one of the leaders of Sunni Islam, which leads to the spread of division and religious differences among Muslims and contradicts the necessity of maintaining Islamic unity and cohesion. It should be noted that every year, the week preceding the ninth of Rabī' coincides with the week of unity and rapprochement among Islamic sects.

Undoubtedly, Islam places great emphasis on preserving unity and cohesion based on the verses of the Quran (Āli 'Imrān: 103) and the sayings of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) (cf. Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 28, 392). As Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) states: "Khālīṭū al-Nāsa bil Barrānīyyati wa Khālīfūhum bil Jawwāīyyati mādāmatil Imratu Ṣibyānīyyatan." (ibid: 72, 421)

According to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, "Islamic cohesion means that inter-sect animosities among Muslims should not be provoked." (Masa'ili, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 116) Surely, preserving the unity and cohesion of the Islamic ummah does not mean giving up on the principles of religious beliefs. Rather, it aims to maintain the structure of the Islamic ummah by emphasizing commonalities and

avoiding divisive issues. This contradiction could serve as a rational basis for rejecting the authenticity of the narration.

A noteworthy point is that most scholars and esteemed religious authorities, in their scholarly fatwas addressing the inquiries of their followers regarding the "*Raf'i Qalam*" narration and participation in the celebrations of the *'Īd al-Zahrā*, besides stating the falsity and fabrication of the mentioned narration, have also addressed the detrimental implications of its content and emphasized the necessity of maintaining unity among Muslims.

For instance, the fatwa of the Supreme Leader is: "In the name of God, any speech, action, or behavior that today gives an excuse or opportunity to the enemy or causes division among Muslims is strictly forbidden." Additionally, Ayatollah Nouri Hamadani states: "There is no concept of *Raf'i Qalam* on any specific day, and Muslims must avoid division and should completely refrain from anything that undermines the dignity of the faith." Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi also comments: "First: We do not have any narration titled *Raf'i Qalam* during those specific days in credible sources. Secondly: Even if such a narration existed, it is contrary to the Quran and the Sunnah, and such a narration is not acceptable; sin and wrongdoing are not permissible at any time, as well as vile speech and other disgraceful acts. Thirdly: Embracing (*Tawallā*) and distancing (*Tabarrī*) in matters have correct paths, not these misguided ones." (cf. *ibid*: 106-108)

On the other hand, the Supreme Leader elaborates on this issue, saying: "Some, in the name of pleasing the heart of Lady Fatimah (AS), engage in actions during these days that hinder the revolution—

a product of Lady Fatimah's (AS) struggle—from achieving recognition in the world... If today someone does something that enables the enemies of the revolution to find excuses, to bring materials here and there, and claim that the country you want to accept its revolution is this one, do you know what a catastrophe will occur? Some are doing this in the name of Lady Fatimah (AS), while Lady Fatimah (AS) is not pleased... One person... engages in actions to please Lady Fatimah (AS) that ultimately brings joy to the enemies of Lady Fatimah (AS)." (ibid: 117-118)

The mentioned fatwas indicate that Shi'a scholars and authorities, in their criticism of the "*Raf'i Qalam*," have not only focused on the weakness of the narration's chain and text but have also paid attention to its conflict with Islamic unity.

#### **5.4.5. Lack of Connection between the Content of the Narration and the Principle of "Tabarrī"**

"*Tabarrī*," derived from the root "*Bara'a*," in language means distancing oneself and being free from anything unpleasant and coercive (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 121). In Islamic terminology, it is one of the branches of faith in the Shi'a doctrine, which is always considered alongside the principle of "*Tawallā*" and is rooted in the concept of Imamāt, with foundations in the Quran and Islamic traditions. "*Tawallā*" refers to loving, affirming, obeying, and accepting the guardianship of God, the Prophet (PBUH), and the Imams (AS). "*Tabarrī*," on the other hand, means to dissociate oneself and distance oneself from falsehood, tyranny, and, in general, to

express disapproval of the enemies of God and the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) (cf. Javadi Amoli, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 7-8). In some traditions, expressing *Tabarrī* from the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt is declared a condition for accepting *Tawallā*. For example, in a prophetic hadith addressed to Imam Ali (AS), it is stated: "*Inna Walāyatuka lā Tuqbalu illā bil Barā'ati min A'dā'il A'immati min Wuldik.*" (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 27, 63) Based on this, *Tabarrī* holds greater significance.

However, whenever the expression of *Tabarrī* leads to the creation of discord among Muslims and endangers the lives of Shia believers—especially if it brings disrepute to the faith associated with the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)—the declaration of disavowal becomes impermissible; as God states in this context: "*Lā Yattakhidhi Mu'minūnal Kāfirīna Awliyā'a min dūnil Mu'minīna wa man Yaf'al Dhālika fa Laysa minallāhi fī Shay'in illā an Tattaqū minhum Tuqātan wa Yuḥadhdhdhirukumullāhu Nafsahū.*" (Āli 'Imrān: 38)

Furthermore, among the conditions for true "*Tawallā*" and "*Tabarrī*" are the practical emulation of the friends of God and the active rejection of their enemies. This means that *Tawallā* and *Tabarrī* can only effectuate in completeness of faith and divine knowledge when a person takes the friends of God and the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) as role models, emulates them, cultivates their virtues and perfections within themselves, recognizes the vices of their enemies, and distances themselves from them (Javadi Amoli, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 9). In this regard, *Tabarrī* takes on a practical aspect.

However, a form of verbal *Tabarrī* is also conceivable, which differs significantly from cursing and abusive language. Abusiveness



contradicts the Quran, as God forbids even insulting the idols of disbelievers (al-An‘ām: 108). The conduct of the impeccable Imams (AS) has always been such that they never resorted to cursing (Ibn Athīr Jazarī, 1974 AD/1367 AH: 1, 185), and they considered insults as a source of enmity (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 2, 360). For this reason, those who engage in cursing and abusive language are deemed detestable in the divine court (ibid: 2, 325).

Therefore, it is clear that there is no necessity for the performance of the obligations of "*Tawallā*" and "*Tabarrī*" to be lifted from everyone for three consecutive days. Hence, the obligation to practice the principle of *Tabarrī* cannot serve as a criterion or evidence for the acceptance of the narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī‘*."

## Conclusion

Following a critical analysis and evaluation of the sources, isnad (chain of narration), and content of the narration regarding the "*Ninth of Rabī‘*," the following results have been obtained:

1) The narration of the "*Ninth of Rabī‘*" lacks credible historical background in Shi‘a sources, with its references ultimately tracing back to the sixth century. It is only found in later sources such as "*Miṣbāḥ al-Anwār*," "*Zawā‘id al-Fawāid*," "*al-Muḥtaḍar*," "*al-Anwār al-Nu‘mānīyyah*," and "*Biḥār al-Anwār*."

2) In fact, the primary source of this narration is a book belonging to the *Ghulāt* (extreme sect) of the Nusayriyyah called "*Majmū‘ al-A‘yād*," authored by *Ṭabarānī* in the fifth century AH, which seems to have entered Shi‘a sources from there.

3) All the chains of narration for this narration are broken (*Mursal*) and reported in an unusual manner, with the narrators' succession being disjointed.

4) The names of all the main narrators are either unknown or have undergone distortion and corruption. In the *Rijālī* sources, only the credibility of two of the early narrators—*Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Qummī* and *Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān*—has been mentioned, while the other individuals recorded in the *isnad* of this narration are unknown and not listed in Shi‘a *Rijālī* Books.

5) The central issue in the text of the narration is "*Raf‘i Qalam*," meaning the lifting of duties from everyone, which essentially reflects the endorsement and promotion of libertinism, severely contradicting the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the impeccable Imams (AS), as the Quran clearly states the perpetual obligation of human beings.

6) This narration also conflicts with well-established historical events in Islamic history regarding the assassination of the second caliph on the ninth of *Rabī‘ al-Awwal*, while all historians unanimously agree that this incident occurred in late (26) *Dhul Ḥijjah* of the 23rd year of *Hijra*.

7) Additionally, the *isnad* and text of this narration are rife with distortions, inconsistencies, and vulgarity—both in expression and in meaning.

8) One of the consequences of accepting this narration and acting upon its contents is the holding of gatherings titled "*Īd al-Zahrā*," which, under the pretext of declaring disavowal from the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), is filled with insults toward the leaders of Sunni

Islam. This contradicts Islamic teachings regarding the necessity of maintaining unity and cohesion among Muslims and also the obligation of observing precaution (*Taqīyya*), thus bearing no relation to the principle of "*Tabarrī*."

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