

In the name of  
God



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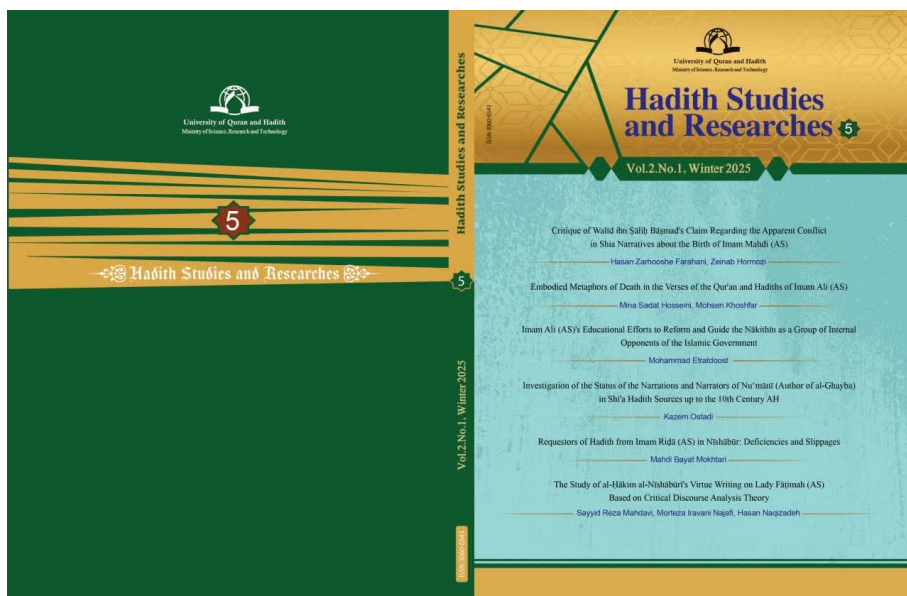
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# **Critique of *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*'s Claim Regarding the Apparent Conflict in Shia Narratives about the Birth of Imam Mahdi (AS)**

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## **Abstract**

Shia hadith sources contain numerous narrations indicating the announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth. However, other narrations seemingly contradict these, suggesting the concealment of his birth. In an Arabic academic dissertation titled "Narrations Regarding the Mahdi in the Authentic Hadith Books of the Twelver Shia: A Critical Study," *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad* uses these and similar narrations to argue that Shia narratives on the Mahdi are weak, contradictory, and irreconcilable, thus casting doubt on the Shia concept of the Mahdi

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itself ". The present study, using a descriptive-analytical method, aims to address the objections raised in the aforementioned dissertation regarding Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth. It first categorizes and reports the claim under two headings: Narrations indicating the announcement of the birth and narrations indicating its concealment. Then, by examining the chain of transmission (*Isnād*) and text (*Matn*) of each narration, it concludes that while credible narrations exist in both categories, based on both narrator-centered and context-centered approaches to evaluating authenticity, their apparent conflict can be resolved. The concealment of the birth refers to general concealment, while the announcement refers to disclosure to select individuals. This duality in concealment or announcement was necessitated by the oppressive circumstances of Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (AS) time and was essential for protecting God's proof. Therefore, these seemingly contradictory narrations are theologically reconcilable, and there is no need to prioritize one over the other.

**Keywords:** Mahdism, Announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) Birth, Concealment of Imam Mahdi's (AS) Birth, *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*, Resolving the Conflict of Narrations.

## Introduction

Hope for the appearance of a savior in the end times is a belief shared by all divine religions. By their very nature, all people desire a day when, under divine grace and the guidance of a global leader, humanity will be liberated from oppression. As promised by the prophets, justice will prevail throughout the world, and humanity will

achieve the dignified life it deserves. This belief gives meaning to human life and makes it easier to bear hardships.

In the Twelver Shia faith, the identity of the Mahdi (AS), the awaited savior at the end of time, is definitively established as the Twelfth Imam, Imam Mahdi (AS). Therefore, belief in the Imamate of the twelve Imams as successors to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and subsequently, belief in the occultation (*Ghaybah*) and eventual reappearance of the Twelfth Imam, referred to as Mahdavidism, is among the five fundamental tenets of Shia Islam. Consequently, a significant portion of the efforts of opponents of Shia Islam, reflected in some publications and academic research, is dedicated to undermining the concept of Imamate, particularly its Mahdavidism aspect. Among these studies is a doctoral dissertation titled "The Narrations Concerning the Mahdi in the Authentic Hadith Books of the Twelver Shia; A Critical Study" by *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*, defended in 2014 at *Umm al-Qurā* University in Mecca. The author attempts to demonstrate contradictions among Shia narrations concerning Mahdavidism; by presenting seemingly contradictory Shia narrations in the following chapters and sections, he seeks to cast doubt on the very principle of Mahdavidism:

**Chapter One:** "Narrations Related to the Circumstances of the Mahdi among the Shia;" in 8 sections titled: "His birth and his mother's circumstances, his names, titles, and *Kunya* (honorific), the prohibition of explicitly mentioning his name, his lineage, his attributes and signs, his status, his miracles, narrations related to the interpretation of verses concerning the rising of the *Qā'im*." (cf.

Bāṣmad, 2014: 92-327)

**Chapter Two:** "Narrations related to the occultation; in 7 sections titled: "Proof of the Occultation and its Durations, The Reason for the Occultation and How People Benefit from Him During His Occultation, The Circumstances of the Representatives Who Were During the Lesser Occultation, Those Who Claimed to Have Seen Him, Those Who Claimed Mahdism, The Prohibition of Specifying the Time of His Appearance, Awaiting Deliverance in His Appearance." (cf. Bāṣmad, 2014: 328-428)

**Chapter Three:** "Narrations related to his appearance; in 9 sections titled: "The Signs of His Appearance, His Appearance, The Day of His Appearance, His Conduct, Character, and the Characteristics of His Time, What He Inherits, What He Rules By, The Cities He Opens or Passes Through, The Companions of the Mahdi, His Enemies." (cf. Bāṣmad, 2014: 429-621)

Of the above, this article specifically examines and critiques the claim of contradiction in the narrations concerning "His Birth and His Mother's Circumstances" (cf. Bāṣmad, 2014: 92-119) and focuses on the following questions:

1. On what basis is the claim of contradiction in the narrations concerning the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS) made?
2. What is the solution to resolving the contradiction between these narrations?

To this end, this article will first categorize and report the narrations upon which the claim of contradiction is based. Then, by examining the chain of transmission and text of the narrations in

question and using the rules of resolving contradictions, it will address the contradiction.

According to the research conducted, no study has yet been found that examines the contradiction between the narrations of the concealment and announcement of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS).

## 1. Background

In criticizing the views of *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*, only two articles have been published to date by the authors of this article, which pertain to other chapters of his treatise. These articles are: "Critique of *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*'s Claim Regarding the Contradiction of Shia Narrations Concerning the Manner of Governance of Imam Mahdi (AS)" (Zarnooshe Farahani et al., 2023 AD/1403 SH (a): 29-56) and "Critique of *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad*'s Claim Regarding the Contradiction of Shia Narrations Concerning the Expectation of the Reappearance." (Zarnooshe Farahani and Hormozi, 2023 AD/1403 SH (b), in press) Regarding the narrations concerning the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS), although some previous research, with the approach of proving his birth, has studied some of the relevant narrations, none of them have sought to resolve the contradiction between the narrations indicating the announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth and the narrations indicating the concealment of his birth, with the aim of responding to Wahhabi doubts in this regard.

## 2. Research Method

The research method used in this article is descriptive and analytical. This means that the narrations cited by *Bāṣmad* are first categorized

and reported fewer than two general categories: "Narrations indicating the announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth and narrations indicating the concealment of his birth. Then, based on a narrator-centric and context-centric validation approach, the chains of transmission of the narrations are examined, and based on their textual validity; a final interpretive reconciliation will resolve the contradiction between the two sets of narrations."

Regarding *Bāṣmad*'s method of work and the manner of its reporting by the authors of this article, it is useful to note a few points: "Firstly, instead of making the effort to find the oldest source of each hadith, which is a necessity of a scientific hadith research, *Bāṣmad*, in most cases, has referred to the book "*Biḥār al-Anwār*," which dates back to the eleventh century." Therefore, finding the ancient and reliable source of each hadith has been considered by the authors of this article.

Secondly, *Bāṣmad*, in presenting textual and contextual criticisms of the narrations, largely relies on two books: "Scientific Examination of Hadiths on the Mahdi" by *Abulfaḍl Burqa'ī* and "The Legislation of *Biḥār al-Anwār*" by *Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī*. He does not himself refer to Shi'a sources of *Rijāl* (men of hadith) and hadith. Therefore, familiarity with these two books and the authors' approach to the narrations is considered in this article. Thirdly, although *Bāṣmad* has presented textual criticisms in the footnotes of some narrations based on the aforementioned two books, since these criticisms are limited to some narrations and the article's length is restricted, this article only examines and critiques his *Isnād* (chain of narration) and *Rijāl* criticisms of the narrations.

### 3. The Claim of Contradiction in Narrations Regarding the Birth of Imam Mahdi (AS)

The author of the treatise "Narrations Concerning the Mahdi in the Authentic Hadith Books among the Twelver Shi'a; A Critical Study," reports 61 narrations, which he claims relate to the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS), under twelve categories. Regarding his categorization and the narrations mentioned therein, two points must be noted: "Firstly, some categories have no connection to the birth itself and are considered deviations from the topic, such as the narrations in the first and second categories titled "That the Mahdi was born to a black mother" and "Details of the event of his birth." (cf. Bāšmad, 2014: 94-103) Therefore, the narrations in these two categories (which are nine narrations) are excluded from the discussion. Secondly, instead of categorizing the narrations into numerous and sometimes similar categories (such as the fifth and sixth and the tenth and eleventh categories), it would have been better for the author to categorize all the narrations under two general headings: "Narrations indicating the announcement of the birth, and narrations indicating the concealment of the birth."

Based on this, and for ease of reporting *Bāšmad's* claim, the remaining 52 narrations he cites are reported under these two general headings: "34 narrations under the first heading, narrations indicating the announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth, and 18 narrations under the second heading, narrations indicating the concealment of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth."

### 3-1. Narrations Indicating the Announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) Birth

Among the narrations mentioned by *Bāṣmad*, the general theme of 34 narrations is the announcement of Imam Mahdi's (AS) birth; after mentioning each narration and its source, the author points out flaws in its chain of transmission (*Isnād*) and text (*Matn*). Regarding the space constraints, only 9 of these narrations are reported in the table below. The first column of the table lists the narration numbers as they appear in *Bāṣmad*'s book to facilitate access to the text for readers. The second column provides the oldest source found in Shia hadith books, along with a selected portion of the narration's text. The third column details the reason *Bāṣmad* gives for weakening the narration and the sources he used for this assessment.

**Table 1: Narrations Indicating Narrations and Announcements of Imam Mahdi's (AS) Birth**

| Narration Number in Bāṣmad's Book | Oldest Source and Selected Portion of Narration                                                                 | Reason for Weakening the Narration from the Perspective of <i>Walīd ibn Ṣālīḥ Bāṣmad</i> and His Sources                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narration 10                      | <i>Bi Surri man Ra'ā fa Hanna'tahū bi Wilādati Ibnih al-Qā'im (AS)</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 434). | The obscurity of <i>Ḥasan ibn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alawī</i> (Burqa'ī (a), n.d.: 71). Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> . |
| Narration 12                      | <i>Kunnā Kharajnā lil Tahni'a bi Mūlid al-Mahdī (AS)</i> (Baḥrānī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 7, 672).                    | Weakening of the <i>Isnād</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 406). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> .                                                                              |

| Narration Number in Bāšmad's Book | Oldest Source and Selected Portion of Narration                                                      | Reason for Weakening the Narration from the Perspective of <i>Walid ibn Šālih Bāšmad</i> and His Sources                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narration 13                      | <i>Li Tahni'ati Abī Muḥammad (AS) bi Mūlid al-Mahdī (AS)</i> (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 5, 199). | The unreliability of <i>Jawharī</i> and the weakness of <i>Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān</i> (Bāšmad, 2014: 105).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Narration 14                      | <i>Lammā Wulida al-Sayyid (AS) Ra'at lahā Nūran</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 431).         | The unknown status of <i>Mājilūyah</i> , <i>Khayzarānī</i> , and the unnamed maidservant (Burqa'ī (a), n.d.: 68). Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> .                                                                        |
| Narration 15                      | <i>Wulida al-Sayyid (AS) Makhtawnan</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/ 1395 AH: 2, 433).                    | The weakness of <i>Ḥasan ibn Ali ibn Zakarīya</i> and the unknown status of <i>Muhammad ibn Khalīlān</i> , his father, grandfather, and <i>Ghīyāth ibn Asad</i> (Burqa'ī (a), n.d.: 70). Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> . |
| Narration 16                      | <i>Dakhaltu 'alayhi Ba'da Mawlidihī bi Laylatin</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 430).         | The obscurity of <i>Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad</i> and the unknown status of <i>Nasīm</i> the servant (Burqa'ī (a), n.d.: 68).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| Narration Number in Bāṣmad's Book | Oldest Source and Selected Portion of Narration                                                                                                                                           | Reason for Weakening the Narration from the Perspective of <i>Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad</i> and His Sources                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                           | Weakening of the Sanad by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the Sanad.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Narration 18                      | <i>Ba'da Arba'īna Yawman min Wilādati Narjis faidhā Mawlānā Ṣāḥib al-Zamān (AS) Yamshī fil Dār falam Ara Lughata Aṣṣaḥa min Lughatihī</i> (Qutb al-Dīn Rāwandī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 466). | The hadith is <i>Mursal</i> (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 164). Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> .                                                                                                                  |
| Narration 19                      | <i>Qad Dakhaltu 'Alayhi Ba'da Mawlidihī bi Laylatin fa 'Aṭastu</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 430).                                                                               | Weakening of the chain of narration by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 383). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> .                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Narration 21                      | <i>Innahū lammā Saqaṭa Ṣāḥibu al-Zamān (AS) min Baṭni Ummihī Jāthīyan 'alā Rukbatayhi</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 430).                                                        | <i>Ḥusayn ibn Ali Nishābūrī</i> , whose existence is denied by experts in <i>Rijāl</i> , and the obscurity of <i>Nasīm</i> and <i>Mārīyah</i> (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 67). Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2004 AD/1426 AH: 2, 208). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> . |

### 3-2. Narrations Indicating the Concealment of the Birth of Imam Mahdi (AS)

Among the narrations mentioned by *Bāšmad*, the general theme of 18 narrations is the concealment of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS). In the following, based on the method of reporting narrations of the announcement of birth, we report 5 narrations indicating concealment of the birth.

**Table No. 2: Narrations Indicating the Concealment of the Birth of Imam Mahdi (AS)**

| Narrative Number in Bāšmad's Book | Oldest Source of the Narration and Selected Part of the Narration                                     | Reason for Weakening the Narration from the Perspective of Walīd ibn Šālīḥ Bāšmad and the Source He Used                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narration 44                      | <i>Fa inna Allāha `Azza wa Jalla Yukhfi Wilādatahū</i> (Khazāz Rāzī, 1980 AD/1401 AH: 225).           | Weakening of the <i>Sanad</i> by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/426 AH: 1, 234 and 2, 144, 145, 213, 229). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness of the <i>Sanad</i> .<br><br>Weakness of the narrators (Burqa'ī, n.d.: 151). |
| Narration 45                      | <i>Tukhfā Wilādatuhū `alā al-Nāsi Ḥattā Yaqūlū lam Yūlad</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 1, 323). | The narrators are of unknown status (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 151). The chain of narration is weakened by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 213). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness in the chain.                       |

|              |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narration 47 | <i>Man Ghuyyibat `an al-nāsi Wilādatuhū</i> (Ibn Abī Zaynab, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 167). | The narrators are of unknown status (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 151). The chain of narration is weakened by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 214). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness in the chain.     |
| Narration 49 | <i>Lā Yu`rafu Wilādatuhū</i> (Ibn Abī Zaynab, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 169).                | The narrators are of unknown status (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 151). The chain of narration is weakened by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 214). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness in the chain.     |
| Narration 50 | <i>Şāḥibu Hādhā Amri Ta`mā Wilādatuhū</i> (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 479).  | The narrators are liars and forgers (Burqa'ī(a), n.d.: 230-236). The chain of narration is weakened by <i>Muḥsinī</i> (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 2, 221). However, <i>Muḥsinī</i> does not specify the weakness in the chain. |

#### 4. Critique of the Contradiction Claim in the Narratives Concerning the Expectation of the Reappearance (Faraj)

Given that most of the *Rijālī* weaknesses that *Walīd ibn Şāliḥ Bāşmad* introduces to the aforementioned narratives are drawn from the book

**14** "Scientific Examination of the Hadiths of the Mahdi" by *Sayyid Abulfaḍl*

*Burqa'ī* and the book "*Mashra'at Biḥār al-Anwār*" by Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī, we will first introduce *Burqa'ī* and *Muḥsinī* and the aforementioned books. Then, using earlier *Rijālī* books, we will re-examine the *Rijālī* status of the weakened narrators to determine the accuracy or inaccuracy of the weakening performed and the rulings issued on the narratives based on the weakening of the narrators.

#### 4-1. Sayyid Abulfaḍl *Burqa'ī* and His Position Regarding Shi'a Beliefs

Sayyid Abulfaḍl *Burqa'ī* (1287-1372 AH) has numerous writings in the fields of Quranic exegesis, creed, theology, jurisprudence, *Rijāl*, etc., some of which have been published in Iran and others, due to their strong alignment with Wahhabism beliefs, have been published in Saudi Arabia. Research shows that *Burqa'ī*'s life has two distinct parts that differ greatly in terms of thought.

In part of his scholarly life, he was staunchly Shia, defending Shia beliefs and opposing Wahhabism. However, in another part, he was influenced by Wahhabism, to the extent that he is sometimes seen defending Wahhabi views and opposing Shia beliefs. After deviating from Imami beliefs, *Burqa'ī* developed a pessimistic view of Shia and did not hesitate to insult the Shia community (Mohammadifam, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 168-169).

Among *Burqa'ī*'s works from the first period of his scholarly life, published in Iran, are the books "*Fawā'id fī al-Fiqh*," (Benefits in Jurisprudence) "*Fawā'id fī al-Uṣūl*," (Benefits in Principles) "*Tarājīm al-Nisā'*," (Biographies of Women) and "*Gulshan al-Quds*." However,

among his other books, aligned with Wahhabism and published in Saudi Arabia, are textbooks such as "Lessons from Wilayah," "Radiance from the Quran," "Superstitions and Excesses in Visiting Graves," and "The Contradiction of *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān* with the Quran."

An examination of *Burqa'ī's* works reveals his lack of belief in common Shia beliefs, such as the belief in twelve infallible Imams as successors to the Prophet (PBUH) (*Burqa'ī* (b), n.d.: 283), the impeccability of the Imams, and recourse to the Imams (*Burqa'ī* (b), n.d.: 412-415).

Given the above, even if we are not certain of *Burqa'ī's* conversion from Twelver Shia Islam to Wahhabism, it is not permissible to accept his opinions on Shia beliefs uncritically as the views of Shia and to attack Shia foundations. This is what *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ* does, claiming, based on *Burqa'ī's* statements, a contradiction in Shia narrations.

#### **4-1-1. The book "Scientific Examination of Hadiths on the Mahdi"**

In this book, *Burqa'ī* examines the hadiths found in volumes 51 to 53 of "*Biḥār al-Anwār*," which relate to the subject of the Mahdi. Regarding his methodology in this book, he writes: "There are narrations in these three volumes that are neither in accordance with reason nor with the Quran; and it is surprising that those who claim knowledge and reason have collected these narrations? If someone has even a little thought, he will realize the falsehood and superstitions of the fabricators, but we are obliged, to show the truth and enlighten the readers, to present some of its

fabrications. It can be said: "Not a single authentic hadith has come among them in terms of its chain of transmission. In this book, we present the introduction of the narrators of the news of the Mahdi according to the sayings of the Shia scholars of *Rijāl*. And if we said 'unknown in status,' the Shia scholars of *Rijāl* themselves have described him as unknown in status or unknown. An unknown person is one whose Islam, faith, justice, and fairness are not known. If we say "Neglected," Shia Imamiyyah scholars of *Rijāl* have not even mentioned him, leaving him neglected. If we say "Weak," Shia *Rijāl* scholars such as *Shaykh Ṭūsī*, *Māmaqānī*, *Allama Ḥillī*, *Najāshī*, and others have considered him weak; a weak narrator is one whose beliefs were corrupt, or who was immoral, a liar, a forger, or an enemy." (Burqa'ī (a), n.d.: 62-63)

This book, regarding the numerous flaws that have been highlighted in several studies (Mahdinejad, 2021 AD/1400 SH; Ṭabasī, 2017 AD/1396 SH; Mahdinejad and Feqhizadeh, 2019 AD/1398 SH), was not accepted by the Shia community. However, it remains one of the most important sources used by Wahhabism to refute Shia beliefs, and *Walīd ibn Ṣāliḥ Bāṣmad* has made the most use of this book in his *Rijāl* and *Fiqh al-Hadith* studies, believing he has presented evidence from Shia works against Shia beliefs!!!

#### 4-2. Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī

*Shaykh Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī Qandahari*, an Afghan (1314-1398 SH), is one of the most renowned Shia scholars in contemporary Afghanistan. He lived in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran and was a fighter against the communist regime in the 1980s. *Muḥsinī* studied *Rijāl*

under Ayatollah Khomeini (d. 1413 AH) and specialized in it. In his famous book, "*Buḥūthun fī 'Ilm al-Rijāl*," he presented his important views on *Rijāl* (Fahdāwī and Ḥubbullāh, 2016 AD/1437 AH: 1, 27).

*Muḥsinī* also examined the authenticity of the narrations in "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" and "*Jāmi' Aḥādīth al-Shi'a*" as part of his scholarly work. The results of this are seen in his books "*Mashra'a Biḥār al-Anwār*" and "*al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara fī Jāmi' Aḥādīth al-Shi'a*." These two books contain technical examinations of the authenticity of the narrations in "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" and "*Jāmi' Aḥādīth al-Shi'a*," but in the midst of these discussions of the chains of transmission, he also examined the extra-textual evaluation of the narrations in some cases. A careful study of them reveals that the purpose of writing these works, especially "*Mashra'a Biḥār al-Anwār*," was to provide guidance for better use of "*Biḥār al-Anwār*," and the author did not intend to remove numerous narrations from a large Shia collection of narrations (Hosseini Hanif, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 132).

#### 4-2-1. The book "*Mashra'a Biḥār al-Anwār*"

It is a two-volume work. In the introduction, *Muḥsinī* explains his approach to the hadiths in "*Biḥār al-Anwār*," attributing his rejection of some hadiths to a lack of information about the narrators or the absence of relevant biographical information in the standard biographical works (*Rijāl*). He emphasizes that he judged the hadiths solely based on their chains of transmission (*Isnād*), assigning a relative judgment, acknowledging that a hadith might have a valid chain in the Four Books (*Kutub al-Arba'ah*). Using this method, he deemed many of the hadiths in "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" to have unsound chains of transmission. *Muḥsinī* cites

the use of concepts shared with authentic hadiths and reliance on corroborating evidence that ensures the hadith's validity as benefits of even non-authentic hadiths. Conversely, he identifies the disregard for the chain of transmission, fabrication, exaggeration, and the ignorance of narrators as corrupting factors. He clarifies that, besides the soundness of the chain of transmission, other methods exist to ascertain the truthfulness of a report. For instance, if a hadith is narrated through three independent chains of transmission, as in some of *Šadūq's* hadiths, relying on it is not unreasonable, as it is unlikely that narrators in three separate chains would fabricate the same false report (Muḥsinī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 7-14).

However, *Fahdāwī* and *Ḥubbullāh*, in their book "*al-Mu'tabar fī Biḥār al-Anwār Wifqan li Naẓariyyāt Āyatullāh al-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī*" (The Authentic in *Biḥār al-Anwār* According to the Theories of Ayatollah *Shaykh Muḥammad 'Āṣif Muḥsinī*), aimed to compile the authentic hadiths of "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" according to Ayatollah *Muḥsinī's* views in "*Mashra'a Biḥār al-Anwār*," presenting 2873 hadiths (cf. *Fahdāwī* and *Ḥubbullāh*, 2016 AD/1437 AH: 1, 2, and 3). This effectively dismissed the remaining hadiths of "*Biḥār al-Anwār*" as lacking in authenticity. Consequently, Ayatollah *Muḥsinī*, in response to an inquiry about "*al-Mu'tabar fī Biḥār al-Anwār...*," highlighted seven points, some of which are as follows:

- 1) The narration of a text through three unreliable chains of transmission can establish confidence in its authenticity from the Imam (AS); it is unlikely that the narrators in all three chains would have fabricated a lie;
- 2) If a text is narrated with variations across ten chains of transmission,

even if the narrators are unknown or weak, the common element among these narrations is considered reliable and authoritative; "*al-Khabar al-Muwaththaq*" (a report corroborated by evidence) is superior to "*Khabar al-Thiqa*" (a report from a trustworthy narrator); because the certainty in the former is based on the content itself, while in the latter it is based on the narrator's trustworthiness;

- 3) Denying texts cited with invalid chains of transmission is incorrect, because denial is a claim that requires evidence; a hadith text, assuming the chain of transmission is invalid and lacks internal and external corroboration, is not authoritative; it is not to be refuted (Hosseini Hanif, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 133-135).

Despite this, *Bāṣmad*, either intentionally or without bothering to study *Muḥsinī*'s viewpoint, refers to *Muḥsinī*'s book to demonstrate the invalidity of most hadiths related to the Mahdi.

#### **4-3. Examination of the *Rijāl* Status of Narrators Weakened by *Bāṣmad* in Early *Rijāl* Books**

As observed in the report of *Bāṣmad*'s claim, he specifies the weakness of the chain of transmission in weakening some narrations, but weakens others without mentioning the point of weakness. In this section, based on the opinions of early Shia *Rijāl*ists, we will first examine the trustworthiness or weakness of 28 narrators specifically weakened by *Bāṣmad* to clarify the validity of his *Rijāl* claims about them. Following this, the chains of transmission of other narrations weakened by *Bāṣmad*, whose points of weakness he did not specify, will also be examined to determine the correctness or incorrectness of

#### 4-3-1. Ḥasan ibn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alawī

No mention of this narrator was found in the books of early Rijālists. Therefore, he is considered insignificant from a *Rijāl* perspective.

#### 4-3-2. 'Īsā ibn Mahdī Jawharī

No mention of this narrator was found in the books of early Rijālists. Therefore, he is considered insignificant from a *Rijāl* perspective.

#### 4-3-3. Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān Khaṣībī

Najāshī and Taqī al-Dīn Ḥillī consider him "Corrupt in his religious beliefs." (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 67; Taqī al-Dīn Ḥillī, 1962 AD/1342 SH: 444) Ibn *Ghaḍā'irī* and *Ḥillī* also called him a "Liar" and "Corrupt in his religious beliefs." (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 54; Ḥillī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 217) *Ṭūsī*, while mentioning him in his books, does not offer any criticism or assessment regarding *Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān* (*Ṭūsī*, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 423; *Ṭūsī*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 146). Therefore, he is considered weak from the perspective of Shia *Rijāl* scholar.

#### 4-3-4. Mājilūya

The only *Rijāl* book that mentions him is *Rijāl Ṭūsī*, which does not offer any criticism or assessment regarding him (*Ṭūsī*, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 437). Therefore, he is considered unknown from a *Rijāl* perspective.

#### 4-3-5. Khayzarānī

He is not mentioned in early books. However, *Shūshtarī* mentions him in his book, but does not offer any criticism or assessment (*Shūshtarī*, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 11, 430). As a result, he is considered unknown from a *Rijāl* perspective.

#### **4-3-6. Jārīyah**

No mention of this narrator is found in the books of *Rijāl*. Therefore, he/she is considered unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### **4-3-7. Ḥusayn ibn Ali ibn Zakarīya**

Ibn *Ghaḍā'irī* in his book describes him as weak (*Da'if*), separate, and a liar (*Kadhdhāb*) (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 53; Ḥillī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 217; Taqī al-Dīn Ḥillī, 1921 AD/1342 AH: 444). Consequently, from the perspective of early Shia scholars, he is considered weak.

#### **4-3-8. Muhammad ibn Khalīlān, His Father, and His Grandfather**

No mention of this narrator, his father, and his grandfather, who are mentioned in the narration, is found in early Shia books. Therefore, all three are considered unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### **4-3-9. Ghīyāth ibn Asad**

No mention of this narrator was found in Shia *Rijāl* books. Therefore, he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### **4-3-10. Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad**

No mention of this narrator was found in early books; therefore he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### **4-3-11. Nasīm Khādīm**

Since no mention of this narrator was found in early books, therefore he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### **4-3-12. Ādam ibn Muḥammad Balkhī**

**22** Ṭūsī uses the word "*Tafwīḍ*" to describe him (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427

AH: 407; Ḥillī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 207; Taqī al-Dīn Ḥillī, 1921 AD/1342 AH: 414). Therefore, he is weak.

#### 4-3-13. Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī

No mention of this narrator was found in Shia *Rijāl* books. Therefore, he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### 4-3-14. Hanẓala ibn Zakarīyā

*Najāshī* only states regarding him "*lam Yakun bi Dhālik*" (he was not like that) (*Najāshī*, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 147). And *Ṭūsī* only mentions his permission from *Tal‘akbarī* without any criticism or commendation (*Ṭūsī*, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 423). Therefore, he is considered weak from a *Rijāl* perspective.

#### 4-3-15. Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī Nīshābūrī

No information about this narrator was found in early books. Therefore, he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### 4-3-16. Mārīyah

No information about this narrator was found in *Rijāl* books. Therefore, she is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### 4-3-17. Abū Hārūn

No information about this narrator was found. Therefore, he is unreliable (*Muhmal*).

#### 4-3-18. Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Bilāl

*Ṭūsī* in his *Rijāl* book considers him trustworthy (*Thiqah*) (*Ṭūsī*, 2006

AD/1427 AH: 401). However, in his book *al-Ghaybah*, he considers him among the blameworthy (*Madhmūmin*) (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 400). Ḥillī also mentions in his book the failure to return property belonging to the Imam that was in Ibn Bilal's possession and curses him (Ḥillī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 274).

Although Ṭūsī considers him trustworthy in *Rijāl*, considering his opinion in *al-Ghaybah*, the narrations of Ibn Bilal should be examined carefully.

#### 4-3-19. Shalmaghānī

Ṭūsī, in his book *Rijāl*, identifies him as a *Ghālī* (extremist) (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 448). He also mentions in *Fihrist* that *Shalmaghānī* initially followed the correct path but later deviated before returning (Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 413). *Najāshī* attributes his change of religious affiliation to envy (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 378). Ḥillī also condemns and curses him (Ḥillī, 1981 AD/1402 AH: 274). Therefore, he is considered a weak and extremist narrator.

#### 4-3-20. Ismā‘īl ibn Ribāḥ

Ṭūsī mentions him in his *Rijāl* but does not offer any criticism or assessment (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 167). Therefore, he is considered unknown.

#### 4-3-21. Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn and Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan

Due to multiple possibilities, I could not identify the correct individual.

#### 4-3-22. Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan

Due to multiple possibilities, I could not identify the correct individual.

#### 4-3-23. Tha‘laba ibn Mihrān

No information about this narrator was found in the *Rijāl* books. Therefore, he is considered *Muhmal*.

#### 4-3-24. Yazīd ibn Hāzim

No mention of this narrator was found in the *Rijāl* books. Therefore, he is considered *Muhmal*.

#### 4-3-25. ‘Abbās ibn ‘Āmir

Ṭūsī mentions him in both his books but does not offer any criticism or assessment (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 341; Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 337). However, *Najāshī*, quoting *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, considers him trustworthy (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 281). Therefore, from a *Rijāl* perspective, he is considered trustworthy.

#### 4-3-26. Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ishāq

No information about this narrator was found in early sources. Therefore, he is considered *Muhmal*.

In summary of the *Rijāl* status of the 28 narrators weakened by *Bāṣmad*, it should be said that according to early Shia *Rijāl* scholars, 2 of them are trustworthy, 1 is an extremist, 3 are unknown, 15 are *Muhmal*, 2 could not be identified due to multiple possibilities, and 5 are weak. A summary of each is shown in the table below. Therefore, *Bāṣmad's* claim that all of them are weak is not acceptable.

**Table No. 3: The Opinion of Early *Rijāl* Scholars Regarding the  
28 Narrators Weakened by *Bāṣmad***

| Row     | Narrator's Name                                   | Opinion of Early Scholars     |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1       | Ḥasan ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alawī                       | Muhmal                        |
| 2       | ‘Īsā ibn Maḥdī Jawharī                            | Muhmal                        |
| 3       | Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān Khaṣībī                         | Weak                          |
| 4       | Mājīlūya                                          | Unknown                       |
| 5       | Khayzarānī                                        | Trustworthy                   |
| 6       | Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far Asadī                         | Unknown                       |
| 7       | Jārīyah                                           | Muhmal                        |
| 8       | Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Zakarīyā                      | Weak                          |
| 9,10,11 | Muḥammad ibn Khalīlān, his father and grandfather | Muhmal                        |
| 12      | Ibrahim ibn Muḥammad                              | Muhmal                        |
| 13      | Nasīm Khādim                                      | Muhmal                        |
| 14      | Ādam ibn Muḥammad Balkhī                          | Weak                          |
| 15      | Aḥmad ibn Ali                                     | Muhmal                        |
| 16      | Ḥanṣalah ibn Zakarīyā                             | Weak                          |
| 17      | Ḥusayn ibn Ali Nīshābūrī                          | Muhmal                        |
| 18      | Mārīyah                                           | Muhmal                        |
| 19      | Abū Hārūn                                         | Muhmal                        |
| 20      | Muḥammad ibn Ali ibn Bilāl                        | Weak                          |
| 21      | Shalmaghānī                                       | Weak and Exaggerating         |
| 22      | Ismā‘īl ibn Ribāḥ                                 | Unknown                       |
| 23, 24  | Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn and Aḥmad ibn al-               | Multiple instances exist, and |

| Row | Narrator's Name           | Opinion of Early Scholars     |
|-----|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
|     | Ḥasan                     | identification is impossible. |
| 25  | Thaʿlaba ibn Mihrān       | Muhmal                        |
| 26  | Yazīd ibn Ḥāzim           | Muhmal                        |
| 27  | ʿAbbās ibn ʿĀmir          | Trustworthy                   |
| 28  | Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ishāq | Muhmal                        |

As previously stated, in addition to the narrations weakened by *Bāṣmad* due to the presence of the above 28 narrators in their chains of transmission, other narrations were also weakened by *Bāṣmad* without specifying the reason for their weakness. Therefore, for a more thorough examination, we reviewed all the narrators of the hadiths that were weakened without specific mention and concluded that of this group of narrators, 38 were unreliable, 6 were unknown, 1 was exaggerating, 1 was praised, and 9 were weak. However, we could not find specific instances for three narrators, but the remaining narrators of these hadiths were categorized as trustworthy. Therefore, *Bāṣmad's* weakening lack a scientific basis.

#### 4-4. Examining the Validity of 52 Narrations Weakened by *Bāṣmad* and Resolving the Conflicts Among Them

After examining the chains of transmission of the 52 narrations in this discussion, we must now state the ruling on each narration to address the alleged conflict among them. In stating the ruling on the narrations, we encounter two approaches to validation: the narrator-centric approach and the context-centric approach. In the narrator-centric approach, the status of the narrators determines the ruling on

the narration, and the slightest flaw in any part of the chain of transmission renders the narration invalid. However, in the context-centric approach, only the isolated narrations of a weak narrator are rejected, meaning that if a narration by a weak narrator has corroboration, it is considered valid (for further study on approaches to validating hadiths, cf. Husseini Shirazi, 2018 AD/1398 SH: 86-87).

Therefore, in the following two separate tables, the judgment of each narration is first stated based on the narrator-centered validation approach and then based on the context-centered validation approach, to determine how many authentic and inauthentic hadiths remain on both sides of the conflict based on each of these two approaches, and how the conflict is resolved.

In the table below, the first column indicates the number of narrations in the *Bāṣmad* book, the second column indicates the judgment of each narration based on the narrator-centered validation approach, and the third column indicates the reason for that judgment.

**Table No. 4: Judgment of each narration based on the narrator-centered validation approach**

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                 |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10           | Weak                     | Failure to identify a criterion for Muhammad ibn Ḥasan Karkhī and the unreliability of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās al-'Alawī. |
| 11           | Weak                     | Unreliability of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās al-'Alawī and Ḥusayn ibn Ḥasan al-'Alawī.                                        |

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12           | Weak                     | Unreliability of ‘Īsā ibn Maḥdī and weakness of Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān (Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 54).                                                  |
| 13           | Weak                     | Unreliability of ‘Īsā ibn Maḥdī and weakness of Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān (Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 54).                                                  |
| 14           | Weak                     | Unknown status of Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Mājilūyah, unreliability of Abū ‘Alī Khayzarānī and Jārīyah.                                                         |
| 15           | Weak                     | Unreliability of Muḥammad ibn Ibrahim, Muḥammad ibn Khalīlān, Ghīyāth ibn Asad, and weakness of Ḥasan ibn Zakarīyā (Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 54). |
| 16           | Weak                     | Unreliability of ‘Aylān Kalānī and Nasīm Khādim.                                                                                                         |
| 17           | Weak                     | Unreliability of Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī Nīshābūrī, Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullāh, and Nasīm Khādim.                                                        |
| 18           | Weak                     | The narration being Mursal (disconnected) and the unreliability of Ḥakīmīh.                                                                              |
| 19           | Weak                     | Unreliability of Ibrahim ibn Muhammad, Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī Nīshābūrī, and Nasīm Khādim, and unknown status of Mājilūyah.                                     |
| 20           | Weak                     | Weakness of Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān (Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 54). Unreliability of ‘Aylān Kalānī and Nasīm Khādim.                                     |

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21           | Weak                     | Weakness and generality of Sayyārī (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 40; Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 80). Unknown status of Mājīlūyah. Unreliability of Nīshābūrī, Ibrahim ibn Muhammad, Nasīm, and Mārīyah. |
| 22           | Weak                     | Weakness and generality of Sayyārī (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 40; Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 80). Unreliability of Nīshābūrī, 'Aylān Kalānī, Ibrahim ibn Muhammad, Nasīm, and Mārīyah.               |
| 23           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal (disconnected). [Source: Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdān (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 54)].                                                                                                 |
| 24           | Weak                     | The narrators' 'Aylān Kalānī, Mūsā ibn Muhammad Rāzī, and Aḥmad ibn Ja'far are unreliable.                                                                                                                |
| 25           | Weak                     | The narrators Ibn Faraj, Abū Hārūn are unreliable, and the criterion for Muhammad ibn Ḥasan Karkhī is not established.                                                                                    |
| 26           | Weak                     | The narrators Kandī and Balālī are unreliable.                                                                                                                                                            |
| 27           | Authentic                | Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Bilāl held heretical beliefs.                                                                                                                                                        |
| 28           | Weak                     | The criterion for Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Kūfī is not established.                                                                                                                                           |
| 29           | Weak                     | Shalmaghānī is weak (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 387; extremist [Ghālī] (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 448). Ḥamza ibn Naṣr is                                                                                     |

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              |                          | unreliable. Ibrahim ibn Idrīs is unknown.                                                                                                                                         |
| 30           | Weak                     | Mājīlūyah is unknown. The criterion for Ishāq ibn Rīyāḥ is not established.                                                                                                       |
| 31           | Weak                     | Shalmaghānī is weak (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 387; extremist [Ghālī] (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 448). Ḥamza ibn Naṣr is unreliable.                                                 |
| 32           | Weak                     | Shalmaghānī is weak (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 387; extremist [Ghālī] (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 448). Ḥamza ibn Naṣr is unreliable.                                                 |
| 33           | Weak                     | Mursal (disconnected) and without a narrator.                                                                                                                                     |
| 34           | Weak                     | Mūsā ibn Ja'far is unknown. However, he is included among the generally accepted authorities.                                                                                     |
| 35           | Good                     | Ibrahim ibn Hāshim is praised (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 4; Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 66).                                                                                           |
| 36           | Good                     | Ibrahim ibn Hāshim is praised (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 4; Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 66).                                                                                           |
| 37           | Weak                     | Aḥmad ibn Ali Rāzī is unreliable. Ja'far ibn Mas'ūd is unknown. Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Kulthūm is an extremist (Ghālī) (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 407; Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 813). |
| 38           | Weak                     | Ishāq ibn Muḥammad is weak (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 41; Najāshī, 1945                                                                                                     |

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              |                          | AD/1365 AH: 73; Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 384).                                                                                                                              |
| 39           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 40           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 41           | Weak                     | Muhammad ibn Ali known as Kirmānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsā, and Aḥmad ibn Ṭāhir are unreliable.                                                                                    |
| 42           | Weak                     | Yazīd ibn Abi Ḥāzim is unreliable.                                                                                                                                        |
| 43           | Weak                     | Aḥmad ibn Ishāq Muthqala is unreliable                                                                                                                                    |
| 44           | Weak                     | Sudayr ibn Ḥakīm and Abū Saʿīd ʿAqīṣā are unknown.                                                                                                                        |
| 45           | Weak                     | Ali ibn Muhammad, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad, Mūsā ibn ʿImrān, and Ḥamza ibn Ḥamrān are unknown. However, these individuals are included among the generally accepted authorities |
| 46           | Weak                     | Aḥmad ibn Hārūn is unknown, and Mūsā ibn Hilāl is unreliable.                                                                                                             |
| 47           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 48           | Weak                     | Ali ibn ʿAbbās ibn Amir and Mūsā ibn Hilāl Kindī are unreliable                                                                                                           |
| 49           | Weak                     | Yaḥyā ibn Yaʿlī is unreliable.                                                                                                                                            |
| 50           | Authentic                |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 51           | Weak                     | Jabraʿīl ibn Aḥmad is unknown. However, he is included among the generally accepted authorities.                                                                          |

| Narration No | Commandment of Narration | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 52           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 53           | Authentic                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 54           | Weak                     | The narration is Mursal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 55           | Weak                     | Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abdullāh and Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ishāq are unreliable                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 56           | Weak                     | Aḥmad ibn Ali Rāzī is unreliable. Ḥanzala ibn Zakarīyā is weak (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 146).                                                                                                                                              |
| 57           | Weak                     | Ishāq ibn Muḥammad ibn Ayyūb is unreliable.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 58           | Weak                     | Ali ibn Aḥmad, Ali ibn Ḥasan, Mūsā ibn Hilāl, and ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Mūsā are unreliable. Al-Qalāsī is weak (Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1960 AD/1380 AH: 96).                                                                                              |
| 59           | Weak                     | Ali ibn Aḥmad and ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Mūsā are unreliable.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 60           | Weak                     | Muhammad ibn Sanān is weak and extremist (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 364; Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 92; Ṭūsī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 406). The condemnation of Abū Jārūd (Kashshī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 495; Ibn Ghaḍā’irī, 1986 AD/1365 SH, 61). |
| 61           | Weak                     | The negligence of Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aṣām and Ismā‘īl ibn Ali Qazwīnī.                                                                                                                                                               |

According to the later *Rijāl* scholars (i.e., from the Hillah school onwards), who emphasize narrator-based authentication, out of the 52 existing narrations in this discussion, forty-seven are weak, two are

*Ṣaḥīḥ* (Correct), two are *Ḥasan* (Good), and one is *Muwaththaq* (trustworthy); meaning only five narrations are considered authentic (including *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥasan*, and *Muwaththaq*). Three of these authentic narrations indicate the concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth, while two indicate its announcement. Therefore, based on the narrator-based authentication approach, there is a conflict among these narrations, and it must be determined whether this conflict can be resolved.

To provide another opportunity to authenticate the other hadiths in these collections, we decided to re-examine the 52 existing narrations, this time based on a context-based authentication approach. According to this approach, all hadiths indicating both the announcement and concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth are considered authentic. A report of this authentication method is presented in the two tables below.

**Table No. 5: Ruling on Narrations Indicating the Announcement of Imam Mahdi's Birth Based on the Context-Based Authentication Approach**

| Row | Narration Nos                                                                      | Content                                             | Narration Commandment | Reason of Commandment                                                                                                                                      |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 10, 11, 12, 13, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42 | Good tidings of Imam Mahdi's birth, time, and place | Ṣaḥīḥ                 | 1- Hadith 27 in this collection is authentic, and hadiths 35 and 36 are among the <i>Ḥasan</i> hadiths. Given the authenticity of these three hadiths, the |

| Row | Narration Nos                                      | Content                                | Narration Commandment | Reason of Commandment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     |                                                    |                                        |                       | <p>authenticity of other similar hadiths is also proven.</p> <p>2- This collection contains twenty-one narrations that, due to their various chains of transmission, are not classified as individual isolated narrations.</p> <p>3- The presence of narrators like <i>Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Walid</i> and <i>Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Yahya</i> in the chains of transmission of these narrations indicates the soundness of their content.</p> |
| 2   | 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 43 | Miracles related to Imam Mahdi's birth | Şahih                 | 1- Thirteen hadiths in this collection, due to their various chains of transmission, are not classified as individual                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Row | Narration Nos | Content | Narration Commandment | Reason of Commandment                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----|---------------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     |               |         |                       | <p>isolated narrations and are therefore considered authentic.</p> <p>2- The presence of narrators like <i>Muhammad ibn Yahyā al-'Aṭṭār</i> and <i>Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Yahyā al-'Aṭṭār</i> indicates the soundness of this content.</p> |

**Table 6: Commandment of the Hadith Concerning the Concealment of Imam Mahdi's Birth Based on a Contextual Evidence-Based Approach**

| Row | Hadith Numbers                                          | Subject                           | Commandment | Reason for Commandment                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, | Concealment of Imam Mahdi's Birth | Ṣaḥīḥ       | <p>1-Given the authenticity of Hadiths 50 and 53 in this collection, the remaining Hadiths are considered authentic.</p> <p>2- The existence of eighteen Hadiths with different</p> |

|  |                   |  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--|-------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | 58, 59,<br>60, 61 |  |  | chains of narration does not fall into the category of isolated individual narrations and are therefore considered reliable.<br><br>3- The presence of individuals such as <i>Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja’far Ḥimyarī</i> , <i>Ayyūb ibn Nūḥ</i> , <i>Muhammad ibn Himām</i> , and <i>Muhammad ibn Yahyā al-‘Aṭṭār</i> indicates the authenticity of these Hadiths. |
|--|-------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**4-5. Examining the Implications of Hadiths Indicating the "Announcement of Imam Mahdi's Birth" and Resolving the Conflict with Hadiths Indicating the "Concealment of Imam Mahdi's Birth"**

Considering that, according to the contextual evidence-based approach, all Hadiths indicating the announcement and concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth are considered authentic, and based on the narrator-centric approach, there are authentic Hadiths in both categories, and we now want to examine their conflicting implications. The question is, ‘Given the authenticity of the Hadiths indicating the announcement and concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth, how is their apparent conflict resolved?’

In the Hadiths indicating the announcement of Imam Mahdi's birth,

individuals such as *Hakimah Khātūn*, daughter of Imam *Jawād* (AS), or those to whom Imam *Hasan al-‘Askarī* (AS) showed his son and introduced him as his successor, are mentioned as being aware of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS). For example, it is narrated from *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq Ash‘arī*, one of the close companions and representatives of Imam *Hasan al-‘Askarī* (AS), that Imam *Hasan al-‘Askarī* (AS), in response to his inquiry about his successor, showed him Imam Mahdi (AS), who was a three-year-old child, and said, "If you were not esteemed by God and His representatives, I would not have shown you my son."

I said to him, "O! Son of the Messenger of Allah, who will be the Imam and Caliph after you?" He, peace be upon him, quickly rose, entered the house, then came out carrying a boy on his shoulder, whose face was like the moon on the night of the full moon, one of the three-year-olds. He said, "O! *Aḥmad ibn Ishāq*, were it not for your virtue with Allah, the Almighty and Glorious, and with His proofs, I would not have shown you this son of mine. Indeed, he is the namesake of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's prayers be upon him and his family, and his kunya (honorific title), who will fill the earth with justice and fairness as it has been filled with tyranny and oppression." (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 384)

Based on this, one can understand the dual policy of Imam *Hasan al-‘Askarī* (AS) in concealing or revealing the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS): "Public concealment and private revelation." From this, the miracles related to the absence of signs of pregnancy in his noble

mother, the concealment of his birth, and the concealment of his existence from the general public, with news of it reaching only a few close relatives and companions, becomes clear. With this description, it is natural that others, including the Sunnis, who were distanced from the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), would not have known about his birth and therefore denies it. However, given the abundant narrations, there is no room for denying the birth.

The policy of concealing and revealing the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS), in addition to indicating that society was not ready for his Imamate, is also presented as a means of testing people: "Indeed, Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, loves to test the Shi'a." (Ibn Bābawayh, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 342)

The policy of concealing or revealing the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS) is similar to the birth of Prophet Moses. Because Pharaoh killed all the male children of the Israelites to prevent his birth, by the will and desire of God, Prophet Moses was born in secret, so that only his family knew of his birth.

Therefore, the oppressive conditions prevailing at the time of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS) led his noble father to conceal his birth from the common people and reveal it only to a few select individuals, to protect the life of the divinely appointed proof.

Thus, the narrations indicating the concealment and revelation of the birth of Imam Mahdi (AS) are reconcilable, and *Bāšmad's* claim of their contradiction is rejected.

## Conclusion

1. Based on a narrator-centric approach to verification, among the 52 existing narrations in the discussion, forty-seven are weak, two are *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Correct), two are *Ḥasan* (good), and one is *Muwaththaq* (authentic). This means only five narrations are considered reliable (including *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Ḥasan*, and *Muwaththaq*), with three supporting the concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth and two supporting its announcement. Therefore, based on the narrator-centric approach, reliable narrations exist in both categories, leaving a conflict that requires resolution.
2. Based on a context-centric approach to verification, all narrations indicating both the concealment and announcement of Imam Mahdi's birth are considered reliable. Therefore, the conflict remains and requires resolution.
3. The narrations indicating the concealment of Imam Mahdi's birth do not conflict with those indicating its announcement. Rather, the concealment refers to public concealment, while the announcement refers to disclosure to select individuals. This concealment and announcement, considering the circumstances of Imam *Ḥasan al-'Askarī's* time, are understandable and necessary for the protection of God's proof. Therefore, these seemingly contradictory sets of narrations are reconcilable, and there is no need to prioritize one over the other.

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# **Embodied Metaphors of Death in the Verses of the Qur'an and Hadiths of Imam Ali (AS)**

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## **Abstract**

Human understanding of divine knowledge, particularly abstract and intangible concepts such as death, significantly influences human behavior and ultimate destiny. Consequently, the concept of death in verses and hadiths, especially in the words of Imam Ali (AS), has been depicted in a tangible manner. A descriptive-analytical study of "Death" with a focus on conceptual metaphors within the cognitive semantics framework has transformed tangible spaces into unfamiliar ones and opened up new perspectives on religious knowledge about death. Based on Verses of the Qur'an and the words of Imam Ali (AS)

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in the context of embodied conceptual metaphor, the concrete concepts of humans, animals, and plants are mapped onto death: 1) Death is portrayed as a human who preaches, comes, and meets one's soul; or as a human who pursues another, waiting to seize them like an officer with a judicial order, or a thief and hunter who takes advantage of one's negligence and steals or hunts all their possessions (life and soul); 2) Another image for death is that of a ferocious animal with sharp claws, directly targeting a person's soul; 3) The third embodied conceptualization presents death as a plant with a pleasant scent or as autumn, symbolizing the end of life. In some of these tangible depictions, pleasure, comfort, and tranquility are the focal points, while in most cases, the certainty and imminence of death, its harsh and terrifying nature, the transience of life, the inevitability of death, and the feelings of loss and regret are emphasized.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Semantics, Conceptual Metaphor, Embodiment of Death, Personification of Death, Animalization of Death, Vegetalization of Death.

## Introduction

"Death" is a significant issue that has been recommended to be remembered in the Quran and hadiths, while negligence of it has been condemned. This is because one's approach and perspective towards death determine the course of their life and destiny. Consequently, the Quran and hadiths have extensively discussed death in various expressions, rendering the abstract concept of death tangible, perceptible, and comprehensible for every individual.

## 1. Statement of the Problem

One of the most significant and widely used methods for concretizing abstract concepts in religious teachings is conceptual metaphor. This approach, in addition to its appeal, serves as an effective medium for accurately and tangibly conveying an abstract concept such as death to the audience, making this critical notion more credible and comprehensible. As Lakoff and Johnson have demonstrated in their book *Metaphors We Live By*, conceptual metaphors are deeply rooted in the human mind and operate subconsciously in everyday life, with numerous examples. For instance, "Reasoning" is one of the fundamental concepts frequently employed in expressions such as: "He attacked the weaknesses of my argument," "He targeted my reasoning," or "Your claims are indefensible." In these cases, the conceptual metaphor "Argument is war" underpins and reflects the discourse, as the terms used (e.g., attack, target, indefensible) are associated with warfare. This means that the concept of reasoning is understood through the source domain of war. Therefore, metaphor is referred to as a conceptual or cognitive metaphor because it is grounded in understanding abstract matters through tangible and conceptual elements, visualizing mental concepts.

The foundational premise of this study is the pivotal role of conceptual metaphor in understanding the meanings of religious texts; delving into various types of conceptual metaphors, especially with a focus on religious themes, can open significant avenues of knowledge to humanity. This is because the multilayered texts of the Quran and traditions have extensively employed this metaphorical nature,

establishing connections between various domains on many topics, to conceptualize abstract domains through multiple source domains, thereby shaping a correct worldview and enhancing comprehensibility. In the cognitive approach, this type of metaphor transcends the boundaries of mere rhetoric and extends to encompass language, thought, and everyday life, offering a broader framework. It facilitates human comprehension, particularly in abstract theological concepts, making them more accessible and understandable.

One of the beautiful and impactful examples of the conceptual metaphor of death in the verses and words of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, especially the Hadith of Imam Ali (AS), is the embodied conceptual metaphor. Based on Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive metaphor theory, this metaphorical nature gives human, animal, or plant qualities to various realms of the Quranic worldview regarding death, recreating a tangible image for the audience. Therefore, this research, using a descriptive-analytical method, examines the embodied conceptual metaphors of death in the verses and words of Imam Ali (AS), except in a few cases where the enlightening words of other infallibles are used for explanation and completion, to gain a higher understanding of the reality of death and to prepare humans more deeply for the hereafter by remembering it.

## 2. Background

"Metaphor" is one of the familiar and ancient concepts in literary discussions, and its exploration, along with figurative language and its various types, has long been a subject of interest among Muslim

scholars in Qur'anic and narrative studies. It has a history spanning over 2500 years in philosophy and literature (Qaeminiya, 2021 AD/1401 SH: 20 and 38). Since the time of Aristotle, the analysis of the nature of metaphor has held particular significance within a rhetorical framework, viewing it as a linguistic art of persuasion achieved through the substitution of words (ibid: 47; Qaeminiya, 2016 AD/1396 SH: 68). The tradition of studying metaphor among Western scholars also traces back to Aristotle, who believed that metaphor is specific to literary language and should be examined among the arts and literary techniques. This classical perspective on metaphor remains prevalent today (Safavi, 2010 AD/1390 SH: 368).

The second viewpoint, which can be traced, in a general sense, in the studies of earlier scholars (Qaeminiya, 2021 AD/1401 SH: 36), is the Romantic approach to metaphor, which dates back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this view, metaphor is not confined to literary language; rather, it is considered an essential element of language and thought for expressing the external world (Safavi, 2010 AD/1390 SH: 368). For the first time, in 1980, Lakoff and Johnson presented a cognitive analysis of "Metaphor," which became known as the "Conceptual Theory of Metaphor" or "Conceptual Metaphor." They introduced its theoretical framework in their book *Metaphors We Live By* (Qaeminiya, 2016 AD/1396 SH: 68 and 647).

Regarding the research background, it is noteworthy that no direct studies have been conducted on the conceptual metaphors of death in the verses and hadith of Imam Ali (AS). However, studies that are

relatively close to the research topic, either in terms of methodology (conceptual metaphor and cognitive semantics) or content (death and the afterlife due to their complexity and significance), have been conducted. Examples of such research include: "Life Afterlife Nomenclature in the Quran in the Light of Conceptual Metaphor Theory" by Zeynab Feyzi and others, "Analysis and Evaluation of Conceptual Metaphors in Verses Related to the Day of Judgment" by Morteza Abdi and Fatemeh Hedayati, "Quranic Origins of Conceptual Metaphors of Death in the Masnavi of Rumi" by Alireza Shabanlou; and the thesis "A Study of the Conceptual Metaphor of Death in the Persian Language from a Cognitive Linguistic Perspective" by Fatemeh Tahmasebi. However, among the reviewed studies, no research was found that systematically identified embodied metaphors of death in verses and hadiths. Only an English article by Fardous Aghaghazizadeh and Shirin Pour Ibrahim titled "Death Metaphor in Religious Texts: A Cognitive Semantics Approach" conceptualized the abstract concept of death in the language of the Quran and Nahj al-Balāghah, but not with the system that exists in this research, as it did not specifically and extensively address embodied metaphors in this context.

### 3. Necessity and Objectives

Given the abundance of the topic of death, especially with the focus on embodied conceptual metaphors, in religious texts, it is necessary to address it to strengthen the divine worldview regarding this topic. Consequently, the belief in the important issue of death becomes more solid and tangible within individuals. Moreover, this directly or

indirectly clarifies the role of embodied conceptual metaphors in better understanding abstract concepts like death.

#### **4. Research Method**

This research is based on a qualitative method and a type of cognitive semantic method. In this method, rather than discovering linguistic metaphors, the focus is on discovering semantic metaphors present in the mind and meaning of the text, primarily the verses of the Quran and the words of Imam Ali (AS) in *Nahj al-Balāghah*. The goal is to discover conceptual metaphors. This is a library-based research with a descriptive-analytical method, extracting data from verses and hadiths based on the theory of conceptual metaphor to select and discover the system of embodied metaphors and to map (source and target and conceptualizations) in verses and hadiths about death based on a structured and organized metaphorical framework and display it in a table.

In this method, by using library resources, after extracting verses and hadiths related to death based on its keywords, and selecting prominent and frequently repeated cases, the data is analyzed based on the theory of conceptual metaphor (embodiment) to clarify how the embodiment imagery for death is reflected in rich religious texts.

#### **5. Concepts**

A better understanding of the conceptual metaphor of "Death" requires familiarity with the following concepts:

##### **5-1. Conceptual Metaphor**

Cognitive semantics is based on the relationship between language

and mind; therefore, conceptual metaphor, which is one of its main areas, is not a feature exclusive to language, but rather, since it encompasses all aspects of daily life, it covers the realm from language to thought and action. This conceptual system plays a fundamental role in defining daily realities; the way we think, our experiences, and our daily actions are very much related to metaphor, even if we are not aware of it. There is much linguistic evidence for the metaphorical nature of most of our everyday conceptual system (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 3).

Unlike traditional metaphor, the focus of conceptual metaphor is on the concept rather than the words. This type of metaphor is called conceptual or perceptual metaphor because it is based on the understanding of abstract matters based on concrete and conceptual matters and by visualizing mental concepts (ibid: 272). For example, the abstract concept of "Argument" can be understood with the sensory and experiential concept of "War." (ibid: 3-5)

Lakoff and Johnson present a three-fold division of metaphor: 1) Orientation; 2) Structural; and 3) Ontological, which itself is divided into two types: Embodiment and personification. Given the subject of this paper, only the personification metaphor will be defined and explained.

Personification is one of the most important types of ontological metaphor, as it organizes the mind and thought that is manifested in language. It assigns properties of living beings to an object, the most prominent of which are humans, animals, or plants. Therefore, it can be found in three types (ibid: 21-25):

### **5-1-1. Personification**

This is a type of metaphor in which human qualities and characteristics are used to express a non-human phenomenon, such as "Life deceived me," and abstract realities like desires, emotions, and social phenomena are treated like a person (ibid:29-33); for example, attributing the human quality of "Coming" to death.

### **5-1-2. Animalization**

This is a type of metaphor in which animal characteristics are used to express a phenomenon that does not have life; for example, the concept of the "Claws of death" indicates that death is imagined as an animal.

### **5-1-3. Vegetalization**

In this type of metaphor, the qualities and characteristics of plants and plant life are used to express a phenomenon that does not have life; for example, the concept of the "Autumn of Life" indicates that life is recreated as a plant.

## **5-2. Death**

In verses and hadiths, words like "Mawt, Ajaal, Liqā'allāh, Raḥīl, Rujū', and others refer to death, each with a specific connotation. In general, "Mawt" means the absence of life; however, death and life are relative to each thing (Muṣṭafawī, 2009 AD/1430 AH: 11, 213). In the following, by explaining conceptual metaphors, a tangible meaning of death will be clarified.

## 6. Types of Embodied Metaphors of Death in the Verses and Hadiths of Imam Ali (AS)

The verses and hadiths of Imam Ali (AS), by employing numerous conceptual metaphors about death, depict it from various perspectives. Paying attention to the interconnected network of different types of conceptual metaphors and their primary and secondary distinctions opens up new doors to the systematic structure of this Quranic concept. One of these depictions in the verses and hadiths of Imam Ali (AS) is the embodied conceptualization of death, which manifests in three types: personification, animalization, and vegetalization. To express the abstract phenomenon of death, human, animal, or plant characteristics have been used, and death has been given life like a human, animal, or plant, in order to organize a correct and objective worldview of death with tangible images in the mind and thought.

### 6-1. Personification of Death

Verses and hadiths, in order to make death tangible and perceptible, have recreated images with human characteristics such as coming and going, understanding, precedence, and so on, and have personified death. Some of these human characteristics attributed to death include:

#### 6-1-1. The Coming of Death

In many expressions in religious texts, verbs such as "Came," "Comes," and so on are attributed to death and destiny. Coming is typically a mental concept that is imagined for a human being with free will, as if the concept of the realization of death is mapped onto

the coming of a human. Examples of such verses include: "Whoever hopes for the meeting with Allah, indeed, the appointed time of Allah will surely come, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing" (al-‘Ankabūt/5); "He will swallow it with difficulty and scarcely be able to swallow it, and death comes to him from every place..." (Ibrahim/17); "And Allah will not delay anyone when his time comes, and Allah is Aware of what you do" (al-Munāfiqūn/11); "And death shall come to you." (Qāf/19)

These are metaphors for a presence that is a property of a body and especially of a human (Qūnawī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 18, 174).

### 6-1-2. The Presence of Death

In other verses and hadiths, presence is attributed to death, as if it is depicted that death is a human being who is present in the presence of another human: "It has been prescribed for you, when death approaches any of you..." (al-Baqarah/180)

### 6-1-3. Death as a Visitor

In these verses, God explains the reason for the certainty and inevitability of death by saying that death, like a human, will surely meet a person: "Say: Indeed, that which you flee from, death, will surely meet you" (al-Jumu‘ah/8) (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 19, 268). This is a two-way meeting, as Imam Ali (AS) says: "O! Servants of God, indeed, death is not something to escape from... if you stand still, it will take you, and if you flee from it, it will catch you" (Sermon: 149) (Qummī, 1943 AD/1363 AH: 2, 367). Humans are constantly fleeing from death and striving to protect themselves from

it. However, since it is inescapable, they inevitably encounter it even as they attempt to escape. During their time in the corporeal body, they are driven toward the ultimate destination set for them (death). Every effort they make—such as movement, treatment, and other measures to evade death—inevitably consumes the moments of their lifespan, hastening the arrival of death and the inevitable meeting with it (Baḥrānī, n.d.: 3, 208-209).

#### **6-1-4. Death as a Preacher**

Another human concept attributed to death is that of a preacher; death is like a caring human who admonishes a person when they make a mistake or sin. Imam Ali (AS) says in this regard: "Therefore, remember death frequently when your souls urge you towards desires, and death is sufficient as a preacher." (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 28) Such metaphors are also evident in common, everyday concepts, such as the "Lessons of time," where the passage of days is personified as a human offering advice and counsel for reflection.

In explaining the instructive nature of death, it has been stated that merely witnessing the daily occurrences, such as the passing of friends and acquaintances and the news of the deaths of those who were alive just yesterday, should suffice for individuals to contemplate their own eventual fate (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 13, 24).

#### **6-1-5. Death as a Perceiver (Perceiver, Runner)**

In Surah *al-Nisā'*, it is stated: "Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you are in fortified towers..." (*al-Nisā'*/78) Such verses serve as a warning, emphasizing that death is an undeniable

reality, and the term "*Yudrikkum*" reminds us that attempting to escape this inevitable reality of the universe is futile. The meaning of the root "*Yudrikkum*" suggests that when someone tries to escape something, it follows after them (Makarem Shirazi, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 4, 19; cf. Ālūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 3, 84).

In the verse "...Whoever leaves his house emigrating towards Allah and His Messenger, and then death overtakes him, his reward has already been assured by Allah..." (al-Nisā'/100) the term "*Idrāk al-Mawt*" is also a metaphor that indicates the natural or sudden arrival of death. The literal sense of *Idrāk* implies that a person who lags behind runs to catch up with the one ahead of them, but in the case of death, no one is left behind for it to catch up with; hence, the literal meaning is not intended (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 5, 53). The metaphor of the "Perception of death" suggests that death is envisioned as a person chasing after another, trying to catch them while the second person attempts to escape (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 5, 84).

This Qur'anic expression regarding death is repeated several times in the words of Imam Ali (AS), such as when he said: "O! Servants of Allah, indeed death is not an escape from. If you remain in place, it will come to you, and if you flee from it, it will overtake you..." (Letter: 27) (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 27)

He further emphasized: "Indeed, there is no escape from death. It will come to you, whether you stay where you are or try to run away from it." The Imam stresses that there is no escaping the inevitable encounter with death. This encounter is swift, as if two moving

entities approach each other from opposite directions. Just as two vehicles traveling towards one another at high speed inevitably meet, so too will the inevitable meeting with death occur (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 12, 182).

### **A) Death as a Competitor**

From the previous discussions about the perception of death, a mental image is recreated where death is like a human who wants to outpace a person and their life, and the person, on the other side of the competition, is running away from death so that it does not catch up to them; while a person should, through their actions, get ahead of death and outpace it. In the hadiths, it is said: "... Hasten to the Hereafter and race against the appointed time, for people are about to lose hope, and death will overtake them, and the door of repentance will be closed to them." (Sermon: 183)

"May God have mercy on a person... that seizes the opportunity and hastens to death and provisions him with good deeds." (Sermon: 76)

Death constantly approaches a person and seeks them out. This expression implies that a person, through good deeds, should outpace it and always keep this rival in sight (Hashemi Khoei, 2020 AD/1400 AH: 21, 45-46; *ibid*: 5, 241).

### **B) Death as a Waiter**

Death, like a swift person, comes towards a person, so one should be waiting for it and prepare for its arrival. The source domain of a waiting person is mapped onto the target domain of preparedness for death and welcoming it. In the words of Imam Ali (AS), it is said:

"Whoever watches for his death will seize his opportunities." *Ajl* (destiny or appointed time) here can mean death, meaning whoever guards their death, that is, waits for it and thinks about it and is not negligent of it, will seize the opportunity and do whatever they can before it, for fear that death may not give them another opportunity (Khansari, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 5, 295); as Imam Ali (AS) has said in another statement: "Whoever anticipates death, hastens to good deeds." (ibid: 327)

#### 6-1-6. Death as a Wakil (Agent) and Ma'mūr

In the metaphor "Death is a wakil and a Ma'mūr," death is considered a terrifying human being who is sent by God to carry out divine commands towards a person (Shabanlou, 218 AD/1398 SH: 3, 53). Imam Ali (AS) has said: "Whoever death is assigned to, it will uproot him and destroy him." (Tamīmī Āmudī, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 2, 1379)

Based on this, death has a mandate for each person, a decree from God that is inevitable and certain. Therefore, in some hadiths of Imam Ali (AS), death is called "*Ḥimam*" (fever) (Qarashī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 3, 137; Hashimi Khoei, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 5, 412), because the *Ḥimam* is a fever that turns the face black, and few people escape from it (cf. Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 135; Farāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 33): "And who pledged to himself that no form he has infused with spirit shall move, without death being its end, and destruction its goal!" (Sermon: 165)

In other words of the Imam, he says: "And for every soul, there is a *Ḥimam*." This means that every soul cannot escape death, like a divine

decree, so one should always be prepared for it (Khansari, 1988 AD/1366 SH: 5, 12). "Whoever is neglectful of the events of time, the *Himam* will awaken him." The purpose of these metaphors is to encourage awareness and preparation for the events of time and not to be negligent about them, because if one is negligent, they will awaken when they are already in ruin and have no choice (ibid: 457).

### 6-1-7. Death as a Guardian

Another human concept attributed to death is that of a guardian; similar to a human being who has a guardian, death also acts as a guardian over a person and their actions. Imam Ali (AS) states in this regard: "Therefore, remember death frequently when your souls urge you towards desires, and death is sufficient as a preacher. And the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) often advised his companions to remember death, and he would say: Remember death frequently, for it is the destroyer of pleasures and a barrier between you and your desires." (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 28)

In another statement, it is explicitly stated that "Death is sufficient as a guardian." (Wisdom 306) Based on these profound words, a tangible image is created from the sensory source of a guardian and observer, and it is mapped onto the abstract destination of death, to portray death and the attention to it as a factor in distancing oneself from desires, or to depict it as a guardian of a person from any incident, because until life ends, no incident can defeat them

### 6-1-8. Death as a Thief

When a thief suddenly steals everything from a person, the person feels a sense of loss, regret, and bankruptcy. Imam Ali (AS) has depicted death as a thief in the sensory realm to evoke this feeling and understanding, motivating immediate action: "And hasten to good deeds before old age hinders you, or sickness prevents you, or death takes everything away from you"; the term "*Khālis*" means to steal something with deceit. The comparison of death to a thief is based on the fact that death stealthily takes everything away from a person suddenly, causing regret and loss (Makarem Shirazi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 8, 489-490).

### 6-1-9. Death as a Hunter

Another image that has been conceptualized for death in the hadiths is that of a skilled hunter whose aim never misses. Imam Ali (AS) said: "O! Servants of God, indeed, death is not something to escape from, so fear it before it comes, and prepare for it; for indeed, you are the prey of death. If you stand still, it will take you, and if you flee from it, it will catch you." (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 27)

The expression "*Antum Ṭuradā'u al-Mawti*" (you are the prey of death) (Letter 27) in another phrase of Imam Ali (AS) means that death is like a skilled hunter chasing its prey. This implies that death, like a skilled hunter, will catch its prey (humans), whether they stand still or run away (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 9, 358). Imam Ali (AS) uses the word "*Ṭuradā'u*" for humans who are being pursued by death to show that they are like prey and death is

like a skilled hunter seeking them (Baḥrānī, n.d.: 3, 208-209).

This hunter knows the ways of hunting well: From taking hostages and ambushing to using various tools to hunt its target:

#### **A) Death as a Kidnapper**

In a statement by Imam Ali (AS), humans are described as hostages of death: "And indeed, he has been taken hostage in the place of the dead, and alone in the narrowness of the grave." (Sermon 83)

This kidnapping is due to the fact that death is a formidable hunter. It takes hostages from humans (based on their actions (Jafari, n.d.: 12, 48) who are powerless and doomed to be its prey. This imagery, rooted in the experiential concept of a hostage, paints a harsh and terrifying picture of death and its inevitability, serving as a reminder to all.

#### **B) Death as a Swift Pursuer**

The hunter chases its prey to capture it; similarly, death is like a hunter that pursues a person to take their soul. As Imam Ali (AS) stated in his will to Imam Ḥasan (AS): (Letter 31). "You are like prey fleeing from the hunter, which is death, but no fugitive can escape this hunter, and inevitably, you will be overtaken by it. So, beware of death finding you in a state of sin, while you had been telling yourself you would repent, and it prevents you from repenting. In such a situation, you will have ruined yourself."

The term "*Ṭarīd*" used for a person being pursued or hunted emphasizes that from the beginning of life, the hunter of death is pursuing humans. Whether in childhood, youth, or old age, no one can escape this hunter, not even the wealthy, the powerful, or even

prophets and saints, as the Quran says: "Say: Your fleeing will not benefit you if you flee from death or killing" (al-Aḥzāb/16) (Makarem Shirazi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 9, 61).

Imam Ali (AS) uses the term "*Ṭālibu Ḥathīth*" for death, meaning that death is a swift pursuer who will not miss its target, whether it is someone who remains stationary or someone who flees (Sermon 123).

### **C) Death as a Lier-in-Wait**

A hunter lies in wait for its prey, catching it off guard. Similarly, death, like a human hunter, lies in wait for humans, closing off any path of escape. Imam Ali (AS) said: "O! People, everyone will encounter what they flee from; for death is the destination of the soul, and escape from it is a meeting with it." (Sermon 149)

"*Masāq*" is a noun or place name derived from the root "*Sawq*" and refers to a destination that a person reaches or the end of a journey (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 5, 703). This is the very trap from which a person, in their own assumption, tries to escape, yet it is where they ultimately end up (death).

### **D) Death as a Hunter with Tools**

In the hadiths, tools like ropes, traps, and arrows are attributed to death as a hunter, used to capture human life. "Indeed, death is the destroyer of your pleasures, the darkener of your desires, and the distant one from your worldly goals. It is an unwelcome visitor, an unconquered enemy, and an unwanted pursuer. It has cast its ropes upon you, its snares have enveloped you, and its arrows have targeted you. Its wrath is great and its enmity is relentless, and its aim is

seldom missed... It is as if death has suddenly struck you, silencing your companions, dispersing your gatherings, erasing your traces, and emptying your homes, and has roused your heirs to gather and divide your inheritance among a close friend who has not benefited you, a sorrowful relative who has not prevented it, and a gloating enemy who has not grieved." (Sermon 230)

"Indeed, death... is an unstoppable criminal." The word "Water" means an archer or criminal, derived from the root "Water" meaning "Bowstring." (Makarem, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 8, 490)

Imam Ali (AS) said: "O! People, you are all targets in this world, waiting for death's arrows." (Sermon 145) "*Gharaḍ*" means a target that is shot at, and "*Tantaḍilu*" means to overcome in a struggle. Man is that target, and the causes of death are the arrows thrown at him. How can a person have peace when enemies from all sides are aiming at him?" (Makarem Shirazi, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 13, 192)

Imam Ali (AS) also stated: "Indeed, Allah has placed a strong shield over me, but when my day comes, it will part from me and surrender me to death. At that time, no arrow will miss its mark, and no wound will heal." (Sermon 62)

If a person truly understands this, they will no longer fear worldly events and will prepare themselves for death. While it's true that there is no shield against death itself, they will recognize that until their predetermined lifespan ends, they will not leave this world. In fact, the predetermined lifespan can be seen as a strong shield against worldly events, as the Imam says, "Indeed, the appointed time (of death) is a strong shield" (Wisdom 201) (Makarem Shirazi, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 3, 25).

### E) Death as a Target

If death is an arrow, then the life of man is its target, as stated in the saying: "O! People, you are all targets in this world, waiting for death's arrows." (Sermon 145) And in another saying, Imam Ali (AS) stated: "If anyone could find a ladder to eternity or a way to repel death, it would certainly be Solomon, the son of David, to whom the dominion of the jinn and mankind was subjected, with the position of prophethood and great proximity to God; but when he had completed his provision and his term of life was complete, the bows of annihilation shot the arrows of death at him..." What a powerful metaphor! The Imam compares the law of mortality to bows, and the arrows to death. These bows are aimed at everyone, waiting for the last morsel of sustenance to be consumed and the last moment of life to end; immediately, the arrows are released and hit their targets, whether it be a fly or Solomon" (Sermon 182) (Makarem Shirazi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 7, 61).

### 6-1-10. Summary of the Conceptual Metaphor of Personification for Death

Understanding the conceptual metaphor of personification, in which death is depicted as a human being with human qualities, as shown in Table 1, provides a tangible and concrete understanding of the certainty of death, deterring humans from wrongdoing and preparing them for the afterlife. It's as if humans see death approaching them as a person, coming to meet them, and in this situation, when a person faces such an entity, there is no escape. This image of death evokes another image, as if death is a preacher warning people to be mindful

of their actions and to be prepared for its arrival, because this world is a racecourse and death is a competitor who should not be ignored. By remembering death, one can prepare for its arrival, knowing that it will come sooner or later, like an officer with a final judgment to take a person's life.

Another aspect of death is that it acts as a guardian, protecting humans from desires, sins, and the vicissitudes of life until the end of their lives. This is a more favorable image of death for most people. However, since most people are unaware of the certainty of death and unprepared to meet it, in order to arouse their fear and awaken them, the narratives recreate another image of death, personifying it as a hunter who is pursuing and hunting human lives, swiftly and secretly, taking advantage of their unawareness and firing their arrows at their targets (human lives). The arrow released from the bow never misses its target, and there is no escape for the prey. This hunting scene is very shocking and awakening. Paying attention to such a scenario makes the moment of death and its difficult events more tangible, making the abstract reality of death more understandable and opening the way for people to prepare for it and correct their actions.

| Row | Embedded metaphor                          | Focal point of the metaphor          | Source domain                        | Target domain           | Cited verse or narration             |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1   | Death is certain to come                   | The imminence and certainty of death | The tangible sense of arrival        | The occurrence of death | Idhā Jā'a Ajaluhā                    |
| 2   | Death is something that presents to humans | The certainty of death               | The tangible presence                | The occurrence of death | Idhā Ḥaḍara Aḥadakum al-Mawtu        |
| 3   | Death is a visitor                         | The certainty of death               | A human encounter with another human | The arrival of death    | Inna al-Mawta... Fa'innahū Mulāqikum |

| Row | Embedded metaphor                  |                                      | Focal point of the metaphor                                           | Source domain                              | Target domain                                                       | Cited verse or narration                                                                                     |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4   | Death is a preacher                |                                      | Deterrence                                                            | The One Who Preaches                       | Guarding humans from error                                          | Kafā Bil Mawti Wā'izān                                                                                       |
| 5   | Death is the pursuer (runner)      | It is someone who competes in a race | Having no way of escape<br>escape, To overtake                        | The racer in a hurry                       | The realization of death and surpassing the human                   | Thumma Yudrikuhu al-Mawtu                                                                                    |
|     |                                    | It is someone who is awaited         | Expectation and readiness                                             | Expectation and readiness                  | The one who is awaited                                              | Man Rāghaba Ajalahū Ightanama Muhalahu                                                                       |
| 6   | Death is an agent                  |                                      | The certainty of death and the futility of fleeing from or fearing it | The appointed judge with a definite decree | The definite command from God                                       | falamā Qaḍaynā 'alayhi al-Mawt                                                                               |
| 7   | Death is a barrier and a protector |                                      | Deterrence<br>Fearlessness of events                                  | Protective human                           | Protecting humans from error/<br>Protection from death in accidents | Ḥā'ilun Baynakum wa Bayna al-Shahawāt                                                                        |
| 8   | Death is a thief                   |                                      | Loss and regret                                                       | The thief                                  | Death and the stealing of everything from a human                   | Mawtan Khāliṣan                                                                                              |
| 9   | Death is a hunter                  | It is a kidnapper                    | There is no escaping from him                                         | Hostage                                    | The deceased are his hostages                                       | Qad Qūdira fī Maḥallihi al-Amwātu Rāhīnan                                                                    |
|     |                                    | It is a kidnapper                    | There is no escaping from him                                         | Hostage                                    | The deceased are his hostages                                       | "Innaka Ṭurīdu al-Mawti Alladhī Lā Yanjū Minhu Ḥāribuhu wa lā Yafūtuhu Ṭālibuhu wa lā Budda Annahu Mudrikuhu |
|     |                                    | It is lying in ambush                | There is no escaping from his grasp                                   | An inevitable prey                         | The certainty of taking a life                                      | A body that death lies in wait for                                                                           |

| Row | Embedded metaphor          | Focal point of the metaphor       | Source domain | Target domain                             | Cited verse or narration                                                          |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | He has hunting tools       | There is no escape from his grasp | Rope<br>Arrow | Taking and intending the life of a person | Qad A'laqatku<br>Ḥabā'iluhu wa<br>Aqṣ adatkum<br>Ma'ābiluhu lā<br>Yaʿīshu al-Sahm |
|     | It has a target and a goal | To reach the goal                 | Hunt          | Human soul                                | Ramathu Qusīya<br>al-Fanā'i Binibāli<br>al-Mawti                                  |

**Table no. 1. Mappings in the Conceptual Metaphor of Personification for Death**

## 6-2. Animal Metaphors

One of the most commonly used and spontaneously formed metaphors in everyday language is the metaphor of animals and their attributes for various things. "Death is an animal" is another primary conceptual metaphor found in verses and narrations, from which many sub-metaphors arise, creating a terrifying image of death, especially for disbelievers, a fear that is alluded to in some verses:

"...And when fear came, you looked at Him, and your eyes rolled about as if one swooning from death..." (al-Aḥzāb/19)

"...Have you not seen those who left their homes in their thousands, fearing death? But Allah said to them, 'Die,' then He gave them life..." (al-Baqarah/243; see also al-Jumu'ah/8)

In some narrations, death is likened to specific animals due to its horror and severity: "Death for a disbeliever is like the sting of a viper or a scorpion, or even worse." (Shaykh Ṣadūq, 1958 AD/1378 AH: 1, 274) Or because claws and other attributes of wild animals are

associated with it, death has been called a wild and ferocious animal (Sermon 84).

### **6-2-1. The Ferocious Nature of Death Due to Its Claws**

The idea of escaping death arises from the terrifying image of death as a ferocious and dangerous animal that has been formed in people's minds. However, this escape is futile, and the ferocious animal of death tears apart the lives of disbelievers.

In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, there is a metaphor: "It is as if the claws of death have been hooked onto you" (Sermon: 84); "And know that the gaze of death is constantly upon you, as if its claws have been embedded in you." (Sermon 195)

"*Aliqatqum*" from the root "*Alaq*" originally means a strong connection or attachment to something. This word is used for a wild animal that bites the throat of its prey and sucks its blood or tears it with its claws. Death is compared to such a wild animal, as "*Makhālibu*" also means the claws of animals and comes from the root "*Khalb*" meaning to tear the skin (Makarem Shirazi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 3, 495).

In the two sentences above, death is depicted as a wild animal attacking and assaulting human lives, and to exaggerate, claws are imagined with which the wild animal tears the lives of other creatures. What a horrifying scene, when a person imagines it, they feel the difficulty and terror of the moment of death deep within themselves.

### **6-2-2. The Ambush of Death**

Imam Ali (AS) depicts the ambush of death, which aligns with the metaphorical imagery of death as a predatory beast, as follows: this

predatory creature is ever watchful, ensuring that its prey cannot escape, eventually launching its attack: "Indeed, your situation and that of this world are like travelers who have embarked on a path as if they have already traversed it, and they aim for a destination as if they have reached it. How long can a runner expect to continue until they reach their goal? How long can one who has an appointed day, which cannot be surpassed, hope to remain? Meanwhile, an urgent pursuer—the death—is hastening toward them." (Sermon 99)

The term "*Ḥathīth*" denotes urgency, pursuit, and swiftly engaging in an action (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 4, 340–344). In this statement, "The Swift Pursuer" refers to death, which is portrayed as a swift seeker. The terms "Seeker" (*Ṭālib*) and "Urging" (*Ḥadw*) are metaphorically attributed to death. The word "*Ḥadw*" symbolizes the factors and causes that inevitably drive human beings toward death (Baḥrānī, n.d: 3, 4; Hashimi Khoei, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 7, 149).

### 6-2-3. The Sudden and Aggressive Attack of Death

A predatory animal surprises its prey, launching an unexpected attack: "Thus, a servant fears their Lord...because their appointed time of death is hidden from them, and their aspirations deceive them...until their death attacks them suddenly when they are most heedless of it." (Sermon 64)

Elsewhere, Imam Ali (AS) advises his son: "My son! Remember death often, and its sudden and aggressive nature, so that when it comes, you are fully prepared. You must remain girded and ready, expecting its arrival, rather than being caught off guard and overcome

by it." (Letter 31)

Imam further warns: "Hasten toward righteous deeds and fear the sudden arrival of death!" (Sermon 114)

Through this imagery of death as a sudden and aggressive attack—akin to a predatory animal ambushing its prey—fear grips the human soul, prompting one to align their actions in a way that ensures readiness and vigilance, avoiding being caught unprepared.

All these statements illustrate the abruptness of death's attack, emphasizing the lack of preparedness humans typically have in that moment (Makarem Shirazi, 2011-2012 AD/1390-1391 SH: 3, 57).

#### **6-2-4. Death as the Destroyer of Pleasures**

A predatory animal, with its sudden attack, obliterates all the pleasures and hopes of its prey. Similarly, death is described by Imam Ali (AS) with loathsome attributes, such as the destruction of worldly pleasures. He states: "Indeed, remember the destroyer of pleasures, the disruptor of desires, and the severer of aspirations, when you are tempted by disgraceful actions." (Sermon 99)

This depiction of death as a force that eradicates human delights and aspirations evokes a deep sense of detachment from the fleeting nature of worldly indulgences (Baḥrānī, n.d.: 4, 103; Hashimi Khoei, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 7, 153).

#### **6-2-5. Death as the Seeker of Prey**

Imam Ali (AS) has said: "For every creature, there is sustenance... **71**

and you are the sustenance of death." (Majlisi, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 68, 263) Here, Imam likens death to a living being whose nourishment is human life itself. This metaphor of death as a predatory animal vividly illustrates its relentless pursuit of its prey—human souls—which cannot escape its grasp; as the Imam states: "Indeed, death is an urgent pursuer; it cannot be eluded by those who remain stationary, nor can it be outpaced by those who flee." (Sermon 123)

This imagery underscores the inevitability and inescapability of death, emphasizing its relentless and unyielding nature in claiming its prey.

#### **6-2-6. Summary and Conclusion of Life-Granting Metaphors of Death as an Animal**

Table 2 provides a vivid depiction of death personified as a predatory animal; this ferocious creature, constantly seeking prey such as humans, lies in ambush, and ready to surprise its victim. It suddenly attacks, sinking its sharp claws into its prey to tear it apart. At that moment, everything becomes dark and hopeless for the individual. This predatory death, with its sudden onslaught, not only inflicts pain, suffering, and torment but also obliterates the pleasures and aspirations of its victim, leaving no escape or refuge. This metaphorical representation of the abstract concept of death instills fear, compelling individuals to reflect on preparing themselves for the moment of death and the life that follows. By doing so, they may encounter a different, less terrifying face of death and avoid being caught off guard.

| Row | Embedded metaphor                      | Focal point of the metaphor                                    | Source domain                 | Target domain                                  | Cited verse or narration                                                                         |
|-----|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Death is a predator with claws         | The frightening nature and futility of escape, difficulty      | Ferocity and attacking        | aking a person's life, the difficulty of dying | -Faka'anna qad 'Aliqatkum Makhālību al-Munīyah - Ka'annakum Bimakhālībihā wa qad Nashībat fikum  |
| 2   | Death is lurking                       | Waiting for the right moment and ambushing                     | Attack at the right moment    | The sudden and unexpected arrival of death     | Man lahu Yawmun lā Ya'udūhu Wa Tālibun Ḥathīthun min al-Mawti Yaḥdūhū                            |
| 3   | Death is a sudden, overwhelming attack | Sudden assault                                                 | Animal attack                 | The sudden arrival of death                    | Dhikr al-Mawti wa Dhikr mā Tahajjam 'alayhi, ...laātīka Baghtatuhū fa Yubhiruka                  |
| 4   | Death is the destroyer of pleasures    | The pain and despair                                           | The painfulness of the attack | The destruction of pleasures by death          | Hādima al-Ladhdhāt wa Munaghghiṣa al-Shahawāt wa Qāṭi'a al-Umniyyāt                              |
| 5   | Death is a predator seeking its prey   | The predator's desire for prey/ The prey's inability to escape | Animal prey                   | Human soul                                     | Inna al-Mawta Tālibun Ḥathīthun lā Yafūtuhū al-Muqīmu wa lā Yu'jizuhū al-Hārib Anta Qūtu al-Mawt |

**Table no. 2. Mappings in the Conceptual Metaphor of Animating Death: "Death is an Animal"**

### 6-3. Metaphors of Death as a Plant

In certain verses and narrations, death is conceptualized as a plant with attributes such as fragrance and autumnal decay. This imagery provides a tangible representation of death, reconstructing its concept in the human mind.

### 6-3-1. The Fragrance of Death

A narration states: "Death is the fragrant flower for the believer." (Majlisi, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 79, 168) In another account, Imam *Riḍā* (AS) conveys the comparison of death to a fragrant flower, as narrated by his father, Imam *Kāẓim* (AS): "When Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) was asked to describe death, he said: For the believer, it is like the most pleasant fragrance they could smell. Its sweetness causes them to drift into a peaceful slumber, freeing them from all fatigue and pain..." (Shaykh Ṣadūq, 1958 AD/1378 AH: 1, 274)

### 6-3-2. The Autumn of Death

In common parlance, approaching death during old age is likened to the "Autumn of Life." This metaphor is based on the conceptual metaphor "Human as a Plant," where human death is mapped onto autumn. Autumn signifies dryness and loss, often evoking regret for the fleeting nature of life.

The comparison between the drying of leaves in autumn and winter and their rejuvenation and regrowth in spring creates a beautiful conceptualization of human death and resurrection. The schema of plant withering and autumn as a metaphor for human death is reflected in verses such as: "And what Allah sends down from the sky of water by which He gives life to the earth after its death," (al-Baqarah/164) and "The example of worldly life is like water We send down from the sky, which mingles with the vegetation of the earth from which people and animals eat, until the earth takes on its adornment and is beautified, and its people think they have mastery over it. Our

command comes to it by night or day, and We make it as if it had not flourished the day before. Thus, We explain the signs for a people who reflect." (Yūnus/24)

6-3-3 Summary and Conclusion of Metaphors of Death as a Plant

Two sub-metaphors, the fragrant flower and autumn, emerge as focal points in the overarching metaphor of death as a plant. These sub-metaphors convey contrasting dimensions of death: one as a source of tranquility and delight, and the other as a symbol of ending and regret. Table 3 summarizes these metaphors. These dual aspects of death as a plant reflect the varied experiences of human death, encouraging faith and contemplation.

| Row | Embedded metaphor | Focal point of the metaphor                      | Source domain   | Target domain                               | Cited verse or narration                                                                 |
|-----|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Death has a scent | Peace and pleasure/ Relief from fatigue and pain | Fragrant flower | The pleasurable and calming nature of death | al-Mawtu Rayḥānat al-Mu'min                                                              |
| 2   | Death is autumn   | The drying up and the end of regret              | Drying the plan | The end of worldly life and human lifespan  | ..Mā'un fa Ahyā bīhil Arḍa Ba'da Mawtiḥā Faja'alnāḥā Ḥaṣīdan Ka'anna lam Taghna bil-Amsi |

Table no. 3. Mappings in the Conceptual Metaphor of Death as a Plant

Conclusion

The abstract concept of death becomes more comprehensible for humans through the various dimensions of personification metaphors

presented in the Quranic verses, prophetic traditions, and especially the words of Imam Ali (AS). These metaphors depict death in tangible imagery drawn from human life, focusing attention on two distinct types of life and death. The first pertains to worldly life, where the transition, particularly for believers, is likened to a fragrant flower, symbolizing ease and tranquility. The second pertains to a worldly life that ends in hardship, regret, fear, and a sense of loss with no escape, a state reserved for those heedless of death and the hereafter.

The personification of death enables a concrete and perceptible understanding of it, reconstructing the concept of death in such a way that it can deter individuals from wrongdoing and inspire them to prepare for death and the afterlife. Death is portrayed as a visitor, like a human being, coming unavoidably to meet the individual. This metaphor serves as a wake-up call, particularly for those negligent of their mortal reality. Death emerges as a preacher, repeatedly reminding humans that life is a competitive race, with death as one of the contestants, a constant presence demanding readiness for its eventual arrival. Metaphorically, death is also likened to an agent or envoy with a definitive mandate from the ultimate judge (God) to claim the soul of the individual. Moreover, death is depicted as a vigilant protector, shielding humans from desires and worldly dangers until their appointed time of demise. However, once this time arrives, death assumes the form of a swift and relentless pursuer, akin to a hunter lying in wait to seize its target unawares, releasing the fatal blow. Alternatively, death is illustrated as a ravenous predator lying in ambush for its prey, human beings. It suddenly attacks with its sharp

claws, leaving no room for hope or escape, filling the individual with pain and despair, and obliterating all worldly aspirations.

These vivid depictions of the abstract notion of death instill a profound sense of fear, urging individuals to prepare for the moment of death and the life thereafter. Such preparation ensures that death does not strike unexpectedly, catching the individual off guard. This practical application of conceptual metaphors of personification, with their intricate schemas, transforms the abstract reality of death into a more believable and relatable phenomenon, paving the way for readiness and acceptance.

### Suggestions

The following topics related to cognitive linguistics and death are proposed for further research:

Exploring additional dimensions of conceptual metaphors of death in religious texts, with a focus on their educational and moral implications;

Conducting a detailed analysis of one specific conceptual metaphor of death in Quranic verses and prophetic traditions.

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# **Imam Ali (AS)'s Educational Efforts to Reform and Guide the *Nākithīn* as a Group of Internal Opponents of the Islamic Government**

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## **Abstract**

Given that established governments in human societies have always faced internal opposition, the appropriate strategy for Islamic rulers is to emulate the practical conduct of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (AS) in dealing with and confronting opponents. From the perspective of Imam Ali (AS), as a model of justice in the world, employing moral education, even when dealing with opponents of the Islamic government, is an important issue. Based on this, he endeavored to

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reform and guide opposing political and social groups to the best of his ability. The present study aims to examine a portion of his statements to internal opponents of the Islamic government, analyzing them using content analysis to uncover and identify the details of Imam's educational behaviors. The results indicated that Imam Ali's educational efforts to reform and guide internal opponents can be categorized under five strategic actions: public awareness, correcting religious beliefs and ideological perspectives, tolerance and Leniency, reprimand and threat, and finally, punishment commensurate with the circumstances. Among these, the Imam's efforts towards public awareness and correcting the religious and ideological beliefs of opponents are of paramount importance. To attract and guide opponents, he individually and specifically addressed their misconceptions, explaining the correct and true interpretation of verses from the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

**Keywords:** Imam Ali (AS), *Nākithīn*, Internal Opponents of the Islamic Government, Moral Education, Content Analysis.

## Introduction

Since governments in human societies have always faced opponents who, in a hostile and armed manner, seek to overthrow the government and oppose not only political actors but also the general principles and foundations of the system's legitimacy (Haghpanah, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 85), the manner in which Islamic rulers deal with opponents is considered an important issue. Therefore, emulating the

conduct of the impeccable Imams (AS), particularly understanding the conduct of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) as a model of justice in the world, is considered important for modeling in Islamic societies.

In other words, in Imam Ali's discourse with groups opposing the Ali's government, the "Educational-ethical Conduct" is so prominent and outstanding that in some works related to the Imam's conduct in dealing with opponents, this educational-ethical aspect of the Imam's behavior is often considered and studied. In another research entitled "Behavioral Study of Imam Ali (AS) with the First Internal Opponents of the Islamic Government," a general report on the totality of his actions with the *Nākithīn* group and the people of Jamal is presented (Shirdel et al., 2016 AD/1396 SH: 45-70). However, this research attempts, with an educational approach, to specifically explain and examine Imam Ali's reformative actions against the internal opponents of the Islamic government in a detailed and case-by-case manner.

Among the major opponents of the Ali government (cf. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 1, 109; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 1, 357), the "*Nākithīn*" group, known as the "People of Jamal" and composed of prominent figures such as *Ṭalḥa*, *Zubayr*, *Āyisha*, and some Quraysh notables, according to Imam Ali's statement, "When I rose to power, a group reneged," (Nahj al-Balāgha, Sermon 3: 49) were the first group of internal opponents of the Ali government who, at the beginning of the just rule of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS), took action to oppose the Imam, instigating the "Battle of Jamal" and causing a civil war among Muslims.

The main issue in this research is to explain and extract the

educational model of Imam Ali in confronting internal opponents to reform and guide them. To achieve this, the "Content Analysis" method has been used, and the statistical population of the research focuses on the totality of the Imam's words and speeches in confronting the "People of Jamal." This is to avoid relying on historical reports and the statements of historians, so that a comprehensive model of the Imam's educational-ethical conduct can be presented.

## 1. Research Method

This research uses content analysis, a common term for a number of different techniques used to analyze text (Veismoradi et al., 2013: 400). Content analysis is a general name for in-depth or intrinsic analysis methods in which the qualitative content of the data is interpreted, analyzed, and explained (Mehrdad et al., 2015 AD/1395 SH: 6). In fact, the path of qualitative content analysis begins with the text and extends towards extracting categories and then presenting conceptual models and patterns.

That is, in most qualitative approaches, inductive logic prevails (Elo and Kyngas, 2007: 107). As Smith argues, the main function of research using the "Content Analysis" method is to identify important theoretical themes from among the content variables (Smith, 1992: 400).

The necessity of choosing the "Content Analysis" method in this research is, firstly, its textual nature, that is, the direct examination of the text by the researcher (Newman, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 2, 179) and the avoidance of incorporating extra-textual reasons in the analysis

process (ibid: 176). This is because content analysis is a message-oriented research; that is, it focuses on measuring and assessing the message (content) (Mohammadimehr, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 37). Among the other advantages of this method is its strength based on fundamental rules such as validity, reliability, and systematicity (Homan, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 80). This has led to a significant increase in the use of this method by researchers in Islamic studies for analyzing religious texts.

This research uses the technique of "Thematic Content Analysis," in which, instead of using pre-determined scales and categories, the themes of the messages are assessed (Oliveira et al., 2016: 74).

## 2. Research Findings

First, by consulting reliable historical and narrative sources, all the narrations of Imam Ali (AS) concerning the Battle of Jamal, from the time of the general allegiance to the Imam, i.e., the second half of Dhul Hijjah 35 AH (Balādhurī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 205; Ibn Athīr, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 3, 194), until after the Battle of Jamal and the Imam's departure from Basra for Kufa, i.e., the beginning of Rajab 36 AH (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 544; Dīnawarī, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 152), were carefully identified and extracted. In total, 54 narrations were categorized into the forms of speeches, letters, and dialogues.

After systematically studying the aforementioned narrations, their content was segmented based on the unit of "Theme" and distributed in Excel spreadsheets. Then, by reflecting on each of the analytical units, the components related to it were recorded in the content

analysis table. Also, an independent identification code was entered for each main theme. Due to the large volume of the content analysis tables, one example of the Imam's statements regarding this group is included here:

**Table 1: Imam's statements regarding the words of the *Nākithīn* on their way to Mecca**

| ROW | Content                                                                                                                                                         | Main Theme                                         | Code ID |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1   | When Zubayr and Ṭalḥa left Medina and went to Mecca, they met no one without saying:                                                                            | Narrator's Explanation                             | R-2-1-1 |
| 2   | We are not bound by any oath of allegiance to Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.                                                                                                | The Nākithīn's Denial of Allegiance                | N-2-1-1 |
| 3   | Our allegiance to him was unwilling and forced.                                                                                                                 | The Nākithīn's Claim of Coercion in the Allegiance | N-2-1-2 |
| 4   | Their words reached the Commander of the Faithful and he said:                                                                                                  | Narrator's Explanation                             | R-2-1-2 |
| 5   | May God remove them from His mercy.                                                                                                                             | Curse upon the Nākithīn                            | A-2-1-1 |
| 6   | By God, I am certain that they will soon kill themselves in the worst possible way, and they will bring with them someone they visited on the most unlucky day. | Knowledge of the Nākithīn's Fate                   | A-2-1-2 |
| 7   | By God, they do not intend to perform Ḥajj.                                                                                                                     | Declaration of the Nākithīn's Deceit               | A-2-1-3 |
| 8   | They came to me with the faces of liars and returned with the faces of oath-breakers and covenant-breakers.                                                     | Assurance of the Nākithīn's Treachery              | A-2-1-4 |
| 9   | By God, from today onwards, they will not come except with a fierce army in which they will kill themselves.                                                    | Assurance of the Nākithīn's Warmongering           | A-2-1-5 |
| 10  | May God remove them further and further from His mercy.                                                                                                         | Curse upon the Nākithīn                            | A-2-1-6 |

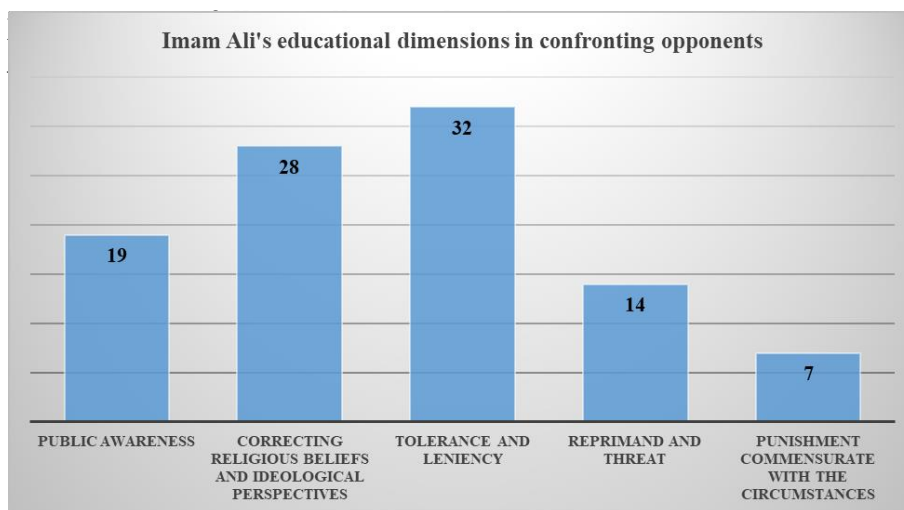
In these tables, the main theme refers to the explicit and clear message of the text, which is considered the primary theme and core data of the content for further analysis. The identifier refers to the letter number and extracted code number from the text so that during the research process, we can quickly find their address while measuring the frequency of sentences.

As stated in the problem statement of the article, this article only extracts the educational approach of Imam Ali (AS) because the special attention of the Holy Prophet to the issue of ethics in dealing with opponents, and guidance and correction of misguided and hostile leaders in confronting them, has been very important and widespread; such that he even emphasizes the necessity of observing ethics on the battlefield. Also, even after the war, despite the glorious victory of the Holy Prophet over the people of Jamal, he forgave and consoled all the survivors and prisoners of Jamal with magnanimity and expressed regret and sorrow for the dead of Jamal (cf. Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 413-414).

### **3. Imam Ali's (AS) Model of Moral Education for Guiding and Correcting Opponents**

Imam Ali (AS) consistently sought to educate and guide the *Nākithīn* (those who violated the pledge of allegiance) and to reconstruct their belief system during the Battle of Jamal. In this regard, he sometimes exercised forbearance and offered counsel, while at other times, he employed a more serious approach, rebuking, reprimanding, and even cursing them, emphasizing God's displeasure and the consequences they faced. This strategy also encompassed other Muslims, whom he urged to learn a lesson from the events of the Battle of Jamal.

Based on a qualitative analysis of Imam Ali's (AS) statements concerning the participants of the Battle of Jamal and research findings, the most frequent dimensions of Imam Ali's (AS) educational and ethical approach towards the *Nākithīn*, in order of



### 3-1. Endeavors for Public Awareness

Given that the theme of "Guiding and correcting the *Nākithīn*" is the most frequent sub-category in the analysis of Imam Ali's (AS) educational and ethical approach towards the participants of the Battle of Jamal, it can be considered his foremost concern as the leader and guardian of Jamal community. This is because he bore the weighty responsibility of guiding and correcting all Muslims, especially those who had gone astray, such as the participants of the Battle of Jamal. They had deviated from the right path by opposing Ali's legitimate rule, violating the Imam's right, a right considered a divine right, to the allegiance of all Muslims to the divinely appointed ruler of the Islamic community. Consequently, the Imam exerted every effort to

abandon their opposition to the Islamic government.

Based on this, in his sermon on the eve of the battle against the *Nākithīn* (those who violated the pledge), the Imam addressed the fighters, saying: "They (*Nākithīn*) have strayed from guidance into misguidance, and we call them to God's pleasure, while they call us to God's wrath. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us and you to guide them back to the truth." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: P, 331) On the other hand, during a conversation with *Ibn Rafā'a* on the way to Basra, in response to his question about how the Imam would deal with the *Nākithīn*, the Imam stated that his most important plan was to reform matters and guide the *Nākithīn*, and he expressed hope for their repentance (cf. Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 479; Ibn Athīr, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 3, 224).

### 3-1-1. Exhortation of Opponents to Observe Piety

One aspect of the Imam's guidance towards the participants of the Battle of Jamal was his advice to them to observe piety and repent. As such, in his letter to *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr*, the Imam emphasized the necessity of their returning from their opposition to him and performing immediate repentance, warning them against the humiliating punishment of the hereafter (Nahj al-Balāgha, Letter 54: 445-446). Similarly, in a letter to *ʿĀyisha*, he advised her to observe piety and maintain seclusion (Ibn Aʿtham, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 2, 465; Ibn Qutayba, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 90; Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 3, 152).

In fact, from the Imam's perspective, the path of repentance was

always open to the misguided and those who opposed the rightful government, and the possibility of repentance was always available. For this reason, in his sermon upon leaving *Dhī Qār* for Basra, he said: "I call them to the path of truth and present them with evidence and proof. So if they repent and accept, the path of repentance is open, the truth is acceptable, and God will not punish them." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: B, 1, 252) Similarly, during discussions with the leaders of the Battle of Jamal on the eve of the battle, the Imam admonished and reproached *Ṭalḥa*, emphasizing the need for his swift repentance (Ibn Qutayba, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 95). Consequently, even after the Battle of Jamal, he urged the survivors among its participants to avoid repeating their sin and to perform sincere repentance (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: P, 408).

### 3-1-2. Correctly Identifying Right and Wrong

One example of Imam Ali's guidance during the Battle of Jamal was his emphasis on the "Necessity of correctly identifying right and wrong." The importance of "Delineating the positions of right and wrong" was such that one of his enlightening discussions during the battle, in response to a question from *Ḥārith ibn Ḥūṭ*, was dedicated to explaining the priority of "Knowing right and wrong" over "Knowing the people of right and wrong." The incident unfolded as follows: "*Ḥārith* approached the Imam and said, "Do you think I consider the companions of Jamal (*Ṭalḥa*, *Zubayr*, and *ʿĀyisha*) to be people of falsehood? (Never!)" The Imam replied, "O! *Ḥārith*, the matter has truly been obscured for you. Certainly, right and wrong are not

identified by the status of individuals. Rather, know the right to know the people of right, and know the wrong to know the people of wrong." (Nahj al-Balāgha, Wisdom 262: 521; Balādhurī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 2, 274)

### **3-1-3. Drawing Attention to History and Learning Lessons from It**

In addition to the above points, which mostly pertained to the companions of Jamal, the Imam, during the events of the Battle of Jamal, paid special attention to guiding the Muslims in general and invited them to learn lessons from the *Fitna* (trial/tribulation) of Jamal. For instance, in a sermon delivered after learning of the *Khawārij*'s (rebels') movement from Mecca towards Basra, he issued a warning about their fate, stating: "Will the people learn a lesson from their conduct, and will they reflect on the actions of these individuals?" (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: B, 1, 247)

Among the noteworthy points that the Imam emphasized in his correspondence after the battle was his effort to guide the survivors of the companions of Jamal and the Muslims in general; as evidenced by a common expression in letters he wrote to the people of Medina and Kufa, he cited the key Quranic verse: "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves." (al-Ra'd/11) (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: P, 395) This verse, in addition to narrating a divine tradition regarding the importance of human will and decision in determining destiny and achieving desirable conditions, carries the important message that other people should also learn a lesson from the fate of the companions of Jamal

and understand that choosing the path of guidance or misguidance depends on their own will and actions.

### 3-1-4. Exhorting the Opponents

It is noteworthy that even with the aim of attracting and insisting on guiding the people of the Battle of Jamal, Imam Ali (AS) utilized the tradition of granting respite. Before engaging in dialogue with the leaders of the Battle of Jamal on the verge of war, and to prevent a potential war between Muslims and avoid a preemptive strike by the righteous fighters, he placed special emphasis on the necessity of fully conveying the truth to the *Nākithīn*. He ordered one of his companions to call out loudly: "No one should throw a spear or stone. No one is permitted to wound anyone with a lance, except when I have fully conveyed the truth to them." (Ibn Qutaybah, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 91) Therefore, the Imam repeatedly gave the people of the Battle of Jamal respite and, by sending righteous and well-meaning representatives, fully conveyed the truth to them and emphasized the necessity of calling the *Nākithīn* to the teachings of the Quran. At the beginning of the Battle of Jamal, when the Imam's army moved towards the enemy, he stopped and warned the people against starting the war before fully conveying the truth to the *Nākithīn*. Then he summoned Abdullah ibn Abbas and gave him a Quran, saying: "Go with this Quran to *Ṭalḥa*, *Zubayr*, and *ʿĀyisha* and call them to its rulings." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 336)

The Imam's insistence on granting respite and guiding the *Nākithīn*

was such that even when Ibn Abbas returned from the leaders of the Battle of Jamal and announced that the negotiations had been fruitless and requested that the Imam issue the order to attack to repel their evil, he was met with the Imam's insistence on repeating the conveying of the truth to the *Nākithīn*. The Imam said several times: "Who will take this Quran from me and present it to them and call them to the rulings of the Quran?" Finally, he gave the Quran to a volunteering youth and said: "Go to the people of the Battle of Jamal and present the Quran to them and call them to its rulings." (cf. *ibid*: 339)

Therefore, it can be said that the Imam spared no effort in guiding and attracting opponents such as the people of the Battle of Jamal. As he stated in a message to the soldiers of the Battle of Jamal at the beginning of the war: "So if you wish, return... and if you wish, join me." (*ibid*: 365)

### **3-2. Attempting to Correct Religious Understandings and Beliefs**

The topic of "Correcting religious understanding" is among the most frequent sub-themes in the educational and ethical conduct of Imam Ali (AS) towards the opponents at the Battle of Jamal. This is because, in addition to praising God and sending blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the beginning of most of his sermons and letters concerning the opponents at Jamal, he repeatedly affirmed the oneness of God, emphasizing aspects of practical monotheism such as the necessity of submission to God's command, reliance on and seeking refuge in God, fulfilling God's rights, obedience to God and His Messenger, and following the Quran and Sunnah. On the

other hand, he asserted the universal message of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the salvation offered by Islamic law, the inevitability of divine punishment, the certainty of death, and the eventual insight of his opponents after death. The Imam consistently supported his statements with verses from the Quran.

Among the narrations replete with the Imam's teachings on matters of faith concerning the opponents at Jamal is a sermon he delivered after learning of their dissatisfaction with the just distribution of the public treasury at the beginning of his rule. This sermon, considered one of Imam Ali's (AS) most effective speeches in prioritizing the ethical education of opponents like those at Jamal, demonstrates the breadth of the Imam's understanding in explaining the principles of the faith. He was well aware that the Quraysh notables and companions of the Prophet (PBUH), due to their accustomed luxurious lives and materialistic inclinations during the reigns of the previous caliphs, had suffered a deficiency in their faith and religious principles. Therefore, in his first extensive speeches to the Muslims, he focused on explaining religious teachings. In fact, he believed that the most effective way to succeed in implementing fundamental reforms in the Ali's government and ensuring the acceptance of these changes by the Muslim community was to strengthen the Muslims' faith and inspire them with spiritual motivation.

Therefore, following his first revolutionary act, the equitable distribution of the public treasury, he extensively explained matters of faith to ensure the effectiveness of his actions: "O! People, the best of people are those most obedient to God's commands, the one who most

diligently worships God, follow the path of the Prophet of God (PBUH), and keep alive the Quran of God."

No one among God's creation has any superiority except through obedience to God and His Prophet, and adherence to His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet... God says in His Book: "If you love God, then follow me [the Prophet of God (PBUH)] so that God will love you and forgive your sins..." Then He said: "Know that, truly, we will enforce the laws of the Quran and grant the benefits of Islam to anyone who turns towards our Qibla... and testifies that there is no god but God, and that Muhammad (PBUH) is His servant and Prophet." Therefore, after strengthening the audience's faith, it is time to conclude and utilize these firm religious teachings to warn Muslims against worldly desires and the necessity of their attention to the hereafter. Thus, in the end, He says: "Know that, truly, this world that you desire and are enamored with... is not your true home, nor the dwelling for which you were created and invited. Know that the world will not remain for you, and you will not abide in it forever. Let not its material things deceive you." (cf. Ḥarrānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 183-185; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 7, 40)

It is noteworthy that although, in the view of some scholars, the "People of Jamal" are not considered among the ideological opponents of the Ali's rule, the Imam's emphasis on explaining religious teachings, in addition to indicating the Imam's attention to the beliefs of his opponents and correcting their religious understanding, also reveals the deviation in the beliefs of the *Khawārij*. In reality, their norm-breaking actions stemmed from a lack of firm belief in the

divine teachings regarding the acknowledgment of the divine caliphate of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) and the necessity of following the leader of the Muslims, as well as a lack of insight into the consequences of their actions. As a result, explaining these kinds of religious teachings is a high priority in the Imam's speeches.

### 3-3. The Effort for Tolerance and Leniency

"Tolerance" linguistically opposes force and violence and is equivalent to "Leniency," meaning to be gentle and kind and to treat with compassion (Farāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 5, 149; Ibn Fāris, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 418; Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 10, 118). A more precise explanation would be that "Tolerance (*Mudārā*)" is semantically close to "Leniency (*Rifq*)," as tolerance refers to gentleness, kindness, good social interaction with people, and bearing their hardships and annoyances.

A distinction can be made between "Tolerance" and "Leniency," as tolerance implies enduring the harm inflicted by others, while leniency does not (Narāqī, n.d.: 1, 341). Tolerance, however, is different from leniency. A tolerant person never abandons adherence to truth in order to persuade or win over an opponent, nor does he deviate towards falsehood. In this sense, tolerance means paying the minimum cost to repel and win over an enemy, enduring their injustice and oppression as long as there is hope for their guidance and reform (Rouhi Barandaq et al., 2016 AD/1396 SH: 32).

### 3-3-1. The Necessity of Gentleness and Kindness Towards Opponents Before Their Armed Action

Among the prominent manifestations of the Imam's compassion and tolerance towards the *Nākithīn* is their presence in Medina. They came under the pretext of complaining about their dire financial situation. After the Imam's compassionate offer of personal financial assistance was rejected, they demanded access to the public treasury, which was met with strong opposition and rejection from the Imam. In fact, the Imam made his agreement contingent upon the consent of the general Muslim population. Nevertheless, Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) showed them compassion, saying, "But I will tolerate you and explain your excuses to the people." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 165) Another prominent example of the Imam's tolerance towards the *Nākithīn* before their rebellion is their request for permission to go to Mecca for *Hajj*. The Imam, after securing a renewal of their pledge, granted their request. This action was challenged by *Ibn 'Abbās*, who questioned why the Imam, knowing of the Jamal leaders' potential sabotage and plotting to prepare for military action against the Ali's government, allowed them to leave without punishment or imprisonment to prevent their harm. The Imam's response to *Ibn 'Abbās* was: "O! *Ibn 'Abbās*, do you suggest that I initiate oppression and evil before doing well? And that I punish based on suspicion and accusation, and hold someone accountable before their crime is committed? Never! By God, I will never deviate from the covenant that God has taken from me to judge justly and speak decisively. O! 97

*Ibn ‘Abbās!* I permitted them, knowing what they would do. But I exercise caution in this matter and seek God's help." (ibid: 167) This demonstrates the utmost tolerance and compassion of the leader of the Muslims towards the internal opponents of the Ali's government.

As the Imam explicitly stated in a sermon concerning the necessity of following the righteous government, delivered upon learning of the movement of the people of the Battle of Jamal towards Basra, the Imam's patience in the face of the opposition and plots of the *Nākithīn* lasted as long as no harm befell the unity of the Islamic society and system (Nahj al-Balāgha, Sermon 169). Similarly, in his letter to *‘Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf*, he emphasizes that if the leaders of the Battle of Jamal renew their allegiance, they should be treated with tolerance and kindness (Eskāfī, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 60). Also, on the outskirts of Basra, the Imam addressed the fighters of the righteous front, advising them on the necessity of self-control towards the *Nākithīn* and patience with them, saying: "O! People, control yourselves. Refrain from harming these people, for they are your brothers. Be patient with what befalls you." (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 496) A noteworthy point in the Imam's statement is the necessity of respecting the people of the Battle of Jamal, due to their being counted among the Muslim brothers. In his letter to the governor and people of Kufa, written after the conquest of Basra, he refers to the status of the people of the Battle of Jamal in the Islamic nation with a similar expression, saying: "We confronted that group from our nation who broke their covenant with us." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 403)

### 3-3-2. The Necessity of Observing Islamic Ethics in War

Among the important aspects of the ethical conduct and moral upbringing of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) in the Battle of Jamal is the Imam's ethical advice on the battlefield, which includes observing ethical principles towards the survivors of the enemy army. In fact, the most important issue considered by the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) in battlefields was ethical conduct and refraining from violating the sanctity of women and the weak.

Imam Ali (AS) advised his troops at the beginning of the Battle of Jamal: "O! People... do not violate the sanctity of any home, do not attack any woman, and do not mutilate any slain." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 342) The issue of observing ethics in war, from the Imam's perspective, was of such importance that even in his letter to the governor and people of Kufa, written after the Battle of Jamal, he addressed this matter while analyzing the events (ibid: 403).

For example, Imam Ali's compassion towards the participants of the Battle of Jamal is evident in his expression of regret over the deaths of its leaders; after the Battle of Jamal and the killing of *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr*, the Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) passed among the slain. Upon seeing the Quraysh notables among the dead, he addressed them, saying: "Indeed, you met an unfortunate end, and I seek refuge in God from an evil and unfortunate death." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: B, 1, 254) Then, upon reaching *Ṭalḥa*'s corpse, he said: "*Abū Muḥammad* (*Ṭalḥa*) lies here, how desolate! By God, I did not wish to see the Quraysh slain under the stars!" (Nahj al-Balāgha, Sermon 219)

Similarly, when *Ibn Jarmūz*, *Zubayr's* killer, presented *Zubayr's* head and sword before the Imam, the Imam drew *Zubayr's* sword from its sheath and expressed his sorrow (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 389).

In reality, the Imam strove to morally guide the *Nākihīn*, preventing such a deplorable end for them. For *Ṭalḥa*, *Zubayr*, and other Quraysh notables, had they abandoned their enmity towards the Imam, they would undoubtedly have deserved a good end due to their companionship with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and their bravery in Islam. However, they chose their own path of destruction.

### 3-3-3. A General Pardon for Opponents Before Armed Conflict

Another example of Imam Ali's (AS) peaceful approach towards the participants of the Battle of Jamal is his declaration of a general pardon for them, as well as for the prisoners and survivors. The significance of this lies in the fact that, as the legitimate ruler of the Islamic community, the Imam had the right to hold this group of rebellious opponents accountable and punish them.

However, with utmost grace and compassion, he pardoned their mistakes. For example, after a sermon in which the Imam, after the conquest of Basra, condemned the people of Basra, some of the Basra people that present there, in a supplicating tone, requested forgiveness. The Imam replied, "I forgive you all." (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 408) It is noteworthy that the Imam mentioned the general pardon granted to the companions and survivors of the Battle of Jamal in similar terms in letters he wrote to the people of Medina and Kufa after the battle (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 395).

Even with the repeated treachery and sabotage of the *Nākihīn*, the Imam constantly and lovingly prayed to God Almighty for the forgiveness of the companions of the Battle of Jamal. Among the instances of Imam Ali's supplication for forgiveness for the companions of the Battle of Jamal can be found at the end of a sermon he delivered after learning of the opposition's dissatisfaction with the equitable distribution of the public treasury at the beginning of his rule (Ḥarrānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 185; Ibn Abil Ḥadīd, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 7, 40), as well as in his address to the people of Basra after the Battle of Jamal (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 402).

A noteworthy aspect of Amir al-Mu'minin's (AS) leniency towards the survivors of the Battle of Jamal concerns the Imam's respectful treatment of 'Āyisha both on the battlefield and after the battle. For instance, among the Imam's important instructions at the outset of the battle was the necessity of preserving 'Āyisha's modesty and honor. He instructed his brother, *Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr*, saying: "O! *Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr*! If 'Āyisha falls to the ground, cover her and take care of her affairs." (ibid: 344) At the end of the battle and after the defeat of the army of Jamal, the Imam inquired about her safety, asking his brother: "See if she has been wounded?" And after ensuring 'Āyisha's safety, he again instructed his brother to transfer her to the (safe) house of the *Khuzā'ī* sons of the Caliphs. In fact, despite 'Āyisha being one of the main accused in the Battle of Jamal and the most influential figure in the military coup against the Ali's government, the Imam, due to her lineage to the Prophet Muhammad **101**

(PBUH), treated her with respect and leniency. Consequently, after the complete suppression of the Battle of Jamal, he provided the necessary arrangements, including a mount, provisions, a guard, and travel supplies for 'Āyisha's journey from Basra to Medina. On the day of her departure, he was present with the people of Basra to see her off (cf. Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 544).

### 3-4. Attempt at Reprimand and Threat

One of the most significant themes in Imam Ali's (AS) educational approach towards the combatants of Jamal is the "curse and rebuke of the *Nākithīn*." When the Imam observed that despite his efforts to guide and reform the *Nākithīn*, they persisted in their rebellious and hostile actions against him, completely disregarding his rightful position as the leader and guardian of Muslims, he employed condemnation and rebuke of the *Nākithīn*, leaving their punishment to God Almighty, to demonstrate the severity of his anger towards their deviation from Islamic governance.

Content analysis tables show that the Imam used the form of a curse in 21 instances, almost all of which occurred after the *Nākithīn*'s rebellion. In contrast, supplication was used only in 6 instances in the Imam's statements concerning the combatants of Jamal. A crucial point regarding the qualitative analysis of the "Curse" theme is that in most cases, the Imam's aim was not simply to curse the combatants of Jamal, but rather to achieve another purpose. While expressing a curse, he also explained its reason, conveying messages such as highlighting the injustice, treachery, and hostility of the *Nākithīn*.

**102** Therefore, the curses in the Imam's speeches can be considered not

merely emotional expressions, but rather rational reactions accompanied by explanations.

For instance, at the end of his enlightening sermon on the illegitimacy of the *Nākithīn*'s political movement, delivered after *Ṭalḥa* and *Zubayr* left Medina, the Imam used a curse to emphasize the widespread treachery of the *Nākithīn* against the Muslim community (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 155).

In fact, sometimes this curse and rebuke stemmed from the severity of the injustice they committed in violating the rights of the Imam and the Muslim community. As such, the Imam used a curse in his sermon calling on the people of Medina to confront the *Nākithīn*. Similarly, in his correspondence with *ʿUthmān ibn Ḥunayf* regarding how to deal with the *Nākithīn*, the Imam speaks of God's displeasure with their actions and the severe divine punishment awaiting them (Eskāfī, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 60).

Then, after their escape from the Battle of Jamal, while conversing with them, he [Imam Ali] declared, concerning the heinous actions of the combatants of the Battle of Jamal against the governor and the people of Basra, and also against the Islamic government: "O! God, render their intentions ineffective, prevent them from achieving their aims, and punish them for their deeds." (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 481)

Among the instances where the Imam cursed each of the leaders of the *Khawārij* specifically is a sermon he delivered in response to the *Khawārij*'s declaration of war on the eve of the Battle of Jamal. In this sermon, several times, while expressing his dissatisfaction and intense anger towards the *Khawārij*, he explicitly cursed them: "May **103**

their mothers mourn for them. No one has ever frightened me from battle or instilled fear of the sword in me... Amazing is *Talḥa*... the same one who pledged allegiance to me many times, then broke his oath. O! Lord, seize him and grant him no respite. Be aware that *Zubayr* severed my kinship ties and broke his allegiance to me and declared war against me... O! God, according to Your will, suffice me from his evil." (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 169)

### 3-5. Efforts to Punish and Sanction in Accordance with Social Circumstances

Even when rebuking and reprimanding the combatants of the Battle of Jamal, Imam Ali (AS) did not act emotionally. Rather, the condemnations in the Imam's words were purposeful and enlightening, and to punish the *Khawārij*, he emphasized the main cause that led to their rebuke. This method of the Imam in reprimanding his opponents is an important lesson in moral education, namely that rebuke and punishment are effective when accompanied by a statement of their cause. Thus, the Imam himself, while delivering a sermon in response to the *Khawārij*'s declaration of war in Basra, explicitly stated that he was rebuking and reprimanding the *Khawārij*, and the reason for this was their breach of covenant and oppression (ibid: 169).

Similarly, while conversing with the survivors of the Battle of Jamal, he rebuked them for waging war: "Woe to you, O! Group of Quraysh! Why did you fight with me? Did I judge unjustly among you?" (Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 413)

In reality, Imam Ali's rebukes and warnings often stemmed from benevolence and compassion for the fate of the combatants at the

Battle of Jamal. They were never intended to damage their character or social standing. A prime example of the Imam's benevolent reproach is his dialogue with *Zubayr* on the eve of the Battle of Jamal. Due to his kinship with *Zubayr* and his knowledge of *Zubayr*'s gentle nature and devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt*, the Imam felt a greater concern for his fate, fearing that despite his unparalleled efforts in Islam, he might ultimately fall victim to divine punishment and, in a sense, suffer disgrace and eternal torment (cf. *Nahj al-Balāgha*, Letter 54; Ibn Qutaybah, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 95). Therefore, upon meeting him, he compassionately inquired about his presence in the enemy ranks and reproached him for his unfounded claim of avenging '*Uthmān*. He then, recalling a prophetic narration warning *Zubayr* against enmity towards the Prophet, strove to guide and reform him (Ibn Qutaybah, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 92).

## Conclusion

This article endeavors to uncover and elucidate Imam Ali's (AS) educational and ethical approach towards internal opponents and dissenters within the Islamic government, aiming to discover his educational model for dealing with such individuals. Therefore, in the first step, using content analysis, the Imam's statements and writings concerning these individuals, particularly the *Nākithīn* and the combatants at Jamal, were examined and analyzed.

In the second step, focusing on the actions Imam Ali (AS) undertook to guide and reform his opponents, an attempt was made to

extract his educational model in dealing with such individuals throughout history. The importance and necessity of this issue lie in understanding that, from Imam Ali's (AS) perspective, employing ethical education, even when dealing with opponents of the Islamic government, is of paramount importance.

The final research findings indicate that Imam Ali's (AS) educational efforts to reform and guide internal opponents can be categorized under the following five strategic actions:

- Public awareness;
- Correction of religious beliefs and ideological perspectives;
- Tolerance and leniency;
- Reprimand and threat;
- Punishment and penalty.

Public awareness, as intended here, refers to the opponents' consistent exhortation to piety, the correct presentation of right and wrong, drawing attention to history and learning lessons from it, and ultimately, establishing irrefutable proof. In the section on correcting the opponents' religious and ideological perspectives, the Imam's significant efforts to rectify their misinterpretations of the verses of the Quran and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are evident. He strived to explain their true and correct interpretation.

It is noteworthy that in the initial stages, before the opponents' armed actions against the Islamic government, the Imam adopted a policy of tolerance and patience, emphasizing the necessity of kind treatment towards opponents, preserving their dignity, and refraining

from insulting them. However, with the commencement of military actions and internal unrest, he initially resorted to reprimand and threat, and finally, due to their disruption of the peace of the Islamic society and opposition to the rightful government, he initiated the final stage: punishment and retribution. Even in this phase, a crucial point is the Imam's emphasis on the necessity of adhering to ethical conduct in war, determining the punishment of opponents in accordance with the societal conditions.

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# Investigation of the Status of the Narrations and Narrators of *Nu'mānī* (Author of *al-Ghayba*) in Shi'a Hadith Sources up to the 10th Century AH

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## Abstract

The details of the life of *Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far Nu'mānī* (b. 342 AH) are not entirely clear, and significant information about him is not readily available. Furthermore, one of the unclear aspects surrounding *Nu'mānī's* life is the extent to which Imamiyyah writers and scholars paid attention to *Nu'mānī's* narrations and the current book *al-Ghayba* attributed to him. Therefore, since some consider *Nu'mānī* to be among the prominent Imamiyyah scholars, it is necessary to investigate and research the "Status of *Nu'mānī's* narrations and narrators in early Shi'a hadith sources": 'What narrations from *Nu'mānī* exist among early Imamiyyah Shi'a hadith

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sources?' 'Who are *Nu'mānī's* narrators among the Imamiyyah Mashāyikh?' And, focusing on *Nu'mānī's* narrations and narrators, 'What is the extent of the attention paid by Imamiyyah scholars to *Nu'mānī* and his works and narrations?' The present study was conducted using a library-based approach, employing an inductive strategy and a descriptive-analytical method. Existing Shi'a hadith sources were explored, ultimately revealing that only sixteen narrations (repeated and unrepeated) from *Nu'mānī* exist in a few sources from the regions of Iraq and Syria. On the other hand, and separate from common Imamiyyah sources, in examining the heritage of the *Ghulāt* (extremists), sources were found containing narrations from *Nu'mānī*; however, none of these are found in Imamiyyah sources or Sunni sources. The majority of the narrators in the chains of transmission of *Nu'mānī's* narrations in these sources are disreputable narrators, leaders of the *Ghulāt*, or those interested in the *Ghulāt* heritage.

**Keywords:** *Al-Ghayba*, *Nu'mānī's* Narrators and Students, Mahdism, Imamiyyah Sources, *Ghulāt* Nasiriyyah.

## Introduction

*Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far Nu'mānī* (d. 360 AH), also known as "*Ibn Abī Zaynab*," was a Shi'a scribe, hadith scholar, and possibly a theologian of the fourth century AH. It is said that during the time *Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī* resided in Baghdad, *Nu'mānī* also lived there, benefiting from his presence and being among his students (cf. *Nu'mānī*, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 14-18). It has even been claimed **113**

that *Muḥammad Nu'mānī* transcribed a significant portion of *Kulaynī's al-Kāfī*; some suggest this may be the reason for his fame as a scribe (cf. Tehrani, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 16, 79). However, according to some Shami and Nasiri sources, *Nu'mānī* served for a time as a government scribe or minister in Antioch; this may also account for his reputation as a scribe (for example, cf. 'Iṣmat al-Dawla, 2016: 665).

Several individuals have discussed *Nu'mānī* and his status (for example, cf. Majlisī, 1983: 14 and 40). However, perhaps the first person to mention *Nu'mānī*, albeit briefly, and describe his position was *Aḥmad Najāshī* (d. 450 AH), who even praised him, writing: "A Shaykh among our companions, of great stature, noble rank, sound creed, and knowledgeable in hadith. He came to Baghdad, then went to Syria, and died there." (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 383)

Several works have also been attributed to *Muḥammad Nu'mānī*: 1. *al-Radd 'alā al-Ismā'īliyya*; 2. *al-Farā'id*; 3. *Nathr al-Li'ālī*; 4. *al-Tasallī wa al-Taqwā*; 5. *al-Dalā'il*; 6. *al-Muḥkam wa al-Mutashābih*; 7. *Risāla fī Aṣnāf al-Qur'an*; 8. *Tafsir Nu'mānī*; 9. *Kitab al-Ghayba* (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 383; *Nu'mānī*, 1976 AD/1397 AH: Introduction).

The first five books are currently unavailable, and there is no reliable information about their content, quantity, or quality. The mentioned Qur'anic titles also appear to be unique, similar to *Tafsir Nu'mānī*, which is considered a spurious attribution to *Nu'mānī* (cf. Ostadi, 1990 AD/1369 SH: entire text), meaning that there is strong evidence refuting this attribution (cf. for example: Shubayrī, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 18).

Furthermore, a work titled *Rasāla al-Muḥkam wa al-Mutashābih* from

the tenth century has been published under the name of *Sayyid Murtaḍā* (cf. 'Alam al-Hudā, 2010 AD/1389 SH: entire text). Some researchers even deny that these titles belong to either *Sayyid Murtaḍā* or *Nu'mānī* (cf. Mūsāwī, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 28).

While numerous books have been attributed to *Nu'mānī*, his works apparently did not receive much attention among early Imami scholars, although his book *al-Ghayba* enjoyed some degree of recognition (e.g., Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 127). Currently, however, *Nu'mānī's* most famous and accessible work is his book *al-Ghayba*. It was written in the early period of the Greater Occultation, as the Imam's absence lengthened and intellectual confusion and wavering faith spread among Shi'a. *Nu'mānī* authored it to address this problem (Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 19). In this book, he explains the matter of Imamate and the mystery of the twelfth Imam's occultation. Some extant manuscripts and printed editions contain approximately 26 chapters and 478 hadiths. However, the few surviving manuscripts vary somewhat in content (Ostadi, 2022 AD/1402 SH (b): Entire text).

## 1. Statement of the Problem

Based on available documents and biographies of *Nu'mānī* (e.g., Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: Introduction; Shubayrī, 2001 AD/1380 SH: Entire text), the dates of his birth and death, as well as details of his life, remain unclear, and significant information about him is lacking.

Furthermore, examination of extant manuscripts of *al-Ghayba* attributed to *Nu'mānī* reveals that only a small number (around 23) **115**

exist, all but one being relatively recent (Ostadi, 2022 AD/1402 SH (a): Entire text). This contrast sharply with *Kamāl al-Dīn*, a similar work by Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH), which has over 150 extant manuscripts (Diraiti, 1391 SH: 4, 682). This situation raises a significant question: ‘Were the manuscripts of *al-Ghayba* (or, more generally, the narrations attributed to *Nu‘mānī*) not valued among Imami scholars, or were these manuscripts and narrations lost over time?’

Therefore, one of the unclear aspects surrounding the life and works of *Nu‘mānī* is the extent to which Imamiyyah writers and scholars have paid attention to *Nu‘mānī*’s narrations and his book *al-Ghaybah*. Since *Muḥammad Nu‘mānī* is considered one of the prominent Imamiyyah scholars of the fourth century AH, it is now necessary to investigate and research the "Status of *Nu‘mānī*’s narrations and narrators in early Shi'a hadith sources," addressing the following questions: 1. ‘What narrations from *Nu‘mānī* exist among the early Imamiyyah Shi'a hadith sources?’ ‘Who are the narrators of *Nu‘mānī* among the Imamiyyah scholars?’ And, focusing on *Nu‘mānī*’s narrations and narrators, ‘What is the extent of the attention paid by Imamiyyah scholars to *Nu‘mānī* and his works and narrations?’

The present study, considering these questions, aims to examine *Nu‘mānī*’s narrations and narrators in Shi'a sources up to the tenth century AH; to provide a concise summary of the status of these *Nu‘mānī* narrations.

## 2. Background

**116** Regarding *Nu‘mānī*, the book *al-Ghaybah*, and its hadiths, apart from

the introduction to the printed edition of *al-Ghaybah*, various articles and works have been written; for example, some of them are:

- Ṭabasī, Najm al-Dīn (2001 AD/1380 SH), "A Look at *Nu'mānī's* Book of Occultation," *Expectation of the Promised One*, Autumn, no. 1;
- Shubayrī Zanjānī, Muḥammad Jawād (2001-2006 AD/1380-1385 SH), "*Nu'mānī* and the Sources of Occultation (1-10)," *Expectation of the Promised Imam Journal*, nos. 2-18;
- Mokhtari, Ali Reza, and Kazim Ghazi Zadeh (2007 AD/1386 SH), "An Analysis of the Hadiths of Occultation in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*," *Hadith Sciences*, no. 45;
- Ma'rifat, Muḥammad (2017 AD/1397 SH), "Re-identification of the Sources of the Hadiths of *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*," *Shi'a Studies Journal*, vol. 4, no. 10, Spring;
- Shariati, Fahimeh (2017 AD/1397 SH), "A Comparative Analysis of the Differences in the Report of Occultation among *Nu'mānī*, Shaykh Ṣadūq, and Shaykh Ṭūsī," *Mahdavi Studies*, winter, no. 27;
- Ostadi, Kazim (2022 AD/1402 SH), "Introduction and Analysis of the Manuscript Copies of the Book *al-Ghaybah* Attributed to *Nu'mānī*," *Journal of Manuscript Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2.

Apart from some writings that have addressed the content of the narrations and the sources of the book *al-Ghaybah* itself, no independent and coherent research has been conducted so far on the examination of narrations quoted from *Nu'mānī* and his narrators in Shi'a sources; therefore, this present writing is apparently the first article of its kind.

### 3. The Status of Narrations and Narrators from *Nu'mānī* in Sources up to the Tenth Century

To better understand the narrations of *Nu'mānī* in Shi'a sources, it is appropriate to examine the status of the narrators of *Muḥammad ibn Ibrahīm Nu'mānī* from two perspectives: First, by searching through commonly used Shi'a sources; second, through the sources of the *Ghulāt* of Sham, which have been published and made available to researchers in recent decades, since the golden years of *Nu'mānī*'s life were spent in Aleppo (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 383), an area where the *Nusayri Ghulāt* were concentrated.

We will first examine the commonly used sources in Imami Shi'ism.

#### 3-1. Narrations and Narrators from *Nu'mānī* in Common Shi'a Sources

According to codicological evidence, manuscripts of *al-Ghayba* only reached the Eastern Mesopotamian region (i.e., the Iranian plateau and Khorasan) around the ninth and tenth centuries. Apparently, they were not accessible to scholars in these hadith centers before that time (Ostadi, 2020 AD/1400 SH: 28). Therefore, to examine the status of *Nu'mānī*'s narrators in Shi'a hadith sources, it is necessary to search and analyze at least the Shi'a hadith sources up to the tenth century.

After examining all available Shi'a hadith sources (based on hadith software), it was determined that no narration or hadith quoting *Nu'mānī* or his books exists in hadith sources from the 4th and 6th centuries. Only a few limited narrations are found in some limited

However, there are also ambiguous and unknown cases where references to "*Nu'mānī*" are unclear; that is, it is not certain which *Nu'mānī* is meant, and with what meaning. For better understanding, an example, which is not related to messianic discussions, is provided. In the book "*Jawābāt al-Masā'il al-Ṭarāblusīyāt al-Thānīya*," by Sayyid Murtaḍā, under *al-Mas'alah al-Ḥādīya 'Ashar* (discussion of what has been narrated concerning *Masūkh*), the questioner, while discussing metamorphosis, states: "...And *Nu'mānī* has narrated much on this matter, that the possibility of both abrogation and metamorphosis exists. Among the narrations he has cited is a long narration mentioned in the book *al-Tasallī wa al-Taqwā* and attributed to [Imam] Ṣādiq (AS); at the end of this narration, he says: And when an unbeliever is dying, the Messenger of God (PBUH), Ali (AS), Gabriel, and the Angel of Death are present beside him..."<sup>1</sup> ('Alam al-Hudā, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 350)

The book "*al-Tasallī wa-l-Taqwā*" no longer exists; more importantly, there is no clear and acceptable evidence to show that this book was actually written by Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Nu'mānī, the author of *al-Ghaybah*. Furthermore, *Nu'mānī*'s name in this reference by *al-Murtaḍā* is not a strong or clear indicator of which *Nu'mānī* is intended.

1. The original text is: Wa qad Rawā al-Nu'mānī Kathīran min Dhālik, Yaḥtamīl al-Naskh wa al-Maskh ma'an, famimmā Ruwāh mā Awradahū fī kitāb al-Tasallī wa al-Taqwā; wa Asnada ilal Ṣādiq (AS) hadith Ṭawīl, Yaḡūlu fī Ākhirihī: Wa idhā Iḥṭāḍara al-Kāfir Ḥaḍarahū Rasūl Allāh (PBUH) wa Ali (AS) wa Jabra'il wa Malak al-Mawt.

Therefore, aside from these uncertainties, the findings regarding *Muḥammad ibn Ibrahim Nu'mānī* in Shi'a sources are as follows:

### 3-1-1. Narrations Attributed to Nu'mānī in the Fifth Century AH

In the fifth century AH, only two sources mention a limited number of narrations from *Muḥammad ibn Nu'mānī*:

#### A) Al-Ghaybah by al-Ṭūsī

Shaykh al-Ṭūsī's *al-Ghaybah* (d. 460 AH), written in Baghdad around 444-447 AH, contains approximately 505 narrations; however, only 9 narrations out of the 478 narrations in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah* (according to the printed edition) are found in Sheikh al-Ṭūsī's *al-Ghaybah*. Two of these are duplicates, and one is not available in the edition of *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah* currently accessible to us.

In *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*, at the end of Chapter Four, there is a section titled "On what has been narrated that the Imams are twelve, according to the Sunni," containing ten narrations. Eight of these are attributed to *Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān*, and the texts of the narrations are quite similar. Two narrations (from *al-Wālabī* from *Jābir ibn Samura*) are almost identical (cf. Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 102-111). Seven of these narrations by *Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān* are found in *al-Ṭūsī's al-Ghaybah*; one of these seven is repeated twice in *al-Ṭūsī's al-Ghaybah*. All of *Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān's* narrations (except the almost identical narration of *Jābir ibn Samura* in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*) are included in the section "From what has been narrated on this matter from the perspective of the opponents of the Shi'a." In the *Isnad* of the first narration, its chain of transmission

is fully cited back to *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*; in the subsequent narrations, the *Isnads* are cited with the phrase "With this Isnad." These are:

Narration 1. *Mā Akhbaranī bihī Abū 'Abdillāh Aḥmad ibn 'Ubdūn al-Ma'rūf bi ibn al-Ḥāshir, Qāla Ḥaddathanī Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn Ali al-Shujā'ī al-Kātib, Qāla Akhbaranaā Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ma'rūf bi ibn Abī Zaynab al-Nu'mānī al-Kātib, Qāla Akhbaranā Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Allān al-Dhahabī al-Baghdādī bi Dimashq, Qāla Ḥaddathanā Abū Bakr ibn Abī Khaythama, Qāla Ḥaddathanī Ali ibn al-Ja'd, Qāla Ḥaddathanī Zuhair ibn Mu'āwīya 'an Zīyād ibn Khaythama 'an al-Aswad ibn Sa'īd al-Hamdānī, Qāla Sami'tu Jābir ibn Samura Yaqūl Sami'tu Rasūl Allāh (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 127; also cf. Similar hadith: 120 and 123; also cf. Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 102).*

Narrations 2 to 7. And with this Isnad (chain of transmission) from *Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān*, he said... (Seven consecutive narrations; two are repeated; making a total of eight narrations) (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 128-133; also cf. Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 103-107).

Several points regarding these narrations are noteworthy:

First: All eight narrations in Ṭūsī's *al-Ghaybah*, which are also present in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*, are identical in terms of order and wording; only the eighth narration in Ṭūsī's version adds the phrase, "Allah the Almighty said, and We sent among them twelve chiefs." (cf. Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 134) Furthermore, the eighth narration from this consecutive series in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah* is not included in Ṭūsī's *al-Ghaybah*.

Therefore, considering the order of presentation in the two works, the textual consistency of these narrations with *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*, and the absence of any indication of these narrations being newly written in the manuscript copies of *Ṭūsī's al-Ghaybah*, it can be strongly suggested that *Shaykh Ṭūsī* directly took these narrations from *Nu'mānī's* book; however, despite some differences, it is currently unclear which edition of *Nu'mānī's* book he utilized.

On the other hand, assuming this possibility, it needs to be explained 'Why *Shaykh Ṭūsī* did not include other narrations from this work?' And if he used some of them, 'Why did he not mention *Nu'mānī's* name in his *Isnads*?'

Second: Two narrations (in both *al-Ghaybah* of *Nu'mānī* and *al-Ghaybah* of *Ṭūsī*) from this group of *Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān* are repeated. (cf. *Ṭūsī*, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 129; *Nu'mānī*, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 106). However, the type of repeated narration differs in both works.

Narration 8. Also, in *Ṭūsī's al-Ghaybah*, there is another narration with the *Isnad* of "*Abul Ḥusayn Shujā'ī*," which is not present in the current copies of *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*:

*Wa Akhbaranī Aīmad ibn 'Ubdūn al-Ma'rūf bi ibn al-Ḥāshir 'an Abī al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Ali Shujā'ī al-Kātibī 'an Abī 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī 'an Yūsuf ibn Aḥmad [Muhammad] al-Ja'farī, Qāla:...* (cf. *Ṭūsī*, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 257)

#### B) *Kanz al-Fawā'id*

*Abul Faḥ Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Karājakī Ṭarābulsī* (d. 449 AH) in **122** *Kanz al-Fawā'id* cites only one narration from *Nu'mānī* concerning

"What is *Ḥalāl* is *Ḥalāl* until the Day of Judgment, and what is *Ḥarām* is *Ḥarām* until the Day of Judgment," which is not found in *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*:

*Ḥaddathanī al-Shaykh Abū al-Marjī Muḥammad ibn Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib al-Baladīyy bil Qāhirah, Qāla Ḥaddathanā Ustādhī Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far al-Nu'mānī Raḥimahū Allah 'an Abī al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd ibn 'Uqda al-Kūfī... (Karājakī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 352)*

### 3-1-2. Narrations Cited from *Nu'mānī* in the 7th Century

In the 7th century, only two narrations are cited from *Muḥammad ibn Nu'mānī* in two sources, both by *Ibn Ṭāwūs* (d. 664 AH):

#### A) *Faraj al-Mahmūm*

In *Ibn Ṭāwūs's Faraj al-Mahmūm*, only this narration was found:

*Arwīhi bi Asānīdī ilā Abī 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far al-Nu'mānī al-Thiqah fī Kitāb al-Dalā'il fī al-Juz' al-Tāsi' fīmā fīh min Dalā'il Mawlānā Abī al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā 'alayhi al-Salām Qāla Ḥaddathanā Muḥammad ibn Hammām Qāla... (Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 95)*

#### B) *Mahj al-Da'awāt*

In *Ibn Ṭāwūs's Mahj al-Da'awāt*, only this narration was found:

*Al-Shaykh 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥarrānī Qāla al-Shaykh Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn 'Abdillāh ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far al-Nu'mānī al-Kātib Raḍīya Allāhu 'anhu Qāla Ḥaddathanā Abū 'Alī ibn Hammām Qāla Ḥaddathanī Ibrāhīm ibn Ishāq al-Nahāwandī 'an Abī 'Abdillāh al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Ahwāzī 'an Abīhi*

‘an ‘Alī ibn Mahzīyār Qāla Sami‘tu Mawlāya Mūsā ibn Ja‘far (AS) Yadu‘ū bi Hādhā al-Du‘ā’ (Ibn Ṭāwūs, n.d.: 233).

### 3-1-3. Narrations Cited from *Nu‘mānī* in the 9th Century

In the 9th century, only two sources cite a few limited narrations from *Muḥammad ibn Nu‘mānī*:

#### A) *Mukhtaṣar al-Baṣā’ir*

In *Mukhtaṣar al-Baṣā’ir* by Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān Ḥillī (d. after 802 AH), four narrations are cited from *Nu‘mānī*’s *al-Ghaybah*:

1. Wa min Kitāb Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu‘mānī fī al-Ghaybah, Akhbaranā ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, ‘an Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, ‘an Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Rāzī, ‘an Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, ‘an Muḥammad ibn Sinān, ‘an Dāwūd ibn Kathīr al-Raqīyy Qāla: Qultu li Abī ‘Abdillāh Ja‘far (AS) ... (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 427; also cf. Nu‘mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 90)
2. Mā Rawaynāhu ‘an al-Nu‘mānī min Kitāb al-Ghaybah laḥū Rafa‘a al-Ḥadīth ‘an Ḥamzah ibn Ḥumrān, ‘an ibn Abī Ya‘fūr, ‘an Abī ‘Abdillāh (AS) annahū Qāla... (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 460; also cf. Nu‘mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 331)
3. Wa min Kitāb al-Ghaybah li Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu‘mānī, Akhbaranā Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyā ibn Shaybān, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Yūsuf ibn Kulayb, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ḥamzah, ‘an ‘Āsim ibn Ḥumayd al-Ḥannāṭ, ‘an Abī Ḥamzah al-Thumālī, Qāla: Sami‘tu Abā Ja‘far (AS) ... (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 494; also cf. Nu‘mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 234)

4. Wa min Kitāb al-Ghaybah lil Nu'mānī: Akhbaranā Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd ibn 'Uqdah, Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Muḥammad ibn al-Mufaḍḍal ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Qays ibn Rummānah al-Ash'arī wa Sa'dān ibn Ishāq ibn Sa'īd wa Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Zayyāt wa Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Qaṭawānī, 'an al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb, 'an 'Amr ibn Thābit, 'an Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī, Qāla: Samī'tu Abā Ja'far (AS)... (Ḥillī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 496; also cf. Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 331)

#### B) al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaḳīm

In *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaḳīm* by 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūnus Nabātī Bayyāḍī Baqā'ī (d. 877 AH), a part of one narration is cited from Nu'mānī's *al-Ghaybah*:

Wa Asnada Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī fī Kitāb al-Ghaybah ilā al-Ṣādiq (AS)... ('Āmilī Nabātī, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 2, 263; also cf. Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 331; Thalāth 'Ashrah Madīnata wa Ṭā'ifatun Yuḥāribu al-Qā'im...)

#### 3-4-1. Summary

1. The total number of narrations (repeated and unrepeated) cited from *Muḥammad ibn Nu'mānī* in *Shī'ī* sources up to the 10th century is sixteen; of these, three narrations are not related to the issue of occultation; and one narration related to occultation is not found in the current extant manuscripts of *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*.
2. All these narrations exist in these five sources "*al-Ghaybah (al-Ṭūsī)*, *Kanz al-Fawā'id*, *Faraj al-Mahmūm*, *Mahj al-Da'awāt*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Baṣṣā'ir*, *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaḳīm*" in four forms: 1) A narration cited **125**

from *Nu'mānī's al-Ghaybah*; 2) A narration cited from *Abū al-Ḥusayn Shujā'ī Kātib*, which is not found in the current extant versions of *al-Ghaybah*; 3) A narration cited from *Nu'mānī's Dalā'il*; 4) Narrations cited from *Nu'mānī* himself, as an absolute narrator.

3. The names of the direct narrators from *Nu'mānī* in these Shi'a hadith sources are as follows:

1. Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Shujā'ī al-Kātib (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 127); or Abī al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Shujā'ī al-Kātib (Ṭūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 257).
2. Abū al-Marjīyy Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Baladīyy (Karājaki, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 352).
3. 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥarrānī (Ibn Ṭāwūs, n.d.: 233).

4. Examining the hadith field and the lives of the authors who quoted *Nu'mānī* reveals that these writers belonged to the regions of Iraq and Syria. *Shaykh Ṭūsī* belonged to the Baghdad school of hadith and is buried in Najaf (cf. Tehrani, 2009 AD/1430 AH: 2, 161 and 162). *Karājaki*, a student of *Shaykh Ṭūsī* and from the same school of hadith, died in Najaf (cf. Karājaki, 2014 AD/1394 SH: 11). *Ibn Ṭāwūs*, with a time gap, was in the same hadith field and the region of Baghdad and Hillah (cf. Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 30). *Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān* and *Ali Nabā'i* also both belonged to the Jabal Amel region and the Levant (cf. Tehrani, 2009 AD/1430 AH: 3, 41 and 89).

5. Apart from the codicological evidence of the manuscripts of the book *al-Ghaybah* (mentioned earlier), considering the geographical locations of *Nu'mānī's* limited narrators and the absence of

*Nu'mānī's* narrations in Shi'a sources outside the hadith field of Iraq and Syria, it seems that *Nu'mānī's* works and narrations did not reach the hadith field of eastern Mesopotamia (i.e., the Iranian plateau and Khorasan) until the tenth century AH.

6. Given the small number of his narrations, it appears that even in Iraq and Syria, the narrations of *Muḥammad Nu'mānī* were not widely considered by scholars and authors of hadith works. This hypothesis is strengthened by the very few copies of *al-Ghaybah* in Iraq and the absence of any copies of this book in the Levant (cf. Ostadi, 2022 AD/1402 SH: A, entire text), even though the origin of the composition and copying of *al-Ghaybah* was the Levant (cf. Ostadi, 2020 AD/1400 SH: 29).

### 3-2. *Nu'mānī's* Narrations and Narrators in *Ghulāt* of Sham Sources

In recent decades, a collection of *Ghulāt* texts, such as those of the Nusayris and Alawites of Sham, have been published and made available (e.g., Abū Mūsā, 2006: entire text). Given that *Nu'mānī* traveled to Sham and remained there until the end of his life (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 383), and this life in Aleppo coincided with the golden age and rise to power of the Nusayri sect and similar sects during the reign of *Sayf al-Dawla* (333-356 AH) of the Hamdanid dynasty (e.g., Ghālib Ṭuwayl, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 259, 316, 318); therefore, it is necessary to consider the status of *Nu'mānī's* narrators in these *Ghulāt* texts.

For example, by examining the available tradition and hadith sources of the Nusayris, sources are found in which narrations from

*Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Nu‘mānī* are cited. To avoid lengthening the writing, and as an example, we will address one of the most important Nusayri sources containing numerous narrations from *Nu‘mānī*:

### 3-2-1. *Nu‘mānī*'s Narrations in the Book *Ḥaqā'iq Asrār al-Dīn*

The hadith book *Ḥaqā'iq Asrār al-Dīn* is an ancient text from the Nusayri heritage; attributed among them to *Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan ibn Ali ibn Shu‘ba Ḥarrānī* (4th century AH) (cf. Baqeri, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 163); and it includes many quotations from early *Ghulāt*, and clearly contains the special esoteric beliefs of the Nusayri *Ghulāt* such as: Metamorphosis, transmigration, the Lordship of the Proofs (*Ḥujaj*), permissiveness, and exaggeration (*Ghuluw*) (e.g., Abū Mūsā, 2006: 4, 78, 97, 139, 141, 157, 158, 164).

In the book *Ḥaqā'iq*, there are more than twenty-two narrations related to *Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Nu‘mānī*; the Isnads of most of them, in order of transmission, are as follows:

4. *Wa Ruwīya ‘an Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ‘an Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Ishāq Yarfa‘uh ilā Muḥammad ibn Sinān fī Kitāb al-Tawḥīd ‘an al-‘Ālim Qāla...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 16).
5. *Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Abī ‘Alī al-Baṣrī Qāla: Ḥaddathanī al-Rāzī ‘an Abī al-Haytham ‘an Hishām ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal ‘an Jābir Qāla: Su‘ila Abū Ja‘far minhu al-Salām ‘an Tafṣīr al-Ṣa‘b al-Mustaṣ‘ab Qāla...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 24).
6. *Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Abī al-Baṣrī ‘an Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ‘an al-Karkhī ‘an ibn Ṣadaqah ‘an ibn Sinān Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 34).

7. Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm 'an al-Baṣrī 'an al-Udsānī 'an Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Barsī 'an al-Armanī 'an Muḥammad ibn Sinān 'an Yūnus ibn Ḍabīyān Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 44).
8. Wa 'anhu 'an al-Baṣrī 'an Muḥammad ibn Mūsā 'an al-Karkhī 'an Abī Samīnah 'an Muḥammad ibn Sinān 'an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qāla Sayyidī... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 44).
9. Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad 'an al-Karkhī 'an Ismā'īl 'an ibn Ṣadaqaḥ Qāla: Qāla al-Riḍā... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 44).
10. Wa Ḥaddathanī 'an 'Abdillāh 'an Idrīs 'an Zayd 'an Yūnus Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 44).
11. Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm 'an al-Baṣrī 'an 'Abdillāh ibn al-'Alā' 'an Idrīs ibn Ziyād 'an Abī Sa'īd 'an 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn 'an ibn Sinān Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 67).
12. Wa Ḥaddathanī 'anhu Qāla: Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Karkhī 'an Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī 'an ibn Ṣadaqaḥ 'an Hāshim 'an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 67).
13. Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm 'an Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī 'an 'Abdillāh ibn al-'Alī 'an Idrīs 'an Zayd ibn Ṭalḥah 'an al-Mufaḍḍal ibn 'Umar Qāla: Qāla Sayyidī Abū 'Abdillāh minhu al-Salām... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 83).
14. Wa bil Isnād 'an Zayd ibn Ṭalḥah 'an 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Malik 'an al-Mufaḍḍal ibn 'Umar Qāla: Qāla Sayyidī... (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 83).
15. Wa bil Isnād 'an 'Abdillāh 'an Idrīs al-Kafartūthī 'an ibn Sinān Qāla: Su'ila al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām 'an Kalāmihim Faqāla... **129**

(Ḥarrānī, 2016: 83).

16. *Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Abī ‘Alī al-Baṣrī ‘an Abī Muḥammad al-Hamdānī ‘an Abī Sa‘īd ‘an Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ‘an ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ‘an Muḥammad ibn Sinān Qāla: Kāna al-Mufaḍḍal wa Jamā‘ah min Aṣḥābih fī Ghurfati Mujtami‘in Yashrabūn wa Yatadhākarūn idh Habaṭ al-Sayyid min al-Saqf wa Biyadihi Bāqah Ādharyūn fa Qāla lahum...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 128).

17. *Wa Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Abī ‘Alī ‘an Muḥammad ibn Mūsā wa ‘Abdillāh ibn Sinān wa Zayd ibn Ṭalḥah ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal ‘an Jābir wa Abī Ḥamzah Qālū Jamī‘ān Qāla al-‘Ālim...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 141).

18. *Ḥaddathanī ‘anhu ‘an Muḥammad ‘an al-Karkhī ‘an Abī Samīnah wa ‘Abd al-Raḥmān wa ‘an ibn Sinān ‘an al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām Qāla...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 141).

19. *Wa bil Isnād ‘an al-Karkhī ‘an Abī Hāshim ‘an Hishām ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qāla Sayyidī...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 142).

20. *Ḥaddathanī Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ‘an Abī Baṣīr Qāla: Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ‘an ibn Mahrān ‘an Abī Samīnah ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Jā‘a Samā‘ah ilā al-Bāqir minhu al-Salām Qāla lahu...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 146).

21. *Wa ḥaddathanī Ayḍan ‘anhu Qāla: Ḥaddathanī Ḥamzah ibn al-Qāsim ‘an al-Rabī‘ Qāla: Qāla al-Sayyid Muḥammad (PBUH)...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 147).

22. *Ḥaddathanī Abū ‘Abdillāh ‘an ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ‘an al-Karkhī ‘an Muḥammad ibn Sinān ‘an Sharīk al-Faḍl ‘an al-*

*Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qultu li Sayyidī: Kayfa Na'lam Ḥālu man La'antumūh fa Kānat 'alayh Sakḥṭa? Qāla...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 148).

23. *Ḥaddathanī Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn [Ibrāhīm] 'Alī al-Baṣrī Qāla: Ḥaddathanī Muḥammad ibn Mūsā 'an al-Karkhī 'an Abī Samīnah 'an Muḥammad ibn Sinān Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 152).

24. *Wa Ḥaddathanī Ayḍan 'anhu 'an 'Abdillāh ibn al-'Alā' 'an Idrīs ibn Ziyād 'an Zayd ibn Ṭalḥah 'an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 152).

25. *Wa bil Isnād 'an Zayd ibn Ṭalḥah 'an Abī 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Malik 'an Sharīk 'an al-Mufaḍḍal Qāla: Qāla al-Ṣādiq minhu al-Salām...* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 152).

### 3-2-2. Analysis and Summary of the Narrations in Ḥaqā'iq Asrār al-Dīn

The narrations of Nu'mānī in *Ḥaqā'iq Asrār al-Dīn* can be examined and analyzed from at least several aspects: "Isnads, narrators, and subject matter."

#### 3-2-2-1. Isnads of Nu'mānī's Narrations in Ḥaqā'iq

1. Nu'mānī's name is not consistent in all the isnads of the book *Ḥaqā'iq*; the most frequent attribution is "Muḥammad ibn Ibrahīm." Three instances use "Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn," omitting the word *Ibrāhīm*; two of these three are counted with additional and elevated isnads. Of all the isnads mentioned previously, one narration's isnad is attributed to "Abū 'Abdullāh," which is unclear whether it refers to *Abū 'Abdullāh Khaṣīb*, *Ḥaḥṣ*, or *Abū 'Abdullāh Nu'mānī*; based on similar isnads and comparison with other

narrators, it seems that *Muḥammad Nu'mānī* is intended.

2. Of the 22 narrations of *Nu'mānī* in *Ḥaqā'iq* (disregarding minor variations in transmission paths), approximately 18 narrations are transmitted through two chains: "*Muḥammad ibn Mihrān al-Karkhī from Muḥammad ibn Mūsā*" and "*Idrīs ibn Zīyād al-Kafartūthī 'an 'Abdullāh ibn al-'Alā*," both ultimately from "*Abū 'Alī al-Baṣrī*." Only one isnad of a third narration lists the narrator as "*Abī al-Baṣrī*," omitting "*'Alī*."
3. None of the twenty-two narrations of *Nu'mānī* in *Ḥaqā'iq* were found in Shi'a or Sunni sources. Only a portion of narration number 11 of *Nu'mānī* in *Ḥaqā'iq* (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 83) exists in a part of a narration by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār* as follows:  
*Ḥaddathanā Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn Masrūr 'anhu Qāla Ḥaddathanā al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Āmir 'an 'Ammihī 'Abdillāh ibn 'Āmir 'an Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Umayr 'an Ibrāhīm al-Karkhī 'an Abī 'Abdillāh (AS) annahu Qāla:* "If you fully understand one hadith, it is more valuable than a thousand narrations you repeat parrot-like; and none of you will be a jurist unless he understands the ambiguities of our speech. Truly, each sentence of our speech can be interpreted in seventy ways, and the way out of each is open to us."<sup>1</sup> (Ṣadūq, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 1, 2)

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1. The original text is: "Ḥadīthun Tadrīhī Khayrun min Alfī Ḥadīthin Tarwīhī wa lā Yakūnu al-Rajulu minkum Faqīhan ḥattā Ya'rifa Ma'ārīḍa Kalāmīnā wa inna al-Kalimata min Kalāmīnā li Tanṣarifu 'alā Sab'īna Wajhan lanā min Jamī'ihā al-Makhrāja."

4. The chains of narration in *Nu'mānī's Ḥaqā'iq* exhibit weaknesses in many instances, which become clearer when all the chains are examined together. However, some of these chains have unclear weaknesses, such as: "And he also narrated to me from him, saying: *Ḥamza ibn al-Qāsim* narrated to me from *al-Rabī'* saying..." (Ḥarrānī, 2016: 147)

5. All the narrations in *Ḥaqā'iq* are directly attributed to *Nu'mānī*, except for one narration which is from *Aḥmad ibn 'Alī*, from *Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm*, from *Ishāq*. Apparently, this is *Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī al-Khaḍīb al-Ayady*; the scholars of Rijāl (men of Hadith) considered him weak and an extremist (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 97; Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 43; Amīn 'Āmilī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 4, 349). For example, Najāshī wrote: "Our companions said: He was not like that, and it was said: He had extremism and arrogance, and he has the book *al-Shifā' wal Jalā'* in *al-Ghaybah*..." (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 97)

Some also mentioned his name among those known for extremism (Esfandiyari, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 206).

Therefore, the narrators of these narrations of *Nu'mānī* are two individuals:

- 1) *Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Shu'ba Ḥarrānī*
- 2) *Abul 'Abbās Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Rāzī*

To better understand the five points mentioned above, and to observe some of the weaknesses in the chains of narration of *Nu'mānī's Ḥaqā'iq*, a table of these chains is included.

Table of Nu‘mānī’s narrations in Ḥaḡā’iq Asrār al-Dīn

|    | 350 AH                                              | 325 AH            | 300 AH                                    | 275 AH              | 250 AH                         | 225 AH                      | 200 AH                     | 175 AH                         | 150 AH               | 125 AH                            |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                |                   |                                           | Ishāq (d.286)       | ?                              | ?                           | Muhammad ibn Sinān (d.220) |                                | al-‘Ālim             | ---                               |
| 2  | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | Abī Ali al-Baṣrī  |                                           | al-Rāzī             | Abī al-Haytham                 |                             | Hishām                     | al-Mufaḍḍal (d. around 185)    | Jābir                | Abū Ja’far                        |
| 3  | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | Abī al-Baṣrī      | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | al-Karkhī           |                                | Ibn Ṣadaqa                  | Ibn Sinān                  |                                |                      | al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 4  | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | al-Baṣrī          |                                           | al-‘Udasā’ī         | Muhammad ibn Ja’far al-Barṣī   | al-Armanī                   | Muhammad ibn Sinān (d.220) | Yūnus ibn Zabyān               |                      | Al-Ṣādiq (d. 148)                 |
| 5  | Wa ‘anhu                                            | al-Baṣrī          | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | al-Karkhī           | Abī Samīna                     |                             | Muhammad ibn Sinān (d.220) | Al-Mufaḍḍal (d. around 185)    |                      | Sayyidī                           |
| 6  | Muhammad                                            |                   |                                           | al-Karkhī           | Ismā’īl                        | Ibn Ṣadaqaḡ Zayd            |                            |                                | Al-Riḍā              |                                   |
| 7  | ‘anhu                                               |                   | ‘Abdullāh                                 | Idrīs               |                                |                             |                            | Yūnus                          |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 8  | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | al-Baṣrī          | ‘Abdullāh ibn al-‘Alā’                    | Idrīs ibn Ziyād     | Abī Sa’īd                      | ‘Alī ibn al-Husayn          | Ibn Sinān                  |                                |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 9  |                                                     |                   | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | Al-Karkhī           | Ismā’īl ibn ‘Alī               | Ibn Ṣadaqaḡ Zayd ibn Talḡah | Hāshim                     | Al-Mufaḍḍal                    |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 10 | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | Abī ‘Alī al-Baṣrī | ‘Abdullāh ibn al-‘Alī                     | Idrīs               |                                |                             |                            | Al-Mufaḍḍal ibn ‘Umar          |                      | Sayyidī                           |
| 11 | Wa bil Isnād                                        | Wa bil Isnād      | Wa bil Isnād                              | Wa bil Isnād        | Wa bil Isnād                   | Zayd ibn Talḡah             | ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Malik     | Al-Mufaḍḍal ibn ‘Umar          |                      | Sayyidī                           |
| 12 | Wa bil Isnād                                        | Wa bil Isnād      | ‘Abdullāh                                 | Idrīs al-Kafartūthī |                                |                             | Ibn Sinān                  |                                |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 13 | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | Abī ‘Alī al-Baṣrī | Abī Muhammad al-Hamdānī                   | Abī Sa’īd           | Muhammad ibn Mūsā              | ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan           | Muhammad ibn Sinān         |                                |                      | al-Sayyid                         |
| 14 | Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                                | Abī ‘Alī          | Muhammad ibn Mūsā and ‘Abdullāh ibn Sanān |                     |                                | Wazīd ibn Talḡah            |                            | Al-Mufaḍḍal                    | Jābir and Abī Ḥamzah | Al-‘Ālim                          |
| 15 | ‘anhu                                               |                   | Muhammad                                  | Al-Karkhī           | Abī Samīnah and ‘Abd al-Rahmān |                             | Ibn Sanān                  |                                |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 16 | Wa bil Isnād                                        | Wa bil Isnād      | Wa bil Isnād                              | Al-Karkhī           | Abī Ḥāshim                     |                             | Hishām                     | Al-Mufaḍḍal                    |                      | Sayyidī                           |
| 17 | Abū ‘Abdillāh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Haddathanī Aydan | Abī Baṣīr         | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | Ibn Mihrān          | Abī Samīnah                    |                             |                            | Al-Mufaḍḍal                    |                      | Al-Bāqir                          |
| 18 |                                                     | ‘anhu             |                                           |                     | Hamza ibn al-Qāsim             |                             | Al-Rabī’                   |                                |                      | Al-Sayyid Muhammad (PBUH) Sayyidī |
| 19 | Abū ‘Abdillāh                                       | Ali               | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | Al-Karkhī           |                                |                             | Muhammad ibn Sinān         | Sharīk al-Faḡl ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal |                      | Sayyidī                           |
| 20 | Abū ‘Abdillāh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim                  | Ali al-Baṣrī      | Muhammad ibn Mūsā                         | Al-Karkhī           | Abī Samīna                     |                             | Muhammad ibn Sinān         |                                |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 21 | Wa Haddathanī Aydan                                 | ‘anhu             | ‘Abdullāh ibn al-‘Alā’                    | Idrīs ibn Ziyād     |                                | Zayd ibn Talḡah             |                            | Al-Mufaḍḍal                    |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |
| 22 | Wa bil Isnād                                        | Wa bil Isnād      | Wa bil Isnād                              | Wa bil Isnād        | Wa bil Isnād                   | Zayd ibn Talḡah             | Abī ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Malik | Sharīk ‘an al-Mufaḍḍal         |                      | Al-Ṣādiq                          |

### 3-2-2-2. Isnad Narrators

By summarizing 22 chains of narration of *Nu‘mānī*, it becomes clear that approximately 17 narrations have similar chains in two ways: the *Karrkhī* and *Idrīs* routes. On the other hand, all of *Nu‘mānī*’s narrations are narrated from someone named "*Abū ‘Alī al-Baṣrī*"; who may be *Abū Ali Muḡammad ibn Hammām* (d. 336 AH) known as the

scribe and teacher of *Muḥammad Nu'mānī*, or *Abū Ali Muḥammad ibn Hammām* (d. 306 AH).

Also, the chains of five other narrations are either different from the two routes above or are corrupted and have scribal errors. A table summarizing the chains of narration of *Nu'mānī* in *Ḥaqā'iq* is as follows:

|   | +350 AH                         | +325 AH           | +300 AH                                   | +275 AH                       | +250 AH                                                        | +225 AH           | +200 AH                                | +175 AH                                    |                              |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 9 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī | Muḥammad ibn Mūsā                         | Muḥammad ibn Mihrān al-Karkhī | Abī Samīnah Muḥammad ibn Ali Šīrafi Ismā'il ibn Ali Abī Hāshim | ?                 | Hishām / Hāshim                        | Al-Mufaḍḍal (d. around 185)                | Imam Bāqir, Šādiq, Riḍā (AS) |
| 8 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm            | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī | 'Abdullāh ibn al-'Alā'                    | Idrīs ibn Ziyād al-Kafartūthī | Abī Sa'id                                                      | Ali ibn al-Husayn | Muḥammad ibn Sinān (d.220)             | Yūnus ibn Zabyān                           | al-Šādiq (AS)                |
|   |                                 |                   |                                           |                               | ?                                                              | Zayd ibn Ṭalḥa    | Abī Ali ibn 'Abdul Malik               | Al-Mufaḍḍal (d. around 185)                |                              |
| 1 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm            | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī | Muḥammad ibn Mūsā and 'Abdullāh ibn Sinān |                               |                                                                | Waḥid ibn Ṭalḥa   |                                        | Al-Mufaḍḍal 'an Jābir wa Abī Hamza         | Al-'Ālim                     |
| 1 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm            | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī |                                           | Ishāq (d.286)                 | ?                                                              | ?                 | Muḥammad ibn Sinān (d.220)             |                                            | Al-'Ālim                     |
| 1 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm            | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī | Al-Rāzī                                   | Abī al-Haytham                |                                                                |                   | Hishām 'an al-Mufaḍḍal (d. around 185) | Al-Mufaḍḍal 'an Jābir (ibn Yazid al-Ju'fi) | Abū Ja'far                   |
| 1 | Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm            | Abī 'Alī al-Baṣrī | Al-'Udsānī                                | Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Barsī  | (Muḥammad ibn Yahyā) al-Armanīy                                |                   | Muḥammad ibn Sinān (d. 220)            | Yūnus ibn Zabyān                           | al-Šādiq (AS)                |
| 1 | Haaddathanī Aydan               | 'anhu             |                                           |                               | Hamza ibn al-Qāsim                                             |                   | Al-Rabī'                               |                                            | Al-Sayyid Muhammad (PBUH)    |

In the documents of these narrations, apart from *Nu'mānī* and *Abū Ali al-Baṣrī*, we encounter these names: *Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Sammān*, *'Abdullāh ibn al-'Alā' al-Madhārī*, *'Abdullāh ibn Sinān*, *al-Rāzī*, *al-Adasani*, *Muḥammad ibn Mihrān al-Karkhī*, *Idrīs ibn Ziyād al-Kafartūthī*, *Ishāq*, *Abū al-Haytham*, *Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Barsī*, *Hamza ibn al-Qāsim*, *Abī Samīna Muḥammad ibn Ali Šīrafi*, **135**

*Ismā'īl ibn Ali, Abī Hāshim, Abī Sa'īd, Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Armanī, al-Rabī', ibn Ṣadqa, Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, Zayd ibn Ṭalḥa, Hishām/ Hāshim, Muḥammad ibn Sinān, (Abī) Ali ibn 'Abdul Malik, al-Mufaḍḍal, Yūnus ibn Ṣabyān, Jābir, Abī Ḥamza.*

Most of these individuals are among the disreputable narrators, or leaders of the *Ghulāt* (extremists) and Nusayris, or those sympathetic to the legacy of the *Ghulāt* and their hadith circles. A few are individuals whose names and biographies are not found in Rijālī books, and these narrators are likely fabrications of the intellectual and practical tradition of the Shi'a *Ghulāt*; they have been disregarded by the experts in the field of *Rijāl* and hadith scholars of the Mesopotamian schools of hadith.

Importantly, the three primary narrators of these traditions who directly narrated from the impeccable Imams (AS) or someone close to him—namely, *Muḥammad ibn Sinān, Yūnus ibn Ṣabyān, and Mufaḍḍal al-Ju'fī*—were narrators who were highly regarded by the *Ghulāt*; and among the experts in the field of *Rijāl*, significant disputes regarding their *Ghulātic* biographies are evident (cf. Shamshiri, 2018 AD/1398 SH: entire text; Ḥillī, 1891 AD/1311 AH: 412; Khu'tī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 17, 169).

For example, *Yūnus ibn Ṣabyān al-Kūfī* can be cited. *Najāshī* considers him extremely weak and regards all his books as fabricated (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 448). *Ibn Ghaḍā'irī* considers him a Ghali, liar, and fabricator of hadith (Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 101). *Kashshī* quotes Imam *Kāẓim* (AS) as having cursed him thousands of times (Kashshī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 275). The experts in the field of

*Rijāl* collectively describe him as a "Liar, weak, fabricator, and forger of hadith." (cf. Māmaqānī, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 269)

Apart from these three well-known individuals, for the sake of brevity, we will now only consider the biographical status of some of the narrators of *Nu'mānī's* narrations in *Ḥaqā'iq*:

### 1. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn 'Īsā al-Hamdānī al-Sammān

*Najāshī* reports that the people of Qom weakened his authority due to his extremism (*Ghuluw*); *Ibn Walīd* also stated that he fabricated hadiths (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 338). Shi'a scholars of *Rijāl* generally consider him a weak narrator, accused of extremism, fabrication of hadiths, and unsound principles (cf. Māmaqānī, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 269).

### 2. Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Mihrān al-Karkhī

He is a well-known figure among the extremist (*Ghulāt*) Shi'a, and he was particularly noted in the traditions of the Nasiri extremists (for example, cf. Khaṣībī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 76, 187, 286-287, 362). *Najāshī* said of him: "He is from among the non-Arabs, an extremist, liar, and corrupt in religion and hadith, and this is well-known." (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 350) *Ibn Ghaḍā'irī* also called him "An extremist, weak, and liar." (cf. Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 95) *Ṭūsī*, following his predecessors, also considered him weak and wrote: "He is accused of extremism (*Ghuluw*)." (cf. Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 391)

### 3. Abul Faḍl Idrīs ibn Zayd ibn 'Alī Kafarthūthī (Kafartūthī)

*Ibn Ghaḍā'irī* expressed doubt about his narrations, writing that he

narrated from among the weak (cf. Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 39). Some also consider him a Waqifī (cf. Shūshtarī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 697). Evidence of his extremism (Ghuluw) also exists (for example, cf. Ibn Shahr Āshūb, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 4, 428).

#### 4. Ishāq ibn Muḥammad Aḥmar Nakha'ī

He was an extremist and the leader of the *Ishāqiyya* sect (for example, cf. Ziraklī, 1980: 1, 295; Ghālib Ṭuwayl, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 209-211), and was among the teachers of *Ibn Hammām* (apparently *Abū Ali Baṣrī*). *Najāshī* and *Ḥillī* called him "A mine of mixing" (Ma'din Takhlīt) (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 73). *Ibn Ghaḍā'irī* considers him corrupt in religion, a liar, and a fabricator of hadiths, saying: "Do not pay attention to what he narrated, and do not elevate his hadiths." (cf. Ibn Ghaḍā'irī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 41) Scholars of *Rijāl* generally consider him "Corrupt in religion, a liar, a fabricator of hadiths, and essentially a mine of mixing." (cf. Māmaqānī, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 266)

#### 5. Muḥammad ibn Ja'far al-Barṣī

He is among the narrators of the traditions of the *Ghulāt* (extremists) (cf. Khaṣībī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 226). He also has numerous narrations from *Muḥammad al-Armanī*, a leader of the Nasīriyah (cf. Zayyāt Nīshābūrī, n.d.: 29, 30, 39, 52, 60, 69, 79, 94, 105, 113, 132, 135, 137, and 138). Even the well-known extremist narration, "*Khabar al-Khayt*," is attributed to him (cf. Ansari, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 5).

#### 6. Abū Samīnah Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ṣīrafi

**138** *Najāshī* considers him "Extremely weak, corrupt in belief, unreliable

in anything, known for lying... then known for extremism." (cf. Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 332) *Ibn Ghadā'irī* wrote: "A liar, extremist, he entered Qum and his matter became known there, and *Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā al-Ash'arī* – may God have mercy on him – expelled him, and he was famous for his extremism, and his hadith was not considered or recorded." (cf. *Ibn Ghadā'irī*, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 94) *Ṭūsī*, with explanations, also considered him an extremist (*Ṭūsī*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 223).

#### 7. *Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī Khuzā'i*

*Najāshī* and *Ṭūsī* consider him unreliable (cf. *Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 32). *Ibn Ghadā'irī* considers him a liar and fabricator of hadith (cf. *Ibn Ghadā'irī*, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 42). *Ṭūsī* also says that he does not narrate hadith from the Imams (AS). (cf. *Ṭūsī*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 469). In summary, the scholars of *Rijāl* consider him a "Liar, fabricator of hadith, unreliable in hadith." (cf. *Māmaqānī*, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 266).

#### 8. *Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Armanī*

He is not known in the Shi'a sources on *Rijāl*. He has narrations in *Ṭīb al-A'immah* from the legacy of the Ghulāt, as mentioned earlier (cf. *Zayyāt Nīshābūrī*, n.d.: 29-138). According to a narration in the same book, *Muḥammad* is considered a "Bāb" (leader): "*Muḥammad ibn Ja'far ibn 'Alī al-Barṣī* said: He narrated to us *Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Armanī*, and he was a Bāb for *Mufaḍḍal ibn 'Umar*, and *Mufaḍḍal* was a Bāb for *Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ṣādiq* (AS)." (*Zayyāt Nīshābūrī*, n.d.: 128) The meaning of "Bāb" clearly indicates his affiliation with the extremist traditions of the *Nasīriyah* (cf. *Ansari*, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 5).

## 9. ‘Abbās ibn Ṣadaqah

*Kashshī* narrates two traditions from *al-Faḍl ibn Shādhān* and *Naṣr ibn al-Ṣabbāḥ*, in which ‘*Abbās ibn Ṣadaqah* is mentioned as one of the "Great cursed extremists" (cf. *Kashshī*, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 522); later scholars of *Rijāl* also reflect the same in their works and write: "From the great cursed extremists, and he preceded in the leadership of a group." (For example, cf. *Khuṭī*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 246)

### 3-2-3. Summarizing the Relationship between *Nu‘mānī*, *Ḥaqā‘iq Asrār al-Dīn*, and the *Ghulāt*

1. The book *Ḥaqā‘iq* is a book in the *Ghulāt* tradition; and even from the narrators of *Nu‘mānī*'s narrations, this point is clearly evident in this book.
2. Due to the extensive use by the author of *Ḥaqā‘iq* of *Nu‘mānī*'s narrations and other evidence such as the narrators of *Nu‘mānī*'s chains of transmission, it appears that *Nu‘mānī*'s connection with the *Ghulāt*, and specifically the Nasiriyyah *Ghulāt* of the Sham region was strong; and conversely, *Nu‘mānī*'s narrations were given attention by them.
3. Given the extensive use by *Muḥammad Nu‘mānī* of the works and narrators of earlier *Ghulāt* in this book, it can be concluded that *Nu‘mānī* paid attention to the tradition of the earlier *Ghulāt*; and he had no qualms about utilizing these works and narrators. Even some of these *Ghulāt* narrators appear in the chains of transmission of his narrations in *al-Ghaybah* (for example, cf. *Nu‘mānī*, 1977 AD/1397 AH: 111, 276, 285, 326).

## Conclusion

1. After examining all available Shi'a hadith sources, it became clear that there are no significant narrations or hadiths quoted from *Nu'mānī* or his books in Shi'a sources; and until the tenth century, only sixteen narrations (repeated and unrepeated) exist in a few sources from the 5th, 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries. The names of the direct narrators of these narrations are: *Muḥammad al-Shujā'ī*, *Muḥammad al-Baladīyy*, *Ali al-Ḥarrānī*.
2. By examining the hadith field and the lives of the authors who quoted *Nu'mānī*, it becomes clear that these authors belonged to the regions of Iraq and Sham; and essentially, *Nu'mānī's* narrations did not reach the hadith field of eastern Mesopotamia until the tenth century. Also, given the small number of narrations quoted by the authors of Iraq and Sham, it appears that *Nu'mānī's* narrations were not given much attention by the scholars and authors of hadith works in Iraq and Sham.
3. Examination of the available Nusayri hadith heritage reveals sources containing narrations attributed to *Muḥammad al-Nu'mānī*. For example, the book *Ḥaqā'iq Asrār al-Dīn*, attributed to *Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan ibn Ali ibn Shu'bah Ḥarrānī* (4<sup>th</sup> century) was examined. This work includes numerous quotations from early *Ghulāt* (extremists), and explicitly contains the distinctive esoteric beliefs of Nusayri *Ghulāt*, such as metamorphosis (*Maskh*), transmigration (*Tanāsukh*), the Lordship of the Proofs (*Rubūbīyyat Ḥujaj*), permissiveness (*Ibāḥah*), and exaggeration (*Ghuluw*). In **141**

*Ḥaqā'iq*, there are more than twenty-two narrations related to *Muḥammad ibn Ibrahim Nu'mānī*. Disregarding a few narrations with minor variations in transmission, approximately eighteen narrations are transmitted through two chains: "*Muḥammad ibn Mihrān al-Karkhī* from *Muḥammad ibn Mūsā*" and "*Idrīs ibn Zīyād al-Kafartūthī* from '*Abdullāh ibn al-'Alā*'," both ultimately tracing back to "*Abī Ali al-Baṣrī*." None of these *Nu'mānī* narrations were found in either Shi'a or Sunni sources.

4. All the narrations in *Ḥaqā'iq* from *Nu'mānī* are directly attributed to him, except for one narration which is transmitted through Ahmad ibn Ali from Muḥammad ibn Ibrahim from *Ishāq*. Therefore, the narrators of these *Nu'mānī* narrations ultimately end with these two individuals: *Ḥasan ibn Shu'bah Ḥarrānī* and *Aḥmad ibn Ali al-Rāzī*.
5. Based on the chains of narration in *Ḥaqā'iq*, *Nu'mānī* narrated his traditions from someone named "*Abī Ali al-Baṣrī*," who may be either *Abū Ali Muḥammad ibn Hammām* (d. 336 AH), known as the scribe and teacher of *Muḥammad Nu'mānī*, or *Abū Ali Aḥmad ibn Hammām* (d. 306 AH). Furthermore, summarizing the twenty-two chains of narration from *Nu'mānī* reveals that approximately seventeen narrations share similar chains through the *Karkhī* and *Idrīs* routes. Moreover, the majority of the narrators in the chains of *Nu'mānī*'s narrations are disreputable narrators, leaders among the Nusayri *Ghulāt*, or those sympathetic to the *Ghulāt* heritage and their hadith circles.
6. From the extensive use of other facts and evidence by the author, it becomes clear that *Nu'mānī*'s connection with the *Ghulāt* of the

Nusayriyah in the Levant region was strong; and conversely, Numayni's narrations were highly regarded by them. Furthermore, given *Nu'mānī's* extensive use of the works and narrators of early *Ghulāt* in this book, it can be concluded that *Nu'mānī* paid attention to the tradition of the early *Ghulāt*; and he had no qualms about utilizing these works and narrators.

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## Requestors of Hadith from Imam Riḍā (AS) in Nīshābūr: Deficiencies and Slippages

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### Abstract

There is no doubt about the reception and stop of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) in Nīshābūr during his transfer to Merw; however, there is inconsistency in the sources regarding those who held the reins of his mount and those who requested the narration of hadith. The present study, by compiling a library of research papers and presenting them in an analytical-descriptive manner, aims to provide a documented demarcation of the individuals who made the request. *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb Nīshābūrī* (d. 234 AH), *Ibn Rāhwayh* (d. 238 AH), *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī* (d. 242 AH), *Muḥammad ibn Rāfi' Qushayrī Nīshābūrī* (d. 245 AH), *Yāsīn ibn Naḍr Nīshābūrī* (d. 252 AH), *Yahyā ibn Yahyā Nīshābūrī* (d. 226 AH), and *Muḥammad ibn Yahyā Dhuhli*

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*Nīshābūrī* (d. 258 AH) are those whose names have been reported by reliable sources; however, including *Abū Zur‘ah Rāzī* (d. 264 AH), *Ibn Khuzaymah Sullamī Nīshābūrī* (d. 311 AH), *Abū Alī Thaqafī Nīshābūrī* (d. 328 AH), *Ādam ibn Abī Ayās ‘Asqalānī* (d. 220 AH), *Naṣr ibn Alī Jahḍamī Rāzī Ḥanafī* (d. 250 AH), and *Mu‘allā ibn Manṣūr Rāzī Ḥanafī* (d. 211 AH) among them is shaky, and the evidence does not support it. These individuals were either not yet born, were not of an age to comprehend hadith, or lived in other regions. Shia scholars must avoid accusations of historical distortion and fabrication by relying on authentic narrations.

**Keywords:** Nīshābūr, Imam Riḍā (AS), Welcoming Scholars, Requestors of Hadith Narration.

## Introduction

Since the dominant religion of the conquerors of the vast land of Iran was Sunni Islam, the people of the conquered lands naturally became acquainted with the caliphate and Sunni schools of thought and gradually accepted them. The historical city of Nīshābūr, however, possessed a unique characteristic: "It was one of the most important centers of Sunni Islamic learning, housing a collection of the greatest Sunni jurists and hadith scholars. As this article will demonstrate, the first individuals to request the narration of hadith from Imam Riḍā (AS) were among the leading Sunni scholars, some of whom are mentioned in this article."

After Imam Riḍā's (AS) arrival in this region, genuine and faith-based Shi'ism spread further; because from the moment he left Medina

until he reached Merw, Imam *Riḍā* (AS) employed various methods to introduce Shi'ism. In Nīshābūr, before a large gathering of people, including scholars, Imam *Riḍā* (AS) highlighted the discourse of Shi'a thought and authentic Islam by reciting the Hadith of the Fortress: "*Lā ilāha illā Allāh Ḥiṣnī faman Dakhala Ḥiṣnī Amīna min 'Adhābī bi Shurūṭihā wa Anā min Shurūṭihā.*" By presenting Tawhid (Oneness of God) as God's secure fortress, the Imam declared the acceptance of Imamate and Wilayah (leadership) as conditions for entering this fortress, safe from divine punishment. The narration of the Golden Chain Hadith, which he traced back through his forefathers to Imam *Alī* (AS) and the Prophet (PBUH), was the best method for introducing the Shi'a school of thought and its leaders, and for neutralizing anti-Shi'a plots (Ṣadūq, 1977 AD/1398 AH: 25; *ibid.*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 144).

There are numerous and documented reports of Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) entry into Nīshābūr. In recent years, efforts have been made to establish the exact date of Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) arrival in Nīshābūr, but these efforts remain speculative. The precise date, and even the route of his journey, is not meticulously documented in early historical and hadith sources. *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī* (321-405 AH), a renowned historian and hadith scholar, states that the city of Nīshābūr was honored by Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) presence in 200 AH; however, a more accurate view is that he was summoned in that year and entered Nīshābūr after several months, in 201 AH (*Ḥākim Nīshābūrī*, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208; Ja'fariyan, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 299).

Nīshābūr, Balkh, Merw, and Herat as the quarters of Khorasan, designating them as the quarter of Balkh, the quarter of Merw, the quarter of Herat, and the quarter of Nīshābūr. These four cities are always mentioned together, and this division of Khorasan existed even before the Islamic period. Depending on their location, population, and economic, political, and cultural importance, each city at different times served as the center of government in Khorasan and the seat of generals, governors, emirs, and held greater importance than other cities in Khorasan (Bayat Mokhtari, 2012 AD/1392 SH: 23, 24, 30, 31, and 42-46).

Undeniably, Khorasan was the birthplace of a great civilization, its territory extending to the borders of China and encompassing all of Transoxiana and the regions of the Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers. In the Middle Ages, Khorasan also referred to all the Islamic states located east of the Lut Desert to the Hindu Kush mountains, with Transoxiana being part of Khorasan. Thus, Khorasan was bordered to the south by Sistan, to the east by the deserts of China and the Pamirs, and to the west by the Lut Desert (Daniel: 8-11; Le Strange: 408). To put it clearly, Khorasan included the territories of the three present-day Khorasan provinces of Iran, and the territories of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, parts of Pakistan, and the greater part of Afghanistan.

Imam Riḍā (AS), on his way to Merw, the capital of *Ma'mūn's* government, had to pass through the cities of Nīshābūr, Tus, and Sarakhs. He entered the Khorasan region from the general area of Yazd and the desert route, southwest of Nīshābūr. The first important

city in the Khorasan region on the Imam's route was Nīshābūr, whose majority population adhered to the caliphate school of thought, and where great scholars, jurists, and theologians lived. As the Imam approached the city, thousands of Nīshābūrīs, along with scholars of that region, including *Ibn Rāhwayh*, the leading compiler of the six canonical hadith collections of Sunni Islam, went to Muayyidiyya village to welcome him. Upon the Imam's arrival in Nīshābūr, the city was overcome with an outpouring of joy. Some wept, others shouted for joy, some tore their clothes, some prostrated themselves on the ground, and some kissed the reins of his mount. The throng continued until midday, when, at the request of the elders, the cries subsided, and silence enveloped the city (Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208; Irbilī, n.d.: 3, 101; Ibn Sabbāgh, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 1001; Manāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 641).

Imam *Riḍā* (AS) resided in Nīshābūr for a period. The governor of Nīshābūr wrote: "It was commonly known among the poor that he resided in Nīshābūr for four years, but knowledge is with God." (Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208) From *Ḥākim*'s statement, it can be inferred that Imam (AS) lived in Nīshābūr from the year 200 to 204. This is undoubtedly incorrect; a stay of a few days at most is more likely and closer to the truth. This is because, according to the viewpoints of *Kulaynī* and *Mufīd*, the Imam was martyred in Tus in Safar of the year 203, and according to *Ṣadūq*, nine days before the end of Ramadan in the year 203 (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 274; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 49, 293). Clearly, *Ḥākim*'s statement is among the things he heard, and he himself doubted its accuracy; the

inclusion of the phrase "Knowledge is with God" is evidence of this. In any case, Imam Riḍā (AS) did reside in Nīshābūr for a time, until Ma'mūn summoned him to Merw by message ('Aṭārodī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 59; ibid: 1968 AD/1388 AH: 88). The Imam settled in the "Ghuzz" neighborhood, in the area known as "Blashabad," in the western part of Nīshābūr. He planted an almond tree in that house, the leaves and fruit of which cured the sick. Furthermore, during his time in Nīshābūr, Imam Riḍā (AS) said, "Our master is buried here; let us visit him," and then he went to the shrine of Sayyid Muḥammad Maḥrūq in the "Talajerd" region and visited him, commemorating the martyr (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 141; Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 209 and 211).

Ḥākim Nīshābūrī states that the Imam ascended the pulpit and, in the presence of thousands who had inkwells and pens, delivered the hadith "Reverence for God's command and compassion for God's creation" in the *Mu'an'an* style, through the intermediary of his noble ancestors (AS) up to the Master of the Universe (PBUH) (Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 212). There is disagreement regarding whether Imam Riḍā (AS) recited the "*Silsilah al-Dhahab*" upon entering or leaving Nīshābūr.

Some, like *Irbilī*, believe that upon arrival, thousands of people, carrying writing materials, requested that the Imam narrate a hadith from his revered forefathers. At this moment, the mount stopped, the canopy was drawn aside, and the Muslims' eyes fell upon the Imam's countenance. The Imam (AS) then recited the *Qudsī* hadith, "*Lā Ilāha illā Allāh Ḥiṣnī faman Dakhal Ḥiṣnī Amīna min 'Adhābī, bi Shurūṭihā*"

*wa Anā min Shurūṭihā*," known as "*Silsilah al-Dhahab*," emphasizing the inseparable link between Tawhid (Oneness of God) and divine leadership. Nearly twenty-four thousand people wrote down the hadith. However, *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, quoting *Abū Ṣalt Hirawī* and *Ibn Rāhwayh*, writes that the "*Silsilah al-Dhahab*" hadith was narrated during Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) departure from Nīshābūr (*Ṣadūq*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 142, 143; *Irbilī*, n.d.: 3, 101; *Ibn Ṣabbāgh*, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 1001; *Majlisī*, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 49, 127).

There is no consensus on who grasped the reins of Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) mount or requested the narration of the hadith. Old and new sources sporadically mention twelve individuals. This article aims to investigate the veracity of these claims, organized into two sections: 1. Those whose names are reported by primary and reliable sources; 2. Individuals whose names are not found in reliable documents and lack supporting evidence.

## 1. Background

To date, no independent study has been written on who grasped the reins of Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) mount or requested the narration of the hadith. However, some names are mentioned sporadically in hadith books. *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH), in his books "*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (AS)" and "*al-Tawḥīd*," explicitly names *Muḥammad ibn Rāfi'*, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb*, *Yahyā ibn Yahyā*, and *Ibn Rāhwayh* (*Ṣadūq*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; *ibid.*, 1398: 24). *Abū 'Abdullāh Ḥākim Nīshābūrī* (d. 405 AH), in his "*Nīshābūr History*," mentions the listening and learning of *Ibn Rāhwayh* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī* (*Ḥākim*, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208 and

226); and Ḥāfiẓ *Abū Nuʿaym Isfahānī* (d. 430 AH), in his "*Dhikr Akhbār Isfahān*," names *Yāsīn ibn Naḍr*, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb*, and *Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā* (Abū Nuʿaym Isfahānī, 1934: 1, 138). *Ibn ʿAsākir Dimashqī* (d. 571 AH), in his "*Tarikh Madinat Dimashq*," mentions Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā (Ibn ʿAsākir: 5, 463).

In the 7th century AH (13th century AD), *Irbilī* (d. 692 AH), for the first time in his book "*Kashf al-Ghumma fī Maʿrifat al-Aʿimma*" mentioned *Abū Zurʿi al-Rāzī* as one who requested the narration of a hadith (Irbilī: 3, 101). After *Irbilī*, *Ibn Ṣabbāgh*, *Qundūzī*, *Majlisī*, *Amīn*, *Khuʿī*, *Murtaḍā ʿĀmilī*, and others repeated this claim (Qundūzī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 122; Ibn Ṣabbāgh, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 1001; Manāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 641; Majlisī: 49, 126; Khuʿī: 16, 88; Murtaḍā ʿĀmilī: 144). *Ṭabasī*, in his book "*Hadith Silsilah al-Dhahab according to the Ahl al-Sunna*," (1388) names *Ibn Khuzayma*, *Abū Alī Thaqafī*, *Ādam ibn Abī Ayās ʿAsqalānī*, and *Naṣr ibn Alī Jahḍamī*, and in his article "*Silsilah al-Dhahab according to the Ahl al-Sunna*," (1385) he names *Muʿallā ibn Maṣṣūr al-Rāzī al-Ḥanafī* among those who requested the narration of the hadith. These statements lack evidence and are historical fabrications.

## 2. Research Methodology

The author of these lines, by gathering library-based research and information and presenting it in an analytical-historical manner, attempts to provide a precise and documented demarcation between those who actually grasped the reins of Imam Riḍā's (AS) mount in Nishābūr or requested the narration of a hadith, and those who are

erroneously included in this group. The aim of this research is to investigate the veracity of these reports and the historical accounts, some of which are marred by errors and inaccuracies.

### 3. Those Who Grasped the Reins and Sought the Narration of Hadiths

An examination of primary historical and hadith sources indicates that the following individuals belong to this category.

#### 3-1. Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb al-Nīshābūrī (d. 234 AH)

Abū ‘Abdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Nīshābūrī was a hadith scholar who went to meet Imam Riḍā (AS) upon his arrival in Nīshābūr. Furthermore, he grasped the reins of the Imam's mount in the "*Marraba ‘ah*" and requested the narration of a hadith. While he is identified as a Nīshābūrī, some accounts mistakenly identify him as a *Marwzī*. The exact date of his birth is unknown. Historians and biographical scholars have written that he was 58 years old at his death in 234 AH; therefore, he must have been born in the late 2nd century AH, around 176 AH, making him approximately 25 years old at the time (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; *ibid.*, 1977 AD/1398 SH: 24; Abū Nu‘aym al-Iṣfahānī, 1934: 1, 138; Irbilī, n.d.: 3, 100; Qundūzī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 123; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 4, 340).

He traveled to various cities such as Basra, Baghdad, and Kufa to acquire knowledge and heard Hadith from *Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah*, *‘Abdullāh ibn Walīd ‘Adanī*, *Abū Dāwūd Ṭayālasī*, and many other

scholars of that class. He resided and taught in Nīshābūr, and many, such as *Sahl ibn ‘Ammār*, *Muḥammad ibn Shadhān*, *Ibrahim ibn Ishāq Anmāṭī*, and others, heard Hadith from him. His most famous student, *Muḥammad ibn Karrām* (190-255 AH), is the founder of the Karramiya school of thought, and therefore, the Karramiya consider *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb* to be one of their own and hold him in high esteem. His writings are said to include *Arba‘īn*, *‘Ayāl Allāh*, *Zuhd*, *Du‘ā*, *Ḥikma*, *Manāsik*, and *Takassub* (Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 17, 36; Ibn Ḥajar, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 1, 149).

*Rijālī* sources describe him as a model for the people of Hadith, a jurist, a devout worshiper, an ascetic, and among the *Abdāl* (Spiritual Elites). *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī* considers him the most pious compared to his two brothers, *Ḥusayn* and *Zakarīyā*. Furthermore, he participated in a war in the Roman lands in the years after 220 AH, resulting in a great victory (Ḥākim Nīshābūrī, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 157; Dhahabī, 1993: 11, 34; ‘Aṭṭār, n.d.: 218-221).

Some sources consider *Aḥmad* to be a Murji‘ite in belief, who propagated his views subtly. However, a man named *Jum‘a ibn ‘Abdullāh* revealed his inclination to the people and prevented him from doing so. The Murji‘ites considered the condition of action to be supplementary to the realization of faith and shared a common view regarding the non-specificity of action for faith. Most Murji‘ites defined faith as verbal confession and as meaning knowledge and affirmation (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 4, 341; Dhahabī, 1962 AD/1382 SH: 1, 89; Vahidi Mehrjerdi, 2014 AD/1394 SH: 81-77).

Valuable narrations about the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) have **157**

been reported from him, such as the following three:

A) Imam *Alī* (AS) addressed the people of Kufa, saying: "O! People of Kufa, ask me before you are no longer able to ask me anything. I swear by God, in Whose hand my soul is, that no verse has been revealed except that I know where and about whom it was revealed; whether in the mountains or in the plains; on the road or in a place." (Hākim Ḥaskānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 1, 40 and 44; Mar‘ashī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 17, 486; Mahmudi, 2016 AD/1396 SH: 2, 623)

B) Regarding the occasion of the revelation of the verse, "*Am Naj‘alulladhīna Āmanū wa ‘Amilū al-Ṣāliḥāt kal Mufsidīna fil Arḍi am Naj‘alul Muttaqīna kal Fujjār*," (Ṣād/28) it is narrated that the righteous and pious referred to are Hamza, *Alī* (AS), and ‘*Ubaydah ibn Ḥārith ibn ‘Abdulmuṭallib*, while the corrupters and wicked are ‘*Utbah*, *Shaybah*, and *Walid ibn ‘Utbah* (Hākim al-Ḥaskānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 2, 171). C. His name is mentioned in the well-known supplication: "*Yā man lā Yashghaluhū Sam‘un ‘an Sam‘in yā man lā Yughallituhū al-Sā’ilūn yā man lā Yubrimuhū Ilḥāḥu al-Muliḥḥīn, Adhqīnī Barḍa ‘Afwika wa Ḥalāwata Raḥmatika*." Imam *Alī* (AS) heard this from the Prophet *Khidr* when *Khidr* struck the curtain of the Kaaba and recited it (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 4, 340; Ibn ‘Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 16, 425).

### 3-2. Ibn Rāhawayh (d. 238 AH)

*Abū Ya‘qūb Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm Marwzī Ḥanzalī Tamīmī Khurāsānī*, known as "*Ibn Rāhawayh*," was a scholar from Nīshābūr who, in the marketplace of Nīshābūr, grasped the reins of Imam *Riḍā*'s (AS)

mount and requested a hadith from his forefathers' traditions. Therefore, he is considered one of the companions and narrators of Imam Riḍā (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; ibid: 1977 AD/1398 AH: 24; Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 351; Qundūzī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 123). Ḥākim Nīshābūrī wrote: In the year 200 AH, *Ibn Rāhawayh*, the city's shaykh, despite his advanced age, went with several thousand pious companions to meet the Imam. They respectfully held the reins of the Imam of the saints' mount and returned to the city, saying, "On the Day of Judgment, my salvation will be that I once held the reins of the mount of the Sultan." (Ḥākim, 1955 AD/1375 SH: 208)

He was born in Marw in 161 AH and settled in Nīshābūr. Regarding the reason for his being known as "*Ibn Rāhawayh*," it is said that "*Rāhawayh*" is composed of the words "*Rāh*" (road) and "*Wayh*" (finding), a title given to his father Ibrahim by the people of Marw because he was born on the road to Mecca. Therefore, *Ishāq* is called "*Ibn Rāhawayh*." In his youth in Khorasan, he heard hadith from *Muhammad ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak*. Then, in 184 AH, he traveled to Iraq, Hijaz, Yemen, and Syria in pursuit of knowledge and to hear hadith from great scholars such as *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, *Ismā'īl ibn Ulayyah*, *Wakī' ibn Jarrāh*, *Abū Bakr ibn 'Ayyāsh*, and others.

The compilers of the six major collections of Hadith (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, etc.) and many others, such as *Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn*, narrated from him. His teacher, *Yaḥyā ibn Ādam*, narrated two thousand hadiths from him (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 6, 345-355; Ibn Khallikān: 1, 200; Ibn 'Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 8, **159**

120; Mizzī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 376-379). Sunni scholars of Hadith considered him a jurist, Mujtahid (independent jurist), trustworthy, reliable, memorizer, hadith scholar, and reviver of the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). He is said to have memorized seventy thousand or more hadiths, and it is reported that he never used any written notes when dictating hadiths. It is said that if *Sufyān Thawrī*, *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, and *Ḥasan Baṣrī* were alive, they would have needed his knowledge. *Ibn Ḥanbal* stated that he had no equal in Iraq and Khorasan and that he won a debate with Shafi'i (Ṣafḍī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 8, 251; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 6, 348-354). His works include books on Tafsir (exegesis), Sunan (collections of Prophetic traditions), and *Musnad* (collections of hadiths attributed to a single narrator) in six volumes. He died at the age of 77 on the night of the middle of Sha'ban in the year 238 AH in Nīshābūr, where he was buried (Ibn Nadīm Baghdādī: 286; Bukhārī, n.d.: 1, 379; Ḥākim: 208).

### 3-3. Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī (d. 242 AH)

When Imam *Riḍā* (AS) approached Nīshābūr and the hadith scholars went to meet him, *Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aslam* was among the most prominent of them. *Ṭūsī* considered him among the companions of Imam *Riḍā* (AS). *Irbilī* also narrated that when Imam *Riḍā* (AS) entered Nīshābūr riding a she-camel, when he approached the market of Nīshābūr, *Abū Zur'ī* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam* met him and asked him to dictate a hadith, and he recited the "*Silsilah al-Dhahab*" hadith, and they and many others wrote it down (Ṭūsī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 366; Irbilī, n.d.: 3, 100; Ibn Ṣabbāgh, 2001 AD/1422

AH: 2, 1001; Manāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 641). *Hākim Nīshābūrī* wrote: "His Majesty, blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah and his family, was riding his she-camel '*Aḍbā*' in a palanquin (*Miḥaffa*), and he had seated the paragon of piety and devotion, Shaykh *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī*, in another palanquin." He wrote elsewhere: Shaykh *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī* was a devout man of his time, and he served Imam *Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā* and heard hadiths from him (*Hākim*, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208 and 226).

*Muḥammad ibn Aslam Tusī*, a mawla of the Kinda tribe, was born in Tus around 180 AH. He moved to Nīshābūr, where he settled and gained renown. A distinguished hadith scholar, he studied under prominent shaykhs such as *Naḍr ibn Shamīl*, *Ya'ālā ibn 'Ubayd*, *Qubayṣah ibn 'Aqabah*, and others. Famous hadith transmitters such as *Aḥmad ibn Salamah*, *Ibn Khuzaymah*, *Muḥammad ibn Wakī'*, and others narrated from him. Like *Ibn Ḥanbal*, he believed in the eternity of the Quran and wrote a book refuting the view of the creation of the divine word. His works include *Musnad*, *Arba'īn*, and *al-Radd 'alā al-Jahmīyyah*. He was described as an Imam *Rabbānī*, Shaykh *Mashriq*, trustworthy (*Thiqah*), memorizer (*Hāfiz*), a *walī* (saint), and one of the *Abdāl* (deputies). *Abū Ya'qūb al-Marwazī*, when asked about the relative merits of *Ibn Ḥanbal* and *Ibn Islam*, having associated with both, stated that *Ibn Islam* excelled in four areas: Insight into religion, diligence in seeking the hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH), familiarity with the Quran, and knowledge of Arabic literature. He died in Muharram 242 AH, with thousands attending his funeral prayer. He was buried alongside *Ibn Rāhawayh* in the **161**

*Shadiyākh* cemetery in Nīshābūr, a resting place for many scholars (Ibn Abi Ḥātam, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 7, 201; al-Dhahabī, 1993: 12, 195-203; al-Ḥākim, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 22, 94, 208, 224).

### 3-4. Muḥammad ibn Rāfi' al-Qushayrī al-Nīsābūrī (d. 245 AH)

*Muḥammad ibn Rāfi'* was among the hadith scholars who went to Nīshābūr to meet Imam *Ridā* (AS), seizing the reins of his mount and requesting a hadith (Sadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; idem, 1978 AD/1398 AH: 24). Born in 170 AH, he traveled to Kufa, Basra, Baghdad, Yemen, and other cities to study hadith. He received hadith from dozens of scholars, including *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, *Shabbābah ibn Sawār*, *'Abdullāh ibn Walīd al-'Adanī*, *Wakī' ibn Jarrāḥ*, *Yahyā ibn Yahyā*, and *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*. *Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *Nasā'ī*, *Tirmidhī*, *Muḥammad ibn Yahyā*, *Abū Zur'ah*, *Ibn Khuzaymah*, and others were among his students. *Ibn Ḥanbal*, *Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, and *Nasā'ī* declared him trustworthy (*Thiqah*) (Mizzī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 25, 192-194; Dhahabī, 1993: 12, 215-218).

He was a narrator of the *Ghadir Khumm* tradition and some hadiths containing the virtues of Imam *Alī* (AS), and in addition, he is considered a student of *Faḍl ibn Shādhān* (d. 260 AH). *Karbāsī*, among Shia scholars, praised him with the phrase: "He was good, learned, and pious." He passed away in Dhu al-Hijjah of the year 245 AH, and *Muḥammad ibn Yahyā* led the prayer for him, and he was buried alongside *Ibn Rāhwayh* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam* (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 735; Mahmudi, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 2, 453 and 517; Karbāsī, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 592; Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 75; Ḥākim, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 227).

### 3-5. Yasīn ibn Naḍr Nīshābūrī (d. 252 AH)

*Abū Sa'id Yasīn ibn Naḍr ibn Yūnus Bāhilī Nīshābūrī*, is among the hadith narrators who, in the Marraba'ah region, grasped the reins of Imam Riḍā's (AS) mount and requested the narration of hadiths (Irbilī, n.d.: 3, 100; Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, 1934: 1, 138; Ibn 'Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 48, 366; Shakeri, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 12, 242-243). He narrated hadiths from narrators such as *Naḍr ibn Shimīl*, *Abū Muāwīya Za'farānī*, *Ḥaḥṣ ibn 'Abdul Raḥmān*, and others, and his two sons, namely *Abū Bakr* and *Abū Aḥmad*, and other individuals like *Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Waḥhāb 'Abdī*, *Muḥammad ibn Zahmuwayh*, and *Abū Yaḥyā Bazzā Rāwī* from *Yasīn ibn Naḍr* (Ibn Ma'kūlā, n.d.: 7, 353). His families were known for their jurisprudence and narration. *Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Yasīn ibn Naḍr* (d. 293 AH), a renowned jurist of Nīshābūr, narrated hadiths from *Ishāq ibn Rāhwayh*, *'Uthmān ibn Abī Shaybah*, and their contemporaries, and *Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Hānī*' and others narrated from him; and *Abū Aḥmad Muḥammad ibn Yasīn ibn Naḍr* was also a jurist and judge of Nīshābūr, and he heard hadiths from *Muḥammad ibn Raf'i*, and *Alī ibn Sa'd Nasawī*, and *Abū 'Abdullāh Dinārī* and other scholars of Nīshābūr narrated from him. *Yasīn ibn Naḍr* passed away in Dhu al-Qa'dah of the year 252 AH (Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 22, 304 and 23, 245; Ibn Ma'kūlā: 7, 353).

### 3-6. Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā Nīshābūrī (d. 226 AH)

According to Shaykh Ṣadūq and Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, "*Abū Zakarīyā Yaḥyā ibn Yaḥyā ibn Bakr Tamīmī Nīshābūrī*" went to meet the Imam

(AS), grasped the reins of his mount, and requested the narration of hadiths. *Shaykh Ṭūsī* and *Ibn Dāwūd Ḥillī* also identified him as among the companions of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; Ṭūsī, 1894 AD/1315 AH: 368; Rijal Ibn Dāwūd, 1971 AD/1392 AH: 284 and 293; Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, 1934: 1, 138; Mizzī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 1, 277).

He was born in Nīshābūr in 142 AH and passed away on the last day of Safar in 226 AH. He journeyed to various regions of Khorasan, Mecca, Medina, Sham, Kufa, Wasit, Yemen, Egypt, Rey, and Baghdad to acquire Hadith. He met with many of the younger Successors. He listened to Hadith from dozens of individuals, including *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, *'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak*, *Fuḍayl ibn 'Ayād*, and *Malik ibn Anas*; and many others, such as *Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, *Ibn Rāhwayh*, *Muḥammad ibn Aslam*, *Muḥammad ibn Rāfi'*, and *Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā Dhuhlī*, transmitted Hadith from him (Mizzī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 32, 31-36; Dhahabī, 1992: 2, 378; Ibn 'Imād, n.d.: 2, 59; Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 318).

Biographical sources describe him as *Shaykh al-Islam*, a scholar, the "Rose of Khorasan," a memorizer (*Ḥāfiẓ*), Imam, ascetic, trustworthy (*Thiqa*), reliable, wise, righteous, learned, and among the great narrators. *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, who wore his garment, considered him trustworthy and in the same rank as *'Abdullāh ibn Mubārak*. *Ibn Rāhwayh* described him as the Imam of the people of the world, saying he had never seen his like. *'Abdullāh ibn Ṭāhir* considered his doubts to be on the verge of certainty (Ibn 'Imād: 2, 59; Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 318; Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 16, 460-

462; Mizzī: 32, 34-35; Ibn 'Abdul Birr, n.d.: 62).

*Yahyā ibn Yahyā* is in the *Isnād* (chain of transmission) of the sound and *Mutawātir* Hadith of "*Manzila*." He is also in the *Isnād* of a narration in which *Bashīr ibn Sa'd* asked the Prophet (PBUH) about the manner of sending salutations, and the Prophet said: "Say: O! Allah, send Your blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad, as You sent Your blessings upon Ibrahim and upon the family of Ibrahim. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious. And bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as You blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. Indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Glorious." (Ibn Baṭrīq, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 130; Shirvani, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 133; Bayhaqī, n.d.: 2, 146)

### 3-7. Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā Dhuhlī Nīshābūrī (172-258 AH)

*Ibn 'Asākir Dimashqī* (d. 571 AH) stated that "*Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Khālīd ibn Fāris ibn Dhu'ayb Dhuhlī of Nīshābūrī*" was among the Muslim scholars of Iran in the second and third centuries AH, one of those who held the reins of the mount of Imam Riḍā (AS), and a seeker of Hadith transmission (Ibn 'Asākir: 5, 463).

He was born in Nīshābūr in 172 AH. To pursue knowledge, in addition to studying in Nīshābūr, as was customary at that time, he studied under other scholars in various cities of the Islamic world, including Rey, Isfahan, Kufa, Basra, Baghdad, Mecca, Medina, Yemen, Sham, Cairo, and others. He was one of the leading scholars of Hadith, and among the most famous memorizers and narrators of

Hadith, considered the foremost authority on Hadith in Nīshābūr and Khorasan during his time. *Khaṭīb Baghdādī* says: He was among the knowledgeable Imams, a memorizer and trustworthy, who collected the Hadith of *Zuhrī*, came to Baghdad, and met and conversed with its scholars. *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* praised him and extolled his virtues. *Dhahabī* stated: He was an Imam, a scholar, a memorizer, a teacher, a Shaykh of Islam, a scholar of the East, and the Imam of Hadith in Khorasan. *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī* says: He was the Imam of Hadith of his time. *Ibn Abī Ḥatam* says: They asked my father about him, and he said: He is trustworthy. *Abū Zur'a* said: He is one of the Imams of the Muslims. *Badr al-Dīn al-'Aynī* said: He is trustworthy, an Imam, and of high stature. A group of leading figures of the Caliphate school, such as *Bukhārī*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *Tirmidhī*, *Nasā'ī*, and *Ibn Mājah*, narrated from him. He finally passed away in Nīshābūr in 258 AH, and the *Amīr Ṭāhirī*, *Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir*, personally participated in his funeral procession and burial. He was buried in the *Ḥusayn Square* (*Khaṭīb Baghdādī*: 4, 185-191; *Dhahabī*, n.d.: 2, 530; *Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 9, 452-455).

#### 4. Unreliable and Fabricated Narrators

##### 4-1. Abū Zur'a al-Rāzī (d. 264 AH)

According to some sources, when Imam *Riḍā* (AS) entered Nīshābūr, *'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Abdul Karīm ibn Yazīd ibn Furūkh*, known as *Abū Zur'a al-Rāzī*, was among his prominent followers. In the market of Nīshābūr, he requested the Imam to narrate Hadith from his forefathers, and the Imam narrated the Golden Chain of Hadith in the

presence of more than twenty thousand people (Qundūzī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 122; Irbilī: 3, 101; Ibn Ṣabbāgh, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 1001; Manāwī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 641).

There are varying accounts regarding the birth year of *Abū Zur'ah al-Rāzī* in Rey: 190, 194, 200, and around 200. The most common account is 200. By consensus, he died at the end of Dhu al-Hijjah in 264 AH at the age of 64 in Rey and was buried there (Ibn Ḥajar, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 636; *ibid.*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 7, 30; Ibn Abi Ya'ī: 1, 203; Dhahabī, 1992: 1, 683).

Based on the mentioned date, *Abū Zur'ah* could not have been among those who met, owned property from, or listened to Imam Riḍā (AS) in the year 200 or at most 201 AH. Undoubtedly, a scribal error or confusion has occurred. Furthermore, *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī*, and *Hāfiẓ Isfahānī*, who have reported on this matter, do not mention "*Abū Zur'ah*" by name (Ṣadūq, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 143; *ibid.*, 1977 AD/1398 AH: 24; Ḥākim, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208; Abū Nu'aym Aṣbahānī, 1934: 1, 138).

The first person to mention *Abū Zur'ah Rāzī* is *Irbilī* (d. 692 AH) in the late seventh century AH, who cited it through an unknown intermediary from the book "History of Nīshābūr." After *Irbilī*, *Ibn Ṣabbāgh* (d. 855 AH) in the ninth century AH, referred to him. After them, this statement and suggestion was repeated by *Qundūzī Ḥanaftī*, *Allama Majlisī*, *Khu'ī*, *Ja'far Murtaḍā 'Āmilī*, and others (Irbilī: 3, 101; Ibn Ṣabbāgh: 2, 1001; Qundūzī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 122; Majlisī: 49, 126; Khu'ī: 16, 88; Murtaḍā Amili: 144).

In my humble opinion, since the extant "History of Nīshābūr," <sup>167</sup>

which is the basis of *Irbilī's* and *Ibn Ṣabbāgh's* and others' statements, does not mention *Abū Zur'ah's* presence at the time of Imam *Riḍā's* (AS) arrival, and since *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī* only mentions *Ibn Rāhwayh* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī*, *Abū Zur'ah* in their accounts can be considered a corruption of *Ibn Rāhwayh's* name, or at most, an unknown *Abū Zur'ah*, not the one from Rey, is intended (*Dhahabī*, 1993: 13, 312; *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī*, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 208).

*Abū Zur'ah Rāzī* traveled to various centers to learn Hadith. *Mizzī* counted nearly 80 of his teachers, including *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, *Faḍl ibn Dakīn*, *Naṣr ibn Alī Jahḍamī*, and others. Many hadith scholars, including *Muslim*, *Tirmidhī*, *Nasā'ī*, *Ibn Mājah Qazwīnī*, and others, also heard from him.

He, like *Ishāq ibn Rāhwayh* and *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, believed in the eternity of the Quran and opposed those who relied on reason and *ijtihād*, while at the same time he did not tolerate the views of the *Murji'ites*. Biographical scholars such as *Nasā'ī*, *Abū Ḥatam Rāzī*, *Ibn Ḥibbān*, and *Dhahabī* praised him. It is said that he compiled some of his hadiths in a *Musnad*. *Najāshī* attributed to him a work entitled "Mention of those who narrated from *Ja'far ibn Muḥammad* (AS) from the successors and those close to them." (*Ibn Abī Ḥatam Rāzī*, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 1, 328 and 5, 325-326; *Mizzī*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 19, 90-102; *Khaṭīb Baghdādī*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 10, 325-335; *Ibn 'Asākir*, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 38, 11-39; *Dhahabī*, 1993: 13, 65-85; *Najāshī*: 10; *Karbāsī*: 588; *Suyūṭī*, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 253)

#### 4-2. Ibn Khuzayma Sulamī Nīshābūrī (d. 311 AH)

**168** *Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaymah Sulamī Nīshābūrī* (d.

311 AH), known as *Ibn Khuzaymah*, is considered by some to have requested a hadith from Imam Riḍā (AS) concerning his pure forefathers (Ṭabasī, 1968 AD/1388 AH: 96). It is noteworthy that, firstly, *Ibn Khuzaymah* was born 20 years after the martyrdom of Imam Riḍā (AS), in 223 AH, and died on the fifth of *Dhul-Qa'dah*, 311 AH, at the age of 88 (Dhahabī, 1993: 14, 371-372). Secondly, he visited the Imam's shrine more than a century after his martyrdom. Ḥākim Nīshābūrī recounts: "I heard from Muḥammad ibn Mu'ammal ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Īsā, who said: One day, we went with the leader of the hadith scholars, *Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah*, *Abū Alī Thaqaḥfī*, and other of our teachers, to visit the tomb of *Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā* (AS) in Tus. They frequently visited the tomb of *Alī al-Riḍā*. *Ibn Khuzaymah*'s reverence, humility, and weeping at the tomb astonished us all. This humility and special respect shown by *Ibn Khuzaymah* at the tomb took place in the presence of dignitaries from the Sultan's family, the family of *Shādhān ibn Na'im*, the family of *Shanqashīn*, and a group of Alawites from Nīshābūr, Herat, Tus, and Sarakhs, all of whom witnessed and recorded *Ibn Khuzaymah*'s demeanor and actions during his visit to the grave. They were very pleased with his conduct at the Imam's tomb, and therefore gave charity, all saying: "If visiting tombs, weeping beside them, and venerating the occupant of the grave were not a tradition and a virtue, *Ibn Khuzaymah* would never have done this. We returned from our visit in *Rabī' al-Thānī*, 309 AH." (Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 7, 339; 'Aṭṭārī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 117; Ḥamū'ī Juwaynī: 2, 198; Shakeri: 12, 554) *Ibn Khuzaymah* was one of the greatest hadith scholars and jurists of

Khorasan. He undertook numerous journeys to acquire knowledge, traveling to Merw, Rey, Baghdad, Kufa, Basra, Abadan, Syria, Cairo, Alexandria, the Hijaz, and Gurgan. He studied hadith with many teachers, including *Ibn Rāhwayh*, *Alī ibn Ḥajar*, *Aḥmad ibn ‘Abda Dabī*, and others. A number of the shaykhs of the authors of the Six Books of Hadith were among his teachers, and even *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* narrated from him. *Ibn Ḥibbān* narrated at least 301 hadiths from him in "*al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*" alone. Sunni biographical dictionaries describe him as trustworthy, truthful, Imam of Imams (Imam al-A‘immah), Shaykh of Islam, jurist, hadith scholar, and interpreter.

The book titled "Tawhid and the Proof of the Attributes of God, the Exalted and Glorified," reveals *Ibn Khuzayma*'s Salafi beliefs, including his acceptance of God's sitting above the seven heavens and the eternity of the divine word (Ibn Khuzayma, 2010 AD/1431 AH: 22; Ibn Ḥibbān, 1972 AD/1393 AH: 9, 156; *ibid.*, 1993 AD/1414 AH: Introduction, 1, 15; Ibn Abī Ḥatam, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 7, 196; Ibn Ḥajar, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 5, 112; Sam‘ānī, 1984: 5, 124).

*Ḥākim Nīshābūrī*, after mentioning *Ibn Khuzayma* as a great scholar and quoting from him the hadith "‘Ammār will be killed by the rebellious group," wrote on his authority: "I testify that whoever clashed with *Alī ibn Abi Talīb* (AS) during the caliphate was rebellious and defiant; our elders followed this path, and Ibn Idrīs Shafī‘ī also said the same." *Ibn Khuzayma* is among the group of Hadith scholars who believed in Alī's precedence over ‘*Uthmān*.

*Ṣadūq* narrated traditions from him (Ṣadūq, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 1,

218; *ibid.*, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 198; Dhahabī, 1993: 14, 365-382; *ibid.*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 24, 238; Ibn ‘Imād, n.d.: 2, 315; Haydari Nasab: 77).

#### 4-3. Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb Thaqaḥī Nīshābūrī (d. 328)

The aforementioned author (Ṭabasī, 1968 AD/1388 AH: 98) also includes "*Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb ibn ‘Abdul Raḥmān ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb Thaqaḥī Nīshābūrī*" among those who asked Imam Riḍā (AS) not to narrate a hadith from his forefathers; however, firstly, he was born in 244 AH, 41 years after the martyrdom of Imam Riḍā (AS), in Qahestan, settled in Nīshābūr, and died on 23 Jumada I, 328 AH, at the age of 84 (or 89 according to some accounts) during the caliphate of Rāḍī ‘Abbāsī in Nīshābūr, where he was buried (Dhahabī, 1993: 15, 283; Ibn ‘Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 41, 212; Ibn ‘Imād: 2, 315; Mustowfi: 652). Secondly, it has been mentioned that he, along with *Ibn Khuzayma*, visited the tomb of the Imam more than a hundred years after his martyrdom and returned in Rabi' al-Thani 309 AH (*ibid.*).

*Abū Alī Thaqaḥī* heard hadith in Baghdad from *Muḥammad ibn Jahm Simarī* and *Aḥmad ibn Ḥayyān ibn Mulā‘ib Baghdādī*, in Rey from *Mūsā ibn Naṣr Rāzī*, and in Nīshābūr from *Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb Farrā’* and those in his class. *Muḥammad ibn Ishāq Ṣibghī*, *Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Faqīh* and *Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ḥajjājī* are among those who narrated hadith from him. He was the first to transmit the Shafi'i sciences and the subtleties of *Ibn Sarīj* to Khorasan, and in Shafi'i jurisprudence in Khorasan, none was more knowledgeable than him.

He has been praised with the titles of Imam, Muhaddith, Faqih, Allamah, Wā‘iz, Shaykh of Khorasan, and scholar of Nīshābūr (Dhahabī, 1993: 15, 283-280; *ibid.*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 24, 238; Ibn ‘Imād: 2, 315). *Abū ‘Alī Thaqaḫī* had connections with the Sufis of the Malāmātiyya order in the third century AH, including *Ḥaddād Nīshābūrī* and *Ḥamdūn Qaṣṣār*, and concise and eloquent sayings are attributed to him. He disagreed with *Ibn Khuzayma* on some important Kalam issues such as faith, disappointment, and success (Ṣafḍī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 4, 55; Ibn ‘Imād: 2, 315; Ibn ‘Asākir, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 4, 212; Sullamī: 363; Ibn Ḥajar, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 7, 339; Ḥammū’ī: 2, 198).

#### 4-4. Ādam ibn Abī Īyās ‘Asqalānī (d. 220 AH)

The author of the book "Hadith of the Golden Chain from the Perspective of the Ahl al-Sunna" includes *Ādam ibn Abī Īyās ‘Asqalānī* among those who requested in Nīshābūr that Imam *Riḍā* (AS) narrate a hadith from his pure forefathers. He considers this behavior to be indicative of the greatness and scientific and spiritual authority of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṭabasī, 1968 AD/1388 AH: 90).

Discussion: Firstly, he has not mentioned any source or evidence for the aforementioned attribution; secondly, *Ṣadūq*, *Ḥākim Nīshābūrī*, *Ḥāfiẓ Isfahānī*, and *Irbilī*, who have somewhat addressed this issue, have not reported his name; and thirdly, the writer of these lines, after extensively reviewing the narrative and biographical sources of both sects, has not encountered him hearing the Hadith of the Golden Chain and other hadiths from Imam *Riḍā* (AS), although he is mentioned in

the chain of narration of some Shia narrations (Ṣadūq, 1977 AD/1398 AH: 331; *ibid.*, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 1, 81; *ibid.*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 145; Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 99).

He was originally from Khorasan, born in 132 AH, and received his education in Iraq, Egypt, Mecca, Medina, and Syria. He narrated hadiths from *Mubārak ibn Faḍḍāla*, *Shu‘ba ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, *Ḥammād ibn Salama*, and others, and many people, such as *Bukhārī*, *Abū Zur‘a Dimashqī*, and *Abū Ḥatam Rāzī* narrated hadiths from him. Biographical sources of the caliphate school describe him as *Ḥāfiẓ*, *Qudwa*, Shaykh of Syria, trustworthy, reliable, devout, and pious. He resided in Asqalan from the beginning to the end of his life and died there at the age of 88 in 220 AH, or according to some accounts, 221 AH (Ibn Ḥibbān, 1972 AD/1393 AH: 8, 134; Mizzī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 303; Dhahabī, 1993: 10, 335; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 171).

#### 4-5. Mu‘allā ibn Manṣūr Rāzī Ḥanafī (d. 211 AH)

*Ṭabasī* (1385 AH), in his article "The Golden Chain according to the Sunni Tradition," includes *Abū Ya‘lī Mu‘allā ibn Manṣūr Rāzī Ḥanafī* among those who received Hadith from Imam Riḍā (AS) and requested its transmission; however, the aforementioned writing does not cite any sources. Furthermore, *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *Ḥākim Nishābūrī*, *Abū Nu‘aym Isfahānī*, and other earlier and later scholars make no mention of *Mu‘allā ibn Manṣūr*. Moreover, in my review of the narrative sources of both schools of thought, I have not encountered any evidence of his receiving or transmitting Hadith. He was born

around 150 AH, resided in Baghdad, and received Hadith from renowned scholars such as *Mālik ibn Anas*, *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, and *Abū Bakr ibn 'Ayyāsh*. Conversely, Hadith scholars such as *Alī ibn Madīnī*, *Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā Dhuhli*, and *Bukhārī* narrated from him. He was considered among the companions of *Abū Yusuf Qāḍī* and *Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan Shaybānī*, two students of *Abū Ḥanīfā*. He was asked several times to assume judicial duties, but he refused. He compiled collections of his narrations and died in Rabi' al-Awwal 211 AH or 212 AH in Baghdad (Ibn Abi Ḥatam al-Rāzī, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 8, 334; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 13, 189-191; Dhahabī, 1993: 10, 365; 'Ijlī, 289). Although Sunni biographical scholars describe him with attributes such as learned, possessing a strong memory, trustworthy, accurate, juris consult, jurist, and truthful, *Ibn Ḥanbal* did not narrate any Hadith from him due to his opinion and ijtihad. Nevertheless, since he considered those who believed in the created nature of the Quran as infidels, he is counted among the Hadith scholars (Mizzī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 28, 293-296; Ibn Ḥibbān, 1972 AD/1393 AH: 9, 182; Ibn Ḥajar, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 10, 216).

#### 4-6. Naṣr ibn Alī Jahḍamī (d. 250 AH)

The aforementioned author also considers *Naṣr ibn Alī Jahḍamī* among those who received, transmitted, and listened to the Hadith of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) (Ṭabasī, 1968 AD/1388 AH: 94). It should be noted that the same three criticisms mentioned in the previous two cases also

He transmitted hadith from many, such as *Abū Dāwūd Ṭayālasī*, *Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah*, *Yahyā ibn Sa'id Qaṭṭān*, and their contemporaries, and many individuals, including the authors of the Six Books of Hadith, *Dhahabī*, *Ibn Khuzayma*, *Abū Ḥatam Rāzī*, and *Abū Zur'a*, narrated from him (Ibn Abi Ḥatam Rāzī, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 8, 466 and 471; Dhahabī, 1993: 12, 133-134; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 13, 288). It is narrated that he transmitted the hadith, "Whoever loves me, and loves these two [*Ḥusayn* and *Ḥasan*], and their father and mother, will be with me in my rank on the Day of Resurrection," concerning the Five Pure Ones, with a chain of narrators from the Prophet (PBUH), and *al-Mutawakkil* sentenced him to a thousand lashes, but he was pardoned upon the testimony of some that he was a Sunni and not a Rafidi. He appears in the chains of narration of some Shi'a hadiths (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 13, 288; Ṭabarī, 158; Namazī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 8, 69).

## Conclusion

1. Undoubtedly, Imam Riḍā (AS) entered Nīshābūr in the year 200 or 201 AH, and some scholars grasped the reins of his mount and requested the recitation of hadith. *Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH) mentions *Muḥammad ibn Rāfi'*, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb*, *Yahyā ibn Yahyā*, and *Ibn Rāhwayh*; *Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* (d. 405 AH) mentions *Ibn Rāhwayh* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam Ṭūsī*; *Abū Nu'aym al-Isfahānī* (d. 430 AH) mentions *Yāsīn ibn Naḍr*, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥarb*, *Yahyā ibn Yahyā*; and *Ibn 'Asākir Dimashqī* (d. 571 AH) mentions *Muḥammad ibn* **175**

*Yahyā al-Dhahabī al-Nīshābūrī*. In total, seven individuals are documented.

2. In the seventh century AH, *Irbilī* (d. 692 AH) only mentions *Abū Zur'a Rāzī* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam*. After *Irbilī*, *Ibn Ṣabbāgh*, *Qundūzī*, *Majlisī*, *Amīn*, *Khu'ī*, *Murtaḍā al-Āmilī*, and others repeated this account, even though *Abū Zur'a Rāzī* was either not born or at most a child at the time of Imam Riḍā's (AS) entry into Nīshābūr. It seems that since the history of Nīshābūr, which is the basis of *Irbilī*'s account, does not mention *Abū Zur'a*, and *Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* only mentions *Ibn Rāhwayh* and *Muḥammad ibn Aslam*, *Abū Zur'a* in *Irbilī*'s account is a corruption of *Ibn Rāhwayh*.
3. Some books and articles in recent years have attributed certain names to the recipients and listeners of Imam Riḍā's (AS) hadiths without providing any evidence or sources. This is despite the fact that two of these individuals were born several decades after Imam Riḍā (AS), one was a child, and two others lived in different lands. Undeniably, such ignorance and distortions undermine the historiography and hadith scholarship of Shia Islam.

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# **The Study of al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī's Virtue Writing on Lady Fāṭimah (AS) Based on Critical Discourse Analysis Theory**

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## **Abstract**

The book **Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā** by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* was composed amidst intense religious controversies and opposing discourses surrounding the status of the Ahl al-Bayt. The present study aims to examine how the position of Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* is represented in response to opposing discourses and analyzes the underlying ideological constructs embedded in the linguistic choices

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and narrations within this work. Utilizing Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this research analyzes the text on three levels: Description, interpretation, and explanation. On the descriptive level, it explores the linguistic methods and word choices employed by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* to emphasize the virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, with meticulous attention to detail. On the interpretive level, this study examines the social and political contexts of the author's time and their impact on shaping the book's discourse. At the explanatory level, it thoroughly analyzes power relations and the author's endeavors to fortify the status of the Ahl al-Bayt while countering opposing discourses. The findings indicated that the selection and use of linguistic elements in this book were specifically designed to highlight the elevated status of Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*. Furthermore, the political, social, and cultural contexts of the Samanid and Buyid periods significantly shaped the composition of this work. This research sheds light on the intricate interplay between religious and political discourses in Islamic history and underscores the pivotal role of the Ahl al-Bayt within this framework.

**Keywords:** Virtue, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS), Critical Discourse, Fairclough.

## Introductiona

Discourse analysis, understood as the social function of language, is a powerful tool for examining religious and historical texts that reflect the social and ideological conditions of their time. This interdisciplinary approach is particularly essential in studies that aim

to uncover hidden power structures and latent ideologies within texts. By analyzing linguistic structures, critical discourse analysis reveals how power, values, and social influences are represented within textual discourse.

The book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* by al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, which highlights the virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* for an audience of prominent Sunni jurists and scholars, exemplifies this type of religious discourse. Likely composed during a gathering in *Nīshābūr* in the late 4th or early 5th century AH, this work reflects the interplay of religious and social themes within the author's discourse, shaped by the sociopolitical context of its time.

Given the social-political environment of the time and its influence on the author's perspective, studying this book through the lens of critical discourse analysis can reveal hidden ideological layers and demonstrate how language serves as a medium to convey specific ideologies. The reciprocal relationship between discourse and society ensures that while social structures shape discourse, discourse also plays a key role in shaping and reproducing those structures. As Fairclough (2000 AD/1379 SH: 245) suggests, social groups and institutions carry meanings and values that are systematically expressed through language.

Written discourse has always been a tool for promoting beliefs, preserving and transmitting ideologies, fostering change, and serving as a mechanism for addressing social struggles. In this study, the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) is analyzed as a discourse produced within a specific context. This discourse, through particular linguistic

and structural choices, seeks to communicate messages about the exalted status of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) to an audience, some of whom questioned her preeminence over the other daughters of the Prophet (PBUH).

The central research question is: 'In what ways does *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* seeks to construct a discourse in defense of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) and in response to opposing narratives through language and specific discursive structures in the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS)?' Furthermore, 'To what extent is this discourse shaped by the political and social conditions of the time?'

The scope of this study includes the narrations within the book as well as the discussions presented by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* in the introduction, where he elaborates on his motivations for composing this work and reflects on the circumstances of his era. By gaining a deeper understanding of the sociopolitical context of that period, the discursive approaches employed by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* in defending the status of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) can be more comprehensively understood.

## 1. Literature Review

With the significant expansion of discourse analysis in the study of historical and religious texts, the book "*Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*" by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* has also become a subject of interest from this perspective. This work, a manuscript copy of which was discovered several years ago, was first published in 2008 by Dar al-Furqan Publishing in Cairo, with scholarly editing and verification by Alireza **187**

ibn Abdullah.

In the introduction, the editor provides an overview of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, detailing the views of various scholars on his life and works. Furthermore, the book's contents are critically analyzed and reviewed, shedding light on its significance within the broader scope of Islamic scholarship.

In a note titled "Why Did *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* Write the Book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' (AS)*?", published in 2008 on the website of the Specialized Library of the History of Islam and Iran, Rasoul Jafariyan provides a brief introduction to the book and its author, along with a translation of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s preface. Additionally, Majid Hadizadeh, in an article titled "An Ancient Manuscript by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* on the Virtues and Merits of *Fāṭimah, the Mistress of the Women of the Worlds (AS)* (Sayyidah *Nisā' al-Ālamīn*)," published in the third and fourth issues of the scientific-specialized semi-annual journal *Basatin* in 2015, introduces the book, examines its attribution to *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, and presents an image of the original manuscript.

Given the growing necessity of employing modern linguistic and discourse analysis methods, this work requires further examination to illuminate the political, social, and cultural contexts in which it was composed. This study applies *Norman Fairclough's* three-dimensional model of discourse analysis to investigate the historical, political, and social circumstances of the time, the context of the text's creation, the communicative interactions, and the structure of its language and how these elements influenced the discourse. This approach facilitates a

transition from the surface level of the text to its sub-textual layers, revealing the intricate relationship between language and power in the formation of this work.

## 2. A Brief Introduction to the Book

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, one of the most prominent preservers of *ḥadīth* in Nishapur and an eminent figure of his era, is recognized as a "*Thiqah*" (trustworthy) scholar with mastery in the sciences of *ḥadīth* and *rijāl*. *Al-Dhahabī* and *Ibn al-Jazarī* describe him as an outstanding tradition researcher with profound expertise in the science of *ḥadīth* (*Dhahabī*, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 17, 163; *Ibn al-Jazarī*, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 185). In his book *al-Mustadrak*, he compiled *ḥadīths* concerning the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) that meet the criteria of authenticity set by *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, yet were not included in these works. Additionally, he authored another significant work titled *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'* (AS), where he gathered numerous narrations.

The scholarly stature of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* and his expertise in transmitting Hadiths with minimal intermediaries (*'Ālī al-isnād*) made him a uniquely influential figure in the 4th century AH. This method of transmission, characterized by brevity in chains, is highly valued for reducing the risk of errors and ensuring authenticity (*cf.* *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, 1976 AD/1396 AH: Nos. 5, 7, 20). The narrations in this work are transmitted through various reliable chains of narration and are cited in the Hadith collections of both Shī'a and Sunni scholars, underscoring their credibility and significance.

The book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah* (AS) by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* consists of ten sections, detailed as follows:

Section One: Praise and glorification of God, followed by blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (PBUH) and his Ahl al-Bayt.

Section Two: A description of the author's time, when leaders in power sought to strengthen their positions by displaying hostility toward the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS). The section also includes an explanation of the motivation behind writing this book, which originated from a scholarly gathering where the Quranic memorization of 'Alī (AS) was denied by an attendee. *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* responds by addressing this claim.

Section Three: "A discussion on the daughters of the Prophet (PBUH), emphasizing the renowned status of *Fāṭimah* (AS) and her virtues."

Section Four: "A recounting of the statement made by a participant in the scholarly gathering, who expressed enmity toward *Fāṭimah* (AS) in an attempt to gain favor with others." This individual cited a narration attributed to 'Urwah, claiming the Prophet (PBUH) said, "*Zaynab is the best of my daughters.*" *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* investigates this narration, finding it to fall outside the criteria of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. He explains that the phrase "*Afḍal Banātī*" (the best of my daughters) should be understood as "*Min afḍal banātī*" (one of the best of my daughters), as numerous authentic narrations highlight *Fāṭimah* (AS) as the foremost among the women of Heaven and the Ummah (cf. Bukhārī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 4, 203; Muslim, 1955: 4, 1904).

Section Five: "Presentation of narrations that demonstrate the superiority of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS), including evidence of her knowledge and understanding surpassing that of *Āyishah*."

Section Six: "A collection of narrations on the virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS), divided into 65 chapters containing 232 hadiths." These chapters are classified into two categories:

1) Chapters Titled with the Virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) such as:

- "Narrations proving that *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* was part of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and that what hurt her hurt him and what caused her hardship caused him hardship."
- "Mention of another virtue of *Fāṭimah*, the daughter of Muhammad (PBUH), explaining that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would always begin by visiting her before anyone else whenever he traveled or returned from a journey."

2) Narrations about Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) Transmitted by Various Figures: "These include narrations from *Amir al-Mu'minīn 'Alī* (AS), *Imam Ḥusayn* (AS), and *'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās*."

### 3. Description of the Book (Virtues of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*) at the Textual Level

At the first level of discourse analysis, attention is focused on textual features such as vocabulary, sentence structure, and the overall composition of the text (*Fairclough*, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 172). In this descriptive stage, several questions arise, including: 'What experiential values do the words convey?' 'Is the process of

nominalization applied?’ ‘Are the sentences framed positively or negatively?’

The use of evaluative vocabulary and descriptions of individuals within a text stems from the author’s underlying ideology; as such choices often reflect value-laden meanings. These meanings shape the selection and narration of words, which are employed to assess and emphasize specific characters and identities.

A quantitative analysis of the evaluative vocabulary and attributes used in *Virtues of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* reveals a frequent and deliberate use of positive terms to describe Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS). The investigation highlights a strongly positive connotation throughout the text. Terms such as: "The beloved daughter of the Prophet (PBUH)," "*al-Batl*" (the chaste), "The secret keeper of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)," "Lady of the Women of the Worlds and the People of Paradise," "The most beloved person to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)," "*al-Siddīqah*" (the truthful), and "*Fāṭimah*" are employed alongside the acknowledgment of the revelation of the verse of purification (al-Aḥzāb/33) regarding her (Hākīm al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 47, 56, 58, 62). These terms collectively emphasize the exalted status of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) and reflect the author’s ideological perspective.

Contrary to the opinion of some who did not consider *Zaynab*, *Ruqayyah*, and *Umm Kulthūm* as daughters of Lady *Khadījah* (AS) from the Prophet (PBUH), *Hākīm al-Nīshābūrī* regards them as daughters of Lady *Khadījah* and the Prophet. He notes, however, that

virtues are emphasized more prominently in narrations (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 31).

In the structure of the introduction, Imam Ali (AS) is implicitly referenced and is consistently referred to as "*Amīr al-Mu'minīn*" (Commander of the Faithful) (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 30, 79, 82, 83, 86, 87, etc.). Additionally, he is described as the most beloved individual to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) among men (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 47), a description that carries a strongly positive connotation.

Moreover, *Hākim al-Nīshābūrī* employs specific descriptions such as "*Amīr al-Mu'minīn*" and makes implicit comparisons to underscore the esteemed status of Imam Ali (AS). At times, this approach contrasts with the attitudes of figures and movements opposed to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). For example, one of the senior jurists present in the same gathering refers to Imam Ali simply as "Ali," omitting any titles (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 30).

From the perspective of critical discourse analysis, this approach can be interpreted as a means of constructing or reinforcing social contrasts and dichotomies. Such strategies ultimately serve to reinforce the identity of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) and emphasize their virtues. Consequently, it appears that *Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, aiming to highlight the exalted status of the Ahl al-Bayt and foster a sense of polarization between their supporters and opponents, intentionally employs contrast as a central element of his discourse.

*Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, in a comparative analysis of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) and *Āyishah*, considers Lady *Fāṭimah* to be more

knowledgeable and learned. Commenting on the narration of *‘Āyishah*, in which she inquired about the private conversations between the Prophet (PBUH) and Lady *Fāṭimah* at the time of his passing, *Hākim al-Nīshābūrī* writes:

"As for the interpretation of *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) words, when she said, "If I reveal the secret of the Prophet (PBUH), I will be considered wasteful," the correct interpretation in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* is that if I reveal the secret of the Prophet (PBUH), I would undoubtedly be wasteful or imprudent. This narration clearly demonstrates that *Fāṭimah* (AS) was more knowledgeable and learned than *‘Āyishah*, because she did not disclose the Prophet's secret during his lifetime, but after his passing, she revealed it. This reflects a mastery of the jurisprudence of hadith (Fiqh al-ḥadīth) that was not fully comprehended by *‘Āyishah*." (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 81)

In this narration, Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) underscores the importance of trustworthiness and safeguarding the Prophet's (PBUH) secrets. She emphasizes that revealing these secrets during the Prophet's lifetime would have constituted a violation of this trust and an act of ingratitude. By preserving the secret until after the Prophet's passing, Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) demonstrated her deep respect for the principle of trustworthiness. This decision highlights her profound comprehension of religious jurisprudence and its core principles.

*Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, by creating a semantic contrast between Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) and *‘Āyishah*, uses this as evidence of *Fāṭimah*'s superior knowledge and understanding. Through this contrast, he illustrates the elevated status of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) in terms of her

intellectual and spiritual insight.

However, when describing *‘Āyishah* in the context of narrations about *Fāṭimah* (AS), *Hākim al-Nīshābūrī* uses terms such as "*al-Ṣiddīqah*, daughter of *al-Ṣiddīq*," "the Beloved of the Beloved of God," and "Mother of the Believers," all of which carry a positive connotation (*Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 117).

In this book, a combination of nominal and verbal sentences is employed.

A) Nominal sentences, such as:

- Indeed, the mention of *Fāṭimah* (AS) in the reports is more famous, and her virtues are more abundant in the narrations;
- This hadith clearly states that *Fāṭimah* (AS) was more knowledgeable and more learned than *‘Āyishah* articulate fixed and undeniable truths. These sentences implicitly convey the permanence and stability of *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) spiritual rank as a timeless theological truth (*Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 31 and 36).

B) Past tense sentences such as:

- He used to rise to her;
- Whenever she entered, he would welcome her;
- He would stand up for her; describe the actions of the Prophet (PBUH) in honoring the status of *Fāṭimah* (AS). These sentences provide historical grounding for the narrations, validating the Prophet's consistent reverence for *Fāṭimah* (AS) (*Hākim al-Nīshābūrī*, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 35).

C) Present tense sentences, such as:

- How can any woman of this Ummah be preferred over *Fāṭimah* (AS)?
- This sentence emphasizes the ongoing and timeless significance of *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) position, extending its relevance to both the present and the future (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 35).

D) The repetition of phrases such as:

- Is *Fāṭimah* (AS) being diminished?
- Indeed, she is the Lady of the Women of Paradise, highlights the semantic importance of these expressions. This repetition reinforces *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) exalted position and amplifies her stature (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 34 and 35).

The last sentence of the introduction, that anyone sincere in their faith may recognize her status in Islam, and no woman from the Ummah should be compared to her (Hākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 37), begins with the verb "*Liya 'lam*" (To know) in the jussive mood. This verb carries an imperative tone, implicitly demanding or obligating the recognition of *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) exalted position in Islam. This imperative tone serves to underscore the importance of acknowledging her unparalleled rank.

The word "*al-Shahīḥ*" (*the miser*) has a strongly negative connotation, referring to those who are negligent in their religious duties or lack spiritual generosity. By employing this term, *Hākim al-Nīshābūrī* calls on such individuals to properly recognize *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) lofty status. Simultaneously, he emphasizes that no woman from the Muslim Ummah can ever be compared to her. Through this contrast between proper religious understanding and negligence,

*Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* reinforces his ideological discourse, highlighting the unique and incomparable position of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS), whose recognition is deemed essential for all believers.

In explaining the reason for mentioning some of the virtues of *Fāṭimah* (AS), *Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* implicitly affirms the authenticity of all subsequent narrations. He suggests that anyone who uses their religion for material gain would lack the spiritual insight to truly understand her unparalleled status in Islam and her superiority over all women of the Ummah. This affirmation underscores that the credibility of the narrations being transmitted is not only fundamental but indispensable for comprehending *Fāṭimah*'s (AS) position in Islamic theology and thought.

#### **4. Interpretation of the Book "*Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS)" at the Level of Discursive Action**

At the interpretive layer, the elements discussed at the descriptive level are analyzed from the perspectives of situational context and intertextuality. This is because key concepts in discourse analysis and meaning extraction are often grounded in contextual knowledge and cognitive frameworks, or schemas (Yarmohammadi, 2014 AD / 1393 SH: 96). The understanding of the origin and purpose of the discourse is often reciprocal, emerging within the text while being conveyed to the reader. Through this process, the reader derives their interpretive framework from a shared perspective that extends beyond the words themselves.

From the interpreter's viewpoint, the formal features of the text, as **197**

explored at the descriptive level, serve as indicators that activate the interpreter's social and cognitive resources. These interpretations are the product of dialectic between these textual signs and the interpreter's social context. *Fairclough* views interpretation as a fusion of elements within the text and the internal resources of the interpreter (Fairclough, 2000: 215).

#### 4-1. Context of the Writing of the Book

The situational context of the book's writing is what structures the text within the minds of both the author and the reader. The meaning and purpose of the book, as perceived by the reader, cannot be fully understood apart from its historical context.

The exact time of the book's composition is uncertain; however, evidence in the introduction—such as references to the gathering and compilation of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* four times, the mention of the book *al-Aklīl*, and discussions about the conditions of *al-Bukhārī* and Muslim (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 31, 32, 34)—suggests that this work was written after *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*. Since *al-Ḥākim* began composing *al-Mustadrak* in 373 AH (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 39), it can be concluded that *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* was written subsequently, during the late Samanid period and the early Ghaznavid era.

Furthermore, a comparison of the number of narrations concerning the virtues of *Fāṭimah* (AS) in *al-Mustadrak* (38 narrations) and in this book (232 narrations) demonstrates that this book was composed after *al-Mustadrak*. The tone of the author also indicates that this work

was written as a bold and direct response to those who denied the virtues of *Fāṭimah* (AS), reflecting a fearless and unapologetic stance.

The lifetime of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* (321–405 AH) coincided with the zenith of the Samanid dynasty's power and its eventual decline under the Ghaznavids. This transition was welcomed by the Abbasid Caliphate, as they hoped the Ghaznavids would serve as a counterforce to the Shia Buyid dynasty's influence. Among the rulers of the eastern Islamic world, the Ghaznavids—particularly Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni—adopted the harshest stance against the Shiites (Ibn Jawzī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 15, 125).

During this period, Khorasan, and particularly Nishpur, the birthplace of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, was a region fraught with political upheaval and revolutions. The area changed hands frequently among competing claimants to power (Girdīzī, 1984 AD/1363 SH: 319–380).

Nīshābūr, as a military garrison of the Samanids, was strategically located near the borders of the Buyid dynasty. *Amir Abū al-Ḥasan Samījūrī* and his son, serving as military commanders of Khorasan, were based in *Nīshābūr*. They recognized the significant role of religious scholars and maintained a close relationship with *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, showing him great respect (Foruzani, 2006 AD/1385 AH: 125). *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* was dispatched as an intermediary to the Buyid court, facilitating the delivery of Samanid correspondence to the Buyids (Ibn 'Asākir, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 229; Ibn Khallikān, 1971 AD/ 1391 AH: 4, 281). It is plausible that *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, due to his perceived Shia inclinations, served **199**

multiple times as an envoy between the Samanids and the Buyids (Brockelmann, 1959: 3, 215; Sezgin, 1991: 1, 454).

*Shaft'i Kadkani* notes that *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s inclination toward Shi'ism, for which Sunni writers criticized him, was primarily politically motivated. He sought to mediate between the Shia Buyid government and the pro-Shia Iranian movements of the time. This inclination led to accusations of narrating hadiths such as "*Man Kuntu Mawlāh*" (For whomever I am the master, Ali is his master) and the "*Ṭayr*" hadith (*The bird hadith*), which were frequently used to support Shia theological positions (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 36).

The era of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* is recognized as the golden age of Islamic-Iranian civilization. During this period, the Samanids supported education and religious freedom, fostering an environment conducive to the advancement of scholars and the creation of scientific works (Bahrami, History of Iran from the Rise of Islam to the Fall of Baghdad, p. 358). Scientific centers were established in Bukhara and *Nīshābūr*, with schools such as the *Qaṭṭān* School, the *Ḥaddād* School, and the *Dār al-Sunnah*. These institutions, later managed by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, became important gathering places for scholars and centers of intellectual activity (Sam'ānī, 1962 AD/1382 AH: 8, 276-278).

Simultaneously, the Buyids, with their tolerant approach, promoted religious and scientific freedom within their territories, facilitating interactions among various ethnic and religious groups (Miskawayh, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 6, 341). Despite conflicts between the Samanids and

the Buyids, there were instances of positive relations between the two dynasties. For example, Amir Nooh Samani invited *Ṣāḥib ibn 'Ubbād*, the renowned minister of the Buyid dynasty, to accept the role of his minister. *Ṣāḥib* declined the offer, citing practical difficulties, including the immense logistical challenge of transporting his wealth and his celebrated library, which reportedly required more than four hundred camels for transport (Tha'ālibī, 1862 AD/1282 AH: 2, 145).

Attention to science and literature flourished under both dynasties, with major libraries such as those of Ibn *Khuzaymah* and *Mikālī* in *Nīshābūr*, *Nūḥ ibn Maṣṣūr* in Bukhara, and *Ṣāḥib ibn 'Ubbād* in Ray playing a pivotal role in the production and dissemination of knowledge. *Ṣāḥib ibn 'Ubbād*'s library in the 10th century CE was said to rival the combined holdings of all libraries across Europe (Pope, 1918 AD/1338 AH: 156).

In *Nīshābūr*, extensive scholarly travels further invigorated the city's intellectual vibrancy. Both Shī'ī and Sunni hadīth scholars traveled to *Nīshābūr* for the study of hadīth. Notably, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH) visited the city in 352 and 368 AH, underscoring the academic freedom and positive relations between scholars and the ruling authorities (Shaykh Ṣadūq, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 7-8).

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s travels to Shī'ī-majority cities such as Rey, Kūfā, and Baghdad, and his engagement with both Shī'ī and Sunni scholars, had a profound influence on shaping his intellectual orientation. During this period, the scholarly connection between *Nīshābūr* and Ray was exceptionally strong. *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* referred to families with intellectual ties to both cities (al-Ḥākim al-

Nīshābūrī, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 132, 92). Between 341 and 343 AH, he also studied under *Ibn Jaʿbī*, a prominent *Shīʿī hadīth* scholar (Fārsī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 1, 6).

In this vibrant academic environment, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīyshābūrī* authored *al-Mustadrak* in 372 AH and began compiling narrations about the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), culminating in the composition of *Faḍāʾil Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ* (AS).

#### 4-2. Intertextual Interpretation of the Book

One of the intertextual contexts of this book involves analyzing how historical hostility toward the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) is revisited and addressed, particularly through the denial of Imam Ali's (AS) virtues. This phenomenon highlights how texts, shaped by differing discourses, carry their unique historical contexts and backgrounds. Intertextual interpretation helps identify the historical framework to which a text belongs.

The denial of Imam Ali's (AS) virtues dates back to the time of *Muʿāwīyah*. According to a report by *Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd* from *Abū Jaʿfar al-Iskāfī*, *Muʿāwīyah* issued a uniform directive to his officials, stating:

"The government has no obligation toward anyone who transmits any of the virtues of *Abū Turāb* and his family. Therefore, preachers in every village and on every pulpit would curse Ali (AS), disassociate themselves from him, and speak ill of him and his family." (*Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd*, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 11, 44)

*Muʿāwīyah* also appointed several Companions and *Tābiʿūn* to fabricate disparaging narrations against Imam Ali (AS) and his family, offering them financial rewards for their efforts. Among those

involved were *Abū Hurayrah*, *ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ*, and *al-Mughayrah ibn Shuʿbah* from the Companions, and *ʿUrwah ibn Zubayr* from the *Tābiʿūn*. These fabricated narrations significantly shaped the perception of Imam Ali's (AS) virtues in later historical and religious narratives (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 4, 63).

Another intertextual aspect of this book involves the emphasis placed on the sayings of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) regarding individuals. The Prophet's (PBUH) words serve as a key criterion for assessing the virtue and superiority of individuals, forming the core of this text's discourse. The centrality of the *Sunnah* and the value of the Prophet's sayings have deep roots in the history of the Prophetic tradition. *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* seeks to establish the elevated position of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) within Sunni discourse by extensively referencing authentic hadiths. This effort is particularly directed against views that rely on weak or unreliable narrations, which fail to meet the strict conditions of authenticity outlined in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, to claim the superiority of figures such as *Zaynab*, the daughter of the Prophet (PBUH).

In his book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* highlights the virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) through numerous Prophetic narrations. For instance, he references hadiths numbered 15, 18, 20, and 21 (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 43–46). These narrations not only underscore the individual and spiritual virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) but also revive the Prophetic discourse that revolves around love and the exalted status of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS).

By rejuvenating this Prophetic discourse, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*

counters interpretations that distort or omit narrations to favor specific groups. His work on documenting the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt represents a deliberate effort to recreate and solidify the Prophetic tradition within the framework of Sunni thought.

The concept of Qur'anic intertextuality serves as a central axis in this discourse, functioning as a strategic tool to address competing narratives. Islam and the Qur'an serve as shared sources and foundational assumptions for both discourses, creating a common intellectual framework. However, within this shared space, differing interpretations of the Qur'an emerge, reflecting the theological tensions between these discourses.

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* employs Qur'anic intertextuality as a strategic mechanism to strengthen his argument for the elevated status of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS). By referencing Qur'anic verses, he reinforces his claims and directly challenges opposing discourses. For instance, in narrations 36 and 37 of his book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'*, he cites the verse: (*Give the relative their right*; Isrā'/26). Based on this verse, *al-Ḥākim* argues that the Prophet (PBUH) granted *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* the land of *Fadak*.

This Qur'anic reference serves as a direct response to the opposing discourse, which cites the narration: *We do not leave inheritance; what we leave is charity* (al-Bukhārī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 8, 149) to deny *Fāṭimah's* right to inheritance. The differing interpretations of these texts underline the theological divide between the two discourses. *Fadak*, a piece of land gifted to *Fāṭimah* by the Prophet (PBUH), became a symbol of her rightful claim, and its denial reflects broader debates over Prophetic legacy and

succession in Islamic history.

In narrations 54 and 55 of the book, reference is made to the verse of *Mubāhala* (Āli 'Imrān/61). In this verse, the Prophet (PBUH) calls upon his "Sons," "Women," and "Self" to engage in the *Mubāhala* with the opponents. *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, through narrating an account in which the Prophet (PBUH) places 'Alī, *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, *al-Ḥasan*, and *al-Ḥusayn* beside him and introduces them to God as "My Family and Household," endeavors to construct a Qur'anic discourse that emphasizes the elevated position of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS). This serves as a rebuttal against opposing narratives that deny *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* such a status.

Additionally, narration 57 refers to the verse 33 (al-Aḥzāb): "Allāh intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O! People of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification." This verse explicitly affirms the inclusion of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) in divine purification. *Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, by invoking this verse, reinforces the status of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS), especially *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, and challenges the opposing discourse.

As a result, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* not only uses Qur'ānic intertextuality as a shared source but also constructs a strong discourse. Through this, he draws on the collective understanding of the Qur'ān as the ultimate reference to affirm the superiority of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS), particularly *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), thereby effectively marginalizing the opposing discourse.

Another aspect of intertextuality is *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s perceived inclination towards Shiism, which some have argued. However, most of

his works are devoted to narrating and examining the ḥadīths and narrators of Ahl al-Sunnah. His interest in ḥadīths such as the ḥadīth of the "Bird" (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 3, 142) and his authentication of the ḥadīth "Whoever I am his master, 'Ali is his master" according to the conditions of *Ṣaḥīḥayn* (ibid: 3, 419) reflect this. Moreover, his refusal to narrate the virtues of *Mu'āwiyah* (al-Dhahabī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 17, 175) led some to consider him a "Moderate Shi'ī" (Sam'ānī, 1962: 21, 402) and others to label him as a "Rāfiḍī." (al-Dhahabī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 17, 174-175)

These views subjected him to pressure from Sunni hardliners, particularly during the Ghaznavid era and the rise of the *Karrāmīyah*, forcing him to live in secrecy for a time (Ibn Kathīr, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 11, 409). The *Karrāmīyah* confined him to his house, broke his pulpit, and prevented him from leaving. *Sullamī* suggested that he could gain his freedom by narrating a virtue of *Mu'āwiyah*, but *al-Ḥākim* refused. This conflict revolved around his narration of the virtues of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) and his refusal to narrate the virtues of *Mu'āwiyah*.

However, *Subkī* contends that *al-Ḥākim* was merely excessive in his devotion to Imam 'Alī (AS) and no negative view of him regarding *Mu'āwiyah* has been reported (Subkī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 163). Similarly, his teacher *al-Dāruqutnī* was also accused of Shi'a tendencies for preserving the collected poetry of Sayyid *Ḥimyarī* (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 12, 35).

206 On the other hand, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* has narrated ḥadīths in his book that are inconsistent with Shi'a perspectives. For instance, he

records the first virtue of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) as narrated by 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, who had a strained relationship with Imam 'Alī (AS). According to this report, Imam 'Alī (AS) mentioned the daughter of *Abū Jahl*, which upset *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS). In response, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "*Fāṭimah* is a part of my body; whoever hurts her, hurts me." (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 37) This narration is at odds with Shi'a ḥadīths, as Imam *al-Ṣādiq* (AS) in other narrations has declared it to be a fabrication and a myth (Shaykh Ṣadūq, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 165).

Similarly, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* recounts a ḥadīth in which *Abū Bakr* led the funeral prayer for *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) with Imam 'Alī (AS) praying behind him (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 76). He also narrates a ḥadīth about *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* crying during her marriage due to Imam 'Alī's (AS) poverty (ibid: 108). Additionally, certain chapters in his book refer to *Abū Bakr*, 'Umar, and 'Āyishah with specific honorific titles (ibid: 68 and 117). These examples underscore that the author's perspective aligns with Sunni views and is deeply rooted in the discourse of Ahl al-Sunnah.

## 5. Interpretation of the Book "Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā (AS)" at the Level of Social Action

At this level, the focus is on ideologies and their foundations, illustrating how social determinants, such as power relations at both situational and societal levels, shape discourse. The analysis of social action reveals how language use within discourse serves specific social and political purposes. Among all forms of discourse, political

discourse carries the most significant ideological weight, warranting particular attention in this context.

In critical discourse analysis, texts are not neutral; ideology plays a pivotal role in shaping how the text is interpreted. The goals of discourse become evident through the explanation of social action, showing how discourse can produce reproductive effects on social structures—affects that either maintain or transform those structures (Fairclough, 2000: 245).

In the analysis of this level in the writing of the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'* (AS), various factors and motivations are examined that significantly influenced the creation of social actions. The discourse of this book belongs to a socio-political context in which religious and political power dynamics among Muslims were undergoing shifts. This discourse emerged as a reaction to the ongoing conflicts among different Muslim factions, particularly after the caliphate of 'Alī (AS). Its primary aim was to reinforce the identity of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, particularly *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'* (AS), in opposition to rival narratives.

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, as the architect of this discourse, sought to bolster his spiritual authority by emphasizing the virtues of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and elucidating their esteemed status before Allah. Through this, he aimed to fortify his position against opposing movements.

Since societal tensions and conflicts play a central role in shaping ideological perspectives, it becomes crucial to understand how ideology functions in interpreting a text as a component of a broader intellectual and ideological framework. The enduring ideological

duality between the supporters and adversaries of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)—rooted in the succession of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and further accentuated by the division between Imam 'Alī (AS) and *Mu'āwiyah*—extends to the status of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) and the other Imams (AS).

Despite the passage of several centuries, these ideological conflicts remain unresolved. *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, as the author of this discourse, remains resolute in his convictions, as reflected in the composition of this book.

The ideology of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* in authoring this book lies in defending the esteemed position of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) against distortions and accusations. This ideology holds particular significance in the aftermath of the caliphate of Imam 'Alī (AS), a period marked by deep ideological divisions within the Islamic community. Through the discourse of virtue-writing, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* implicitly seeks to establish a religious and political hegemony aimed at reinforcing the status of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) in Islamic society.

In Islamic discourse, unlike Western paradigms, social action extends beyond the analysis of power relations, social functions, and personal superiority. The discussion surrounding narrations of virtues is deeply rooted in divine knowledge, reflecting the exalted status of the individual in the sight of God. Its significance is not based on conventional societal constructs but rather regarded as a matter of core belief. Consequently, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, in compiling the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), seeks to reshape societal perceptions

of her. By gathering narrations of her virtues and clarifying her elevated status in the sight of God Almighty and the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), he aims to solidify her position in the collective consciousness of the Muslim community.

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, in composing this book, indirectly strives to consolidate his religious hegemony by reconstructing and emphasizing the virtues of Lady *Fāṭimah* (AS) in response to rival discourses. This discourse has been particularly influential in countering movements opposed to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and groups that attempted to distort their virtues.

The ideology of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* is distinctly centered on love and devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). Beyond compiling *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, he authored *Mafākhīr al-Riḍā*, referencing the presence of Imam *Riḍā* (AS) in Nishābūr (Ja'farīyān, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 230). Through these works, *al-Ḥākim* sought to foster an intellectual and religious climate conducive to collaboration between Shi'a and Sunnī scholars.

In this endeavor, by promoting positive discourses centered on the Ahl al-Bayt, he aimed to counteract opposing narratives and reinforce the Ahl al-Bayt's pivotal role in the intellectual and religious history of Islam. This ideology reflects a synthesis of religious devotion, political legitimacy, and scholarly collaboration, which, during his era, succeeded in cultivating a distinctive intellectual milieu in *Nishābūr*.

### 5-1. The Role of Imam Shāfi'ī in *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s Virtue Writing

**210** One of the primary motivations behind the composition of this book

was the inspiration *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* derived from Imam Shāfi'ī (d. 204 AH), who is widely regarded as a devotee of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). Shāfi'ī was of *Qurayshī* descent through his father (al-Dhahabī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 10, 6), and according to some sources, his mother was from the *Hashimī* lineage (al-Subkī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 193). This dual genealogical heritage significantly influenced Shāfi'ī's character and fostered his profound love for the Ahl al-Bayt.

Imam Shāfi'ī frequently extolled the virtues of Imam 'Alī (AS), considering him worthy of admiration for his asceticism, profound knowledge, bravery, and nobility (Abū Zahra, 2008: 144). Moreover, in his poetry, Shāfi'ī emphasized that love for the Prophet's family (PBUH) is a religious duty, urging others to uphold their dignity and esteem.

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, who also authored *Faḍā'il al-Shāfi'ī* (al-Dhahabī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 89), drew extensively from his Imam's example, demonstrating a special devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in his works.

A notable incident exemplifies al-Shāfi'ī's commitment to their honor: while attending a gathering where the virtues of Imam 'Alī (AS), Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), and their two sons were discussed, a participant objected, saying, "It is improper to speak of them. Abandon this discussion, for it reflects the speech of the Rafīdah." Deeply moved, al-Shāfi'ī responded with the following verses of poetry: "I seek refuge in God from people who regard love for *Fāṭimah* and her children as rejection (*Rafḍ*). When the name of Imam 'Alī (AS) or his sons is mentioned, they respond with fabricated statements to obscure and diminish their memory. May the blessings

and peace of my Lord be upon the family of the Messenger of God (PBUH), and may His curse be upon those entrenched in ignorance."

Inspired by such stances, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* demonstrated similar resolve when facing disrespect toward the Ahl al-Bayt. On one occasion, during a gathering where disparaging remarks were made about Imam 'Alī (AS), he objected strongly. In the same assembly, an individual attempted to diminish the status of Lady *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) by citing a narration that portrayed her sister Zaynab as the most virtuous daughter of the Prophet (PBUH). *Ḥākim* could not accept this claim and, in defense of her unparalleled status, authored the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, affirming her superiority over all women of the world.

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* (d. 405 AH) lived in an era more than a century after the compilation of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. During this period, a belief was taking shape among the ḥadīth scholars within the Sunni community that *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* had collected all authentic narrations. As a result, any ḥadīth absent from these two collections was regarded as weak or unreliable. To challenge the misconception that only the narrations in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* are authentic, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* authored the *Mustadrak* (Supplement), becoming the first scholar to write a supplement to these two collections. Before this work, he had written *al-Madkhal ilā Ma'rifat al-Ṣaḥīḥ* and *al-Madkhal ilā Ma'rifat Kitāb al-Aklīl*, laying the foundational principles of 'Ilm al-Ḥadīth (the science of ḥadīth criticism) (cf. *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, 1977 AD/1397 AH: 52, 53, 57, 61). Through his composition of *Ma'rifat*

*ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*, he produced the first structured and organized text on ḥadīth sciences, completing and refining the earlier efforts of *Ibn Khallād al-Rāmahurmuzī*.

The recognition of the shortcomings and inefficiencies in the conventional methods for distinguishing authentic from inauthentic ḥadīths, alongside the issue of fabricated narrations, motivated *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* to classify and systematize ḥadīth sciences through his seminal work, *Maʿrifat ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*. A study of his ḥadīth-related works, such as *Maʿrifat ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*, *al-Mustadrak*, and *Faḍāʾil Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ*, demonstrates that he initiated a fresh approach to reforming the thinking of ḥadīth scholars in his time, aiming to rid them of certain rigid and dogmatic perspectives.

At the beginning of *Maʿrifat ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*, *al-Ḥākim* notes that, during his era, an intense zeal among students of ḥadīth, coupled with their limited understanding of the principles of ḥadīth science, had given rise to certain innovations in the principles of the prophetic traditions (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 1977 AD/1397 AH: 1–2). He observed that, within his society, some individuals, relying solely on earlier works such as *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* and *Sahīh Muslim*, dismissed other ḥadīths and narrations as inauthentic. This, he argued, was contrary to the views of the compilers of these collections themselves (al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 1, 41–42).

In response to these prevailing attitudes, *al-Ḥākim* authored *al-Mustadrak* and *Faḍāʾil Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ*, asserting that the widespread acceptance of such restrictive views would lead to the

neglect and loss of numerous authentic narrations.

Based on this perspective, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* compiled numerous narrations that were omitted from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, claiming that they met the criteria of either or both works, in his book *al-Mustadrak*. The composition of *Faḍā'il Fā'imah al-Zahrā'* is also considered part of this effort. By adopting such an approach, it was inevitable that a significant portion of the narrations included in these works would be seen by *ḥadīth* scholars as inconsistent with their theological doctrines and beliefs. This led to considerable criticism from the scholars of *ḥadīth* regarding his theological outlook, his mention of the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, and his perceived Shi'i inclinations.

For instance, some critics, like *Mālīnī*, remarked: "*I studied al-Mustadrak from beginning to end and did not find any narration that met the conditions of the two Shaykhs.*" (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*) Others, like *Dhahabī*, considered *Mālīnī's* statement an exaggeration, arguing that about half of the narrations in *al-Mustadrak* meet the criteria of the two Shaykhs or one of them. *Dhahabī* further noted that the remaining narrations are a mix of authentic, weak, rejected, or fabricated reports (*Dhahabī*, 2003: 9, 89). Additionally, some scholars accused him of leniency in *ḥadīth* authentication (*Al-Suyūṭī*, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 1, 111). However, *Ibrahim ibn Muḥammad al-Irmawī* offered a more balanced analysis, stating that the opposition to *al-Ḥākim* stemmed from his inclusion of narrations—such as the *ḥadīth al-Ṭayr* and the *ḥadīth of Wilāyah*—that met the conditions of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, but

which were controversial among scholars of *ḥadīth* (Ḥājī Khalīfah, n.d: 2, 1672).

It could be said that the purification of narrations from fabricated reports, on the one hand, and the adoption of a more conservative approach to narrations, particularly concerning the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt, on the other, had the greatest influence on the composition of works like *Ma'rifat 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*. Since the science of *Dirāyah* focuses on evaluating the authenticity of narrations, the prominence of this subject in al-Ḥākim's scholarly efforts enhanced the credibility of his writings on virtues. From this perspective, there is a profound connection between al-Ḥākim's virtue-writing and his contributions to *Ilm al-Dirāyah*.

In explaining the prominence of al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī's composition of the book *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*, it is important to note that narrations about the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt had been present in Sunni hadith collections from the outset, but recording these narrations often faced challenges due to political and social conditions. Ahmad Amin, an orientalist scholar, cites observations comparing *Musnad Aḥmad* and the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, noting that *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* (d. 241 AH), due to his courage and lack of fear of the Abbasids, narrated the virtues of Imam 'Alī and his followers, whereas *al-Bukhārī* (d. 256 AH) and *Muslim* (d. 261 AH), adopting a more conciliatory stance toward the Abbasids, avoided transmitting these narrations. Amin, however, refutes the orientalist perspective, arguing that Bukhārī and Muslim may have deemed the virtues of the Umayyads unauthentic, while Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, departing from the

stringent criteria of the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, exercised greater leniency in his narrations. This, Amin contends, was not due to bravery but rather differences in the standards for accepting narrations (Amin, 1998: 2, 122–123).

It appears that *al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, influenced by political and social conditions as well as their sectarian biases, deliberately avoided including certain authentic hadiths—agreed upon by Muslims and present in other Sunni collections—solely to prevent highlighting the superiority of Imam ‘Alī (AS) over the caliphs. Among these hadiths are the Hadith of *Ghadīr*, the Hadith of the Closed Doors (*Sadd al-Abwāb*), the Hadith of the Verse of Purification (*Āyat al-Tathīr*), and the Hadith "I am the city of knowledge, and ‘Alī is its gate."

In discussing the dynamics of power relations and ideological tensions at the societal and situational levels shaping this discourse, it is crucial to note that during the reigns of *al-Ma‘mūn*, *al-Mu‘taṣim*, and *al-Wāthiq*, the *Mu‘tazilah* rose to prominence, leading to a weakening of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth. The *Mu‘tazilah* in Baghdad emphasized and persistently advocated for the superiority (*Afḍalīyyah*) of Imam ‘Alī (AS). During this period, *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, a prominent figure among the Ahl al-Ḥadīth, in opposition to the *Mu‘tazilah*, explicitly addressed the issue of *al-Tarbī* (the arrangement of the caliphate in sequence) and acknowledged Imam ‘Alī (AS) as the fourth caliph. *Ibn Ḥanbal* maintained that the sequence of the caliphate was based not on individual virtues (*Faḍā’il*) but on the chronological order of succession.

"The number of virtues that have reached us regarding 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (AS) has not been reported for any other companion." (al-ʿAsqalānī, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 7, 74) Following the *Mmiḥnah* (ordeal), *Ibn Ḥanbal* grew closer to the caliphal authority during the reign of *al-Mutawakkil*, and the Ahl al-Ḥadīth regained their dominance over the *Muʿtazilah*. In his book *Uṣūl al-Sunnah*, he regarded *Abū Bakr*, *ʿUmar*, and *ʿUthmān* as the best of the *Ummah* after the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and then included the members of the *Shūrā*, among whom Imam 'Alī (AS) was listed (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 35–38).

In all the books of Ahl al-Ḥadīth that discuss the virtues (*Faḍā'il*) of the companions (*Ṣaḥābah*), the virtues of *Abū Bakr* are mentioned first, followed by *ʿUmar* and *ʿUthmān*, and finally the virtues of Imam 'Alī (AS). After the reign of *al-Mutawakkil*, ḥadīth scholars who adhered to the belief in the superiority based on the caliphate began narrating the ḥadīth in a way that downplayed the virtue of Imam 'Alī (AS) in comparison to *Abū Bakr*, *ʿUmar*, and *ʿUthmān*. Consequently, many of the virtues of Imam 'Alī (AS) and the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) were either completely omitted or mentioned incompletely. *Mutawakkil* ordered that *Naṣr ibn 'Alī al-Jahḍamī* be lashed a thousand times for narrating a ḥadīth praising Imam 'Alī (AS), *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), Imam *al-Ḥasan* (AS), and Imam *al-Ḥusayn* (AS) (al-Dhahabī, 2003: 5, 1265). In this environment, ḥadīth scholars such as *al-Bukhārī* (d. 256 AH), *Muslim* (d. 261 AH), *Abū Dāwūd* (d. 275 AH), *Ibn Mājah* (d. 275 AH), and *al-Tirmidhī* (d. 279 AH) either refrained from narrating the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) or mentioned them selectively.

In the book *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 369 narrations are reported regarding the virtue of Imam 'Alī (AS). In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, after removing repetitive narrations, two or three narrations concern the virtue of Imam 'Alī (AS), and four narrations are about the virtue of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS). Similarly, in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, three narrations are reported about the virtue of Imam 'Alī (AS) and three about the virtue of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) (Zahrāb, 2012 AD /1391 SH: 231, 246, 247, and 251).

*al-Mu'taḍid* (d. 289 AH), after *al-Mu'tamad*, assumed power. He showed kindness to the 'Alawīs and the family of 'Alī (AS) and displayed hostility toward the Umayyads. In 284 AH, he issued an order for *Mu'āwīyah* and *Yazīd* to be cursed on the pulpits (Ṭabarī, 1984 AD/1403 AH: 8, 189). From this period onward, we observe a significant transformation in the composition of works on the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt (AS).

The 4th and 5th centuries AH marked a flourishing era of virtue-writing among Ahl al-Sunnah, with over 70 independent works composed on the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt (AS). Important books from this period include *Khaṣā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by *al-Nasā'ī* (d. 303 AH), *Faḍā'il 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* (AS) by *al-Ṭabarī* (d. 310 AH), *al-Tabṣirah fī Faḍīlat al-'Itrah al-Muṭahharah* by Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan Hamdanī (d. 371 AH), and *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) by *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* (d. 405 AH).

*Al-Ḥākim*, by compiling the virtues of Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in *al-Mustadrak*—which is an addition to the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*—and also gathering the virtues of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS) in *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*

(AS), reconciled the discrepancy between the avoidance and strictness of the two Shaykhs (*al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*) and the leniency that *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal* showed in narrating the virtues of the *Ṣaḥābah*. He narrated numerous authentic ḥadīths on the merits of *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) according to the conditions of the two Shaykhs or based on his own views, which should be considered a new chapter in virtue-writing.

In *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* narrated around 258 ḥadīths on the virtues of *Ahl al-Bayt* (AS) that meet the criteria for inclusion in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, but were not included in these two books. In *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS), he collected 232 ḥadīths and organized them into 65 chapters.

## Conclusion

The findings of this research were analyzed across three levels of discourse, summarized as follows:

At the descriptive level, considering the structure and content of the book, it can be concluded that the narrations of the virtues of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* are rooted in profound and significant messages. The language employed in these narrations is predominantly marked by positive, purposeful meanings. The element of repetition is strategically used to reinforce their content and emphasize their core themes.

At the interpretive level, the foundational axis of *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s discourse is the affirmation of *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā*'s unparalleled superiority over all women of the world and the women of paradise. He skillfully employs various discursive strategies, including explicit and implicit intertextuality, to articulate the divine

message of her exalted status and the incommensurability of her rank with that of other women. This message is effectively conveyed to his audience within the framework of his discourse.

Based on what occurred during a particular meeting between *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī* and others, the interpretive level reveals that *al-Ḥākim* had no choice but to elucidate the duality within society through an ideological lens rooted in tradition. This was essential for articulating his discourse on the status of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in opposition to the prevailing narrative of the *Ahl al-Ḥadīth*.

The distinctive political and social context of the Samanid and Buyid eras, which emphasized the promotion of knowledge and scholars, alongside their policy of tolerance and leniency towards various sects and intellectuals, marked the golden age of the 4th century AH. Moreover, *al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*'s unique attributes—including his affection for Imam *al-Riḍā* (AS), his emulation of Imam al-Shāfi'ī, his engagement with Shi'a-leaning scholars as mentors, and his role as a mediator and courier between the Sāmānids and the Buyids—played a significant role in laying the groundwork for the composition of *Faḍā'il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS).

*Al-Ḥākim al-Nīshābūrī*, through fundamental reforms in his ḥadīth methodology, not only purified fabricated narrations but also introduced a major transformation in the Sunni perspective, particularly regarding the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), by shifting his approach to these narrations.

These reforms can be traced within the interdisciplinary framework of ḥadīth sciences and *ʿIlm al-Dirāyah* (the science of critical

evaluation), where *al-Ḥākim* strengthened the foundational principles of *‘ilm al-dirāyah* through his works such as *al-Madkhal ilā Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Madkhal ilā Ma‘rifat Kitāb al-Aklīl*, and *Ma‘rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*. This science, which focuses on assessing the authenticity of ḥadīths, directly influenced the credibility and acceptance of al-Ḥākim's contributions to virtue-writing, especially his books like *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* and *Faḍā’il Fāṭimah al-Zahrā* (AS).

This connection underscores how *‘Ilm al-Dirāyah* underpinned the development of virtue-writing as a scholarly discipline. However, this scientific and discursive evolution triggered backlash from certain rival groups, who accused *al-Ḥākim* of leniency and sought to marginalize him. The interplay of virtue-writing and discursive critiques in the intellectual milieu of the time reveals the intricate dimensions of shifting Sunni attitudes towards the Ahl al-Bayt (AS).

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