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God



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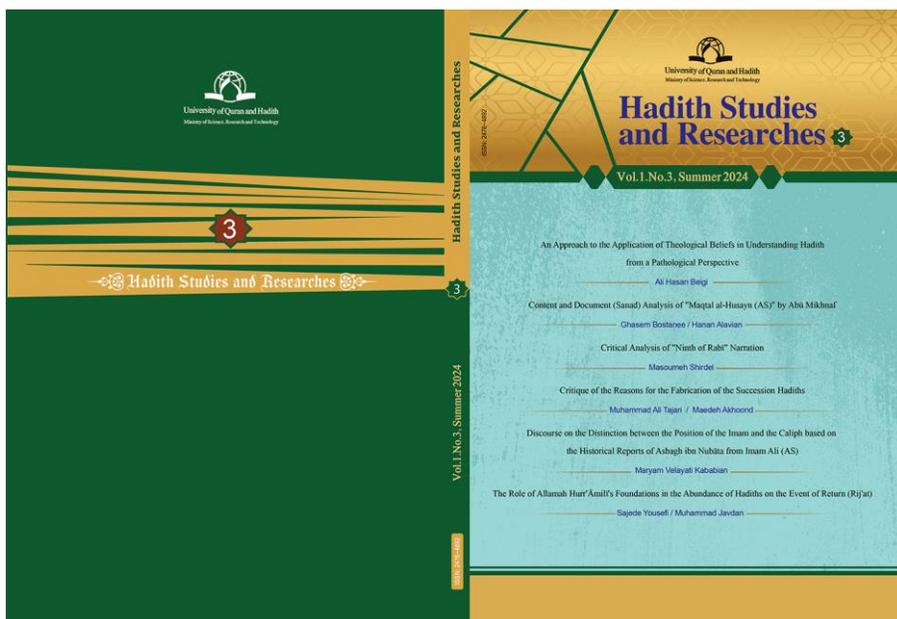


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# **An Approach to the Application of Theological Beliefs in Understanding Hadith from a Pathological Perspective**

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## **Abstract**

Understanding the intent of the speaker in any text, including Hadith, involves navigating through underlying assumptions and culminates in grasping the serious intent of the speaker. Theological beliefs are one of the most significant underlying assumptions that have a decisive impact on understanding the main intent of the Hadith speaker. On the other hand, among the various branches of Hadith studies, the field of "*Fiqh al-Hadith*" holds substantial importance. Theological beliefs have been a point of interest for researchers in the realm of *Fiqh al-Hadith* since ancient times. The present study aims to conceptualize the nature of this clue and the conditions under which it can be utilized in understanding Hadith. It is noteworthy that the use of theological beliefs in interpreting Hadith carries certain risks; if these risks are neglected, a methodical understanding of Hadith will not be achieved. Therefore, after examining the conditions for applying this clue in understanding Hadith, the associated drawbacks will

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also be addressed. The results indicated that by five specific conditions, theological beliefs can be cited as a connected non-verbal clue for understanding Hadith. Six significant drawbacks related to this sign have been identified and examined in this paper.

**Keywords:** Understanding Hadith, Clue, Theological Beliefs, Drawbacks.

## Introduction

Understanding Hadith begins with grasping the meaning of the text and concludes with comprehending the speaker's intent. In this process, contextual clues play an irreplaceable role. Moreover, to achieve a systematic understanding of Hadith, it is essential to investigate the principles and theological beliefs of scholars responsible for Hadith interpretation, as any understanding of any text or Hadith is based on underlying assumptions and principles. In other words, it is not possible to comprehend a text without underlying assumptions, and no scholar can be found who has interpreted a text devoid of those assumptions and theological beliefs. Among the underlying assumptions and principles of Hadith scholars, theological beliefs hold significant importance, acting as clue in this process. Consequently, it is crucial to define the limits and boundaries for the systematic use of theological beliefs in interpreting Hadith and to consider the drawbacks that Hadith researchers may encounter when utilizing this clue.

Although scholars and Hadith experts have utilized theological beliefs in understanding and critiquing Hadith in their jurisprudential and Hadith studies, a glance at jurisprudential books and Hadith commentaries such as Ma'ānil Akhbār, Rawḍatul Muttaqīn, Mir'āt al-

‘Uqūl, interpretation of Nahj al-Balāghah ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, interpretation of Nahj al-Balāghah ibn Maytham, Minhāj al-Barā‘ah, fī Zilāl Nahj al-Balāghah, interpretation of Muḥammad ‘Abduh on Nahj al-Balāghah, Payām Imām Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (AS), Maṣābīḥ al-Anwār fī Ḥall Mushkilāt al-Akḥbār, Faṭḥ al-Bārī, Irshād al-Sārī, al-Minhāj, al-Ḥadā’iq al-Nāḍirah, Majma‘ al-Fā’idah wa al-Burhān, Jawāhir al-Kalām, which all inspire admiration, serves as clue for the accuracy of this claim; yet, to date, there has been no writing that accurately addresses the conceptualization of theological beliefs, their application in understanding Hadith, and their pitfalls. This writing aims to precisely conceptualize theological beliefs and their range of application in Hadith understanding along with the associated pitfalls.

## 1. Background

Since no understanding of Hadith occurs without presuppositions and theological beliefs, the use of the aforementioned belief in understanding Hadith among Sunni people dates back to the first century. This is because a person asked Imam Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn (AS) what is meant by the word *Mawlā* in the Hadith of *Ghadīr*. The Imam replied: "This term in the Hadith of *Ghadīr* means Imam, and the Prophet (PBUH) introduced Imam Ali (AS) as the Imam after him." (Ṣadūq, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 160-161). Given that the questioner was Arabic-speaking, it is apparent that among the Sunni scholars, a meaning other than leader and Imam was presented based on the justice of the companions, prompting a person to inquire of Imam al-*Sajjād* (AS) regarding it. In the early third century, some Sunni scholars in the debate

of *Ma'mūn* presented the meaning of friend from the term *Mawlā* in the Hadith of *Ghadīr* based on the theological belief of the justice of the companions (Ibn 'Abd Rabbih Andalusī, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 4, 741). Additionally, *Jāhīz* in the third century also presented the meaning of friend from the word *Mawlā* in the Hadith of *Ghadīr* based on the theological belief of the justice of the companions (*Jāhīz*, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 145-146). In the fourth century, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* likewise approached the understanding of Hadith based on theological beliefs (*Ṣadūq*, 1951 AD/1371 AH: 84-85).

The conflict among Shia hadiths in the fourth and fifth centuries has been considered one of the theological doubts of Sunni scholars against the Shi'a (Delbari, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 60). This doubt occupied the minds of many Shia scholars to the extent that it has been claimed that very few hadiths can be found without several opposing hadiths existing against them (*Ṭūsī*, 1986 AD/1365 AH: 1, 2).

This issue led some Shia scholars to abandon the Shia faith! *Shaykh Ṭūsī*, in the fifth century, writes: "Some friends discussed opposing hadiths with me. They stated that very few hadiths can be found without several opposing hadiths. This led the opponents of Shi'ism to mock and use this as clue against the validity of the Shi'a religion; I heard from my teacher, *Shaykh Mufīd*, that *Abul Ḥusayn Hārūnī*<sup>1</sup>,

1. The Hārūnī brothers (Abul Ḥusayn and Abū Ṭālib) were raised in an Imamite family, and both were previously adherents of Imamism. As it is stated, they abandoned the Imamite sect under the influence of their teacher Abul-'Abbās and adopted the Zaydi sect. They were, in fact, considered among the most important references for the Zaydi sect (Ansari, 2012 AD/1391 SH, Library, Museum, and Documentation Center of the Islamic Consultative Assembly website).

upon observing the conflict among hadiths, abandoned the Imamite faith (Ṭūsī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 1, 2). In this context, *Shaykh Ṭūsī* undertook the writing of "*al-Istibṣār*" to address the contradictions among hadiths. Following him, jurists and hadith scholars from both Shia and Sunni backgrounds also engaged in understanding hadith based on theological beliefs.

## 2. Method

The author's method in this writing is descriptive-analytical. The explanation is that the author, considering the application of theological beliefs among scholars and researchers of hadith and theology, undertakes a conceptual analysis of theological beliefs and gathers instances of the application of these beliefs as clue for understanding hadith among hadith researchers, presenting their shortcomings using the same approach of paying attention to the application instances.

## 3. Theological Beliefs Conceptology

Although theological beliefs are not mentioned in the lexicons, with reflection and careful examination of their applications, theological beliefs can be defined as follows: "Theological beliefs refer to those beliefs that the believer is certain of, with their origins found in reason, scripture, or optimism. Furthermore, theological beliefs pertain to the realm of thought and intellect, not to the realm of actions and rituals. Beliefs such as the impeccability of the Prophet, the knowledge of the Imam, the non-alterability of the Qur'an, and the justice of the companions, among others, fall into this category. "

### 3.1. Types of Influence of Theological Beliefs on the Text of Hadith

It appears that theological beliefs have various effects on the text of hadith. Below are some of these effects.

#### 3.1.1. Modification of the Text of Hadith

One of the effects of theological beliefs on hadith is the modification of its text. For example, impeccability is one of the theological beliefs of the Imamites. They believe that the Imam (AS) possesses this characteristic (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1371 AH: 29; Sayyid Murtaḍā, 1987 AD/1405 AH: 2, 367; Ḥillī, n.d.: 1, 242); however, sometimes the theological belief of the narrator regarding the non-necessity of impeccability for the Imam has led to the omission of this characteristic. Professor Ali Akbar Ghaffari points out an important issue regarding the hadith of *Ibn Faḍḍāl* from Imam Riḍā (AS): "The Imam has signs that he is the most knowledgeable of people and..." (Şadūq, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 1, 438-440) He writes: "In this hadith, the greatest and most important sign of the Imam, which is agreed upon by the Imamites, has not been explicitly mentioned and has apparently been omitted. This status is impeccability, which some Shia sects, like the Fatahites and Jarudites, do not accept, and *Ibn Faḍḍāl* was also a follower of the Fatahite sect." (ibid.)

#### 3.1.2. Assessment and Critique of Hadith

The assessment and critique of hadith based on theological beliefs have always been of interest to hadith researchers. They have critiqued hadith based on theological beliefs. Below are two instances:

1) When Lady Fatimah (AS) delivered a sermon in front of the people and *Abū Bakr* and later returned home to complain to Imam Ali (AS), saying: "O! Son of *Abū Ṭālib*, you are sitting in the corner of the house as if you were a child hiding in the womb! The Commander of the Faithful replied: Woe to you, I have never been weak or timid in my faith, and I have not erred within the limits of my power and ability." (Ibn Shahr Āshūb, n.d.: 2, 208)

Dr. Shahidi, based on the impeccability of Lady Fatimah (AS) and Imam Ali (AS), does not accept the mentioned hadith and writes: "*Ibn Shahr Āshūb* has mentioned this dialogue without citing a chain of transmission in his *Manāqib*. Did such a conversation really take place between the daughter of the Prophet (AS) and the Commander of the Faithful? How is such a thing possible? The Shia attributes impeccability to these two great figures." (Shahidi, 2016 AD/1394 SH: 143)

2) After the betrayal of *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr* and their takeover of Basra, Imam Ali (AS) set out towards Basra. Imam *Ḥasan* objected to Imam Ali (AS) in *Rabadhah*, saying that when the people besieged *Uthmān*, he instructed you to distance yourself from them, but you did not comply. Now, when *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr* have opposed you, I ask you: "An lā Tatba‘ahumā wa Tada‘humā;" do not engage with *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr* and do not go to Iraq (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 52). This hadith (Imam *Ḥasan*'s objection to Imam Ali) is not acceptable due to its weak chain of transmission and its inconsistency with the theological principles of Imami beliefs (the impeccability of the Imam). Consequently, the aforementioned hadith is not accepted (Mohseni, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 2, 49-50).

### 3.1.3. Understanding Hadith

Another significant effect that theological beliefs have on hadith is their impact on understanding the hadith, which will be addressed later.

## 4. Theological Beliefs and Their Scope

As mentioned, non-verbal (*Lubbī* or rational) indications used to understand the speaker's intent possess a broad scope. This is because the speaker does not speak in a vacuum and often omits many words and phrases based on clues. These kinds of indications are all connected non-verbal indicators: The time and place of the speaker and listener, the speech issuance atmosphere, context, the cultural background at the time of speech issuance, the characteristics of the speaker, the states and personality of the speaker and audience, rational arguments, scientific truths, etc. It is also not the case that non-verbal indicators have a narrower scope than verbal indicators, as one author has stated (Masoudi, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 112). It now seems that among these indicators, theological beliefs also function as substantive (non-verbal) indications through which hadith researchers comprehend the speaker's intent.

## 5. Negative Indicators and Theological Beliefs

Theological beliefs are often considered negative indicators in the understanding of hadith. In other words, the hadith researcher refers to and considers theological beliefs to realize that the apparent meaning of the hadith is not the intended meaning of the speaker. For example, a hadith that speaks of the necessity of being Hashemite for the position of Imamate (Raḍī, n.d.: 201) is not the intended meaning for a Sunni researcher; because, on one hand, they accept the validity of this

text, and on the other hand, their theological belief in the justice of the companions and the legitimacy of the rule of the first, second, and third caliphs contradicts this apparent meaning.

## **6. Conditions for Theological Beliefs to be Indicative**

Theological beliefs can only qualify as indicators for understanding the speaker's intent if they meet the following five conditions:

### **A) Certainty of Theological Beliefs**

A careful examination of theological, exegetical, and hadith literature reveals that theological beliefs can be divided into two categories:

- A) Certainty-based theological beliefs;
- B) Non-certainty-based theological beliefs.

It seems that among these two categories, only certainty-based theological beliefs qualify as indicators for understanding the speaker's intent; otherwise, one cannot disregard the apparent meaning of the speaker's words. Further clarification will follow under the title "Types of Theological Beliefs."

### **B) Solid Foundation of Theological Beliefs**

The solidity of the foundation of theological beliefs is an important condition that researchers must pay attention to; because not every belief with any foundation qualifies as an indicator. For example, can superstitious beliefs such as the unluckiness of the number thirteen or the necessity to wait after sneezing be used as indicators? Further discussion will be provided under "Foundations and Types of Theological Beliefs."

### **C) Connection Between the Indicator (Theological Belief) and the Subject of the Indicator (Sentence or Speech)**

The third condition, which is often overlooked, is this connection; in the absence of such a connection, one cannot disregard the apparent meaning of the words, and ultimately, the words will remain ambiguous. For example, as we will point out, some Sunni scholars have interpreted the "*Hadith al-Arīkah*" based on their theological belief in the justice of the companions, describing wealthy individuals sitting on thrones and neglecting the pursuit of knowledge. This interpretation has no connection with the hadith in question and resembles personal interpretation rather than systematic exegetical reasoning.

### **D) Absence of Conflict Between Clues**

Theological beliefs serve as indicators for understanding the speaker's intent only when they do not conflict with other clues. For example, in the Hadith of *Ghadīr*, interpreting *Mawlā* based on the theological belief of justice of the companions is not acceptable because it conflicts with other indicators such as the context in which the hadith was issued, the status of the speaker, the number of listeners, the geographical location of the Hadith of *Ghadīr*, and so forth. Furthermore, the Hadith of *Arīkah*, assuming the suitability of the theological belief in justice of the companions as an indicator, conflicts with another indicator (the statement of *Abū Bakr*, which we will discuss later); thus, the aforementioned interpretation is not acceptable.

### **E) Reliance on Certainty of Indicators**

**12** In the science of principles of jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*), non-

verbal indicators such as the consensus of the rational people, consensus, Fatwa reputation, legal *Sīrah*, etc., are referred to as non-verbal (*Lubbī*) evidence. Since non-verbal evidence is not analogous to words, it lacks generality and comprehensiveness. Consequently, only the certain aspects of non-verbal evidence should be considered (Fayyād, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 3, 190; Bihsūdī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 461; Ḥakīm, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 2, 89; and Subḥānī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 3, 137). Given that theological beliefs are connected and non-verbal indicators, one should suffice with the certainty of these beliefs; therefore, the generalities of theological beliefs serve as indicators for understanding.

## 7. Origin of Theological Beliefs

As referenced, theological beliefs are considered connected non-verbal indicators. On the other hand, not every theological belief qualifies to be an indicator; a belief only qualifies if it has sufficient validity so that the audience can set aside the apparent meaning of the text and ascribe a different meaning to the speaker. Thus, attention must be paid to the origin of theological beliefs to differentiate those that are suitable as indicators from those that lack such suitability.

Currently, it appears that the sources and origins of theological beliefs are as follows:

1) **Reason:** Linguistic scholars consider reason as the means of prevention and obstruction (Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 11, 458); however, the intended meaning of reason in hadith, which is not entirely foreign to this definition, refers to the innate power by which

humans discern right from wrong and benefit from harm (Majlisī, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 1, 99). Sometimes, the origin of certain theological beliefs such as the unity of God, the impeccability of the Prophet, and so forth, is reason (1986 AD/1407 AH: 280 and 349; Fāḍil Miqdā, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 151-154 and 245). In other words, rational arguments have been established for each of these beliefs.

**2) Narration (Naql):** One of the significant origins of theological beliefs is narration, which can be categorized into valid and invalid narration. Valid narration refers to the Quran and authentic hadiths that all Muslims agree upon their credibility. Sometimes the source of certain theological beliefs, such as the impeccability of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the immediate succession of Imam Ali (AS), and the knowledge of Imam Ṣādiq (AS), is valid narration (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 83; Fāḍil Miqdā: 2001 AD/1380 SH: 335-342; Amīnī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 1, 165; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 2, 138-144; Muẓaffar, n.d.: 63-76). Invalid narration refers to fabricated or weak hadiths that some theological beliefs are based on. For instance, some individuals assert the distortion of the Quran based on certain narrations (Mālik ibn Anas, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 2, 842; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, n.d.: 5, 132; Bukhārī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 8, 26; Muslim, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 4, 373; 6, 252; and Ṭabrisī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 1, 598), which most interpreters, theologians, and scholars of hadith and Rijāl have stated to be baseless. As a result, the theological belief formed based on it is rejected (Khu'ī, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 226; Muẓaffar, n.d.: 59; Ma'rifat, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 83 and 60; Subḥānī, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 142-143).

**3) Optimism or Good Opinion of Certain Individuals:** Sometimes, the origin of a verbal belief is an overly optimistic view of certain individuals, which may arise from events occurring in society. The victories and actions of rulers play a significant role in this and have led to the establishment of theological beliefs such as the "Justice of the Companions." (Hasan Beigi, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 107-111)

At times, optimism towards individuals is influenced by other schools of thought and religions; for example, some Muslims have been influenced by Judaism and Christianity in their beliefs regarding the immortality of Imam Ali (AS), Muḥammad Ḥanafīyya, Imam Ḥusayn (AS), and others (Dhahabī, 1962 AD/1382 AH: 4, 98-99; Ṭūsī, 1969 AD/1348 SH: 316; Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 203; Bible, Exodus, 21:13).

## **8. Types of Theological Beliefs**

Due to the diversity of theological beliefs, a researcher must pay attention to these types when understanding hadith, because, as previously mentioned, not all theological beliefs have equal strength against the apparent speech. By examining theological and narrative texts, theological beliefs can be divided into two categories:

1) Certain theological beliefs, such as the existence of God, the impeccability of the Prophet (PBUH), the knowledge of the Imam (AS), and so on (Ḥillī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 349 and 280; Fāḍil Miqdād, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 151-154 and 245; Muḥaffar, n.d.: 63-76).

2) Uncertain or specific theological beliefs, such as the impeccability of Imam *Ali Akbar* (AS), *‘Abbās* (AS), *Zaynab* (AS), *Sukayna* (AS),

and the impeccability of the four deputies (Ostadi, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 37, 9; Sanqari Haeri, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 59 and 68; Mojtahidi Sistani, n.d.: 647).

In other words, theological beliefs can be categorized into two groups: Some of these beliefs are such that all or most experts and theologians agree on their correctness, while others are presented by non-experts in religious issues or some theologians. In understanding hadith, the theological belief that is criteria is one that, in addition to the relationship between the indications and their subjects, has the absence of conflict among the indications and suffices with the certain extent of the indications; it should also meet two additional conditions: Firstly, all or most theologians should agree on its correctness or, if some theologians have presented it, it should have sufficient strength; secondly, its origin should be either rational or based on credible transmission.

## **9. Understanding Hadith in Light of Theological Beliefs**

Sometimes, hadith researchers utilize theological beliefs to grasp the intended meaning of the hadith speaker, and we will mention a few examples below:

### **9.1. Impeccability and Knowledge of the Imam (AS):**

In the previous section, we mentioned that Shi'a believers have always considered impeccability and knowledge as certain characteristics of the Imam (AS). Accordingly, when confronted with conflicting hadiths that challenge these two characteristics through implication (mistakes and contradictions in the statements of the Imam), they

resort to various solutions, one of which is the justification, interpretation, and manipulation of the apparent text of the hadith. Below are a few examples of this.

A) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Receiving payment in exchange for selling excreta is *Ḥarām* (forbidden)." (Ṭūsī, n.d.: 3, 56 and Ṭūsī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 6, 272-273)

Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Receiving payment for excreta is permissible." (ibid.)

As can be observed, the conflict between these two hadiths is clear; Shaykh *Ṭūsī*, by relying on the implications of the impeccability and knowledge of the Imam (the absence of mistakes and contradictions in the Imam's statements), has sought to resolve the contradiction in the speeches of the Imam (AS) and believed that the solution lies in interpreting the apparent wording of the Imam's statements. He writes that the intended meaning of excreta in the first narration refers to human excreta; consequently, there is no contradiction between the two hadiths, and otherwise, there would indeed be a conflict between them (ibid.).

B) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Do not perform the obligatory prayer inside the Kaaba." (ibid: 1, 243; ibid: 5, 279)

One of the two Imams, either Imam *Bāqir* (AS) or Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS), said: "It is not proper to perform the obligatory prayer inside the Kaaba." (ibid.)

A narrator told Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS): "I was inside the Kaaba when the time for the obligatory prayer came. Should I pray right there? He replied: Pray your prayer there." (ibid.)

It now seems that there is a contradiction between the third hadith and the first and second hadiths; therefore, *Shaykh Ṭūsī*, based on the aforementioned theological beliefs, attempts to resolve the contradiction between them. He writes: "The third hadith does not conflict with the first two hadiths because the third hadith can be understood as a state of necessity." (ibid: 1, 243; ibid: 5, 279)

C) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Vomiting does not invalidate ablution." (ibid: 1, 83)

Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Nosebleeds, vomiting, and the act of using a toothpick such that it causes bleeding, if done intentionally, invalidate the ablution, and otherwise, ablution does not become invalid." (ibid.)

As it can be seen, these two hadiths are contradictory; therefore, *Shaykh Ṭūsī* considers two solutions for resolving the contradiction: Interpreting the second narration as an expression of precaution regarding its alignment with the fatwa of some Sunnis; or interpreting the second narration as a recommendation (ibid.).

D) I asked Imam *Bāqir* (AS) about wiping the feet during ablution. He said: "This is a command that Gabriel brought to the Prophet (PBUH)." (ibid.)

Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Sometimes a person prays for sixty or seventy years; yet Allah does not accept even one prayer from them. Someone asked: How is this possible? He replied: He washes his feet during ablution whereas Allah has commanded to wipe the feet." (ibid.)

*‘Ammār ibn Mūsā* asked Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS): "A person performs ablution but washes his feet instead of wiping them. What is the ruling on this action? He replied: Washing the feet is sufficient." (ibid: 65)

Now, the recent narration is in conflict with the previous narrations. *Shaykh Ṭūsī* writes: "The recent narration can be interpreted as an expression of precaution (*Taqīyyah*)."<sup>1</sup> (ibid.)

E) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "When an old woman and an old man commit adultery, they are first struck with a hundred lashes and then stoned."<sup>2</sup> (ibid: 4, 201)

Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "Stoning is the great punishment of God, and lashes are His minor punishment. Therefore, if a married person commits adultery, they will only be stoned."<sup>3</sup> (Ṭūsī, n.d.: 4, 201-202)

As can be seen, the content of the second hadith contradicts the first hadith; because the second hadith states that a married person, whether old or young, will be stoned, whereas the first hadith indicated that if an old man and woman commit adultery, they will first be lashed and then stoned.

*Shaykh Ṭūsī* proposes two solutions to resolve the contradiction:

1) Since the fatwa of the Sunni scholars is that both lashes and stoning apply to a married adulterer, regardless of age, we interpret the second narration as a precaution (ibid.).

2) The term "Married Adulterer" in the second hadith does not refer to an old man and woman; rather, it refers to someone who is in their youth (ibid.).

It is worth mentioning that interpreting and justification a hadith based on the theological belief in the knowledge of the Imam (AS) is not limited to instances of hadith conflict; rather, sometimes a hadith is interpreted without the presence of a conflicting narration, based on theological beliefs. Consider the following two examples:

A) Imam *Husayn* (AS), during his trip to Iraq, said to *Farazdaq*: "If God's decree happens as we desire, we will praise Him for the blessings He has bestowed upon us." (Ṭabarī, n.d.: 4, 290; Mufīd, n.d.: 2, 67; Ibn Kathīr, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 8, 180)

One researcher, who believes that Imam *Husayn* (AS) had knowledge of his fate and that his motivation for rising up was to attain the blessing of martyrdom, writes about this hadith: "It can be said that the alignment of this general response with the martyrdom of that noble figure, which was his ultimate desire and the true love of his heart, is the most apparent and clear." (Salehi Najaf Abadi, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 129)

B) Ali (AS) said: "Alayka La‘natullāh al-Lā‘nīn Ḥā’ik ibn Ḥā’ik!" Ali (AS) said to *Ash‘ath ibn Qays*: "God's curse and the curse of the cursers be upon you, the weaver of the son of the weaver!" (Sayyid Raḍī, n.d.: Sermon 19, p. 61)

It appears that this translation, which many translators of *Nahj al-Balāghah* have performed, does not align with the history and family background of *Ash‘ath* and his father, as they were leaders of the large *Kinda* tribe (Mas‘ūdī, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 216). On the other hand, one of the theological beliefs of Shi'ism is the knowledge of the Imam (AS), and he does not speak contrary to reality; thus Dr. Shahidi has suggested that "*Ḥā’ik*" may have originated from the root "*H Y k*," meaning arrogant (Shahidi, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 454), and this interpretation aligns with historical personality and the behaviors attributed to *Ash‘ath* (Mas‘ūdī, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 216).

## 9.2. Limitations of the Imam's (AS) Knowledge

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Some Shi‘a scholars who believe in the limitations of the Imam's (AS)

knowledge (Salehi Najaf Abadi, n.d.: 248) attempt to justify and manipulate the apparent meaning of narrations that are inconsistent with this belief; for example, Imam *Husayn* (AS) writes in a letter to the *Banī Hāshim*: "However, whoever joins me will be martyred, and whoever does not join me will not see goodness and prosperity." (Ibn Qūlawayh, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 75)

Since this narration indicates Imam *Husayn's* (AS) awareness of his own fate, which is incompatible with the author's theological belief that the Imam (AS) lacks knowledge of his outcome, he interprets the mentioned narration as follows: "Whoever joins me is exposed to martyrdom." (Salehi Najaf Abadi, n.d.: 426; also cf. 2005 AD/1384 SH: 96)

### **9.3. Lack of Distortion in the Qur'an**

One of the well-known theological beliefs among Shi'a scholars is the lack of distortion in the Qur'an (1975 AD/1395 AH: 200-201; 1999 AD/1420 AH: 273-274). Accordingly, these scholars justify and interpret narrations that suggest the distortion of the Qur'an. Here are two examples:

A) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "The Qur'an that Gabriel brought to Muhammad (PBUH) contained seventeen thousand verses." (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 2, 634)

As is evident, this narration is not consistent with Shi'a theological beliefs; therefore, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* writes: "If we account for the totality of the Qur'an and revelation, excluding anything that is not Qur'an, it adds up to seventeen thousand verses." (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 84-85) Ali Akbar Ghaffari, a contemporary hadith researcher, notes regarding this narration: "The discrepancy (between the number of

verses in the Qur'an accessible to people and the number in this narration) is likely regarding the counting of verses by individuals." (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 2, 634)

Another researcher, discussing this narration, states: "After the Prophet's (PBUH) passing, Muslims divided the Qur'an into thirty parts and several thousand verses according to their own taste and understanding. Therefore, Muslims living during the revelation era may have had a different division, resulting in what is considered a single verse today being counted as several verses at that time." (Mohseni, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 2, 381)

B) Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "The commandment of stoning is established in the Qur'an, where it states: When an old man and an old woman commit adultery, stone them." (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 18, 347)

*Sulaymān ibn Khālīd* says that I asked Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS): "Is the ruling of stoning mentioned in the Qur'an? He replied: Yes. I said: Which verse? He said: When an old woman and an old man commit adultery, stone them." (ibid.)

As can be seen, these two hadiths, despite having a correct chain of narration (Khu'ī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 195), are inconsistent with the theological belief of Shi'a scholars regarding the lack of distortion in the Qur'an. So, some Shi'a scholars have interpreted these two hadiths as being influenced by *Taqīyyah* (dissimulation) (ibid); because 'Umar, the second Caliph, was the originator of the idea that there is a verse of stoning in the Qur'an (*Mālik ibn Anas*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 2, 824; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, n.d.: 12, 127).

#### 9.4. Justice of the Companions

The justice of the Companions is one of the crucial theological beliefs of Sunni Muslims. They believe that all the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) were just and that their actions were in accordance with God's pleasure (Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, 1910 AD/1328 AH: 1, 5; Muslim, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 8, 6; Ibn Khaldūn, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 412). Therefore, scholars who adhere to the justice of the Companions have sought to justify and interpret hadiths that are inconsistent with this belief. Below are several examples:

##### A) The Hadith of *Ghadīr*

It is noteworthy that many Sunni scholars have accepted the Hadith of *Ghadīr* either as a *Mutawātir* (mass-transmitted) hadith or a *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) one. Scholars such as *Hākīm Nīshābūrī*, *Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī*, *Dhahabī*, *Ibn Athīr Jazarī*, *Suyūṭī*, and *Ibn Kathīr* fall into this category (*Hākīm Nīshābūrī*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 8, 311; *Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī*, n.d.: 118, 42; *Qurṭubī*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 6, 195; *Mīlānī*, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 6, 105). Despite accepting the Hadith of *Ghadīr*, they have turned to justifying and interpreting it, claiming that the word "*Mawlā*" in the phrase "Whoever I am his *Mawlā*, Ali is his *Mawlā*" does not mean guardian or leader; rather, it means friend and helper.

It can perhaps be said that from the early third century, this interpretation can be observed in the discussions of Muslim scholars. For example, the same justification appears in the dialogue between *Ma'mūn* and the scholars of Baghdad (*Ibn 'Abd Rabbih Andalusī*, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 4, 741). Later, scholars such as *Jāḥiẓ*, *Ṭaḥāwī*, *Fakhr Rāzī*, *Qāḍī 'Aḍud Ījī*, and others have adopted this interpretation

(Jāhiz, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 145-146; Ṭaḥāwī, n.d.: 5, 25; Fakhr Rāzī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 29, 227; Ījī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 3, 602).

It now seems that the root of this interpretation and justification should be sought in the same theological belief in the justice of the Companions. Regarding the reason for these scholars choosing such an interpretation, in contrast to clear evidence in the *Ghadīr* sermon, it appears that the abundance of narration of the Hadith of *Ghadīr* by the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) left no room for denial; however, since they view the Companions with respect and sanctity, they consider the Companions' actions in the *Ghadīr* event, namely the rejection of the leadership of Imam Ali (AS) despite the narration of the hadith of *Ghadīr*, they have perceived it as valid and have taken the path of justification and interpretation. In other words, considering the abundance of chains of narration for the hadith of *Ghadīr*, Muslim scholars have narrated and compiled it; however, their theological belief in the justice of the Companions has left them no choice but to interpret and justify the hadith of *Ghadīr*. This belief prevents a believer from thinking that the word "*Mawlā*" in the hadith of *Ghadīr* means "Authority" and "Leader," while also asserting that the just Companions acted against the truth and did not accept Ali's Vilayat (AS). Here, a Sunni scholar chooses a middle ground: to accept the hadith of *Ghadīr* while justifying it, as there are conflicting realities—the actions of the just Companions and the *Ghadīr* event.

On one side, the way out from between these two is precisely this justification and interpretation of the hadith of *Ghadīr*, which is based on the premise that the Companions are not accused of disobeying the

Prophet's (PBUH) command, nor is the hadith of *Ghadīr* denied. Among the scholars who have explicitly discussed this problem and the way out of it is *Shaykh Salīm Bishrī*. Regarding the hadith of *Ghadīr* and its indication of the guardianship of *Amir al-Mu'minīn* (AS), he writes to *Allamah Sharaf al-Dīn*: "I am certain of the implications of the hadiths for your statements, and if I were not bound to assume the correctness of the Companions' actions, I would accept your words; however, I have no choice but to relinquish the apparent meaning of these narrations so that I might follow the righteous predecessors." (Sharaf al-Dīn, n.d.: 162-163) In another letter, he writes: "Assuming the correctness of the Companions' actions is the cause of the interpretation of the hadith of *Ghadīr*, whether this hadith is *Mutawātir* (mass transmitted) or not." (ibid.)

### **B) The Hadith of al-Arīkah**

One of the hadiths that Sunni scholars have understood and analyzed based on the theological belief in the justice of the Companions is the hadith of *al-Arīkah*, narrated from the Prophet (PBUH) who said: "Soon, one of you will deny me, and my hadith will be narrated to him, and he will lean on his cushion and say: Between us and you is the Qur'an, the Book of God. Whatever is unlawful in it, we will consider unlawful, and whatever is lawful in it, we will consider lawful. "Then the Prophet (PBUH) said: "What the Prophet (PBUH) prohibited is like what God has prohibited." (Dārimī, n.d.: 1, 144; Ibn Mājah, n.d.: 1, 6; Bayhaqī, n.d.: 9, 331; Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 109) On the other hand, hadith and historical sources narrate the following two events:

**9.4.1.** *Abū Bakr*, the first caliph, after the death of the Prophet (PBUH), called people together and said: "You narrate hadiths from the Prophet (PBUH); while you yourselves disagree on those hadiths. Naturally, later generations will have even more disagreement than you. Therefore, do not narrate any hadith from the Prophet (PBUH), and whenever someone among you asks a question, refer them to the Qur'an and say that between us and you, the Book of God is the criterion: consider what is lawful according to Him as lawful and what is unlawful according to Him as unlawful." (Dhahabī, n.d.: 1, 2-3)

**9.4.2.** *Āyisha*, the wife of the Prophet (PBUH) and the daughter of *Abū Bakr*, said: "My father had collected five hundred hadiths from the Prophet (PBUH). One night, when I was beside him, I saw he could not sleep. I asked: Are you unwell, or is something bothering you?' In the morning, he said: Bring me the hadiths that I left with you. I brought them and he burned them all." (ibid: 6)

Now, anyone who puts these reports together will conclude that *Abū Bakr* is the embodiment of the Prophet's (PBUH) prophecy, who is criticized in the first narration. It is worth noting that some Sunni scholars have acknowledged the authenticity of this hadith (Hosseini Jalali, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 354). The first narration, along with the two recent reports, has posed a serious challenge to the theological belief of Sunni scholars regarding the justice of the Companions; therefore, some Sunni scholars have justified the first hadith based on their theological beliefs, stating: "The one who leans on the throne is not the ruler of society; rather, they are affluent individuals who sit at home and do not trouble themselves to acquire knowledge." (Qurṭubī,

1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 38; ‘Azīm Ābādī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 12, 232; Manāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 3, 212)

### **C) The Imamate of Ali (AS) and the Necessity of the Imam Being Hāshimī**

Various statements have been reported from Imam Ali (AS) regarding his authority, depending on the circumstances he faced. Sometimes he spoke of his priority, not the exclusivity of the imamate to himself (Sayyid Raḍī, n.d.: Sermon 3, 48 and Sermon 217, 336), and at times he mentioned his exclusive right in this regard. Here are two examples:

"All the Imams are from the Quraysh tribe, and the plant of the imamate is cultivated among the *Banī Hāshim* tribe; non- *Hāshimīs* are not suitable for the imamate and should not be governors." (ibid: Sermon 144, 201)

Some Sunni scholars, who held the theological belief in the justice of the Companions or at least the justice of the two Shaykhs (*Abū Bakr and ‘Umar*) and interpret the *Nahj al-Balāghah*, when faced with this text, which is inconsistent with their beliefs, have adopted three approaches:

#### **9.4.1.1. Silence**

Some Sunni scholars who have commented on *Nahj al-Balāghah* have adopted the approach of silence when confronted with the aforementioned text, which is inconsistent with their beliefs about the Companions. One can mention *Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abduh*, an Egyptian scholar and commentator on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, as an example (‘Abduh, n.d.: 2, 27).

#### **9.4.1.2. Doubt**

One of the prominent Sunni scholars who has provided a significant commentary on *Nahj al-Balāghah* and defended the authenticity of the

entire text (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 10, 128-129), when faced with this text, expressed doubt and skepticism about its issuance from Imam Ali (AS) (ibid: 9, 88).

#### 9.4.1.3. Justification

*Ibn Abil Ḥadīd*, after expressing doubt about the issuance of the mentioned statement from Imam Ali (AS), turned to justification, stating that being *Hāshimī* is a condition for the perfection of leadership, not a condition for its validity (ibid). "O! God, I bring to You the complaint of the Quraysh and those who supported them; for they severed ties, belittled my great position, and conspired in defiance against a matter (Vilayat and leadership) that rightfully belongs to me." (Sayyid Raḍī, n.d.: Sermon 217, 336)

As can be seen, the text in question is inconsistent with the theological belief of Sunni scholars regarding the justice of the Companions, as many of the Companions who migrated from Mecca to Medina were Qurayshis. Therefore, *Ibn Abil Ḥadīd* resorts to justification and interpretation, stating: "Sunni Mu'tazili scholars interpret this saying and similar ones as conveying the superiority and greater entitlement of Imam Ali (AS) to governance over others; otherwise, it would imply the excommunication or condemnation of the Muhajirin and Ansar." (Ibn Abil Ḥadīd, n.d.: 9, 307) As can be observed, *Ibn Abil Ḥadīd* acknowledges that the apparent statement of Imam Ali (AS) is inconsistent with the justice of the Companions.

## 10. Pathology of Hadith Understanding

(Mo'in, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 1, 58). Pathology refers to the recognition of pain, suffering, and damage (Amid, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 1, 44). It should be noted that the term "Pathology" has transitioned from the medical sciences to social sciences and then to other fields, originally referring to the study of the causes of diseases and abnormal symptoms. In general, it can be said that the purpose of pathology is to recognize the totality of threats and obstacles that may currently or potentially threaten a phenomenon, such as the understanding of hadith (Diyari, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 2).

### **10.1. Dangers to Understanding Hadith Based on Theological Beliefs**

Understanding hadith based on theological beliefs faces serious challenges, and hadith researchers must exercise utmost caution in using these indicators. Here, we mention some of these challenges:

#### **10.1.1. Theologians and Disagreements about Theological Beliefs**

It may be claimed that the details of theological beliefs have always been a point of contention among scholars of theology, although this disagreement is less observed in the general principles of theological beliefs. For instance, all Muslim theologians agree on the basic theological belief of the impeccability of the Prophet (PBUH); however, there is significant disagreement regarding the specifics of that impeccability. Among Muslims, the Imamite believe the Prophet (PBUH) is impeccable from both minor and major sins, both before and after the mission, while the Mu'tazilah allow for the commission of minor sins, both before and after the mission (Sayyid Murtaḍā, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 15-16; Ibn Abil Ḥadīd, n.d.: 17, 159).

Among the Imamiyah, although the impeccability of the Prophet and the Imam and their freedom from error is well-known (Hillī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 349; Fāḍil Miqdād, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 323, 245; Muẓaffar, n.d.: 53-54), some, such as *Ibn al-Walīd*, *Ṣadūq*, and *Allamah Tustarī*, believed in the possibility of the Prophet making mistakes (Ṣadūq, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 233; Tustarī, 2004 AD/1425 AH: end of Vol. 12).

It should be noted that *Sayyid Murtaḍā* and *Ṭabrisī* believe that the Prophet is only protected from error and forgetfulness in the reception and transmission of revelation; thus, there is no hindrance to experiencing those two in ordinary life (Sayyid Murtaḍā, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 120-121; Ṭabrisī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 82). Among contemporary authorities, Ayatollah *Khu'ī* also believed that the Prophet's error outside the proclamation of revelation is not impossible (Tabrīzī, 2011 AD/1433 AH: 1, 462).

It is necessary to recall that, as previously mentioned, some Shi'a scholars and writers have expanded the scope of impeccability beyond the fourteen impeccables to include figures such as Imam *Alī Akbar* (AS), *Zaynab*, *Umm Kulthūm*, *Sukayna*, and the Four Deputies.

In addition to the issue of impeccability, Shi'a scholars and theologians have agreed on the general principles of the Imam knowledge, but there has always been disagreement regarding its specifics; some, like *Ibn Qubbaḥ* and *Faḍl ibn Shādhān*, believed that the Imams (AS) were only knowledgeable about the *Sharī'a* (Modarresi Tabatabai, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 227; Ṭūsī, 1969 AD/1348 SH: 540). Other scholars, such as *Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥusayn Lārī*, *Ākhūnd*

*Khurāsānī*, and others, believed that the Imam (AS) is not only knowledgeable about *Sharī‘a* but also benefits from knowledge of the unseen (*Ghayb*) (Lārī, 1985 AD/1364 SH: 25; Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 273).

We now see that disagreement in the specifics of theological beliefs has led to interpretations and even rejections of certain narrations. For example, all theologians agree on God's attribute of "Will" (Ḥillī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 288; Fāḍil Miqdād, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 38; Muẓaffar, n.d.: 38; Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 307); however, the disagreement regarding whether divine will is an essential attribute or an active attribute affects their stance on certain narrations.

As an example, Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said: "When Imam *Husayn* (AS) left Mecca, *Muḥammad Ḥanaḫīyya*, his brother, came to him and said: "Why are you leaving Mecca in haste?" The Imam replied: "After I separated from you, the Messenger of God (PBUH) came and said: O! *Husayn*, go to Iraq; for God wishes to see you killed." *Muḥammad Ḥanaḫīyya* said to him: Indeed, we belong to God and to Him we will return. Now that you are going to be killed, why are you taking these women with you? *Husayn* (AS) said: The Messenger of God (PBUH) told me: God wishes to see these women as captives." (Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 84)

It seems that some researchers view divine will, or the will of God, as an inherent attribute and believe that there is no meaningful interpretation for "Will" in the phrase "God willed for you to be killed;" because two situations arise: 1. "Will" is existential; meaning God has destined that you be killed, and there is nothing you can do to

avoid it. This explanation is obvious, as everyone knows that God's decrees come to pass; 2. The intention behind "Will" is legislative, signifying that God's command pertains to the killing of *Husayn* (AS), which is also not accurate; because this interpretation implies that the killing of Imam *Husayn* (AS) is desirable to God (Salehi Najaf Abadi, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 97-98; *ibid*, n.d.: 405 and 398).

Now, it seems that if we consider divine will, or the decree, as an attribute of action, as some scholars do (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 17, 120), meaning that a person has seen the deed of God and then derives the will and decree from it, the meaning of the aforementioned Hadith is: God prepared the conditions for the killing and captivity of the family of Imam *Husayn* (AS). Preparing these conditions means that someone (*Yazīd*) came to power that is bound by no covenant or pact and respects no sanctity. On the other hand, there is someone (*Husayn*) who cannot tolerate such a thing; thus, the conditions and possibilities for the killing of Imam *Husayn* (AS) have been established. Therefore, when the Prophet (AS) tells Imam *Husayn* (AS), "God has wished to see you killed and your family taken captive," it informs about the occurrence of conditions and factors; that is, God has facilitated these conditions.

### **10.1.2. Lack of Historical Studies on Theological Beliefs**

The unclear historical background of theological beliefs is another drawback in using these beliefs to understand Hadith. In other words, the absence of historical studies on theological beliefs deprives us of recognizing the developments and transformations that these beliefs have

undergone. For example, one of the Shi'a theological beliefs is that the "*Muḥtaḍar*" (one who is dying) witnesses the Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams (AS) (Majlisī, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 6, 200). However, *Shaykh Muḥḥid* based on some hadiths believed that the "*Muḥtaḍar*" sees only the Prophet and Ali at the time of death. Furthermore, the intent behind seeing is to observe the results of accepting or rejecting the Vilayah (leadership) of the Imams, even though the *Ḥashwīyyah* believe that the "*Muḥtaḍar*" sees the Prophet (PBUH) and Ali (AS) with the physical eye (Muḥḥid, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 73-74). Thus, some scholars assert that the aforementioned theological belief (observing the results of Vilayah by seeing the impeccables at the time of death) has undergone change and transformation (Muḥḥinī, 2007 AD/1428 AH: 3, 354).

Currently, it seems that regarding the lack of these studies, many researchers perceive the theological beliefs of today's generation as being the same as those of the past, and based on that, they engage in the understanding of hadith without daring to offer an alternative interpretation.

### 10.1.3. Theological Beliefs and Their Assumptions

The unquestioning acceptance of certain theological beliefs is a third detriment that threatens the understanding of hadith. In other words, sometimes a researcher considers a non-fundamental belief as fundamental and interprets a Hadith based on it. For example, the interpretation of the Hadith "*Inna man Laḥiqa bī Istashhid*" and the hadith of *al-Arīkah* are based on the limited knowledge of the Imam (AS) and the justice of the companions, which has been previously mentioned.

#### 10.1.4. Theological Beliefs and Errors in Application

Sometimes, the theological belief that is the basis for understanding a hadith is based on a solid foundation; however, the hadith researcher makes a mistake in applying the hadith to that belief. In other words, they view the hadith as an instance of the theological belief when it is not. For example, a hadith states that the Quran contained the verse of *Rajm* (stoning) (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 18, 350). Ayatollah *Khu’ī* categorized it under *Taqīyyah* (dissimulation) (Khu’ī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 196), while the mentioned hadith does not qualify as an instance of *Taqīyyah*; because although ‘*Umar* spoke of the existence of the verse of *Rajm*, it was not accepted (Suyūṭī, n.d.: 1, 206; Khu’ī, 1975 AD/1395 AH: 202); therefore, the possibility of *Taqīyyah* is not appropriate.

#### 10.1.5. Confusion Between Verbal and non-Verbal (*Lubbī*) Evidence

As previously mentioned, the indicators for understanding the speaker's intention are divided into verbal and non-verbal (*Lubbī*) categories. One of the detriments to understanding hadith is the confusion between these two types of evidence. In other words, theological beliefs that are considered non-verbal (*Lubbī*) indicators are sometimes treated as verbal evidence; for instance, the late Salehi, based on his theological belief regarding the limitation of the Imam's (AS) knowledge, explained the hadith "Whoever joins me will be martyrs," (Ibn Qūlawayh, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 75; Salehi Najaf Abadi, n.d.: 426) whereas the knowledge of the Imam (AS) is one of the theological beliefs that should be drawn from the certain knowledge of

the Imam. Thus, details such as the lack of awareness of all future events cannot be the basis for justifying the hadith since the mentioned theological belief is derived from non-verbal (*Lubbī*) evidence.

#### **10.1.6. Neglecting Other Indicators**

Sometimes, individuals interpret a hadith based on a theological belief that is a connected non-verbal (*Lubbī*) indicator, while being oblivious to other indicators. For example, some Sunni scholars have interpreted the hadith of *Ghadīr* and the hadith of *al-Arīkah* based on their theological belief, specifically the justice of the companions, interpreting them respectively as friendship and individuals who are affluent and free from the pursuit of knowledge; whereas in the first hadith, they overlooked other indicators like the time, location of the hadith issuance, the large number of recipients, and in the second hadith, they failed to consider the behavior of *Abū Bakr* regarding the hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) and his statements.

#### **Conclusion**

The results indicated that theological beliefs play a significant role as indicators in the process of understanding Hadith. Also, both Shi'a and Sunni scholars and researchers have utilized theological beliefs in the understanding and analysis of hadith; however, this usage faces some challenges that, if ignored, will lead to a subjective interpretation of the hadith text. It seems that by defining the scope and range of using the theological beliefs in the process of understanding Hadith and paying attention to the essential nature of these beliefs, we can prevent these challenges. In this research, the

main challenges of using theological beliefs in understanding hadith include: Differences in theological beliefs, assuming non-accepted beliefs as established, mixing between verbal and non-verbal (*Lubbī*) indicators, and neglecting other indicators.

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## Content and Document (Sanad) Analysis of "Maqtal al-Ḥusayn (AS)" by Abū Mikhnaf

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### Abstract

*Abū Mikhnaf, Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā Azdī*, was one of the historians of the first century and among the narrators of historical hadiths. His name is associated with the recording of events related to Iraq, evoking occurrences such as the Battle of *Jamal*, *Ṣiffīn*, the incident of *Karbala*, the uprising of *Mukhtār*, and more. One of his most important works is the "*Maqtal al-Ḥusayn (AS)*," which has drawn the attention of both early and later scholarly circles and is considered an inspiring element. The present study aims to explore the historical, literary, and biographical aspects of the "*Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*." In this historical work, textual and biographical points are examined, and it also reports the existence of a fake martyrdom work bearing the same name. It seeks to explain the reasons for the differences and the nature of its forgery. This work serves as a response to contemporary enthusiasts seeking accurate and authentic details about this event, and perhaps this very concern has

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spurred the compilation of similar works. Thus, it aims to clarify the credibility of *Abū Mikhnaf* and the scholarly value of his work "*Maqatal al-Husayn (AS)*." Additionally, it seeks to shine a light on works that intend to utilize or rewrite *Abū Mikhnaf's* martyrdom account. It is hoped that this article will provide an appropriate answer to the question of 'Who was the first to write about the *Maqatal al-Husayn*?' 'How credible it is?' and 'How the authenticity of these reports and narratives has been examined?' This article has been used library method to collect data.

**Keywords:** *Abū Mikhnaf*, *Isnād*, Analysis, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Content.

## Introduction

The tradition of writing *Maqatal* (accounts of martyrdom) began in the first century, coinciding with significant and impactful events. These were events that arose following the deaths of important figures and stirred the emotions and sentiments of contemporaries.

Works that hold a special place in Islamic sources include the *Maqatal* of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, 'Uthman ibn 'Affān, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (AS), and others. However, no topic has garnered as much attention from writers as the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (AS). The *Maqātil* written about Imam Ḥusayn (AS) are often not available today; works such as the "*Maqatal* of Abī 'Abdillāh" by *Asbagh ibn Nubāta*, the "*Maqatal Ḥusayn (AS)*" by *Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī*, the "*Maqatal Ḥusayn (AS)*" by *Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī*, and the "*Maqatal* of Abī 'Abdillāh" by *Naṣr ibn Muzāhim*. Among the most significant works in this area is the "*Maqatal*" by *Abū Mikhnaf*. One of the features of "*Maqatal Ḥusayn (AS)*," which is recorded in relation to the events of the year 61 in *Ṭabarī's* history, is the narrative chain (Sanad) presented in the manner of hadith scholars and the acceptance of its

text; by analyzing the Sanad of the "*Maqtal*" according to the methods of hadith scholars, and further analyzing the text, this research will investigate the dimensions of the importance of this work. The present study, using library research and a descriptive-analytical method, examine the "*Maqtal*" of *Abū Mikhnaf*.

### 1. *Abū Mikhnaf* Biography

He is *Lūṭ ibn Yahyā ibn Saʿīd ibn Mikhnaf... ibn Saʿd ibn manāh ibn Ghāmid al-Azdī* (Ibn Saʿd, n.d.: 6, 35; Tustarī, ١٩٩٨ AD/1419 AH: 10, 19; Ḥillī, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 259). He passed away in the year 157 AH (Dhahabī, 1993: 7, 302; Aqa Bozorg Tehrani, 1983: 1, 312; Ziriklī, 1980: 5, 245), or in 170 AH (Dhahabī, 1963: 3, 419). His ancestor, "*Mikhnaf ibn Salīm*," was a companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Ibn Saʿd, n.d.: 6, 35). His name is listed among the Shiʿa companions (Sharaf al-Dīn Mūsawī, n.d.: 199; Ṣadr, n.d.: 91). Regarding the beliefs of *Abū Mikhnaf*, some assert that he was a Shiʿa (Dhahabī, 1993: 7, 301, 9, 581; Ibn Maʿīn, n.d.: 1, 210; Rāzī, 1952: 7, 182; Ziriklī, 1980: 5, 245; Najāshī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 320; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, n.d.: 128; Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 233; Ḥillī, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 157; Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 4, 75; Ardabīlī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 2, 33; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, 1984 AD/1363 AH: 1, 286; Burūjirdī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 566; Anṣārī, n.d.: 15, 140; Aqa Bozorg Tehrani, 1983: 1, 312; Amīn, n.d.: 1, 153). Others believe he was Sunni (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 1959: 1, 147; Qummī Shīrāzī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 71; Majlisī, 1983: 1, 25). However, there is no strong evidence to support these claims. Several works are attributed to him

(Najāshī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 320; Anṣārī, n.d.: 15, 141; Ibn Nadīm, n.d.: 105; Kaḥāla, n.d.: 8, 157; Ṭūsī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 204; Ṣadr, n.d.: 91; Ghaffārī, 1990 AD/1369 AH: 234). Nevertheless, his most important work is "*Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn*" by *Abū Mikhnaf*.

## 2. Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn

*Abū Mikhnaf* is the author of one of the earliest and most prominent works about Imam Ḥusayn (AS), which he narrates in the style of hadith scholars. Important figures such as Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dīnawarī in "*al-Akḥbār al-Ṭawāl*" (Dīnawarī, 1960: 230, 232, 236, 279) and *Shaykh Muḥīd* in "*al-Irshād*" (Muḥīd, 1993: 23-122) have been influenced by it, while some have followed him with less influence; among these are *Ibn A'tham* (Ibn A'tham, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 31, 32, 35, 37, 38, 45, 65, 66.....). *Khārazmī* in "*Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn*" (Khārazmī, n.d.: 2, 196, 197, 199, 211.....) and *Ibn Ṭāwūs* in "*al-Luhūf fī Qatli al-Ṭufūf*" (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 33, 34, 35, 42, 44, 49....) are also included. Others have followed him less closely (Ibn Sa'd, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 65, 69; Ibn Kathīr, 1998: 8, 186; Abul Faraj Iṣfahānī, 1965: 74; Ṣadūq, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 219). This *Maqṭal* is noted as the oldest source with a chain of narration included in Ṭabarī's history, and Ṭabarī's narration has been considered in this research.

### 2.1. The *Maqṭal* Attributed to *Abū Mikhnaf*

In addition to the *Maqṭal* of *Abū Mikhnaf* in Ṭabarī's history, there is another *Maqṭal* attributed to *Abū Mikhnaf*, the text of which is more well-known than the *Maqṭal* of *Abū Mikhnaf* in Ṭabarī's history. The manuscripts of this forged *Maqṭal* date from the year 1200 onward

(*Waqafah 'indal Kitāb: Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn* (AS) for *Abū Mikhnaf*: 50-51). *Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī*, after introducing *Abū Mikhnaf*, states about the work attributed to him: "Know that *Abū Mikhnaf* has many books in the fields of history and *Sīrah*... However, the *Maqṭal* that is attributed to him is not his work, and the author is unknown." (Qummī, n.d.: 1, 155) *Muḥsin Amīn* shares a similar view (Amīn, n.d.: 4, 614). Some of the glaring errors in this work can be noted as follows.

### 2.1.1. Rijālī Mistakes

- A) *Abū Mikhnaf's* narration from *Hishām ibn Muḥammad*: At the beginning of the book, there is a significant chain of narration where *Abū Mikhnaf* narrates from *Hishām ibn Muḥammad ibn Sā'ib Kalbī* (*Abū Mikhnaf*, n.d.: 5). However, *Hishām* is a student of *Abū Mikhnaf* (*Dhahabī*, 1993: 10, 320), and *Hishām* takes hadith from *Abū Mikhnaf*, not the other way around.
- B) *Abū Mikhnaf's* narration from *Kulaynī* (*Abū Mikhnaf*, n.d.: 12): *Abū Mikhnaf* (d. 157 AH) predates *Kulaynī* (d. 329 AH) by over a century, thus he could not have narrated from *Kulaynī*.

### 2.1.2. Content Errors in the *Maqṭal* of *Abū Mikhnaf*

- A) It is stated that when *Ḥusayn* (AS) arrived in *Karbala*, his horse stopped and, despite many efforts, did not move from its place. He changed horses seven times, yet none of them budged. Then he dismounted and said... (ibid: 75). Such an account is not found in reliable sources, and the mentioned source is single (*Wāḥid*) in conveying this news.
- B) The report of Imam *Ḥusayn's* (AS) departure from Mecca to Medina after hearing about the martyrdom of *Muslim ibn 'Aqīl* (ibid: 61).

- C) The Narrative of *Hurr* Joining Imam *Husayn* (AS): The depiction of Imam *Husayn* (AS) in this account is not befitting of him. It is stated in this work: "When Imam *Husayn* (AS) saw that all his companions had been killed, he began to cry loudly and then shouted, "Is there no one to help us? Is there no one to come to our aid?" At that moment, these words reached *Hurr* and had an effect on him." (ibid: 117) This report contradicts other narratives that describe how *Hurr* joined Imam *Husayn* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 223; Dīnawarī, 1960: 253; Ibn A‘tham, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 101; Mufīd, 1993: 99). In other narratives, *Hurr* voluntarily joins Imam *Husayn* (AS) before the beginning of the conflict.
- D) The description of Imam *Husayn*'s (AS) martyrdom and his request for water from *Shimr*, who tells him: "You will not drink water until you sip death slowly with torture and sorrow." Then Imam (AS) swore *Shimr* to remove the veil from his face. *Shimr* removed the veil, and Imam (AS) saw that he was a leper, blind, had the snout of a dog, and had hair like that of pigs. Then he said, "My grandfather, the Messenger of God (PBUH), spoke the truth." *Shimr* asked, "What did your grandfather say?" He replied, "I heard my grandfather say to my father: "O! Ali, this son of yours will be killed by someone who is a leper and blind..." (Abū Mikhnaf, n.d.: 145-146) This report is not found in any credible sources.

### 2.1.3. Distortion in the Names of Characters

48 Distortion through misrepresentation (Taṣḥīf) is frequently seen in this

work. For example, the report of the cursing of *Ibn Ḥuza* by *Abā ‘Abdillāh* (AS) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 328; Mufīd, 1993: 2, 102; Ibn A‘tham, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 96; al-A‘lām al-Warā bi A‘lām al-Hudā, 1, 462) shows that in the discussed (forged) *Maqtal*, the name *Ibn Ḥuza* is changed to *Jabīrah al-Kalbī* (Abū Mikhnaf, n.d.: 100).

## 2.2. The Original *Maqtal* of *Abū Mikhnaf*

*Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* paved its way to important works such as Ṭabarī’s History and Shaykh Mufīd’s *al-Irshād* after several decades. This work encompasses precise details of the martyrdom of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) and was able to collect oral reports from among the sayings and writings that the author believed were worthy of documentation. The reports that the author considered valuable were either regarding the importance of the narrator or the significance of the news or because they provided answers to questions existing in the audience’s minds. Questions such as: ‘Where, how, with whom, and why Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) was martyred?’ All these factors give *Abū Mikhnaf*’s writing a historical dimension, but this work and similar works are responses to the fervent emotions present in the author’s society; thus, we witness a narrative and storytelling aspect in such works. The text possesses a storyline, poetry, elegy, and other techniques of oral narratives.<sup>1</sup> These two aspects, together, created a genre that, despite the merging of *Maqtal* texts with historical books in the ensuing centuries, still allowed these *Maqtal* texts to re-emerge in the eighth century through *Ibn Ṭāwūs*.

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1. <https://maarefhekmiya.org/10362/adb-almokatel/>

The narrative and storytelling aspect of the material, which some researchers have also referred to in their articles (Abbasi, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 1), and the claim that the literary aspect (emotional and sentimental) was born out of distortion in the tenth century is unfounded (Sahebi, 2007: 70). Essentially, the strong narrative aspect and the audience-friendly nature of the *Maqātil*, alongside the authenticity of the documents and the accuracy of the statements, as well as including content that is not available elsewhere for the audience, have contributed to the creation and continuation of this historical-literary genre throughout the centuries.

The following will examine this work based on *Ṭabarī's* narration.

### 3. An Overview of *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal*

*Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal* is an influential source on Shi'a thought. The merits of *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal* have not been hidden from past scholars. In general, this work can be examined in two ways: textually and documentarily. We will proceed to analyze the textual aspect of *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal*.

#### 3.1. Examination of the Text of *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal*

Regarding the precedence of this *Maqatal*, it cannot be compared with earlier works. Therefore, we will examine *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal* in various aspects alongside its parallel works. The parallel works refer to collections written about the *Āshūrā* event in the first five centuries of the Islamic calendar. In addition to the comparative method, *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqatal* will also be examined textually.

##### 3.1.1. Comparison with Parallel and Contemporary Sources

as "Translation of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) " as part of *Ibn Sa'd's al-Ṭabaqāt* (168 AH), the narration of 'Ammār Ibn Duhnī from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) in *Ṭabarī's* history, "*al-Futūḥ*" by *Ibn A'tham* (314 AH), "*al-Akḥbār al-Ṭawāl*" by *Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnawarī* (282 AH), and "*al-Imāmah wa al-Sīyāsah*" by *Ibn Qutaybah* (322 AH). In this section, most of the focus is on discussing the common negative characteristics found in parallel texts, and the absence of these characteristics in *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqtal* indicates the superiority of this work over its contemporaries.

### 3.1.1.1. Mastery Over General and Specific Aspects

*Ṭabarī*, in his narration of the *Āshūrā* event from *Abū Mikhnaf*, says: "*Abū Mikhnaf's* narration is complete and thorough compared to 'Ammār *Ibn Duhnī's* narration" (al-Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 260). Upon a careful review of this work, one can arrive at this conclusion once again.

*Abū Mikhnaf* has narrated the accounts in detail, maintaining a chronological order and depicting the general outline with robustness. The report regarding the news of *Mu'āwīyah's* death until Imam *Ḥusayn's* movement towards Iraq (ibid: 4, 294–374), and the correspondence with the people of Kūfa... up to the martyrdom of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) is narrated sequentially and extensively (ibid: 4, 260–286). This method continues until the end of the work. The detail and sequence in the narration of events have resulted in thematic unity within the *Maqtal*, although this performance is weak in the narration of the events in Syria.

In addition to mastery over general topics, the details are also well reflected. His focus on specifics does not create fragmented images in the audience's mind (Wellhausen, 1988: 113). For instance, when narrating

the death of *Qāsim ibn Ḥasan* (AS), the outlines are well drawn, and valuable details are presented. He narrates: "A young man came towards us, as if his face were a part of the moon; he had a sword in hand and was dressed in a shirt and trousers, wearing sandals, one of which had a broken strap; no matter what I forget, I will not forget that it was his left strap." (al-Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 314) The description of *Qāsim ibn Ḥasan*'s appearance aligns with the account of the events of *Āshūrā*, thereby creating a cohesive image in the audience's mind.

By comparing this work with its contemporary *Maqātil*, the reasonable and appropriate general and specific perspectives become even more evident. For instance, in *Ibn Sa'd's Maq̄tal*, a morbid focus on details can be observed, stemming from the method of class-writing. These instances often detail specifics such as the quality of hair and its dye (Ibn Sa'd, n.d.: 1, 432, 439; 3, 211; 5, 322), descriptions of types of clothing (ibid: 4, 334), types of rings and their inscriptions (ibid: 1, 471, 473, 474; 3, 30, 143, 211, 220; 4, 176), and the color of turbans (ibid: 1, 452, 455; 3, 29, 201; 4, 113, 276), which vary in detail relative to the person's fame.

A similar trend is present in the translation regarding Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS). *Ibn Sa'd* dedicates 18 narrations solely to the wearing of fur clothing and dyeing by Imam (Ibn Sa'd, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 41-44). However, in recounting the events related to *Āshūrā*, he allocates only 9 narrations to describing the *Āshūrā* events (ibid: 72-75).

### 3.1.1.2. Lack of Bias

Bias in the narration of history is a red line. This matter had been considered in Islam even before the official compilation of history. They knew that they could only weaken or strengthen a narrative (Duri, 2005: 1,

20). Therefore, *Ṭabarī* states at the beginning of his history: "Let the reader of my book know that my foundation in what I have presented and stated is based on the words of the narrators, not the authenticity of reasons and the inferences of souls..." (*Ṭabarī*, 1983: 1, 5)

Some of the earlier historians, contrary to *Ṭabarī*, compromised the credibility of their works by presenting personal opinions while narrating. For instance, *Ibn Sa'd* explicitly mentions at the beginning of his narration of the *Āshūrā* event that he only conveys the essence of the speech without specifying which statement is from which narrator (*Ibn Sa'd*, 1415: 53). Additionally, while narrating the events, he interrupts his report seven times and continues with the phrase "*Raja'al Ḥadīth ilā Awwalihī*." (*ibid*: 55, 64, 71, 80, 81, 83, 92) The interruption indicates that *Ibn Sa'd* is constantly expressing his view.

In addition to the chain of narrations, bias is also evident in the text. He states: "The departure of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) was a mistake, and its consequences are evident, and the reaction of the government is entirely natural." (*ibid*: 57) In the narration of *'Ubaydullāh ibn Zīyād*'s arrivals in *Kūfa*, the people of *Kūfa* are described with the phrase "*Falammā Ra'athu al-Safla*," indicating the shadow of *Ibn Sa'd*'s analysis over the *Maqatal* (*ibid*: 65). In contrast, *Abū Mikhnaf*'s narration is direct, and in the text, there is no explanation or guidance provided.

### 3.1.1.3. Truthlikeness

Throughout *Abū Mikhnaf*'s report, there is no trace of myth-making. This truth becomes evident when compared with some parallel texts such as *al-Futūḥ* by *Ibn A'tham* (d. 314 AH). For example, two instances of these narrations are examined here.

1. As narrated from *Ibn 'Abbās*: "I was with the Prophet when I saw

Gabriel with a group of angels beside him, spreading their wings and weeping sorrowfully for Imam *Husayn* (AS)..." (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 323)

2. When *Husayn* (AS) was one year old, 12 angels descended upon the Prophet, one in the form of a lion, one in the form of a cow, another as a demon, and a fourth in the form of a son of Adam, while the other eight took various forms and shapes with red faces, announcing to him the martyrdom of *Husayn* (AS) and informing him... (ibid: 4, 324)

The framework of this speech is a tale, and its content is a myth; because in his narration, the angels are depicted in the form of wild and domestic animals. Furthermore, it is unclear how the narrator understood that a collection of animals in the presence of the Prophet (PBUH) were angels. In the report where *Ibn 'Abbās* claims to have seen Gabriel, there is the question of whether *Ibn 'Abbās* really had the ability to see the angel of revelation and other angels. Such narrations have not been observed in the account of *Abū Mikhnaf*.

#### 3.1.1.4. Absence of Contradiction in Definitive Reports

Comparing the narration of *Yazīd* sending a letter to the governor of Medina in sources such as "*al-Akhbār al-Ṭawāl*" by *Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnawarī* and *Ṭabarī*'s narration from *'Ammār Duhnī*, the author's negligence in transmitting conflicting historical narratives deserves attention. In the narration of *Yazīd* sending to *Walīd ibn 'Utbah*, the governor of Medina, and other governors of important Islamic cities such as *Nu'mān ibn Bashīr*, there are points that will be studied further: *Abū Mikhnaf* mentions in the report of *Yazīd*'s letter to the governor of Medina and ordering him to take

the allegiance of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, 'Abdullāh ibn Zubayr, and Imam Ḥusayn (AS) (ibid: 4, 250-252).

1. The narration of *Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnawārī* (d. 282): The form of the narration is derived from *Abū Mikhnaf*. However, an important point is that in *Abū Ḥanīfa*'s narration, *Yazīd* instructs *Walīd ibn 'Utbah* to also obtain the allegiance of 'Abdul Raḥmān ibn Abū Bakr (Dīnawārī, 1960: 277). This is while 'Abdul Raḥmān ibn Abū Bakr, who opposed *Yazīd*'s succession and the transformation of the caliphate into a monarchy, had passed away before *Mu'āwīya*'s death (Ziriklī, 1980: 3, 311-312).

2. The narration of 'Ammār Duhnī (1st century AH): He does not elaborate on the process of sending the letter and the order to obtain allegiance from Imam Ḥusayn (AS) or the role of the Umayyads. 'Ammār Duhnī narrates as follows: I said to *Abū Ja'far*: Relate to me the killing of Ḥusayn (AS) as if I were present. He said: *Mu'āwīya* died, and *Walīd ibn 'Utbah* was the governor of Medina, so he sent someone to Ḥusayn (AS) to take his allegiance. The Imam (AS) said: Treat me gently and give me time. *Walīd* agreed. Then he went to Mecca, where the letters from the people of Kūfa reached him (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 257-258). None of these reports have been transmitted, indicating a disregard for this news.

### 3.1.1.5 Accurate Recording of Names

In "*al-Imāmah wa al-Sīyāsah*" by *Ibn Qutaybah* (d. 213 AH), we see the name 'Umar ibn Sa'd and 'Amr ibn Sa'īd recorded (Ibn Qutaybah, n.d.: 2, 4). 'Amr ibn Sa'īd Ashdaq (d. 70 AH) was one of the Umayyad governors who was the governor of Mecca in 60 AH (Ziriklī, 1980: 5, 78). Such inaccuracies are not present in the "*Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn*."

### 3.2. Intertextual Analysis

By studying *Abū Mikhnaf's* account, some of the capabilities of this work can be observed. These points indicate the expression of *Abū Mikhnaf* and the cohesive factors of his work, such as:

#### 3.2.1. Narrative and Non-Fictional Expression

*Abū Mikhnaf's* accounts of events are non-fictional and realistic (Wellhausen, 1988: 113-114). The credibility of *Abū Mikhnaf's* work primarily stems from the fact that the narrator is a character involved in the events (Ya'qūbī, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 294). *Abū Mikhnaf's* narration is one that, according to Gérard Genette's interpretation, is centralized and relies on the portrayal of characters somehow connected to the event of *Āshūrā*. In comparing the forged account of *Abū Mikhnaf* and the account in *Ṭabarī's* history, one can observe the element of storytelling. Many of *Abū Mikhnaf's* narrations in *Ṭabarī's* history also appear in the forged account, but the forger has added storytelling elements to make the text more engaging, while simultaneously undermining its credibility.

Storytelling is a way of expression in which the author selects a part of reality that is more imaginative, then gives it a philosophical or even literary dimension, using each of these selected dimensions appropriately (Ibn Athīr, n.d.: 101).

For example, the description of the battlefield situation on the morning of *Āshūrā* is compared: "On the morning of *Āshūrā*, before noon, the only way to overpower Imam *Husayn's* army was to burn the tents, which seemingly made the enemy's task more difficult. At this moment, *Shimr* aimed his spear at Imam *Husayn's* tent, which

frightened the women of the Prophet's family. Then *Shimr* requested fire to burn Imam *Husayn's* tent. At this point, some individuals, like *Shabath ibn Rib'ī*, protested to *Shimr*, saying: You have reached a point where you frighten women; with this statement, *Shimr* refrained from burning the tent." (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 334) By comparing these words with what is mentioned in the forged account, one can observe the storytelling aspect of this narration. The forger quotes *Abū Mikhnaf* as stating that *Shimr* intends to burn Imam *Husayn's* tent, but the details he uses in narrating this account leads to a more elaborate description. In this account, it is stated:

"*Shimr* asks his companions for fire to burn the tent of the oppressor. At this moment, the companions of Imam (AS) attack him and drive him away from the tent. Then Imam cried out: Woe to you, O! *Shimr*! Do you want to burn the tent of the Messenger of Allah? *Shimr* replied, yes. The Imam then said: O! God, it is not difficult for you to throw *Shimr* into the fire on the Day of Resurrection. At this moment, *Shimr* became angry and commanded an attack, and the two armies clashed." (Abū Mikhnaf, n.d.: 100-101)

Some factors that have contributed to the narrative becoming more story-like in the forged account of *Abū Mikhnaf* include: addressing the Ahl al-Bayt as the "Oppressors," the Imam's prayer being accompanied by exaggeration, and the addition of a battle to the previous text. Furthermore, the removal of historical context from the narration has also erased some of the valuable insights found in *Abū Mikhnaf's* account. For instance, aspects such as the intensity of the battle are not mentioned, nor are some military tactics, such as how

the burning of the tents still does not allow the Kufans to reach the Ahl al-Bayt. In the forged narration, however, a brief statement like "Leave them, for they have not reached you" simplifies the discussion, thereby obscuring the military tactic from the reader's perspective.

### 3.2.2. Mention of Useful Points

#### 3.2.2.1 Indirect and Clarifying Points, such as:

1. *Abū Mikhnaf's* report regarding the letters sent by *Yazīd* to *Walīd*: In the first detailed letter, news of *Mu'āwīya's* death is conveyed, while the second letter, described as small like a mouse's ear (*Ka'annahū Uzunun Fa'rah*), and contains orders for pledging allegiance from the prominent men of Medina. This narration indicates that the first letter was for public announcement, whereas the second contained the directive for pledging allegiance, which indirectly clarifies the urgency and secrecy involved in acquiring the allegiance of those individuals.

2. Text of the letters from the Kufans: These texts reflect the ideological orientation of the groups present in *Kūfa* in the year 61 AH.

A) First letter: The writer of this letter includes some Shi'as led by *Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad*, among others like *Ḥabīb ibn Mazāhir*. The sincerity of the people of Shi'a *Kūfa* is notable in this long letter (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 261-262).

B) Second letter: This letter reinforces the first, with the Shi'as of *Kūfa* stating: "To *Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī* (AS) from his believing and Muslim Shi'as, but after that: the people await you and have their hearts with no one but you—hurry, hurry, peace be upon you." (ibid: 4, 262)

C) Third letter: This letter is from the wealthy leaders of *Kūfa* and has a very different tone. The flattery of the writers is considerable. They write in their letter: "But after that, everything has become green, the fruits are ripe, and the wells are full of water—if you wish to come, your army is ready, and peace be upon you." The tone of the writers is devoid of devotion and is dry and overly literary (ibid.).

*Abū Mikhnaf*, by conveying the text of the letters, indirectly shows the reader that Imam *Husayn* (AS) responded to the second letter. The evidence in Imam *Husayn*'s letter includes the following:

- 1) The sending of the letter in response through *Sa'īd ibn 'Abdullāh Hanafī* and *Hānī ibn Hānī Sabī'ī*, who were the messengers of the second letter;
- 2) The use of language similar to that of the letter sent by the people of *Kūfa*: In his letter, the Imam writes: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, from *Husayn* ibn *'Alī* (AS) to the assembly of believers and Muslims," which is almost identical to the text of the second letter and reflects the urgency, insistence, and pleas of the Shi'a.

### 3.2.2.2. Details of Coherence

*Abū Mikhnaf* quotes the words of *'Abbās ibn Shabīb al-Shākirī* in describing the gathering of the Kufans present at Muslim's location. By placing the statements of *'Abbās* in *Kūfa* alongside the day of *Āshūrā*, the reader becomes convinced that the context of both statements is similar and both texts express the principles of *'Abbās ibn Shabīb*.

This contextual similarity serves as a factor of coherence. *'Abbās* says in *Kūfa*: "As for what follows, I will not inform you of the

activities of others, nor do I know what they have in their hearts, and I do not promise you anything deceptive on their behalf; I speak of something I have decided upon: When you call, I will respond, I will fight alongside you against your enemy, and I will defend you with my sword until I stand before Allah, seeking nothing from this act except the reward of Allah." (ibid: 4, 264)

On the 10<sup>th</sup> day, he says to Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS): "*Abā ‘Abdillāh*, by Allah, on the face of the earth, I have no one closer or more beloved to me than you, and if I could remove oppression and killing from you with something loftier than my soul and blood, I would do so. O! *Abā ‘Abdillāh*, peace be upon you; I testify that I am guided by you and your father." (ibid: 4, 337-338)

The beginning and the end of what has been narrated from *‘Abbās* align with each other, allowing the audience to empathize with *‘Abbās*.

#### 4. A Review of the Sources Related to the *Maktal* of *Abū Mikhnaf*

A review of the sources of *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqtal* has received more attention from experts than a textual analysis. Accordingly, numerous works have been written about this text, each employing a different method to analyze the chain of transmission of *Abū Mikhnaf*. Among these are resources such as "*Waq‘atu al-Ṭaff*" by Muhammad Hadi Yousef Gharavi and "*Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*" by Hussein Ghaffari. The analysis of the sources related to *Abū Mikhnaf's Maqtal* will be explored in light of the opinions of the hadith scholars.

##### 4.1. Weak Narrators (Ḍu‘afā’)

1) From *‘Uqba ibn Abī ‘Ayzār*, two narrations from one source have been reported (ibid: 4, 304, 305-306). He is considered *‘Āmī*, *Kūfan*,

and weak narrator (Tustarī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 11, 68; Amīnī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 301).

2) *Ḥajjāj ibn ‘Alī Bāriqī Hamadānī*: He narrates the gathering of the people of Kūfa, sending a letter to Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS), and the sermon of ‘*Ubaydullāh* after the arrest of *Hānī*, from *Muḥammad ibn Bushr Hamadānī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 261, 275). He is considered unknown (Dhahabī, 1963: 1, 463; Rāzī, 1952: 3, 164). Hence, he is counted as one of the weak narrators.

3) *Fuḍayl ibn Khadīj* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 320-321, 339-340): His status is unknown (Rāzī, 1952: 7, 72). He narrates the news of *Yazīd ibn Ziyād* joining Imam *Ḥusayn* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 339) and describes the political arrangement of the Kufans against Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) (ibid: 4, 321, 339-340).

4) *Numayr ibn Wa‘lah* (ibid: 4, 264, 272, 333-334, 338-339): He is listed among the unknown narrators (Dhahabī, 1963: 4, 273).

5) *Naḍr ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥabīb ibn Zuhayr ‘Abasī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 311, 330, 348): *Abū Mikhnaf* is single in narrating from him, and the Rijālīss consider him unknown (Dhahabī, 1963: 8, 477). In the intervals of the work, *Abū Zuhayr ‘Abasī* is referred to as *Naḍr ibn Ṣāliḥ*, indicating that they are likely the same person (Ṭabarī, 1983: 3, 566; 4, 330).

6) *Abū Janāb Yaḥyā ibn Abī Ḥiyyah Wadā‘ī Kalbī* (d. 150 AH) (ibid: 4, 276-277, 285-286, 288-289, 290, 299, 300, 301, 302, 312-313, 314, 324-326, 326-327): He narrates through three ways:

A) Through a disconnected narration (*Mursal*): He reports the failure of *Muslim*'s uprising in *Kūfa* (ibid: 4, 276-277), the letter of ‘*Ubaydullāh* to *Yazīd* (ibid: 4, 314), the threat to

*‘Umar ibn Sa‘d* by *‘Ubaydullāh ibn Zīyād* (ibid.), and the presence of *‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umayr Kalbī* and his wife *Ummi Wahab* on Āshūrā (ibid: 4, 326-327). *‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umayr* is mentioned in the chain without a title, but researchers believe he is the husband of *Ummi Wahab* (Tustarī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 10, 448).

- B) Through two intermediaries: From *‘Adī ibn Ḥarmalah* through *‘Abdullāh ibn Salīm* and *Midhrī ibn Mushma‘al*; two *Asadī* men present at the events who narrate the conversation between *Zubayr* and the Imam (AS) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 288-289), a meeting with *Farazdaq* (ibid: 4, 290), a meeting with the two *Asadī* men (ibid: 4, 299), the Imam's words about the martyrdom of *Muslim* (ibid: 4, 300), and the halt of *Abā ‘Abdillāh*'s caravan by *Ḥurr* in the land of Iraq (ibid: 4, 301-302).
- C) *Hānī ibn Thabūt Ḥaḍramī*: He was present in Karbalā and narrates the report of the Imam's meeting with *‘Umar ibn Sa‘ad* (ibid: 4, 312-313).
- D) *‘Adī ibn Ḥarmalah* narrated the news of *Ḥurr* joining Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) (ibid: 4, 324-326).

Rijālī scholars have described *Abū Janāb Yaḥyā ibn Abī Ḥayyah Kalbī* as trustworthy, even though he occasionally labeled some trustworthy narrators as unreliable (Khu‘ī, 1992: 1, 246; ‘Aqīlī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 4, 398; Rāzī, 1952: 9, 139). The chain of these narrations is weak; however, these instances have been recorded with slight variations in other sources (Mufīd, 1993: 2, 101; Ibn

- Athīr, 1966: 4, 65).
- 7) Among the friends of *Abū Mikhnaf* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 321): Due to being unknown, the chain is ambiguous (*Majhūl*). This person narrates from *Abū Khālīd al-Kāhilī*. It is possible that the name *Kāhilī* is a miswriting of *Kābulī*. If this is true, he would apparently be *Wardān*, *Abū Khālīd Kābulī*, one of the close companions of Imam *Sajjād* (AS) (Ḥillī, 1417: 287).
- 8) *Hishām ibn Walīd* narrates in a *Mursal* form, reporting the news of the martyrdom of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) reaching *Muḥammad ibn Hanīfīah* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 297).
- 9) *Suwayd* reports the killing of *Ibn Ḥuza* (ibid: 4, 328).
- 10) *Abū ‘Alī Anṣārī* (ibid: 4, 300-301).
- 11) *Thābit ibn Hubayrah* (ibid: 4, 330).
- 12) *Ḥasan* (or *Ḥusayn*) *ibn ‘Uqbah Murādī* (ibid: 4, 272, 331-332).
- 13) *Zuhayr ibn ‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn Zuhayr Khath‘amī* (ibid: 4, 340-346).
- 14) *Ḥajjāj ibn ‘Ammār ibn ‘Abd Yaghūth Bāraqī* (ibid: 4, 345): He narrated the presence of the Imam just a few steps from the execution pit.
- 15) *Ḥusayn Abū Ja‘far* (ibid: 4, 327): He narrated the Imam’s curse upon *Ibn Ḥuza*.
- 16) *Muḥammad ibn Qays* (ibid: 4, 297, 335-338).
- 17) *Jamīl ibn Marthad* (ibid: 306, 307). He narrates from *Ṭarmāḥ ibn ‘Adī*, a companion of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) (Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 432). *Jamīl ibn Marthad* reports the meeting of *Ṭarmāḥ* with Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS). In this narration, *Ṭarmāḥ* promises the Imam

that he will join him after placing his commercial goods. When *Tarmakh* arrives in Karbalā, Ahl al-Bayt household had already been martyred (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 307).

18) *Dulham bint 'Amr* (ibid: 4, 298-299). The name *Dulham*, the wife of *Zuhayr ibn Qīn*, is mentioned in some sources as *Diylam bint 'Amr* (Ibn Namā, 1950: 32; Majlisī, 1983: 44, 371; Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 44). *Zuhayr* was a companion of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) who was killed on *Āshūrā* by *'Abdullāh al-Sha'bī* and *Muhājir ibn Aws* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 336). His wife provides a detailed report about how *Zuhayr* joined Imam Ḥusayn (AS) (ibid: 4, 298-299).

19) *Sulaymān ibn Abī Rāshid* (ibid: 4, 277, 311-312, 314, 326, 334-335, 340, 341-342, 344-345, 347-348, 349, 350, 357). The majority of his narrations (about 9 narrations) come from *Ḥumayd ibn Muslim*, who is an important figure in the reports of the *Āshūrā* event. In addition to *Ḥumayd ibn Muslim*, he has narrated from *'Abdul Raḥmān ibn 'Ubayd Abī al-Kanūd* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 357), *'Abdullāh ibn Salīm*, and *Mudhrī ibn Mushma'al Asadī* (ibid: 4, 288-289, 290, 299, 300, 301-302) and *'Abdullāh ibn Ḥāzim* (ibid: 4, 277). These individuals are significantly important regarding their presence in the event (Wellhausen, 1988: 142).

20) *Sa'īd ibn Mudrak* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 282-283): He narrated from his grandfather, *'Ammārah ibn 'Uqbah*, who was present during the arrest and martyrdom of *Muslim* (ibid: 4, 282, and 281). In the chain of *Abū Mikhnaḥ*, *Sa'īd ibn Mudrak ibn 'Ammārah ibn 'Uqbah* is mentioned, which appears to be more accurately referred to as *Sa'īd ibn Mudrak* on the authority of *'Ammārah ibn 'Uqbah*.

- 21) *‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn Jundab* (ibid: 4, 260, 308-309, 313, 330). He was among the companions of *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* (AS) and a participant in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn* and is recognized as a scholar. He is listed among the notable figures by Shaykh (Tafriṣhī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 45). His narrations are reported through two ways:
- 1) The report of *K‘ab ibn Jābir*'s regret (*Mursal* form) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 330).
  - 2) The report of the refusal to accept the conditions of *‘Umar ibn Sa‘d*, the dream of seeing Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) on the way to *Banī Muqātil*'s castle (ibid: 4, 308-309), the conditions the Imam set for accepting peace (ibid: 4, 313), and the details of the departure from Medina towards Mecca narrated from *‘Uqbah ibn Sam‘ān* (ibid: 4, 260). In the narration of the departure from Medina, *‘Uqbah* says that the Imam left via the main road and did not take a detour like *‘Abdullāh ibn Zubayr* (ibid.). *‘Uqbah* is a servant of *Rubāb*, the wife of the Imam (AS) (ibid: 4, 347). In his account about the refusal of *‘Umar ibn Sa‘d*'s conditions, he mentions that he had precise information about the events of *Āshūrā* and that he was with the Imam (AS) from the time of leaving Medina until his martyrdom, stating that he had never seen the Imam engage in any sort of pragmatism or change of position (ibid: 4, 313).
- 22) *‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Aṣim Fā’ishī* (ibid: 4, 317 two reports, 318, 319, 321-323, 339). He is reported through *Ḍaḥḥāk ibn ‘Abdullāh Mushriqī* (the name of a village in Yemen). On the day of *Āshūrā*, with the permission of the Imam (AS), he escaped the battlefield by

taking a horse. The cavalry of 'Umar Sa'd pursued him, but since 'Abdullāh Sha'bī, the murderer of Zuhayr ibn Qīn, was among the forces of 'Umar Sa'd, he managed to survive ('Askārī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 3, 95; Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 338).

23) 'Alī ibn Ḥanẓalah ibn As'ad Shabāmī (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 323-324) was among the companions of Imam Ḥusayn (AS), who utilized verses in his rhymes while fighting against the forces of 'Umar Sa'd and was subsequently martyred (ibid: 4, 327). His name is mentioned in the Ziyārat Nāḥīyah and Rajabīyyah (Anṣārī, n.d.: 7, 321). Kathīr ibn 'Abdullāh Sha'bī narrated this report from 'Alī ibn Ḥanẓalah. No translation for him has been seen. According to Abū Mikhnaḥ's narration, he is a relative of Ḥanẓalah ibn As'ad (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 323).

The narrator of the event is one of the martyrs of Āshūrā, so one must reflect on this narration or its chain of transmission.

24) Mu'allā ibn Kulayb al-Hamdānī (ibid: 267-269): Narrated from Jabr ibn Nūf, Abul Wadāk Hamdānī. Abul Wadāk is trustworthy (Anṣārī, n.d.: 4, 584; Dhahabī, 1963: 53). He was among the companions of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (AS) (Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 2, 399). According to the narration of Abū Mikhnaḥ, Abul Wadāk was in the army of 'Umar Sa'd but had a hatred for fighting Imam's (AS) companions and dissuaded others from battle (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 333).

25) A person named Abū Ṣāliḥ narrates from the servant of 'Abdul Raḥmān ibn 'Abd Rabbah (ibid: 4, 321). Both the servant of 'Abdul Raḥmān and Abū Ṣāliḥ are unknown.

26) A person from the Banī Ludhān tribe: Narrated the advice given to Ḥusayn (AS). This speech is recorded in the name of one of the

Imam's cousins, urging the Imam not to go to Iraq (ibid: 4, 301).

27) *'Abbās al-Jadalī* (ibid: 4, 267, and 275).

The above individuals either do not have a general translation or are not mentioned by the *Rijālīs* and are unknown. In any case, the anonymity of a person, especially among *Rijālīs*, classifies them as weak narrators, even if they were present on the Day of *Āshūrā*.

28) *Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Raḥmān*: Shared information among the unknown and the trustworthy. It is unclear who he is.

29) *'Uqbah ibn Bashīr al-Asadī* (ibid: 4, 342). From the companions of Imam *al-Sajjād*, *al-Bāqir*, and *al-Ṣādiq* (AS) (Kashshī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 2, 459; Anṣārī, n.d.: 11, 165; Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 205; Namāzī Shahrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 5, 246). He narrated the story of the killing of the infant of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) from Imam *al-Bāqir* (AS). There is no explicit declaration of his trustworthiness.

#### 4.2. Trustworthy Narrators (*Rijāl*)

1) Imam *al- Ṣādiq* (AS), narrated the behavior of *'Umar Sa'd's* army with the blessed body (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 346).

2) *Abul Makhāriq al-Rāsabī* (ibid: 4, 262-263) is trustworthy (Ibn Ḥajar, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 6, 379). Some have stated that *Abū al-Makhāriq* is trustworthy in narrating from *'Umar* (Dhahabī, 1963: 4, 58; Dhahabī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 7, 82).

3) *Abā Sa'īd 'Aqīṣī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 289) was one of the companions of the Imam (AS), deemed trustworthy by Ali (AS) and just (Ardabīlī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 1, 312; Tustarī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 11, 374; Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 208).

4) *Abū Ḥamzah Thumālī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 355-356). *Dīnār ibn Thābit*

*ibn Ṣafīyya* was trustworthy (Najāshī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 115). He narrated from *Qāsim ibn Bakhīt* the story of the whipping on the lips of Imam *Ḥusayn (AS)* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 355-356), although there is no translation for *Qāsim ibn Bakhīt*.

5) *Ismā'īl ibn 'Abdul Raḥmān ibn Abī Karīma Suddī* (d. 127 AH) narrated from a man of *Banī Fazāra*. *Suddī* is among the trustworthy and interpreters of the Quran (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 97).

6) *Ja'far ibn Ḥudhayfa Ṭā'ī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 281): He was a companion of Ali (AS) in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn*. *Ibn Ḥibbān* has listed him among the trustworthy (Ibn Ḥibbān, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 4, 105). Some have mentioned his name in the list of obscure figures (Rāzī, 1952: 2, 476; Ibn Ḥajar, 1971: 2, 113).

7) *Ḥārith ibn Ḥuṣayra* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 314, 317): Trustworthy (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 170). He narrated from *'Abdullāh ibn Sharīk 'Āmirī* (trustworthy) (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 5, 223). *'Abdullāh ibn Sharīk 'Āmirī* also narrated from Imam al-Sajjād (AS) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 317). All narrators in this chain of transmission have been praised.

8) *Ḥārith ibn Ka'b Wālbī* (ibid: 4, 287, 289, 291, 318-319, 353): In Shi'a *Rijālī* Books, *Ḥurr ibn Ka'b Azudī* is mentioned as one of the companions of *Ali ibn Ḥusayn (AS)* (Anṣārī, n.d.: 5, 178). He is likely a distortion of *Ḥārith*. He transmitted news from the servant of *Rubāb* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 289, 313), Imam al-Sajjād (AS) (ibid: 4, 291), and *Fāṭimah*, daughter of Ali (AS) (d. 117 AH) (ibid: 4, 353). There are several reports from him that do not mention the phrase " *Abū Mikhnaḥ* Qāla," (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 354) which do not account for the narration of *Abū Mikhnaḥ*.

- 9) *Ṣaq‘ab ibn Zuhayr ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Salīm Azudī Kūfī* (ibid: 4, 265, 274, 283-285, 286, 326, 345, 352): Trustworthy (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1973 AD/1393 AH: 6, 79; Majlisī, 1983: 42, 63).
- 10) *Abū ‘Uthmān Nuḥdī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 265): A pious, ascetic, and trustworthy man (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 6, 249-250).
- 11) *‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn Shurayḥ ibn ‘Ubaydullāh Ma‘āfirī* (d. 167 AH) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 274): A distinguished and trustworthy scholar of the first century AH (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 573).
- 12) *‘Awn Abū Juḥayfa Wahab ibn ‘Abdullāh Suwā’ī* (d. 116 AH) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 283-285, 286): His grandfather, *Abū Juḥayfa*, known as *Wahab al-Khayr*, was a companion and close associate of Ali (AS) (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 292). He is among the successors and a skilled scholar from Kūfa (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 170; Iṣfahānī, 1944: 201). Ṭabarī mistakenly wrote 12) ‘Awn as ‘Awf.
- 13) *‘Amr ibn ‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn Ḥārith ibn Hishām Makhzūmī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 286): Trustworthy (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 7, 415).
- 14) *Qāsīm ibn ‘Abdul Raḥmān Shāmī Abū ‘Abdul Raḥmān Dimashqī Mawlā Āli Abī Ḥarb Umawī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 352). Trustworthy (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, 290).
- 15) *‘Abdul Malik Nūfīl ibn Masāḥiq ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Makhramah ‘Āmirī Qurashī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 253). From the people of Medina. He reported on the intention of *Ḥusayn* (AS) to leave Medina and the manner of Imam *Ḥusayn*’s (AS) entry into the Prophet’s Mosque (ibid: 4, 253). This report has appeared in other sources attributed to

*Zubayr ibn Bakkār* from *Abū Sa'īd Maq̄barī* (Maghribī, n.d.: 3, 144; Ibn 'Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 204). He is accepted among *Rijālīs* (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 621).

16) *'Amr ibn Khālīd* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 300). A person by this name is one of the martyrs of the *Āshūrā* incident (Anṣārī, n.d.: 14, 35; Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 340). For this reason, he cannot be considered a transmitter of news. Considering his narration from *Zayd ibn Alī*, it seems he is "*'Amr ibn Khālīd, Abū Khālīd Qurashī, Mawlā Banī Hāshim Kūfī*," who narrated more than 97 reports from *Zayd ibn Alī* (Anṣārī, n.d.: 14, 100). *'Amr ibn Khālīd* is trustworthy (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 498).

17) *'Amr ibn Shu'ayb* (d. 105 AH). He narrated the fate of *Baḥr ibn Ka'b* from *Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Raḥmān* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 345). *'Amr ibn Shu'ayb* was one of the great successor and jurists of Medina, trustworthy (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 84, 737).

18) *'Aṭā' ibn Sā'ib* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 328): Initially he was Sunni and later became Shi'a. He took hadith from Imam Sajjād (AS). Most scholars regard him as trustworthy. However, at the end of his life, he experienced confusion and change (Anṣārī, n.d.: 4, 159).

19) *'Abdul Jabbār ibn Wā'il Kūfī* is trustworthy. He does not narrate from his father and brother, *Alqamah*, and has few narrations (Ibn Sa'd, n.d., 6, 312; Rāzī, 6, 30).

20) *Masrūq ibn Wā'il* was present at the *Āshūrā* incident and is the brother of *'Abdul Jabbār ibn Wā'il*. He, along with a group from *Haḍramūt* and *Aslam*, embraced Islam in front of the Prophet

- (PBUH) (Tustarī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 10, 53). On *Āshūrā*, he intended to demonstrate his bravery to earn a reward from ‘Ubaydullāh but withdrew upon witnessing the grim fate of ‘*Abdullāh ibn Ḥuzah* (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1999 AD/1415 AH: 7, 403). He is the one who transmitted the fate of ‘*Abdullāh ibn Ḥuzah* in *Abū Mikhnaf’s Maqtal* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 328). Generally, companions are considered trustworthy by Sunni scholars.
- 21) ‘*Amr ibn Murrah Jamalī* (ibid: 4, 321). He is reliable (‘Ijlī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 2, 186). He is one of the four Kufans from whom there is no disagreement or issue in his narrations (Rāzī, 1952: 6, 256-257).
- 22) *Mujālid ibn Sa‘īd* (d. 144) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 272, 307, 313, 350). Some trusted him (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 7, 349; Dhahabī, 1963: 3, 438). However, another group of *Rijālīs* deemed him weak (Mizzī, 1998: 2, 101; Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 10, 37; Ibn Ḥibbān, n.d.: 3, 10). The reason for this difference of opinion may stem from *Mujālid* being Shi‘a, and *Rijālīs* who weakened him referred to this point (Dhahabī, 1963: 3, 438).
- 23) *Ṣaq‘ab ibn Zuhayr Azudī* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 313). Trustworthy (Ibn Ḥibbān, 2014 AD/1393 AH: 6, 79; Majlisī, 1983: 42, Explanation p. 63).
- 24) ‘*Āmir ibn Sharāḥīl Sha‘bī* (d. 110 AH) (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 307). He is a trustworthy and distinguished scholar of the first century (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 461).
- 25) *Yaḥyā ibn Hānī ibn ‘Urwah* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 331) is one of the notable Arabs and trustworthy (al-Ansāb: 4, 531). This person is not the son of *Hānī ibn ‘Urwah*, who sheltered *Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl*,

because the son of *Hānī* was one of the companions of Imam *Husayn* (AS) and was martyred on the day of *Āshūrā*; for this reason, he cannot be the transmitter of the verses recited by *Nāfi' ibn Hilāl* (Tustarī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 11, 84).

26) *Yūsuf ibn Yazīd* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 275, 328). Trustworthy (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 11, 377; Rāzī, 1952: 9, 235). He transmitted the narration in two ways:

A) He narrated the revolution of *Muslim ibn 'Aqīl* in *Kūfa* from '*Abdullāh ibn Ḥāzim* (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 275).

B) The narration of *Burayr Mubāhila* with *Yazīd ibn Ma'qal* was transmitted through '*Aḥīf ibn Zuhayr ibn Abū Akhnas* (ibid: 4, 328).

27) *Yūnus (Yūsuf) ibn Abī Ishāq* (d. 175) (ibid: 4, 275-276, 297). He is recognized as one of the prominent scholars (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 266). Some regard his narration as careless, negligent, with omissions and additions, while others consider him trustworthy and free from the aforementioned flaws (Namāzī Shāhrūdī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 11, 382). It seems he may have been accused of these flaws regarding his Shi'a affiliation. He is the transmitter of news regarding the siege of the *Dār al-Imārah* by *Muslim* and the dispersal of that siege (Ṭabarī, 1983: 4, 275, 276).

## Conclusion

The Maqatal of *Abū Mikhnaḥ* is among the earliest works written concerning the *Āshūrā* uprising. This work has multiple documentary and textual advantages, including the existence of narrators' chains and content that closely aligns with reality, derived from a literary

genre that documented events in the first century, addressing occurrences that conflicted with the powerful political narrative and sought to uncover truths in detail. Furthermore, this work adheres more closely to scientific principles compared to its contemporaries and has a total of 70 independent chains of narration, 11 of which are from correct or reliable sources, while the rest are weak. However, the weakness of the narrations does not mean the rejection of their content as long as there are external clues and evidence supporting their authenticity or likelihood of authenticity.

Additionally, 30 of its narrations have particular historical value considering the presence of narrators at the event. Such performance is less noticeable in other works written about the events of Karbala.

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## 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; Masaeli, 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>

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1. *al-Anwār al-Nu'mānīyyah* written by *Sayyid Ni'matullāh Jazā'irī*, is one of the greatest shi'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'* in the presence of the Messenger of God. 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'ādarihī 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 Ghāşibu Ḥaqqihim..."*

Then, quoting from that Imam, it is said that he asked God to make the ninth of *Rabī'* 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 Ahli 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-Faḥ: 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: Ruffi'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-Muḥṭaḍar* (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 Maḥāhir 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 'Allāmah 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) *Bihār al-Anwār* (11<sup>th</sup> Century)

Among the later hadīth collections, only 'Allāmah Majlisī, in volume 31 and page 95 of *Bihār al-Anwār*, has narrated the "Ninth of Rabī'" with some variations. Although he opened the fourteenth chapter in volume five of *Bihār 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; Hariiri, 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'tya Jamā'atun min Ikhwānī As'aluhū I'rāḍun Ruq'atun 'alā Sayyidī Abil Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad Ṣāhibil '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'īl Baghdādī Qālā Tanāza'nā fī Bābi Abil Khaṭṭāb wa Ishṭabaha 'alaynā Amruhū fa Qaṣṣdunā 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 Muḥīd through *Kaf'amī* (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 31, 119), while Shaykh *Muḥīd* 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-Zilzāl: 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 Ḥiṭṭatun Naghfir lakum Khaṭāyām.*" (Cf. al-Baqarah/58; al-A'rāf/161; al-Shu'arā'/51; Ṭāhā/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 Istihbābil 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 Jawwāyiyati 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 Walāyataka 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 Yuḥadhdhdirukumullāhu 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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# Critique of the Reasons for the Fabrication of the Succession Hadiths<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Sunni scholars have accused the Shi'a of fabricating the hadiths of succession to prove the legitimacy of the caliphs' rule and have denied the appointment of Imam Ali (AS) as the successor by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Contrary to the credible documents and sources available to them, they have cited reasons such as: The lack of objection from Imam Ali (AS), his voluntary allegiance to the caliphs, his failure to refer to the texts of succession, and the role of the Jewish Ibn Sabā' in this fabrication. The

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1. The following article, taken from the author's doctoral dissertation (Maedeh Akhoond), is entitled "Analysis of the Historical Course of the Attribution of Forgery of Hadith to Shia in the Field of Imamate" under the guidance of Dr. Muhammad Ali Tajari.

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present study, employing an analytical-critical method and considering credible Quranic, narrative, and historical sources, concludes that Imam Ali (AS) expressed his objection to the usurpation of the caliphate by the caliphs at various times and places and was never willing to pledge allegiance to them. He reminded others of the texts of succession and caliphate, engaged in discussions and arguments regarding this matter, and declared his qualifications for the succession of the Prophet (PBUH).

**Keywords:** Hadiths of Succession, Fabrication of Hadith, Fabricated Hadiths, Hadiths of Imamate.

## Introduction

Succession is an important term in the political thought of Shi'a Islam. According to Shi'a belief, the Prophet (PBUH) appointed his successor by divine command. Based on evidence found in Sunni sources, they accept the principle of succession and the appointment of successors in previous prophets as a given, asserting that, according to God's command, all of them introduced their successors to the people (Zuhaylī, 1997 AD/1418 AD: 25, 37). However, it is noteworthy that Sunni scholars deny the implementation of this divine tradition by the Prophet of Islam and, in order to exclude the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) from the political scene—of which Imam Ali (AS) is at the forefront—they justify the caliphate, defend the caliphs, and create doubt and ambiguity in people's beliefs, asserting that the hadiths of succession were fabricated by the Shi'a.

Some Salafi scholars, such as *Ibn Taymīyyah*, claim that there is no authentic hadith indicating that the Prophet - as Shi'a claim - appointed Imam Ali (AS) as his successor. They argue that the narrations regarding

**122** this matter, attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) and others, are weak and

fabricated by the Shi'a and the *Sabā'īyyah* (Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 130; Ibn Qayyim, n.d.: 1, 145; Ibn Taymīyyah, n.d.: 1, 150).

In some Sunni sources, this claim is made absolutely and unqualifiedly with phrases such as: "*Lam Yūṣa Rasūlullāh*: The Messenger of Allah did not appoint anyone." (Abī Dāwūd, n.d.: 198; Tirmidhī, n.d.: 3, 392)

*Sarakhsī* writes: People ask whether the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) made any appointments at the time of his passing. He then responds: "And the correct view among us is that he did not appoint anyone regarding anything." (Sarakhsī, n.d.: 27, 145) The view considered correct among us (the Sunnis) is that the Prophet did not appoint anyone for anything (Qazwīnī, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 706). Some attribute this to the narration of *Āyisha*: " *Āyisha*, may Allah be pleased with her, and her father said: The Messenger of Allah left neither a dirham, nor a dinar, nor a sheep, nor a camel, nor did he appoint anything." (Abū Nu'aym, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 232) In some sources, an addition is made to this, stating: "He did not appoint Ali as caliph." (Ibn Kathīr, 1992 AD/1412 AH: 7, 251)

*Shawkānī*, in recounting the denial of the Prophet's appointment, writes: "If it is said that an appointment is obligatory, then why did the Messenger of Allah leave it aside? We say that the meaning of the Prophet's not appointing anyone only negates the appointment in terms of the caliphate; otherwise, he did make appointments in other matters." (Shawkānī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 6, 144) Some also claim that the Prophet's appointment only referred to the Book of Allah: "I asked *Abdullah ibn Ubay* about whether the Messenger of Allah appointed

anyone. He said: No. I said: So he wrote to the Muslims or commanded the Muslims to make an appointment but did not appoint anyone. He said: He appointed regarding the Book of Allah." (Abū Nu'aym, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 233) According to the content of this report, the Prophet did not appoint anyone except regarding the Book of Allah. To justify the Prophet's lack of appointment in financial matters, there is a belief that the reason for not appointing regarding wealth was that he had left no wealth for himself (Mubārakfurī, n.d.: 6, 257).

Historical examination indicates that the denial of the evidence for the caliphate of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) began in the early first century when the *Saqīfah* movement was initiated by the caliphs. By around the second century, they attempted to weaken, misinterpret, and distort the texts and chains of narrations regarding succession, attributing the fabrication of hadiths regarding the Imamate and the succession of Imam Ali (AS) to the Shi'a, a process that continued into contemporary times. Therefore, considering the denial of the hadiths of succession and the labeling of them as fabricated by prominent Sunni scholars, it is essential to examine and evaluate their reasons in this regard.

## 1. Background

In the background of this research, in addition to the numerous books written to prove the succession and Imamate of Imam Ali (AS), such as "*al-Ghadīr*" by 'Allamah Amīnī, "*Dalā'il al-Şidq*" by *al-Muẓaffar*, "*Nahj al-Ḥaqq wa Kashf al-Şidq*" by 'Allamah Ḥillī, "*al-Şawārim al-Muhriqa fī al-Radd 'alā al-Şawā'iq al-Muhriqa*" by Qādī Nūrullāh

*Shūshtarī*, etc., there has been less focus on critiquing the reasons for attributing the fabrication of the hadiths of succession to the Shi‘a. The only work that can be found is the thesis "Critical Study of *al-Waḍ‘fī al-Ḥadīth* in Defense of the Shia in Fabricating Hadith" by Mohsen Karimi, which critiques and examines the specific views of ‘Umar Falātah regarding the fabrication of hadith and accusing the Shi‘a of leading in fabrication, along with some of his other ideological foundations.

With this background, it seems that until now, no specific research has been conducted regarding the attribution of the fabrication of the hadiths of succession to the Shi‘a, indicating a scientific gap in this area. Therefore, this research will descriptively, analytically, and critically examine the textual and chain aspects of the hadiths cited by the Sunnis.

## **2. Sunnis' Reasons for the Fabrication of the Hadiths of Succession**

Prominent Sunni scholars, in justifying the caliphate of the caliphs, have accused the Shi‘a of fabricating the hadiths of succession and Imamate without referring to their own credible books and sources. In this article, their reasons will be examined and critiqued.

### **2.1. Imam Ali's (AS) Lack of Reference to the Hadiths of Succession**

One of the reasons cited by the Sunnis for the fabricated nature of the hadiths of succession of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) is his reference to narrations indicating his non-acceptance of the hadiths of his own succession.

*Abū Zahw*, a Sunni writer, states: Since the issue of the Prophet's (PBUH) succession to Ali (AS) was prevalent among his followers during the time of Amir al-Mu'minin, some companions asked him about it, and Amir al-Mu'minin firmly denied the existence of such a prophetic appointment. He supports his statement by referencing a narration in which *Abū Juḥayfa* asks Amir al-Mu'minin: "Do you have a book?" He replies: "No, except for the book or understanding given to a man who has submitted, or what is in this scroll." The man asks: "What is in this scroll?" The Imam responds: "Reason, the freeing of captives, and no Muslim should be killed by a disbeliever." (*Abū Zahw*, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 94) The Sunnis consider this narration as evidence for the fabricated nature of the hadiths of succession and Imamate (*ibid.*). Although this narration has no connection to the succession of Amir al-Mu'minin, it is added that the reason for this question was the uproar that the Shi'a had raised regarding the succession and caliphate of Amir al-Mu'minin; while Amir al-Mu'minin, with that statement, meaning his response to *Abū Juḥayfa*, categorically denied it and even swore (*Abū Nu'aym*, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 232).<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1.1. Critique and Analysis

The Sunni reliance on this hadith faces several issues. Furthermore, the reference to this report for the purpose they pursue is ineffective. This hadith has no connection to the issue of caliphate; however, the

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1. Cf. Critical analysis of *Abū Zahw*'s view on the authenticity of the hadiths of Imam Ali's will, p.50.

Sunnis have linked the two, while there is no evidence in Sunni hadith sources indicating the reason for the issuance of the hadith. They themselves have pointed to it in other transmitters of the hadith. The situation is such that, given the closeness and proximity of Amir al-Mu'minin to the Prophet (PBUH), they wanted to know whether other verses of the Qur'an had been revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) that others might not have been able to write down, and that those verses would be present with Imam Ali (AS). Some narrations indicate this meaning. *Bukhārī* narrates in the chapter of "The Freeing of Captives": "From *Ibn Abī Juḥayfa*: I said to Ali (AS): Do you have anything regarding the revelation in the Book of Allah?" (*Bukhārī*, n.d.: 3, 357) The question of *Abī Juḥayfa* explicitly indicates that he is asking about the existence of verses from the Book of God that he suspected might not be with others, as the narrations in the chapter of "*al-Āqila*" in *Bukhārī* emphasize this meaning; there it says: "I heard *Abā Juḥayfa* say: I asked Ali: Do you have anything that is not in the Qur'an?" (*Bukhārī*, n.d.: 8, 365-368) Thus, the understanding of Sunni scholars regarding the cited hadith is mistaken and contradicts the general meaning of these narrations.

## **2.2. Imam Ali's Satisfaction and Lack of Objection to the Caliphs and Pledge of Allegiance to Them**

Given that the thought of denying the appointment was put forth by Sunni scholars in response to the Shi'a claim regarding the appointment of Amir al-Mu'minin, one of the arguments the Sunnis mention in denying the Prophet's appointment and the fabricated

nature of the hadiths of Imamate and succession is that Ali (AS), after the establishment of *Abū Bakr's* caliphate, never objected. If the Prophet had appointed him to the caliphate, he should have claimed it for himself (Muẓaffar, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 4, 241; Abū Zahw, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 88; al-Najdī, n.d.: 6).<sup>1</sup>

*Shawkānī* writes in this regard:

"The Shi'a have fabricated hadiths stating that the Messenger of Allah appointed the caliphate for Amir al-Mu'minin. This claim has been rejected by a group of companions and successors. The evidence for the incorrectness of this claim is that Ali never claimed, in situations such as after obtaining the caliphate or even before that on the day of *Saqīfah*, that the Prophet had appointed him to the caliphate." (Shawkānī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 6, 144)

They provide another hadith indicating that Imam Ali (AS) pledged allegiance to the three caliphs without objecting to their caliphate: "When Allah took His Prophet (PBUH), we considered our affairs and chose for our worldly matters the one whom the Prophet of Allah was pleased with for our religion, and since prayer is the essence of Islam and the foundation of the religion, we pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr..." (Abū Zahw, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 95; al-Malaṭī, n.d.: 164; al-Ḥanbalī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 2, 50) The conclusion that the authors draw from this narration is that this hadith refutes the delusions and falsehoods of the Shi'a regarding the appointment of Imam Ali (AS) and that the first three caliphs did not usurp the caliphate.

*Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī* states: "The hadith regarding Amir al-Mu'minin

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1. Cf. al-Mughnī fī Abwāb al-Tawḥīd wa al-‘Adl, p. 125.

Ali being the appointed successor is not authentic among us, and our evidence for this claim is that Ali himself never claimed that the Messenger of Allah appointed him as a successor. Those who claim the appointment of Ali are actually belittling him, because if he were truly the appointee, how could he, with the courage and rigor he displayed in the path of religion, overlook his own right?" ('Asqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 5, 269) Elsewhere, he considers the hadiths of succession to be fabricated (ibid: 8, 150; al-Bayhaqī, 1998 A/1419 AH: 8, 34).

Therefore, Ali's (AS) acceptance of the caliphate of others is one of the defensive strategies of Sunni scholars to present the caliphs they support as legitimate in contrast to Ali's (AS) caliphate.

### 2.2.1. Critique and Analysis

#### A) Imam Ali's Argument with *Abū Bakr*

Numerous narrations and historical accounts indicate that Imam Ali (AS) was dissatisfied with the caliphate of the three caliphs and expressed his objections at appropriate times, considering himself the appointed successor of the Prophet. Among these objections, one can observe the argument of Amir al-Mu'minin with *Abū Bakr*, where he recounted his virtues to prove his superiority for the caliphate (Ibn Qutayba, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 2; Khārazmī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 313; Juwaynī, 1978: 1, 320).

#### B) Objection in the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyya*

The third sermon of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, known as the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyya*, is one of Amir al-Mu'minin's objections and complaints regarding the caliphate of the three caliphs. Therefore, when he

explicitly states in the Sermon of Shiqshiqīyyah: " Beware, I swear by God that the son of *Abī Quḥāfa* has worn the caliphate like a shirt, while he knows that I am the center of the caliphate like the millstone," (Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 1, 48) this narration clearly indicates the usurpation of the caliphate by another and even explains the reason for this priority in the following phrases, which provide the highest rational standard for choosing leaders.

Imam (AS) said: "I was contemplating whether to take up arms against a few men or to endure the darkness of ignorance and the misguidance of the people." (ibid: 1, 48) This narration clearly indicates the usurpation of the caliphate. It can also be found in Sunni sources (al-Ābī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 1, 186; Sabṭ ibn al-Jawzī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 117; Ibn Mardawīyyah, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 134).

### C) Imam Ali's Objections to the Caliphs

Moreover, he never ceased to introduce himself as the appointed successor and heir of the Prophet (PBUH). Rather, whenever the situation warranted, he spoke of his position as the appointed successor and sought to illuminate the illegitimacy of others' rule. In this regard, numerous hadiths from him can be found, including the account of the Hadith of *Yawm al-Dār*, where he reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Indeed, this (Ali) is my brother and my successor..." (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 1, 216; al-Baghawī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 4, 149; al-Ṭabarānī, n.d.: 6, 221; Ibn Ḥajar, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 3, 91)

compared to the family of the Messenger (PBUH). They (the Prophet's 'Itrat) are the foundation of the religion and the steadfast pillars of certainty. The hastening one should return to them, and the lagging one should join them because the characteristics of true leadership are exclusive to them. The Prophet's testament regarding the caliphate and the legacy of the mission belongs to them; the rightful claim has now returned to its rightful owners and has been restored to the position it had been distanced from." (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 6, 384)

Furthermore, according to *Khārazmī*, he stated: "O! people, I am the brother of the Messenger of Allah and his successor, and the heir to his knowledge. The Prophet chose me from among his companions and appointed me as his successor." (Akḥṭab Khārazmī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 222)

Ibn *Qutayba* writes: When Ali (AS) was brought to the mosque, he, while refusing to pledge allegiance, said to *Abū Bakr* and 'Umar: "It is you who should pledge allegiance to me regarding the caliphate, not I to you; because you took the caliphate from the *Anṣār*, and this is due to your being close relatives of the Prophet. Now you want to take this right from us, the Ahl al-Bayt. Since this is the case, I will argue just as you argued with the *Anṣār*, that we, the Ahl al-Bayt, are more deserving of the Prophet both during his lifetime and after him. So let us be fair and do not knowingly wrong us." 'Umar replied to him: "We will not let go of you unless you pledge allegiance to *Abū Bakr*." The Imam said: "O! 'Umar! Today you are doing well, as you will benefit from it; strengthen the matter for him today so that he may

return it to you tomorrow." Then he said: "I swear by God, I will neither accept your words nor pledge allegiance." After that, *Abū Bakr* intervened and said to him: "We do not compel you to pledge allegiance." (Ibn Qutayba, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 9 and 10)

#### **D) Imam Ali's Argument Using the Hadith of *Ghadīr* in Various Situations**

According to Sunni sources, Imam Ali (AS) referred to the Hadith of *Ghadīr* at different times and places to draw people's attention to his authority. Among these instances are the following:

##### **1. On the Day of the Council**

It is narrated from *Abū Tufayl 'Āmir ibn Wa'ilah* that on the day of the council, I was standing with Ali by the door of his house and heard him say to them: "Indeed, today I will argue with you in a way that neither any Arab nor non-Arab among you can change or oppose its content. I swear to you by God, is there anyone among you to whom the Messenger of Allah said: Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. O! God, love whoever loves Ali, and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him, and support whoever supports Ali, and the Prophet commanded that everyone present that day inform those who were absent?" They all said: "We bear witness to God." (Akhtāb Khārazmī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 313; Juwaynī, 1978: 1, 319)

##### **2. During the Caliphate of 'Uthmān**

*Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī* says: During the caliphate of 'Uthmān, I saw Ali in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah, who said: "I urge you by God, do you know about whom verse 16 of Surah *al-Tawbah* was revealed?" And when the people asked the Messenger of Allah

whether these verses were specific to some believers or included all believers, Allah instructed His Prophet to announce to them that just as he explained prayer, almsgiving, and pilgrimage for them, he should also explain the leadership (*wilāyah*) to them. This was realized with my appointment on the day of *Ghadīr*. Then, by the command of the Messenger of Allah, the people were called to establish congregational prayer. After the prayer, in a sermon he said: "O! people, do you know that Allah is my Master and the Master of the believers? And I am more deserving of them than they are of themselves?" They said: "Yes, O! Messenger of Allah." Then he said: "O! Ali, stand up." When I stood, he said: "Whoever I am his master, then this Ali is his master." At the end of Imam Ali's words, they all said: "O! God, we heard these words, and we bear witness to what you conveyed as it was stated." Some said: "We remember most of what you said, and we have forgotten some." (Juwaynī, 1978: 1, 312, Hadith 250)

### 2.3. Citing Narrations from *‘Āyisha* and *‘Umar*

Another argument from the Sunnis in denying the testament of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and deeming the hadiths regarding the appointment of Imam Ali (AS) fabricated is based on narrations attributed to *‘Āyisha* and *‘Umar*. In the hadith and historical sources of the Sunnis, it is narrated from *Aswad ibn Yazīd* that: When it was mentioned to *‘Āyisha* that Ali was the appointed successor, she said: "When did he bequeath to him? For I was leaning against his chest, and I did not realize that he had passed away. So when did he

bequeath to Ali?" A group of people told Aisha: "Ali was the successor," and Aisha responded to them: "In which time did he bequeath to him, while he (the Prophet) was resting on my chest, and I did not understand that he had died? So when did he bequeath to Ali?" This narration has been reported in many Sunni sources with variations in the wording (Bukhārī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 3, 93, Chapter on Testaments; Humaydī, n.d.: 4, 123; Ibn Ḥanbal, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 6, 32; al-Nīshābūrī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 5, 75; Ibn Mājah, n.d.: 5, 194; Ibn Abī Shayba, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 6, 228).

One of the main arguments that Sunni scholars have used to deny Ali's position as the successor after the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and to consider the hadiths of his succession as fabricated is noted by *al-Shawkānī*, who writes: "The Shi'a claim that the Messenger of Allah appointed Ali as his successor, and this claim is refuted by the narration from Aisha stating that the Messenger of Allah did not make such a testament." (al-Shawkānī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 6, 144; 'Asqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 8, 114)

Another narration involves 'Umar, who made this argument in his final moments. In the days leading up to the end of the caliph's life, those around him had realized that he would soon pass away, and discussions and suggestions had begun from every side regarding the appointment of a successor. When someone asked him what he would say to God if he died without appointing a successor and left the community like a flock without a shepherd, he replied: "If I appoint someone, I have appointed one who is better than me - *Abū Bakr*. And if I leave it, I have left someone who is better than me - the Messenger

of Allah." (Bukhārī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 8, 126; Ibn Ḥibbān, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 10, 331; Ibn ‘Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 44, 425; al-Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 9, 267; al-Ṭabarī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 3, 292)

Many Sunni scholars have taken this statement of ‘Umar as evidence that the Messenger of Allah did not appoint a successor for after his death. *Nawawī* states: "Whenever the signs of death appear for a caliph, it is permissible for him to make a testament regarding his successor, but it is also permissible that he does not make a testament, as he initially followed Abu Bakr and secondly followed the Messenger of Allah." (al-Nawawī, 1972 AD/1392 AH: 12, 205)

In some sources, with reference to ‘Umar's son, it is reported: "When my father mentioned the name of the Messenger of Allah, I knew that he, like that Prophet, would not make a testament for a successor." (Abī Ya‘lī, n.d.: 1, 182; Muttaqī Hindī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 5, 727; Ibn ‘Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 44, 433) Similarly, Ṣāliḥī Shāmī has emphasized, based on ‘Umar's statement, that the Messenger of Allah did not make a testament, saying, "‘Umar's statement indicates that he did not make a testament." (al-Ṣāliḥī al-Shāmī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 12, 309)

*Ibn Khaldūn* states: "The Shi'a claim that the Messenger of Allah appointed Ali as his successor is incorrect; for ‘Umar, after being wounded, said: If I appoint, I have appointed one better than me, meaning *Abū Bakr*, and if I leave it, I have left one better than me, meaning the Prophet." (Introduction of Ibn Khaldūn)

### 2.3.1. Critique and Analysis

#### A) Contradiction of Narrations

In examining these narrations, two aspects can be discussed: "Firstly, in contrast to this statement, there are other narrations that deny the financial testament of the Prophet (PBUH) and do not mention a testament regarding the caliphate. In this regard, it is narrated from *‘Āsim ibn Zur* that when *‘Āyisha* was asked whether the Prophet had made a testament, she replied: "He left neither a dinar nor a dirham, nor a sheep nor a camel, nor did he bequeath anything." (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 14, 572; al-Nīshābūrī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 15) The Prophet left no dirham, dinar, sheep, or camel, and did not make a testament regarding anything.

Additionally, this narration is also reported in Sunni sources from *Ibn Abil Awfā*, stating that the Prophet passed away without making a testament. The narrator, upon hearing this statement, is surprised at how the Prophet could have left out a testament. He responds: "The Prophet made a testament regarding the Book of Allah." (al-Nawawī, n.d.: 15, 399; Bayhaqī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 6, 266)

If the intention behind denying the testament of the Prophet at the time of his passing is an absolute denial of any testament, then this claim is entirely incorrect; as this assertion contradicts the narrations that have been reliably transmitted, indicating that he made three testaments at the time of his passing. As *Bukhārī* narrates from *Ibn ‘Abbās*: "... And he made a testament at his death regarding three matters ... Expel the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula, and sending delegations to the areas they were supposed to go to, and a

third matter that I forgot!" (Bukhārī, 1989 AD/1401 AH: 4, 69)

However, if the intention is that the Prophet did not make a testament regarding Imam Ali (AS), this also seems very unlikely. We have no doubt that the third matter referred to in the above narration, which was said to have been forgotten, was a testament regarding Imam Ali (AS), as there is no justification for forgetting that part of the narration except for opposing the prevailing atmosphere at that time. Proving the succession of Imam Ali (AS) would have undermined the legitimacy of the Umayyad rulers; therefore, the narrator feared the occurrence of difficult and unfortunate events for himself and for this reason, he claimed to have forgotten the third testament.

In addition, in the text of the narration that denies the testament regarding Ali (AS) from the words of *‘Āyisha*, it is mentioned that the Prophet passed away while his head was in my lap (and according to some reports, his head was on my chest) (Bukhārī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 3, 93; al-Nīshābūrī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 5, 75; Ibn Ḥanbal, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 6, 32; Ibn Mājah, n.d.: 5, 194; al-Nasā’ī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 4, 260; ‘Asqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 8, 107; Muttaqī al-Hindī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 7, 253; Ibn Sa‘d, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 2, 263).

Meanwhile, it is reported in authentic Sunni sources that the Prophet passed away with his head in the lap of Ali (AS). In Sunan *al-Nasā’ī*, it is narrated based on *Ummi Salama* that she swore that at the time of the Prophet's passing, the closest person to him was Ali (AS), and in the last moments of his life, the Prophet called Ali (AS) three times. When he came next to him, we (the wives of the Prophet) realized that the Prophet needed Ali (AS); thus, we went out, and only

Ali (AS) remained with him; he was the last person to be separated from the Messenger of Allah (al- Nasā'ī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 4, 260).

It is also narrated from *Ibn 'Atfān* that *Ibn 'Abbās* said: "The Prophet passed away with his head on Ali's chest." *Ibn 'Abbās* further emphasized that the Prophet passed away with his head on Ali's chest ('Asqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 8, 107; Muttaqī Hindī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 7, 253; Ibn Sa'd, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 2, 263).

Secondly, an important point that exists here is that these two statements contradict a multitude of narrations found in both Shi'a and Sunni sources concerning the appointment of a successor by the Prophet. Here, we will refer to some of those narrations based on Sunni sources.

The Hadith of *Yawm al-Dār* is one of the most famous narrations regarding the testament, wherein the Prophet introduced the appointment of Ali (AS) at the beginning of his prophethood. According to what has been transmitted in sources, when the verse "*Wa Andhir 'Ashīratal Aqrabīn*" (And warn your closest relatives) (al-Shu'arā/214) was revealed to the Prophet, he said, "O! Children of 'Abd al-Muṭallib, by God, I do not know anyone among the Arabs who has brought for his people anything better than what I have brought for you. I have brought you the good of this world and the hereafter. God Almighty has commanded me to call you to Him; now, who among you will assist me in this matter so that he can be my brother, heir, and successor among you?" The narrator - Imam Ali (AS) - says:

"The attendees at the gathering refrained from cooperation, but I -

who was younger, less experienced, with a larger belly, and thinner legs than all - offered: "O! Messenger of Allah! I wholeheartedly accept your ministry and will spare no assistance." The Prophet joyfully placed his hand around my neck and said, "This esteemed person is my brother, my successor, and my caliph among you; now listen to him and obey his commands." The attendees stood up, laughing." (Ibn 'Asākir, 1977 AD/1398 AH: 1, 86; al-Baghawī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 4, 278; al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 319; Ibn al-Athīr, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 487; Ibn Kathīr, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 116; al-Nasā'ī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 125; Ibn 'Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 42, 48; al-Ḥalabī al-Shāfi'ī, n.d.: 1, 286; Muttaqī Hindī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 13, 149)

#### **B) Sunni Acknowledgment of the Title "Successor" for Imam Ali (AS)**

Some Sunni scholars have stated, based on these same narrations and historical evidence, that the issue of the succession of Imam Ali (AS) was widely recognized and known among Muslims in the early days of Islam (al-Azharī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 12, 18; Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 15, 394; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 1, 142; Ḥusaynī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 140). *Muḥammad 'Arafa al-Disūqī* writes about this: "The story of the succession of Imam Ali (AS) was so well-known in the early Islam that after the rise of *Abū Bakr's* caliphate, some stopped giving *zakāt*, for they claimed that he (the Prophet) bequeathed the caliphate to Ali." (al-Disūqī, n.d.: 4, 299) This is because they (the *zakāt* withholders) believed that the Prophet had entrusted the caliphate to Ali (AS).

## 2.4. Silence and Lack of Transmission by the Companions

Some Sunni scholars have regarded the narration of "The establishment of the caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful on the day of *Ghadīr*" as fabricated due to the silence of the companions regarding its transmission or adherence to its content (Ibn Qayyim, 1970 AD/1390 AH: 57; Abul Maḥāsīn, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 232; Abū ‘Abdul Raḥmān, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 337). *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyyah* narrates that the Shi‘as claim that the Prophet appointed Imam Ali (AS) as his successor and caliph in the presence of the companions on the day of *Ghadīr*; however, all the companions suppressed this matter. Thus, he considers this general concealment as evidence of the fabricated nature of the *Ghadīr* narration:

*"An Yadda‘ī ‘alā al-Nabīyy annahū Fa‘ala Amran Zāhiran bi Maḥḍarin minal Ṣaḥābah Kullihim wa Annahum Ittafaqū ‘alā Kitmānihī wa lam Yanqulūhu kamā Yaz‘umu Akdhabu al-Ṭawā‘if: Annahū Akhadha bi Yadi Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib bi Maḥḍarin minal Ṣaḥābati Kullihim wa Hum Rāji‘ūna min Ḥajjatil Widā‘i fa Aqāmahū Baynahum Ḥattā ‘Arifahul Jamī‘i Thumma Qāla: Hādhā Waṣīyyī wa Akhī wal Khalīfatu min Ba‘dī fasma‘ū lahū wa Aḥī‘ū Thumma Ittafaqal Kullu ‘alā Kitmāni Dhālika wa Taghyīrihī wa Mukhālafatihī fa La‘natullāhi ‘alal Kādhibīn."* (Ibn Qayyim, 1970 AD/1390 AH: 57)

He claims that the Prophet performed a public action in front of all the companions, and they all agreed to conceal it, failing to convey it and opposing it.

### 2.4.1. Critique and Analysis

First Point: If we accept this statement, it can be argued that the

criteria mentioned are not acceptable; because concerning the *Ghadīr* narration, the companions did not conceal these statements but rather conveyed and disseminated them. Therefore, this narration cannot be considered an example of this criterion. Moreover, there are other narrations among the Sunni sources that also mention the succession and caliphate of Imam Ali (AS) (al-Ṭabarānī, n.d.: 6, 221; ‘Asqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 1, 535; al-Qundūzī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 1, 235).

It may be that their intended meaning regarding the concealment is that the companions did not act according to this narration and did not acknowledge the Commander of the Faithful as the successor to the Prophet (Ibn Ḥajar, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 331).

In response to this claim, we say: "Firstly, aside from Medina, the people of other Islamic regions did not have significant roles in determining the successor of the Prophet. Secondly, in Medina, after the *Saqīfah* incident, *Banī Hāshim* and a group of the *Muhājirīn* and *Anṣār* took refuge in Fatimah's house in opposition to *Abū Bakr*'s succession and in support of Imam Ali (AS)" (Ibn Abī Shaybah, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 7, 432; Ibn Qutaybah, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 28; Ibn ‘Abd Rabbah, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 5, 13) Thus, it is not true that all the companions acted contrary to the words of the Prophet (PBUH) and did not adhere to them.<sup>1</sup>

Second Point: It can also be mentioned that the Prophet selected Imam Ali (AS) as his caliph, but many of the companions denied and

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1 . For more information cf. "Criticism and Review of Mullā Ali Qārī's Opinion about Imam Ali's Virtues Hadiths" in the book "al-Asrār al-Marfū‘ah fil Akhbār al-Mawḍū‘ah."

concealed this. Numerous Sunni books have reported this concealment by the companions, including *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, who narrates in his *Musnad* that '*Abdul Raḥmān ibn Laylī* said:

"Imam Ali (AS) said: I urge you, anyone who witnessed and heard the words of the Prophet at *Ghadīr Khumm*, to stand up. Those who saw stood up, and twelve people stood up ... all stood up except for three who did not rise and concealed it; Imam Ali cursed them, and the curse of him befell them." (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 119; Muqaddasī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 2, 274)

The names of some of those who concealed the truth are also mentioned, such as *Yazīd ibn Wadī'ah* and '*Abdul Raḥmān ibn Mulij ibn Athīr Jazarī*, *Abul Ḥasan 'Izzuddīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Karīm* (Ibn al-Athīr, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 3, 321). *Zayd ibn Arqam* (Bilādhuṛī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 386) and *Anas ibn Mālīk* concealed *Ghadīr* and fell ill with leprosy (Ibn Qutaybah, 1992: 1, 580).<sup>1</sup>

## 2.5. Attributing the Hadith of Succession to *Ibn Sabā'*

Some Sunni scholars believe that the hadiths regarding succession were fabricated by *Ibn Sabā'*. *Ibn Jawzī*, at the beginning of his discussion on fabricated hadiths, claims that the hadith of succession was created by *Ibn Sabā'*, who was born a Jew, drawing a parallel between Jews and Shias (Ibn Jawzī, 1966: 2, 92-94). Unfortunately, Sunni scholars have followed him without examining and evaluating the narrations (Ibn Taymīyyah, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 3; Aḥmad Amīn, 2012: 291; Abū Shahbah, n.d.: 20; Falātah, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 1, 241).

1. For more information cf. Khārij of Symmetrical Theology, Ḥusaynī Qazwīnī, 162.

The origin of attributing the hadiths to *Ibn Sabā*' goes back to a narration from *Ṭabarī*. It is said that a Jew from Yemen named '*Abdullah ibn Sabā*', nicknamed "*Ibn al-Amatul Sawdā*'," pretended to be a Muslim during the time of '*Uthmān* and claimed that Ali was the successor of the Prophet and that he was the last of the successors, just as Muhammad is the last of the prophets, and that '*Uthmān* was usurping the caliphate (al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 3, 378).

### 2.5.1. Critique and Analysis

The aforementioned idea is a type of interpretation of *Ṭabarī*'s narration that some historians have included in their works, without paying attention to its chain of transmission and content. In any case, what *Ṭabarī* has narrated here is rejected for several reasons:

1) How could an unknown Jewish individual pretend to be a Muslim and then, alone, persuade a group of companions and followers throughout the Islamic lands to align with him, to the extent that they would enter Medina in front of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) and assassinate the current caliph while introducing Ali as his successor?! This matter is never compatible with historical calculations, and the reason for the caliph's assassination in Medina must be derived from examining the history of his life.

2) The conduct of '*Uthmān* and *Mu'āwīyah* indicates that they never allowed objections to their actions and would punish dissenters severely. For instance, *Abuūdhār* faced '*Uthmān*'s wrath for criticizing his hoarding of wealth and was exiled to *Rabdhaḥ*, where he eventually passed away.

‘*Ammār Yāsir*, who was one of the opponents of ‘*Uthmān*’s policies, faced great anger; ‘*Uthmān*’s servants beat him so severely that one of his ribs was broken. Other opponents, such as ‘*Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd*, also faced beatings during ‘*Uthmān*’s caliphate. In such circumstances, could the Islamic caliphate, with all its power, allow a Jewish individual to incite chaos across various cities and territories of the Islamic world, trampling upon regions like Syria, Egypt, Basra, and *Kūfa*, and enter Medina with an army to overthrow the caliph and install another caliph in his place?

3) Those who are fixated on this part of *Ṭabarī*’s history should recognize that, if this claim is correct, one of their fundamental beliefs would be shaken. According to Sunni beliefs, the companions of the Prophet are just and honorable, and no kind of criticism or adjustment is permitted against them. How is it then possible for prominent companions and followers like *Abūdhar*, ‘*Ammār*, and *Muḥammad ibn Hudhayfah*, along with a group of distinguished followers, to be deceived by a single Jewish individual and instigate a chaos that results in the assassination of the caliph?

### 3. Examination of the Chain of Transmission for This Narration

1) *Sarīyy*: In the Sunni scholars’ records, there are two individuals well-known by this name.

A) *Sarīyy ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Hamdānī*: *Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd*, a Sunni *Rijālī* scholar, considered him to be a liar and weak (*Mizān al-I‘tidāl*: 2, 117).

B) *Sarīyy ibn ‘Āṣim ibn Sahl al-Hamdānī*, residing in Baghdad, who

died in 258; part of his life is documented by the historian *Ṭabarī*. It is sufficient to note that the scholars state about him that he is a liar and a thief of hadith (Mizān al-I'tidāl: 2, 117; Ibn Ḥajar, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 3, 145).

2) *Shu'ayb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī*: He is an unknown figure; Dhahabī states that this man is a narrator of the books of *Sayf ibn 'Umar*, but he is not recognized by us.

3) *Sayf ibn 'Umar*: The weakness of this chain of transmission primarily relates to this man. *Ibn Hibbān* states that *Sayf ibn 'Umar* attributed fabricated hadiths and histories to well-known figures and was accused of heresy (lack of faith). *Ibn 'Adīyy* says that all his narrations are unknown and unacceptable (Mizān al-I'tidāl: 2, 275; Ibn Ḥajar, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 3, 145). Major historians have questioned the character of *Ibn Sabā'*, considering him a historical myth<sup>1</sup>; they have deemed this story to be fabricated by historical and hadith forgers like *Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tamīmī*.

## Conclusion

The issue of whether the successor of the Prophet is appointed or elected is the greatest point of contention between the Imamiyah and the followers of the Caliphate school. The Imamiyah believe in the issuance of a text for the appointment of an Imam after the Messenger of God (PBUH) and, considering the narrations, evidence, and strong arguments, they assert that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

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1. For more information cf. al-Fitnah al-Kubrā, p. 134; Aṣl al-Shī'ah wa Uṣūlihā, p. 73; al-Ghadīr, Allamah Amīnī, vol. 9, p. 220-221.

introduced *Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib* (AS) as his immediate successor in governing the Islamic community by divine command. In contrast, Sunni scholars deny the realization of this text in this matter, and some of them have historically accused the Shias of fabricating hadiths regarding the succession of Imam Ali (AS).

Based on the studies conducted, it can be observed that Sunni scholars, with considerable bias against the Shias and political motivations, have denied the hadiths of Imamate and succession without thorough investigation and by relying on weak narrations to legitimize and defend the caliphate of the caliphs. Some of them have deemed the hadiths of succession as fabricated regarding the presence of Shia narrators or by considering the narrators weak for mentioning the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). They have used completely flawed arguments, including the lack of objection from Imam Ali (AS), his acceptance of the caliphate of the caliphs, his voluntary allegiance to the caliphs, the absence of any claim of a text from Imam Ali (AS), attributing the fabrication of the hadith of succession to *Ibn Sabā'*, narrations from *Āyisha* and *Umar* denying the text from the Prophet (PBUH), and the claim that the companions concealed the narrations of succession. However, considering the credible Quranic, narrative, and historical sources, the political nature and baselessness of these accusations have been demonstrated.

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# **Discourse on "The Distinction between the Position of Imam and Caliph" Based on Historical Reports of *Aṣḡagh ibn Nubāta* from Imam Ali (AS)**

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## **Abstract**

Discourse analysis is an effective method in historical research that leads to a better understanding of the origins of a thought and the ups and downs associated with it. Ancient hadith data serves as a rich source for discovering earlier discourses. The present study, using the historical reports of *Aṣḡagh ibn Nubāta* as narrated by Imam Ali (AS), aims to uncover and extract the prominent discourse of this period. The research findings indicate that *Aṣḡagh ibn Nubāta*, as one of the close companions of Imam Ali (AS), was from the very beginning a crucial pillar in transmitting Shia-based discourses such as Imamate and *Wiṣāyat* (Caliphate and Succession), considering his personality traits and concerns. He distinguished between these two concepts

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based on Imam Ali's epistemological framework. Furthermore, the movement of Imam *Husayn* (AS) also aimed to consolidate this discourse, and it can be stated that based on the theory of "Contradictory Voice of Bakhtin," the widespread reflection of the components of the succession concept in the historical reports of *Aṣḡagh* and his significant attention to the discourse of Alawī *Wiṣāyat* was purposeful. It was formed in a dialectical interaction with the rival discourse that sought to institutionalize the theory of the *Saqīfa* Caliphate in society. In other words, *Aṣḡagh* aimed to normalize the notion that Imamate is not equivalent to Caliphate; rather, succession is one of the important dimensions of Imamate.

**Keywords:** Discourse, Imam and Imamate, Caliph and Caliphate, Discourse of Imamate and Caliphate, Imamiyya Hadith, *Aṣḡagh ibn Nubāta*.

## Introduction

Today, some Western researchers engaged in Shia studies, such as Gleave, Madelung, and others; regard the Shia perspective on the leadership position as one of their main historical concerns, considering it to contain distinctive and identity-forming elements. They view this issue as a key and central topic for the conflicts among Shia groups (Gherami, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 56). Kufa, as a central gathering place for Shias and a suitable ground for producing and promoting Shia thoughts, especially concerning Imamate and leadership, has always been of interest to the Imams. The special companions of the Imams predominantly hailed from this city and contributed significantly to its cultural development.

One of the research methods that can provide a more accurate, clearer, and truly closer image of the cultural space of Shia in ancient historical contexts and the framework that facilitated the formation of

movements<sup>1</sup> and discourses is historical discourse analysis. In this method, discourse refers to what seeks to establish a belief and teaching within society; in other words, discourse is defined as the formation of a stable and effective movement regarding the analysis of a teaching (Rad, Ali; Ghazizadeh, Kazem, 2011 AD/1390 SH). According to Bakhtin's theory of "Contradictory Voice," discourse is not merely a collection of coherent propositions; rather, there are two processes concerning discourse: One that strives to propagate specific ideas and another that aims to establish boundaries between those propositions and others, preventing their proliferation (Salehizadeh, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 120).

Given this context, the main issue of the present study is the linguistic and content analysis of the historical reports of *Aṣḥab ibn Nubāta*,<sup>2</sup> a close companion of Imam Ali (AS), to understand his primary concerns regarding concepts related to Imamate. 'Did he also pay attention to *Wiṣāyat*, Caliphate, and Succession?' 'Did he view them as different from the concept of Imamate?' 'What discourse was he trying to normalize through references to the verses of the Quran and the sayings of Imam Ali (AS)?'

## 1. Background

Numerous articles and works have been written on the topic of Imamate, but they lack the approach and perspective of discourse

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1. Consider the distinction among three historical realities: The essence of Shiism, Shia thought, and the Shia movement (Gherami, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 57-58).
  2. *Aṣḥab ibn Nubāta Tamīmī Ḥanzalī* (d. 55 AH) was originally from Kufa and belonged to the lineage of *Mujāshi' ibn Dārim*.

analysis.<sup>1</sup> For instance, Hassan Bashir (2019 AD/1398 SH) addresses the major views presented in Imam *Riḡā*'s (AS) sermon regarding Imamate using discourse analysis; however, this work does not distinguish between the positions of Imamate and Caliphate.

In another article titled "The Concept of "Imam" over Time (Until the Mid-Second Century)," Mortaza Bahrami Khoshnoodi (History in the Mirror of Research, 2008 AD/1387 SH: No. 17) discusses the term Imam and its semantic components; however, the main issue of the present research is not addressed. A search of other research works, which primarily include earlier sources, indicates that none of them have paid attention to the discourse distinguishing the roles of the Imam and the Caliph, nor have they engaged with this issue. Therefore, the present paper aims to provide historical evidence and documentation to prove the existence of such discourse in the first century.

## 2. Research Methodology

Textual analyses lead to the discovery and extraction of frequently

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1. From our perspective, discourse analysis differs from discourse mining. In the discourse mining method, we aim to discover and extract discourses, while discourse analysis, which is often conducted critically, typically involves one or more texts being analyzed at various levels based on well-known discourse theories such as that of Fairclough, among others. See for the difference between the terms "Historical discourse mining" and "Historical discourse analysis": Nasrawi, Mohammad (2015 AD/1394 SH), "An Introduction to Historical Discourse Mining: A Case Study of Zaynab's (AS) Sermon in Sham." Additionally, historical discourse mining differs from historical semantics (synchronic semantic) or the evolution of meaning of a word (for a sample of historical semantics of a word, cf. Mehrwash, Farhang, (2016 AD/1395 SH), "The History of the Concept of Dhikr in Islamic Culture," Studies in Quran and Hadith. Vol. 9, no. 1).

occurring linguistic actions. The goal is to achieve discourses that can be attributed to individuals; hence, the discourse must necessarily meet the condition of "Frequency." The nature of the discourses attributed to individuals is also of significant importance, meaning we need to determine whether the discourses are predominantly productive or if they emerge in response to representing the forgotten discourse of earlier eras for the purpose of defending against and responding to the opposing discourse in times of challenges and critical junctures. For instance, the discourse that can be attributed to *Aṣḥāb ibn Nubāta* is based on reports<sup>1</sup> that reflect his ideological psychology. The first challenge after the Prophet's (PBUH) passing, namely succession, which the Muslim community grappled with, also strongly suggests that the discourse attributed to *Aṣḥāb* is rooted in Shia beliefs and is organized based on certain components of appointment (*Wiṣāyat*) or Imamate. Part of this discourse revives a rooted discourse from the Prophetic era, while some aspects of it are also productive and foundational.

The method employed in this research is an interdisciplinary approach, as it is closely related to text analysis. By analyzing the text and discovering its linguistic relationships, it seeks to recognize the discourses prominent in its historical period; therefore, its discussions are connected with both linguistics and history.

In the field of linguistics, one of the methods for understanding

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1. The initial or middle expressions of these reports indicate a close and sincere relationship between *Aṣḥāb* and the Imam; for examples of such examinations, cf. Marnisi, F. (n.d.). "Veiled Women and Armored Men." Tehran: Nashr-e Ney.

texts involves uncovering lexical relationships and also conceptual (or semantic) relations. Phenomena such as opposition, syntagmatic and paradigmatic, collocation, are parts of the conceptual relationships, while any type of relationship between words -including phonological (poetic metrics), structural (morphological changes), and syntactic relationships- falls under lexical relationships (Sharifi, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 55).

Of course, this method is not completely new, and its use has been prevalent in traditional methods. The difference is that the first method is somewhat more systematic and structured. In the traditional approach, the researcher goes through several stages<sup>1</sup>, some of which are similar to the first method; however, overall, they will be able to gain a relatively good understanding of the text and its discourses. Therefore, many of the components referred to as "Historical Discourse Analysis" actually existed among scholars of *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Principles of Jurisprudence) and ancient interpreters as well.

The first stage in the "Historical Discourse Analysis" method is the extraction of concepts (thoughts, ideas)<sup>2</sup> through frequently occurring

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1. For details on the phases, cf. Shukrani, Reza; Moti', Mi; Sadegh Zadegan, H. (2011 AD/1390 SH). "An Examination of Discourse Mining Method and Its Application in Quranic Studies." *Ayyar Journal of Human Sciences*. Vol. 3, no. 1.
  2. The concept of "History of Concepts" is, in fact, a research approach that investigates the application and meaning of various concepts in different fields of human sciences within a historical context. Additionally, there is another term called intellectual history, which is a broader concept referring to the historiography of thought and ideas, where the history of concepts can serve as one of the tools for intellectual historiography (Gherami, S.M. H; Qandehari, M. (2013 AD/1392 SH). "Exploring the Relationship between Speech and Intellectual History in Shi'a Studies." *Islamic History Studies*. Vol. 5, no. 18).

linguistic actions. In this phase, which we call the first reading of the text, language (or text) functions as an element that represents the social environment or the context of the text's issuance,<sup>1</sup> guiding the audience towards the hidden implications of the text; in other words, it allows them to transition from the text's interior to its exterior.

After extracting the discourses, the next stage involves examining the changes in these discourses. This means assessing what stages they have undergone from normalization to ultimately reaching the phase of naturalization. If a concept reaches the stage of maturity or naturalization, it can produce other discourses (the second reading of the text), although this stage is currently outside the scope of this research. Ultimately, identifying the discourses and currents present in society based on the linguistic actions extracted from the text using the "Text-based" method described above will be the main focus of this writing.<sup>2</sup>

### **3. Tracing the Sources of Ancient Reports on *Aṣḥāgh ibn Nubāta***

The extraction of historical reports about *Aṣḥāgh* (identifying their positions in ancient early sources) reveals two components: Their

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1. This statement reflects the essence of Foucault's thinking in the discussion of discourse analysis, emphasizing that there is an interactive and dialectical relationship between text and context (Salehizadeh, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 123).
  2. Among recent studies that have simultaneously employed both methods to achieve a precise understanding of the discourses present during a historical period, one can refer to the article "An Introduction to Historical Discourse Mining: A Case Study of Zaynab's (AS) Sermon in Sham" by Mohammad Nasrawi, as well as his master's thesis on the discourse of Muhammad (PBUH) in the era of Imam Sajjad (AS).

frequency and distribution in the written heritage of hadith and interpretation following him—including compilations and early monographs up to the fifth century AH.

Given the limitations of writing in the first century and the limited heritage from this period, the existence of 100 historical reports for *Aṣḡagh*, who passed away in the middle years of this century, is considered a positive occurrence. Hence, it is possible to derive reasonable conclusions from the analysis of these reports. The distribution of *Aṣḡagh's* reports in the hadith and interpretative works of later periods indicates the importance of his statements. The list of works that have utilized his reports, wherein his name appears within the chains of narration, is as follows:

**Table of the Historical Reflection of *Aṣḡagh's* Historical Reports in Later Works**

2 <sup>nd</sup> Century	3 <sup>rd</sup> Century	4 <sup>th</sup> Century	5 <sup>th</sup> Century
Tafsir of Abū Ḥamza Thumālī	Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq Ṣan‘ānī	al-Kāfī Kulaynī	Amālī Shaykh Mufīd
	Maḥāsīn Barqī	Sharḥ al-Akḡbār Qāḡī Nu‘mān	Mi‘atu Manqabat Ibn Shādhān Qummī
	al-Gḡarāt Thaqaḡī Kūfī	al-Gḡaybah Nu‘mānī	al-Irshād Shaykh Mufīd
	Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt Ṣaffār	al-Faqīḡ Ṣadūq	Amālī Shaykh Ṭūsī
	Virtue of Imam Ali (AS)	Tuḡaf al-‘Uqūl Ḥarrānī	Kḡaṣā’iṣ al-A’immah Sayyid Raḡī
Tafsirs of ‘Ayyāshī, Qummī and Furāt Kūfī		Ma’rifah al-Sunan wal Āthār Bayḡaḡī	

#### 4. Typology of the Expressive Structures of *Aṣḥab*'s Historical Reports

Direct reports of *Aṣḥab* from Imam Ali (AS) have made the expressive structures of his narratives significant. Some of the narrations are of the type "Report" or "Quotation," which refer only to certain verses of the Quran either in the course of the statement or at its conclusion (Referential, 28). Others are explanations that *Aṣḥab* has provided from Imam Ali (AS) concerning specific verses, aimed at clarifying ambiguities, and the method of transmitting the hadith is indicated with phrases like (*Qāla* and *Sami'tu*) (He said and I heard) (explaining interpretation, exegesis, and verses' instances, 40). Another category includes inquiries from *Aṣḥab* himself (*Sa'altu*) or questions from others directed at the Imam (in the passive voice; *Su'ila 'an...*), specifically regarding some verses of the Quran (Questions, 20).<sup>1</sup>

A number of other reports also utilize verses of the Quran for guiding and instructing the Shias or to encourage and commend them on a specific topic (Instructive, 12). Naturally, one must distinguish between each of these states, as each represents a special context for the issuance of the narration. Each of these categories contains subtle messages that require analysis, examination, and discovery, which will be further explored in the subsequent sections.

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1 . See examples of questions narrations: Masoudi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 123-125.

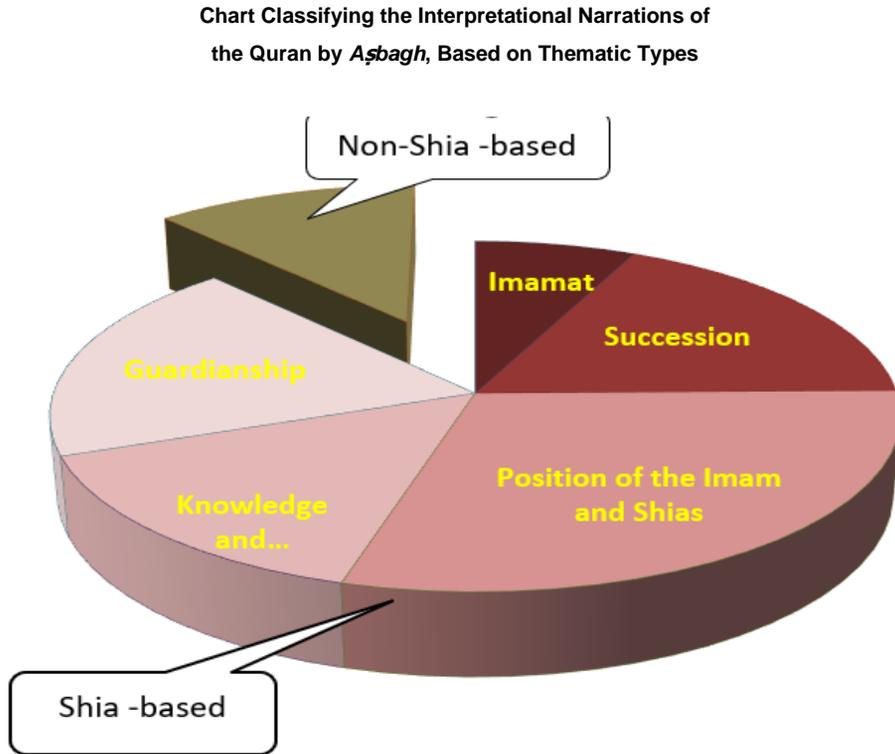
Diagram of the Expressive Structures of Aṣḡagh's Historical Reports



## 5. Linguistic and Content Analysis of Aṣḡagh's Historical Reports

Considering the main issue of the research and the abundance of reports from the Shia foundational figure Aṣḡagh ibn Nubātaḥ (cf. the diagram at the end of this section), we have focused our examination on this specific category of reports. The term "Shia-based" refers to that part of Shia beliefs that shapes its doctrinal foundations and underpinnings, serving as the basis for the forming an independent Shia identity that began during the time of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) and reached fruition in the era of Imam Ṣādiq (AS). Here, we seek to discover 'Whether, through an analysis of Aṣḡagh's historical reports, the concept of Imamate can be attributed to him as a discourse, or the doctrine of succession?' 'What distinguishing characteristics exist

between the aforementioned discourses in his words?’ ‘Did he even make a distinction between these two concepts or not?’



### 5.1. Linguistic Actions Related to Succession (*Wiṣāyat*)

As previously mentioned, paying attention to *Aṣḥab*'s belief psychology or, in other words, some of his personality traits can significantly familiarize us with the discourses attributed to him. The important term "*Shurṭatul Khamīs*" for him,<sup>1</sup> and his belief in the

1. The Title of Some of the Forces of Amir al-Mu'minin who had established this condition with him that they would remain loyal to him until the end and would never retreat (Kashshī, 1929 AD/1348 AH: 1, 103; Mufid, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 65).

appointment of successors to the Prophet (PBUH),<sup>1</sup> provides a key to understanding him as someone who initiated the discourse on succession. Other expressions from him, such as "*Ana bihī Mūqin*" (I believe in him), concerning succession, demonstrate that Aṣḡagh was deeply concerned about this issue and even felt justified in his views. Quoting statements from Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) regarding the identification of the successor after the Prophet (PBUH)<sup>2</sup> adds another dimension that indicates the concept of succession in his mind had a particular clarity.

Aṣḡagh has two historical reports (one a direct narration from the Imam and the other a narration through *Ibn 'Abbās* from the Prophet (PBUH)) indicating that the earliest discussions about succession began during the time of the Prophet (PBUH). The content of both narrations (Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 244; Mufīd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 224) is the question about the Imams after the Prophet (PBUH) and their number; however, Shaykh *Mufīd's* narration (Mufīd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 224) refers not only to the number of successors but also to some of their characteristics. For various reasons, we refrain from attributing these two narrations to Aṣḡagh; however, similar to both previous narrations, they are also present in *Kamāl al-*

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1. Nāshi' Akbar, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 183.

2. Both of these reports aim to highlight the role of Imam Ḥasan in the succession of Imam Ali and likewise Imam Ḥusayn in succeeding their noble brother. The expressions articulated by these two esteemed Imams seek to produce and create the discourse of "Attributing their succession to the Prophet and Imam Ali." (Hāshimī Khu'ī, n.d.: 17, 310; Burūjirdī, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 13, 214; Qummī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 79)

*Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'mah* by Shaykh Ṣadūq (Ibn Bābawayh, 1975 AD/1395 AH: 1, 259-260), based on which we can ascribe the narration regarding the number of Imams to *Aṣḥab* and demonstrate the rootedness of the discourse on succession during the time of the Prophet (PBUH) in *Aṣḥab's* interpretation.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to these two narrations, *Aṣḥab* has also warned about the alteration of the Sunnah of the Messenger of God (PBUH) and the deviation from his successor. In these narrations, the association of the phrases (alteration of the Sunnah and deviation from the successor) with (the descent of punishment) and the contrast between punishment and blessing creates precise and significant semantic relationships. The mentions of succession among other historical reports of *Aṣḥab* can be organized in the following components related to succession:

### **5.1.1. The Necessity of the Existence of a Successor for the Prophet**

In the historical reports of *Aṣḥab*, the necessity of the existence of a successor after the Prophet (PBUH) is not explicitly stated; however, considering the conceptual conjunctions that we previously included in the stages of understanding the text and uncovering the underlying discourses, this issue can be somewhat established through implied reasoning. Most of these reports are presented in the form of tripartite conjunctions of God, the Prophet, and the Successor (‘Ayyāshī, n.d.: 2, 41), which sometimes contain evaluative judgments regarding the

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1. Several good articles on the number of Imams have been published, including: "Two ‘Amrs and a Twelver Hadith," by Mohammad Reza Lavasani, pp. 108, as well as the article "Investigating the Antiquity of the Hadiths of the Twelve Imams in al-Kāfī," by Reza Ghorbani Zarrin, *Imam Research*. No. 12.

successor; one narration even explicitly mentions the name of Ali (AS).<sup>1</sup>

### 5.1.2. The Knowledge and Expertise of the Successor and Its Quality

After clarifying the fundamental necessity of succession after the Prophet (PBUH) as the first component of the identity of succession, another identity-forming component can be seen as the knowledge and expertise of the successor. This is evident from the conjunction of the two concepts of knowledge and succession in some of the questioning narrations of *Aṣḡagh* (the questioner being *Ibn Kawwā'*)<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, attributing this knowledge to God and the Messenger can also indicate the divine nature of the position and status of succession, establishing it as a high rank of the Imams. The structure of these narrations is based on mentioning specific instances that center on the condemnation of concealing the knowledge of the successors and opposing them (Baḡrānī, n.d.: 5, 595).

### 5.1.3. The Complexity of the Concept of Succession in Terms of "Understanding" and "Acceptance"

In explaining this phrase, it should be noted that the inability to grasp

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1 . (Qummī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 2, 417; Ḥuwayzī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 5, 555). In another instance, *Aṣḡagh* narrates from Salmān that the Messenger of God (PBUH) said: "O! Ali; indeed you and the successors after me, or he said: After you—are [as stated in] A'raf." (Baḡrānī, n.d.: 2, 550)

2 . Among the historical reports of *Aṣḡagh*, there are multiple instances where *Ibn Kawwā'* (a leader of the *Khawārij* in *Ḥarūrā'* and a notable figure from Kufa) questions the Imam about verses of the Quran, and it is evident that most of his questions are more intended to trouble the Imam than for understanding. For information about his character, see the Encyclopaedia of Islam, entry on *Ibn Kawwā'*, pp. 529-530.

all the aspects and the true nature of succession leads to a natural challenge to its general public acceptability. Considering a number of historical reports from *Aṣḥab* and a similar approach observed in the narrations of other Shia narrators, this aspect can be counted among the identity-forming components of succession.

In this section, three reports from *Aṣḥab* were found that indicate the mentioned complexity based on the specific expressions used in them. The first two narrations are questions that begin with phrases using the word "Secret." Noting the beginning and end of both narrations reveals the connection between the secret and the concept of succession. The intermediate content in these beginning and ending parts demonstrate the special concern of the Imams in explaining some of their statuses through references to the verses of the Quran. In the first narration, reference is made to verse 23 of Surah *al-Shūrā*, known as the verse of Affection (*Mawaddat*), which, if mentioned in later exegetical heritage, suggests that the discourse of love for the Prophet's (PBUH) family is among the prevalent themes in Shia interpretation.

In the third narration, "*Inna Ḥadīthanā Ahlul Bayti Ṣa'bun Mustaṣ'ab*," the Imam, while referencing verse 30 of Surah *al-Baqarah*, suggests that presenting specific instances does not negate the uneven perceptions of his words. He attempts to connect the prevailing spirit of the narration to another issue related to the concept of guardianship as a form of succession. References to the "*Hadith of Ghadīr*" and the explanation of its connection to the believer along with the mentioned characteristic (*Qad Imtaḥana Allāhu Qalbahū lil*

*Īmān*) all indicate the complexity of the concept of succession in its various dimensions and it shows that only these individuals truly understood the words of the Prophet (PBUH), and thus, in the Imam's words, they distinguished themselves by something that all the angels, all the prophets, and even all the believers had not comprehended (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 54-56).

### **Summary of the Discourse on *Wiṣāyat* (Caliphate and Succession)**

Based on the analysis of historical reports from *Aṣḡagh*, several points of interest emerge in the discussion of succession that can be counted among the identity-forming components of this concept. The most important of these is the necessity of establishing a successor after the Prophet (PBUH), which seems to be articulated in its initial context through the triadic conjunction of God, the Prophet, and the Successor. This idea is supported and upheld by references to verses from the Quran. A related point is the specification of "Immediacy," which, according to the theological presuppositions of Imamiyyah, although not explicitly stated in the texts of the narrations regarding succession, seems to indicate that the inseparable conjunctions mentioned provide at least evidence for the continuity and lack of separation of the successor after the Prophet (PBUH) from him. This is especially true as some reports explicitly refer to Ali (AS) as the successor after the Prophet (PBUH).

Another point is the knowledge and expertise of the successor and the affirmation of its divine origin, which is corroborated by the conjunction of God and the Messenger. Additionally, the relatively

frequent actions (knowledge, guidance, and faith) reflect the close relationship of these attributes with the status of succession and leadership. A very significant component is the complexity and difficulty of understanding the concept of succession and identifying its instances, which naturally invites questions. Therefore, it can be said that the interpretative discourse attributed to *Aṣḥbagh* in the realm of succession possesses an initiating and non-questioning aspect concerning the components of "Necessity" and "Knowledge and expertise." However, when it comes to implications and instances, questioning transforms it into the representation of the discourse prevalent in the prophetic era.

Even among those reports by *Aṣḥbagh* that focus on questions about specific companions of the Prophet (PBUH), there is a possibility that these individuals, especially given the positive descriptions provided by the Prophet (PBUH) regarding them, were accused and defamed by opposing factions due to their belief in the legitimacy of Alawi's succession (the rightful successor to the Prophet (PBUH)). Therefore, *Aṣḥbagh* also seeks to counteract or at least moderate this faction in light of the representation of the discourse of Alawi's succession.

## 5.2. Linguistic Actions Related to Imamate

### 5.2.1. The Status of the Imam

Considering the famous narration "*Lanā Karā'imul Qurān*" (Qāḍī Nu'mān, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 2, 353; Mufīd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 25; 'Ayyāshī, n.d.: 1, 9 and 16; Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 17 and 47), it must be said that the true meaning of this phrase is that the most

distinguished verses of the divine book and the most decisive expressions of the Almighty God concern the family of the Prophet. The common message of all these verses emphasizes the necessity for the Islamic community to follow the leaders of this family (Reyshahri, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 14-15).

Accordingly, many narrations regarding this type of verse can be observed that reflect the virtues and specific status of the Imams. Most of these narrations serve as examples of the verses and establish a conceptual relationship of intertwined and close connections among the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), the Prophet (PBUH) himself, and God, indicating the alignment of the guiding path of the Prophet and the Imam, ultimately affirming its oneness.

These narrations can be discussed in two categories:

A) Non-questioning narrations, where *Aṣḡagh* seeks to select and narrate them to highlight the foremost and most crucial gap in the discourse of Imamate (status), which he has rightly understood, so that the surrounding society may also recognize it;

B) Questioning narrations, where the Imam, in response to a question or request from the audience, guides them to the Quranic status of the Imam.

In explaining the first category, it should be noted that some of these narrations apply only to Imam Ali (AS), while others encompass all Imams. The narrations concerning Imam Ali (AS) often focus on the faith-based and guiding dimensions of his character.

Especially noteworthy is a narration where the Imam uses the term

**174** "*Ana Anful Īmāni Ana Anful Hudā wa ‘Aynāhu.*" This seems to

address any doubts from non-specialists regarding his firmness on the path of guidance. Further, if we consider the continuation of the Imam's statement, "*Ayyuhannās lā Tastawḥishū fī Ṭarīqil Hudā li Qillati man Salakah*," we find that he refers to himself as the embodiment of "*Ṭarīqil Hudā*," as he had previously introduced himself with the term "*Anḥul Hudā*." (Nu'mānī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 35)

From the analysis and review of other cases relating to the status of the other Imams, it cannot be necessarily concluded in a unified manner, although among them, there is one instance where the guide is applied to the Imams in a verse of the Quran (Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 489).

In accordance with the mentioned instances, there are examples where *Aṣḥab* himself is either the questioner or he conveys information in response to a specific question or request from the Imam. Both situations could reflect the doubts and challenges raised in the Shia community regarding the identity aspects of Imamate.

A careful look at the opening passages of narrations, where the questioner is someone other than *Aṣḥab*, indicates the presence of an unresolved issue in the mind of the questioner. This individual seems to be struggling to align it with their own mental findings and even the realities of society, prompting them to present it to the Imam in search of an answer to their ambiguous thoughts. The expressions used at the beginning of both narrations suggest a sympathetic position from the questioner. Nonetheless, it seems that the question is asked with the aim of dispelling doubts and uncertainties and attaining a higher knowledge (Certainty), thus completing their understanding of the

status of the Imamate, which appears to have some deficiencies in their thought system.

In response to the first question, the Imam clarifies his own status and that of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt to the audience by referencing the verses from Surah *al-Nūr* (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 285-286). In response to the second question, before referring to the Quranic verse, he tries to guide the questioner step by step toward the answer in a different manner. The Imam then references verse 253 of Surah *al-Baqarah*, stating: "Despite the similarities (which can cause confusion), whenever a disagreement arises, we are more entitled to God, His religion, and His Prophet, as well as to the Book and the Truth. We are indeed the believers, while they are the disbelievers (referring to the phrase "*Fa minhum man Āmana wa minhum man Kafar*" in the verse), and our fighting against them is by the will, command, and intention of God." (Ṭabrisī, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 1, 248; Mufīd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 102; Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 197; Burūjirdī, 1978 AD/1399 AH: 13, 85; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 3, 19; Ibn Abil Ḥadīd, 1956 AD/1378 AH: 5, 258)

According to these narrations, *Aṣḡagh*'s questions are derived from Quranic verses that are worthy of reflection. In response to the first question, the Imam applies the phrase "*Rijāl*" to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and introduces the grounds for entering Paradise and Hell as being the support or the animosity (Denial) of others toward them. Based on the intertextual relations of the text, *Aṣḡagh*'s narration from Salmān regarding the Prophet (PBUH), "*Yā Ali Innaka wal Awṣiyā' min Ba'dī aw Qāla min Ba'dika A'rāf*" can also be seen as a context and

background for the discussion of this topic during the time of Imam Ali (PBUH) (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 144; Ṭabrisī, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 4, 261-262; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 3, 31; Ṭabrisī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 660; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 24, 249; Zarkishī, n.d.: 2, 549; Hā'irī Ṭihirānī, 1918 AD/1337 AH: 4, 335).

The Imam's response to *Aṣḡagh's* second question begins with the expression that "No one has asked about this verse before you; I also asked the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and he replied with the information from Gabriel." Such expressions indicate the expectation of the Imam for others to ask questions; it seems that he anticipated that other individuals would inquire about this verse, yet it appears that this did not occur. Ultimately, in Gabriel's response, the conjunction of the terms Ahl al-Bayt, wilāyah (guardianship), Shia, love of Ahl al-Bayt, and specifically the mention of *Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib* (AS) stands out, as all of these together constitute the elements of Shia identity, which, according to Gabriel, are the ones who will be safe from the great terror on the Day of Judgment (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 311-312; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 7, 241).

Other verses that serve as the basis for non-question-based narrations of *Aṣḡagh* actually encompass the status of those other than the Imams; that is, the companions and followers of the Imams, who are highlighted in the narrations through specific linguistic actions such as "Shia," "Companions," and "*Anṣār*." The main narrations from this group are of the type that specifies examples. What stands out in these kinds of narrations is the defensive and corrective nature of the Imam's reaction when faced with questions that reflect the

perspectives attributed to his companions. For instance, in response to *Ibn Kawwā*'s question, "Indeed, some of your companions claim that..." the Imam says: "Speak of what you have heard, and do not add to the words from what (he) said to them." (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 53, 73; Fayḡ Kāshānī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 4, 76-78; Baḡrānī, n.d.: 1, 221-222)

Hence, it becomes clear that, firstly, challenging the claims of the Imam's companions and even considering them incorrect, as indicated by "They claim," and secondly, adding embellishments to their words, along with failing to convey them accurately and explicitly—whatever the motivation—exists, and the Imam seeks to correct such thinking by referring to the verses of the Quran and applying concepts from it to the Shia, while also revealing other dimensions of a Shia's personality.

### 5.2.2. Knowledge and Learning

One of the points mentioned in our narrations is the continuity of divine teachings until the end of times in the form of inheritance.<sup>1</sup> The term "*Ālim*" (scholar) in the Imami narrations has a specific connotation, and as long as there is no evidence to suggest otherwise, it refers to the impeccable Imam. In these narrations, two key aspects are evident:

A) The scholarly nature of Amir al-Mu'minin and the Imams (AS) after him;

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1. Previously, the article related to this topic was mentioned under the title "Review of Two Theories about the Chosen Heirs of the Qur'an."

B) The continuity of knowledge (the ongoing presence of humans in elucidating the teachings of Islam).

Among the narrations that *Aṣḥāb* initiates, it appears that he has selected and transmitted the narrations with a specific perspective. Therefore, certain specific components of the Imam's knowledge<sup>1</sup> can be identified, which will be mentioned below.

A) Reference to the depth of knowledge and its root and source (knowledge that comes directly from God); the necessity of knowledge for the evolving discourse of Imamate is reflected in a report where Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) states: "The Prophet (PBUH) revealed to me a thousand hadiths, each containing a thousand chapters, and for each chapter, there were a thousand keys." He then refers to the verse 71 of Surah *al-Isrā'*: "On the Day We will call forth every people with their Imam" (Mufid, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 283; Rāwandī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 746; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 98; Baḥrānī, n.d.: 3, 556);

B) The breadth of the Imam's knowledge; according to the historical reports of *Aṣḥāb*, it encompasses a wide range—from the Imam's scientific mastery of the sacred texts of previous religions to the Quran. Initially, the discussion regarding the Quran focuses on the apparent meanings of its verses, and at subsequent levels, it includes knowledge of the deeper implications and awareness of future events. Numerous examples report the Imam's absolute knowledge of all heavenly books and illustrate concrete instances of this knowledge.

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1 . cf. the article: The place of Imam Ali (AS) in the publication of religious sciences in the scientific centers of the Islamic society of the first century, pp. 28-7.

The structure of these types of narrations indicates that these statements and the ensuing questions and answers have intentionally taken place in public spaces, such as mosques and pulpits; thus, the reactions of the addressed audience and their questions are noteworthy. The reactions to the Imam's statements, such as: "O! Amir al-Mu'minin, what is the verse that was revealed about you...", firstly, demonstrates that their interest in promoting the discourse of "Verses of the Quran revealed about individuals" has borne fruit, prompting people to search for instances of it. Secondly, it practically references them to verses of the Quran that are related to introducing the scope of his knowledge (Hūd: 17; cf. Ṣaffār, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 152; al-Ra'd: 39; cf. Ṭabrisī, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 1, 385; al-Ḥāqqah: 12; cf. 'Ayyāshī, n.d.: 1, 14; Ṭabrisī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 367; Ṭabrisī, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 9, 169). In some of these transmissions, the addition of "The Messenger of Allah" and its association with the term "Inheritance" not only proves the divine connection between the Messenger and, consequently, Ali (AS) with God, but it also reflects the inherited nature of the Imam's divine knowledge. Some of the Imam's responses, corresponding to the questions posed, as previously mentioned, indicate the Imam's knowledge of the deeper meanings of the Quranic verses and future events. An example of this is when the Imam interprets certain verses of the Quran (al-Isrā': 6; Saba': 51; al-Anbīyā': 15) as pertaining to the advent of Imam al-Mahdī (AS) and elaborates on the events that will occur on that day (Qabbānjī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 7, 407);

historical reports of *Aṣḥab*, there are narrations that fundamentally express another level of the Imam's knowledge regarding the Quran. However, since these have a practical aspect and the Imam's intention in referencing them is to bring the Quran into tangible and sensory realms of human life to safeguard against disasters and dangers (al-A'raf: 196; al-Zumar: 67; Āli 'Imrān: 83; al-Tawbah: 128-129; al-Nūr: 40; al-Isrā': 110-111), provide healing (Kulaynī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 2, 624; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 40, 184), invalidate magic, and resolve problems, we have presented them separately. In these narrations, the Imam highlights the authenticity of his knowledge by considering various factors, including the legitimacy of the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and the veneration of his household by God. Thus, through linguistic actions that establish the identity of the Ahl al-Bayt (just as the family of the Prophet is integral), and by linking this to the Prophet (PBUH), the Imam seeks to solidify the foundations of his scientific status for the audience;

D) The Imam's guidance and instruction regarding his scientific authority: Naturally, anything related to the domain of knowledge, even if it does not explicitly mention the Imam's knowledge, can be categorized under the title of scientific authority since the Imam is the reference for that knowledge. For example, all topics that appear prominently in the historical reports of *Aṣḥab*, such as the attributes of God, faith and disbelief, the relationship between action and its quality with the two, the soul and angels, and the connection to *Laylatul Qadr*, etc., can be seen as linked to the components of Imamate. The Imam aims to clarify that we are the reference for

understanding righteous action, the attributes of God, and so forth. This can be understood as part of the Imam's guidance and instruction regarding his scientific authority.<sup>1</sup>

### 5.2.3. *Wilāyah* and *Barā'ah* (Disassociation)

Just as the Imam, by virtue of his guiding status from God, is tasked with leading the legislative guidance of humanity to fruition, he is also responsible for his intrinsic authority; thus, we see that many of the historical reports of *Aṣḡagh* contain teachings relevant to *Wilāyah* and its identity-forming components, which can be categorized in the following types:

A) Emphasis on understanding the factors shaping authority: The historical reports of *Aṣḡagh* emphasize the unity between the authority of the Prophet (PBUH) and the authority of Imam Ali (AS), as well as the unity in obedience to both. The cited verses mentioned in these reports (al-Baqarah: 256, Luqmān: 22, al-Mā'idah: 56) also address the implications of authority in various ways. For example, the necessity of adhering to the authority of Ali (AS) is likened to holding fast to the "'Urwatul Wuthqā,"<sup>2</sup> understanding Ali's (AS) role as a

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1 . For more information about the topic of monotheism and its relationship with Imamate, cf. Imamate Research interview with Mohammad Sanad Baḡrānī, no. 2, year 1, summer 1390.

2 . The fact that in many interpretations, the Imam is referred to as the argument (Ḥujjat), the path (Ṣirāṭ), the door (Bāb), the strong handhold ('Urwatul Wuthqā), the ultimate example (al-Mathal al-A'lā), the great sign (al-Āyat al-Kubrā), and so on, indicates that the Imams are the means of introducing the cognitive aspect of God (the action of God, not His essence) to the people. In this case, understanding the truth of the Imam means recognizing what is to be known about God (Mu'izzī, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 645-646).

legitimate authority after the Prophet (PBUH) requires knowledge and recognition of him, and the necessity of loving God and His Messenger (PBUH) is linked to following Ali (AS) after the Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams from the progeny of the Prophet (PBUH), who are the repositories of the Prophet's knowledge. Ultimately, the recognition of the greatness and depth of *Laylatul Qadr* is presented as fundamental to living in accordance with authority;

B) The scope of authority: It is God's will that the world be governed through intermediaries, and one of the most important and a significant mediator of divine grace in the realm of creation and legislation is the Imam, who also has authority over the realm of creation. Therefore, the existential authority of the Imam is understood as his control over creation with God's permission. Among the historical reports of *Aṣḥab*, there are themes that can be indicative of this existential authority; in one narration, Imam Ali (AS) addresses *‘Abdullāh ibn Jundab* and states, "Binā Fataḥa Allāhu al-Dīna wa binā Yakhtimuhū wa binā Aṭ‘amakumu Allāhu ‘Ashbal Arḍi wa binā manna Allāu ‘Alaykum minal Gharaqī wa binā Yunqīdhukumū Allāhu fī Ḥayātikum wa fī Qubūrikum wa fī Maḥsharikum wa ‘inda al-Ṣirāṭi wal Mīzāni wa ‘inda Wurūdil Janāni." He further applies verse 35 of Surah *al-Nūr* to himself and his Ahl al-Bayt (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 285-286);

C) The function of authority concerning practical realms of "Deviation, denial, and adherence": Among the historical reports of *Aṣḥab*, the verses addressing the issue of departing from authority and denying it largely serve to illustrate examples rather than posing

questions. The connection between the "Nākibūn"<sup>1</sup> and deviating from the authority of the Ahl al-Bayt (Qāḡī Nu‘mān, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 1, 233; Ḥākīm Ḥaskānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 1, 524), as well as the Jews and the issue of recognizing Muhammad (PBUH) and authority, as highlighted in the Torah, where the conscious denial of these leads to the loss of faith in the "*Aṣḡāb al-Mash‘amah*" (Jews and Christians) (denial of prophethood and authority = absence of faith), serves as prominent examples of this theme (Baḡrānī, n.d.: 4, 138). According to such reports, there are narrations that present the effects of adhering to the view of authority (*Wilāyah*) within the ideological framework of *Aṣḡagh*, citing the Imam's reference to verse 70 of Surah *al-Furqān* to illustrate its impact on the forgiveness of sins (Furāt Kūfī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 293; Muḡīd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 65). The historical reports of *Aṣḡagh* that indicate the existence of a specific question and pertain to both the realm of deviation from authority and adherence to it generally fall under the category of interpretation and illustrative examples.<sup>2</sup> Given the compound phrase "The door of God," which indicates the attribution of the Ahl al-Bayt to God, it can be said based on the theory of "Contradictory Sounds" that there was likely a common notion that the intended "Doors" in this verse referred to

1 . al-Mu‘minūn: 74; *Nakiba ‘anhu*: ‘Adl means deviation from something; ‘an al-Ḥaqq Ankabu (Farāḡhīdī, 5, 385).

2. "And enter houses through their doors." (al-Baqarah: 189) In response to Ibn Kawwā’s question, "Tell me about this verse," he guides him towards its inner meaning and states, "We are the door of God." (Ibn Shāḡḡhān Qummī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 71; Qāḡī Nu‘mān Maghribī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 2, 34; Baḡrānī, n.d.: 1, 408)

individuals other than the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (PBUH). If this notion existed, it could be connected to the phenomenon of deviation from the rightful successor and the topic of Imamate, as entering through an incorrect opening clearly reflects a loss of the way and path.

### **Summary of the Discourse on "Imamate"**

As previously mentioned, the main concern of *Aṣḥabgh ibn Nubātah* and what engages the symbolic system of his mind are concepts related to Imamate, including its position, knowledge, authority, and dissociation (*Barā'ah*). After the Prophet (PBUH), his primary concern has been about which complete human being would take hold of this helm. For this reason, his selection of historical accounts regarding Imam Ali (AS) is entirely purposeful and carefully executed to achieve this goal. If the position of the Imam is clarified and the scope of his knowledge and guardianship is determined, the status of guidance, which is the primary and fundamental function of the Imam, will be established.

The tripartite associations (of God, the Messenger, and Ali) (of the Ahl al-Bayt, the progeny, and the Imams from the lineage of Ali and the descendants of the Prophet) in *Aṣḥabgh's* historical accounts convey an important message, indicating that the Prophet (PBUH) is connected to the unique origin of existence, namely God. On the other hand, the association of Ali (AS) as the first guiding human being with the Prophet and ultimately with God signifies the exclusivity of the position of Imamate within the family of the Messenger of God (PBUH) and its divine nature.

In the expressions related to authority (*Wilāyah*), what holds significant importance is the reality of the authority of the Messenger and the Imam, which in some cases is illustrated by the mention of Ali (AS) as a model, indicating his priority and suitability for succession. Another important point is the association between the terms "*Wilāyah*" and "Faith," which demonstrates a reciprocal and dual connection between *Wilāyah* and faith, the latter being certain knowledge. This means that a lack of understanding regarding authority diminishes the spirit of faith and influences it.

## Conclusion

The linguistic and content analysis of the historical accounts of *Aṣḡagh* demonstrates that the most frequently used terms by him relate to the discourses of Imamate and succession (*Wiṣāyah*). This is a result of the symbolic system governing his mind and proves that, in terms of personality and social context, issues related to Imamate and succession have always been one of his main concerns.

Based on the theory of "Bakhtin's Contradictory Voices" or "The Central Factor of Rejection" in discursive discussions, it can be said that the establishment and promotion of such discourses by the students of the Imams were, in fact, a political-social reaction to opposing groups that denied the status of the Imam or had an ambiguous perception of it. They believed that the leader of the community held merely the position of caliphate and succession, thereby reducing the status of the Imam to that of a mere successor or caliph. There is evidence to support this claim, indicating that the

nature of people's interactions with Imam Ali (AS) was very ordinary, treating him as a regular human. The practical behaviors of the audiences suggest that they were not aware of the dimensions of Imamate and were vacant of knowledge regarding the foundational meaning of the concept of Imamate. They did not realize that this position is a divine one, thus perceiving the Imam as an ordinary individual.

For this reason, we believe that a person like *Aṣḥāb ibn Nubātah* had both a grasp of the concept of Imamate and the notion of succession (*Wiṣāyah*). While his discourses on Imamate are more prominent, due to the better-known and more comprehensible nature of the discourse of succession, he has sought to present it within the context of the discourse of Imamate to cover both concepts. In fact, through this type of discourse, he sought to indicate that Imamate is not equivalent to succession; rather, succession is merely one aspect of it, albeit an important one. There is evidence to highlight the better-known concept of succession; for example, the statements of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) at "*Dhī Qār*," which reflect the social atmosphere of Kufa during his arrival in that city, can serve as strong testimony to this assertion.

In other words, the primary concern of *Aṣḥāb ibn Nubātah* has been to elucidate 'Who is the Imam?' and 'What is the nature of Imamate?' Alongside this important discussion, he has also pursued another significant truth, which is the issue of succession and leadership. Therefore, it seems that the establishment of the discourse on Imamate has been his main focus, while he has also strived to

ensure that the discourse of succession and leadership is not neglected in order to bring it to a state of normalization and naturalization, consistently emphasizing the differences and distinctions between it and Imamate. This is the void that seems to occupy an individual like *Aṣḡagh* because of his crucial mission and role, as well as his personal characteristics and interests. He has sought to fill this void from the early stages, with the goal of ensuring that the essence of Imamate is not misunderstood and that the issue of succession does not become marginalized. One noteworthy point in the discourse of succession is the element of "Text" (Naṣṣ), which was previously mentioned as a code for recognizing the discourse of succession in the historical reports of *Aṣḡagh*.

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# The Role of *Allamah Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*'s Foundations in the Abundance of Hadiths on the Event of Return (*Raj‘at*)

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## Abstract

The hadiths regarding the event of Return (*Raj‘at*) have only gained a significant number in later hadith collections, which have even dedicated a chapter to them. The present study aims to identify, using a descriptive-analytical method, some factors that have led to the disparity in the number of hadiths on *Raj‘at* between earlier and later centuries by comparing earlier and later hadith sources. The results include: Hadith errors such as discrepancies in the transmission of a hadith from earlier to later sources, and the misjudgment of considering multiple chains that lead to a single direct narrator; adherence to the literal meanings of words at the expense of common understanding; fallacies such as repeated counting of hadiths, fragmenting a single hadith and presenting it as multiple ones, counting non-authentic reports, mixing topics, deviating from the subject, and circular reasoning. The reliance on the latter abundance of hadiths presents a challenge to Sunni

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scholars, who has been created by the Shia theologians and hadith scholars themselves. The benefit of this study lies in recognizing this challenge, ultimately leading to a more robust defense of the belief in *Raj'at*.

**Keywords:** *Raj'at*, Narrative, Transmission Differences, Fallacies.

## Introduction

In ancient hadith sources, the number of hadiths regarding *Raj'at* is less than in later sources, to the extent that only in later hadith collections can a chapter titled "*Raj'at*" be found. The oldest surviving hadith book that, compared to its predecessors, contains the highest number of hadiths on *Raj'at* and for the first time dedicated an independent chapter to these hadiths is the book "*Mukhtaṣar Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*" by Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī (cf. Yousefī, Javadan, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 6, 7-26). After him, *Allamah Majlisī* and Ḥurr 'Āmilī also presented a large number of hadiths on *Raj'at*. Among them, Ḥurr 'Āmilī leads with the collection of 620 hadiths (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 388), which is why this article specifically studies Ḥurr 'Āmilī's perspective in the book "*al-Īqāz min al-Haj'ah bil Burhān 'alā al-Raj'ah*." With the subsequent abundance of hadiths on *Raj'at*, the reference to this abundance and even its purported continuity found its way into the arguments defending this belief, and this multitude became one of the justifications for those who consider belief in *Raj'at* essential to the faith (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 53, 122; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 57, 60, 66, 202, 309).

The question of why there is a difference in the number of hadiths on the *Raj'at* between early and later hadith sources has prompted the focus of this inquiry. Understanding the answer to this question, and

generally delving into the arguments used against opponents, helps prevent weak defenses. This is particularly important considering that the *Raj'at* is a contentious issue between the Shi'a and Sunni, and a weak defense against skeptics only emboldens them in their erroneous beliefs.

Most studies regarding hadiths have aimed at describing, explaining, or proving the concept of *Raj'at*, with very few focusing on the chains of transmission and the narrators of *Raj'at* hadiths. We were unable to find any research that studies the factors contributing to the increase in *Raj'at* hadiths. The only relevant work is the article "Dating the Hadiths of *Raj'at*" by Saeed Shafi'i, published in issue 106 of the Journal of Quranic Sciences and Hadith, which associates the proliferation of *Raj'at* hadiths with the first half of the second century, thus aligning in a way with the present article. This is because it indicates a delay in the proliferation of hadiths and is somewhat in agreement with the current article; although the aforementioned article only focuses on the narrators influencing the spread of these hadiths, while the present work solely addresses the factors increasing the number of hadiths in later sources.

This paper proposes that the following factors have led to the greater number of *Raj'at* hadiths in later hadith sources compared to earlier ones.

## 1. Hadith Errors

Two major hadith errors seem to be the difference in the transmission of a hadith from earlier to later sources and the miscounting of a hadith that concludes with various chains leading to a single direct narrator. Examples of these issues are as follows:

## 1.1. Difference in Earlier and Later Transmission of a Hadith

Intentional distortion or alteration of the text of a hadith is the most prominent factor leading to discrepancies in narrations. Reliance on memory, paraphrasing the narration, misprint, or even attempts to correct the narration are among the factors that can lead to differences in transmission. Sometimes, differences in narration can lead to a change in the implications of the hadith; for instance, a narration that did not originally imply the *Raj'at* may now be considered one of the hadiths concerning *Raj'at*. It appears that some differences in the transmission of certain hadiths have artificially inflated the number of *Raj'at* narrations. For example:

**1.1.1.** The *Mursal* report recounts a conversation between God and Satan in which God grants Iblis respite until the Day of Judgment (*Ilā Yawmil Waqtil Ma'lūm*) and states: "I have chosen for that time servants of Mine... They are an Ummah I have selected for My chosen Prophet." (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 67, H. 17)

This report does not imply *Raj'at*; however, in some later sources, the word "Ummah" has been replaced with "*A'imma*" (Imams) (Kūrānī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 918), changing the meaning to suggest that God has chosen Imams for the end times. Since the Imams are limited to specific individuals, all of whom, except for Imam *Mahdi* (AS), have passed away; this narration speaks of their return to this world. Thus, the alteration in the transmission of this narration has led to a change in its implications and classified it among the hadiths concerning *Raj'at*.

**198**     **1.1.2.** *Sulaym ibn Qays Hilālī* (d. 76) narrates a narration in which

the Prophet (PBUH) names each of the Imams for Ali (AS) (Sulaym, 1996 AD/1415 AH: 2, 620, H. 10). *Nu'mānī*, *'Ayyāshī*, and *Shaykh Ṣadūq* have also reported this narration from *Sulaym* (Nu'mānī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 49-52, H. 3; 'Ayyāshī, n.d.: 1, 14, H. 2; Ṣadūq, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 1, 284, H. 37; Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 93). Up to this point, none of the reports imply *Raj'at*. Only in a work attributed to *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* (d. 290), which emerged in the eleventh century, is there an additional phrase regarding the twelfth Imam: "The avenger of My enemies,"<sup>1</sup> thus indicating the *Raj'at* of the contemporaneous enemies of the Prophet (PBUH). The narration from *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* suggests that he also transmitted this report from the book of *Sulaym*. Therefore, all transmissions lead back to *Sulaym*'s book, and since the phrase "The avenger of My enemies" is not found in the copies of *Sulaym*'s book or the narrations from *Nu'mānī*, *'Ayyāshī*, and *Ṣadūq*, it becomes plausible that the phrase in question may be a later addition, possibly due at least in part to errors in the transmission of the hadith.

**1.1.3.** In the book of *Sulaym ibn Qays Hilālī* (d. 76), it is stated that the Prophet (PBUH) spoke with Ali (AS) about the times after him. *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and *Shaykh Ṭūsī* have narrated this report from *Sulaym*'s book in the same manner (Sulaym, 1996 AD/1415 AH: 2, 661-671, H. 12; Ṣadūq, 1997 AD/1417 AH: 1, 262, H. 10; Ṭūsī, 2001 AD/1411 AH: 334, H. 280;

1. *Ibn Shādhān*, 2012 AD/1434 AH: 17-22, H. 3; *ibid.* 18, H. 1. The oldest known version of "Proof of the Raj'at" by *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* was available in the eleventh century, and Mirlōhi Sabzevari (d. 1085) has included narrations, including the aforementioned narration, from it in his book *Kifāyat al-Muhtadī* (Mirlōhi, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 429, H. 1).

ibid. 193, H. 155). However, in a work attributed to *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* (d. 290), which emerged in the eleventh century, there is an additional phrase: "My son will take revenge on your oppressors, and the oppressors among your children and your followers in this world." (Ibn Shādhān, 2012 AD/1434 AH: 47, H. 30)

With this addition, the narration indicates the *Rajʿat* of the enemies of Wilayah and vengeance against them. Thus, the difference in the transmission of a hadith has placed it among the reports concerning Return.

**1.1.4.** In the Tafsir *Qummī*, it is narrated from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) that when Jesus (AS) returns to the world, all the People of the Book will believe in him (Qummī, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 1, 158). However, Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, possibly due to a memory error, reported it from Tafsir *Qummī* as follows: "When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) returns, everyone will believe in him." (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 313, H. 63; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 53, 50, H. 24) Thus, a narration that did not originally imply *Rajʿat* now indicates the *Rajʿat* of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) due to a mistake in transmission.<sup>1</sup>

**1.1.5.** In Tafsir *Qummī*, it is mentioned from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) that on the Day of Judgment, each leader will be called with his followers: "*Yajīʿu Rasūlullāh fī Firqatayn wa Yajīʿu Alī fī Firqatayn*: The

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1. It is worth mentioning that the Imam Mahdi Foundation has dedicated itself to the re-publication of *Qummī*'s Tafsir. This edition includes new and additional content compared to the Najaf edition; however, these additions (including the aforementioned narration) do not result from research into the manuscript but instead involve the collection of everything attributed to *Qummī*'s Tafsir from other sources without conducting research and matching it with the handwritten manuscript! (Qummī, 2013 AD/1435 AH: 1, 231, H. 30)

Messenger of God will come with one group, and Ali will come with another group..." (Qummi, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 2, 589) This narration has encountered textual variations, at times replacing the word "*Firqatin*" (group) with "*Qawmah*" (tribe) or "*Qarnah*" (contemporaries) (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 8, 9, H. 1). So far, this variation of the word has not led to significant differences in implications. However, in one version of Tafsir *Qummī*, the word "*Qaryah*" (city) has been recorded. Therefore, Ḥurr 'Āmilī has speculated that since there will be no city on the Day of Judgment, this narration actually speaks of the *Raj'at* and coming back of the townspeople of the Prophet, Ali, and others (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 314, H. 68). Here too, the difference in transmission is one of the factors that have included a narration among those concerning *Raj'at* after several centuries.

**1.1.6.** *Shaykh Kulaynī* (d. 329) narrated a report from Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) regarding the questioning in the grave (Kulaynī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 235, H. 4714/2). *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī* (8th century) also conveyed the same narration through the same chain but added a phrase regarding questioning and accountability during the *Raj'at* (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 100, 17). This narration serves as another example where a report, due to differences in transmission, has been classified among the reports concerning *Raj'at*.

## 1.2. Considering a Narration to Be Multiple

Sometimes a narrator encounters a single narration, but neglecting certain details leads them to believe they have several narrations. The first point is that if a narration is transmitted through multiple chains

but all lead to a single direct narrator from the impeccable Imam, then it is, in fact, only one issuance and one narration. The second point is that if a narration is transmitted both as a *Musnad* and as a *Mursal*, the *Mursal* is regarded as the same *Musnad*, merely conveyed with the chain omitted; thus, both are essentially one narration. Such mistakes and confusions have also occurred within the realm of *Raj'at* narrations, contributing to the increase in the number of reported narrations; for example:

**1.2.1.** A group of Iraqi Shias met with Imam *Sajjād* (AS). During that meeting, the topic of *Raj'at* was discussed. The report of this meeting has been transmitted through two chains, but in both cases, the direct narrator is *'Abdullāh ibn 'Aṭā*. Thus, there is essentially only one narration that is counted as two reports (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 96, H. 12; *ibid*: 108, H. 27; *ibid*: 259, H. 82; *ibid*: 267, H. 104).

**1.2.2.** In a report, *Jābir ibn Yazīd Ju'fī* is praised due to his belief in *Raj'at*. This has been narrated by two groups of narrators, all from *Zurāra*, from Imam *Bāqir* (AS). The direct narrator in both chains is *Zurāra*. Therefore, both are, in fact, one narration, yet some have presented it as two distinct narrations (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 321, H. 89; *ibid*: 322, H. 91).

**1.2.3.** It is reported from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) that *Husayn ibn Ali* (AS) will be the first to return and will govern for a long duration. This narration has been transmitted through two distinct chains of narrators, all culminating in *Ḥamrān ibn A'yun* as the direct narrator. Some have

mistakenly regarded them as two narrations, even though both chains lead to a single direct narrator from the Imam, meaning that we are only encountering one narration that, through the conveying of its content, has been expressed with slight variations in wording without any difference in implications (Hillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 101, H. 19; *ibid*: 117, H. 39; Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 331, H. 108; *ibid*: 333, H. 114).

The same content has also been narrated by two other chains from Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS), with the direct narrator in both cases being *Mu‘allī ibn Khunays*. Again, this has been mistakenly considered as two separate narrations (Hillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 91, H. 4; *ibid*: 119, H. 44; Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 330, H. 106; *ibid*: 334, H. 116; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 64, H. 54; *ibid*: 53, 46, H. 19).

**1.2.4.** *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, in his book "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*," mentioned that Imam Riḍā (AS) narrated the hadith "*Hadhw al-na‘l bil Na‘l*" from the Prophet (PBUH). Based on this, he has also presented this prophetic narration in two other books, "*al-I‘tiqādāt*" and "*Kamāl al-Dīn*," using the phrase "*Ṣaḥḥa ‘an al-Nabī*" in a *Mursal* form (Ṣadūq, n.d.: 2, 201; Ṣadūq, 1995 AD/1413 AH: 62; Ṣadūq, 1997 AD/1416 AH: 2, 576). Following that, Ṭabrisī also presented it in a *Mursal* form with the same phrasing "*Ṣaḥḥa ‘an al-Nabī*" in "*I‘lām al-Warā*." (Ṭabrisī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 309) Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, having found this narration in these four sources, recorded it as four separate narrations (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 117, H. 2, 9, 10, 18), whereas all four instances count as a single narration.

**1.2.5.** *Shaykh Ṭūsī*, in his work "*Ma‘rifat al-Rijāl*," reported the

sermon of Salmān after the Prophet's (PBUH) demise, as a *Musnad* from Imam Ṣādiq (AS) (Kashshī, 1929 AD/1348 AH: 49, H. 47). Ṭabrisī has abbreviated the text of this sermon in "*al-Iḥtijāj*" and omitted its chain (Ṭabrisī, 1996 AD/1386 AH: 1, 149). However, Ḥurr 'Āmilī quoted a segment of this sermon once from "*Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*" and another time from "*al-Iḥtijāj*," considering them as two separate reports (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 118, H. 12 and 15), though the *Mursal* report from "*al-Iḥtijāj*" is, in fact, the same as the *Musnad* report from *Kashshī*.

**1.2.6.** "After the Qā'im, eleven Mahdis from the lineage of Ḥusayn (AS) will arise." Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Hillī has presented this narration once as *Musnad* and another time as *Mursal*, considering them as two different narrations; however, in such cases, the *Mursal* narration is regarded as *Musnad* based on the mentioned chain, and thus the two should be counted as one narration (Hillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 142, H. 9; *ibid*: 166, H. 41; for more instances, cf. 148 and 478, H. 14 and 19).

**1.2.7.** Allamah Majlisī narrated from Abū 'Abdillāh Jadalī both as *Musnad* and *Mursal*, where Ali (AS) introduced himself as *Dābbah al-Ard* (Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 100, H. 120; *ibid*: 53, 117, H. 146).

**1.2.8.** Allamah Majlisī quoted a narration attributed to Imam Ṣādiq (AS), stating that the Imam interpreted a verse as referring to the *Raj'at*. He presented this narration once as *Musnad* and once as *Mursal*, thus considering it as two separate narrations (Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 51, H. 27; *ibid*: 53, 60, H. 49).

**1.2.9.** *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī* has narrated a report once with a complete chain and another time in a raised form (... *Abī Sa'īd Sahl ibn Zīyād Yarfa'uh*). *Sahl ibn Zīyād* appears in the middle of both chains (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 139, H. 7; also referenced in: 169, H. 46), which indicates that the raising of the hadith here means elevating the chain up to the direct narrator. Thus, here too, a single narration has been regarded as two reports.

## 2. Excessive Literalism and Distancing from Common Understanding

An excessive emphasis on the literal meanings of words and, in other words, an over-scrutiny of the terminology while distancing from common understanding is one of the principles of *Ḥurr 'Āmilī*, which has significantly contributed to the proliferation of *Raj'at* narrations in his view.<sup>1</sup> The following instances exemplify this principle:

**2.1.** Reports indicating the presence of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Commander of the Faithful (AS) at the moment of a believer's demise signify their *Raj'at* to this world (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 211-214, H. 24-34). He considers *Shaykh Mufīd*'s interpretation regarding perceiving the fruits of faith and disbelief to be baseless and unacceptable (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 215).

1. *Ḥurr 'Āmilī*'s being *Akhbarī* has been driven by his adherence to the doctrines of the traditionalist school. His inclination towards *Akhbarī* is clearly evident in his book "*al-Īqāḍ*," especially in its introduction. Two clear pieces of evidence for his *Akhbarī* thought are that he considers the narrations in the Four Books to be definitively authentic (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 56) and claims the authenticity of all the reports in the Four Hundred Principles (ibid: 70).

**2.2.** In a narration, it is mentioned that the greetings of Shia on each Imam will also be presented to Imam Zaman, and he sends blessings and tidings to the greeter (*Yulqā Ṣāhibahū bil Bushrā*). On one hand, the text of the narration states that the *Qā'im* responds to salutations; on the other hand, Shias do not currently receive a response to their greetings. Thus, the greeter will be revived and return after the emergence of the *Qā'im* to receive his response (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 226, H. 5).

**2.3.** Any narration that speaks of the triumph of the progeny of Muhammad (PBUH) indicates the *Raj'at*. This is because the progeny of Muhammad (PBUH) includes the Presence of Imam Zaman (AS). The triumph of the *Qā'im* will occur with his emergence, while the triumph of the progeny of Muhammad (PBUH) will be realized with their return to this world. He considers the restriction of triumph to the emergence of the *Qā'im* as a form of figurative speech without evidence and incorrect (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 291, H. 15; ibid: 290, H. 15; ibid: 290, H. 14; ibid: 291, H.16; ibid: 321, H. 88; ibid: 322, H. 92).

**2.4.** In the visitation of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS), it is stated: "O! Allah, make us among those who assist *Ḥusayn*." Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) has passed away! Hence, the implied meaning of this phrase and similar expressions is the return of that Imam to this world! Ḥurr 'Āmilī does not accept interpretations such as the assistance being in the way of that Imam (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 228, H. 10).

**2.5.** The Prophet (PBUH) said to Ali (AS): "...God has begun with us and will conclude with us." However, both of them, namely the

Prophet (PBUH) and Imam Ali (AS), have passed away. Therefore, the implied meaning of this statement indicates their return (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 298, H. 28). This is while common understanding perceives the pronoun "We" in the above narration to refer to the Ahl al-Bayt and interprets this narration as meaning that the world will end with the emergence of Imam Zaman.

**2.6.** It is attributed to Imam Bāqir (AS) and Imam Ṣādiq (AS) that they said, "The last government on Earth will be our government." In Ḥurr ‘Āmilī's view, interpreting the pronoun of the first person leads us to the return of the Imams. Two Imams (AS) said: "Our government," it implies that they themselves will also return and govern (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 328, H. 103; *ibid*: 341, H. 130).

**2.7.** It is attributed to Imam Ṣādiq (AS) that he said: "Surely, God will help us through you." The Imam addressed the audience using the pronoun "You," which necessitates their return (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 232, H. 18).

**2.8.** When Imam Ṣādiq (AS) received the letter from the people of Kufah, he threw it aside and said: "I am not their Imam! Do they not know that their companion is the *Sufyānī*?!" In Ḥurr ‘Āmilī's view, the term "Companion" indicates a physical presence, and thus this narration, along with similar narrations containing the term "Companion," suggests a *Raj‘at*. The Imam said this in the context of the Kufans who were contemporary with him, and they have not yet associated with the *Sufyānī*, who will appear at the end of world. Therefore, during the time of the *Sufyānī*, those Kufans contemporary

with Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) will also return to the world (Ḥurr ‘*Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 251, H. 67).

### 3. Fallacies

It seems there are sometimes fallacies in the usage of narrations and occasionally in the counting and claiming their multitude. These include:

#### 3.1. Repeated Counting of a Narration

*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī* has presented a narration multiple times across different chapters for various purposes. The issue here is that he counts these instances again, and ultimately, when he states at the end of his book that he has presented six hundred and twenty narrations about the *Raj‘at* (Ḥurr ‘*Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 388), it should be noted that several instances involve the repetition of a single narration across different chapters for different purposes, each of which is separately counted. Thus, this has contributed to the numerical abundance of the narrations about the *Raj‘at* (Ḥurr ‘*Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 181, H. 42; *ibid*: 153, H. 53; *ibid*: 329, H.104; *ibid*: 257, H. 78; *ibid*: 127; *ibid*: 185, H. 1; *ibid*: 233, H. 20; *ibid*: 298, H. 30; *ibid*: 327, H. 99; *ibid*: 180, H. 41; *ibid*: 337, H. 122; *ibid*: 342, H. 132).

#### 3.2. Fragmenting a Narration and Presenting It as Multiple Reports

At times, different sections of a narration are fragmented for various purposes and mentioned in different chapters. However, fragmenting a narration and presenting its parts in one chapter as several reports is not acceptable. *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī*, *Allamah Majlisī*, and *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī* have all presented these multiple sections from a single report in such a way that it creates the illusion of multiple reports, treating

them as independent narrations. Thus, the fragmentation of one narration has resulted in a misleading numerical increase; for example:

**3.2.1.** *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī* quotes two excerpts from the assembly of *Ma’mūn* and the responses of Imam *Riḍā* (AS), numbering them as two separate reports, which creates the illusion of multiple narrations. These two excerpts pertain to the revival of the birds for Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and the revival of the seventy individuals who went to Mount Sinai with Prophet Musa (AS) (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 130, H. 3 and 4).

**3.2.2.** In responding to a question from an atheist, Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) mentioned examples of the *Raj‘at* in past nations. *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, by fragmenting the Imam's response, counts each of these examples as a separate report (Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 150, H. 44-46), thereby presenting one report as three (for more examples, refer to Ḥurr ‘Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 178, H. 34; *ibid*: 179, H. 36; *ibid*: 203, H. 5; *ibid*: 208, H. 17; *ibid*: 152, H. 49 and 50; *ibid*: 143, H. 29).

**3.2.3.** *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī* also, after narrating a detailed report, fragments a section that contains interpretations of verses and presents it as a separate narration (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 88, H. 1; *ibid*: 113, H. 34). Since "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" also contains a significant number of reports on the *Raj‘at* derived from *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān*'s book, this same error occurs there as well (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 53, 64, H. 55; *ibid*: 1960 AD/1380 AH: 53, 40, H. 8).

### 3.3. Listing non-Narrative Phrases

In the hadith books containing references to the *Raj‘at*, there are sometimes phrases from non-narrative supplications and visits

alongside the reports. Since these supplications and visits are the compositions of scholars, including them alongside the narrations constitutes a fallacy. This confusion is one of the factors contributing to the inflation of the chapters on the *Raj'at*. The following examples are non-narrative supplications and visits that have been cited as evidence of the abundance of reports on the *Raj'at*:

**3.3.1.** A pray for the day of *Daḥw al-Ard* (25th of Dhil Qa'dah) (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 227, H. 7; *ibid*: 292, H.17; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 99, H. 118).

**3.3.2.** The visitation of Imam *Mahdi* (AS) (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 249, H. 63; *ibid*: 277, H. 123; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 95, H. 109 and 110).

**3.3.3.** The visitation of the cellar (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 277, H. 122; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 95, H. 108).

**3.3.4.** The visitation of Imam *Husayn* (AS) on the day of 'Arafah (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 292, H. 18).

**3.3.5.** Part of the dialogue between *Mu'min al-Ṭāq* and *Abū Ḥanīfah*, which pertains to the *Raj'at*, has also made its way into hadith books and is mentioned among the narrations of the *Raj'at* (Majlisī, 1983 AD/1380 AH: 53, 107, H. 136).

**3.3.6.** The dream of *Ali ibn Mahzīyār* in which Imam Zaman told him that after his appearance, he would bring the first two caliphs out of their graves and punish them (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 269, H. 108).

**3.3.7.** Gradually, the statements of Ali ibn Ibrahim, without being established as narrations, have entered hadith books and have been mentioned among the hadiths (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 160, H. 30-32; *ibid*: 162, H.35; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 51, H. 25-26; *ibid* 56, H. 34-35 and 37-39). The majority believes that in general, his statements are based on narrations; however, when specific narrations are available, listing Ali ibn Ibrahim's sayings alongside those narrations lacks justification. Sometimes his saying is merely a reiteration of an existing narration or a result of mixing multiple narrations. Here, citing the words of *Qummī* merely represents a false abundance, as it refers to non-narrative sources where the foundational narration has already been conveyed (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 158, H. 26-27; *ibid*: 162, H. 34; *ibid*: 157, H. 24, which is actually the same narration as number 25; Majlisī, 1983 AD/1403 AH: 53, 39, H. 1; *ibid*: 58, H. 40; *ibid*: 103, H. 129; *ibid*: 42, H. 10; *ibid*: 54, H. 32, which is in fact a statement resulting from the mixing of several narrations).

### 3.4. Mixing of Subjects

In the hadith and theological books related to the *Raj'at*, two mixes have occurred more than others. One is the confusion between possibility and *Ikhbār*, and the other is the confusion between returning to the world and the Shia *Raj'at*; for example:

**3.4.1.** Confusion between possibility and *Ikhbār*: In the recent centuries, narrations concerning the resurrection of the dead among the Children of Israel have been listed among the reports on the *Raj'at*.

While these reports do not provide independent evidence for proving the Shia *Raj'at*, they ultimately remove absurdity and indicate the possibility of the *Raj'at* happening in the future. What has transpired in our sources is a mixing of reports indicating "Possibility" with narrations that "*Ikhbār*" the occurrence of it in the future; indeed, the "Possibility" of the *Raj'at* is not a point of dispute among Muslims.

All Muslims believe that "Indeed, God is capable of all things." The disagreement lies in whether there are credible reports regarding the Shia claim of the *Raj'at* or not. The accounts of the Children of Israel are merely a "Commentary" on the narration indicating the similarity of the Islamic Ummah to the Children of Israel (cf. Ṣadūq, 1993 AD/1413 AH: 60-63), and should not be counted among the narrations of the *Raj'at*, creating a false abundance!

Ḥurr 'Āmilī, who authored the most comprehensive hadith book on the *Raj'at*, has made this error in many instances, to the extent that when he concludes his book by saying, "I have gathered six hundred and twenty narrations, and based on this, I consider the news of the *Raj'at* to be beyond the limits of consensus," (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 388) it should be noted that many of these only indicate the possibility of the *Raj'at* rather than reporting its occurrence in the future! Of the eight chapters that contain these narrations, four chapters, with a total of one hundred and seventy-five narrations, are dedicated to the occurrence of the *Raj'at* among the Children of Israel in the past. Among the other four chapters, which discuss the reporting of the occurrence of the *Raj'at* in the future, some narrations only indicate the possibility of the *Raj'at*. If we remove only those

related to this fallacy, less than a fourth of the six hundred and twenty narrations remain -only one hundred and thirty- one narrations!

**3.4.2.** Confusion between returning to the world and the Shia *Raj'at*: The *Raj'at* is a term associated with the physical body and after the rise of the *Qā'im*, so mixing it with narrations concerning the life of souls or returning to this world with an ideal body is fallacious. Listing such narrations with the justification that they represent a type of revival and consequently a type of *Raj'at* is a false pretense, as death does not afflict the soul such that the continuation of human life after death can be deemed "Revival." Referencing these narrations to defend the belief in the Shia *Raj'at* is a mistake that Ḥurr 'Āmilī has particularly succumbed to; for example:

**3.4.2.1.** The presence of former prophets in Jerusalem during the Night Journey and their existence in the heavens during the Prophet's (PBUH) *Mi'rāj* (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 163, H. 6; *ibid*: 172, H. 22; *ibid*: 182, H. 44; *ibid*: 172, H. 23; *ibid*: 177, H. 31; *ibid*: 206, H. 12).

**3.4.2.2.** Narrations indicating the presence of *Ḥawwā* (Eve), *Āsīya*, Sarah, and Maryam during the birth of Fatimah (AS) (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 151, H. 47-48).

**3.4.2.3.** Narrations indicating questioning in the grave, which necessitates a type of life after death (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 198, H. 24; *ibid*: 186, H. 3; *ibid*: 188, H. 6; *ibid*: 272, H. 112; *ibid*: 287, H. 3).

**3.4.2.4.** Narrations indicating the return of Prophet Jesus (AS) (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 283, H. 6; *ibid*: 297, H. 26; *ibid*: 300, H.

32-39; *ibid*: 308, H. 51 and 53; *ibid*: 313, H. 64; *ibid*: 323, H. 93; *ibid*: 327, H. 100; *ibid*: 340, H. 129; *ibid*: 342, H. 135; *ibid*: 343, H. 136; *ibid*: 344, H. 137). It is worth mentioning that *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, like *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, believes in the death of Jesus (AS) (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 301; *Ṣadūq*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 62). However, even if we accept his death and thus his return after death, the reports of his return as "A specific individual" do not serve as proof for the Shia *Raj‘at*; a Return which means the return of all those who were completely faithful or completely disbelieving (*Mufīd*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 35).

**3.4.2.5.** A narration attributed to Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) in which his father said to him at the time of his passing: "Do you hear the voice of my father, *Ali ibn Ḥusayn*, calling me from behind the wall?" (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 204, H. 7)

**3.4.2.6.** A narration attributed to Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) stating that during the time of Imam Ali (AS), a young man from the *Makhzūmī* clan, who was saddened by the loss of his brother, asked the Imam to make it possible for him to meet his brother again. With the Imam's strike on the grave, the deceased emerged from the grave, and after a conversation, he returned to the grave.<sup>1</sup>

**3.4.2.7.** A statement from Imam *Riḍā* (AS) indicating that one night he saw the Prophet (PBUH) (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 203, H. 6. For more examples, cf. *ibid*: 204, H. 6 and 8; *ibid*: 205, H. 10; *ibid*: 207, H. 14-15; *ibid*: 208, H. 16; *ibid*: 209, H. 18-20; *ibid*: 210, H. 21-22).

1. *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 187, H. 4, quoted from *Kulaynī*, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 2, 486, H. 7/1239. The continuation of the narration states that the deceased person did not pass away with belief in the leadership of Ali (AS), and for this reason, in the afterlife, his language changed from Arabic to Persian.

### 3.5. Departure from the Subject

In the previous fallacy, there was a mix-up between possibility and *Ikhbār*. However, here we find narrations that are completely outside the subject of *Raj‘at* and are not even effective in dispelling the absurdity perceived by opponents of the *Raj‘at*; for example:

**3.5.1.** *Ḥurr ‘Āmilī* reports a narration about the long life of *Khiḍr* to show that the longevity of the Imam (AS) is not more remarkable than that of *Khiḍr*. This is an example of listing reports that have no relation to the *Raj‘at* (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 118, H. 13).

**3.5.2.** It is attributed to Imam *Kāzīm* (AS) that with the emergence of the *Qā‘im*, Islam and the belief in leadership will prevail throughout the world (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 296, H. 25). This narration does not mention anything about the *Raj‘at*, nor does this prevalence entail a halt to it.

**3.5.3.** It is attributed to the Prophet (PBUH), who said that Ali (AS) is in Paradise, the *Dhul Qarnayn* (*Ḥurr ‘Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 341, H. 131); meaning he owns the East to the West (*Ibn Athīr*, n.d.: 4, 51-52). This narration is about Ali's (AS) position in Paradise; it does not pertain to this world to be cited as evidence for the *Raj‘at*.

### 3.6. Circular Reasoning

In this fallacy, the conclusion is supported by a premise whose validity depends on the truth of the conclusion itself. Sometimes, to obscure the circularity, the validity of the premises of the argument is interdependent (*Khandan*, 1999 AD/1379 SH: 265). Some consider circular reasoning a form of begging the question, where the desired

conclusion is assumed to be established beforehand. In other words, the argument uses the conclusion it aims to prove as a premise (ibid: 264). In the hadith sources concerning the *Raj'at*, we also encounter this type of fallacy; for example:

**3.6.1.** *Hurr 'Āmilī* narrates from Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) that on the Day of Judgment; all those involved in the tragedy of Karbala will be killed by Imam Ali (AS). They will then be revived to be killed by Imam *Ḥasan* (AS). This cycle continues until each of the Imams kills them. The narration explicitly mentions this punishment occurring on the "Day of Judgment." However, *Hurr 'Āmilī* asserts that because, on one hand, the oppressors die and are resurrected after every punishment, and on the other hand, there is no death on the Day of Judgment, this punishment must occur in this world. Therefore, the term "Day of Judgment" in this narration refers to the *Raj'at* or the Minor (*Sughrā*) Resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

## Conclusion

1. Various factors have resulted in the number of narrations regarding the *Raj'at* in later hadith collections being significantly greater than in earlier sources. This study identified three key factors: Hadith errors, rigid adherence to the apparent meanings of reports, and fallacies.

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1. *Hurr 'Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 238, H. 29. *Hurr 'Āmilī* mentions that he found the term "Minor Resurrection" applied to the *Raj'at* in the words of some earlier scholars; however, he does not name anyone (*Hurr 'Āmilī*, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 238, H. 29). As far as the search went, the expression "*al-Ākhirah al-Sughrā*" was found only in the words of *Shaykh Ahmad Iḥsā'ī* (Iḥsā'ī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 201).

2. Two hadith errors that have played a role in this issue include: Differences in the transmission of a narration between earlier and later sources; and considering a narration that reaches a specific direct narrator through multiple chains as multiple narrations.
3. Differences in the transmissions of a narration have sometimes led to varying implications of the narration, causing a narration that was previously not included in the body of *Raj'at* narrations to be added to this collection in later centuries.
4. The number of narrations regarding the *Raj'at* has increased based on certain criteria that are not accepted among intellectuals, such as rigid adherence to the literal meanings of words.
5. Fallacies such as the repeated counting of narrations, the fragmentation of a narration to present it as multiple narrations, listing non-narrative reports, mixing subjects, straying from the topic, and circular reasoning have contributed to exaggerating the number of *Raj'at* narrations.
6. Mixing subjects has led to a change in the scope of debate and has weakened the defense of the belief in the *Raj'at*.
7. In the efforts of Imamiyya theologians, two subjects have been conflated. One is the possibility of the occurrence of the *Raj'at*, and the other is the issuance of reports indicating a *Raj'at* that the Imamis believe in. The second involves confusion between the Shia *Raj'at* and the general concept of coming back to life after death and returning to this world.
8. Non-narrative reports only indicate the importance of the belief in the *Raj'at* among the Imami, but since they are not issued by an

impeccable Imams source, they cannot be counted among the narrations regarding the *Raj'at*.

9. In defending a belief or doctrine, the quantity of evidence or the number of narrations is not important. What matters is the strength of the evidence; because weak defenses will only embolden opponents in their unfavorable assumptions.

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