



Sanad and Semantic Analysis of the Narration "Envy Almost Overcomes Divine Decree"

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Abstract

In hadith sources, envy is introduced as one of the moral vices and deadly afflictions of the heart, regarded as the origin of many individual and social corruptions. The narration "Envy almost overcomes divine decree" (*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yaghliba al-Qadara*) reflects the profound negative impact of this trait on human destiny within the order of creation. The present study, adopting an analytical approach, examines the chain of transmission and the semantic implications of this narration and a similar hadith reported in two early sources, namely "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (AS)" and "*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*." The findings of the *Sanad* analysis indicate that the narration reported

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by Shaykh *Ṣadūq* is considered weak due to the presence of narrators whose status is unknown or neglected. However, the narration in "*Kāfī*," through its chain of transmission and the key term "*Yaghliba*," confirms the wording and meaning of the report. The semantic analysis also shows that the term *Qadar* (divine decree) in this narration does not refer to a deterministic and inevitable fate, but rather to conditional decrees that operate according to divine laws and the system of causes and effects. Within the framework of these divine laws, envy, by creating obstacles to the realization of favorable decrees and altering conditions and circumstances, can act as a barrier to the flow of divine mercy and ultimately lead human destiny toward ruin. Finally, by clarifying the threatening dimensions of envy, this study proposes approaches such as education based on trust in God and contentment, the institutionalization of gratitude, and avoidance of blameworthy social comparisons as means to preserve psychological and social security.

Keywords: Envy, *Yaghliba*, Divine Decree and Predestination, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*, *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, Sanad Analysis, Semantic Analysis.

Introduction

Envy is among the moral vices and destructive afflictions of the heart which, within the scope of religious texts, has been identified as the root of many social and individual corruptions. This trait not only disturbs the inner balance of the envious individual but also

of interpersonal tensions. The Holy Qur'an and the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), through serious warnings about the dangers of this spiritual disease, have counted it among the factors capable of directing human destiny toward destruction. Therefore, beyond being merely a simple behavioral trait, it is portrayed, at the level of causes and from the perspective of its human consequences, as a factor that appears to stand in opposition to divine will and the ontological laws governing existence.

Based on the statement of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) in the noble hadith "Envy almost overcomes divine decree," the destructive power of envy is described as being so great that it seems capable of prevailing over what is certain and operative within the cosmic order. Nevertheless, several fundamental questions arise concerning this narration, and answering them requires careful examination of both its chain of transmission and its meaning. First, the chain of transmission of this narration in early Shi'i sources, including "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*" and "*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*," contains differences that affect the scholarly credibility of each report. Second, 'What exactly is meant by *Qadar* in this narration?' 'Does it refer to a deterministic and inevitable fate, or to conditional decrees?' 'How can a moral and psychological trait exert influence upon, or even appear to prevail over, divine decree?'

A review of the research background indicates that previous studies have generally examined "Envy or divine decree and predestination" separately, and have been limited in establishing a clear and analytical relationship between these two concepts. What has largely remained overlooked is answering the fundamental question of how a behavioral

and ethical trait can interact with a divine matter and appear to prevail over it or precede it. Therefore, the main issue of this study is the precise examination of the Sanad and semantic dimensions of the aforementioned narration and the clarification of how envy may influence divine decrees within the framework of the system of causes and effects.

1. Literature Review

Existing studies can be categorized into two main axes: "Envy and divine decree and predestination." In the first axis, research efforts have mainly focused on examining the roots, dimensions, and consequences of envy. Barazesh (2015 AD/1394 SH) and Sohrabifar (2007 AD/1386 SH) analyzed the conceptual dimensions of envy in their works. Likewise, Mousavi (2022 AD/1401 SH) and Khoshbakht (2015 AD/1394 SH) examined the philosophy behind the prohibition of envy and its psychological consequences in the Qur'an and hadith. Furthermore, in interdisciplinary studies, an article analyzing the internal grounds of envy from the perspectives of Islam and psychology (2019 AD/1399 SH) attempted to explain the roots of this trait. Walizadeh et al., (2021 AD/1400 SH) also presented preventive strategies against envy based on Islamic sources; however, these strategies are largely educational and ethical in nature and do not address its ontological relationship with divine decree. Sadr Nabavi et al., (1983 AD/1362 SH), in a historical study, highlighted the destructive role of envy in historical events of early Islam.

134 In the second axis, studies have focused on the doctrinal and

exegetical dimensions of divine decree and predestination. Works such as the book by Bistouni et al., (2007 AD/1386 SH), Baghban Khatibi (2022 AD/1401 SH), Sangiyan (2011 AD/1390 SH), and Sedighe Mousavi (2015 AD/1394 SH) have explained the position of divine decree in religious sources and its influence on lifestyle. Likewise, Wahhabpour et al., (2024 AD/1403 SH), with emphasis on *Tafsīr al-Mizān*, have examined the concept of divine predestination.

Despite the fact that the aforementioned studies have each addressed, in one way or another, one of the two variables, "Envy or divine decree and predestination," they fall short in establishing a clear and analytical relationship between these two concepts. The existing literature is largely descriptive in nature and has generally examined envy as a moral illness and divine decree as a fixed divine matter in a separate manner. What has remained overlooked is answering the fundamental question of how a behavioral and ethical trait (envy) can interact with a deterministic and divine matter (divine decree and predestination) and, as stated in the noble narration "Envy almost precedes divine decree," even surpass it. Therefore, the principal gap lies in the absence of an analytical study that undertakes a deep examination of both the chain of transmission and the semantic dimensions of this narration, and clarifies the process through which envy may influence, alter, or even precede divine decree, an issue that has either been entirely neglected in previous studies or only mentioned in a general and passing manner.

2. Sanad Analysis

In order to evaluate the authenticity of the hadith reported in the noble **135**

book "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*," the narrators mentioned in Shaykh Ṣadūq's chain of transmission are examined in terms of their reliability:

"Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Yūsuf al-Baghdādīyy narrated to us, saying: 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Uyaynah narrated to us, saying: Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān al-Malīṭīyy narrated to us, saying: 'Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā narrated to us, saying: My father Mūsā ibn Ja'far narrated to me from his father, from his forefathers, from 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who said: The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "Envy almost precedes divine decree." (Ibn Bābawayh, 1958 AD/1378 AH: 2, 132)

This chain up to the impeccable Imams (AS) includes several narrators whose biographical status will be examined as follows:

1) Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Yūsuf Baghdādī

The first narrator in the chain is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Yūsuf Baghdādī, known as *Ibn Zurayq*. *Mu'jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth* introduces him as one of the teachers and shaykhs of Shaykh Ṣadūq (Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 15, 340). Nevertheless, it should be noted that some scholars of *Rijāl* have not explicitly authenticated him and have merely mentioned his name among the teachers of Ṣadūq. Therefore, the mere fact that Shaykh Ṣadūq narrates from his teachers does not in itself constitute proof of the narrator's reliability (unless supported by additional evidence). *Ibn Zurayq* appears in Ṣadūq's book *al-Amālī* in session 41, hadith 11, and is also mentioned as a narrator in the noble book *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*, in the second

2) ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Uyaynah

One of the Sanad-related difficulties in this chain is the presence of a narrator, such as ‘*Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Uyaynah*, whose name does not appear in the biographical sources of *Rijāl*, or whose name is mentioned without any discussion of his personality or reliability (Rabbani, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 190; Delbari, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 340). Based on the available investigations in *Rijāl* sources, the name of this narrator could not be found in the classical biographical works. This may be due to several reasons: the narrator may not have been widely known, his narrations may have been few, or information about him may have existed in sources that are no longer available (such as some lost works from the early centuries). From the perspective of the science of *Rijāl*, a chain containing such narrators cannot independently serve as a basis for certainty or definitive legal reliance, because the primary condition for accepting a narration is the reliability of the narrator. Although some scholars may rely on such reports when supported by other corroborating indications, in precise juridical and analytical discourse, the presence of such a gap in the chain prevents the narration from attaining definitive authenticity or probative authority.

3) Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Maḷṭīyy

According to hadith scholars, the name *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Maḷṭīyy* does not appear in the early classical books of *Rijāl* (Atarodi Qouchani, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 113). However, Muhammad Mahdi Najaf, a contemporary hadith researcher, in *Jāmi‘ li Ruwāt Aṣḥāb al-Imām* **137**

al-Riḍā (AS), considers him among the narrators of Imam *Abul Ḥasan (AS)* and states that *Ḥusayn ibn Sa'īd* transmitted narrations from him. This narrator has reported a single hadith from Imam *Riḍā (AS)*, which appears as hadith 75 in the book "Faith and Disbelief" in *Musnad al-Riḍā (AS)* (Najaf, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 184).

Regarding acting upon the narration of a transmitter whose name does not appear in the books of *Rijāl*, or about whom no statement has been made concerning his methodology, beliefs, or character (a neglected narrator, *Muḥmal*), there exists scholarly disagreement. *Ibn Dāwūd Ḥillī* held that it is permissible to act upon such narrations and therefore listed such narrators in the first section of his biographical work. In contrast, Allamah *Ḥillī* regarded neglect as an indication of weakness and did not act upon such reports (Mousavi Ameli, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 182). Likewise, a narration in whose chain there is a narrator about whom no praise or criticism has been transmitted, rather, whose status has been explicitly described as unknown, is generally not considered reliable, because the explicit designation of "Unknown" is regarded as a form of criticism. Explicit statements by scholars concerning a narrator's unknown status lead to weakness; however, the mere absence of a narrator's name in *Rijāl* works does not automatically prove his weakness. For this reason, a jurist must investigate the likely sources and contexts in which information about the narrator may appear. This includes examining the layers of transmission chains, *Mashākhāt*, permissions, hadith collections, biographies, historical works, and genealogical records in order to determine his reliability. Nevertheless,

138 according to some jurists (Shahīd Thānī, n.d.: 7, 340; Mousavi Ameli,

1989 AD/1410 AH: 6, 83, 87, 52 and 77), mere ignorance of a narrator's status or his classification as *Muḥmal* may itself be sufficient to render the narrator weak.

Based on the *Rijāl* evaluations and the analysis of the chain of transmission of the narration in the noble book " *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*," the Sanad is considered weak in terms of *Rijāl* credibility and does not meet the necessary conditions for independent and separate reliance. This assessment is based on the status of the narrators and the structure of the chain as follows:

1) Strength of the chain (beginning of the Sanad)

The chain begins with *Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh Ṣadūq)*. He is among the greatest Shiʿi hadith scholars and jurists and holds a highly esteemed position in the accurate transmission of hadith. His reliability and scholarly stature are unanimously acknowledged among *Rijāl* scholars.

2) Main weakness (unknown status of narrators)

After *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, the chain reaches *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Yūsuf Baghdādī* (known as *Ibn Zurayq*). Although he is counted among the teachers of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, no explicit authentication of him is found in the authoritative Shiʿi *Rijāl* sources, and his status remains ambiguous (*Muḥmal*). This creates a break in the reliability of the chain.

Regarding the third narrator, *ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUyaynah*, no authentication, weakening, or biographical information concerning his life and character has been found. The absence of his name in the

authoritative *Rijāl* works places him among narrators whose status is unknown (*Majhūl al-Ḥāl* or *Majhūl al-ʿAyn*). The presence of such a narrator in the chain undermines its credibility and removes it from the level of reliable authority.

The fourth narrator, *al-Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān al-Malṭīyy*, is in a similar situation and has not been authenticated in the *Rijāl* sources.

Considering that the Sanad contains two neglected narrators (*Ibn Zurayq* and *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān*) and one narrator whose status is completely unknown (*ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUyaynah*), the chain is evaluated as **weak** according to the scholars of hadith methodology. The presence of an unknown narrator (explicit weakness) within the chain prevents this narration from being independently authoritative unless it is strengthened by additional evidence, such as agreement with other reliable sources or the widespread acceptance of the narration among scholars, an issue that will be discussed later.

Table 1. Sanad Analysis of the Narration "Envy Almost Precedes Divine Decree" (ʿUy ūn)

Row	Narrator	Rijāl Status	Final Result of Sanad
1	Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al Ḥusayn ibn Bābawayh (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Reliable (<i>thiqa</i>) and highly esteemed	Weak The presence of two neglected narrators and one narrator of unknown status undermines its credibility.
2	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn Yūsuf Baghdādī (Ibn	Neglected (ambiguous)	

Row	Narrator	Rijālī Status	Final Result of Sanad
	Zurayq)		
3	‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Uyaynah	Unknown status	
4	Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān al-Maṭṭīyy	Neglected / unknown	

3. Earlier Chain of the Hadith

In addition to the narration found in *‘Uyūn*, *Kulaynī* reports a hadith with a very similar theme in *Kāfī*, which chronologically and hierarchically precedes the work of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*:

"*‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm* from his father, from *al-Nawfalīyy*, from *al-Sukūnī*, from *Abū ‘Abd Allāh* (AS), who said: "The Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "Poverty almost becomes disbelief, and envy almost overcomes divine decree." (*Kulaynī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 2, 307)

This chain includes several narrators whose *Rijāl* evaluation is as follows:

1) ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm

He is considered one of the most important teachers of *Shaykh Kulaynī*. *Najāshī* describes him as "Reliable in hadith, precise, trustworthy, and possessing a sound doctrine." He transmitted numerous narrations and authored many books, demonstrating his mastery in the sciences of hadith and jurisprudence (*Najāshī*, 1945 AD/1365 SH: 260; *Ṭūsī*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 266). Moreover, the

reliable chain that *Shaykh Ṭūsī* provides for transmitting the books of *ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm*, containing major scholars such as *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and *Shaykh Mufīd*, further confirms his scholarly credibility (Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 266).

2) Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim Qummī

Another narrator in the chain is *Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim*, who holds an important position in the history of Shiʿi hadith. Both *Taqī al-Dīn Ḥillī* and *Najāshī* mention his Kufan origin and his later migration to the city of Qum (Ḥillī, 1922 AD/1342 AH: 20; Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 16). Concerning his teachers, *Kashshī* considers him a student of *Yūnus ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān*, one of the companions of Imam *Riḍā* (AS). However, *Najāshī* remarks that "There is some consideration regarding *Kashshī*'s statement." Despite this difference, *Rijāl* scholars generally agree that *Ibrāhīm* played a fundamental role in the transmission and dissemination of the hadith of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) (Ḥillī, 1922 AD/1342 AH: 20).

3) Ḥusayn ibn Zayd Nawfalī

Shaykh Ṭūsī, in his "*Fihrist*," refers to *Ḥusayn ibn Zayd Nawfalī* and confirms the existence of a book attributed to him. He records its transmission chain as follows: "A group of our companions transmitted it from *Abū al-Faḍl*, who narrated it from *Ibn Baṭṭa*, who in turn narrated it from *Aḥmad ibn Abī ʿAbd Allāh* (Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 152). This report indicates that the works of *Nawfalī*

circulated among Shi'i hadith scholars and that their transmission pathways were regarded as reliable. In some *Rijāl* manuscripts, an additional note appears clarifying his connection with the previous narrator in the chain, namely *al-Sukūnī*.

4) *Ismā'īl ibn Abī Ziyād Sukūnī*

The final narrator in this chain is *Ismā'īl ibn Abī Ziyād*, who is also known as *Shu'ayrī*. Both *Ṭūsī* and *Najāshī* refer to the existence of authored works by him, and *Ṭūsī* specifically mentions his "Large Book" and *al-Nawādir* (*Ṭūsī*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 33; *Najāshī*, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 26). However, the religious affiliation and hadith reliability of *Sukūnī* has been a subject of debate among scholars of *Rijāl*. Allamah *Ḥillī* explicitly identifies him as belonging to the *ʿĀmma* (the Sunni community) (*Ḥillī*, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 199). In Sunni *Rijāl* sources as well, he has been subjected to some of the harshest criticisms. *Dārquṭnī* accused him of lying (*Dhahabī*, 1962 AD/1382 AH: 1, 250). The severity of this criticism reaches its peak in the statements of scholars such as *Ibn Ḥibbān* and *ʿAsqalānī*, who referred to him as a "Deceitful Shaykh." (*Ibn Ḥibbān*, 1975 AD/1396 AH: 1, 129; *ʿAsqalānī*, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 1, 406; *ʿAsqalānī*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 107; *Mizzī*, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 3, 96; *Ibn ʿAdī*, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 510)

Among Sunni scholars, the evaluation of this narrator is uncertain, meaning that some considered him reliable while others weakened him (*ʿAsqalānī*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 249). These criticisms, **143**

especially accusations such as narrating *Munkar al-Ḥadīth* and that "They accused him of lying," may stem from the Shi'i content of his narrations, even if his Shi'i affiliation was not explicitly mentioned (Nūrī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 4, 160). However, this inference by Ḥājī Nūrī is based on the assumption that Sunni works do not refer to *Sukūnī*'s Shi'ism. A closer examination of Sunni sources, however, reveals indications of Shi'i inclinations attributed to him (ʿAsqalānī, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 1, 408). In contrast, within Shi'i sources the only accusation against *Sukūnī* is that he was a Sunni.

Considering the large number of narrations transmitted from him, if accusations such as being a liar had reasons other than his Shi'ism, Shi'i *Rijāl* authorities such as *Najāshī* and *Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī*, who were known for their strictness regarding fabricators and liars, would certainly have mentioned them.

Based on the detailed examination of the status of the five narrators, the Sanad of the narration, in terms of both structure and *Rijāl* evaluation, is considered reliable and therefore acceptable as evidence.

1) The Imami and reliable section

The beginning of the chain consists of a series of trustworthy Shi'i narrators. *Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī*, as the author and first narrator, occupies a highly esteemed position and is known for his exceptional precision in the science of hadith. After him come *ʿAlī ibn*

144 *Ibrāhīm* and his father *Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim*, both of whom are

endorsed by major *Rijāl* authorities such as al-Najāshī and *Shaykh Ṭūsī* and are recognized as reliable and trustworthy. Likewise, *Husayn ibn Zayd Nawfalī*, despite minor differences of opinion, is regarded in this chain as an acceptable narrator whose works are considered reliable. These four narrators form a strong chain that ensures the reliability of the transmission of the hadith close to its original source.

2) The non-Imami (Sunni) section

The final narrator in the chain is *Ismā'īl ibn Abī Ziyād Sukūnī*. According to explicit statements of *Rijāl* scholars, he belonged to the *Āmma* (followers of the Sunni school). In Shi'ī hadith methodology, a narration whose narrator is a reliable non-Imami narrator) is not considered invalid; rather, it is placed in the category of reliable. This means that the hadith is considered reliable in terms of its issuance and the accuracy of its transmission, even though the narrator's doctrinal reliability as an Imami Shi'ī is not established. It should also be noted that there are many disagreements among earlier and later hadith scholars regarding this narrator.

Given that all the narrators in this chain are regarded as trustworthy and reliable in transmission, and none are subject to explicit criticism or *Rijāl* corruption, the Sanad is considered to possess a high degree of authenticity. The general authentication of the chain by hadith authorities and the confirmation of the narrators' works further strengthen the conclusion that the aforementioned narration is reliable and can be relied upon.

Table 2. Sanad Analysis of the Narration "*Kāda al-Ḥasad an Yağhliba al-Qadar*" (*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*)

Row	Narrator	Rijāl Status	Final Result of Sanad
1	Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī	Reliable and the most trustworthy	Reliable All the narrators in the chain are trustworthy and reliable in transmitting hadith (whether Imami or non-Imami). The presence of a Sunni narrator at the end of the chain lowers the classification from correct to reliable, but it does not invalidate its reliability.
2	ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm Qummī	Reliable and precise	
3	Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim Qummī	Reliable; founder of Kufan hadith in Qum	
4	Ḥusayn ibn Zayd Nawfalī	Reliable / Acceptable	
5	Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Ziyād Sukūnī	Reliable Sunni narrator	

4. Examination of the Narrations and Hadith Sources in Later Works

A close review of hadith collections shows that this wording appears in Shi'i sources with **two distinct verbs**: "*Yağhliba*" (to overpower) and "*Yasbiqa*" (to outstrip).

1) Sources for the hadith "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yasbiqa al-Qadar*" (as transmitted from *ʿUyūn*)

146 Allamah *Majlisī*, in *Biḥār al-Anwār*, cites this narration in the chapter

on envy (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 70, 253), quoting it from *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā ‘alayhi al-salām*. It is also transmitted in *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn* (‘Arūsī Ḥuwayzī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 5, 722) and in *Tafsīr Kanz al-Daqa’iq wa Baḥr al-Gharā’ib* (Mashhadī, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 14, 550) under the commentary of the verse "And from the evil of the envier when he envies." (Surah al-Falaq)

2) Sources for the hadith "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yashbiqa al-Qadar*" (as transmitted from *al-Kāfi*)

Biḥār al-Anwār (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 70, 246) also cites this narration in the chapter on envy. Furthermore, in the chapter *Faḍl al-Faqr wa al-Fuqarā’* (ibid: 69, 29), he quotes it from *al-Amālī* of Shaykh Ṣadūq. In addition, Majlisī in *Mir’āt al-‘Uqūl*, Fayḍ in *al-Wāfi* and *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, and Ḥurr ‘Āmilī in *Wasā’il al-Shī’a* transmit the narration using *Kāfi*’s chain (Majlisī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 10, 165; Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 860; Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 5, 396; Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 15, 366).

Additionally, Allamah Baḥrānī in *al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an* (Baḥrānī, 1954 AD/1374 AH: 5, 812) and the author of *Safīnat al-Biḥār* (Qummī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 2, 175), under the entry "Envy," report it from *Kāfi*.

5. Distinguishing Features of the Two Narrations

A comparative examination of the two reports (from *Kāfi* and *‘Uyūn*) reveals substantial differences in both the *Sanad* chain and the wording, which can lead to divergent interpretive outcomes:

1) Difference in the *Sanad*

The chain in *Kāfī* is: "ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm from his father from Nawfalī from Sukūnī from Abū ʿAbdillāh (Imām Ṣādiq).

In this *Sanad*, the intermediary between Imam Ṣādiq (AS) and the Prophet (PBUH) is not mentioned; thus, the report is *Marfūʿ* (*Mursal*) from the Imam.

In contrast, the *ʿUyūn* version has a connected (*Musnad*) chain. Shaykh Ṣadūq transmits it with a long and "Sequential" *Sanad* from Imam Riḍā (AS), who reports it from his father Mūsā ibn Jaʿfar, from his forefathers, and finally from *Amīr al-Muʿminīn* ʿAlī (AS).

However, it must be emphasized that the *Musnad* nature of the *ʿUyūn* narration does not automatically grant it greater reliability than the *Kāfī* version. A weak *Musnad* report may be less reliable than a trustworthy *Mursal* one.

Therefore, a sound evaluation requires examining both the content and the narrators' status.

2) Difference in text and word of narration

The text in *Kāfī* has two sentences: "*Kāda al-Faqr an Yakūna Kufran, wa Kāda al-Ḥasad an Yaghliba al-Qadar.*"

Here, in discussing envy, the verb "*Yaghliba*" (to overpower) is used; meaning envy nearly overcomes or overshadows divine decree.

But the *ʿUyūn* version reads: "*Kāda al-Ḥasad an Yasbiqa al-Qadar.*"

This uses "*Yasbiqa*" (to get ahead of).

148 Thus, *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s wording portrays a warning about the rapid

impact of envy on human destiny and society, while *Kulaynī*'s version emphasizes its destructive force and dominance.

The preference of later hadith scholars for reporting the *Kāfī* version over others is explainable based on the principles of *Dirāyat al-Ḥadīth* and *Rijāl*: "Their preference stems from the stronger *Sanad* (reliable vs. weak) and the authoritative status of *Kāfī*."

Table 3. Comparative Analysis and Final Evaluation of the Two Narrations

Criterion	<i>Uyūn</i> Version (yasbiqa)	<i>Kāfī</i> Version (yaghliba)
Hadith wording	kāda al-Ḥasad an Yasbiqa al-Qadar	kāda al-Faqr an Yakūna Kufran wa Kāda al-Ḥasad an Yaghliba al-Qadar
Type of sanad	Musnad (connected)	Mursal (from Imam Ṣādiq without explicit intermediary to the Prophet)
Creditability of Sanad	Weak (due to unknown and unclassified narrators)	Reliable (all narrators reliable; final narrator is Sunni)
Later hadith scholars approach	Rarely cited with full Sanad; generally quoted without chain or as supporting evidence	Because of its stronger Sanad, it forms the basis of later juridical and exegetical reasoning

Criterion	<i>Uyūn</i> Version (yasbiqa)	<i>Kāfi</i> Version (yaghliba)
Reason for preference	—	(1) Stronger Sanad (reliable vs. weak) (2) The authoritative status and fame of <i>Kāfi</i> (3) The rigorous methodology of later scholars in rejecting weak reports

6. Semantic Analysis of the Hadith

A) Semantic study of the verb and root "*Kāda*"

The term "*Kāda*" in Arabic derives from a root meaning intention and determination, and in its verbal noun usage denotes attempting to do something or approaching its occurrence (Farrāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 5, 395).

The verb fundamentally conveys the meaning of near-occurrence (*Muqāraba*), such that "*Kāda Yaf'alu*" indicates that the act is on the verge of happening, though it has not yet occurred (Rāghib, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 729; Dār al-Mashriq, 2000: 1255; Ṭurayhī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 3, 138).

Additionally, some have mentioned the meaning of will, especially in the Qur'anic phrase "*Akādu Ukh'fihā*," (Ṭāhā: 15) interpreted as being close to revealing the secrets of the Resurrection or intending to

150 conceal them (Qarashī, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 6, 167).

B) Conceptual Analysis of Envy and Its Dimensions

In technical terminology, envy is defined as a blameworthy trait whose essence is the desire for the removal of another person's blessing, regardless of whether the envier wishes to possess that blessing for himself or not. This characteristic distinguishes envy from *Ghibṭah* (benign envy or emulation), which merely denotes the wish to possess a blessing similar to that of others (Ṭurayḥī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 3, 36).

Rāghib and other scholars emphasize that envy is not always limited to an internal psychological state; it may also be accompanied by effort and attempts to eliminate the blessing of the envied person or to transfer it to oneself. This is reflected in the Qur'anic verse, "And from the evil of the envier when he envies," which alludes to the practical and harmful actions of the envier (Rāghib, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 234).

From an etymological perspective, some lexicographers such as *Ibn A'rābī* traced the root of envy to the meaning of "Scraping" or "Peeling," comparing it to a tick that gnaws at and sucks the heart, an analogy illustrating the destructive and painful impact of this trait upon the human being (Ibn Manẓūr, n.d.: 3, 148).

Mullā Ṣāliḥ Māzandarānī, in his commentary on *Kāfī* and citing "*al-Nihāyah*," emphasizes that envy, defined as wishing for the disappearance of a blessing, is inherently reprehensible and forbidden, except in rare and specific circumstances, such as when a blessing in the hands of a disbeliever or a corrupt person becomes a source of temptation and corruption (Māzandarānī, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 9, 299).

The striking dimension of the present narration lies in its second part, which addresses the relationship between envy and the cosmic order. The phrase "*Kāda al-Hasadu an Yaghliba al-Qadar*" expresses a form of hyperbole regarding the destructive influence of envy upon the ordained order of the universe. Envy often drives its possessor toward actions that contradict the divine laws governing existence.

In hadith sources, several interpretations have been proposed for the meaning of the "Precedence" or "Dominance" of envy over divine decree, each illuminating a particular aspect of this tension. *Rāwandī* (2010 AD/1431 AH: 220) outlines three principal interpretations:

- 1) Envy may lead to the removal of the envied person's blessing, as if it has overcome his destined portion, for example, when the envier disrupts the envied person's life by destroying his wealth.
- 2) Envy may unexpectedly result in an increase in the envied person's blessings, thereby overriding his initial decree, where the envier inadvertently becomes the cause of the envied person's elevation in status.
- 3) Envy may cause the loss of the envier's own blessings, negatively affecting his own destiny and ordained share (Kulaynī, 1967 AD/1387 SH: 5, 638).

C) The Semantic Framework and Usage of "*Qadar*"

The root (*q-d-r*) in the Qur'an and in Arabic lexicography carries a multi-layered meaning revolving around the notions of ability, measurement, and determination.

152 In its first sense, "*Qadar*" denotes capability or power to perform

an action. When attributed to human beings, it signifies the possession of ability; when attributed to God, it implies the negation of incapacity and the affirmation of absolute power. An example is "*Qadīr*," one of the Divine Names, which signifies God's execution of matters according to wisdom without excess or deficiency (Rāghib, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 657; Qarashī, 1951 AD/1371 AH: 5, 246).

The term is also used in contrast to "*Basī*" (expansion), signifying restriction or scarcity. This meaning appears in the verse:

"He expands provision for whom He wills and restricts it," (al-Isrā': 30) which indicates the constriction of sustenance (Farāhīdī, 1978 AD/1409 AH: 5, 112).

The second and broader meaning of this root is determination and measurement, referring to God's determination of the quantity, timing, and qualities of things. Within this perspective, divine decree is of two types:

- A cosmic or ontological decree, referring to the creation of things according to their inherent nature and order (for example, the growth of a date palm from a date seed).
- The bestowal of capacity and potential upon created beings (Qarashī, 1951 AD/1371 AH: 5, 246; Rāghib, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 657).

This concept is reflected in numerous Qur'ānic verses such as: "Indeed, We created everything according to a measure (Qadar)," (al-Qamar: 49) and "So We determined [it], and excellent are We as determiners." (al-Mursalāt: 23)

These verses demonstrate the precise and wise order governing the universe.

Likewise, the verse "They did not appraise Allah with the appraisal due to Him" (al-An'ām: 91; al-Zumar: 67) refers to humanity's failure to recognize the true greatness and perfection of the Divine Essence (Ibn Fāris, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 5, 62).

Types of Divine Decree (Definitive and Non-definitive): Definitive decree refers to matters recorded in the Preserved Tablet that cannot be altered by human beings, such as the time of death or place of birth (Irbilī, 1961 AD/1381 AH: 1, 349).

In contrast, changeable decree refers to matters that may be altered through human actions, such as health, wealth, and success in life. The narration: "Supplication repels the decree even after it has been firmly established," while the Imam clasped his fingers together (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 2, 470), indicates that supplication can alter divine decree, particularly in cases where human beings employ positive actions alongside faith in God. The narration emphasizes that through supplication and effort, a person may exert a constructive influence upon his destiny.

D) Interpretation and Analysis of How Envy "Precedes" or "Overcomes" Divine Decree

Divine power is absolute; however, within the system of creation there exist divine laws (fixed laws of creation) that operate according to human actions and choices. A profound analysis of the hadith "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yaḡhliba al-Qadar*" (envy almost overcomes divine decree) and the examination of how envy confronts divine determination reveals

This narration unveils a frightening reality regarding the destructive power of the trait of envy, which can create a barrier against the flow of divine mercy and decree. An important question arises in this context: from a rational and analytical perspective, how can envy precede or overcome divine decree? In answering this question, several important points should be considered.

1) Envy as a barrier to the movement of divine mercy

Divine decree unfolds through causes and conditions. God has decreed mercy and blessing yet envy acts like a barrier that prevents this blessing from reaching the envier (and sometimes even the envied person). When someone harbors envy, he is in fact opposing God's *Qadar*, which includes the distribution of sustenance and blessings among His servants.

This idea is clarified in the statement of Imam 'Alī (AS): "The envier is angry with the divine decree." (Tamīmī Āmidī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 68)

The envier becomes resentful because God has granted a blessing to another person. This inner anger generates such a cloud of resentment and hostility that it obstructs the perception of truth and the reception of divine grace. Thus, envy "Precedes" decree in the sense that, before a good decree can be realized, it suffocates it at its inception.

In explaining the implication and deeper meaning of this narration, attention to the interpretations of major hadith scholars is instructive. *Fayḍ Kāshānī*, in explaining the phrase "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yaghliba al-Qadar*," writes:

"Perhaps what is meant by the dominance over decree is that which has been decreed of good for the envier and the envied."

In other words, the intended meaning may be the good destinies that God has recorded for parties, the envier and the envied, in the Preserved Tablet (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 860).

2) Envy as a preemptive destruction of the self

A sacred hadith states: "The envier is the enemy of My blessing..." (Daylamī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 129)

Through his envy, the envier effectively rises in opposition to God's blessing, because envy deprives him of the blessings of inner tranquility and sound reason. The precedence of envy over decree here means that a person, through his own choice, establishes upon himself a form of affliction and punishment that might not have been part of his destiny had he not made such a corrupt choice.

The envier burns himself with the fire within before the fire of destiny reaches him.

The Qur'an in several verses points to the destructive nature of envy and its effect on human destiny:

- Surah al-Baqarah: 109

"Many of the People of the Book wish that they could turn you back to disbelief after your faith, out of envy from themselves..."

This verse shows that envy can become so powerful that it attempts to alter the course of divine guidance and success that has been decreed, even though it ultimately results in harm to the enviers

- Surah al-Nisā': 54

"Or do they envy people for what Allah has given them of His bounty?"

This verse also points to the root of envy; denial of divine grace bestowed upon others.

3) Change in the "Effective Cause" and the "Obstacle"

In Islamic philosophy, the realization of an event (such as a decree) depends on the presence of the necessary conditions and the absence of obstacles. Envy functions as a powerful obstacle. God's decree intends human well-being and happiness, yet envy, by generating intense psychological stress and even physical illness, weakens the body's immune system.

In this case, envy (an internal factor) overcomes and precedes the decree of health (an external factor).

The mentality of envy consumes a person's spiritual energies in the effort to destroy others. Instead of using his existential capacities for self-development, the envious person wastes them. As stated in the saying: "Hatred arises from the intensity of envy." (Tamīmī Āmidī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 413)

This intense inner turmoil removes a person from balance and places him on a path that conflicts with the law of spiritual and moral development, which itself is a divine principle governing human existence.

4) Confrontation with "Caution"

The noble hadith "*al-Qadar Yaghlibu al-Ḥadhar*" (divine decree **157**

overcomes precaution) (Tamīmī Āmidī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 56) appears at first glance to contradict the hadith under discussion, but in reality it complements it.

The statement that decree overcomes precaution means that no matter how much a person attempts to avoid worldly misfortunes, if a divine decree has been written for his destiny, there is no escape from it. However, in the hadith "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu...*," the discussion concerns overcoming a decree of goodness or mercy. Envy is so dangerous that even if a benevolent decree exists for a person, envy may destroy it. In other words, while divine decree prevails over human precaution, human envy may precede the divine decree of good intended for one and bring about its destruction.

Moreover, human history is filled with lessons showing how envious individuals attempted to alter the course of divine destiny and sometimes succeeded in bringing themselves, or their societies and environments, into serious crises, destruction, or ruin. Historical examples of envy include the killing of Abel by Cain and the story of the brothers of Joseph.

The divine decree had determined that Abel would be favored because his offering was accepted. Cain's envy dominated him to such an extent that he destroyed not only his brother but also his own righteousness. Envy preceded the divine decree, which included the continuation of a righteous lineage, and innocent blood was shed (al-Mā'idah: 27-31).

Likewise, the envy and hostility of the Umayyads toward the status
158 and position of Imam 'Alī (AS) and his descendants led them to

challenge the divine decree established through the system of *Wilāyah* and Imamate by means of wars and sedition (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 295). By allowing envy to precede truth, they stained history with blood; yet ultimately divine decree triumphed over falsehood, and the names of the envious remained in history as symbols of injustice.

Accordingly, the hadith "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yaghliba al-Qadar*" serves as a warning to human beings that this vile trait can become a barrier against the benevolent decrees of God.

5) Envy as a Heart Disease with Material Manifestations

These narrations constitute a serious warning that envy is not merely an individual moral vice; it is also a factor capable of disturbing social harmony and placing a person in direct opposition to the divine will and decree.

Envy may manifest internally (through thoughts and mental imaginings) or externally (through attempts to eliminate the blessings of others). Internal envy is a hidden fire that burns the heart, whereas external envy leads to antisocial behavior and material destruction.

Its effects extend beyond the spiritual dimension and also appear in physical and bodily symptoms. Traditions describe the envier as suffering from constant sorrow, psychological distress, and even physical illnesses resulting from stress and inner anger (Tamīmī Āmidī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 46, 54, 108; idem, 1946 AD/1366 AH: 300-301). In reality, envy places a person's existential capital at risk of ruin and destruction.

7. Analysis of Findings

The present study, through an analytical approach, examined the chain

of transmission and the semantic implications of the narration "*Kāda al-Ḥasadu an Yaḡhliba al-Qadar*" in two early sources: "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (AS)*" and "*Uṣūl al-Kāfi*."

From the perspective of transmission analysis, a detailed examination of the narrators indicates that the chain in *Uyūn* is weak in terms of *Rijāl* evaluation, due to the presence of narrators whose status is ambiguous, unknown, or lacking explicit authentication. In contrast, the chain of transmission in *Kāfi* enjoys a stronger status. Although the final narrator (*Sukūnī*) belongs to the Sunni tradition and his sectarian affiliation has been debated among *Rijāl* scholars, all the preceding narrators are trustworthy and reliable. Consequently, the chain of *Kāfi* may be classified as reliable and suitable for citation, which explains why later hadith scholars have relied more frequently upon this version.

The narration in *Uyūn* employs the verb "*Yasbiqa*" presenting a warning image of the rapid and preemptive negative impact of envy upon human destiny. By contrast, the narration in *Kāfi* uses the verb "*Yaḡhliba*" emphasizing the destructive and overpowering force of envy.

The findings indicate that the term *Qadar* here does not refer to an absolute, deterministic decree in which humans play no role. Rather, it refers to conditional decrees that unfold according to divine laws and the network of causes and effects.

Furthermore, the manner in which envy affects divine decree can be analyzed from four perspectives:

- 1) Envy as a barrier to divine mercy. God has decreed mercy and

- forms a wall of resentment that blocks the reception of divine grace.
- 2) Envy as self-destructive precedence. The envier burns himself with the fire within before the calamities of destiny reach him.
 - 3) Envy as a disruption of causal conditions. In Islamic philosophy, the realization of events depends on the presence of proper conditions and the absence of obstacles. Envy creates intense psychological stress and physical illness, weakening the immune system and thus overcoming the decree of health.
 - 4) Complementarity with the hadith "*al-Qadar Yaghlibu al-Ḥadhar*." Although this hadith appears to contradict the narration under study, it actually complements it: "Divine decree prevails over human precaution, yet human envy may precede and destroy the divine decree of good intended for oneself."

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of analyzing the chain of transmission and the semantic implications of the narration "Envy almost overcomes divine decree." The findings indicate that envy, by creating obstacles in the path of the realization of benevolent decrees, can form a barrier against the flow of divine mercy and lead human destiny toward ruin. This does not imply a conflict between human will and the will of God; rather, it can be explained within the framework of the system of causes and conditions established in creation.

The root of this influence lies in the very nature and dimensions of envy. As a moral vice whose essence is the desire for the removal of

another person's blessing, envy wastes a person's existential energy and places him in opposition to the divine will. Therefore, envy is not merely a disease of the heart; it is also a factor capable of disturbing social harmony and diverting human beings from the path of perfection.

Education based on trust in God and contentment with divine decree, the institutionalization of gratitude for divine blessings, avoidance of blameworthy social comparisons, and strengthening belief in the just system of divine decree are among the strategies that can protect individuals from the harms of envy.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that envy, as a moral and spiritual affliction, can have profound effects on human destiny; therefore, serious attention to its prompt treatment is essential on the path of spiritual development.

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