ZARB-E-HAIDERI
THE STRIKE OF HAIDER (RA)



By

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Prefatory Apology

All praise is due to Allah, the Almighty, and peace and blessings be upon His Prophet. We have endeavored to translate these Islamic texts from Urdu to English with the utmost care and devotion. However, as human fallibility is inherent in any endeavor, any inadvertent errors, misinterpretations, or shortcomings in conveying the profound meanings of the original text belong solely to the translators, and we seek forgiveness from Allah and indulgence from the reader for any such imperfections.

We humbly welcome guidance from scholars and readers, and we invite you to point out any inadvertent errors. We assure you that corrections will be received with an open heart and utilized to improve future editions.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ahl al-Bayt:

The family of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), including his daughter Fatimah (RA), son-in-law Ali (RA), and their descendants.

Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah:

The mainstream group of Muslims who follow the Sunnah (way) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the consensus (Jama'ah) of his companions (RA).

Ameer Muawiyah (RA):

A respected Sahabi, the governor of Syria, founder of the Umayyad dynasty, scribe of the Quranic revelation, and the brother-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Astana Aaliya:

A spiritual center or shrine associated with a Sufi order.

Bid'ah:

In Islam, an act of worship or belief introduced into the religion that has no basis in the Quran or Sunnah.

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Fasiq:

An Islamic legal term for someone who openly commits major sins and disobeys the Shariah without repentance.

Fazail:

Plural of Fazilat, meaning virtues, merits, or excellences.

Hujjah:

An Islamic term for authoritative evidence used in religious discourse.

Ijma':

The unanimous agreement of Muslim scholars on a religious issue, regarded as a binding source of Islamic law.

Khawarij:

An early sect that rebelled against the Caliphate of Hazrat Ali (RA), known for their extreme ideology and declaring other Muslims as disbelievers.

Khulafa-e-Rashideen (RA):

The 'Rightly Guided Caliphs' — Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA), Hazrat Umar (RA), Hazrat Uthman (RA), and Hazrat Ali (RA).

Mu'tabar:

An Islamic term for something or someone considered authentic, credible, and worthy of acceptance.

Munazir-e-Azam:

A title meaning 'The Grand Debater,' often given to a scholar known for his exceptional debating skills on religious issues.

Rafidhis:

A sect that rejects the first three Caliphs (RA) and shows excessive bias towards Hazrat Ali (RA) and the Ahl al-Bayt, often accompanied by cursing the Sahaba (RA).

Rifz (Rafidhism):

A deviant belief system that involves rejecting the majority of Sahaba (RA) and promoting enmity towards them.

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Sahaba (RA):

The Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who believed in him and died as Muslims.

Shaykhain (RA):

A title referring collectively to Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) and Hazrat Umar (RA), the first two rightly-guided Caliphs.

Sahih Hadith:

Saying or action attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that meets the standards of absolute authenticity set by Muslim scholars

Tafdhilis:

Those who believe that Hazrat Ali (RA) was superior to Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) and Hazrat Umar (RA), contrary to the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

To the Responsible Scholars Who Carry a Sincere Concern for the Religion

> *The issue of the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar occupies such foundational position that the refutation of the entire Shi'a sect fundamentally rests upon it... Its corruption is even more severe than the corruptions of the Mu'tazilah and Jabriyyah sects. Thus, it is obligatory upon scholars to accord particular emphasis and rigorous attention to the issue of superiority... Indeed, for establishing the necessity of upholding this doctrine, it is sufficient proof that the belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar) is among the defining hallmarks of Ahl al-Sunnah."*
>
> *(Nibrās, Page 302 – By Hazrat Allama Muhammad Abdul Aziz Parharwi, may Allah have mercy on him)*

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PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the master of the prophets and messengers, his family, and all his companions.

The commendations of the greatest scholars of the Muslim world have been received. This humble servant deems it necessary to preface a few words.

At an international Mawlid conference, a speaker claimed that during the welcoming of the Prophet (PBUH) in Medina,

> *"all the men and women were dancing."*

This statement is a distortion by extremists (*tahrīf al-ghālīn*). To interpret *"la'ibat al-Habasha bi-hirābihim* (لَعِبَتِ الْحَبَشَةُ بِحِرَابِهِمْ)*"* (the Abyssinians playing with their spears) in this manner and to use the word *"dancing"* for the most sacred women of Islam is utterly disgraceful.

At the Imam-e A'zam Abu Hanifa Conference, the same speaker said,

> *"We are the first to coin the terms 'thaniyyāt (ثنائيات)' and 'wahdāniyyāt (وحدانيات)' for the narrations transmitted by Imam Abu Hanifa."*

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He seems unaware that these terms were already established and mentioned in the introduction of *Musnad Imam-e A'zam* (published by Qadeemi Kutub Khana, p. 10). This claim is nothing but *"intihāl al-mubtilīn"* (plagiarism of the falsifiers) and reflects extreme ignorance.

During a speech on *Haqeeqat-e Muhammadiyya* (The Reality of Muhammad) at Liaquat Bagh, he said, *"The Prophet (PBUH) is like Allah."* Such words by the so-called scholar are pure transgression (*zulm-e 'azeem*). He often boasts, *"What I say, you won't find in any books,"* sometimes labeling all scholars of the Ummah as *"envious,"* and at other times claiming, *"I am fatwa-proof; I don't care about scholars' edicts".* When such individuals began attacking the foundational beliefs of Islam and propagating their deviations**, I was compelled to take up the pen.**

Misguided people, with their resources and followers, have carried out major intellectual projects and gained fame. The history of the Khawarij and Mu'tazila is before us—their contributions to Quranic studies, activism, and strategic planning cannot be denied. Even the Qadianis have such a strong network that it leaves one astonished. However, true success lies not in organizational strength, prolific writing, or eloquence, but in adherence to the Quran, Sunnah, consensus (*ijmā'*), following the majority (*sawād al-a'zam*), and servitude to the Prophet's (PBUH) followers.

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"In every generation of my Ummah, there will be those who reject the distortions of extremists, the plagiarism of falsifiers, and the misinterpretations of the ignorant."*
>
> *(Mishkat, Hadith 248)*

This hadith clarifies that every era will witness ignorant misinterpretations, extremist distortions, and intellectual theft. Those who engage in such acts will claim to be Muslims, while the responsible scholars of the Ummah will expose them. Keeping this in mind, scholars have written commendations for *Zarb-e Haideri* to uphold truth and refute falsehood.

A *Tafdhīlī* (one who prefers Ali over Sayyiduna Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar) wrote:

> *" Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was a political caliph, while Ali was a spiritual caliph. The domain of political caliphate extends to the earth (farsh), while the domain of wilayah (sainthood) reaches the throne (ʿarsh)."*
>
> *(Al-Sayf al-Jalī, p. 9)*

Denying the spiritual caliphate of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is pure Rafidhism (Shi'a extremism). Comparing his caliphate to the earth and Ali's to the throne is disrespectful. If a Khariji were to say the same about Ali , it would be Kharijism; similarly, saying this about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is Rafidhism. A true Sunni accepts all four rightly-guided caliphs as legitimate in both apparent *(Zahir)* and spiritual *(Batin)* authority.

Is it mere coincidence that those who deny the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar also slander Muʿawiya ? Or that they interpret *"maraja al-bahrayn"* (the merging of the two seas) as referring to Ali and Fatima , ignoring the next verse (*"Between them is a barrier they do not transgress"*—Quran 55:20) Even the mention of fish, ships (*fulk*), and pearls (*lu'lu' wa al-marjān*) in the Quran refutes their Rafidhi interpretations.

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> *"And the two seas are not alike: this, fresh, sweet, good to drink, this (other) bitter, salt. And from them both ye eat fresh meat and derive the ornament that ye wear. And thou seest the ship cleaving them with its prow that ye may seek of His bounty, and that haply ye may give thanks."*
>
> *(Surah Fāṭir 35:12)*

These same people interpret the Qur'ānic verse **"There come forth from them both pearls and coral" *(Yakhruju minhumā al-lu'lu'u wal-marjān)*** as referring to **Hasan and Husayn (peace and blessings be upon their grandfather and upon them both)**.

However, the scholars have clearly written that:

> *"This is among the interpretations of the ignorant and the foolish, such as the Rāfiḍites (extremist Shīʿah)."*
>
> *(References: Mirqāt, vol. 1, p. 292; Al-Itqān, vol. 2, p. 180; Muqaddimah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, pp. 38–39; Majmaʿ al-Biḥār, vol. 5, p. 236; Fayḍ al-Qadīr, vol. 2, p. 102).*

Even **their own favored scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah**, writes regarding this :

> *"Its chain of transmission is darkness upon darkness (isnādahu ẓulumātun baʿḍuhā fawqa baʿḍ)."*
>
> *(Minhaj al-Sunnah, 4/66)*

Is it also a coincidence that such people claim:

> *"Until the age of 56, not a single white hair was on Imam Hussain's blessed body, but as soon as he carried his martyred son's body, his hair and beard turned white."*
>
> *(Shahadat-e Imam Hussain, p. 43)*

Yet, Sahih Bukhari records that Imam Hussain's blessed head had black dye (*khidāb*) on it (*Bukhari, 3748*), proving his hair was already white, and he dyed it as a mujahid.

Is it merely a coincidence that the same individuals who consider the consensus of the Ummah to be insignificant and repeatedly oppose it in numerous matters — while rejecting consensus is a hallmark of the Rawafid?

Is it also mere coincidence that these very individuals attend the gatherings and *Majalis* of the Rāfiḍites, seek to please them, maintain cordial relations with them, and speak in their praise? Why, then, are all these Rāfiḍī tendencies found combined in a single person?

On the other hand, those who claim Ali's superiority in wilayah now openly deny the absolute superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar. Graduates from their institutions have become propagators of Rafidhism, attacking Sunni beliefs under the guise of *"love for Ahl al-Bayt.*

> *" Remember: One who denies the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar will eventually criticize them openly and will inevitably become an eternal enemy of Mu'awiya .*

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If a teacher slips by a foot, the student slips by a mile. As Umar said:

> *"A scholar's misstep destroys Islam."*

Meanwhile, opponents exploit such people's speeches and writings to mislead Sunni masses. They frequently make controversial statements, causing divisions—such as claiming *"jihad is only defensive"* or stating in a Christmas event that *"Jews and Christians are believers, not disbelievers."*

Just reflect—how grave and unjust these statements are! Because of such utterances, your followers and other Muslims have fallen into bitter disputes. Meanwhile, your associates, like zealous witnesses supporting a negligent claimant, tirelessly strive to prove these claims true.

> *But the crucial question remains: why has it come to this state of conflict? What did you truly gain by raising such controversies? Where is that professed concern for the Ummah? What became of the slogans and efforts for unity and harmony?*

Is it that all the earlier differences were false, and the new divisions you are creating now represent the very essence of Islam? The same question extends to your other misleading assertions as well.

By Allah's grace, this humble servant foresaw these dangers and addressed them timely, though not everyone may perceive them yet.

> *"I wish to tear open my chest, piece by piece, to express the pain of longing."*

But consider this: If the author of this book is ignorant, then are the great, authoritative scholars who endorsed it also ignorant? These are scholars unparalleled in the world today, some of whom were even teachers of the *Tafdhīlīs*.

I sought these commendations so that no critic could oppose me except with baseless emotions—neither before their conscience nor before Allah. Those whom they call *"narrow-minded"* are the very ones the Prophet (PBUH) called *"the bearers of knowledge and the just."*

This book was written to preserve Islam's pure record and prevent the writings of 15th-century heretics from becoming references for future generations. However, we have not targeted anyone by name. May Allah protect us from opposing others out of personal grudges and grant us the courage to speak and accept the truth.

May He accept this humble effort. Ameen

This new edition includes additional commendations, diacritics on Arabic texts, hadith verifications, and responses to objections of Tafdhiliyyah on *Zarb-e-Haideri*. However, the critic's name has been deliberately withheld so as not to grant him undue importance, allowing him to remain within his proper limits and ensuring that the true purpose of the book is not undermined.

Interestingly, most objections to *Zarb-e Haideri* have already been answered within the book itself. Many of their followers don't even read it properly.

> ***Note:*** *If anyone objects to any point in Zarb-e Haideri, readers are requested to check the relevant section themselves. Insha'Allah, the critic's Rafidhi tendencies will become evident.*

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—Ghulam Rasool Qasmi

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

ZARB-E HAIDERI

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. Blessings and peace be upon the master of the prophets and messengers, his family, and all his companions.

The Distinctive Virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him)

Allah, the Almighty, chose the Companions of His Beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) and granted them superiority over all creation. Among them, the 313 Companions of Badr hold the highest merit. The Ten Promised Paradise (*Ashara Mubashara*) are even more distinguished. Then come the Rightly Guided Caliphs (***Rashidun***): Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) is the most superior, followed by Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq (may Allah be pleased with him), then Sayyiduna Uthman al-Ghani (may Allah be pleased with him), and then Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him).

While the first three caliphs hold unparalleled excellence, Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) was also blessed with countless virtues and unique distinctions. Some misguided individuals harbor hatred toward Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) and Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), denying the latter's exalted status. These are the *Khawarij and Nasibis* (haters of Ali).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> *"The Khawarij are the dogs of Hellfire" (Ibn Majah: 173).*

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How can any believer deny the virtues of Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) when the following are affirmed in authentic traditions:

1. **Lineage**: He is the ancestor of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) progeny and the husband of Sayyidah Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her).

2. **First to Believe**: He was the first child to embrace Islam (Tirmidhi: 3734).

3. **Harun to Musa**: He was the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When the Beloved Prophet ﷺ set out for the Battle of Tabuk and left him behind in Madinah, he (SAW) said:

   > *"Anta minnī bimanzilati Hārūna min Mūsā"*
   >
   > *"You are to me as Harun was to Musa" (Bukhārī, 3706, 4416; Muslim, 6218, 6221; al-Tirmidhī, 3731; Ibn Mājah, 115.)*

4. **Beloved of the Faithful**: He is the beloved and supporter of every believer, about whom the Prophet ﷺ emphatically declared:

   > *"Whoever regards me as his friend and guardian, ʿAlī is also his friend and guardian. O Allah, befriend those who befriend him, and show enmity towards those who show enmity towards him." (References: al-Tirmidhī, 3713; Mishkāt, 6091.)*

5. **Conqueror of Khaybar**: He is the conqueror of Khaybar, about whom the Beloved of Allah ﷺ declared:

   "Tomorrow, I shall give the banner to the one who loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger love him." (References: al-Bukhārī, 2942, 3009, 3701, 4210; Muslim, 6223.)

6. **Unique Permission**: He was allowed to pass through the Prophet's Mosque *(Masjid-e-Nabavi)* in a state of major impurity (*Janabah*) (Tirmidhi: 3727).

7. **Brother in Faith**: He was the Brother of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who came weeping at the time of *Mu'ākhāt al-Madīnah* (the pact of brotherhood in Madinah), saying, "You have not made me anyone's brother." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied:

   "You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter" (Tirmidhi: 3720).

8. **Sole Trustee**: About numerous companions, the Prophet's words *"He is from me and I am from him"* are indeed found, yet these **special words** were said **only** regarding *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (may Allah be pleased with him):

   "None can discharge my duty except Ali"(Tirmidhi: 3719, Ibn Mājah: 119).

9. **Gate of Knowledge**: He is the **Gate of Knowledge** (*Bāb al-'Ilm*), the one who was honored above all other Companions as the greatest judge among them *(Mishkāt, 6120)*.
   It was for this very reason that **Sayyidunā 'Umar al-Fārūq** (may Allah be pleased with him) would seek Allah's refuge from any gathering of judgment or knowledge in which 'Alī was not present *(al-Iṣābah, vol. 2, p. 1296).*

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10. **Sacrifice**: He slept on the Prophet's (peace be upon him) bed during the night of migration (*Hijra*) (*Al-Riyad al-Nadrah* 2:113).

11. **Divine Strength**: He destroyed idols on the Kaaba's roof and later said: It was none other than that exalted personality, 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (RA), whom the Beloved of Allah ﷺ commanded to climb upon His blessed shoulders and cast down the idols from the roof of the Ka'bah. 'Alī (RA) himself later said:

    ""It felt as though, had I willed, I could have touched the very edges of the sky." (Al-Sunan al-Kubra: 8507).

12. **Sun Reversed**: The sun was turned back so he could pray (*Al-Shifa* 1:185, Its narrators are trustworthy)

13. **Prophet's Longing**: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ dispatched an army in which 'Alī (may Allah be pleased with him) was also included. The Prophet ﷺ then raised his blessed hands in supplication and prayed:

    "O Allah, do not cause me to die until I see Ali" (Tirmidhi: 3737).

Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"Ali possessed eighteen virtues, any one of which would suffice for salvation. Thirteen of these were unique to him, unmatched by anyone in the Ummah" (Tabarani, Al-Awsat: 8432).*

After all this clarification, if anyone still harbors ill thoughts about the Ahl al-Sunnah or doubts their sincerity, then let him prepare his answer before Allah, the One, the All-Powerful.

Shaykh ʿAbdal Ḥaq Muḥaddith Dihlawī (may Allah have mercy upon him) has written, quoting Imām al-Suyūṭī (may Allah have mercy upon him), that:

> *""The virtues and excellences of the three Caliphs are likewise numerous—indeed, greater and more abundant than those of Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā (may Allah be pleased with him), and even surpass them in many respects." (Ashi'at al-Lama'at 4:674).*

This author has compiled *"Kitab al-Khasa'is"* on the virtues of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs, now published for seekers of truth.

—Ghulam Rasool Qasmi

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INTRODUCTION TO THE TAFDHILI RAFIDHIS

On the other hand, some people consider *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq (may Allah be pleased with them), even though *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* has thirteen unique virtues, while Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) has over eighty. *Sahih al-Bukhari* alone mentions more than twenty distinctive virtues of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. Denying these textual truths is beyond the capacity of the deniers. Those who reject the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr are Rafidhis (rejectionists) and Tafdhilis (preferentialists). These groups, like the Khawarij (extremists), stand on the opposite extreme. In contrast, the Ahl al-Sunnah creed is:

> *"Affirming the superiority of the two Sheikhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) while loving the two sons-in-law (Uthman and Ali)" (Sharh Aqaid al-Nasafi, p. 150).*

Scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah have sternly warned that affirming the superiority of the Sheikhs does **not** diminish love for the sons-in-law, nor does loving the sons-in-law justify considering them superior to the Sheikhs.

The Rafidhi sect has numerous subgroups, detailed in works by scholars such as:

- **Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlawi** (May Allah have mercy on him) in *Tuhfa-e Ithna Ashariyya*.
- **Qazi Sanaullah Panipati** (May Allah have mercy on him) in *Al-Sayf al-Maslul*.
- **Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani** (may Allah sanctify his soul) in *Ghunyat al-Talibin*.

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A core doctrine of Rafidhism is ***taqiyya*** (dissimulation), which makes identifying and countering their subgroups exceedingly difficult.

Today, we address a subgroup that claims to be Ahl al-Sunnah. Among them is the **Tafdhili faction**, which considers Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to the first three caliphs and often harbors hostility toward Sayyiduna Muawiyah (may Allah be pleased with him). These are deviant innovators (*bida'ti*). Scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah explicitly declare them **outside the fold of Sunni orthodoxy**.

The Nature of Deviant Sects

The Khawarij, Rafidhis, and Mu'tazila are misguided sects that reject the consensus (*ijma*) and majority (*sawad al-a'zam*) of the Ummah.

- **Khawarij** (lit. "those who secede") rebel against legitimate authority.
- **Rafidhis** (lit. "rejectionists") *who abandon the majority's path or one who separates and scatters away.*
- **Mu'tazila** (lit. "separatists") *those who withdraw and keep apart*.

A person who presents arguments from the Qur'an and Sunnah to justify his false notions in opposition to the Sawdā al-Aʿẓam (the great majority of the Muslim community) is called a Mulḥid (heretic). The word "Mulḥid" is derived from "Laḥd," which literally means a side or a corner. To deviate from the straight path or for an arrow to miss its target is also called **ilḥād** (deviation). For this reason, the side niche in a grave is called Laḥd—because it is dug on the side, not in the center. Hence, the same underlying meaning found in the terms **Rāfiḍah, Khawārij, and Muʿtazilah** also applies to the **Mulḥidīn**—all denote those who withdraw, abandon, or separate themselves from the main body of the Muslims.If you consult the lexicons, you will find that these names indeed carry the very meanings we have mentioned. One and the same spirit runs through all of them: they are those who detach themselves from the united majority.

Because of this shared trait, they become self-opinionated and **"free-thinkers"**. It is precisely this so-called freedom of thought that led them to create countless sects. Each of them carries his own peculiar interpretation, distinct and divergent from others. Under the guise of "research" and "intellectual inquiry," they dissect matters beyond reason—while the unsuspecting common people, impressed by their cleverness, exclaim in admiration, unaware that such a person himself is misguided and is leading others astray.

Those who cast off the collar of **Sabīl al-Mu'minīn**—the path of the believers—and become so-called "free thinkers," are like **a kite whose string has been cut**: no one knows in whose lap it will fall or on which pole it will become entangled. Yet one thing is certain—its fate is to be lost and torn to shreds. *May Allah protect us from such a fate.*

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Shaaz (Rare), *Matrook* (abandoned), and *Mardood* (rejected) opinions can be found in books on almost every subject. For instance, some writings claim that Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) was superior to all other prophets; some assert that Pharaoh was forgiven; others state that Yazīd was pardoned; and some go so far as to argue that since Yazīd was a Muslim—though sinful—it is therefore permissible to say *"may Allah have mercy on him."*

Such statements are of various kinds: some are interpolations, some are fabricated, and others are weak and untenable.

Beyond these, the books of the **Muʿtazilah, Khawārij, Rāfiḍah,** and **Naturalists (Nīcharīs)** are also filled with a wide array of such absurd and baseless notions.

But remember this well — the true standard of truth is the stance adopted by the ***Sawdā al-Aʿẓam*** (the great majority of the Muslim community). A person who, through his wealth or resources, has amassed an enormous library will naturally have in it all sorts of writings — including the frivolous and the false. If such a person lacks sound intellectual "digestion," then instead of trusting the established and reliable works and following the authoritative opinions of the scholars, he places his confidence in — and even takes pride in — rare, abandoned, and rejected statements, as well as obscure references from forgotten books. He meticulously splits hairs and uses crude and far-fetched interpretations to justify his erroneous views. To lend weight to his so-called "research," he cites statements of **Muʿtazilites, Khārijites,** or other deviant figures, or quotes rejected and isolated opinions, presenting them as scholarly brilliance. Meanwhile, no matter how loudly the ***Sawdā al-Aʿẓam*** may protest, he remains indifferent. The common people, impressed by his show of intellect, mistake such absurdities for profound scholarly subtleties and applaud him in admiration. If such a person happens to be eloquent, talkative, and well-

resourced, he can indeed cause serious harm to the faith and create great distress for the true scholars of Islam.

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ warned:

> *"The thing I fear most for my Ummah is a hypocrite who is eloquent of tongue."*
> *(Musnad Aḥmad, 144)*

Such heretical individuals *(Mulhideen)* prefer their own reasoning and conjecture even in the face of **explicit and authentic Ahadith.**

The truth is that some people have turned their followers into frogs of a well—confined and narrow in their view of the world. Such unfortunate individuals neither appreciate the sermons of any other scholar nor value their writings. Naturally, when they never attend the gatherings of other scholars, how can they recognize or benefit from their knowledge and abilities?

As Ḥaḍrat Ayyūb al-Tābiʿī (may Allah have mercy upon him) wisely said:

> *"If you wish to recognize your teacher's mistakes, then sit with others besides him."*
> *(Sunan al-Dārimī, 647)*

Key Refutations Against the Tafdhilis

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Now, coming to the main point — this treatise has been written in refutation of the **Tafdīliyyah**. This work is not the first to address this subject. In fact, several significant books have already been authored in refutation of the Tafdīliyyah, some of which are listed below:

1. **Manaqib al-A'imma al-Arba'a**

   By Imam Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (may Allah have mercy on him)

2. **Al-Tariqa al-Muhammadiyya**

   By Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi (may Allah have mercy on him)

3. **Al-Habl al-Wathiq fi Nusrat al-Siddiq**

   By Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (may Allah have mercy on him)

4. **Qurrat al-Aynayn fi Tafdhil al-Shaykhayn**

   By Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (may Allah have mercy on him)

5. **Izalat al-Khifa**

   By Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi (may Allah have mercy on him)

6. **Sirr al-Jalil fi Mas'alat al-Tafdhil**

By Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlawi (may Allah have mercy on him)

7. **Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah**

   By Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (may Allah have mercy on him)

8. **Sab'a Sanabil (First Sanbal)**

   By Mir Syed Abdul Wahid Bilgrami (may Allah have mercy on him)

9. **Matla' al-Qamaryn fi Ibana Sabqat al-Umarayn**

   By Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him)

10. **Al-Zilal al-Anqa min Bahr Sabqat al-Atqa**

    By Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him)

11. **Ghaya al-Tahqiq fi Imamah Ali wa al-Siddiq**

    By Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him)

12. **Tazkirat al-Murtadhawi**

    By Hasan Raza Khan Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him)

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THE MODUS OPERANDI OF THE TAFDHILIS

Some Tafdhilis openly declare Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to the two noble Sheikhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar, may Allah be pleased with them). Others verbally affirm the superiority of the Sheikhs but restrict it to ***apparent caliphate***, while claiming ***spiritual wilayah*** (sainthood) as Ali's (may Allah be pleased with him) exclusive domain. This ultimately leads to the same heresy of preference (*tafdhil*). Both groups are equally deviant, but the latter is more dangerous due to their deceit.

Imam Ahl al-Sunnah, Fazl-e Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him), exposes their tactics:

> *"Those whose hearts, overwhelmed by arrogance and rigidity, could not accept the superiority of the Sheikhs yet feared losing the title of 'Sunni' resorted to verbal affirmation. They maintained the Sunni order of caliphate outwardly but redefined 'superiority' to ensure Ali's status remained undiminished. When confronted with proofs from the Quran, Hadith, traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt, or scholarly consensus, they dismissively reply: 'We do not deny the superiority of the Sheikhs—we consider them the most superior after the Prophets!' But their redefinition of 'superiority' nullifies its true meaning. Thus, half a sentence devours entire volumes of evidence, rendering all efforts futile." (Matla' al-Qamaryn, Manuscript p. 32)*

Observant readers will note that Qadianis (Ahmadiyya) similarly deny rejecting the finality of prophethood (*khatm-e-nubuwwat*), and Parwezis (rationalists) reject being labeled as deniers of Hadith. **The Tafdhilis employ the same deceptive tactics.**

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We will first establish the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) through the **Quran, Sunnah, and consensus (ijma)**. Subsequently, we will refute the arguments and objections of the Tafdhilis.

Success comes only from Allah.

THE SUPERIORITY OF SAYYIDUNA SIDDIQ IN THE QUR'AN

Many verses of the Holy Qur'an have been used by esteemed scholars (may Allah be pleased with them) as evidence to prove the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him). And it is evident that the Qur'an was revealed before the outward appointment of the caliphate. Below are some Qur'anic verses for reference:

The First Verse

> *"Those among you who spent and fought before the victory (of Makkah) are not equal (to others); they are greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards..." (Surah Al-Hadid 57:10)*

In the explanation of this verse, many scholars have written powerful and insightful commentaries. For example, in *Tafsir al-Baghawi*, it is stated that this verse was revealed about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him). He was the first to accept Islam and the first to spend wealth in the cause of Allah. Sayyiduna Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: *The first to draw a sword in defense of Islam were the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him).* (*Tafsir Baghawi*, Vol. 4, p. 295)

The same is mentioned in *Tafsir al-Khazin*, Vol. 4, p. 228 and *Tafsir al-Madarik*, Vol. 4, p. 228.

In *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*,

> *it is mentioned that believers have no doubt that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) ranks at the top regarding this verse. He has the greatest share (لَهُ الْحَظُّ الْأَوْفَرُ), and he is a leader among all the followers of the Prophets in acting upon this. He spent all his wealth for the pleasure of Allah. (Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, p. 404)*

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Tafsir al-Qurtubi mentions that:

> *this verse is a clear proof of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's superiority. He is ahead of all because he was the first to accept faith, the first to fight in jihad, and the first to spend wealth on the Prophet of Allah. (Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Vol. 17, p. 206)*

Imam Fakhruddin Razi writes that Wahidi said:

> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the first to fight in the cause of Islam, whereas Sayyiduna Ali was still a young child in the early days of Islam — he was a little boy and not involved in combat. (Tafsir al-Kabir, Vol. 10, p. 452)*

In *Tafsir al-Baydawi*, it is stated that

> *this verse was revealed about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), because he was the first to believe, to spend in the way of Allah, and to confront the*

disbelievers. He was beaten so severely that a person could have died from such beatings. (Tafsir al-Baydawi, Vol. 2, p. 468)

When the polytheists of Makkah tried to harm the Prophet (peace be upon him), Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) fought them off and said:

"Do you want to kill a man who says, 'My Lord is Allah,' while he has brought you clear signs from your Lord?" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith: 3678, 3856, 4815)

In another hadith, when people asked:

"Who is this man showing support for Muhammad?" others replied: "It is the son of Abu Quhafah — he has gone mad." (Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim, Hadith: 4480)

Finally, we present the words of Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlavi (may Allah have mercy on him), who was the reviver (*Mujaddid*) of his century and one of the most esteemed scholarly and spiritual figures in the Islamic world.

He (Shah Waliullah) states:

This verse is a clear textual proof (nass) on the subject that those who made sacrifices before the Victory (of Makkah) are superior to those who did so afterward. (Up to the point he says:) Sayyiduna As-Siddiq (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) fought and spent in the way of Allah before the Hijrah, and Sayyiduna Umar also fought before Hijrah. In contrast, no other Companion—whether it be Sayyiduna Ali or anyone else—engaged in fighting or spending in the cause of Allah before the Hijrah. Thus, this verse proves that the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) are superior to Sayyiduna Ali.

(Izalat al-Khafa, Vol. 1, pp. 296–297)

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Imam al-Baghawi (may Allah have mercy on him), in the commentary of this same verse, narrates powerful hadith about the status of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq with a complete chain of transmission. He writes:

Sayyiduna Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I was present in the company of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was also present. He was wearing a cloak that was stitched in the front with thorns. Then Jibreel (peace be upon him) descended and asked,

"What kind of garment is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr wearing?"

The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "He spent all his wealth on me before the Victory of Makkah."

Jibreel then said, "Allah the Exalted sends His greetings to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and asks: Are you pleased with Me in this state of poverty, or are you displeased?"

The Prophet (peace be upon him) conveyed this greeting and question to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr.

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr replied, "Can I ever be displeased with my Lord? I am pleased with my Lord! I am pleased with my Lord!"

(Tafsir al-Baghawi, Vol. 4, p. 295; Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, p. 404; Abu Nu'aym, Vol. 7, p.105; Kanz al-'Ummal, Vol. 12, p. 228)

Note by Ibn Kathir: *The chain of this narration is weak (isnaduhu da'eef).*

Imam al-Qurtubi writes:

This is why all the Companions acknowledged Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's superiority over themselves and admitted to his precedence.

Sayyiduna Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"The Prophet (peace be upon him) is the first, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the second, and Umar is the third. And whoever prefers me over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I will punish him with the prescribed punishment for a slanderer and declare him unfit for giving legal testimony."

He further said:

"Those who were foremost bore more hardships than those who came later. Their opinions and counsel were implemented, and through them, Islam progressed." (Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Vol. 17, p. 206)

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All Ahl al-Sunnah hold this belief with such certainty and conviction that the author has named this book ***Zarb-e-Haydari*** based on this very hadith.

Today, if Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (peace be upon him and his beloved) were alive, he would have whipped those who give preference to others over the Shaykhs, just as he said.

So before getting upset with us, consider this: we have the supportive hand of *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* upon us. Whoever wishes may embrace faith in *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha*, and whoever wishes may try confronting him and see for themselves.

The Second Verse

"If you do not help Him (the Prophet), then (know that) Allah has already helped Him when the disbelievers expelled Him (from Makkah) while He was the second of the two, when they were in the cave, and He said to his companion, 'Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us." (Surah At-Tawbah 9:40)

In the phrase ***"Allah helped Him"***, the assistance through Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) is referenced. In ***"the second of the two",*** we see the height of companionship in seclusion.

The intimacy of the phrase ***"when they were in the cave"*** left many commentators unable to distinguish who was the "first" and who the "second."

The possessive ***"his companion"*** reflects the same intimacy as in the phrase ***"carried His servant (asra bi 'abdihi)".***

The words ***"do not grieve"*** offer great comfort, and in ***"Indeed, Allah is with us"*** lies the glory of divine companionship.

To understand this, one does not need the crooked lens of the **Rawafid (extremist Shi'a),** but the clear insight of the noble Murtadha (Ali ibn Abi Talib), who said:

> *"Indeed Allah has criticized all the people and praised only Sayyiduna Abu Bakr when He said: 'If you do not help him..." (Ruh al-Ma'ani, Vol. 10, p. 89)*

Sayyiduna Hasan al-Basri (may his noble soul be sanctified) said:

> *"Allah reprimanded all the people of the earth except Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him). (Ruh al-Ma'ani, Volume 10, Page 89; also attributed to al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi)*

This same statement was also made by Imam Sha'bi al-Tabi'i (may Allah have mercy on him):

> *"In this verse, Allah the Exalted reprimanded all the people of the earth except Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him)." (Baghawi, Volume 2, Page 282)*

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Imam Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah also said:

> *"With this verse, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was excluded from the reprimand mentioned in the words: 'If you do not help him...'" (Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Volume 8, Page 131)*

Although all the noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) supported and served the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, this distinction and exclusivity of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) has been acknowledged even by great personalities like Sayyiduna 'Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him). Those who reported and preserved these narrations command such respect that no one may call themselves a true believer unless they bow in submission before these truths.

Imam Sayyid Mahmud Alusi (may Allah have mercy on him), while commenting on the verse *"Do not grieve"* (Lā Taḥzan), concluded:

> *"It is thus established that the rank of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr in the court of the Prophet ﷺ is the same as that of the Prophet ﷺ in the court of his Lord, Glorious and Exalted is He." (Ruh al-Ma'ani, Volume 10, Page 89)*

Hazrat Mirza Jan-e-Janaan (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

> *"It is enough of a virtue for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ confirmed for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr the companionship of Allah, in the same manner, without any distinction, as he confirmed it for himself. Whoever denies the virtue of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr has in fact denied this noble verse." (Tafsir Mazhari, Volume 3, Page 288)*

Regarding the same verse, Sayyiduna Hassan ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) stated:

> *"No man is equal to him (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr)." (Mustadrak al-Hakim, Hadith 4468)*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed:

> *"O Allah, support Hassan through Jibril (Gabriel)," (Bukhari: 453, 3212, 6152; Muslim: 6384)*
>
> *And Jibril only acts upon Allah's command, thus confirming that whatever Hassan said is in fact divine confirmation.*

Sayyiduna 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"The Prophet ﷺ said to Jibril: 'Who will migrate with me?' He replied: 'Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq." (Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4319 - authenticated by al-Dhahabi)*

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Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated:

> *"I said to the Prophet ﷺ while we were in the cave: 'If one of them were to look down towards his feet, they would surely see us.' He ﷺ replied: 'O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, what do you think of two people when Allah is the third with them?" (Muslim: 2381, 6169; Bukhari: 3653, 3922, 4663; Tirmidhi: 3096; Sahih Ibn Hibban: 6278; Musnad Ahmad: 12)*

From Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib (may Allah have mercy on him):

> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) held the position of a minister for the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ would consult him in all matters. He was second to him in accepting Islam, second in the Cave (of Thawr), second in the canopy on the Day of Badr, second in the grave, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not consider anyone superior to him. (Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4463)*

The Third Verse

Allah Almighty says:

> *"And the one who brought the truth and the one who confirmed it — they are the righteous." (Az-Zumar: 33)*

In the commentary of this verse, Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"The one who brought the truth" refers to Muhammad ﷺ, and "the one who confirmed it" refers to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him)." (Tafsir Ibn Jarir, Hadith: 23214)*

Once the Prophet ﷺ climbed Mount Uhud along with Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them). The mountain began to shake, so the Prophet ﷺ struck it with his blessed foot and said:

> *"Remain still, O Uhud, for upon you are a Prophet, a Siddiq, and two martyrs." (Bukhari: 3675)*

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"I was taken up to the heavens, and I did not pass a single heaven without seeing written therein my name: Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, and behind it: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq." (Musnad Abi Ya'la, Hadith: 6600)*

Imam Suyuti states that this narration has also been reported by Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Anas, Abu Saeed, and Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with them all). Though the individual chains are weak, they support and strengthen each other.

> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 48) — thus, the hadith is considered hasan (good).*

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After the Mi'raj (Ascension), the Prophet ﷺ said to Jibreel (peace be upon him):

> *"My people will not believe in me."*
>
> *Jibreel replied:*
>
> *"Indeed, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq will certainly believe in you." (Fada'il as-Sahabah, Hadith: 116)*

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) himself said:

> *"I affirm the truth of the Prophet ﷺ even in matters greater than that — I affirm the truth of what he tells us from the heavens, whether in the morning or evening — and that is why I was named 'as-Siddiq'." (Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4462, 4514)*

Once the Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon and, turning his attention, did not see Sayyiduna Abu Bakr among the attendees. He said:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr! Verily, the Holy Spirit — Jibreel (peace be upon him) — has just informed me that the best of your Ummah after you is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq." (At-Tabarani al-Awsat, Hadith: 6448)*

Note: This hadith is classified as weak (da'if).

Imam Qurtubi writes:

> *"The entire Muslim Ummah unanimously agrees on the title of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as 'As-Siddiq' (The Truthful), just as they unanimously agree on the title of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the Messenger. And when this has been established and it is confirmed that he is As-Siddiq and the second of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then it is not permissible for anyone to surpass him after the Prophet ﷺ." (Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Vol. 5, p. 262)*

Fourth Verse

Allah Almighty says:

> *"And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they will be with those whom Allah has blessed – the Prophets, the Truthful (Siddiqeen), the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent are they as companions." (Surah An-Nisa: 69)*

Regarding the words **"وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا"**, scholars have narrated this Hadith from Bukhari and Muslim:

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"I love the Prophet ﷺ, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and Umar, and I hope to be with them in Paradise due to my love for them, even if I have not performed deeds equal to theirs." (Bukhari: 3688, Muslim: 6713)*

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Ikrimah 'Tabi'i said:

> *"The word 'Prophets' in this verse refers to Muhammad ﷺ, 'Truthful' refers to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and 'Martyrs' refers to Umar, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all)." (Tafsir al-Baghawi, Vol. 1, p. 559)*

In explanation of the same verse, Sheikh Khalid Naqshbandi said:

> *"The Prophet ﷺ is the axis (Qutb) among the Prophets, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the Qutb of the Truthful, Umar is the Qutb of the Martyrs, Ali is the Qutb of the Saints (Awliya), and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them) was blessed with both martyrdom and sainthood. Among the gnostics ('ārifīn), this is the meaning of him being 'Dhul-Nurayn' (the Possessor of Two Lights)." (Ruh al-Ma'ani, Vol. 5, p. 69)*

Fifth Verse

Allah the Exalted says:

> *"And the most righteous will be spared from it (Hellfire)." (Surah Al-Lail: 17)*

Sayyiduna Hassan ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) said in praise of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq:

"The best of creation, the most pious, and the most just." (Ibn Abi Shaybah, Vol. 8, p. 448)

In the commentary of this verse, after quoting many Qur'anic verses, Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlvi writes:

"Indeed, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq is the most pious (Atqa) in the Ummah. And the one who is the most pious is the most honored (Akram) in the Ummah. And that is precisely what we aim to prove. The Book of Allah indicates through many aspects the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar al-Farooq." (Izalah al-Khifa, Vol. 1, p. 301)

Allama Abu al-Hasan al-Wahidi writes:

"The word 'Atqa' (most pious) refers to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, according to the unanimous opinion of the Ummah." (Al-Tafsir al-Basit, Vol. 24, p. 88)

Imam Ibn al-Jawzi states:

"They are unanimous that this verse was revealed regarding Sayyiduna Abu Bakr." (Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 66)

Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi writes:

"All our commentators unanimously agree that the one intended in this verse as the most God-fearing is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him)." (Tafsir al-Kabir, Vol. 11, p. 187)

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Allama Imad al-Din Ibn Kathir writes:

"Some of them have reported consensus among the commentators that this verse was revealed regarding Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq." (Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, p. 707)

Allama Ibn Hajar al-Makki states:

"This verse clearly establishes that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most God-fearing of the entire Ummah. According to the Qur'an, the most God-fearing is the most honored. And the one who is most honored by Allah is the most virtuous. Therefore, the result is that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most virtuous of the Ummah. It is not possible to attribute this verse to Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) as some ignorant people have falsely claimed." (Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 66)

Allama Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti says:

"The word 'al-atqa' (the most pious) is exclusive to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him), and grammatically no one else can be included in it." (Al-Itqan, Vol. 1, p. 30)

He further says:

> *"A multitude of commentators—beyond count—have agreed that this verse was revealed about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr." (Al-Hawi lil-Fatawa, Vol. 1, p. 314)*

Allama Suyuti also compiled an entire treatise on the interpretation of this verse titled **"Al-Habl al-Wathiq fi Nusrat al-Siddiq"**, which is included in *Al-Hawi lil-Fatawa*. In this, the author emphatically proves the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and labels those who deny it as not just deniers of superiority but allies of the Rafidah and of corrupt belief. (*Al-Hawi lil-Fatawa, Vol. 1, p. 318*)

Allama Qadi Thanaullah Panipati writes:

> *"There is consensus among the commentators that this verse was revealed about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him)." (Tafsir Mazhari, Vol. 7, p. 423)*

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi also wrote a detailed Arabic treatise of 100 pages on the interpretation of this verse, titled:

> *"Al-Zilal al-Anqa min Bahr Sabaqat al-Atqa,"*

which has been published in *Fatawa Ridawiyyah*, Vol. 28. He writes:

> *"The truest of the truthful, the leader of the righteous —Countless salutations upon the eyes and ears of Divine guidance."*

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As for being *muttaqi* (pious), every companion is pious, but here the discussion is not just about being pious, rather it is about **"al-atqa" — the most pious.**

As stated in *Tafsir Zia al-Qur'an*:

> *"All those who entered the circle of love and devotion to the Holy Prophet ﷺ possessed such traits, but the highest example of these qualities is found in the deeds of Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq." (Zia al-Qur'an, Vol. 5, p. 582)*

The following are the titles and descriptions used in the Holy Qur'an for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq :

1. **Al-Atqa (The Most Pious)** – *(Surah Al-Layl: 17)*
2. **The One with the Greatest Rank *(A'azzam Daraja)*** – *(Surah Al-Hadid: 10)*
3. **The Foremost *(Sabiq)*** – *(Surah Al-Waqi'ah: 10)*
4. **The Closest *(Muqarrab)*** – *(Surah Al-Waqi'ah: 11)*
5. **The Companion of the Messenger *(Sahib-ur-Rusul)*** – *(Surah Al-Tawbah: 40)*
6. **The Second of the Two *(Sani Isnayn)*** – *(Surah Al-Tawbah: 40)*
7. **The One Who Affirmed the Truth** – *(Surah Al-Zumar: 33)*
8. **The One Whom Allah Will Please** – *(Surah Al-Layl: 21)*

Now, reflect on the verse:

> ***"And surely He (Allah) will be pleased with him."*** *(Surah Al-Layl: 21)— then connect it with the Hadith:*
>
> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's favors will be repaid by Allah Himself on the Day of Judgment."*

Now say: are these words connected to apparent caliphate or to inner spiritual sainthood (*wilayah*)?

Also count the unique attributes of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq — these are only Qur'anic references. In their interpretations, we have already included numerous authentic Hadith. Now, under a separate section, you may examine the Hadith as well.

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THE SUPERIORITY OF SAYYIDUNA Abu Bakr AL-SIDDIQ IN HADITH

Imam al-Bukhari has dedicated an entire chapter titled:

> *"The Virtue of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr After the Prophet ﷺ" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book: Virtues of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, Vol. 4, p. 32, Chapter: The Virtue of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr After the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith: 3655).*

He also created a chapter about the Imamate of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, titled:

> *"The People of Knowledge and Virtue Are More Deserving of Leadership" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Adhan, Vol. 46, p. 197, Chapter: The People of Knowledge and Virtue Are More Deserving of Imamate, Hadith: 678).*

Imam Abu Dawud created a chapter called **Bāb al-Tafdīl** "Chapter of Superiority", in which he clarified the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar) as being as evident as the midday sun. (*Abu Dawud, Vol. 4, p. 273, from Kitab al-Sunnah, Chapter 7: The Superiority*).

In Tirmidhi, there is a chapter titled:

> ***"Maziyyatu Abī Bakr wa 'Umar 'inda an-Nabiyy ﷺ** "The Distinction of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar in the Presence of the Prophet ﷺ"", and it includes forty detailed Hadith on this subject.*

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The Imam of the Ummah After the Prophet ﷺ

(1) Narrated by Abu Musa al-Ash'ari :

The Prophet ﷺ became ill and his illness intensified. He said:

> *'Instruct Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer.'*
>
> *Aisha said: 'He is a tender-hearted man. If he stands in your place, he may not be able to lead the people in prayer.'*
>
> *The Prophet ﷺ again said: 'Instruct Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer.' Aisha repeated her concern. Then the Prophet ﷺ said:*
>
> *'Tell Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer! Indeed, you are like the women of the era of Yusuf!'*
>
> *Then a messenger went to him, and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr led the prayer during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ." (Sahih al-Bukhari: 678, 679, 682, 3385; Sahih Muslim: 948; Tirmidhi: 3672)*

Imam al-Suyuti classified this Hadith as mutawatir (mass-transmitted).

Imam Bukhari included this Hadith under the chapter titled:

> ***Ahl al-ʿIlm wa al-Faḍl Aḥaqqu bil-Imāmah*** *"The People of Knowledge and Virtue Are More Deserving of Leadership" (Bukhari, Hadith No. 678).*

This event occurred **before** the apparent caliphate, yet **the Companions** derived proof of superiority from it.

Umar said to the Ansar:

> *"Do you not know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer? So who among you would feel comfortable advancing ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?"*
>
> *The Ansar replied:*
>
> *"We seek refuge in Allah from advancing before Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah: Vol. 8, p. 572; Al-Nasa'i: 777; Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4479 — Hakim said it is authentic, and Al-Dhahabi agreed.)*

(2) The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"It does not befit any people that, while Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is among them, someone else should lead them in prayer." (Tirmidhi: 3673)*

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In the commentary of this Hadith, Mulla Ali Qari writes:

> *"This Hadith is a clear proof that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most superior among all the Companions. Once his superiority is established, then his entitlement to the caliphate becomes automatically established." (Mirqat al-Mafatih, Vol. 11, p. 334)*

Reflect on the statement from **Mirqat**: **Superiority is established first**, and entitlement to the caliphate follows **as a result**.

Where, then, is the belief of those who say that superiority depends upon the external caliphate?

The First Orator and Public Preacher in the Ummah

(3) Narrated by Abu al-Darda :

> *"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a brief sermon, and when He finished, He said: 'O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, stand up and deliver the sermon.' Sayyiduna Abu Bakr stood up and gave a speech that was shorter than that of the Prophet ﷺ. When Sayyiduna Abu Bakr finished his sermon, the Prophet ﷺ said: 'O Umar, stand up and deliver the sermon.' Sayyiduna Umar stood up and delivered a speech that was shorter than both the Prophet's ﷺ and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's speeches." (Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4556; He said the chain of narrators is authentic, and Al-Dhahabi mentioned it was disconnected.)*

Narration from Umm al-Mu'minin Aisha

When the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ gathered, there were thirty-eight people present. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr insisted on preaching openly, and finally, the Prophet ﷺ agreed. All the Muslims spread around the Kaaba. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr stood up to preach and became the first preacher to openly invite people to Allah and His Messenger.

The idolaters attacked Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and all the Muslims and inflicted severe harm upon them. Thus, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr became the first preacher who invited to Allah and His Messenger. (*Tareekh al-Khulafa, p. 33; quoted from Ibn Asakir*)

The Greatest Interpreter of Dreams

(4) Narrated by Ibn Abbas

> *"A man came to the Prophet ﷺ after the battle of Uhud and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I saw in a dream last night a canopy dripping with ghee and honey.'*
>
> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr said: 'O Messenger of Allah, may my parents be sacrificed for you, allow me to interpret this dream.'*
>
> *The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Interpret it.'*
>
> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr said: 'The canopy represents the shade of Islam, and the ghee and honey dripping from it represent the sweetness and smoothness of the Qur'an.'*
>
> *Muhammad ibn Sirin (the famous Tabi'i) said: 'After the Prophet ﷺ, the greatest expert in dream interpretation was Sayyiduna Abu Bakr.'*
>
> *(Sahih Muslim: 5928, 5929; Sahih Bukhari: 7046, 7000; Abu Dawood: 3267, 3269, 4633; Ibn Majah: 3918; Tareekh al-Khulafa, p. 83; As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 34; Al-Riyad al-Nadira 1/59)*

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Allah Does Not Allow Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to Err

(5) Narrated by Sahl bin Sa'd al-Sa'idi :

> *"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Indeed, Allah dislikes that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr should make a mistake." (Al-Majma' al-Awsat, al-Tabarani, as in Majma' al-Zawā'id: 14328; Kanz al-'Ummāl, Vol. 11, p. 250)*
>
> *Al-Haythamī, Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī, and al-Suyūṭī said: "Its narrators are trustworthy."*

The Station of Intimacy

(6)

> *"If I were to take anyone as a friend (Khalil) in seclusion, I would have taken Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as my Khalil. But I am the Khalil of Allah." (Sahih Muslim: 6172, 6173, 6174; Jami` at-Tirmidhi: 3655; Sunan Ibn Majah: 93)*

Imam Suyuti considers this hadith to be mutawatir (widely transmitted) and writes: "This hadith has been narrated through the chains of Ibn Abbas, Ibn al-Zubair, Ibn Mas'ud, Jundub ibn Abd al-Mu'alla, Aisha, Abu Huraira, and Ibn Umar. Their narrations have been recorded in the mutawatir ahadith." (*Tareekh al-Khulafa, p. 45*)

Reflect deeply on this ḥadīth — it places **Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar (RA)** in the very scale of divine friendship, showing that he stands nearest to Allah in love and favor. He has been declared the most beloved and preferred of all people after Allah Himself. Remarkably, this honor was bestowed **well before** his apparent caliphate.

This hadith emphasizes the position of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as the most beloved and preferred person after Allah. This was long before the Caliphate of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. Hazrat Mulla Ali Qari states that this hadith is a clear and manifest proof that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most superior among the Companions. (Mirqat, Vol. 11, p. 283)

The Best, the Sun Has Never Seen Anyone other Than Siddiq

(7) Once, Abu al-Darda was walking ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (R.A). The Prophet ﷺ asked,

> *"Why are you walking in front of the one after whom no better person has ever risen with the sun, after the Prophets?" (Fazā'il al-Sahābah: 135, 137, 662; Abū Nu'aym: 3159 Taqrīb al-Bughya bi Tartīb Aḥādīth al-Ḥilya; Tārīkh Baghdād by al-Khaṭīb, vol. 12, p. 438; al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ by al-Ṭabarānī: 7306; Majma' al-Zawā'id, vol. 9, p. 24, ḥadīth no. 14313)*

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The hadith is considered authentic by Shah Abdul Aziz, and Ibn Hajar al-Makki and Al-Suyuti confirmed its authenticity with supporting evidence. (*As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 68*)

This hadith is a clear proof of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's superiority. Interestingly, this narration has also been reported by Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq who narrated from his forefathers, and it is as follows:

> *"I heard from my father, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, who heard from his father, Imam Zain al-Abidin, who heard from his father, Imam Husayn , who heard from his father, Ali ibn Abi Talib , who said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "No one better than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr has ever had the sun rise or set." (Al-Riyad al-Nadira, 1/136)*

This chain of narration, where all the narrators are from the Ahl al-Bayt, is known as the "Silsilat al-Dhahab" (the Golden Chain).

After the Prophet ﷺ, Ahead of Everyone Else

(8) Narrated by Hazrat Amir Tabi'i:

> *"I asked Ibn Abbas , 'Who was the first person to embrace Islam?' He replied: 'Did you not hear the words of Hassan ibn Thabit?'*

"When you speak of the tales of the loyal friends and their sorrows, remember your brother Sayyiduna Abu Bakr – for all what he did. He was the best of creation after the Prophet, the most pious, the most trustworthy, and the one who fulfilled his responsibilities the most. He was the second in line — following the Prophet ﷺ. His testimony to the Prophet's message was beloved, and he was among the very first to affirm the truth of the Messenger.

(Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shaybah, 8/448; Al-Isti'ab, p. 430; Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim, Hadith no. 4469)

Its chain of narration is **authentic (isnāduhu ṣaḥīḥ)**, and it has also been narrated by **al-Ṭabarānī** with another chain of transmission — *(al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr by al-Ṭabarānī: 12398; Majma' al-Zawā'id: 14310)* — though it includes **al-Haytham ibn ʿAdī**, who is considered **matrūk (abandoned)** by the hadith scholars.

The Greatest Beloved of Allah's Beloved

(9) Narrated by Amr ibn al-As , he said:

The Prophet ﷺ sent me to fight in the Battle of Dhat al-Salasil. I came to him and asked, O Messenger of Allah "Who among the people is most beloved to you?" He replied, "Aisha." I asked, "Among men?" He said, "Her father." I asked, "Then who?" He replied, "Then Umar ibn al-Khattab," and then he listed a few other men. (Sahih Bukhari: 3662, 4358; Sahih Muslim: 6177; Jami` at-Tirmidhi: 3885)

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(10) Narrated by Hadrat Umar ibn al-Khattab :

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was our master, the best of us, and the most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. (Sahih Bukhari: 3668; Jami` at-Tirmidhi: 3656; Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4477)

The Eulogy of the Siddiq

(11) One day, the Prophet ﷺ asked Hassaan ibn Thabit ,

"Have you composed anything in praise of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?" Hassan replied, "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Recite it to me, I wish to hear it." Hassan then recited the following verse:

"The second of the two in the blessed cave, when the enemy surrounded it as they climbed the mountain,

And he was the beloved of the Messenger of Allah, known among the creation as the one none could compare to."

(Translation from Tafseer Zia-ul-Quran, Vol. 2, p. 213) (Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4468, 4518; Al-Isti'ab, p. 430; Tareekh al-Khulafa by Suyuti, p. 39)

Al-Hakim remained silent about it.

It is narrated in Tabarani that the same hadith was also reported by Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him). When the Holy Prophet ﷺ heard this quatrain, he smiled so broadly that his blessed Mawlar teeth became visible. The Prophet ﷺ then said:

"O Hassan! You have spoken the truth — Sayyiduna Abu Bakr indeed possesses this rank." (As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 85)

Do Not Speak ill of My Friend, For My Sake

(12) Narrated by Abu Darda :

> *The Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah sent me to you, and you said, 'You are lying,' but Sayyiduna Abu Bakr said, 'He is truthful,' and he supported me with his life and his wealth. Will you leave my friend alone for my sake?" (Sahih Bukhari: 3661, 4640)*

In this hadith, the phrase **قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ صَدَقَ** – which is in the singular masculine third-person form — carries the scholarly meaning that:

"*Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, even in my absence, kept telling the people: My Prophet speaks the truth."* The words **وَأَسَانِي بِنَفْسِهِ** refer to the sacrifice of his life, while **وَمَالِهِ** refers to the sacrifice of his wealth. Hence, no Rafidhi can make a false distinction between life and wealth here — **both forms of sacrifice are clearly mentioned.**

The phrase **فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ تَارِكُو لِي صَاحِبِي** expresses the Prophet's ﷺ deepest love and affection, reaching its emotional peak.

To truly grasp the meaning of **صَاحِبِي**, one must also reflect on the Qur'anic phrase **إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ** ("when he said to his companion"), where the word sahib (companion) is used. Though Sayyiduna Umar (RA) was also a companion, here the Prophet ﷺ specifically said,

فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ تَارِكُو لِي صَاحِبِي؟ "Will you not leave my companion for my sake?" This indicates that the companionship of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) holds a unique and unparalleled rank among all the Companions — a distinction that none other shares.**رضی اللہ عنہم اجمعین۔**

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Unique and unparalleled virtues of Siddiq-e-Akbar

(13) A narration from Aisha who said:

> *"I never remember my parents except that they followed the religion, and every day, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would visit us, in the morning and in the evening. When the Muslims were put to trial, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr left for Abyssinia. When he reached Bark al-Ghamad, he met Ibn al-Dhigna, the leader of the Qara tribe, who asked, 'Where are you going, O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?' Sayyiduna Abu Bakr replied, 'My people have expelled me, and I wish to travel the land and worship my Lord.' Ibn al-Dhigna said, 'A man like you should not leave, nor should he be expelled. You are one who earns for the poor, maintains family ties, carries the burdens of the weak, hosts the guest, and helps with the hardships of truth. I offer you my protection. Go back and worship your Lord in your homeland.' Ibn al-Dhigna then returned with Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and visited the*

leaders of the Quraysh, saying, 'A man like Sayyiduna Abu Bakr should not be expelled, nor should he leave. How can you expel someone who earns for the needy, maintains family ties, helps the weak, hosts guests, and assists with the difficulties of truth?' As a result, the Quraysh granted Sayyiduna Abu Bakr protection under the guarantee of Ibn al-Dhigna. They told Ibn al-Dhigna to tell Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to worship in his house, pray, read the Qur'an, but not to harm us with it or make it public. They feared it might cause a disturbance among our sons and women. Ibn al-Dhigna conveyed this message to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and he confined his worship and recitation to his house. Later, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr decided to build a mosque in the courtyard of his house. He began praying there and reciting the Qur'an aloud, and the women and children of the idolaters would gather to observe him. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was a man who would cry a lot and could not hold back his tears when reciting the Qur'an. This sight caused distress among the Quraysh leaders. They sent for Ibn al-Dhigna and said, 'We had granted Sayyiduna Abu Bakr protection with the condition that he would worship in his house, but now he has built a mosque in his courtyard and is praying aloud and reciting the Qur'an. We fear that this might cause a disturbance for our sons and women. Go to him and tell him that he can either worship in his house or, if he insists on making it public, ask him to return your guarantee to you, as we do not wish to break the protection we have granted him.' Ibn al-Dhigna went to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and said, 'You know the agreement I made with you. Either you stick to it, or you return my protection to me because I do not wish for the Arabs to hear that I broke my promise.' Sayyiduna Abu Bakr replied, 'I return your protection, and I am content with the protection of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).' At that time, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, 'I have been shown the place of your migration. I saw a dry land with palm trees between two rocky areas.' When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) spoke of this, those who had migrated to Abyssinia returned to Medina, and the others who had migrated there followed suit. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr then prepared to migrate. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) told him, 'Wait for a while, as I hope to be given permission to migrate.' Sayyiduna Abu Bakr asked, 'Do you hope so, by my father and mother?' The Prophet (PBUH) replied, 'Yes.' Therefore, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr stayed back to accompany the Prophet (PBUH), and he fed the two camels that he had kept for the journey for four months."

(Bukhari: 476, 2138, 2263, 2264, 2297, 3905, 4093, 5807, 6079)

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In this single ḥadīth the number of virtues ascribed to Sayyidunā *Ṣiddīq al-Akbar* (may Allah be pleased with him) is seven — judge for yourselves the full measure of his merits.

The Greatest Benefactor in Financial Terms

(14) A hadith states:

No one's wealth benefited me as much as the wealth of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr.

(Tirmidhi: 3661, Musnad Ahmad 2/386, Hadith: 8811, Fadā'il al-Ṣaḥābah: 29, Musnad Ḥamīdī: 250, Musnad Abū Ya'lā: 4418, 4905).

Tirmidhi said, "This is a Hasan hadith."

Imam Ahmad narrates from Ḥadrat Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"No one's wealth has benefited me as much as the wealth of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr." Hearing this, Sayyiduna Abū Bakr wept and said, "O Messenger of Allah, my life and my wealth are entirely yours."*
>
> *(Ibn Mājah, Hadith: 94, Ibn Abī Shaybah, Hadith: 11976, Musnad Ahmad, Vol. 2, p. 340, Hadith: 7464, Fadā'il al-Ṣaḥābah, Hadith: 25, al-Sunnah by Ibn Abī ʿĀsim, Hadith: 1264, its chain is authentic and its narrators are those of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim).*

Ḥadrat Sayyiduna Abū Bakr Shiblī was once asked about the nisāb (minimum amount) for Zakat. He replied,

> *"Are you asking this as a matter of jurisprudence, or as a matter of love?" The person replied, "Please explain both." He said, "In the law (sharīʿah), Zakat is 2.5%, But in the path of love (ʿishq), zakah is to give away one's entire wealth — along with the offering of one's very life."*
>
> *The man then asked, "And what is the proof of the zakah of love?"*
> *Shibli replied:*
>
> *"Its proof lies in the example of **Sayyidunā Ṣiddīq al-Akbar** (may Allah be pleased with him) — who presented all his wealth in the service of the Noble Prophet ﷺ, and offered his own daughter, **ʿĀ'isha** (may Allah be pleased with her), in marriage to him."*
>
> *(Maktūbāt-e-Yahyā Miniri, p. 34)*

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Another hadith mentions:

> *"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would use the wealth of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as he would use his own wealth." (Musannaf Abdur-Razzāq: 20397, Fadā'il al-Ṣaḥābah: 36, al-Riyāḍ al-Nadrah, Vol. 1, p. 130, Mirqāt, Vol. 11, p. 286).*

When considering all of these hadiths about the financial sacrifices of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq and combining them with the Qur'anic verse ***"Those who spent and fought before the conquest are not equal..." (al-Ḥadīd: 10)***, the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr becomes even more apparent.

Foremost in the sacrifice of life — the bravest of all.

(15) Ḥadrat ʿUrwah ibn Zubayr said:

> *"I asked Abdullah ibn ʿAmr about the harshest thing the polytheists did to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He said: 'I saw ʿUqbah ibn Abī Muʿayṭ coming to the Prophet ﷺ while he was praying. He placed his cloak around his neck and began strangling him severely. Then Sayyiduna Abū Bakr came and pushed him away, saying: 'Are you going to kill a man because he says: "My Lord is Allah," when he has come to you with clear signs from your Lord?"*

(Bukhārī: 3678, 3856, 4815).

It is thus evident that Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar (RA) did not only sacrifice his wealth but also risked his very life for the sake of the Prophet ﷺ. Both **the Cave of Thawr** and **the canopy of Badr** stand as enduring witnesses that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) staked his life not once, but time and again. The Beloved Prophet ﷺ himself declared:

"He supported me with his life and his wealth" (Bukhari: 3661).

Moreover, the **Exalted Lord** affirms in the Qur'an:

"Those among you who spent (in the cause of Allah) and fought before the victory (of Makkah) are higher in rank than those who did so afterwards."
— (Al-Hadid: 10)

Further Narrations

Anas bin Malik narrates:

The disbelievers tormented the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so severely that he fell unconscious. At the moment, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr stood up and began to proclaim aloud:

"Woe unto you! Would you kill a man merely because he says, 'My Lord is Allah'?"

The people asked, "Who is this?"

Others replied, "This is the son of Abu Quhafa — the madman."

(Reported by al-Ḥākim, Mustadrak al-Ḥākim: 4480, classified as Ṣaḥīḥ by al-Dhahabī).

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Proof of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's Courage from Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha

From such narrations, Ḥadrat Ali al-Murtadha inferred that no one was braver than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr . He once asked the people,

"Tell me, who is the bravest among the people?"

They replied, "You."

He said, "I have always challenged those who are equal to me, but tell me, who is the bravest?"

The people said, "We do not know, you tell us."

He replied, "Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."

"When the Battle of Badr came, we set up a shelter for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We raised the question of who would remain with the Prophet ﷺ to ensure that no enemy would dare approach him. By Allah, none of us moved forward except Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. He stood with his sword raised, guarding the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and

whenever anyone dared to approach the Prophet ﷺ, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr would strike them first. This is the bravest of all people."

Sayyiduna ʿAlī al-Murtazā (RA) also cited several other ḥadīths and incidents as evidence that Sayyiduna Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (RA) was the bravest of all men. (Reported in Majma' al-Zawā'id: 14333, al-Riyāḍ al-Nadrah, 1/138, al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah, p. 30, Tārīkh al-Khulafā', p. 32).

This is further affirmed by Ṣiddīq al-Akbar's (RA) unwavering composure at the time of the Prophet's ﷺ passing, his firm resolve in dispatching the army of Usāmah (RA), and his decisive stand in waging war against the apostates.

Narration from Ḥadrat ʿĀ'ishah

Ḥadrat ʿĀ'isha (RA) narrates:

"When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away, the Arabs turned apostate and hypocrisy began to spread. My father was tested with a trial so severe that if it had fallen upon the highest mountains, it would have shattered them. However, whenever the Companions had a difference of opinion, my father always took the strongest and most resolute stance." She then mentioned Ḥadrat Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and said: "By Allah, he was always prepared for the cause of Islam, and he was ready for every mission, standing as an example for others."

(Reported by al-Ṭabarānī in al-Muʿjam al-Ṣaghīr, 2/101, al-Muʿjam al-Awsat, 4913, Majmaʿ al-Zawā'id: 14337, al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah by Ibn Hishām, 2/665, Tafsīr al-Baghawī, 1/689).

The chain of narration is hasan (good) according to al-Haythamī, and one of its narrators is trustworthy.

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The First to Enter Paradise

(16) **Narrated Abu Huraira :**

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "Indeed, O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, you are the first from my Ummah to enter Paradise." (Abu Dawood: 4652, Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4500, He said it is authentic, and Az-Zahabi agreed).

The Siddiq (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) Will Be Called from All the Gates of Paradise

(17) **Narrated Abu Huraira :**

I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying:

"Whoever spends a pair of something in the way of Allah will be called from the gates of Paradise: 'O servant of Allah, this is goodness!'
Whoever was among the people of prayer will be called from the Gate of Prayer;
Whoever was among the people of jihad will be called from the Gate of Jihad;

Whoever was among the people of charity will be called from the Gate of Charity; And whoever was among the people of fasting will be called from the Gate of al-Rayyan."

Upon hearing this, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) said,

"O Messenger of Allah, there will be no need for one who is called from all these gates—but will there be anyone who will be invited from all of them?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied,

"Yes, and I hope that you, O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, will be among them."

(Sahih Muslim: 2371, 2372, Sahih Bukhari: 1897, 2841, 3216, 3666).

Allah and the Angels Do Not Acknowledge Anyone Except Siddiq

(18) **Narrated Aisha :**

"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to me during his illness that led to his passing: 'Call for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and your brother so that I may write a statement, for I fear that someone might aspire to leadership or claim, 'I am more deserving, while Allah and all the believers (that is, the angels) acknowledge none but Sayyiduna Abū Bakr."

"(Sahih Muslim: 6181).

The scholars have stated that this ḥadīth contains the clearest and most decisive indication that al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him) is **absolutely superior to all other Companions.** *(Tārīkh al-Khulafā', p. 52).*

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The Sermon of the Pulpit in Praise of Siddiq

(19) In the same period of his illness, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came out with a bandage on his head and ascended the pulpit. After praising and thanking Allah, he said:

Allah had placed a choice before a man — between this world and that which is with Allah — and that man chose what is with Allah. At this, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) began to weep. I thought within my heart: what is making this old man weep?

If Allah gives a servant the choice between the world and what is with Allah, and that servant chooses what is with Allah—then the Prophet ﷺ himself was that servant, and Abū Bakr was the most learned among us.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "O Abū Bakr, do not weep. Verily, among the people none has served me more by his company and by his wealth than Abū Bakr. And had I been to take a khalīl (intimate friend) from my Ummah, I would have taken Abū Bakr. Nevertheless, the bond of brotherhood and friendship in Islam must remain as it is. All the doors of the mosque will be shut — except the door of Abū Bakr."

(Sahih Bukhari: 466, 467, 3654, 3904, Sahih Muslim: 6170, 6171, Tirmidhi: 3660).

Reflect deeply upon this ḥadīth! This sermon, delivered from the pulpit of the Prophet's Mosque, belongs to the very final days of the blessed life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Within it lie multiple indications of the unique status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (RA): a **special sermon** dedicated solely to him; his being the **greatest helper and servant of the Prophet** ﷺ; his standing **foremost in sacrificing both life and wealth** for the Messenger ﷺ; his being the **most knowledgeable among the Companions**; his being the **potential Khalīl (intimate friend)** of the Prophet ﷺ after Allah; and the command to **close all doors leading into the mosque except the door of Abū Bakr**, which serves as a **clear sign of his coming leadership and khilāfah**.

The scholars state that this ḥadīth demonstrates how Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (RA) possesses such **virtues and rights** that no other created being shares with him:

> *"Thus it becomes evident that al-Ṣiddīq holds such distinctions and rights in which no other creature partakes." ('Umdat al-Qārī, vol. 4, p. 72)*

After Me, Meet Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

(20) **Narrated by Jubair ibn Mut'im :**

> *A woman came to the Prophet ﷺ, and he (SAW) instructed her to return her at another time. She asked, "If I come and don't find you? —" as if she were alluding to his passing away. The Prophet ﷺ replied,* ***"If you do not find me, then go to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."***
>
> *(Bukhari: 7220, 7360, 3659; Muslim: 6179, 6180; Tirmidhi: 3676)*

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The Divine Decrees of Eternity

(21) **Narrated by Jubair ibn Mut'im :**

> *When Allah Almighty sent His Prophet ﷺ and His message became known in Makkah, I traveled to Syria. When I was in Busra, a group of Christians came to me and asked,*
>
> *"Are you from the people of the Haram?"*
>
> *I said, "Yes."*
>
> *They then asked, "Do you recognize the one who has claimed prophethood among you?"*
>
> *I replied, "Yes."*
>
> *They took me by the hand and led me into a monastery where there were statues and pictures.*
>
> *They asked, "Do you recognize the image of the Prophet sent to you?"*
>
> *I looked and did not see his image.*
>
> *I said, "I do not see his image."*
>
> *They took me to a larger monastery that had more statues and pictures.*

Again, they asked if I recognized his image. I looked and then saw the image of the Prophet ﷺ and alongside it the image of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr holding the feet of the Prophet ﷺ.

They asked, "Do you recognize his image?"

I said, "Yes."

I decided not to tell them anything until I knew their thoughts.

They then pointed and asked, "Is this the Prophet?"

I replied, "Yes, by Allah, I testify that this is he."

They then asked, "Do you recognize the one holding his feet?"

I said, "Yes."

They said, "We testify that this is your Prophet, and the one holding his feet is his successor after him."

(Al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ by al-Ṭabarānī: 8231; Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr by al-Ṭabarānī: 1518; Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah by al-Bayhaqī 2/258–259; Al-Wafā, p. 56–57; Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr 2/348).

The ḥadīth concerning the sermon delivered by Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, may Allah be pleased with him) at the time of the **passing of the Prophet ﷺ (Bukhārī: 1241)**, and the ḥadīth regarding the **wars against the apostates (Bukhārī: 1399),** both appear later under the discussion of the profound knowledge and discernment of al-Ṣiddīq.
They are alluded to here as a reminder, so that these ḥadīths — which **reflect the loftiest peaks of al-Ṣiddīq's greatness** — are not overlooked.

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The Mention of the Two Shaykhains Together

(22) **Narrated by Hudhayfah :**

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Follow the two after me, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."

(Tirmidhi: 3662, 3663, Ibn Majah: 97). Tirmidhi said this is a hasan hadith and it has various chains of narration.

In the words of Tabrani: "Follow the two after me, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, for indeed they are the extended rope of Allah. Whoever holds onto them, he has grasped the firmest handhold, which will never break." This hadith has been narrated with various chains of transmission. (Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa, p. 77)

The Comparison of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr with Jibril (AS)

(23) Narrated by Umm Salamah :

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed in the heavens, there are two angels: one commands with strictness, and the other commands with leniency, and both are correct. One is Jibril, and

the other is Mikail. And there are two prophets: one commands with strictness, and the other commands with leniency, and both are correct. These were Ibrahim and Nuh. And I have two companions: one commands with strictness, and the other commands with leniency, and both are correct. These are Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."

(Fadhail al-Sahabah: 300, Al-Mujam al-Kabir: 19190, Majma' al-Zawaid: 14345)

Haythami mentioned that their narrators are trustworthy.

In this ḥadīth, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (RA) is likened to Sayyidunā Jibrīl (Gabriel**)** AS, who is the most superior of all creation in the heavens. Furthermore, he is compared to Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm (Abraham) AS, peace be upon him, who is the most virtuous among all beings on earth after the Noble Prophet ﷺ.

(24) Narrated by Ali from the Prophet ﷺ:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar are the leaders of the elders of the people of Paradise, from the first to the last, except for the prophets and messengers. Do not inform them, O Ali."

(Tirmidhi: 3666, 3665, Ibn Majah: 95, Ibn Abi Shaybah: 7/473, Musnad Ahmad: 604, Musnad Abu Ya'la: 533, Al-Mujam al-Awsat by Tabrani: 1348)

This ḥadīth is also narrated by Anas (RA) through al-Tirmidhī (3664) and al-Baghawī (*Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, 3896); by Abū Juḥayfah through Ibn Mājah (100), Ibn Ḥibbān (6904), and al-Ṭabarānī (4174); by Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh (al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ, 8808); and by Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ, 4431).

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In another narration from Musnad Ahmad (604) by Ali, the Prophet ﷺ said,

"These two are the leaders of both the elders and the youth of Paradise."

This hadith is Sahih.

Hazrat Shah Waliullah writes:

*"This hadith clearly establishes their (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar's) superiority over all the companions, and it is narrated by Murtadha himself." (**Izalatul Khafa**, Vol. 1, p. 316)*

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi says:

"Some later scholars have counted this among the Mutawatir (mass-transmitted) narrations." (Matla' al-Qamrayn, Manuscript, p. 116)

This hadith is mentioned in **Musnad Ahmad** as follows:

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha said: "I was present with the Prophet ﷺ when Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar came from above. The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *'O Ali, these two are the leaders of the elderly and the youth of Paradise after the Prophets and Messengers.'"*
>
> *(Musnad Ahmad: 604)*

Usually, the public is only made to hear the hadith: *"Hasan and Husayn are the leaders of the youth of Paradise."* However, this hadith is found in **Tirmidhi**, **Ibn Majah**, and **Musnad Ahmad**—and the above-mentioned hadith in praise of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) is also found in these same three books.

Both ahadith are authentic, but one-sided and imbalanced love has distorted the spirit of true research, and it became popularly known:

> *"Behold! The heirs of Heaven — the valiant sons of Ḥaydar are"*

But after bringing both hadiths to light, the true picture becomes clear:

> *Behold! The heirs of Heaven — companions of Madinah's Star,*
>
> *Behold! The heirs of Heaven — the valiant sons of Ḥaydar are*

Āmannā wa ṣaddaqnā (We believe and affirm)

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Some deniers raise the question: *"If everyone in Paradise will be young, then what does it mean to be the leaders of the elderly?"*

The answer is: *The elderly of Paradise refers to those who passed away in old age, and the youth refers to those who passed away in their youth.*

Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi writes:

> *"The meaning of the hadith is that these two (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) are the leaders of those who died old in the world. Just as they are leaders of the elderly, they are also leaders of the youth."*
>
> *(Ashi'atul Lam'aat, Vol. 4, p. 664)*

Secondly, we ask: If everyone in Paradise is young, then what does it mean to call Hasan and Husayn the leaders of the youth? Why restrict it to youth?

Thirdly, if no distinction is made, it would imply that Hasan and Husayn are the leaders of the Prophets (peace be upon them), the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself, and even *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* — God forbid!

(25) ***Narrated by Ibn Umar :***

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once entered the mosque, and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar were with him—one on his right and one on his left. He was holding their hands and said:

> *"This is how we will be raised on the Day of Judgment."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3669, Ibn Majah: 99, Mustadrak Hakim: 4484) — Hadith Hasan*

(26) *Narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri :*

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"Indeed, those in the highest ranks (of Paradise) will be seen by those below them like you see shining stars high in the sky. And verily, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar are among them and are the most blessed of them."*
>
> *(Abu Dawud: 3987, Tirmidhi: 3658, Sharh al-Sunnah: 3891, Musnad Ahmad: 11212, 11219) — Tirmidhi said: Hadith is Hasan*

(27) *Narrated by Abdullah bin Hantab:*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar and said:

> *"These two are (like) my hearing and sight."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3671) — The hadith is mursal (narrated with a missing link), but the gap does not harm its authenticity due to the reliability (trustworthiness) of the transmitter*

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(28) *Narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri :*

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"There is no Prophet except that he has two ministers from among the dwellers of the heavens and two ministers from among the dwellers of the earth. As for my two heavenly ministers, they are **Jibrīl (Gabriel)** and **Mīkā'īl (Michael)**. And as for my two earthly ministers, they are **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** and **Umar**."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3680) — Tirmidhi said: Hadith is Hasan*

(29) *Narrated by Abdullah bin Umar :*

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> **عَنْ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ أُرِيتُ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَنْزِعُ بِدَلْوٍ بَكْرَةٍ عَلَى قَلِيبٍ فَجَاءَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ فَنَزَعَ ذَنُوبًا أَوْ ذَنُوبَيْنِ نَزْعًا ضَعِيفًا وَاللَّهُ يَغْفِرُ لَهُ ثُمَّ جَاءَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ فَاسْتَحَالَتْ غَرْبًا فَلَمْ أَرَ عَبْقَرِيًّا يَفْرِي فَرِيَّهُ حَتَّى رَوِيَ النَّاسُ وَضَرَبُوا بِعَطَنٍ**
>
> *"I saw in a dream that I was drawing water from a well using a pulley system. Then Sayyiduna Abu Bakr came and drew one or two buckets with some weakness in his pulling —and may Allah forgive him. Then Umar bin al-Khattab came, and the bucket became*

very large in his hands, and I have never seen a skilled expert perform like he did. People drank to their fill and moved back, just as camels do after quenching their thirst."

(Bukhari: 3633, 3676, 3682, 7019, 7020, Muslim: 6196, 6197, Tirmidhi: 2289)

فاستحالت فربا — changed from a state of insignificance to one of prominence and strength.

العبقري — skillful and proficient in his craft, reaching the highest degree of perfection.

يفرق فريه — does something extraordinary and admirable in his work.

ضربوا بعطن — meaning they settled and rested after drinking, ready to drink again; metaphorically, it refers to firm establishment and stable repose after effort.

(30) Narrated by Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him):

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"A man was once driving his cow and had mounted it. The cow turned toward him and said, 'I have not been created for this purpose; I have been created for plowing.' The people exclaimed, 'Glory be to Allah!' in amazement and wonder. 'Does a cow speak?!'

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Indeed, I believe in it, and so do Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar.'"

(Muslim: 6183, Bukhari: 3690)

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(31) Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"I often heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'I, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and Umar were together.' 'I did such-and-such with Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar.' 'I, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and Umar went (somewhere).' These things often come to my mind."

(Bukhari: 3677, 3685; Muslim: 6187, 6188; Ibn Majah: 98; Musnad Ahmad: 901)

Mention of the Three Caliphs Together

(32) Narrated by Nafi from Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them):

"In the time of the Prophet ﷺ. we used to discuss who was the most virtuous among the people. We would declare Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as the most superior, then Umar ibn al-Khattab, then Uthman ibn Affan (may Allah be pleased with them all)."

(Bukhari, Chapter: Virtues of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr after the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith: 3655; al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim: 1226, 1227 [worded as: We used to discuss], 1228 [worded as: We used to prefer])

(33) Narrated by Nafi from Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them):

"During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, we did not consider anyone equal to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman. After them, we left the rest of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ without giving precedence among them."

(Bukhari: 3697; Abu Dawood: 4627; Musnad Abi Ya'la: 5595, 5596, 5597; Kitab al-Sunnah by Abdullah: 1280, etc)

(34) Narrated by Salim from his father:

"We used to say, during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that the best of the Ummah after him is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them all)."

(Abu Dawood, "Bāb fī al-Tafḍīl" 4628; Tirmidhi: 3707; Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat by al-Tabarani: 1692; al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim: 1224, 1225)

Also narrated by Ibn Abi Asim from Suhayl, through his father, from Ibn Umar (Haidth 1229, 1230); from Abu Huraira: 1231; and from Umar ibn Usaid from Ibn Umar: 1232, 1233.

Imam Ahmad also narrated it in Fada'il al-Sahabah from Abu Huraira: 52

In another narration Ibn Umer said:

"And his Companions were numerous and unanimous in this belief."

(Musnad Ahmad: 4625; Musnad Abi Ya'la: 5776; Kitab al-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad: 1278, 1284; Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir by Tabarani: 12122).

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Another narration states:

"When this statement reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he did not disapprove of it."

(Musnad Abi Ya'la: 5597; al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim: 1230; al-Mu'jam al-Kabir by Tabarani: 783; al-Mu'jam al-Awsat by Tabarani: 8702; Majma al-Zawa'id: 14385 — it says: 'Its narrators are trustworthy, though with minor differences)

Hence, it is conclusively established

that there was complete consensus among the dwellers of the heavens — with our Lord, majestic and exalted, in their agreement — and among the people of the earth, with our Prophet ﷺ among them, that:

The most excellent of this Ummah, after the Prophet ﷺ, is Abū Bakr; then 'Umar; then 'Uthmān — may Allah be pleased with them all.

Reflect deeply upon the words **"أفضل هذه الأمة" (the most excellent of this Ummah), "كنا نخير" (we used to prefer), and "لا نعدل" (we equate none with)** — for the variation and repetition of these expressions have **closed every possible door to distortion or ambiguity**.

How faith-inspiring are the words **"وَاَصْحَابُهٗ مُتَوَافِرُوْن"** (while his companions were numerous and unanimous)!

Furthermore, the phrases **"فِيْ زَمَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ"** (in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ) and **"فَلَا فَبَلَغَ ذٰلِكَ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ﷺ يُنْكِرُ ذٰلِكَ عَلَيْنَا"** (and when this reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he did not disapprove of it) as recorded by al-Ṭabarānī, **elevate this narration to the rank of a marfūʿ (Prophetic) tradition**.

Thus, no doubt remains in the absolute certainty of **consensus (ijmāʿ)** on this matter.

In these ḥadīths, the notion of any consensus (ijmāʿ) regarding Sayyidunā ʿAlī's (RA) superiority in the fourth position is **clearly negated**. Moreover, they also refute the claims of those who placed Sayyidunā ʿAlī (RA) in the third position and Sayyidunā ʿUthmān al-Ghanī (RA) in the fourth.

After the explicit mention of the first three Caliphs in their respective order of excellence, the fourth position naturally and rightfully belongs to Sayyidunā ʿAlī (RA).

Further ḥadīths also affirm and support this understanding — please observe them below.

(35) Hadith from Jabir:

> *Jabir narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:*
>
> *"Last night, I saw in a vision a righteous man. Abū Bakr was attached to (connected with) the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, ʿUmar was attached to Abū Bakr, and ʿUthmān was attached to ʿUmar."*
>
> *Jabir (RA) said: "When we arose from the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we said: As for the righteous man, he is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. And the connection of each one to the other indicates that they will be **rulers (khulafa)** over the mission which Allah entrusted to His Prophet ﷺ.*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 4636)*

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This very ḥadīth makes it clear that remaining silent after mentioning the names of the three Caliphs is not an omission or fault. It also becomes evident that the order of these Caliphs is not based merely on their **outward (political) rule**, but rather on their succession in fulfilling the **Prophet's ﷺ mission**—as indicated by the words:

"فَهُمْ وُلَاةُ الْأَمْرِ الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ بِهِ نَبِيَّهُ ﷺ"

"They are the leaders over the very matter (mission) with which Allah sent His Prophet ﷺ."

In the light of the hadith of Ibn Umar, when some people confined themselves to only naming the three caliphs, Imam Yahya ibn Ma'in objected—not to the hadith itself, God forbid—but to the misinterpretation made by some of the **Khawarij** of the time, who used this narration to deny the caliphate of Ali.

When Yahya ibn Ma'in was asked about his belief, he replied:

"I say: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman."

(As-Sunnah by Al-Khallal: 591)

It is mentioned "Its chain is authentic."

Hazrat Mir Syed Abdul Wahid Bilgrami Chishti (**قدس سره**) states:

"The consensus of the Companions (Sahabah) is the foundation of religion, the source of light, and the key to certainty. Whoever denies this consensus is disowned by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and soon becomes rejected by the court of Allah. The knot of his misfortune cannot be undone, for denying these pure-hearted companions is akin to denying Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Whosoever opposes the Sunnah has collars of curses around his neck."

(Sab'a Sanabil, p.18)

(36) Hadith from Safina:

Safina narrated that a man said:

"O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I saw in a dream that a scale was lowered from the sky. You were weighed against Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and you outweighed him. Then Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was weighed against Umar, and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr outweighed Umar. Then Umar was weighed against Uthman, and Umar outweighed Uthman. Then the scale was lifted."

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ interpreted this dream, saying:

"This (sequence) represents the Caliphate of Prophethood, after which Allah will bestow kingship to whomever He wills."

(Al-Bazzar, Hadith 1567; Majma' al-Zawa'id: 8917)

In its chain of narration includes **Mu'ammil ibn Ismail**, whom **Ibn Ma'in and Ibn Hibban** declared trustworthy, though **Imam Bukhari** regarded him as weak. The rest of the narrators are reliable.

Al-Tabarani also narrates from Hazrat Mu'adh that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"I saw in a dream that I was placed in one side of a scale, and my entire Ummah in the other. I outweighed them all. Then Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was placed on one side and the Ummah on the other. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's weight was equal to the whole Ummah. Then Umar was weighed against the Ummah; Umar too was equal in weight. Then Uthman was weighed against the Ummah, and again, his weight matched theirs. After that, the scale was lifted."

(Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer: 165; Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqa, p. 71)

Four Caliphs Altogether:

(37) Hadith from Jabir:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"Indeed, Allah has chosen my Companions above all the worlds—except for the Prophets and Messengers. From among them, He has especially chosen four for me: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. He has made them the best among my Companions, though indeed, all of my Companions are filled with goodness."*
>
> *(Ash-Shifa, vol. 2, p. 42; Ar-Riyad an-Nadhirah, vol. 1, p. 47)*

This hadith is classified as ***Hasan.***

In this hadith, the number **four** is explicitly mentioned, and it is from this very reference that the term **"Chaar Yaar" (The Four Friends)** originated.

(38) Hadith from Ali:

Ali said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated:

> *"May Allah have mercy on Sayyiduna Abu Bakr! He gave me his daughter in marriage, carried me to the place of Hijrah, and freed Bilal with his wealth. May Allah have mercy on Umar! He always spoke the truth even if it was bitter, and truth departed not from him —he was truthful. May Allah have mercy on Uthman! Even the angels feel shy before him. May Allah have mercy on Ali! O Allah, make the truth turn with him wherever he turns."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3714)*

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Tirmidhi said: This narration is ***Gharib (rare)***

This hadith includes the **Rashidun** (four Rightly Guided Caliphs) in order.

(39) Statement of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah :

Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah said:

> *"I asked my father (Ali RA),*
>
> *'Who is the best of people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?'*
>
> *He replied, 'Sayyiduna Abu Bakr.'*
>
> *I asked, 'Then who?'*
>
> *He replied, 'Umar.'*
>
> *I feared he might then say 'Uthman,'*
>
> *so I asked, 'Then are you the next?'*

He replied,

'I am but a man among the Muslims.'"

(Bukhari: 3671; Abu Dawood: 4629)

This narration also includes honorable mention of all **four Rightly Guided Caliphs** (Rashidun)**.**

(40) It is narrated from Saeed bin Jumhan that he said: Sufinah (RA) narrated to me, saying that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"The Caliphate (Khilaafah) will last for thirty years, then it will become kingship (Mulukiyat)."

Then **Sufinah (RA)** said:

*"Count the Khilaafah of **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** as two years, the Khilaafah of **Umar** as ten years, the Khilaafah of **Uthman** as twelve years, and the Khilaafah of **Ali** as six years."*

Saeed (RA) said:

*"I said to Sufinah : Some people claim that **Ali** was not a Caliph?"*

He replied:

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"They lie — may the backsides of the sons of the blue woman (i.e., Banu Marwān) be struck down."

*(Tirmidhi: 2226, Abu Dawood: 4646) — The hadith is **Sahih** (authentic).*

(41) It is narrated from Abdullah Ibn Umar: the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

*"Indeed, Allah has made love for **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr**, **Umar**, **Uthman**, and **Ali** obligatory upon you just as He has made obligatory upon you **Salah (prayer)**, **fasting**, **Hajj**, and **Zakat**. So, whoever harbors hatred against even one of them, then none of his Salah, Hajj, or Zakat will be accepted, and he will be raised from his grave on the Day of Judgement towards the Fire."*

*(Tabaqat al-Hanabilah, vol. 1, p. 78) — Chain is **Sahih** (authentic).*

In the blessed **hadith**:

***"Inna arḥama ummatī bi ummatī Abū Bakr"**, the name of **Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar (RA)** appears first.*

That is,

*"Indeed the most merciful of my Ummah towards my Ummah is **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr**.*

*The most severe in upholding the command of Allah is **Umar**, the most modest (Shy) is **Uthman**."*

(Tirmidhi: 3790, 3791; Ibn Majah: 154, 155; Ibn Abi Shaybah 7/472; Mustadrak al-Hakim: 6390)

In another narration, it is mentioned:

*"The greatest judge among them is **'Alī**."*

(Ibn Mājah: 154; Mishkāt: 6120)

At that time, the caliphate had not yet been established, and within this statement lies a complete reflection of the **Prophet's ﷺ attribute of "Mercy to all the worlds."** To be the **most merciful** toward the Ummah of the Beloved ﷺ is such a supreme virtue that neither knowledge can encompass it nor can any other deed equal its rank.

Furthermore, in the Hadith of the **Ten Promised Paradise (Asharah Mubasharah)**, the names of all four **Rightly Guided Caliphs** appear in order:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is in Paradise, Umar is in Paradise, Uthman is in Paradise, and Ali is in Paradise."

(Tirmidhi: 3747)

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In addition to these, **Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal** has recorded the following hadiths about the **Four Friends (Khulafa Rashideen)** in *Fadā'il as-Sahābah*:

- **Hadith 675** – Weak (Da'eef)
- **Hadith 690** – Weak (Da'eef)
- **Hadith 789** – Good (Hasan)
- **Hadith 977** – Good (Hasan)
- **Hadith 1027** – Good (Hasan)

The Slogan of "Haqq Chaar Yaar" (The Truth for the Four Noble Companions)

The slogan **"Haqq Chaar Yaar"** is, in fact, a refutation of those **Khawarij** who did not accept **Sayyiduna Ali** al-Karram Allahu Wajhahu as the fourth **Rightly Guided Caliph** (Khalifa-e-Rashid)**.**

To remove this misconception, **Imam Abu Dawood** established a chapter in his *Sunan* titled **"Chapter of Superiority (Bab al-Tafdeel)"**, in which he narrated the **Hadith of Ibn Umar** and similar narrations. Immediately after that, he established another chapter called **"Chapter of the Caliphs (Bab al-Khulafa)"**, where he narrated the **Hadith of Safeenah** and its likes.

Imam Khallal (may Allah have mercy on him**)** in his book *As-Sunnah* created a chapter titled:

"Affirmation of the Caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him), the Commander of the Faithful — Truly, Indeed the Truth"

Under this heading, he writes:

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal said about the one who does not accept **Ali** as an Imam (Caliph):

> *"What direction is such a person heading toward? Did not Ali establish the limits of Shariah (Hudood)? Did he not lead the people in Hajj? Did not the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) call him 'Ameer al-Mu'mineen' (Commander of the Faithful)?"*

Salih bin Ali said:

> *"I do not like the person who excludes Ali from the Caliphs."*
>
> *(Al-Sunnah tul-Khallal : 610, The narration is Sahih (authentic))*

Several such sayings are mentioned with **authentic chains** in Khallal's *As-Sunnah*. It is thus clear that the slogan **"Haqq Chaar Yaar"** is raised **to affirm the legitimate Caliphate of Sayyiduna Ali**. It does **not** contain — God forbid — any scent of hatred towards **Ahl al-Bayt**, rather it exudes the **fragrance of love** for **Ali (RA)**.

The symbol and identity of **Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah** is:

- **To declare superiority (afdaliyyah)** of the **Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar)**,
- And to express **love** for the **Khatnayn (Uthman and Ali — both sons-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ).**

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He who denies the superiority of the Shaykhayn is a **Rafidhi**, and he who denies love for the Khatnayn is a **Khariji**. But the one who accepts all four — in superiority and love — and believes all four to be rightly guided is from **Ahl al-Sunnah**.

Thus, **in the single slogan of "Haqq Chaar Yaar", there is a refutation of both the Khawarij and the Rafidah**.

Hazrat Sultan Bahoo states:

> *"I dissociate myself from the religion of the Rafidah and the Khawarij. I am a Sunni, and a lover of the Four Friends."*
>
> *(Aqal-e-Baydar, p. 246)*

Elsewhere, he writes:

> *"Know that to be called an 'Aalim (scholar), Faqih (jurist), Shaykh al-Mashayikh (master of masters), Ghawth, Qutb or a Darvesh is easy. But to become a true believer and Muslim is difficult and a very hard task. A follower of the Qadri path is a believing Muslim from Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, adheres to the Hanafi madhhab, and is a lover of the Four Friends (Haqq Chaar Yaar). He is spiritually absorbed inwardly and outwardly alert in matters of Shari'ah."*

(Noor al-Huda, p. 440)

Note on the Superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr did not surpass you due to excessive prayers or fasting, but because of the secret that was instilled in his heart."*
>
> *(Narrated by Tirmidhi al-Hakeem in Nawadir 3/55 from the statement of Bakr ibn Abdullah al-Muzani — Fada'il al-Sahabah: 118 — Chain is authentic)*

The **Muhaddithun** (Hadith scholars) regard this as a **saying of the Tabi'i Bakr ibn Abdullah al-Muzani**, and its chain is **authentic**. However, many **Sufi scholars** have accepted it as a **marfu' (elevated) hadith** and declared it **authentic**.

(Ihya Ulum al-Din p. 35, *Rasa'il Ibn Arabi* p. 30, *Al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir* p. 437, *Saba' Sanabil* p. 10)

They have stated:

> *"This is an explicit and decisive text affirming that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) is the most superior among all the Companions"*
>
> *(Al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir, p. 437)*

As the Chief Leader of all Messengers, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself bore witness to his excellence. (*Ihya' 'Uloom al-Din*, p. 35)

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> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr did not excel due to more prayers and more fasting, but by something that had taken firm root in his heart."*
>
> *(Saba' Sanabil, p. 10)*

A similar confirmation is found in another **Maqtu' Hadith** (narration from a Tabi'i).

Abu Malik ibn Ashja'i said:

> *"I asked Sayyiduna Ibn al-Hanafiyyah:*
>
> *'Was Sayyiduna Abu Bakr the first to accept Islam?'*
>
> *He replied: 'No.'*
>
> *I asked: 'Then how did he become so superior and distinguished that no one else is even mentioned alongside him?'*
>
> *He said: 'He was the most excellent among them in Islam until he met Allah, the Mighty and Majestic.'*
>
> *(Ibn Abi Shaybah, vol. 7, p. 472; As-Sunnah by Ibn Abi 'Asim: 1255 — Chain is authentic)"*

RESEMBLANCE OF SAYYIDUNA ABU BAKR AS-SIDDIQ WITH THE PROPHET ﷺ AND HIS COMPLETE ANNIHILATION IN THE PROPHET'S WAY (FANĀ' FĪ AL-RASŪL)

1. Companion Since Childhood

He was the Companion of the Prophet ﷺ since childhood. The Qur'an refers to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (RA) as **"Thānī Ithnayn"** — *the second of the two* — thus declaring him the second to the Prophet ﷺ himself. On the night of migration (Hijrah), Almighty Allah appointed Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) as the guardian of the Prophet's life. During the **Battle of Badr**, while others were on the battlefield, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) stood watch at the **Arish (shelter) of Badr**, guarding the blessed life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

2. Reflection of the Prophet's Traits

When the Prophet ﷺ received the first revelation, Umm al-Mu'minīn Khadijah (RA) comforted him with words affirming his noble character — that he maintained family ties, supported the poor, never turned away anyone empty-handed, honored guests, and stood by the truth (Bukhari: 3).

These same words were later used by Ibn Dughunnah for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr when he protected him:

> *"You support the poor, maintain family ties, carry the burden of the weak, honor the guest, and assist in every matter of truth."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 3905)*

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3. Identical Words at Hudaybiyyah

At the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, the Prophet ﷺ told Umar ibn al-Khattab:

> *"Indeed, I am the Messenger of Allah; I do not disobey Him, and He is my Helper... You will certainly come and perform Tawaf."*

Later, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr repeated these exact words to Umar:

> *"Indeed, he is the Messenger of Allah; he does not disobey his Lord, and He is his Helper... You will certainly go and perform Tawaf." (Bukhari: 2731)*

4. Sharing of Wealth and Risks

The Prophet ﷺ used Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's wealth as if it were his own (Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah, Vol. 1, p. 72). During the migration, the disbelievers placed a bounty on both the Prophet ﷺ and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (Al-Mustadrak-Al-Hakim: 4481).

5. Similar Responses in Critical Moments

During the blessed era of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, a man once divorced his wife by pronouncing **three divorces at once**. The Prophet ﷺ, in a state of righteous anger, stood up and said:

"Is the Book of Allah being played with while I am still among you?"

(Nasā'ī: 3401, Mishkāt: 3292)

Later, when **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (RA)** assumed the mantle of caliphate, some apostates refused to pay **Zakat (obligatory charity)**. Upon this, he declared:

"Shall the religion be diminished while I am alive?"

(Mishkāt: 6034)

Observe the **striking resemblance in the words** of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA). A discerning eye of faith will recognize that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (RA) had attained the **station of complete self-effacement in the Messenger ﷺ (Fanā fi'l-Rasūl)**.

6. Fulfillment of the Prophet's Responsibilities

After the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr announced:

"Anyone to whom the Prophet ﷺ owed a debt or promised anything, let them come to me and I will fulfill it."

(Bukhari: 3137)

7. Unwavering Commitment to the Sunnah

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr once said words, worthy of being inscribed in gold:

"I will never abandon anything that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to do." (Bukhari: 3093)

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Hence, when companions discussed the dispatch of Usama's army, fighting those who denied Zakāt, or the issue of Fadak, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr consistently responded: ***"It is incumbent upon me to remain steadfast upon the way of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."***

8. Title of "Al-Awwāh" — The Refuge

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr benefited immensely from the Prophet's ﷺ mercy upon creation (*raḥmat li'l-ʿālamīn*) to the point where the companions nicknamed him *al-Awwāh*, meaning "a compassionate refuge or shelter" (al-Iṣābah Vol. 2, p. 1091; al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah, p. 85).

9. Allah's Pleasure with the Prophet ﷺ and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

Allah, Most Exalted, said about His beloved Prophet ﷺ:

"And your Lord is going to give you so much that you will be pleased."

(Surah ad-Duhaa: 5)

And about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq , He said:

"And surely, he will be pleased."

(Surah al-Layl: 21)

10. The Most Merciful in the Ummah

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was given the title **"Arḥam Ummatī"** (the most merciful of my Ummah) by the Prophet ﷺ (Tirmidhi: 3790), while the Qur'an gave the Prophet ﷺ the title:

"Mercy to the worlds (Raḥmatullil-'Ālamīn)."

(Surah al-Anbiya: 107)

11. Prohibited from Walking Ahead of Him (RA)

The Prophet ﷺ once forbade Abu al-Dardā' from walking ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr . Similarly, the Qur'an says regarding the Prophet ﷺ:

"Do not put yourselves before Allah and His Messenger."

(Surah al-Ḥujurāt: 1)

12. Addressing with Respect

The companions never called Seyyuduna Siddiq-e-Akbar by his personal name. They always addressed him by his *kunyah* **"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr"** or his title **"As-Siddiq"**. This mirrors the Qur'anic command about the Prophet ﷺ:

"Do not call the Messenger among yourselves the way you call each other."

(Surah an-Nūr: 63)

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13. Both Were Poisoned

The Prophet ﷺ was poisoned, and so was Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (al-Mustadrak al-Ḥākim: 4467).

14. Shrouded Like the Prophet ﷺ

In his final moments, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr willed that he be shrouded just like the Prophet ﷺ:

"Shroud me in the same (type of cloth)."

(al-Mustadrak: 4470)

He lived the same number of years as the Prophet ﷺ and was buried next to him.

15. The Strength of Their Shoulders

At the Conquest of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ climbed upon the shoulders of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha to demolish the idols. Sayyiduna Ali lifted him up, but when the Prophet ﷺ found him weak, he told

him to sit down. Then the Prophet ﷺ told Ali to climb onto his shoulders. The Prophet ﷺ lifted him, and Ali later said:

> *"I felt as if I could touch the sky."*
>
> *(as-Sunan al-Kubra lil-Nasa'i: 8507)*

SubḥānAllāh! What a beautiful virtue and immense honor granted to Ali. Shame upon the ***Khawārij*** who burn in hatred for Ali.

Now consider the strength of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's shoulders — on the night of the migration, to conceal the Prophet's ﷺ footprints, he lifted him onto his shoulders and brought him to the mouth of the cave (al-Wafā, p. 237).

Shame upon the ***Rāfiḍah*** who deny the strength and resolve of the one who bore the burden of prophethood on his shoulders.

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SAYINGS OF SAYYIDUNA ALI AL-MURTADHA (KARRAMALLĀHU WAJHAH)

1. The Title "As-Siddīq" Was Revealed from the Heavens

Hazrat Ḥakīm ibn Saʿd reports:

> *"I heard ʿAli swear by Allah that Allah sent down the name of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as As-Siddīq from the heavens."*
>
> *(Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr of Ṭabarānī, Vol. 14; Majmaʿ az-Zawāʾid: 14295; Mustadrak al-Ḥākim: 4460)*

And al-Haythamī said "Its narrators are trustworthy."

2. The Term "Chār Yār"

The Hadith narrated by Hazrat Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him), mentioned earlier in reference to the expression *"Chaar Yaar"* (the Four Companions), has already been cited. *(Bukhārī: 3671; Abū Dāwūd: 4629)*

3. ʿAlī at the Funeral of ʿUmar

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Ibn ʿAbbās said:

> *"I was standing among the people while they were making duʿā for ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and he was laid upon his bier. A man behind me placed his elbow on my shoulder and said:*
>
> *'May Allah have mercy on you! I was hopeful that Allah would unite you with your two companions. For I often heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say:*
>
> *"I, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and ʿUmar did such-and-such...*
>
> *I, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and ʿUmar went somewhere together..."*
>
> *So I was sure Allah would join you with them.'*
>
> *When I turned around and saw that the man was 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib."*
>
> *(Muslim: 6187; Bukhārī: 3677, 3685; Ibn Mājah: 98; Sharḥ as-Sunnah: 3890)*

4. 'The Best of People after the Prophet ﷺ'

ʿAlī said:

> *"The best of people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and after Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, it is ʿUmar."*
>
> *(Ibn Majah, Hadith: 106; Musnad Ahmad: 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 874, 881, 882, 883, 911, 925, 935, 936, 937, 1034, 1035, 1036, 1044, 1055, 1056, 1058; Ibn Abi Shaybah*

8/574; al-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad: 1298–1326; al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi ʻAsim: 1234–1239).

This ḥadīth is **mass-transmitted (mutawātir)** from ʻAli, with some chains being *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic), some *ḥasan* (good), and some *ḍaʻīf* (weak), but overall, they reinforce each other and strengthen the authenticity of the report.

Imām adh-Dhahabī wrote:

> *This statement has been transmitted from Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) through a large number of reliable narrators—so extensively that it reaches the level of tawātur (mass transmission). He mentioned that about eighty (80) individuals narrated it and said:*
>
> *"By Allah, this is truly the saying of Hazrat Ali, which he proclaimed from the pulpit of Kufa. May Allah curse the Rafidhites—how ignorant they are!"*
>
> *(Tārīkh al-Islām, vol. 3, p. 115; al-Muntaqā min Minhāj al-Iʻtidāl, p. 361 — both by al-Dhahabi; Tārīkh al-Khulafā', p. 38; al-Sawāʻiq al-Muḥriqah, p. 60)*

Imām Ibn Kathīr wrote:

> *"It has been established through tawātur from ʻAli that he said from the pulpit of Kūfah:*
>
> *'O people, indeed the best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then ʻUmar. And if I wished, I could mention the third one as well.'"*
>
> *(Al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah, Vol. 7, p. 328)*

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5. Sayyiduna Sila bin Zufar reports:

Hazrat Sillah ibn Zafar narrated: Whenever the name of Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was mentioned in the presence of Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), he would say,

> *"People speak of precedence — by Him in Whose hand is my soul, whenever we advanced toward any good deed, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr always surpassed us in it."*
>
> *(Al-Muʻjam al-Awsat of Tabarani, also in Majmaʻ al-Zawa'id: 14332)*

Al-Haythami commented, "In its chain is Ahmad bin Abdur-Rahman bin al-Mufaddal al-Harani – I do not know him – but the rest of the narrators are trustworthy."

Hazrat Sheikh Fariduddin Attar (may Allah have mercy on him) said: **Siddeeq-e-Akbar** excelled all others in every aspect. *(Mantiq al-Tayr, p. 28)*

6. It is narrated from Sayyiduna Ali and Zubayr:

> *"We considered Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to be the most deserving of leadership after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ because he was the companion of the cave and the second of the two (in the cave). We also knew his honor and greatness.*
>
> *The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had appointed him to lead the people in prayer while he (the Prophet) was still alive."*

This hadith is authentic according to the criteria of **Bukhari and Muslim**, although they did not record it and Imam a**l-Dhahabi** agreed with this statement. (Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4478)

7. Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha said:

> *"By the One who split the seed and created human beings from a mere particle – if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had appointed me as a caliph, I would have done Jihad for it in obedience to his command. Even if I had no sword, I would have fought with my cloak!*
>
> *And I would not have allowed Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to climb even a single step of the Prophet's pulpit ﷺ.*
>
> *But the Prophet ﷺ, knowing my rank and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's rank very well, declared his decision and said:*
>
> *'O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, stand and lead the people in prayer.'*
>
> *He did not command me to lead the prayer.*
>
> *So if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased to make him our religious leader, why should we not be pleased to make him our worldly leader?"*
>
> *(As recorded in **As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah**, p. 62, and **Asna al-Matalib fi Manaqib Ali ibn Abi Talib**, Hadith 43)*
>
> ***"He (the Prophet ﷺ) was pleased with him (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) for our religion, and so we were pleased with him for our worldly affairs."***
>
> *(Al-Riyad an-Nadrah, Vol. 1, p. 81)*

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Ali also said:

> *"When the Prophet ﷺ ordered Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the prayer, I was present – not absent."*
>
> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 52)*

From the noble statement of *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (may Allah ennoble his face), it becomes clear that Sayyidnā Abū Bakr as-Siddīq (RA) was made the spiritual leader of the religion even before he assumed the apparent caliphate. *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (RA) distinctly acknowledged both aspects in favor of Siddīq Akbar (RA): the **inner authority (wilāyah-bāṭinī),** meaning the spiritual leadership of the religion, and the **outer caliphate (khalāfah-ẓāhirī),** meaning the worldly leadership.

A highly noteworthy point is that, had the Prophet ﷺ, hypothetically, placed *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (RA) on the imamate platform, the opponents among the Ahl al-Sunnah would have caused a major uproar. Reflecting on this through the lens of imagination, one can clearly see the exalted status of Abū Bakr (RA) shining forth, while the honor, balance, and moderation of Ahl al-Sunnah become vividly evident.

8. Saying of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha

When Ali (RA) was wounded, the people said to him:

> *"Appoint someone over us as caliph."*
>
> *He replied:*
>
> *"I am leaving you as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left us."*
>
> *We said:*
>
> *"O Messenger of Allah, appoint a caliph over us."*
>
> *He ﷺ said:*
>
> *"If Allah sees good in you, He will appoint the best among you as your leader."*
>
> *Sayyiduna Ali continued:*
>
> *"Allah knew Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to be the best among us, so He granted him leadership over us."*
>
> *(Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4756)*

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9. *Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha* (karam allahu ta'ala wajhu) said:

> *"I will not find anyone who prefers me over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar except that I will give him the punishment of a slanderer (80 whips)."*

- ***Fadā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*** *by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Hadith Nos. 49 and 387, narrated by Ḥakam ibn Ḥujjal, in which he reports hearing ʿAli (رضی اللہ عنہ) speak*
- ***As-Sunnah*** *by ʿAbdullah ibn Ahmad, Hadiths 1242 (Ḥakam ibn Ḥujjal) and 1322 (ʿAlqamah)*
- ***As-Sunnah*** *by Ibn Abi Asim, Hadiths 1027 (ʿAlqamah) and 1254 (Ḥakam ibn Ḥujjal)*
- ***Sharḥ Usul Iʿtiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāʿah*** *by al-Lalkā'ī, 2/270*
- ***Al-Iʿtiqād*** *by al-Bayhaqī, p. 206 (from Ḥakam ibn Ḥujjal: "ʿAli (رضی اللہ عنہ) delivered a sermon in Basra...")*
- ***Fadā'il Abī Bakr as-Siddiq*** *by Abu Talib Muhammad ibn Ali al-Ashʿarī (d. 451), Hadith 39*
- ***Tuḥfat al-Ṣiddiq*** *by Ibn Balbān, p. 87*
- ***Al-Istiʿāb****, p. 434*
- ***Tarikh Ibn ʿAsākir****, Vol. 30/369, 371, 383; Vol. 44/365*

- ***Al-Riyāḍ al-Niḍrah**, 1/401*
- ***Al-Mu'talif wa'l-Mukhtalif** by al-Daraqutnī, 3/92 (from Ḥakam ibn Ḥujjal)*
- ***Al-Muntaqā** by al-Dhahabī, p. 361 (from Muhammad ibn al-Hanafīyah)*
- ***Tārīkh al-Khulafā'**, p. 38*
- ***Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah**, p. 60*
- ***Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī**, 17/206*
- ***Kanz al-'Ummāl**, Hadith 36152*
- ***Izālat al-Khafā'**, 1/317*

Please reflect on the various references of this narration. Its narrators include **Hazrat Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah**, **Hazrat Alqamah**, **Hazrat 'Abd Khayr**, **Hazrat Jabir ibn Hameed**, **Hazrat Hakam ibn Hujl**, and his father **Hazrat Hujl** (may Allah have mercy on them all). All of them are directly narrating from **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha**.

Hakam ibn Hujl narrates from his father and also says himself, "I heard Ali say..." In another place he says: "Ali delivered a sermon to us in **Basrah**." This clearly proves that **Hakam ibn Hujl** had indeed met **Sayyiduna Ali**. In the books of **Rijāl (narrators' biographies)**, **Hakam ibn Hujl** is graded as **trustworthy (thiqah)**, and since he is trustworthy, it is impossible that he would lie about having seen Ali —God forbid.

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Furthermore, for the narration of a Hadith, contemporaneity is sufficient, meaning that physical meeting is not strictly necessary. Even if, hypothetically, the Hadith is **Mursal (with a missing link)**, it is still considered **evidence (Ḥujjah)** according to our understanding, because the person who transmits the Mursal Hadith does so with trust in the authenticity of the report.

That is why scholars have graded this hadith as **authentic**. **Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlvi** declared it **sahih (authentic)** in *Fatawa Azizi (Urdu), p. 383*, and **A'la Hazrat Ahmad Raza Khan** quoted **Imam al-Dhahabi** as having also declared it **sahih** (Al-Zulāl al-Anqā, p. 95).

Even though some Pakistani **Tafdhilis** (those who believe in the superiority of Ali over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) insisted on denying the authenticity of this hadith, a contemporary **Tafdhili scholar from Egypt** accepted it as authentic (*Ghayat al-Tabjil, p. 259*).

This Hadith has been narrated by Hazrat Alqamah as:

> ***Ibrahim said:** Alqamah struck the pulpit with his hand and said:*
>
> *"Ali delivered a sermon to us from this pulpit. He praised and glorified Allah, then said what Allah willed him to say. Then he said: 'Be aware! I have received news that some people prefer me over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar. If I had previously announced a punishment for this, I would have acted upon it. But I dislike punishing before making an announcement. So, whoever says this (after this point) is a slanderer and shall receive the punishment of one who fabricates lies. The best of people after the Messenger of Allah*

> *(ﷺ) is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar. After them, we began to face newly occurring matters, which Allah will judge among us."*
>
> *(As-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad, Hadith 1322; As-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim, Hadith 1027 — with authentic chains)*

This same narration is also reported from **Sayyiduna Suwayd ibn Ghaflah** (*Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, vol. 2, p. 270*).

All these hadiths clearly show that the **hadith about punishing slanderers** is a **part** of the well-known **mutawatir hadith** (mass-transmitted tradition) which has been transmitted by **eighty** narrators:

> *"The best of people after the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, and the best after Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is Umar."*

Some narrators transmit this segment, while some do not.

Imam-e-Azam Abu Hanifa narrates:

A man came to Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and said, "I have never seen anyone better than you." He (Ali) replied, "Have you seen the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)?" The man said, "No." He then asked, "Have you seen Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them)?" The man replied, "No." He (Ali) said, "If you had told me that you had seen the Prophet (peace be upon him), I would have killed you. And if you had said that you had seen Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I would have lashed you."

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> *"Had you informed me that you had seen Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I would have punished you severely."*
>
> *(Kitab al-Athar by Imam Abu Yusuf: 924)*

This decision is in complete agreement with the hadith narrated by Sayyiduna Imam Hussain ibn Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both):

> *"The punishment for one who disrespects the Prophet is death, and the punishment for one who insults a companion is lashes."*
>
> *(Al-Shifa, Volume 2, Page 194)*

Clearly, the statements of truthful people align with each other.

It is important to note that Ibn Saba and his followers were punished by Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) with a punishment even more severe than the *hadd* (prescribed punishment) for false accusation – he burned them alive. (*Sahih Bukhari: 3017; Mustadrak al-Hakim: 6405*)

In another hadith:

Thawr bin Zayd al-Daylami narrates that Sayyiduna Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) sought counsel regarding a man who had consumed alcohol. Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"I believe he should be given eighty lashes, because when a person drinks, he becomes intoxicated; when he is intoxicated, he speaks nonsense; and when he speaks nonsense, he falsely accuses – and the punishment for false accusation is eighty lashes."*

So Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) administered eighty lashes for drinking alcohol. This opinion was unanimously agreed upon by all the Companions.

> *(Muwatta of Imam Malik: 2 from Kitab al-Ashribah; Sunan al-Daraqutni: 3290; Mustadrak al-Hakim: 8299; Bukhari: 6778, 6779; Muslim: 4457, 4458; Abu Dawood: 4486, 4488; Ibn Majah: 2570, 2571)*

If Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) did not have the authority to enforce *hudood* (prescribed punishments) on those who preferred him over others (Tafdhilis), then how could he have the right to burn the Rawafid alive and administer 80 lashes to the drunkard?

Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) is saying that when a drunkard drinks alcohol, he becomes intoxicated; when intoxicated, he utters nonsense; when he speaks nonsense, he falsely accuses – and the punishment for false accusation is 80 lashes. Similarly, the belief of the Tafdhilis leads to false accusations against all the Companions – Muhajirun and Ansar – thus their punishment should also be 80 lashes.

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Allama Parharvi writes:

The Rawafid consider Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) superior, then based on that they argue that denying him the caliphate was oppression, and those who oppress are not just; and those who are not just, their narrations are unreliable – thereby, they render the entire hadith collection of Ahl al-Sunnah as invalid. Through this chain of reasoning, they mislead simple-minded Muslims. (*Nibras, p. 302*)

During the caliphate of Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq (may Allah be pleased with him):

A man said that Umar was superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. When Umar learned of this, he began lashing the man until he lost control of his bladder. Umar said:

> *"After the Prophet (peace be upon him), Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most superior of all people – in this regard and that regard. Whoever opposes this belief, we will impose the same punishment upon him that we do on a slanderer."*
>
> *(Fada'il al-Sahaba by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Hadith: 396 – Isnad: Sahih)*

This proves that the punishment was actually carried out.

Sayyiduna Umar's further declaration of punishment for false accusation is also found in other ahadith:

"The best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. Whoever says otherwise is a liar and shall be punished as a liar."

(Al-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad: 1292; Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunnah: 2448)

Once the hadith regarding punishment for slander is established as authentic, accepted by scholars of hadith, and corroborated by several chains – and even opponents agree with its authenticity – then there remains no doubt that none among the Companions, Ahl al-Bayt, or the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt could ever contradict the statement of Sayyiduna Ali.

The belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) is definitive. If, hypothetically, any statement or report is found opposing it, it would surely be either fabricated or misinterpreted.

10. Muhaddith 'Abd al-Razzaq (RA) had Shia inclinations regarding the two grandsons (Hasan and Husayn), yet since Sayyiduna Ali himself affirmed the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umer over him, he ('Abd al-Razzaq) said:

"I prefer the Two Shaykhs only on account of Ali's preferring them over himself. Otherwise, I would not have given them precedence. It would be sufficient misfortune for me to profess love for him (Ali) yet contradict him."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 62)

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'Abd al-Razzaq also said:

"By Allah, I never had any inner satisfaction in believing that Ali was superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar. May Allah's mercy be upon Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, and may His mercy be upon Uthman, and may His mercy be upon Ali. Whoever does not love them is not a believer. The strongest of our deeds is that we love all of them — may Allah be pleased with them all — and that not even the slightest doubt regarding any one of them rests upon our necks. And we pray that we be resurrected among them and together with them. Āmīn, O Lord of the worlds."

(Fada'il al-Sahaba: 126 – Isnad: Sahih)

11. Someone asked Sayyiduna Imam Zayn al-Abidin (may Allah be pleased with him):

"Who was closest to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him)?"

He replied:

"Those who were closest to him then, are the very ones who are closest to him now – those who rest beside him (in his grave)."

(Musnad Ahmad 4/96, Hadith: 16714; Fada'il al-Sahaba by al-Daraqutni, Hadith: 35; al-I'tiqad by al-Bayhaqi, p. 362)

EXPRESSIONS OF SUPERIORITY FOR SIDDIQ-E-AKBAR

After the Qur'anic verses, countless hadiths also enumerate the unique merits of **Siddiq-e-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him)**. Not just his distinctions, but the Qur'an, Sunnah, and the sayings of the Companions employ the following superlative expressions to describe his rank and excellence:

A'ẓamu darajatan – *The one of the greatest rank (Surah Al-Hadid: 10)*

Al-atqā – *The most pious (Surah Al-Lail: 17)*

Khayru aṣ-ṣaḥābah – *The best of the companions (Bukhari: 3668)*

Khayrun-nās – *The best of people (Ibn Majah: 106)*

A'lamu – *The most knowledgeable (Bukhari: 466)*

Arḥamu – *The most merciful (Tirmidhi: 3790)*

Ar'afu – *The most compassionate (Mustadrak: 6390)*

Amanun-nāsi 'alā Rasūlillāh ﷺ – *The most trusted by the Messenger of Allah* ﷺ *(Bukhari: 466)*

Afḍalul-ummah – *The most virtuous of the Ummah (Abu Dawood: 4628)*

Khayrul-awwalīn wal-ākhirīn – *The best of the first and the last (generations) (Ṣawā'iq Muḥriqah, p. 76)*

Aḥabbu ilā Rasūlillāh ﷺ – *The most beloved to the Messenger of Allah* ﷺ *(Bukhari: 3668)*

Aḥaqqu bil-imāmah ba'da Rasūlillāh ﷺ – *The most deserving of leadership after the Messenger* ﷺ *(Mustadrak Hakim: 4478)*

A'lamu bis-sunnah – *The most knowledgeable in Sunnah (Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 35)*

A'baru hādhihil-ummah – *The most insightful of this Ummah (Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 83; Ṣawā'iq Muḥriqah, p. 34; Riyāḍ an-Naḍrah, Vol. 1, p. 59)*

A'lamu bil-ansāb – *The most well-versed in genealogy (Muslim: 6395)*

Ashja'u – *The bravest (Majma' az-Zawā'id: 14333)*

Al-Awwāh – *The one most often turning to Allah in humility (Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 49; Ṣawā'iq Muḥriqah, p. 85)*

As-Ṣiddīqul-Akbar – *The greatest truthful one*

Al-Akram – *The most noble*

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SAYINGS OF THE SCHOLARS AND SUFIS

(1) *Abu Nu'aym* narrates from *Furāt bin Sā'ib*, who said:

I asked *Maymūn bin Mehrān*,

> *"In your view, is Ali more superior or Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and 'Umar?"*

Upon hearing this question, he began trembling so much that his staff fell from his hand. Then he said:

> *"I never imagined I would live to see a time when people would even think of comparing anyone to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and 'Umar."*
>
> *(Abu Nu'aym in al-Ḥilyah, Vol. 4, pp. 92–93; Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 30)*

(2) The renowned foundational book of Sufism, *al-Ta'arruf*, was authored by the great Imam *Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Kalābādhī* (d. 380 AH). He writes:

> *"So what then can be said of these two (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and 'Umar), such that no one from the first or the last of mankind after the Prophets and Messengers can even come close to them in virtue."*
>
> *(Baḥr al-Fawā'id, Vol. 1, p. 175)*

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To further enrich the spiritual taste of the learned reader, here is a verse from the *Qaṣīda al-Burda composed by the eminent scholar Imām al-Būṣīrī* (d. 694 AH):

فَاقَ النَّبِيِّيْنَ فِي خَلْقٍ وَ فِي خُلُقٍ

وَ لَمْ يُدَانُوْهُ فِي عِلْمٍ وَّلَا كَرَمٍ '

> *You (the Prophet ﷺ) surpass all the Prophets in physical appearance and in character;*
>
> *And none of them, in knowledge or in spiritual rank, has ever reached your station.*
>
> *(Qaṣīda al-Burda, verse 38)*

Note the expressions:

> *"(they could not even come near him) used by **Imām Būṣīrī** for the Prophet ﷺ,*
>
> *and (none could draw near them) used by **Imām Kalābādhī** for **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and 'Umar**.*
>
> *For scholars and truth-seekers, these parallels are spiritually stirring—SubḥānAllah!*

(3) *Hazrat Dātā Ganj Bakhsh* writes:

> *"The spiritual leader of Islam and the best of all creation after the Prophets."*
>
> *(Kashf al-Maḥjūb, p. 67)*

He further states:

> *"Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar is foremost among all creation after the Prophets (peace be upon them all), and it is impermissible for anyone to step ahead of him."*
>
> *(Kashf al-Maḥjūb, p. 69)*

Additionally, *Hazrat Dātā Ṣāḥib* mentions the four Rightly Guided Caliphs in this exact order:

1. *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddīq*
2. *'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*
3. *'Uthmān ibn 'Affān*
4. *'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*

(4) *Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī* states:

> *"The most virtuous of people after the Prophet ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī—may Allah be pleased with them all."*
>
> *(Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn, p. 119)*

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In another place, he writes:

> *"The rightful Imam after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī—may Allah be pleased with them."*
>
> *(Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn, p. 146)*

Elsewhere, Imām Ghazālī explains:

> *"Know that the cause of earning virtue in the sight of Allah is one thing, and being widely known among the people is another. The fame of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddīq was due to his Caliphate, but the **real cause of his superiority** was the secret instilled in his heart."*
>
> *"And his virtue lay in that secret which was placed in his heart."*
>
> *(Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn, p. 35)*

(5) *Hazrat Sayyidunā Ghawth al-A'ẓam Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī* says:

> *"The Rightly Guided Caliphs did not attain the caliphate through force or coercion; rather, they were granted it because of their* ***superiority over their contemporaries in their respective eras****."*
>
> *(Ghunyat al-Ṭālibīn, p. 158)*

From the statement of Hazrat Ghawth al-Aʿzam (Quddis Sirruhū), it becomes clear that **spiritual precedence** had already been attained, while the **mantle of caliphate** was bestowed later.

Hazrat Sayyiduna Ghawth al-Aʿzam (Quddis Sirruhū) and other scholars have explicitly stated that after the Rightly Guided Caliphs (**Rashidun**), the most virtuous are the **Asharah Mubasharah** and the **Companions of Badr** (Ghunyat al-Ṭālibīn, p. 157). If superiority were solely based on **chronological succession of caliphate**, it would not have been appropriate to mention these others' excellence alongside the caliphs.

(6) ***Shaykh al-Akbar Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi (may Allah sanctify his secret) said:***

> *"Know that there is no one in the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ who is more virtuous than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr—except for 'Isa (Jesus, peace be upon him)."*
>
> *(Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Chapter 93, as quoted in al-Yawaqeet wal-Jawahir, p. 438)*

Reflect upon this statement—if the intended superiority were merely in terms of outward caliphate, then the exception of Prophet 'Isa (peace be upon him) would become entirely meaningless.

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(7) ***Imam Abdul Wahhab al-Sha'rani (may Allah sanctify his secret) wrote under the heading:***

> *"Clarification that the most superior among the Muhammadan saints after the Prophets and Messengers are Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all)."*
>
> *(Al-Yawaqeet wal-Jawahir, p. 437)*

Reflect on the wording of this heading: **Afdal al-Awliyā' al-Muḥammadiyyīn** ***)The Most Superior among the Muhammadan Saints(.*** These words alone dismantle the very foundation of every claim made by the *tafaḍḍulīs*. The term ***awliyā'*** clearly indicates that superiority is not based on holding outward political caliphate, but on possessing **Muhammadan Sainthood** (*walāyah Muḥammadiyyah*). Everything the Imām (rahimahu'Llāh) has written under this title is truly worthy of careful study."

(8) In the renowned classical book ***Sharh al-ʿAqaid al-Nasafiyyah*****, it is written:**

> *"The most virtuous human being after our Prophet ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq."*
>
> *(Sharh al-ʿAqaid al-Nasafi, p. 150)*

(9) ***Shaykh Fariduddin Attar said:***

"The first guide and leader—he is the first companion of the Prophet ﷺ.

The second of the two when they were in the cave.

The head of the religion, al-Siddiq al-Akbar, the pole of truth.

In every matter, he surpassed all others."

(Mantiq al-Tayr, p. 28)

"Every line of this quatrain is worthy of deep reflection and is a burden upon the Rāfiḍah. In particular, the phrases 'the foremost master,' 'the Pole of Truth,' and especially the final line—'he surpassed everyone in every matter'—should be carefully noted."

(10) ***Imam Mujaddid Alf Thani stated:***

"The superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) over the rest of the Ummah is definitive. None denies it except an ignorant person or one or one blinded by prejudice"

(Maktubat, Volume 2, Letter 36)

(11) ***Mulla Ali al-Qari (may Allah have mercy on him), while explaining the basis of superiority, wrote:***

"The strongest evidence for the superiority of al-Siddiq (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) from a scholarly standpoint is that the Prophet ﷺ appointed him to lead the people in prayer during his final illness—day and night."

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For this reason, the senior Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them) said:

"If the Prophet ﷺ was pleased with him as a leader for our religion, should we not be pleased with him as a leader for our worldly affairs?"

(Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 63)

He further wrote:

"Know that all of the Rafidha and most of the Mu'tazila hold the belief that Ali is superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him)."

(Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 63)

(12) **Hazrat Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlavi (may Allah have mercy on him) states:**

"The Shi'i Tafdhiliyyah sect, which gives Sayyiduna Murtadha (radiyAllahu 'anhu) superiority over all the Companions, is in fact among the lowest disciples of the accursed Satan, having accepted his whisperings. Sayyiduna Murtadha (radiyAllahu 'anhu) sternly warned them, declaring: 'If I hear of anyone who gives me superiority over the two Shaykhs, I shall administer to him the punishment for slander, which is eighty lashes.'"

(Tuhfa Ithna Ashariyyah, p. 5)

(13) Belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah as Written by Mufti Muhammad Qasim Mashhori

"Our Murshid (spiritual guide), Qutb al-Aqtab, Faqih al-Azam Hazrat Pir Mufti Muhammad Qasim Mashhori (may Allah sanctify his secret), writes:

> *"There is no doubt that the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah is that Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (radiyAllahu 'anhu) is superior to all the Companions, followed by Hazrat 'Umar al-Fārūq (radiyAllahu 'anhumā). To consider Hazrat 'Ali (karramAllahu wajhahu) superior to them is misguidance and a departure from the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah. Likewise, to speak ill of any Companion—especially Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah (radiyAllahu 'anhu)—amounts to casting aspersions upon Islam itself and is tantamount to rejecting explicit and definitive texts."*
>
> *And Allah Most High knows best. Written by the humble servant, Muhammad Qasim—may he be pardoned.*

(14) Ranking of the Caliphs by Khawaja Shams al-Haq Sialvi

Qudwat al-Salikin Hazrat Khawaja Shams ud-Din Sialvi (may Allah sanctify his secret) states:

> *" "Their virtue follows a divinely established order." Thereafter, he recited this blessed ḥadīth from the sacred tongue of the Prophet ﷺ "The most excellent of people after me is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī."*
>
> *(Mir'āt al-'Āshiqīn, p. 22)*

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(15) Hazrat Pīr Mehr 'Alī Shāh Golravi 'alayhi al-raḥmah writes

> *"Only that person can be deemed worthy of the Prophetic vicegerency who possesses a nature whose spiritual essence is closest to the essence of the Prophets. Such a person must combine both the outward form of caliphate (i.e., general leadership of the Ummah) and the inner reality of caliphate (i.e., nearness to the Prophets). This perfection was collectively embodied by the four rightly guided Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them all."*
>
> *(Fatawa Mehria, p. 145)*

Continuing to dismantle the claims of the *Tafḍīlīs*, he writes:

> *"However, there is one distinguishing difference: during the era of the first three Caliphs, both the outward form of the caliphate—that is, the general governance of the Muslim community—and the unity of the Muslims were present in the most complete degree. In contrast, during the era of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī, although the inner reality of the caliphate—namely nearness to the Prophet—was present in its perfection, the outward authority and communal unity were not at the level they had been during the rule of the first three Caliphs."*
>
> *(Fatāwā Mehrīyah, p. 145)*

The essence of this passage from ***Fatāwā Mehrīyah*** is that during the periods of the first three Caliphs, both the external and internal dimensions of the caliphate reached their peak; whereas in the time of the fourth Caliph, the inner reality remained, but the outward conditions were no longer what they had been.

Elsewhere, quoting Abū Ḥafṣ Ḥaddād **ʻalayhi al-raḥmah**, he writes:

> *"After the Prophet ﷺ, no one was superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, for he performed, in the battle against the apostates, a task akin to that of a Prophet."*
>
> *(Taṣfiyah mā bayna Sunnī wa Shīʻah, p. 19)*

This statement from *Taṣfiyah* is in perfect conformity with the consensus of the Ummah.

(16) Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid on the Order of Caliphate

After quoting the Hadith of *Ashara Mubashshara*, Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid of Kot Mithan states:

> *"This Hadith clearly outlines the Caliphate and ranks of the Sahabah based on their closeness and status with the Prophet ﷺ."*

He adds:

> *"Among the four Caliphs, Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar held the pure Prophetic Caliphate."*
>
> *(Maqabis al-Majalis, p. 924)*

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(17) Imam Ahmad Raza Khan's Powerful Testimony

Hazrat Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan writes:

> *"This noble belief has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Mawlā ʻAlī **karamallāhu wajhah**, by eighty (80) Companions and Successors. Our comprehensive and extensive work Maṭlaʻ al-Qamrayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-ʻUmarayn is dedicated to this very subject, in which oceans of evidences surge forth—from the Noble Qur'an, from the sayings of the Master of all Messengers ﷺ, from the reports of the noble Ahl al-Bayt and the esteemed Companions, from the statements of the Commander of the Faithful ʻAlī **raḍiyallāhu ʻanhu**, and from the explicit texts of the Imāms, scholars, saints, and gnostics **quddisa asrāruhum**."*
>
> *Every child knows that in all the books of Ahl al-Sunnah, the belief is unanimously established that the most superior of all human beings after the Prophets is Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. If one claims—on a perfectly clear day, with open eyes, standing in an open plain at noon—that the sun is not shining, then only such a madman could also deny this truth."*
>
> *(Fatāwā Riḍawiyyah, vol. 9, p. 61)*

(18) Consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah as Reported by Syed Naeemuddin Muradabadi

Sadr al-Afadil Syed Naeemuddin Muradabadi states:

> *"There is consensus among Ahl al-Sunnah that after the Prophets, the most superior of all creation is Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, followed by Hazrat Umar, then Hazrat Uthman, and then Hazrat Ali"*

He further narrates from Ibn Asakir on the authority of Hazrat Ibn Umar:

> *'We used to give superiority to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali —while the Prophet ﷺ was among us.'*
>
> *(Sawanih Karbala, p. 18)*

(19) Maulana Amjad Ali Refutes the Tafdhili Misconception

Maulana Amjad Ali writes:

Refuting the above-mentioned heretical and misguided belief of the Tafdhilis, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Amjad ʻAlī **ʻalayhi al-raḥmah** writes:

> *"Their caliphates occurred in accordance with the order of superiority. Whoever was higher and more exalted in the sight of Allah was granted the caliphate first. It was **not** that superiority followed the order of caliphate—meaning that the most superior would be the one who possessed greater administrative or political skill, as is falsely claimed today by those Tafdhilis who try to pass themselves off as Sunnis. If that were the criterion, then ʻUmar al-Fārūq **raḍiyallāhu ʻanhu** would have been the most superior of all."*
>
> *(Bahār-e-Sharīʻat, Part 1, p. 38)*

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Read the objection of the *Tafdhilis* again and again, and read this passage from *Bahār-e-Sharīʻat* repeatedly as well. This passage is a torment for the Tafdhilis, for it refutes their belief **word for word**. It strips the cloak of Sunnism from them and exposes them completely.

(20) Sayyid Khawaja Muhammad Qamaruddin Sialvi on the Superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

Ḥaḍrat Shaykh al-Islām wal-Muslimīn Khwāja Muhammad Qamar al-Dīn Siyālvī **ʻalayhi al-raḥmah** writes:

> *" "If you reflect and contemplate upon the matter, you will surely come to know that Abū Bakr surpasses all the Companions in virtue and piety. For his excellence, perfection, and rank, the statement of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is sufficient, wherein he said regarding Abū Bakr: 'You are to me as hearing, sight, and soul.'"*

(Madhhab-e-Shi'a, p. 85)

He further declares in another place:

> *" "There is consensus of all the Companions **raḍiyallāhu 'anhum** that Abū Bakr **raḍiyallāhu 'anhu** is superior to the entire Ummah. Whoever denies this consensus falls under the warning of shuddh fī al-nār (those who will be cast into the Fire)."*
>
> *(Taqreez: Fazail-e-Ameer Muawiyah, p. 49, by Allama Ghulam Mahmood Hazarvi)*

(21) Hakim al-Ummat Mufti Ahmad Yar Khan Naeemi on Qur'anic Proof of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's Excellence

Hakim al-Ummat Allama Mufti Ahmad Yar Khan Naeemi writes:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's great piety after the Prophets is proven from the Qur'an. And the superiority of the one who is most pious is also Qur'anically established. Hence, the excellence of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is definitive (qat'i), and the one who denies it is misguided."*
>
> *(Tafsir Noor al-Irfan, p. 983)*

(22) Allama Sayyid Mahmood Ahmad Rizvi on the Rank of the Rightly Guided Caliphs

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Hazrat Allama Sayyid Mahmood Ahmad Rizvi states:

> *"'After the Prophets and Messengers, among all the creations of Allah—including jinn, human beings, and angels—the most superior is Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar; then Fārūq-e-A'ẓam; then 'Uthmān Ghani; and then 'Alī al-Murtaḍā, **raḍiyallāhu ta'ālā 'anhum**."*
>
> *(Deen-e-Mustafa, p. 162)*

(23) Pir Muhammad Saeed Ahmad Mujaddidi on the Belief of Imam Rabbani

Hazrat Abu al-Bayan Pir Muhammad Saeed Ahmad Mujaddidi writes:

> *"'According to Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid **raḥmatullāhi 'alayh**, whoever denies the superiority of the Shaykhayn and the superiority of 'Uthmān is an innovator, misguided, and a companion of the ill-fated Yazīd."*
>
> *(Sarmaya-e-Millat Ka Nigehban, p. 155)*

CONSENSUS OF THE UMMAH (IJMA' AL-UMMAH)

1. Consensus of All Companions of the Prophet ﷺ

(a) Sayyiduna Ibn Umar states:

> *"All the companions—both Muhajireen and Ansar (may Allah be pleased with them)—were united in the belief that after the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the most superior person in this Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq ."*
>
> *(Bukhari 3697, Abu Dawood 4627)*

(b) Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah narrates:

> *"We, the group of the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in large number, used to say: The most superior of this Ummah after our Prophet ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman."*
>
> *(Narrated by Ibn Asakir – Maram al-Kalam, p. 46 by Allama Parharwi)*

In the presence of the Noble Prophet ﷺ, there was no need for consensus (ijmā'); however, this does not mean that the Companions—may Allah be pleased with them—were forbidden from reaching agreement on any matter. For this very reason, the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah have acknowledged and accepted the consensus mentioned in this ḥadīth. Allama Abdul Aziz Parharwi affirms:

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> *"The words 'كُنَّا نُخَيِّرُ' in this hadith explicitly confirm the consensus."*
>
> *(Maram al-Kalam, p. 46)*

Imam Ahl al-Sunnah also began his section *Al-Fasl al-Awwal fi al-Ijma'* by quoting this very hadith of Ibn Umar in his work *Matla' al-Qamarayn* (manuscript), p. 67.

(c) Mulla Ali Qari

Mulla Ali Qari narrates from Sayyiduna Ibn Umar:

> *"The Muhajireen and Ansar unanimously agreed that the best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman."*
>
> *(Mirqat al-Mafatih, vol. 11, p. 334)*

2. The consensus of the Four Imams (Aimma-e-Arba'a)

(a) Imam Abu Hanifah

Imam al-A'zam Abu Hanifah said:

"The most superior of mankind after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, then Umar ibn al-Khattab, then Uthman ibn Affan, then Ali ibn Abi Talib."

(Fiqh al-Akbar with Sharh, pp. 61–62)

He further stated that a sign of Ahl al-Sunnah is to consider Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) superior and to love the two sons-in-law (Uthman and Ali). This indicates that this belief is decisive (*qat'i*) in his view; its denial disqualifies one from being a Sunni.

Makhdoom Muhammad Hashim Thattvi explains:

"Imam Abu Hanifah's words clearly indicate that whoever considers Ali superior to the Shaykhayn is outside the fold of Ahl al-Sunnah."

(Al-Tariqat al-Ahmadiyyah fi Haqiqat al-Qat' bil-Afdaliyyah, p. 6)

(b) Imam Malik

Imam Malik personally narrated the hadith:

"If I were to take a Khalil (intimate friend), I would have taken Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."

(Muwatta Imam Muhammad, p. 395)

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He further said:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar. Then he added: Is there any doubt in this matter?"

(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 57; Maram al-Kalam, p. 46; Fath al-Mughith, 3/127)

Thus, Imam Mālik regarded the superiority of the Shaykhayn as definitive and unequivocal. However, for a period of time he maintained silence regarding the relative rank between the two sons-in-law (Uthman and Ali), but later he also withdrew from that position.

(Tadrib al-Rawi, 2/197; Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 57; Al-Isti'ab, p. 538)

Now, if any statement of Imam Malik is found regarding the superiority of Sayyidat-un-Nisa 'ala Abiha wa 'Alaihas-Salat wa al-Salam, then surely such a statement would be interpreted as a partial superiority due to her being a part of the Messenger (peace be upon him).

(c) Imam al-Shafi'i

He says:

"In matters of caliphate and superiority, we begin with Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, and then Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all)."

(Al-I'tiqad by al-Bayhaqi, p. 203; Fath al-Bari, Vol. 7, p. 13; Maram al-Kalam, p. 46)

Imam al-Shafi'i has stated the consensus (ijma') of all the Companions and the Followers on this matter.

(Al-I'tiqad by al-Bayhaqi, p. 203; Takmil al-Iman, p. 56)

Hence, it is not permissible to distort or pull contrary meanings out of his poetry or writings against this consensus-based belief.

(d) Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy on him)

It is narrated from Hamid bin Yahya al-Balkhi:

"Ahmad ibn Hanbal considered the order of superiority to be: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali."

(Al-Sunnah by al-Khallal, 607)

And it has been declared as *Sahih.*

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3 Consensus of All Scholars and Sufi Saints of Ahl al-Sunnah

(a) *"All Sufis unanimously agreed on giving precedence to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali (may Allah be pleased with them)."*

(*Al-Ta'arruf li Madhhab Ahl al-Tasawwuf* by Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ishaq, d. 380 AH, p. 62)

(b) Imam Sharfuddin al-Nawawi says:

"The Ahl al-Sunnah have agreed that the most virtuous among them is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar."

(Sharh al-Nawawi, Vol. 2, p. 272)

(c) A well-known elder of the Chishti Sufi order, Hazrat Sayyid Mir Abdul Wahid Bilgrami (may his secret be sanctified), states in his profound work on Sufism:

"There is consensus among the Ahl al-Sunnah that after the Prophets, the most superior of all creation is Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him), followed by Hazrat Umar al-Faruq, then Uthman Dhu al-Nurayn, then Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with them all)."

(Sab'a Sanabil, p. 7)

(d) Hazrat Allama Jalaluddin al-Suyuti says:

> *"The Ahl al-Sunnah have unanimously agreed that the most virtuous person after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Sayyiduna Umar, then Sayyiduna Uthman, then Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, then the rest of the ten promised Paradise (Ashara Mubashara), then the rest of the people of Badr, then the rest of the people of Uhud, then the rest of the people of Bay'ah al-Ridwan, then the remaining Companions."*

Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi also reported this same order of consensus (ijma').

> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 37)*

Imam al-Suyuti not only narrated the consensus on the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar), but also reported the consensus on the hierarchical order of superiority among all the Companions.

Now tell —if the superiority is only based on the order of caliphate, then how will you assign caliphate to the ten promised Paradise, the people of Badr, Uhud, Bay'ah al-Ridwan, and the rest of the Companions? Justice must prevail.

(e) Allama Ibn Hajar al-Makki states:

> *"There is unanimous agreement of the entire Ummah on the superiority of the two Shaykhs. If someone asks what the basis for this consensus is, then I say: (Although its foundation lies in the Qur'an and countless ahadith), consensus itself is a proof upon every individual—whether one knows its basis or not—because Allah has protected this Ummah from agreeing upon misguidance."*

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The Qur'anic verse is very clear on this matter:

> *"And whoever opposes the way of the believers, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell—and what an evil destination!"*
>
> *(Qur'an 4:115)*

Thus, based on this order of superiority, they were also rightfully chosen for caliphate.

> *(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 59)*

From the words of Allama Ibn Hajar al-Makki (may Allah have mercy on him), it becomes clear that the superiority of the first three Caliphs was already established, and they were granted the caliphate in accordance with this same order of superiority.

Now, quoting this verse *"We shall burn him in Hell..."*, we ask the Tafdhiliyyah (those who give preference to anyone over the Shaykhs):

Was there ever any threat of Hellfire for believing in the superiority of the Shaykhs? Yet those who consider Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) superior are being frightened with this verse!

So, tell us, what does caution and prudence demand?

(f) Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi states:

> *Abu Thawr narrates from Imam Shafi'i that not a single companion or successor differed in affirming the superiority and precedence of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar.*

That is, Imam Shafi'i said that among the Sahabah (companions) and Tabi'in (successors), there was no disagreement whatsoever regarding the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar. The only disagreement, if any, was concerning Sayyiduna Ali and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them both). (Takmil al-Iman, p. 56)

Imam Nawawi states:

> *"The most virtuous among all companions, absolutely, is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, followed by Umar, and this is by consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah."*

Thus, Imam Nawawi has also affirmed consensus (ijma') on the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar). (Takmil al-Iman, p. 56)

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Referring to al-Dhahabi, it is mentioned that the superiority of the Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) was narrated from Sayyiduna Ali the Noble (may Allah be pleased with him) by eighty individuals, and this narration is considered authentic and mutawatir (mass transmitted). (Takmil al-Iman, p. 62)

It is further written:

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"Whoever considers me superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I will give him eighty lashes as a punishment for a slanderer (muf'tari)."*
>
> *(Takmil al-Iman, p. 62)*

Then he writes:

So many sermons and passages of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) are narrated in praise of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar that once someone is aware of them, even a rebel has no room left to object. If the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah were to suffice, in establishing the superiority—indeed, the **definitive superiority**—of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, with these proofs alone, they would be fully sufficient for this purpose.

> *"If the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah were to rely solely on these evidences for the superiority and decisiveness of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, it would be entirely adequate."*

(Takmil al-Iman, p. 64)

It has been said that **the hallmarks of Ahl al-Sunnah are three**:

1. *Affirming the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar),*
2. *Loving the two sons-in-law (Ali and Uthman), and*
3. *Believing in the permissibility of wiping over leather socks (khuffayn).*

These three are the distinguishing marks of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaʿah, and the people of innovation (Ahl al-Bidʿah) do not accept them.

(Takmil al-Iman, p. 78, by Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi)

You have seen that the venerable Shaykh al-Muḥaqqiq (may Allah have mercy on him) affirms consensus **(ijmāʿ)** on the superiority of the Shaykhayn, regards it as definitive **(qaṭʿī)**, and considers its denial to be a departure from Ahl al-Sunnah.

When the noble scholars mention the two Shaykhs, they speak of **consensus and definitiveness** regarding their superiority. However, when some scholars mention **all four caliphs** — Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all) — together, they refer to **majority opinion (jumhoor)** and **probability (zann)**. This points specifically to the difference in opinion regarding **the order of virtue between Sayyiduna Uthman and Sayyiduna Ali**(may Allah be pleased with them both).

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When the scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) speak of the Shaykhayn, they assert **consensus and definitiveness** regarding their superiority. However, when some scholars mention **all four**—Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān and ʿAlī (may Allah be pleased with them)—together, they then speak in terms of the **majority view (jumhūr)** and **probabilistic judgment (ẓann)**. By this, they point to the fact that the comparative preference between Sayyidunā ʿUthmān al-Ghanī and Sayyidunā ʿAlī (may Allah ennoble his face) is regarded as probabilistic rather than definitive.

Accordingly, we present a clear example of this from the very book *Takmīl al-Īmān*, so that the proof may be fully established from every angle and the issue may be clarified in the Shaykh's own words.

We give a living example of this from the very same book, *Takmil al-Iman*, so that the proof is complete from every aspect and the matter becomes clear in the words of the noble Shaykh himself:

Hazrat Shaykh (may Allah sanctify his secret) writes:

> *"Know that the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaʿah are upon the order we have stated, but from Imam Malik and others, silence and non-commitment between Uthman and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them both) is narrated."*
>
> *(Takmil al-Iman, p. 56)*

This is the actual reason behind the usage of the term **'majority' (jumhur)**, and the differing views relate **only** to this aspect — not to the superiority of the two Shaykhs, which is agreed upon and definitive.

In *Sharh Fiqh Akbar*, Hazrat Mulla Ali Qari has made a very clear statement:

> *"The superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) is agreed upon among Ahl al-Sunnah. The order between Uthman and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) is the view held by the majority of Ahl al-Sunnah." (Sharh Fiqh Akbar, p. 63)*

(g) – Mulla Ali Qari on the Superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

Hazrat **Mulla Ali Qari Makki** states:

> *"He (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) is the most superior of all the Awliya (friends of Allah) from the first to the last, and consensus (Ijma') has been transmitted on this. The opposition of the Rawafid (extremist Shia sects) carries no weight. The Prophet ﷺ appointed him as his deputy in Salah, thus his caliphate was established in full truth and reality."*
>
> *(Sharh Fiqh Akbar, p. 61)*

The passage of Mullā ʿAlī Qārī (may Allah have mercy on him) is lethal for the tafḍīlīs for several reasons. It establishes the consensus of the entire Ummah on the superiority of al-Ṣiddīq; it affirms that superiority is connected to wilāyah (spiritual authority), not to politics; the words **"afḍal al-awliyāʾ min al-awwalīn wa'l-ākhirīn"** shake the very foundations of Rāfiḍī ideology; it labels those who deny superiority in wilāyah as Rāfiḍīs; it treats deputation in prayer as proof of entitlement to the caliphate; and it employs the emphatic words **ḥaqqan wa ṣidqan** for the Caliph, which utterly dismantle the artificial distinction between politics and wilāyah. All these powerful features are found together in this single passage. May Allah reward him with the best of rewards.

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(h) – Shah Waliullah on the Ijmaʿ of the Companions

Hazrat **Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlvi** writes:

At the time of electing the Caliph, the Sahabah used words such as

> *"The best of this Ummah,"*
>
> *"The most virtuous of people,"*
>
> *"Most deserving of the Caliphate," and*
>
> *"Most worthy of this leadership"*

for **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq**.

The **jurists among the Sahabah** declared him the most superior of the Ummah, and based on this superiority, they deemed him deserving of the Caliphate.

All the other companions remained silent and accepted this decision, thus an **Ijma' (consensus) of the Sahabah** was formed on the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq.

This entire discussion is recorded by Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlvi in his book **"Izalat al-Khafa," Volume 1, Page 311**.

Shah Waliullah further writes:

> *"The issue of the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) is definitive (qat'i) within the Islamic Ummah."*

He goes on to say that, **after studying all the relevant narrations**, he has arrived at the **conclusion** that the superiority of the Shaykhayn rests upon **four** distinguishing qualities.

> *(i)* ***First:*** *their attainment of the* ***loftiest ranks within the Ummah****, such as Ṣiddīq and Shahīd.*
>
> *(ii)* ***Second:*** *their* ***support of the Noble Prophet*** ﷺ*, their service to the cause of Islam, their role in its propagation, and their embodiment—during the days of hardship and poverty—of the saying, "The one who has shown me the greatest favor is Abū Bakr," along with the honor and dignity of Islam that is uniquely associated with 'Umar.*
>
> *(iii)****Third: the completion****, at the hands of these two eminent figures, of those tasks which were required and intended by prophethood itself, and the fact that the Prophet* ﷺ *saw various dreams concerning them.*
>
> *(iv)****Fourth:*** *the* ***elevation of their ranks in the Hereafter****—being leaders of the elderly of Paradise, residing in the loftiest palaces, being among the first to be raised, the special divine manifestation (tajallī khāṣṣ) granted to al-Ṣiddīq, and the divine embrace (mu'ānaqah al-Ḥaqq) bestowed upon 'Umar.*
>
> *(Izālat al-Khafā', vol. 1, p. 302)*

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(i) – Qadi Thanaullah Panipati on the Consensus

Hazrat **Qadi Thanaullah Panipati** writes:

> *"And upon this, consensus (Ijma') has been established."*
>
> *(Tafsir Mazhari, Vol. 7, p. 424)*

(j) – Ala Hazrat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan on the Superiority of the Shaykhs states:

> *Whoever has understood this has truly understood and attained success; and whoever did not understand before should now know that the superiority and excellence of* ***Sayyid al-Mu'minīn, the Imam of the God-fearing, 'Abdullāh ibn 'Uthmān Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar****, and* ***Amīr al-Mu'minīn, the Imam of the just, Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Fārūq al-A'ẓam****—may Allah Most High be pleased with*

> *them both and grant them His pleasure—over **Mawlā al-Mu'minīn, the Imam of those who have attained nearness, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Murtaḍā, Asadullāh**, may Allah Most High ennoble his countenance, and indeed over **all the noble Companions**, may Allah be pleased with them all, **is a unanimously agreed-upon creed**.*
>
> *(Maṭlaʿ al-Qamaraynn, p. 67)*

The same **Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah**, Imam Ahmad Raza (may Allah's mercy be upon him), writes:

> *"This is a refutation of the so-called 'Tafdhilis of today' who falsely and deceitfully claim to be Sunni. They interpret the issue of 'order of superiority' (tartīb al-fadilah) by saying that superiority pertains only to worldly caliphate, and that it belongs to the one most skilled in politics, military organization, and other state affairs. This is a **false and vile claim**, **opposing the consensus** of the Companions and their followers (Tabi'in). Rather, **true superiority** relates to **abundance of reward**, **closeness to the Lord of Lords**, and **honour in the sight of Allah**."*
>
> *(al-Muʿtamid al-Mustanad, pp. 197–198)*

You have already read, in the light of explicit and clear **ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth**, that **the Shaykhayn were superior to the entire Ummah even before they assumed the caliphate**. It was **on the basis of this very superiority** that the caliphate was bestowed upon them. Accordingly, it is recorded in **Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī** that **Sayyidunā al-Fārūq al-Aʿẓam** declared **Ṣiddīq al-Akbar**—may Allah be pleased with them both—to be entitled to the caliphate by saying:In **Sahih Bukhari (3668)**, **Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq** calls **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** :

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> *"Our leader, the best among us, and the most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ "*
>
> *(Bukhārī: 3668)*

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha himself said:

> *"Allah considered Sayyiduna Abu Bakr superior to us and granted him authority over us."*
>
> *(Mustadrak, Hadith 4756)*

Ghuniyat al-Talibin:

> *"He (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) had superiority over his contemporaries." (p. 182)*

Imam Shafiʿi said:

> *"After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the people were in a state of severe anxiety, and they did not find, beneath the canopy of the sky, anyone better than Abū Bakr, so they entrusted their necks (i.e., leadership and authority) to him.*
>
> *(Tārīkh al-Khulafā', p. 54)*

Al-Sawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah:

> *"They were given the Caliphate based on this same order of superiority." (p. 59)*

- **Mirqat al-Mafātīḥ**:

  "Once this is established, then their right to the Caliphate is also firmly established." (Vol. 11, p. 334)

- **Izālat al-Khafā**:

  "This is the reasoning based on which his Caliphate was justified." (Vol. 1, p. 311)

- **Matlaʿ al-Qamrayn**:

  "The Caliphate of Siddiq was based on his superiority." (p. 76)

- **Fatāwa Mehrīyah**:

  "The rightful successor to the Prophet ﷺ is one whose inner self most closely resembles that of the Prophets." (p. 145)

- **Bahār-e-Shariat**:

  "Their Caliphates were in accordance with their ranks of superiority."

  (Vol. 1, p. 38)

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All these statements should be carefully reflected upon. The **researchers and scholars** have clarified the matter to the utmost degree:

The **Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar – RA)** are **not only superior**, but their **precedence in Caliphate** itself was **founded upon this very superiority**.

To claim that **"all four are equal"** or say **"who are we to judge their rank"** may sound poetic, but these are **not scholarly** or **theologically grounded** claims. Their ranks were not defined by us — they are established through **Qur'an, Hadith, and Ijmaʿ (consensus)**.

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS OF TAFDHILIYYA (THOSE WHO CLAIM SUPERIORITY)

THE FIRST QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

This question pertains to the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq , the duties of the Caliphate, the establishment of religion, and the responsibilities of the Ummah. The sequence mentioned by the scholars is based on the order of the apparent Caliphate (Al-Qaul Al-Wathiq, p. 41).

Answer:

Firstly, the questioner fails to understand that the Caliphate's order reflects *precedence* (awwaliyyah), not *superiority* (afdaliyyah). Superiority pertains to spiritual ranks and inner sainthood (wilayah batiniyyah), not the chronological order of the Caliphate. That is why scholars and Sufis have deemed those who declare Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha superior in wilayah over others as *Rafidhis* (as will be explained further).

Secondly, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ appointed Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq to lead the prayers even before the apparent Caliphate (Bukhari: 678). **He also said before the establishment of outward Caliphate:**

"Follow Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar after me" (Tirmidhi: 3662, Ibn Majah: 97).

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar are the leaders of the elders of Paradise" (Tirmidhi: 3665, 3666, Ibn Majah: 95).

"If I were to take a close friend (Khalil), I would have taken Sayyiduna Abu Bakr" (Bukhari: 467, Muslim: 6170).

"The one who has done the most favors to me from my Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr" (Tirmidhi: 3661).

"The most merciful to my Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr" (Tirmidhi: 3790).

"The four Caliphs are the most superior of all humans after the Prophets" (Ash-Shifa, vol. 2, p. 42).

During the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Companions were unanimously agreed that *"Among this Ummah, the most superior after me is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman" (Bukhari: 3697, Abu Dawud: 4627).*

"The sun has never risen upon a man better than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr" (Majma' al-Zawaid, vol. 9, p. 44).

Thirdly, *Matn-e-'Aqaid Nasafi* states:

"The best of mankind after our Prophet is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, then Umar al-Farooq, then Uthman Dhu al-Nurayn, then Ali al-Murtadha . Their Caliphate was in the same order."

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(Matn-e-'Aqaid Nasafi, p. 3)

So tell us, did the superiority of the first three Caliphs not already exist well before their Caliphate?

Fourthly, the order given by the Imams is not based on the chronological order of Caliphate but on the abundance of rewards, God-consciousness **(*khashyah*),** piety **(*taqwa*),** nobility **(*karamah*)**, and benefit to Islam and the Muslims.

Imam Ibn Hajar al-Makki wrote:

> *"But the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and 'Umar) surpass everyone else in reward, are greater in benefit to Islam and the Muslims, and are more fearful of Allah and more God-fearing than all others besides them."*
>
> *He further states that* ***the Ummah is unanimously agreed that it was precisely this order of superiority which entitled them to the Caliphate****.*
>
> *(Sawā'iq al-Muḥriqah, p. 59)*

Shaykh Abdul Haq Dehlvi said:

> *"What is meant by afḍaliyyah (superiority) is the greater abundance of reward."*
>
> *(Takmil al-Imān, p. 49)*

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Mulla Ali Qari stated:

> *"By afḍaliyyah is intended the abundance of reward."*
>
> *(Sharh Fiqh Akbar, p. 63)*

Allama Parharwi explained:

> *"The superiority under discussion refers to the abundance of reward for good deeds, not genealogical nobility. Otherwise, the Prophet's ﷺ sons would surpass other Prophets. It also does not refer to the quantity of outward acts of worship, because reward is not merely based on quantity. Even if we spend gold equal to Mount Uhud in Allah's way, it won't match a handful of barley offered by the Sahabah, as explicitly stated in Hadith. This is because reward is linked to sincerity, love for Allah, and constant presence before Him—qualities rooted in the inner, spiritual station, not outward deeds.*
>
> *That's why it's said about Sayyiduna Abu Bakr: He did not surpass you because of much prayer and fasting, but due to something settled in his heart. Clearly, the true measure of reward is something only the Prophet ﷺ can convey—reason and apparent virtues have no bearing here. Understand this well, and many of the Shia's doubts will be resolved."*
>
> *(Nibrās, p. 299)*

We ask the Tafdhiliyya: What stronger wording could the scholars have used to satisfy you? And if superiority is tied to the chronological order of Caliphate, then why do some of you claim Ali to be superior to Uthman? What need was there for this contradiction? Reflect.

Fifthly, the order of Caliphate is an external historical reality—even the *Rawafid* don't deny it. Despite accepting the order, they still considered Ali superior. Clearly, they meant superiority in *wilayah* (inner sainthood), and this is the superiority Ahl al-Sunnah refute.

> *"Abū Bakr is the most excellent of the Muhammadan saints (awliyā'). The Shīʿa and many of the Muʿtazila, however, hold that after the Prophet ﷺ the most excellent is ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib"*
>
> *(Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir, vol. 2, p. 438)*

Sixthly, People of insight should reflect carefully: if 'excellence' (afḍaliyyah) meant nothing more than superiority in outward, political caliphate, and had no connection whatsoever with inward sainthood (wilāyah), then why was there any need for the entire Ummah to stand on tiptoe, so to speak, to bear witness to it?

Why was it necessary, in Friday sermons, to proclaim Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq as *'the best of all creation after the Prophets'* and to raise the clarion call that he is *'the most excellent of the Companions in absolute reality'*? Why was there a need to warn the deniers with threats of Hellfire? And what purpose was served by filling volumes upon volumes of books with proofs and arguments, if the matter were merely one of outward political precedence?"

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Seventhly, Allama Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani wrote under the chapter *"Virtues of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr After the Prophet ﷺ"* in Sahih Bukhari:

> *"This refers to superiority in rank, not in chronological order. The superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was already established during the Prophet's ﷺ lifetime, as proven by the hadith."*
>
> *(Fath al-Bari, vol. 7, p. 19)*

Allama Badr al-Din Ayni stated:

> *"This chapter explains the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr after the Prophet ﷺ—not in time but in status—because his superiority was established during the Prophet's ﷺ life."*
>
> *(Umdat al-Qari, vol. 13, p. 292)*

THE SECOND QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

"The Inward Spiritual Authority (Wilayah-e-Batini) that was bestowed upon Hazrat Ali through the declaration "مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ" (Man kuntu mawlāhu fa-ʿAlīyyun mawlāhu)— is unique to him alone. It is for this very reason that those who bear the rank of the Supreme Wilāyah and the station of the Greatest Ghawth (Ghawsiyyat-e-ʿUẓmā) are found among his progeny." (Al-Saif Al-Jali).

Answer:

Firstly, the Hadith *"Man Kuntu Mawlahu..."* (Whoever I am master of, Ali is his master) expresses a great virtue of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (Karram Allahu Wajhah).

We pray:

> *"O Allah! Include us among his group and among those who love him."*

This emphatic declaration in the Hadith has already been discussed among the unique distinctions (*Khasa'is*) of Hazrat Murtadha Karim. Even now, whoever labels Ahl al-Sunnah as deniers of this virtue is undoubtedly a person of ill suspicion—indeed, one of ill intent.

However, to claim that this Hadith grants *Wilayah-e-Batini* (inner spiritual authority) is the questioner's own assumption. The Beloved Prophet ﷺ always manifested his noble nature in such a way that whenever any of his beloved companions were opposed, he ﷺ stood up in their defense.

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For example:

When Sayyiduna Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib faced opposition, the Prophet ﷺ ascended the pulpit and said:

> *"O people! Who among the inhabitants of the earth is the most honored before Allah?"*
>
> *They replied, "You."*
>
> *The Prophet ﷺ said:*
>
> *"Then Abbas is from me, and I am from him."*
>
> *(Musnad Ahmad: 2734)*

Another example:

It is narrated from Abdullah bin Umar:

The Prophet ﷺ appointed Usama bin Zayd as commander of a battalion heading towards Syria. People objected to his leadership. The Prophet ﷺ stood up and said:

"If you criticize his leadership, then you had already criticized the leadership of his father before. By Allah! He was indeed worthy of leadership, and he was among the most beloved of people to me, and indeed this son is also among the most beloved to me after him."

(Bukhari: 4250, 4468, 4469, 6627; Tirmidhi: 3816)

A third example:

When a minor and momentary disagreement occurred between Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar and Farooq-e-Azam, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Will you not leave my companion for me? Will you not leave my companion for me?

I had said, 'O people! I am Allah's Messenger to all of you.'

You all said, 'You are lying,'

but Sayyiduna Abu Bakr said, 'You have spoken the truth.'"

(Bukhari: 4640, 3661; Fada'il-us-Sahabah: 297)

When all these Hadiths are considered together and "Man Kuntu Mawlahu" is pondered upon with honesty, it becomes clear that the context (Shan-e-Wurud) of all these Hadiths is similar.

Though the wording differs slightly, the essence in each is the defense of the Prophet's beloved companions. The special wording in each case is the distinguishing factor for each beloved individual.

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Context and True Meaning of "Man Kuntu Mawlahu"

The context (Shan-e-Wurud) of this Hadith is explicitly stated within it. During the expedition to Yemen, some companions who were under the command of Hazrat Ali raised complaints about him.

Hazrat Buraidah says that he expressed this concern to the Prophet ﷺ.

In response, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Whoever I am the guardian of, Ali is also his guardian."

(Musnad Ahmad: 22924)

In Tirmidhi, it is mentioned that the number of complainants was four.

(Tirmidhi: 3712)

This situation indicates that the term *"Mawla"* here refers to a **friend and beloved**, and this hadith has **no connection to inner spiritual sainthood (wilayah batiniyyah)**. This very context (*Shan-e-Wurud*) of the hadith has also been explained by great scholars such as **Imam Shafi'i**, **Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi**, **Mulla Ali Qari**, **Qadi Sanaullah Panipati**, and **Khawaja Ghulam Farid**, may Allah have mercy on them all.

(*Al-I'tiqad p. 203, Ashi'at al-Lam'aat vol. 4 p. 481, Mirqat vol. 11 p. 247, Tafsir Mazhari vol. 2 p. 369, Maqabis al-Majalis p. 918*).

Imam Shafi'i said:

> *Even if the chain of the Hadith of Mawalat (friendship) is authentic, it does not provide explicit proof of the sainthood (wilayah) of Ali.*

In our book *"Al-Fada'il"*, we have clearly written the intended purpose of the Prophet ﷺ. The issue was that when the Prophet ﷺ sent **Sayyiduna Ali** to Yemen, many companions complained against him and expressed resentment.

The Prophet ﷺ intended to express his special love and bond with Ali, and through that, encourage others to also love and befriend him and to give up enmity. Therefore, he ﷺ said:

> *"Whoever considers me his wali (friend/protector), then Ali is his wali."*

In some narrations, the wording is:

> *"Man kuntu mawlāhu fa-'Alīyyun mawlāhu. Allāhumma wāli man wālāhu wa 'ādi man 'ādāhu."*

This implies **Islamic brotherhood and love**. It is incumbent upon Muslims to love one another and not bear enmity. This hadith conveys the same meaning as the saying of Sayyiduna Ali :

> *"By Allah, the unlettered Prophet ﷺ promised me that none shall love me except a believer, and none shall hate me except a hypocrite."*

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(The intent here is Islamic alliance and affection among Muslims; that they support each other and not harbor hostility — just as affirmed in Sayyiduna Ali's own narration.)

> *(Al-I'tiqad by Imam Bayhaqi, p. 202-203)*

Now, observe the **complete hadith**, the **noble personality of Imam Shafi'i**, and his **clear explanation**. His interpretation finds full support in this Qur'anic verse:

> *"The believing men and believing women are protectors (awliya) of one another."*
>
> *(Surah At-Tawbah: 71)*

Furthermore, reflect on Imam Shafi'i's statement:

> *"Even if the chain of the Hadith of Mawalat is authentic..."*

This subtly suggests **Imam Shafi'i expressed doubt regarding the chain** of this hadith. So, what is your ruling on Imam Shafi'i in light of this?

Likewise, **Imam Qurtubi** presented three points:

> *This hadith contradicts a sahih hadith agreed upon by both Bukhari and Muslim.*
>
> *Even if it is deemed authentic, the word "Mawla" means **friend**.*
>
> *The reason behind this hadith was either **Usama's statement**, "You are not my Mawla," or the **taunts of the hypocrites**, and this was a response to their words.*
>
> *(Tafsir al-Qurtubi, vol. 1, p. 308)*

So, tell us—what is your ruling on **Imam Qurtubi**?

Imam Jazari said:

> *"This was a rebuttal to those who spoke ill of him."*
>
> *(Asna al-Matalib, p. 15)*

Now, **great personalities** such as Sayyiduna Buraidah , **Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal**, **Imam Tirmidhi**, **Imam Shafi'i**, **Qurtubi**, **Jazari**, and **Qadi Sanaullah**—all of whom explained the background and context of this hadith—how can anyone with faith accuse them of being *Nasibi* (those who harbor enmity toward the Ahl al-Bayt)? Or claim that this interpretation is influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah?

Furthermore, **Imam Nawawi** writes:

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According to the scholars who are truly qualified in this matter and on whose expertise, one must rely in understanding this and similar narrations, the meaning of this hadith is:

> *'Whosoever I am a helper, supporter, beloved, and sincere friend to — Ali is also the same."*
>
> *(Fatawa Imam Nawawi, p. 261)*

Allama Muhibullah Tabari writes:

> *"The word 'Mawla' here means 'Wali' (friend), which is the opposite of 'enemy'."*
>
> *(Al-Riyad al-Nadhirah, Vol. 1, p. 227)*

Hazrat Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi writes:

> *"We do not accept that 'Mawla' here means ruler or governor, rather it means beloved and helper."*
>
> *(Ashʿat al-Lamʿāt, Vol. 4, p. 680)*

Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid of Kot Mithan has given an extensive explanation of this hadith across three pages. He states:

> *"Here the meaning of 'Mawla' is not leader, chief, ruler, or deserving of Imamate, but rather it means 'helper' and 'beloved'.*
>
> *(**Maqabis al-Majalis**, p. 920)*

Shaykh al-Islam Hazrat Khawaja Muhammad Qamaruddin Sialvi (may his secret be sanctified) says:

> *"It is utter deception to use the Hadith of Ghadir Khumm as evidence for the immediate Caliphate of Hazrat Ali, where the Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'Whoever's Mawla I am, Ali is his Mawla' — meaning: 'Whoever is my friend, Ali is also his friend.' Clearly, in the Noble Qur'an, the word 'Mawla' means 'friend'. See the verse: 'Then indeed, Allah is his Mawla, and Jibreel and the righteous among the believers.'*
>
> *This shows that the friend of the beloved of Allah is Allah Himself, Jibreel, and the righteous believers."*
>
> *(Mazhab-e-Shi'a, p. 90–91)*

In this Quranic verse, Sayyiduna Jibreel (AS), all believers, and all angels are referred to as *Mawla*. Hence, it is completely valid to say: *Mawla Jibreel (AS)*, *Mawla Sayyiduna Abu Bakr*, *Mawla Umar*, *Mawla Uthman*, *Mawla Ali*, *Mawla Zayd*, *Mawla Hasan*, *Mawla Husain* (may Allah be pleased with them all), and to refer to scholars as *Maulana*.

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Also note the interpretation of the phrase *"Salih al-Mu'minin"* in that verse by companions such as Hazrat Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Hazrat Ikrimah, Hazrat Dahhak, and Hazrat Abu Umamah , who said it refers to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar .

> *(Fada'il al-Sahabah, p. 98, 161; Mustadrak al-Hakim, Hadith 4489 — chain is Hasan)*

Regarding the verse *"Those who give zakat while bowing (in prayer)"*, Imam Baqir states about Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha :

> *"Ali is among those who have believed."*
>
> *(Tafsir Ibn Jarir, Vol. 4, Juz' 6, p. 356; Baghawi, Vol. 2, p. 47; Ibn Kathir, Vol. 2, p. 102)*

In a hadith about all the companions, the Noble Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *"Whoever loves them, loves them due to my love, and whoever harbors enmity toward them does so due to my enmity."*

Even within the same Hadith, the phrase *"O Allah, befriend the one who befriends him, and oppose the one who opposes him"* clarifies the concept of *Wilayah* — that is, *"O Allah, whoever makes Ali his friend, make him Your friend, and whoever is hostile to him, be hostile to him."*

Here, the word *Mawla* is used in opposition to *enemy*, which clearly shows that it means *beloved* or *friend*, and **not** *master* or *lord*.

Allama Sindhi writes:

> *"Its meaning is: 'He is the beloved of the one whom I am beloved to,' and this is proven by the statement: 'O Allah, befriend the one who befriends him,' meaning: 'Love the one who loves him.'*

Since the phrase also includes:

> *'O Allah, oppose the one who opposes him', this is a clear indicator that the word Mawlah ere means beloved."*
>
> *(Hashiyah Sindhi on Ibn Majah, Vol. 1, p. 103)*

Numerous narrations explicitly convey the Prophet's ﷺ supplications regarding Sayyiduna Ali:

> *"O Allah, love the one who loves Ali, and hate the one who harbors enmity towards him."*

In other narrations, it is mentioned:

> *"O Allah, disgrace the one who tries to disgrace him."*

And in some:

> *"O Allah, help the one who helps him."*

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Such phrases clearly illustrate the elevated status and beloved nature of Sayyiduna Ali in the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ.

Clarifying the Meaning of "Mawla"

Some interpret the word **Mawla** to mean *master*, but if that were the case, then the Prophet ﷺ—being the master of all Prophets—would imply that Sayyiduna Ali is the master of all Prophets as well.

Does this not logically lead toward the **extremist and exaggerated beliefs (ghuluw)** associated with the **Rafidah (extreme Shiites)**?

Hadith in Musnad Ahmad: Mawla Means Wali (Friend)

In **Musnad Ahmad**, the same hadith appears with the wording:

> *"Whoever's Wali (friend) I am, Ali is also his Wali."*
>
> *(Musnad Ahmad: 22924, 22952 — Chain is authentic)*

This alternative wording clarifies that the term *Mawla* here means *Wali*, which means **friend**, not *master*.

Prophet's ﷺ Prayer for Abu Huraira

In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"O Allah, make this servant of Yours — meaning Abu Huraira — and his mother beloved to Your believing servants, and make the believers beloved to them."*

Hazrat Abu Huraira then said:

> *"No believer will be born who hears about me without loving me, even if he never sees me."*
>
> *(Sahih Muslim: 6396)*

Mawla Zayd: A Similar Usage

The Prophet ﷺ also said to Hazrat Zayd:

> *"You are our brother and our Mawla."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 2699)*

Therefore, one may as well say: **Mawla Zayd** — demonstrating that *Mawla* is not restricted to the meaning of "master."

The Intended Meaning of Mawla in the Hadith

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Our purpose here is to clarify that in the hadith in question, *Mawla* does **not** mean *master*, *spiritual guide*, or *immediate successor*

> *(Khalifa bi'l-Fasl).*

Rather, it means **beloved** and **friend**.

The Special Status of Sayyiduna Ali

That said, the act of the Prophet ﷺ holding Sayyiduna Ali's hand and issuing this strong affirmation is undeniably a **unique honor** among his many virtues.

From the first edition of *Zarb-e-Haideri* to the latest, we have always documented this distinction prominently on the first page under the special merits of Sayyiduna Ali .

Even in response to the second question posed by the **Tafdhiliyyah**, our consistent stance is well recorded in every edition.

This hadith not only addresses past complaints but also **establishes the necessity of loving Sayyiduna Ali** for all believers until the Day of Judgment.

Does this suspicious group not notice how frequently we've used the phrase Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha throughout this book?

On the Spiritual Wilayah of the First Three Caliphs

There is no doubt about the **spiritual Wilayah** and high status of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha — **KarramAllahu Wajhah**.

However, the **spiritual Wilayah of the first three Caliphs** surpasses even that of Sayyiduna Ali.

Their unique status is beyond doubt and free of any ambiguity.

Who Truly Helped the Ummah in Times of Hardship?

Consider these questions:

> *Who took charge of the Ummah after the passing of the Prophet ﷺ and showed the most courage in the hardest times — is that person not the true helper of the Ummah?*
>
> *When Muslims prayed in secret, and only began praying openly after a certain individual accepted Islam — was that not the one who relieved the hardship of the Muslims?*
>
> *Who donated 300 camels and immense wealth in the campaign of Jaysh al-'Usrah, easing a time of great difficulty — is that not the one who deserves to be called the reliever of distress?*

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"The Noble Prophet ﷺ said:

> *'If I were to take anyone as an intimate friend (khalīl), I would have taken Abū Bakr.*

In this distinction, Ṣiddīq al-Akbar alone stands unmatched—so why has this unique excellence of Ṣiddīq escaped your notice?"

It is only *As-Siddiq* (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr RA) who was uniquely granted the title of *Siddiq* (the Truthful) from the heavens. And *Siddiqiyyah* is the highest rank in inner spiritual sainthood (*Wilayah Batin*). Why do you fail to see this uniqueness of As-Siddiq?

The Qur'an states:

> *"He was the second of the two when they were in the cave."*

This refers exclusively to As-Siddiq Akbar . When the Qur'an itself declared him the second of the Prophet ﷺ, why do you not recognize his distinctiveness?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"The sun has not risen upon anyone better than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr after the Prophets."*

Again, this unique status belongs solely to As-Siddiq Akbar. Why do you not acknowledge his distinction?

Appointed by the Prophet ﷺ to Lead the Prayers

The Prophet ﷺ personally appointed him to lead the prayers. When others were suggested, the Prophet ﷺ emphatically rejected them by saying: **"No, no, no!"** (Abu Dawud, Hadith No. 4661)

And he explicitly declared:

> *"Allah and the believers refuse anyone other than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (as Imam)."*
>
> *(Sahih Muslim: 6181)*

This too is a distinction that belongs exclusively to As-Siddiq Akbar. Why do you not see his uniqueness?

The Most Merciful Towards the Ummah

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"The most merciful of my Ummah towards my Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*

This reflects the reflection of the Prophet's *Rahmatul-lil-'Alameen* (Mercy to all the worlds) shining completely through him. Again, it is Siddiq-e-Akbar who is unique in this regard. Why do you not see his excellence?

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The One with the Greatest Favor Upon the Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

> *"The person who has done the greatest favor to me from among people is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*

It is he who is meant by the words 'the one who has shown me the greatest kindness.' In this distinction, he alone stands unparalleled—so why has this unique excellence of Ṣiddīq escaped your notice?" This is a distinction exclusive to him. Why do you not recognize it?

The First to Accept Islam Before the Birth of Ali

Scholars have written that As-Siddiq Akbar had already accepted Islam during a trade journey to Syria, even before the Prophet ﷺ publicly proclaimed his Prophethood. At that time, even the blessed birth of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha had not yet occurred:

> *"In this distinction, Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar stands utterly unmatched".*
>
> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 30)*

Why, then, has this unique excellence of Ṣiddīq escaped your notice?"

As-Siddiq as the Minister of the Prophet ﷺ

Finally, in *Al-Mustadrak*, Imam al-Hakim (rahimahullah) narrates a hadith where it is stated that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the Prophet's ﷺ minister. He ﷺ consulted him in all matters. To Prophet ﷺ, he was his ﷺ second in Islam, his second in the Cave, his second on the day of Badr at the canopy, his second in the grave. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never gave precedence to anyone over him. The original wording is:

"كَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ مَكَانَ الْوَزِيرِ، فَكَانَ يُشَاوِرُهُ فِي جَمِيعِ أُمُورِهِ، وَكَانَ ثَانِيَهُ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ، وَكَانَ ثَانِيَهُ فِي الْغَارِ، وَكَانَ ثَانِيَهُ فِي الْعَرِيشِ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ، وَكَانَ ثَانِيَهُ فِي الْقَبْرِ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يُقَدِّمُ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدًا"

(Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4463)

Why are all these unique honors of As-Siddiq not visible to you?

Consensus of the Ummah on His Superiority in Wilayah

There is consensus among the entire Ummah that As-Siddiq Akbar is the greatest of all the saints (*Awliya*) among the earliest and the later generations:

"فَهُوَ أَفْضَلُ أَوْلِيَاءِ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ، وَقَدْ حُكِيَ الْإِجْمَاعُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ"

(Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 61)

Clarification Against False Accusations

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It is entirely possible that the **vein of Rāfiḍism** may throb in some hearts and that we may be accused of denying the distinctive merits of **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (raḍiya llāhu ʿanhu)**. Suspicion and deliberate false accusation are, after all, habitual practices of such people. Therefore, we find it necessary to state clearly and unequivocally that among the **established unique merits (khaṣāʾiṣ)** of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (raḍiya llāhu ʿanhu) are the following:

His being the ***most eminent forefather of the Family of the Messenger*** ﷺ,

his status as ***the most judicious of the Companions (aqḍā al-ṣaḥābah)***,

the ***explicit proclamation of his being the master of all believers***,

the ***bestowal of the banner upon him on the Day of Khaybar***,

the ***permission granted to him to pass through the Sacred Mosque while in a state of major ritual impurity***,

the distinguished declaration ***"None shall discharge this duty on my behalf except myself or ʿAlī"***,

and the statement ***"You are to me as Hārūn was to Mūsā"***

We have already detailed these unique honors of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha on the very first page. These matters undoubtedly constitute **magnificent proofs of his virtue**, yet **they do not establish his absolute superiority (afḍaliyyah)** over all others.

Misconceptions Popularized by the Rafidah

However, there also exist numerous virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (raḍiya llāhu ʿanhu) which the Rāfiḍah have publicized as **exclusive distinctions**, and which our **well-intentioned but uncritical Sunnīs** have accepted and repeated without proper investigation.

The Claim: Sayyiduna Ali Was the Only One Born in the Ka'bah

It is widely propogated that **only Sayyiduna Ali** was born in the **Holy Ka'bah**.

The Reality

In reality, the birth of **Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām (raḍiya llāhu ʿanhu)** inside the Sacred Kaʿbah has been mentioned in **numerous authoritative works**, such as:

Sahih Muslim: 3859

Mustadrak al-Hakim: 6146

Ahadith Yahtajju Biha al-Shi'ah, p. 122

Tadhhib al-Asma' by al-Nawawi, p. 234

Tadrib al-Rawi, vol. 2, p. 313

Maʿrifat al-Sahabah by Abu Nuʿaym, vol. 2, p. 701

Usud al-Ghabah, vol. 2, p. 43

al-Istiʿab, p. 201

al-Iʿlam, vol. 2, p. 269

Siyar Aʿlam al-Nubala', vol. 3, p. 46

Nasb al-Rayah, vol. 4, p. 2

al-Ikmāl fi Asma' al-Rijāl (of the compiler of Mishkat), p. 591

Kitab al-Muhabbar, p. 176

al-Isabah by Ibn Hajar, p. 397

Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 182

Izalat al-Khafa, vol. 2, p. 251

Fayd al-Qadir, vol. 2, p. 37

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We have relied solely on references and added **no personal commentary**. If you wish to debate, then take your arguments to these **shining stars of knowledge and spirituality**, whose like can never be matched.

All Companions Are Gates of Knowledge

Similarly, Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha and **all the noble Companions** are **gates of knowledge**.

A detailed discussion on the "Gates of Knowledge" will appear in the response to Question 5 of the *Tafdhiliyyah*.

The Claim: Gazing at Sayyiduna Ali Is an Act of Worship

It is also popularized that **gazing at Sayyiduna Ali's face** is an act of worship.

The Balanced View

This statement is **correct in its place**. There is no doubt in the virtue of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha . However, this **is not his exclusive quality**.

In fact, it is an act of worship to look at all Prophets, Companions, Tabi'een (Successors), and Awliya (saints).

> *Whoever saw the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ or even saw any Companion will never be touched by the Fire (Tirmidhi: 3858, Hadith Hasan).*

So why wouldn't looking at Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha be an act of worship? "However, this is not his uniqueness.

> *The Holy Prophet ﷺ would look at Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar Farooq رضي الله عنهما and smile, and both of them would smile back upon seeing him ﷺ (Tirmidhi: 3668).*
>
> *Looking at the Ka'bah is an act of worship.*
>
> *Reading the Qur'an from the Mushaf holds a thousand times more reward (Shu'ab al-Iman by al-Bayhaqi: 2218, Mishkat: 2167).*
>
> *Looking at one's parents with mercy once grants the reward of an accepted Hajj (Mishkat: 4944, though the hadith is weak).*
>
> *The sign of a Wali (friend of Allah) is that when you look at him, you remember Allah (Ibn Majah: 4119).*

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Therefore, this carries the virtue of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha رضي الله عنه, but it is **not unique to him**. In all these narrations, the common factor is the act of worship itself, while the distinction of ranks and spiritual stations remains intact.

The Claim: Mentioning Sayyiduna Ali Is Worship

It has been widely propagated that **mentioning Sayyiduna Ali** is itself an act of worship, whereas the Prophet ﷺ, in the same way he instructed Hazrat Hasssan رضي الله عنه to recite his Na'at, once asked:

> *"Have you written anything in praise of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?"*
>
> *He replied: "Yes."*
>
> *The Prophet ﷺ said:*

"Recite it, I wish to hear it." (Qul hatta asma'a)

Hassaan then recited his poetry.

(Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4468, 4518)

This privilege is unique to As-Siddiq al-Akbar, for it was the Prophet ﷺ himself who asked for his praise. In *Mustadrak al-Hakim*, a remarkable statement of Sayyiduna **Ibn Mas'ud** is recorded:

"When the righteous are mentioned, be sure to include Umar!"

(Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4578)

Even Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha himself said:

"When the righteous are mentioned, be sure to include Umar!"

(Tabarani al-Awsat: 5549, Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 94)

and regarding all righteous individuals, he said::

"Mentioning the righteous is an expiation for sins."

(al-Jami' al-Saghir: 4331)

Therefore, while these narrations reflect the virtue of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha رضي الله عنه, this is not unique to him.

Being the **son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah** ﷺ is indeed a virtue of Sayyiduna Ali, However, every child knows that this **is not his unique distinction**. Rather, it is **Mawla Uthman al-Ghani** who holds the **unique honor in all of creation** of having been married to **two daughters of the Prophet** ﷺ.

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A Special Aspect of Fatimah al-Zahra

Yes, there is indeed a **special dimension** to this virtue from the perspective of **Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra**, the **leader of the women of the worlds**, and we have already discussed this aspect under **Sayyiduna Ali's unique virtues**.

Similarly, the statement "Ali is from me and I am from Ali" is frequently presented as a unique attribute of **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha**, yet the same wording is also mentioned regarding Mawla Hussain *(Tirmidhi: 3775),* **Sayyiduna Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib** in same book Tirmidhi *(Tirmidhi: 3759, Mishkat: 6157)*, **the entire tribe of Ash'ariyun**,

"The Ash'ariyun are from me, and I am from them."

(Bukhari: 2486, Muslim: 6408)

And same wording is mentioned for **Hazrat Julaybib**:

"Julaybib is from me and I am from Julaybib, Julaybib is from me and I am from Julaybib".

(Muslim: 6358)

For the attention of scholars, consider the phrase:

> *"He is the one who sent among the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves"(minhum)*
>
> *(Surah Al-Jumu'ah, 62:2)*

In contrast, the verse:

> *"Indeed, those who divided their religion and became sects—you are not (O Muhammad) from them in anything."*
>
> *(Surah Al-An'am, 6:159)*

Also consider the prophetic statement:

> *"Whoever deceives is not from me."*

With proper contemplation, the truth will become clear, InshaAllah.

This phrase **does express a virtue of Sayyiduna Ali**, but **it is neither exclusive to him** nor a **proof of superiority** over other companions.

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The Claim: The Prophet ﷺ Declared Ali as His Brother

It is also said that the Prophet ﷺ declared Sayyiduna Ali as His brother**,** and that this is **an exclusive virtue** of his. In fact, the Prophet ﷺ also referred to **Mawla Siddiq-e-Akbar** as:

> *"But rather he is my brother and my companion."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 3656, Muslim: 6172)*

Regarding Mawla Farooq-e-Azam, He ﷺ said:

> *"Include us, O my brother, in your prayers."*
>
> *(Abu Dawud: 1498, Tirmidhi: 1980, Mishkat: 2248)*

He ﷺ said to Sayyiduna Zayd bin Harithah:

> *"You are our brother and our Mawla."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 2699)*

Even **Jibreel (AS)** declared **Sayyiduna Umar** to be the brother of the Prophet ﷺ *(Al-Riyad al-Nadrah, vol. 1, p. 318)*. Therefore, this too is not an absolute or exclusive distinction of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (رضی اللہ عنہ). Yes, in the *specific context of the Madinan bond of brotherhood*

(Mu'ākhāt), Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (رضی اللہ عنہ) alone was honored with the unique distinction of being **"the brother of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."**

This particular aspect of Mu'ākhāt is due to his being the Prophet's cousin, his upbringing in the noble household of the Messenger ﷺ, and his many established virtues — **not because of overall superiority (afḍaliyyah).** We have already discussed this dimension among the *distinctive merits (khaṣā'iṣ)* of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (رضی اللہ عنہ) at the beginning of *Ḍarb-e-Ḥaydarī*. However, **this does not constitute proof of superiority**, and it must be kept clearly in mind that **the present discussion concerns superiority (afḍaliyyah)**, not mere virtue.

The Claim: Love for Ali Is a Sign of Faith, Hatred Is Hypocrisy

Likewise, it is often asserted that **harboring hatred for Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is a sign of hypocrisy, and loving him is a sign of faith**. This statement is absolutely true — **but even this is not exclusive to Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (رضی اللہ عنہ).**

This Statement Is True—But Not Exclusive

Yes, this statement is **absolutely true**, but **it is not exclusive** to Sayyiduna Ali.

Similar Hadith About Other Companions

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"Love for the Ansar is a sign of faith, and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 17, 3784; Muslim: 235, 236, 237, 238, 239; Nasa'i: 5019)*

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Likewise, regarding **all the companions**, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"Whoever loves them, loves them because of love for me; and whoever hates them, hates them because of hatred for me."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3862, Musnad Ahmad: 16808)*

Qadi 'Iyad writes:

> *"A similar statement appears in another hadith regarding all the Sahabah:*
>
> *Whoever loves them, it is because of love for me; and whoever hates them, it is because of hatred for me."*
>
> *(Ikmal al-Mu'allim Sharh Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, p. 233)*

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

> *"Love for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar is faith, and hatred for them is disbelief."*

This hadith has been narrated through multiple chains:

(Fada'il al-Sahabah: 597, 645, 688)

Thus, this hadith is considered **Hasan li-ghayrihi (sound due to supporting narrations)**.

Imam al-Dhahabi writes:

> *"If the Prophet ﷺ said this regarding 'Alī, then Abū Bakr is more deserving and more entitled to it, because he is the most superior of all creation after the Prophet ﷺ."*
>
> *(Kitab al-Kaba'ir, p. 93)*

The Four Categories of Hypocrites are:

1. Those who harbored **hatred for the Prophet ﷺ** himself, such as 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy.

2. Those who harbor **hatred toward Abū Bakr and 'Umar, the Anṣār, or any of the Companions (رضی اللہ عنہم),** such as the Rāfiḍah.

3. Those who harbor **hatred toward 'Alī (کرم اللہ وجہہ) and the purified Ahl al-Bayt (رضی اللہ عنہم)**, such as the Khārijites.

4. Those who **betray** when entrusted, lie when they speak, break their promises when they make them, and resort to abuse when they quarrel.

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Understanding True Hypocrisy

> *A kalimah-reciting person who harbors hatred for the Prophet ﷺ is the greatest hypocrite, as per the Qur'an.*
>
> *One who hates the two noble Shaykhs—Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and 'Umar —is a Rafidhi.*
>
> *One who hates Sayyiduna Ali is a Khariji.*
>
> *One who practices the fourth type of hypocrisy is a societal menace.*
>
> *One who recognizes all of these based on hadiths is a **true Sunni and a noble person**.*
>
> *One who does not understand these distinctions is ignorant.*

Aside from the Khawarij's brand of hypocrisy, **other forms are being tolerated**, despite authentic ahadith condemning them.

> *Just as rebellion (khuruj) is hypocrisy, so is Rafidhism.*
>
> *True Iman lies in loving all Companions and the Ahl al-Bayt.*

Rafidhis' Misappropriation of Virtues of Sayyiduna Ali

The virtues of Sayyiduna Ali in Sunni texts have been wrongly portrayed as universally agreed upon by Rafidhis and Tafdhilis. Meanwhile, abundant and strong narrations about other Companions—even those that point to their **superiority**—are **ignored**. They turn **virtue into superiority** and when we **deny superiority**, they misrepresent it as **denial of virtue and issue fatwas. This deception must be clearly understood.**

Just as hatred of Ali is hypocrisy, excessive love is disbelief, ruin, and destruction. Sayyiduna Ali himself disowned such extreme followers—his statements have been mentioned earlier.

The Ever-Changing Standards of the So-Called Lovers

Among these so-called lovers, even the standards of love and hatred are strangely distorted. **One "lover"** claims that whoever mentions other Companions alongside the mention of ʿAlī harbors hatred for ʿAlī in his heart. If you accept this unjust claim and abandon speaking well of the other Companions, **another "lover"** will say that whoever does not regard Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha as superior to the first three Caliphs in **wilāyah** and knowledge harbors hatred for ʿAlī. If you accept this injustice as well, **a third "lover"** will declare that whoever does not openly consider Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha superior to the three Caliphs harbors hatred for him. If you accept even this, a **fourth "lover"** will assert that whoever does not engage in open vilification of the three Caliphs harbors hatred for ʿAlī.

And even if you were to accept all of this, you would still be considered a **half-baked lover**. The "true" lover, according to them, is only the one who believes ʿAlī to be the **very self of God**, the **very self of the Messenger**, the **teacher of Jibrīl**, the **rightful recipient of revelation**, **superior to all Prophets**, and, in the true sense, **the definitive proof of God over creation**, the **repository of the original Qur'an**, and the ultimate **problem-solver** of the Noble Prophet ﷺ—and who also fully grasps the subtleties of **taqiyyah**.

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Our words above are deeply reflective and meaningful. Not everyone can comprehend the Rāfiḍī doctrines concealed behind them. A person lacking proper study should not play the role of a pretended expert, nor indulge in conjecture or superficial interpretations. We state with full confidence that whoever harbors a soft corner for the Rāfiḍī creed is either himself a Rāfiḍī, or else has never truly studied that creed at all.

Appeasement Will Never Satisfy Them

fvsfbfgf Now tell us: **how long are we supposed to keep appeasing the Rāfiḍah just to escape the accusation of hatred for ʿAlī?** Merely to avoid this allegation, some naïve and non-research-oriented Sunnīs have, with their own hands, helped promote the Rāfiḍī creed. They kept fulfilling their demands, and—like America's demands—those demands continued to grow. At this point, remember the Qur'ānic verse:

> ***"The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their way."***
>
> *(al-Baqarah: 120)*

Therefore, the request to the Ahl al-Sunnah is this: **keep your conscience at ease regarding Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, may Allah ennoble his countenance.** There should be no hatred for Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha in your heart—only sincere love. Whether people consider you a lover of ʿAlī or not is irrelevant. Pleasing such people is not within your control. Their list of demands is not only long, but also dangerous. Deliberate suspicion is their habit.

Among the Khārijites, disrespect toward Prophets and saints (peace be upon them) is considered tawḥīd, while among the Rāfiḍah, abusing the Companions is labeled "love for ʿAlī" (رضی اللہ عنہ). **There is no power nor strength except with Allah.**

Let the *tafdhili Rāfiḍīs* understand this clearly: today you have been challenged by a community that itself raises the slogan of **Ḥaydarī**, and that believes in Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha as a remover of difficulties just as it does with the first three Caliphs. Hence, every door of fraud, false accusation, malicious suspicion, and deception is now closed to you.

The Verdict of the Sufis

Hadrat Data Ganj Bakhsh says:

اِنَّ الصَّفَا صَفَا الصِّدِّيقِ
اِنْ اَرَدْتَ صُوْفِيًا عَلَى التَّحْقِيْقِ

> *"If you want to know the name of a true Sufi with certainty, it is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq."*
>
> *"Indeed, the purest of the pure is Siddiq. If you desire a true Sufi, it is he."*
>
> *(Kashf al-Mahjub, p. 32)*

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Now tell me, whom did Data Sahib (Quddisa Sirruhu) declare to be unmatched in sainthood (wilayah)?

The First Sufi Utterance

The Sufis (may Allah be pleased with them) state that **the very first explicitly Sufi statement ever uttered by any Companion was a Ṣiddīqī statement**, namely the words:

> *"I have left for them (in my home) Allah and His Messenger."*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 1678, Tirmidhi: 3675)*

Now tell us here as well: **who, then, emerged as unique and unparalleled in spiritual authority (wilāyah)?**

Praise by Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi

The excellence of Siddiq al-Akbar in sainthood has been beautifully described by Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi :

> *"Special is he, the first in the journey to Divine closeness, Unique in perfection — countless salutations upon him."*

Each word of Faazl-e-Barelvi in this couplet sparkles like a pearl. The word خاص "special" reflects the meaning of خُصُوصاً عَلَى اَفْضَلِ الصَّحَابَةِ بِالتَّحْقِيقِ **"especially the best of companions with certainty."** The phrase سابقِ سیرِ قربِ خدا "first in the journey to Divine closeness" subtly captures the intricacies of *inner sainthood* and clearly hints at the verse وَالسَّابِقُوْنَ السَّابِقُوْنَ . **"And the foremost, the foremost."** In it, the precedence of Siddiq radiates profoundly.

The word اوحد means *unique*, and is a superlative form derived from *Aḥad* (One), implying that even his uniqueness is extraordinary. By adding "perfection" to "unique", it becomes evident that this uniqueness relates to *inner sainthood and spiritual perfection*, not to outward caliphate. May Allah reward him greatly — he placed things exactly where they belonged.

The final part of the question raised by the Tafdhilis was:

> *"Is it because of this that those possessing Grand Sainthood (Wilayah Kubra) and Supreme Ghausiyyah (Ghausiyyah Uzma) are from his lineage?"*

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Clarifying the Role of Lineage

The answer is: it is not necessary for such individuals to be from the progeny of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. Mawla Siddiq al-Akbar and Mawla Farooq-e-Azam were themselves **Qutb al-Aqtab** in their respective eras.

We have used the term *Qutb al-Aqtab* in place of *Wilayah Kubra* and *Ghausiyyah Uzma*, and understanding this distinction is not obligatory upon us to explain. However, it is worth noting that the term *Qutb al-Aqtab* is more suitable for the reality implied in their usage.

The Qutb al-Aqtab in his era is a manifestation of the **Muhammadan Reality** (*Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*). The statement of Siddiq-e-Akbar:

> *"Whoever among you worshipped Muhammad — Muhammad has passed away."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 4454)*

is proof of his ultimate spiritual clarity (*sahw*) and perfected spiritual path (*suluk*).

Similarly, he said:

> *"I will not abandon anything the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to do."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 3093)*

This is also due to his status as *Qutb al-Aqtab*.

Sayyiduna Ali 's Dream and Its Fulfillment

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha saw a dream in which he offered the Fajr prayer behind the Noble Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). After the prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reclined against the prayer niche (Mihrab). At that moment, a woman arrived carrying a tray of dates and placed it before the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ picked up one date and said,

> *"O Ali, will you eat this date?"*
>
> *I said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah."*
>
> *He then extended his blessed hand and placed the date into my mouth.*

He picked up a second date and asked me in the same manner, and when I replied affirmatively, He placed that date into my mouth as well. At this point I awoke. My heart was restless with longing for the vision of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while the sweetness of the date still lingered in my mouth. I performed ablution and went to the mosque, where I offered prayer behind ʿUmar. After the prayer, he too sat leaning against the prayer niche. I wished to narrate my dream to him, but before I could speak, a woman arrived and stood at the entrance of the mosque with a tray of dates. The tray was placed before Umar.

He took one date and said:

> *"O Ali, will you eat this date?"*
>
> *I replied, "Yes."*
>
> *He placed it in my mouth.*

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He then took a second date and asked me again in the same way, and upon my assent, he placed that date into my mouth as well. Thereafter, the remaining dates were distributed among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

I desired that I might receive more dates, but then Sayyiduna Umar said:

> *"“O my brother, had the Messenger of Allah ﷺ given you more dates, we too would have given you more. "*
>
> *I was amazed and said, “What I saw in my dream last night—Allah has informed you of it."*

Sayyiduna Umar replied:

> *"O Ali, a believer sees with the light of faith."*
>
> *I said, "You speak the truth, O Commander of the Faithful. I saw exactly the same in my dream, and I I experienced from your hand the very same taste and sweetness that I had felt from the blessed hand of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."*

(Al-Riyadh al-Nadhirah vol. 1, p. 331; Izaalat al-Khafa vol. 2, pp. 168-169)

This is the status of *Qutb al-Aqtab* — the station that manifests the light of Prophethood.

Secondly, the scholars of Islam have explicitly stated that among the twelve caliphs who would succeed the Noble Prophet ﷺ, the names of the first four are:

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Sayyiduna Umar, Sayyiduna Uthman and Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha

Reference may be made to the works on Islamic creed, such as Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar and similar texts, as well as Fatāwā Riḍawiyyah, vol. 9, p. 25, and Fatāwā Mehrīyyah, p. 145.

Imam Shihab al-Din Khafaji writes:

"'It is necessary that there always be a khalīfah upon the earth of Allah. At times, this khalīfah exercises authority only in an outward sense, as is the case with the sultans; and at times, he exercises authority inwardly, as is the case with the aqṭāb. In some individuals, however, both outward and inward forms of caliphate are combined, such as in the Rightly Guided Caliphs—Abū Bakr—and in 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz."

(Naseem al-Riyadh vol. 2, p. 215)

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Shaykh Fariduddin Attar says:

"The King of Religion, Ṣiddīq al-Akbar is the Qutb of the Truth, surpassing all others in every matter."

Allama Alusi , while commenting on **لَا تَحْزَنْ "Do not grieve"**, writes:

"This indicates that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq held the same position in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ) as the Prophet (ﷺ) held in the presence of Allah — he is the beloved of the Beloved."

(Ruh al-Ma'ani vol. 5, p. 402)

In another place, he reports that Shaykh Khalid Naqshbandi (Quddisa Sirruhu) once said:

The ranks of the perfected ones (al-kāmilīn) are four:

Prophethood — whose axial pivot (quṭb al-madār) is our Prophet ﷺ,

Siddiqiyyah — whose axial pivot is Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (RA)

Martyrdom — whose axial pivot is 'Umar-e-Fārūq (RA)

Sainthood (Wilāyah) — whose axial pivot is 'Alī (RA)

Someone then asked regarding Uthman, what was his rank among the three caliphs following Prophethood?, he replied:

> *"He was granted a share in the rank of martyrdom as well as a share in the rank of sainthood, and that this—according to the gnostics—is the true meaning of his being Dhū al-Nūrayn (the Possessor of Two Lights).*
>
> *(Rūḥ al-Maʿānī, vol. 3, p. 106, under the verse "Those are with whom Allah has bestowed His favor"; and he states, "I have not found this detailed explanation elsewhere as presented by Mawlānā Shaykh."*

At another place, he writes:

> *"One who surpasses the Siddiqin (the truthful) enters the realm of Prophethood, and that door is now closed. Shaykh Akbar identified a station between Prophethood and Siddiqiyyah, which he called the 'Station of Nearness' (Maqam-e-Qurbah). This secret was placed in the chest of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, as hinted in the hadith — 'There is no one between the Prophet (ﷺ) and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Ruh al-Ma'ani vol. 3, p. 107)*

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi also stated in *Al-Malfuz* that the Rightly Guided Caliphs (Rashidun) were the Ghawth of their respective eras. *(Malfuzat A'la Hazrat, p. 237)*

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Misconceptions About Lineage and Spiritual Rank : Misattribution to Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha

Thirdly, those sacred figures who came thereafter are designated as **sayyids** not because they are descendants of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu), but because of Sayyidat al-Nisāʾ Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ (peace and blessings be upon her and upon her father). Even if one were to accept your assumption, the cause would still be Sayyidat al-Nisāʾ, not Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. Otherwise, the progeny of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha from his other wives existed in abundance in the past and continue to exist today.

Rather, under a deliberate **propaganda**, the Rāfiḍah have singled out and publicized only the Ḥusaynī sayyids for this purpose. As for the Ḥasanī sayyids, far from honoring them, they harbor animosity toward them; indeed, they even bear rancor against Imām Ḥasan himself. According to them—God forbid —*"he, like his father, became a disbeliever."* May Allah protect us from such a blasphemous claim.

It is for this very reason that they also harbor hostility toward the august **Qutb al-Aqṭāb**, Sayyidunā Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (may his secret be sanctified), namely because he was a Ḥasanī Sayyid.

Fourthly, hence, the twelve caliphs were called **Qurayshi**, not **Hashimite**.

Fifthly, if by this you mean the saints (*awliyā'*) of the Ummah apart from those twelve caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them all), then what textual proof do you possess that confines them exclusively to the progeny of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha?

Sixthly, to declare superiority and uniqueness in sainthood (*wilāyah*) as the very cause for the operation of *quṭbiyyah* within the noble lineage is, in itself, a strange assertion. The reality is that even when *quṭbiyyah* manifests within the noble progeny, it does so on the basis of the individual's own intrinsic excellence and spiritual capacity, not merely by virtue of lineage alone.

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THE THIRD QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

"Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is the chief of the Awliya (saints). Shah Ismail Dehlvi wrote that for Hazrat Ali al-Murtadha, a particular form of superiority over the two Shaykhs is established, namely that the majority of the chains of sainthood (wilāyah) proceed from him."

(Al-Saif al-Jali)

Answer:

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha – Leader of the Saints

Undoubtedly, Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is the chief of the saints—their crown, their sovereign, and the distributor of sainthood. Our teacher, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Alī Bakhsh Ṣāḥib Chāndiyo (Quddisa Sirruhul Aqdas), says::

"Gariftam nama-e-khud siyah ba fuhsh,

Che baakam chun mara Mawla Ali Bakhsh"

"Even if my deeds are blackened with sins and disgrace, I do not fear, because my Mawla is Ali Bakhsh (Ali the Granter)."

He subtly and beautifully incorporated his name "Ali Bakhsh" into the verse. However, to begin with, this issue is purely experiential (*kashfī*) and spiritual in nature, for which there exists no explicit and decisive textual proof in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Matters of creed cannot be founded upon *kashf*, nor can the entire Ummah be made legally bound by experiential and unveilings-based matters.

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Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlvi writes:

"The preference (Tafdil) of the two Shaykhs is a matter derived from the Sharīʿah, and the outcome of this discussion is that, from the perspective of the Sharīʿah, the two Shaykhs possess overall superiority. Therefore, in this debate, the legal proofs from the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, consensus, and analogical reasoning must be cited—not the spiritual unveilings of the Ṣūfīs—because no legal ruling is established on the basis of the unveilings of the Ṣūfīs."

That is to say, the superiority of the two Shaykhs is an issue derived from the Sharīʿah, and the conclusion of the discussion is that, according to the Sharīʿah, they possess comprehensive and overall superiority. Hence, in discussing this matter, one must present legal evidence from the Qur'ān, Sunnah, consensus, and analogy, rather than relying on the unveilings of the Ṣūfīs. Know well that no legal ruling is established through Ṣūfī unveilings. (Qurrat al-ʿAynayn, pp. 317–318)

Comprehensive vs. Partial Superiority

The opposite of **comprehensive superiority (fadhl kulli)** is **partial superiority (fadhl juz'i)**. Shah Sahib means that while partial superiority is granted to many Sahabah including Sayyiduna Ali al-

Murtadha, the **overall, comprehensive superiority** belongs to the Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, RA).

Ala Hazrat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan sarcastically remarks on the ignorance of the Rawafid (Shia extremists) who misunderstand these terms:

> *"Give applause to these self-proclaimed scholars of knowledge and excellence who understood fadhl kulli (comprehensive superiority) to mean superiority from every possible angle! Their misunderstanding stems from unfamiliarity with the terminology of scholars."*
>
> *(Matla' al-Qamrayn, Manuscript, p. 64)*

Limitations of Mystical Unveilings

That the general public is unable to comprehend the unveilings (*mukāshafāt*) of the Ṣūfīs; that even the Ṣūfīs themselves may fail to fully grasp their own unveilings; that *kashf* is limited by the spiritual capacity of the one who experiences it; that *kashf*, in and of itself, can become a veil; and that spiritual unveilings do not constitute a binding legal proof—these are subtle and intricate matters. We do not wish to engage in a detailed discussion of them here, though we have already alluded to much by way of indication.

Those who, by indulging in such claims, disrupt the discipline of the Sharī'ah are not treating the Ummah of the Noble Beloved ﷺ with due fairness or goodwill.

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Misinterpretation of the Hadith: "Man Kuntu Mawlahu..."

As for the argument advanced by the so-called *Tafdhili* from the **statement *"Man kuntu mawlāhu fa-'Alīyyun mawlāhu,"*** he has selected—out of multiple possible interpretations—an interpretation of his own choosing, and that too an inferior, indeed a rejected one. Rather, by adopting the very stance of the Rāfiḍah, he has elevated it to the level of an explicit and decisive proof, as though this ḥadīth admits of no other meaning and represents the final word on the matter. How ignorant the claim itself was, and how utterly misplaced and irrelevant the proof advanced in its support.

Even If Kashf is Considered Valid

Secondly, even if we accept the validity of spiritual kashf, one must remember this important point: **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is the leader of saints who came after him — not of the rightly guided caliphs who preceded him.**

This is similar to how **Ghaus al-A'zam and Qutb al-Aqtab, Sayyiduna Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani** , is the leader of all saints — but **not of those who came before him**, whose **superiority is established by clear textual evidence**.

He is not the leader of the Sahabah, the Tabi'in, the Tabi' al-Tabi'in, or the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt — rather, all of them are his seniors and superiors.

Kashf Must Align with Qur'an and Sunnah

Thirdly, since this matter is not based on clear Qur'anic or Sunnah texts, but on **Sufi spiritual unveilings**, we now present the **verdicts of the most accomplished Sufis** to clarify the truth. These verdicts and unveilings **align perfectly with the Qur'an and Sunnah**, which is why there is **no harm in quoting them**.

Let no unfortunate soul say that we based our argument entirely on mystical experiences. In fact, many of these statements are not even based on kashf — **they are the scholarly and spiritual investigations** of the Sufi masters.

1. Consensus of the Sufi Saints on the Superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

In the well-known book of Sufism, *Al-Ta'arruf*, it is stated:

> *"All Sufi saints unanimously agree on the precedence of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Sayyiduna Umar, then Sayyiduna Uthman, and then Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all)."*
>
> *(Al-Ta'arruf, p. 62; Nibras, p. 303)*

2. Hazrat Ali Hujwiri's Praise for Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar

Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh Sayyid Ali Hujwiri states in praise of Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq :

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> *"Shaykh al-Islām, the best of mankind after the Prophets (peace be upon them), the Imām and leader of the people of renunciation, the sovereign of the masters of singular devotion, far removed from human frailties—Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUthmān al-Ṣiddīq. His miracles in the realms of realities and gnosis are well known, and their signs and evidences are manifest... The great shaykhs regard him as the chief of the people of spiritual witnessing (ahl al-mushāhadah), and they consider Ḥaḍrat ʿUmar (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu) to be the leader of the people of spiritual struggle (ahl al-mujāhadah)... Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu) surpasses all of creation after the Prophets (peace be upon them), and it is not permissible for anyone to step ahead of him...*
>
> *When Allah Most High elevates one of His servants to the station of perfect truthfulness (kamāl al-ṣidq) and firmly establishes him in the* مقام تمکین *(station of stability), he then awaits the Divine command as to whether he is to be directed toward poverty or authority. If he is commanded to authority, he assumes it, yet allows no personal desire or self-direction to interfere. Thus did Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu), from beginning to end, prefer poverty, submission, and contentment. For this reason, the Ṣūfīs—whose Imām and exemplar is Ṣiddīq al-Akbar—have adopted the path of poverty, submission, and contentment, and they do not seek authority or dominion.*
>
> *He (raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu) is the religious Imām of the general body of Muslims, and the particular Imām of those who tread this spiritual path (tareeqat)."*
>
> *(Kashf al-Mahjub, pp. 67–69)*

Hazrat Ali Hujwiri Further States:

> *"If you wish to know the true essence of a Sufi, then know that the one who truly embodies the qualities of a Sufi is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq."*
>
> *(Kashf al-Mahjub, p. 32)*

Hazrat Data Sahib has has utterly refuted and demolished those who regard the caliphate of Sayyiduna Ṣiddīq al-Akbar as merely political and confined to the outward realm, and those who claim that Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (Raḍiya Allāhu ʿanhu) was uniquely superior to Sayyiduna Ṣiddīq al-Akbar in sainthood (*wilāyah*).

3. Hazrat Shaykh al-Akbar Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi writes:

> *"Among the saints, there are those whose rule is manifest, and they receive both external and internal caliphate due to their elevated status—like Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Hasan, Mu'awiyah bin Yazid, Umar bin Abdul Aziz, and al-Mutawakkil. And among them are those who only receive internal (spiritual) caliphate and do not rule outwardly—like Ahmad bin Harun al-Rashid al-Sabti and Abu Yazid al-Bistami, and most of the Qutbs, who have no outward rule."*
>
> *(Futuhat al-Makkiyyah, Chapter 73, Volume 2, p. 9)*

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Now tell us—after the acceptance of both external and internal caliphate for all four Rightly Guided Caliphs by Shaykh al-Akbar, what grounds are left for any denial? This exact passage has also been quoted by Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlvi in *Qurrat al-ʿAynayn*, p. 322.

4. **Refuting False Rafiḍi Claims**, Hazrat Mir Sayyid Abdul Wahid Bilgrami Chishti states:

> *"At times this Rāfiḍī prattles on, claiming that when Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ascended the seat of the caliphate, ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā was not present. At other times, he alleges that the precedence of the two Shaykhs in the caliphate was due merely to their advanced age, not on account of their virtues. And at yet another time, he seeks to argue from a ḥadīth that has not attained authenticity, namely: "The caliphate after me shall last thirty years, and it was completed with ʿAlī," and then claims that the caliphates of the other successors were deficient and only reached completion and perfection in the caliphate of ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā. On this basis, he further asserts that all spiritual lineages of Sufism trace back exclusively to him and to no one else.*
>
> *(Sab'a Sanabil, p. 19)*

5. There are two paths to attain closeness to Allah (SWT). One path is that of the Prophets (Peace be upon them), and the other is that of the Saints (Ahl al-Ridwan).

Proximity through Prophethood:

> *The proximity attained through the path of the Prophets is known as Qurb-e-Nubuwat (Closeness of Prophethood).*

Proximity through Saintliness:

The proximity attained through the path of the Saints is known as Qurb-e-Wilayat (Closeness of Saintliness).

Words of Imam Ahmad Sirhindi (The Mujaddid Alif Thani)

Imam Ahmad Sirhindi, may Allah sanctify his soul, states:

"The spiritual perfection of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) is similar to the perfection of the Prophets (Peace be upon them). The people of Wilayat (Saintship) fall short in comparison to the perfection of the Shaykhs, and the knowledge of the people of Kashf (spiritual unveiling) is partial compared to the heights of their spiritual ranks. The perfection of Wilayat is as if it were thrown away in the path compared to the perfection of the two Shaykhs. The spiritual attainments of Wilayat serve as a ladder to ascend the perfection of Prophethood."

How, then, can preliminaries comprehend final objectives, and how can means grasp the realities of their origins? Today, because of distance from the era of prophethood, this truth appears unpleasant and difficult for many to accept—but what can be done?"

Behind the mirror I have been placed, parrot-like;

Whatever the Eternal Master utters, that alone do I repeat.

That is: I have been placed like a parrot behind the mirror; whatever the Eternal Teacher says, I merely repeat.

Yet praise be to Allah and thanks to Him, that in this discourse I am in agreement with the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah (may Allah reward their efforts), and in harmony with their consensus. Allah Most High has rendered their inferential knowledge superior to my experiential unveiling, and their concise understanding more complete than my detailed one.

Until this poor servant was led to the perfections of the station of prophethood and granted a full share therein, he was not informed—by way of unveiling—of the virtues of the two Shaykhs, nor was any path shown to him other than that of following transmitted authority.

(Maktubat Imam Rabbani, Vol. 1, Ma ktub 251).

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Further Reflections by Imam Rabbani

Imam Rabbani further comments:

"What can these people do? They have never stepped beyond the circle of sainthood, nor have they understood the reality of the perfections of prophethood. They have taken half of sainthood—its ascending aspect—as the entirety of sainthood, and the other half—its descending aspect—as the station of prophethood.

Like a worm concealed within a stone,

For it, that alone is its earth and its sky."

A fabricated statement was circulated by a self-proclaimed Shaykh al-Islam regarding Hazrat Mujaddid (may Allah have mercy upon him), claiming **that there is one path associated with the nearness of sainthood, whose leader and source of spiritual effusion is Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā** (may Allah ennoble his countenance). Yet, regrettably, he has quoted this letter selectively, **cutting it off from both before and after**. Prior to this passage, it is written that **there is one path associated with the nearness of prophethood, and thereafter it is written that the two Shaykhs attained realization through the first path**.

(*Maktūbāt-i Imām Rabbānī*, vol. 2, Letter no. 123)

6. Shaykh Abdul Aziz Dabbagh, may Allah sanctify his soul, states:

"The belief in Allah Almighty, as experienced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), was of a very special nature. If this belief were to be transferred to all the people on earth, including the Companions and others, they would dissolve under it. However, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr inherited a small part of this special belief according to his own capacity. Despite this, no one in the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), including the Companions, could bear the intensity of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's experience, nor could they approach it. This is because the Prophet (PBUH) had attained the highest level in the secrets of Divinity, the realities of Lordship, and the subtleties of Divine Knowledge, which could neither be described nor tolerated by anyone. The Prophet (PBUH) would engage in deep spiritual conversations with Sayyiduna Abu Bakr in the waters of knowledge where the Prophet was immersed. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr had reached a certain level in these spiritual realms, but in the last three years of his life, the Prophet (PBUH) refrained from discussing these profound matters with him, fearing that he might dissolve under their intensity."

The source for this is in Jawahir al-Bahar (Vol. 2, p. 273) and Al-Abriz (p. 326).

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Now tell us: to what extent had you confined the superiority of Ṣiddīq al-Akbar—and what is it that Ḥaḍrat al-Dabbāgh (may Allah have mercy upon him) is declaring? This is the very saint who was endowed with *ʿilm ladunnī* and who, outwardly, studied under no teacher. Moreover, the one who has transmitted this passage is the illustrious ʿAllāmah Yūsuf ibn Ismāʿīl al-Nabhānī (may Allah have mercy upon him)—a figure whose very dust your thunderous oratory cannot hope to reach.

7. Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-Thani's spiritual successor, Kashf-ul-Haqaiq, Allama Badruddin Sirhindi writes: "in reality, all spiritual lineages trace their affiliation back to Hazrat Siddiq-e-Akbar." (Hazraat-al-Quds, p. 23)

8. Hazrat Allama Abdul Aziz Pirharvi states: "Those who make this claim are Shīʿa: that Ḥaḍrat ʿAlī was more knowledgeable in the science of the spiritual path (*ṭarīqah*) than all the other Companions, and that for this reason all spiritual lineages originate from him." The original wording is as follows:

"What has been related from Aḥmad al-Zūraqī, one of the shaykhs of the Maghrib, is that there was disagreement as to whether this superiority applies to both the outward and the

inward, or to the outward alone—and the matter ends there. This is an indication toward the statement of some of the Shīʿa, though not of the extremist type, that ʿAlī was more knowledgeable in the science of the spiritual path than the rest of the Companions, and therefore the chains of the Ṣūfīs culminate in him."

(Miram-ul-Kalam, p. 47)

Now tell us: who is this ʿAllāma ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Parhārwī (may Allah have mercy on him), and what exactly is he saying? This is a personality who was *ummī*—that is, he did not study outwardly under any teacher; rather, he acquired inner, esoteric knowledge through the spiritual attention of Ḥaḍrat Khiḍr (peace be upon him). He was a master of two hundred and seventy sciences, which is an unparalleled record in this world. We hope that such a figure would understand the issue of inner sainthood (*wilāyat-e bāṭinī*) far better than you people.

What he is stating is that to regard Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha as superior in the knowledge of the spiritual path (*ʿilm al-ṭarīqah*), and to take the continuation of the spiritual lineages from him as evidence for this superiority, is the view of certain people who wear the garb of the Shīʿa.

9. Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi writes:

"in the earlier periods, spiritual benefit (fayḍ) was transmitted through companionship and close association. If bayʿah and companionship are taken as the basis, then the spiritual lineages (salāsil) of the two Shaykhs are ***more firmly established*** *than those of Mawlā al-Murtaḍā. Rather, even* ***Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā*** *(may Allah be pleased with him) himself received spiritual benefit from the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umer).*

(Qurat-ul-Aynayn fi Tafdil Ash-Shaykhein, p. 300)

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The Unique Position of Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar

10. The two noble Shaykhs (may Allah be pleased with them both) are so completely effaced (fanāʾ) in the august person of the Noble Prophet ﷺ that they exist within the sacred enclosure of the Sun of Prophethood itself, and their period of caliphate is, in reality, a direct continuation and completion of the Prophetic mission. It is for this reason that the regions whose bestowal upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ he had already witnessed during his lifetime were conquered precisely during the era of the two Shaykhs.

Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā (may Allah be pleased with him), by contrast, is like the moon: a luminous body possessing a distinct existence, yet receiving its light entirely from the Sun of Prophethood.

The easiest way to understand this matter is to observe that even today, the **sacred shrines of the two Shaykhs** remain within the **holy enclosure of the Noble Prophet ﷺ's blessed resting place**. By visiting the Roza of the Messenger ﷺ, one **automatically attains visitation of the Roza of Ṣiddīq and the Roza of ʿUmar**.

Imam Zain-ul-Abidin said:

"Those who were closest to the Prophet (SAW) in this world are the ones who are still resting in peace with him today." The Prophet (SAW) himself said: "I and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar were created from one clay."

(Kanz-ul-Ammal, 11/259, Hadith: 32680).

Almost all this discussion can be found in Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi's book "Qurat-ul-Aynayn fi Tafdil Ash-Shaykhein," on the last pages, which we have supplemented with a few hadiths and examples for clarification.

Hazrat Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi expresses in his own words as follows:

"The days of the caliphate of the two Shaykhs are, in reality, the days of the Prophethood of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, whereas the days of the caliphate of al-Murtaḍā are the days of the cycle of sainthood. In Ṣiddīq, I found a greater resemblance in terms of annihilation (fanā') and the reflection of the prophetic rays".

(Qurat-ul-Aynayn, p. 331)

Hazrat Fazil Barelvi beautifully expresses this truth by saying:

سایۂ مصطفیٰ مایۂ اصطفا
عزو نازِ خلافت پہ لاکھوں سلام

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"Shade of Mustafa is the foundation of chosen grace; hundreds of salutations upon the honor of the caliphate."

Read these passages repeatedly. It will become clear that the superiority of the two Shaykhs is not confined merely to outward, political caliphate; rather, it pertains—more emphatically—to inner, spiritual sainthood. But what awareness can a worm trapped within stone possibly have of such realities?

11. Shāh Walīullāh Muḥaddith Dehlavī رحمه الله included in his book *Izālat al-Khafā'* a substantial treatise entitled **"Risālah Taṣawwuf-e-Fārūq-e-Aʿẓam."** In this treatise he writes:

"The seventh chapter concerns the continuity of the Sufi chain of companionship, which began with the Prophet ﷺ and has continued up to our own time through the mediation of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. Here we shall mention the chain of the people of Iraq, for they constitute the majority of the Muslims, and in this we shall take particular account of Sufi companionship."

He then clarifies a crucial point that must be kept in mind: in the eras of the Companions, the Successors, and the Successors of the Successors, it was not customary for disciples to take a formal pledge of allegiance (bayʿah) at the hands of their shaykhs, nor to receive a patched cloak (khirqah). Rather, merely sitting in companionship was considered sufficient. People did not confine themselves to a single shaykh, nor did they restrict themselves to a single spiritual chain. Instead, each person would remain in the company of many shaykhs and maintain connections with multiple chains. Their chains were not strictly traced back to a single Companion; however, when the companionship of a particular saint was more widely

acknowledged, or its effect more pronounced, or when that saint became more renowned, it would be said that such-and-such people were the companions of that individual.

Our shaykh Abū Ṭāhir narrated to me the statement of Shaykh Ḥasan ʿAjamī al-Makkī, who said: I asked my shaykh, Ḥaḍrat ʿĪsā al-Maghribī, "If a seeker has one shaykh from whom he derives spiritual benefit, is it permissible for him to visit another shaykh as well?" He replied: ***"The father is one, but the uncles are many."***

(Azalat-ul-Khafa, Vol. 2, p. 185).

12. Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlvi states:

"The researchers of Sufism have written that the two Sheikhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) were bearers of the perfections of Prophethood, while Hazrat Amir (Ali) was the bearer of the perfections of Wilayah (spiritual authority). "

'Tuhfah Ithna Ashariyah' (Chapter 7, Page 214).

13. Hazrat Ala Hazrat Maulana Shah Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi has quoted the words of Qudwat-ul-Awliya Hazrat Syedna Abu Al-Hussain Ahmad al-Nuri, who states:

" When divine grace, guidance, and pre-eternal solicitude undertake a servant's training, he firmly grasps the hem of the Sharīʿah and enters the paths of spiritual wayfaring with ardour. Since the fundamental work at this stage consists in severance and devoted withdrawal from all that is other than the Truth, the very first station is the rectification of thought and the purification of imagination. Gradually, by engaging the heart with subtle disciplines and gentle forms, the habit of distracted and restless gazing is removed; deliverance is granted from the tug-of-war of "this and that," and the imprint of Divine Oneness is firmly engraved upon the tablet of the heart—may Allah, by the blessing of our noble shaykhs whose secrets are sanctified, grant us this provision. Āmīn.

This journey is called sayr ilā Allāh (the journey to God), and its culmination is termed the station of fanā' fī Allāh (annihilation in God). In traversing this stage, all saints are equal, and there one says—by analogy with "We make no distinction between any of His messengers"—"We make no distinction between any of His saints."

When all that is other than Allah has fallen from one's sight, and having reached the rank of annihilation the traveller steps further ahead, this is sayr fī Allāh (the journey in God). This has no final limit, and it is here that differences in degrees of nearness become manifest: the greater one's journeying in God, the closer one is to Him. Thereafter, some continue to advance onward, while others are granted a descent into the human realm for the sake of calling creation. This is called sayr min Allāh (the journey from God). From such figures the practice of the cloak and the pledge (khirqah and bayʿah) comes into currency, and the movement of the spiritual orders is set in motion.

This, however, does not entail that their sayr fī Allāh surpassed that of those before them, nor that they attained superiority in nearness or elevation—though it was indeed a distinct grace bestowed upon them and not granted to others. Have you not observed that among the

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noble successors of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha رضي الله عنه, Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥusayn and the venerable Khwājah SaḤasan Baṣrī were granted descent into the human plane and the rank of guidance and spiritual completion, while no order was established or widely propagated from Imām Ḥasan? And yet, the nearness and sainthood of Imām al-Mujtabā were, without doubt, more complete, higher, and superior to those of the Khwājah; moreover, clear prophetic reports also establish his precedence even over Imām Ḥusayn, the prince in the crimson robe. May Allah be pleased with them all."

("Matal'ul Qamarain Fi Ibanat Sabaqat al-Umrain, Qalami, Page 22")

14. Hazrat Maulana Hassan Raza Khan Barelvi states:

"When Hazrat Farooq, Uthman, and Ali entered into Bai'ah (spiritual allegiance), the pride of Sufi orders was established through the chain of Siddeeq Akbar (Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr)."

15. Hazrat Allama Syed Mahmood Ahmad Rizvi states:

"Among the saints of the Ummah, the most superior is Siddeeq Akbar (Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr), followed by Farooq (Hazrat Umar), then Uthman, and then Ali. All the companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are, according to their ranks, saints and those closest to Allah. The perfections of Prophethood were transmitted through Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar, while the perfections of Wilayah (spiritual authority) were transmitted through Hazrat Ali.

('Deen-e-Mustafa', Page 213)"

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16. Finally, we would like to pose this question, What is the meaning of this verse of Hazrat Sultan Bahu?

غوث قطب سب أڑے أڑیڑے تے عاشق جان اکیڑے ہو

Ghaws and Qutb—all of them cry out and rush about;

it is the true lover who seizes the very soul.

You have already seen the answers to the first three questions raised by the tafdhilis. In reality, it was a single question; we merely divided it into three parts in order to make the response clearer and easier to understand. Now, finally, behold how Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Shāh Aḥmad Razā Khān Barelwī قدس سره, unleashes the whips of scholarly chastisement upon these oppressors—and, taking a lesson from it, leave them to stand alone in the Field of Recompense.

Ḥazrat Fāḍil-e-Barelwī قدس سره writes:

"What a strange spectacle it is—the sect of the Sanfḍīliyya, whose hearts do not open to following the Qur'an, the Sunnah, the consensus of the Ummah, and the scholars of Ahl al-Ḥaqq when it comes to affirming the superiority of the two Shaykhs رضي الله تعالى عنهما. Even when the blazing force of decisive proofs softens the heart somewhat, the affliction described

in 'He makes his breast tight and constricted, as though he were climbing into the sky' rises up to block the way. Yet despite all this, the sweet and endearing name of 'Sunnī' is such that they cannot even tolerate openly renouncing it. To conceal themselves, they invent far-fetched explanations and flimsy interpretations, and then shift all these imagined calamities onto the heads of the Sunnīs, claiming that this is what their doctrine entails.

Then, by divine grace, through the resolute effort of the people of truth, milk is separated from water, clarity from confusion. And the irony is that whoever among them fashions a new discourse and claims it to be the Sunnī position acts as though the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah were a wax figure that could be turned whichever way one pleases. Some gentlemen produced such 'eloquent refinements' that their service was already addressed in an earlier admonition. Others went even further and bestowed upon the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah the 'honour' of reduction, declaring it thus: the two Shaykhs رضي الله تعالى عنهما *are superior in terms of caliphate, while Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha karam Allāhu wajhah is superior in terms of sainthood. And the explanation that drips from their tongues is this: that the caliphate reached Abū Bakr and 'Umar* رضي الله تعالى عنهما *first, whereas Mawlā al-Murtaḍā karam Allāhu wajhah al-Karīm is the point at which the spiritual lineages of the people of the Path culminate, not the two Shaykhs—hence one is superior for this reason, and the other for that.*

I say—and my Lord forgive me—this is a statement that escapes their tongues in a state of intellectual desperation. Examine it closely, and even their own minds are found empty of any clearly defined meaning. If by this they intend what seeps out during their discourse, then it is nothing but incoherent confusion: the caliphate reaching one earlier and another later establishes precedence with respect to caliphate, not superiority with respect to caliphate —that is, they became caliphs earlier, not that they were superior by virtue of caliphate. Likewise, to claim that the culmination of the spiritual paths is a basis for the contested form of superiority is an assertion without proof—indeed, the evidence speaks against it, as we have already stated in the fourth clarification.

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And if what is meant is that the two Shaykhs possessed greater aptitude in matters of governance, and were more adept at administration and rule, then my dear friend, this is hardly something over which such uproar would arise, or that Sunnīs and tafḍhilis would split into opposing camps. Ahl al-Sunnah count the two Shaykhs as the most excellent after the Prophets; every Friday it is proclaimed from the pulpits: 'The most excellent of mankind after the Prophets, in truth, is our master Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq.' In the ḥadīth, the two Shaykhs are described as the leaders of the first and the last, and the best of the inhabitants of heaven and earth after the Prophets and Messengers. Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha himself repudiated claims of his superiority with such intensity that he declared: whoever hears me described in such a way is a slanderer, and I will apply to him the legal punishment for slander.

These matters pertain to worldly affairs, even if they serve as means and instruments for religion. Hence Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha karam Allāhu wajhah said: 'Whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ *approved for our religion—namely, prayer—shall we not approve him for our worldly affairs—namely, the caliphate?' Then whether there was increase in this or not—what of it? If the dispute was only over this much, then the Sunnīs unjustly*

subjected these poor tafdhilis to such trials, and Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha declared them deserving of those lashes. And if something else altogether is intended, then its answer has already been given in the previous admonition."

(Maṭlaʿ al-Qamarayn, pp. 54–56)

The second part of this question was that Shāh Ismāʿīl Dehlavī wrote such-and-such. You have already read the scholarly and research-based response to his statement. As for a response with respect to his personality, it is this: this is the very same Ismāʿīl Dehlavī who wrote that becoming absorbed in the thought and imagination of one's spiritual guide or similar revered personalities—even if that personality be the Noble Messenger himself—is worse than a person becoming absorbed in the thought of his cow or donkey (Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm, p. 86). The same author further states that one must firmly believe that every created being, great or small, is more contemptible than a tanner in comparison to the majesty of Allah (Taqwiyat al-Īmān, p. 14). In that very book he also writes that one whose name is Muḥammad or ʿAlī has no authority over anything.

Now, embracing the gleanings of such people is something you may congratulate yourselves on.

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THE FOURTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

"Three kinds of caliphate issued forth from the Noble Prophet ﷺ: **the caliphate of sainthood (wilāyah) (خلافت ولایت), the caliphate of sovereignty (خلافت سلطنت), and the caliphate of guidance (خلافت ہدایت)**. Ḥaḍrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlavī رحمہ اللہ writes in his book *Tafhīmāt-e-Ilāhiyyah* that the heirs of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are of three kinds:

The first are those who received from Him ﷺ the grace of wisdom and infallible rectitude, and the inward pivot of spiritual authority; these are His **Ahl al-Bayt and his most intimate elect**.

The second group are those who received from Him ﷺ the grace of preservation and transmission, and an outwardly manifest pivot of guidance and right direction; these are His **great Companions**, such as the **Rightly Guided Caliphs** and the **Ten promised Paradise**.

The third group are those who received individual bestowals, together with knowledge and piety; these are the Companions who were distinguished by the attribute of **iḥsān**.

(*al-Sayf al-Jalī*)

Answer

Firstly, the excerpt from Shah Waliullah is not from the Qur'an, Hadith, or scholarly consensus (Ijmaʿ). What, then, was the foundation of the beliefs of the Ummah for the 1200 years before this text was written?

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Secondly, Shah Waliullah's division does not support the Tafdhili viewpoint. Not once does he mention the word "Caliphate" (Khilafah) in his statement. Instead, he uses the term *Qutbiyyah*—both *Qutbiyyah-e-Irshadiyyah* (guidance) and *Qutbiyyah-e-Bāṭiniyyah* (spiritual centrality). It is clear that a *Qutb al-Irshad* is not necessarily a political ruler. Even today, and throughout history, spiritual guides (*Qutb al-Irshad*) have existed who were not political leaders or statesmen.

The Word "Khawas" Cannot Be Ignored

Another issue is that Shah Waliullah includes both Ahl al-Bayt and "Khawas" (the chosen ones) in the first group. Why did the Tafdhilis overlook the word *Khawas*? Who among the companions can be more "Khas" (special) than the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (Khulafa-e-Arbaʿah), especially the one about whom the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"If I were to take a Khalil (intimate friend) besides Allah, it would be Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*

If the Tafdhilis take this as an **explanatory apposition (ʿaṭf tafsīrī)**, then we submit the following: in the **second category**, Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib has mentioned **Khilāfah-e-Arbaʿah** and **Ashrah Mubashsharah**. Here too, the relationship of explanatory apposition is intended between the Khulafā-e-Arbaʿah and the Ashrah Mubashsharah.

In the **first category**, the **Ahl al-Bayt** are included among the **Khuwās**, yet the **Khuwās** are not limited to the Ahl al-Bayt alone. Likewise, in the **second category**, the **Khilāfah-e-Arbaʻah** are included within the **Ashrah Mubashsharah**, yet the **Ashrah Mubashsharah** are not restricted to the Khulafā-e-Arbaʻah alone.

The third reason for the lack of correspondence is that Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib رحمه الله has described the **third category** as those distinguished by the attribute of **iḥsān**. Every student of Islamic knowledge understands that *Ihsan* is synonymous with Sufism and spiritual purification (*Tasawwuf* and *Tariqah*). According to the mystical explanation of the Hadith of Ihsan, the state of *Fana'iyyat* (self-effacement) described as:

> *"As if you see Him, and if you do not, then know that He sees you."*

—this level is known as *Ihsan*. Shah Waliullah does not speak of *Khilafah* at all in this context. You can search his writings thoroughly, but you won't find the term *Khilafah* used here. Instead, he categorizes these spiritual legacies into three types of *Qutbiyyah* and *Ihsan*.

Ironically, the Tafdhili scholar keeps using the term "three types of Caliphate," while Shah Waliullah completely avoids the word 'Caliphate'. In contrast, Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib قدس سره has employed the terms **Qutbiyat** and **Iḥsān** for all three categories, whereas the *tafdhili* author has entirely avoided using these terms. This highlights a world of difference: Ḥaḍrat Shāh Walī Allāh رحمه الله's intent is one thing, while the *tafdhili* author's intention is something entirely different.

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Thirdly, even the *tafdhili* author himself noticed the lack of correspondence in Shāh Ṣāḥib's original wording with his own division. This forced him to clarify:

"It should be understood that this division is intended only to indicate predominance in the present state or particular distinction; otherwise, none of the three categories is entirely devoid of the Khuwās and perfections of the other categories."

Fourthly, Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib included **all Ahl al-Bayt and Khuwās** in the first category. The question arises: which personalities are intended by "Ahl al-Bayt"? Are the **Āzwāj-e-Muṭahharah** included in the Ahl al-Bayt—those whose status as Ahl al-Bayt is explicitly stated in the Qur'an? It is for this reason that we assert: certain statements of the *tafdhilis* inevitably verge on *Rāfiḍī* positions.

Hazrat Shah Waliullah himself writes that he was spiritually commanded from the court of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to give superiority to Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar over Hazrat Ali. He explains:

> *"If my disposition and inner inclination had been left free, I would have preferred Hazrat Ali and expressed more love towards him. But this was a matter that, though against the desire of my inner nature, was imposed upon me like a form of worship, and I was obligated to comply."*
>
> *(Fuyuz al-Haramayn, Urdu edition, page 203, 33rd Vision)*

This raises an important point to ponder: **From which aspect was Shah Sahib considering Hazrat Ali to be superior, which then needed correction?** Was he only viewing Hazrat Ali as superior in the political domain?

Sixthly, Hazrat Shah Waliullah wrote an entire book on the superiority (*Tafdeel*) of Shaykhayn titled **Qurrat al-Aynayn fi Tafdeel al-Shaykhayn**. In it, he clearly states:

> *"The period of the Caliphate of Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) is the period of the Prophethood of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, while the period of the Caliphate of Murtadha (RA) is the period of Wilayah (spiritual leadership). I have seen more resemblance of the Prophet ﷺ in Sayyiduna Abu Bakr with respect to Fana'iyyat (self-effacement) and reflection of divine lights."*
>
> *(Qurrat al-Aynayn, page 331)*

A coherent reconciliation of Ḥaḍrat Shāh Walī Allāh رحمه الله's statements thus emerges quite naturally: according to him, **Qutbiyyat-e-Irshādiyyah** denotes being endowed with the **perfections of Prophethood**. Moreover, the attainment of **proximity to Prophethood** by the **Shaykhayn** has also been explicitly affirmed by Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid رحمه الله. Consequently, harmony is established between the positions of **Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid** and **Ḥaḍrat Shāh Wali Allah**, demonstrating that their statements are, in fact, fully consistent with one another.

Elsewhere, he cites a statement of **Shaykh Akbar** رحمه الله to the effect that the **Four Caliphs** possessed both **outward** and **inward** caliphate. We have already reproduced this passage in its original wording (see *Qurrat al-'Aynayn*, p. 322).

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At another place, he writes:

Elsewhere, Shah Waliullah writes:

> *"If allegiance (bay'ah) and companionship (ṣuḥbah) are taken as the criterion, then the spiritual lineages of the Shaykhayn are more firmly established than those of Mawlā al-Murtaḍā; indeed, even Sayyidunā 'Alī al-Murtaḍā رضي الله عنه himself receives spiritual benefit (Faiz) from the Shaykhayn.*
>
> *(Qurrat al-Aynayn, page 300)*

Now tell us: Why did you not take into account the entire picture? Why did you hide Shah Waliullah's vision (*Kashf*)? Why didn't you try to understand one statement in the light of his other statements? On what basis did you **impose your own classification** on Shah Sahib's words, aligning them forcefully with your personal interpretation and inner bias?

Seventhly, the **Rafidah (Shia)** doctrine believe that **Imamate is not based on consultation (*Shura*)**, but rather that the Imam is **appointed directly by Allah**. While they describe the Caliphate of Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as a result of mutual agreement and consultation among the companions, they use this to **criticize** his Caliphate. In fact, they have authored a complete, blasphemous book titled *Shaykh al-Saqifah*, which is an extremely insolent and offensive work.

Our *tafḍīlī rāfiḍī* addressee, having become completely detached from **Ḥaḍrat Shāh Ṣāḥib's** actual division, displays a **one-hundred-percent Rāfiḍī mindset**. By declaring **Ṣiddīqī khilāfat** to be merely *ẓāhirī* (external) and the *wilāyat* of **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha** to be *bāṭinī* (esoteric), he presents the following comparison:

> *"Zahiri Khilafah is a political office within Islam, based on election and consultation, coming into being through public choice. It is democratic, involving proposals by some and endorsements by others."*
>
> *Whereas*
>
> *"Batini Khilafah is purely a spiritual office, entirely gifted (Wahbi) and divinely chosen (Ijtabai). The appointment of a spiritual caliph is made by God Himself. It involves no democracy, no public endorsement or nomination."*

He further states:

> *"Khilafah beautifies the earthly system, while Wilayah embellishes it with the beauty of the heavenly system. Khilafah produces just individuals; Wilayah produces perfected individuals. Khilafah's domain is up to the Farsh (earth), whereas Wilayah's domain reaches the Arsh (Divine Throne)."*

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The people of knowledge are earnestly requested to examine these views of the *tafḍīlī rāfiḍī* with careful attention. Has there remained any deficiency in the disparagement and humiliation of the **three Khulafā'** (may Allah be pleased with them), or even in pronouncing *tabarrā'* against them? Has this comparison between **khilāfat** and **wilāyat** not carried the matter beyond mere *tafḍīl* and into the realm of **extreme Rāfiḍīism**?

Listen further! He states:

> *"Therefore, there is now no escape from either khilāfat or wilāyat, because the khilāfat of Sayyidunā Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar (رضی اللہ عنہ) was established bilā faṣl (without any interval or interruption) through the ijmāʿ of the Ṣaḥābah (the unanimous consensus of the Companions), and it is proven by conclusive historical testimony (shahādat-e-qaṭʿī); and the wilāyat of Sayyiduna Mawlā ʿAlī (رضی اللہ عنہ) was established bilā faṣl directly by the command of Muṣṭafā ﷺ, and it is proven by the conclusive testimony of mutawātir aḥādīth, etc."*

Reflect carefully! The Rāfiḍī Scholar has confined the **khilāfat of Ṣiddīq** to nothing more than **ijmāʿ al-Ṣaḥābah** *(the consensus of the Companions)* and **tārīkhī shahādat** *(historical testimony)*—as though it possesses **no documentary proof from the Qur'ān and Sunnah whatsoever**. In contrast, he has declared the **wilāyat of Sayyidunā Mawlā ʿAlī (رضی اللہ عنہ)** to be **decisively proven** through **aḥādīth mutawātirah** *(mass-transmitted reports yielding certainty)*.

And that too, a *Wilayah* crafted and fabricated by his **own imagination**!

Rather, throughout the entire book, he consistently translated the word **"mawlā"** as *mawlā* itself; however, upon reaching the end, **where Sayyidunā Fārūq-e-Aʿẓam (رضی اللہ عنہ)** used the word *mawlā*, he seized the opportunity and translated *mawlā* as **"āqā"** *(master/lord)*—so that this **scheme** might manifest itself across the whole book.

The objective was clear: to establish *mawlā* **not** in the **Ahl al-Sunnah sense** of *friend, beloved, or helper*, but in the **Rafiḍi sense** of *master and sovereign*.

He further says:

> *"We must all recognize that Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha and Imam Mahdi (AS) — the father and the son — are both the Awliya' of Allah and the Wasiyy (appointed successors) of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Belief in them is obligatory upon every person of faith."*

Now tell us! Is this not the **exact translation** of the Shia declaration:

> **عَلِیٌّ وَلِیُّ اللّٰہِ وَصِیُّ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰہِ**
>
> *"Ali is the friend of Allah and the successor of the Messenger of Allah"?*

Where has Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi ever written such things? And to whom will you attribute all these **fabrications**?

The reality is that the **Caliphate of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** is firmly grounded in the **Qur'an and Sunnah**, and scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah have consistently provided evidence for it from the beginning. They have relied upon the verse of the Qur'an:

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> *"Allah has promised those who believe..."*
>
> *(Surah An-Nur: 55)*

To support the rightful Caliphate of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Similarly, from the verse:

> *"Those who, if We establish them in the land, establish prayer..."*
>
> *(Surah Al-Hajj: 41)*

They derive confirmation of the **legitimacy** of their rule.

Prophetic Instruction to Appoint Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as Imam

In **Sahih al-Bukhari**, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> **مُرُوا أَبَا بَكْرٍ فَلْيُصَلِّ بِالنَّاسِ**
>
> *"Command Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (murū = issue an authoritative order) to lead the people in prayer."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 678)*

Ask yourself: in the verse *Wa'adallahu (وعد الله)*, was the **promise of Siddiqi Khilafah** made by **Allah**, or by the **public consensus**? What does the command **"Murū" (Order him)** mean? And why, when divine appointment is observed here, do your eyes become blinded?

In **Sahih Muslim**, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"After me, Allah and all the believers have refused to accept the leadership (imamate) of anyone except Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Muslim: 6181)*

And in **Abu Dawood**, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"No, no, no! Allah and the believers refuse anyone other than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 4661)*

Sayyiduna Hasan al-Basri said:

> *"By Allah! The Caliphate of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr descended from the heavens."*
>
> *(Fada'il al-Sahabah, Hadith 210)*
>
> *Chain of narration: Hasan (reliable)*

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Now tell us: is this *history* or *Qur'an and Hadith*? Does this involve **Allah, His Messenger, and all the angels of heaven**, or merely *the public*, *majority opinion*, *consultation*, or—according to Rafidhis—**a conspiracy**? Then how did you dare to fabricate such a **Rafidhi-style division** between a purely consultative (*Shura-based*) and purely divine (*God-appointed*) system?

If these very words — *"Ya'ba Allah wa'l-Mu'minun illa Aba Bakr"* — had been mentioned regarding Sayyiduna Ali, the *Tafdhilis* would have been proclaiming the **resonance of his Wilayah and Imamate across the heavens and the earth**.

If one person proposed, and the others endorsed it, what was the reason and the background of the proposal? Do not the words:

> *"You are our leader, the best among us, and the most beloved of us to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (Bukhari: 3668) not explicitly bring Allah and His Messenger into the matter?*

Even the status of Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar as the Caliph of the Messenger was mentioned in previous religious scriptures. The very image of Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar sitting at the noble feet of the Prophet ﷺ was preserved among those people. We have already quoted this hadith with complete references.

Despite such clear evidences, the Tafdhili claimed that the Siddiqi Caliphate was not divinely ordained and was purely consultative.

Sayyiduna Ghaus-e-Azam Qaddas Sirruhul Aziz states:

"The Rāfiḍīs call Ahl al-Sunnah 'Nāṣibīs' because Ahl al-Sunnah appoint their Imam based on the opinion of the community:

> بين تُسمِّيهَا الرَّافِضَة نَاصِبَة لِقَوْلِهَا بِاخْتِيَارِ الْإِمَامِ وَ نَصْبِهِ بِالْعَقْدِ

(Ghaniyyat al-Ṭālibīn, p.176)

There is no doubt that if you peel the skin of any Tafdhili, you will find a staunch Rāfiḍī underneath.

The Tafdhili's claim that "Caliphate is democratic, while the spiritual Wali is appointed directly by Allah, is chosen by divine command, and is divinely ordained," and that "Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha's wilāyah is definitively proven through mutawātir (mass-transmitted) ahādīth," and that "Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is the Prophet's ﷺ successor, and believing in him and Imam Mahdi is obligatory upon every believer,"—these statements should be pondered over carefully. This is not mere preference but clear-cut Rāfiḍī ideology. This esoteric belief is not just limited to Rāfiḍīs but is also prevalent among Ismā'īlīs.

The Tafdhili author's lengthy comparison between political authority and spiritual wilāyah is merely rhetorical flourish and contradicts the Quranic verses, Prophetic ahādīth, and especially the statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

> *"Allah and the believers refuse anyone but Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*

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Poetic Expression on False Claims

> *"Your deceitful talk, O stubborn heartless one, is like a satanic enchantment before the Prophet."*

Whoever denies the wilāyah of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (RA) is in fact a Kharijite. But in this wilāyah, the first three Caliphs are foremost. The manner in which the Tafdhili has prioritized the wilāyah of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha over the three Caliphs is not only pure Rāfiḍī thought but an insult and disrespect to them.

The belief of Ahl al-Sunnah lies between the extremes of Khawārij and Rāfiḍīs:

> *"May Allah's curse be upon the worst among them."*

Final Refutation by Shah Waliullah

Finally, let us hear the refutation of the aforementioned blasphemous statements of the insolent Tafdhili through the words of Shah Waliullah :

> *'I spiritually asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the Shi'a sect. They claim love for the Ahl al-Bayt, yet harbor enmity toward your Companions. The Prophet ﷺ replied: Their doctrine is false. The falsity of their doctrine becomes evident through even a slight reflection on the concept of the Imam that they present.*

After returning from this spiritual state, I reflected upon the term Imam, and it became clear that these people regard the Imam as infallible and consider obedience to him obligatory. They attribute to the Imam a kind of inner revelation (waḥy bāṭinī), which they describe as the divine command being cast into the inner self, and they establish this for the Imam as ijtihād, ilhām (inspiration), or as freedom from error. They claim that Allah Himself appoints the Imam for the people so that he may convey divine commands to them.

Whereas this is precisely the meaning of Prophethood, along with its duties and defining characteristics. The definition of a Prophet is that Allah sends him to convey His commands. Allah sends the Prophet for the proclamation of His injunctions, and obedience to him is obligatory. In other words, these people do not truly believe in the finality of Prophethood; rather, they affirm Prophethood for their Imams.'

(Al-Intibāh fī Salāsil al-Awliyā', p. 8)

Hold in one hand the claims of the Tafdhili, and in the other, the book *Al-Intibāh*, and it will become clear that Shah Waliullah has declared these people deniers of the Finality of Prophethood.

It is written in every book of the beliefs of the **Rāfiḍīs** (Shia) that:

The greatest, foremost, and fundamental difference between Shias and Sunnis is that, according to the Imāmiyyah (Twelver Shias), their Imams are divinely appointed (ma'mūr min Allāh). For instance, they believe that the Imāmah (leadership) of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadā was declared at the event of Ghadīr Khumm. In contrast, ***Ahl al-Sunnah*** *believe that the* ***Caliphate*** *is a* ***consultative and consensus-based*** *position.*

(See: Every Shia doctrinal book, such as "Asl-o-Uṣūl-e-Shī'ah" p. 101, and "Imāmat wa Mulūkīyat" p. 174.)

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In the classical lexicon **"Ghiyāth al-Lughāt"**, it is stated:

"Imāmiyyah: A Shia sect that does not believe in the spiritual authority (wilāyah) of anyone except the Twelve Imams."

(Ghiyāth al-Lughāt, p. 44)

THE FIFTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

"Superiority is based on knowledge, and Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha was the most knowledgeable among the companions. He is the gate of knowledge, the greatest judge (aqḍā), and all the caliphs sought guidance from him."

Answer

There is no doubt in the greatness of **Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā** in terms of knowledge and judicial excellence (being the best judge). However, when it comes to **being the most knowledgeable** (aʿlam), that distinct honor **exclusively belongs to Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar**.

The Exceptional Knowledge of Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar

1. The **Holy Qur'an** describes **Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar** as "**Atqā**" (the most God-fearing):

> "وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى"
>
> *"But the most God-fearing one will be spared from it."*
>
> *(Al-Layl: 17)*

Since **taqwā (God-consciousness)** is not possible without knowledge, being "Atqā" implies being **Aʿlam** (most knowledgeable).

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The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

> *"I am the most knowledgeable of you about Allah, and the one who fears Him the most."*
>
> *(Bukhārī: 6101, Muslim: 6109)*

Sayyidunā Ḥasan al-Baṣrī states:

> *"Abū Bakr had the most knowledge of Allah, the most God-fearing, and the one who feared Allah the most among all companions."*
>
> *(Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 53)*

Because of above-stated reason, Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān states:

> *"Since Abū Bakr is the most God-fearing in the entire Ummah, it necessitates that he is the most knowledgeable of Allah (Aʿrafuhum bi-llāh)."*
>
> *(Al-Zulāl al-Anqā, p. 68)*

Note: The phrases "Aʿlam bi-llāh" (most knowledgeable about Allah) and "Aʿraf bi-llāh" (deepest knower of Allah) are noteworthy here.

In another place, explaining the verse:

"Indeed, the most honored among you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing."

(Al-Ḥujurāt: 13)

He writes:

"This verse is a clear proof for the superiority of Ṣiddīq, and a decisive argument for his deep spiritual knowledge and intrinsic closeness to Allah above all others in the Ummah."

(Maṭlaʿ al-Qamarayn, manuscript, p. 80)

He further elaborates:

"Allah raises in rank those who have faith and those given knowledge."

(Al-Mujādilah: 11)

He concludes:

"These verses prove that knowledge is a cause of excellence, just as faith is, and that the one with more knowledge has more virtue. And it is established through aḥādīth and aathār that no companion equaled the knowledge of Shaykhayn (Abū Bakr and ʿUmar), and the Aʿlamiyyah (superior knowledge) of Ṣiddīq is proven directly from the Qur'an."

(Maṭlaʿ al-Qamarayn, p. 108)

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The Prophet's Appointment of Abū Bakr as Imām:

2. The Prophet ﷺ appointed **Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar** as the Imām for the prayer during his final illness.

(Bukhārī: 678, Muslim: 948)

Imām Bukhari has narrated this hadith under the chapter which he titled:

"Ahl al-ʿIlm wa-l-Faḍl Aḥaqq bi-l-Imāmah"

"The people of knowledge and virtue are most deserving of leadership."

Imām al-ʿAqā'id, Imām Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī states:

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ placing Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (**رضي الله عنه**) ahead is a clear proof that he was the most knowledgeable of the Companions and the best of them in recitation. This is based on the sound (Sahih) ḥadīth unanimously agreed upon by all scholars wherein the Prophet ﷺ said:

"The one who should lead the people in prayer is the one who is the most proficient in reciting the Book of Allah. If they are equal in recitation, then the one who is most knowledgeable of the Sunnah. If they are equal in knowledge of the Sunnah, then the one who is eldest in age. And if they are equal in age, then the one who accepted Islam earliest."

Ibn Kathīr says:

"The statement of Ashʿarī deserves to be written in gold. All these qualities were present in Abū Bakr."

(Al-Bidāyah wa-l-Nihāyah, vol. 5, p. 257)

In explaining the ḥadīth that lays down the conditions of imāmah (leadership in prayer), **all the commentators have written that Sayyidunā Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (رضي الله عنه) was the most learned (aʿlam)**:

Sharḥ Nawawī ʿalā Muslim vol. 1, p. 236

Ashiʿat al-Lamʿāt vol. 1, p. 514

Mirqāt vol. 3, p. 82

Ḥāshiyah Sindhī ʿalā al-Nasā'ī vol. 1, p. 126

Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim vol. 2, p. 306 and others

In the ḥadīth concerning the **imāmah** of al-Ṣiddīq**,** and in the commentary on this very chapter of Imām al-Bukhārī, the scholars of **Ahl al-Sunnah** have written that **Ṣiddīq al-Akbar** (رضي الله عنه) was the most learned of all the Companions**. ʿAllāmah Badr al-Dīn ʿAynī** writes:

*"There is no doubt that both of these qualities – having greater juristic knowledge (al-afqah) and Qur'anic recitation (al-aqra) - were combined in the person of Abū Bakr Siddiq. Don't you see the statement of Abū Saʿīd - 'Abū Bakr was the most knowledgeable among us'? And the Prophet's insistence that he **alone should lead the prayer** clearly indicates his **preference over all the Companions and his superiority**.*

(Umdat al-Qārī, vol. 5, p. 205 under the ḥadīth of the imāmah of al-Ṣiddīq)

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Hakeem-ul-Ummat Mufti Ahmed Yar Khan Naeemi writes:

*"Sayyuduna Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar was the most knowledgeable of all the companions and Ahl al-Bayt. He was extremely intelligent and perceptive, and the one who best understood the temperament of the Noble Prophet ﷺ. That was precisely why the Noble Prophet made him stand upon his own place of prayer (musalla). An Imām is appointed only from the one who is the **most learned**, and among all the Companions, Abū Bakr was the most knowledgeable."*

He adds a poetic couplet:

In knowledge and virtue, you were undoubtedly the best,

Your appointment to lead prayer showed your hidden gems, O Ṣiddīq.

Through this imāmah, it was revealed: you are the Imām al-Akbar,

This was the secret of the Prophet; even ʿAlī says: Ṣiddīq!

(Mir'āt al-Manājīḥ, vol. 8, p. 260)

ʿAllāmah Sayyid Maḥmūd Aḥmad Riḍwī writes:

> *"Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq was the most virtuous and most knowledgeable among the companions, which is why the Prophet ﷺ selected him for leading the prayer."*
>
> *(Fuyūḍ al-Bārī, vol. 2, p. 315)*

Pīr Muḥammad Saʿīd Aḥmad Mujaddidī writes:

> *"It should be clear that the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq , was described with titles like Atqā (most pious), Akram (most noble), Aʿẓam darajah (highest in rank), Arḥam (most merciful), Afḍal al-Ummah (most virtuous of the nation), Aʿlam (most knowledgeable), Aʿlam bi-l-Sunnah (most knowledgeable of the Sunnah), Ashjaʿ (most courageous)."*
>
> *(Sarmāyah-e-Millat kā Nigehbān, p. 163)*

ʿAllāmah Ghulām Rasūl Saʿīdī writes:

> *"Among all the companions, Abū Bakr had the greatest knowledge and virtue."*
>
> *(Niʿmat al-Bārī, vol. 2, p. 555)*

Clarifying a Misunderstanding

The case of **ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf** leading prayer **during battle** is a separate issue, while **Abū Bakr** being **appointed directly by the Prophet ﷺ** to lead prayer **in the mosque** is a **distinct and unmatched virtue**.

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3. When the Beloved Prophet ﷺ passed away, **Mawlā Ṣiddīq al-Akbar (رضی اللہ عنہ)** recited the Qur'ānic verse:

> **مَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ**
>
> *"Muhammad is no more than a messenger..."*
>
> *(Surah Aal-e-Imran: 144)*

By this recitation, the confusion and shock of the Companions **(رضی اللہ عنہم)** was dispelled, and everyone became certain that the Beloved Prophet ﷺ had indeed passed away. Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas states:

"It was as if people had never understood the true meaning of this verse until Sayyiduna Abu Bakr recited it. When the people dispersed, the verse was on everyone's tongue."

> *"By Allah, it was as if the people had never known that Allah had revealed this verse until Sayyiduna Abu Bakr recited it, and then the people received it from him. There was no one who could be heard except that he was reciting it."*
>
> *(Sahih Bukhari: 1241, 1242)*

His delivering this sermon is clear evidence of his complete composure and clarity of mind, while his recitation of the Qur'anic verse *"Muhammad is nothing but a Messenger"*—which left all the Companions astonished—stands as a decisive proof of his superior knowledge.

At this point, we appeal to the conscience of fair-minded individuals and ask: had this narration concerned Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him), what kind of uproar would the Rawafid have raised?

4. Imam Al-Nasa'i established a chapter titled:

> *"The Leadership (Imamah) of the People of Knowledge and Virtue"*

In this chapter, he narrated only **one Hadith**, which is as follows:

> *"When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away, the Ansar said: 'One leader from among us and one from among you (the Muhajirun).'*

At that moment, Umar arrived and said:

> *Do you not know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer?*
>
> *Then who among you would be pleased to go ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?'*

They replied:

> *"We seek refuge with Allah from advancing ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Sunan Al-Nasa'i: 777)*

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The heading established by Imam al-Nasa'i itself clearly indicates that he inferred from this hadith the superior knowledge (*a'lamiyyah*) and excellence (*afḍaliyyah*) of Siddiq-e-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him).

It is this very Imam al-Nasa'i (may Allah have mercy on him) who authored the book ***al-Khaṣā'iṣ*** on the exclusive virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him).

5. After the blessed passing of the Leader of the Messengers ﷺ, when the apostates refused to pay Zakat, Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him) declared declared:

"By Allah! I will surely fight the anyone who differentiates between Salah and Zakat."

At that time, the other Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) did not immediately grasp his stance. However, after discussion and deliberation, it became clear to them that Siddiq-e-Akbar was upon the truth. Consequently, all of them returned to and accepted his stance.

Sayyiduna Umar said:

> *"By Allah, it was only that Allah expanded the chest of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to understand the truth, and I realized then that it was the truth."*
>
> *(Reported in: Muslim 124; Bukhari 1399, 1400, 1456, 1457, 6925, 7285; Abu Dawud 1556–1557; Tirmidhi 2607; Nasa'i 2443, 3090–3094, 3969–3975; Ibn Majah 71–72, 3927–3928)*

Hazrat Pir Mehr Ali Shah of Golra states:

> *"Likewise, there was also a discussion between Sayyiduna Ali and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. Eventually, all acknowledged that the opinion of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was correct."*
>
> *(Tasfia, p. 19)*

We cited this reference because it perfectly aligns with the consensus of the Ummah.

The scholars have derived from this incident that:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among all the companions because they all stopped and referred the matter to him."*
>
> *(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 17)*

Imam Abu Ishaq has also used this incident—and others—in his work **"Tabaqat"** to prove the same point. He states:

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> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among the Companions, because none of them understood the ruling of the matter except him. Then, after discussion, it became clear to them that the opinion of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the correct one, and they returned to his judgment."*
>
> *(Tahdhib al-Asma by Imam Nawawi, Vol. 2, p. 56; Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 34)*

If this situation had occurred with **Ali-al-Murtadā Karīm** instead of **Siddiq-e-Akbar**, then the Rāfiḍīs would have used this very incident as evidence to demean and vilify the rest of the Companions—**God forbid.**

6. At the time of the burial of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq narrated a hadith stating:

> *"Prophets are buried at the place where they pass away."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 1018)*

This statement is a clear proof of the superior knowledge of Siddiq-e-Akbar in this matter. No other Companion was aware of this ruling. This is not merely a case of non-narration like a solitary report; rather, it is a case of lack of knowledge. This is why **Imam Suyuti** writes:

> *"**Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (رضی اللہ عنہ)** was the most knowledgeable of all the Companions regarding the Sunnah. On more than one occasion, the Companions referred back to him, and at times of need he would present hadiths of the Prophet ﷺ which he had memorized and had readily present in his mind, while those narrations were not known to the other Companions."*
>
> *(Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 35)*

While mentioning this very incident, **Imam Qurtubi** writes:

> *"The Greatest Scholar (العالم الأكبر) said this hadith, referring to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as the "greatest scholar".*
>
> *(Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī, 4/220)*

By explicitly using the words **al-Ālim al-Akbar**, Imam al-Qurṭubī has struck the Tafdhili Narrative a fatal blow. But, as the saying goes, **there are still those who refuse to remain silent despite this**.

7. Sayyiduna Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among us."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 466, 3654, 3904; Muslim: 6170, 6171; Tirmidhi: 3660)*

Numerous scholars have explained this hadith as an affirmation of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's superior knowledge. Among the references:

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> *Fatḥ al-Qadīr (Vol. 1, p. 358)*
>
> *al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq (Vol. 1, p. 607)*
>
> *ʿUmdat al-Qārī (Vol. 4, p. 424)*
>
> *Ashiʿat al-Lumaʿāt (Vol. 1, p. 514)*
>
> *Mirqāt (Vol. 3, p. 82)*
>
> *Qūwat al-Mughtadhī ʿalā Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī (Vol. 1, p. 55)*
>
> *Ḥāshiya Ibn Mājah (p. 69)*

Imam Badr al-Din al-ʿAyni writes:

> *"This hadith is proof that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among the Companions."*
>
> *(ʿUmdat al-Qārī, Vol. 4, p. 74)*

Elsewhere he writes: The scholars have differed over whether the one most entitled for Imamate is the greatest jurist **(faqīh)** or the greatest reciter **(Qari)**. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, and the majority say that **the greatest jurist** is most entitled to the imamate. Imām Abū Yūsuf, Aḥmad, Isḥāq, Ibn Sīrīn, and some of the Shāfiʿīs say that **the greatest reciter** is most entitled to the imamate. **There is no doubt that both**

of these qualities are combined in Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq. Do you not see the statement of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that Abū Bakr was the most knowledgeable among all of us? (*Umdat al-Qārī, Vol. 4, p. 424*)

It is important to note: the generality of words **(umūm al-alfāẓ)** takes precedence over the specific context **(khuṣūṣ al-wurūd)**. Even if this hadith is interpreted as referring specifically to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's familiarity with the Prophet's noble temperament, then even so, undoubtedly **understanding the temperament of the Noble Prophet ﷺ outweighs and surpasses all other forms of knowledge.**

8. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq possessed the most knowledge in **interpreting dreams**. The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"I have been commanded to tell Sayyiduna Abu Bakr to interpret the dreams of the people."*
>
> *(Ṣawāʿiq Muḥriqah, p. 69)*

Imam Muhammad ibn Sīrīn stated:

> *"After the Prophet ﷺ, the most knowledgeable in interpreting dreams in this Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Tārīkh al-Khulafā, p. 83; Ṣawāʿiq Muḥriqah, p. 34; al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍrah, Vol. 1, p. 59)*

The interpretation of dreams is not merely a form of knowledge; rather, it is a deep spiritual and Sufi knowledge, and in this field Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar **رضي الله عنه** stands ahead of the entire Ummah.

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9. The Noble Prophet ﷺ said to Sayyiduna Hassan bin Thabit: -

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most knowledgeable among the Quraysh regarding lineage (genealogy), and the Quraysh are part of my lineage. So, take information from Sayyiduna Abu Bakr before composing poetry against the Quraysh's lineage."*
>
> *"Indeed, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most knowledgeable of the Quraysh in their lineages."*
>
> *(Sahih Muslim: 6395)*
>
> *"The most knowledgeable among people about Arab genealogy."*
>
> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 36)*

10. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA) is the first Orator (Khateeb) in this Ummah. Sayyiduna Abu al-Darda narrates:

> *The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a brief sermon. After he finished, he said: "O Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, stand and address the people." So Sayyiduna Abu Bakr stood and delivered a sermon, which was shorter than that of the Prophet ﷺ. When he finished, the Prophet ﷺ said: "O Umar, stand and address the people." Umar stood and also gave a sermon, which was shorter than both the Prophet's and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's.*

(Al-Mustadrak of al-Hakim: 4556) – Al-Hakim graded it as Sahih in isnad; Al-Dhahabi noted a break in the chain.

Imam al-Suyuti, quoting from Ibn Asakir, said:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the first khateeb (orator) who invited people to Allah and His Messenger."

(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 33)

11. Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Zubair stated, deriving from the hadith, "If I were to take a Khalil (intimate friend)..."

"The statement of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is the most deserving to be adopted"

(Musnad Ahmad: Hadith 16052)

12. Sayyiduna Urwah said:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most learned of all people (of his time)."

(Musnad Ahmad: 24434)

13. It has already been mentioned earlier:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr did not surpass others by excessive fasting or prayer, but by the secret that was placed in his heart."

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This statement is clear proof that he surpassed others even in the knowledge of divine secrets (Ilm al-Asrar).

Let no ignorant person misunderstand this to mean that we are denying the **'Ilm al-Asrār** of the other Companions. The matter here is not about knowledge in general, but about **being the most learned and having precedence**.

Hadrat Qadi Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Baqillani states:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most virtuous of the Ummah, the strongest in faith, the most complete in understanding, the most abundant in knowledge, and the most forbearing among them. And the Prophet ﷺ testified to this with the statement: 'If the faith of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr were weighed against the faith of all the people of the earth, the faith of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr would outweigh theirs."

(Al-Insaf by al-Baqillani, p. 131)

Have a look at the final judgement of Imam Ibn Hajar al-Makki:

"He (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) was absolutely the most knowledgeable of all the companions — and this is established by clear and explicit evidences on the subject."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 33)

Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlawi writes:

> *"When comparing the lifespan and circumstances hindering narration during Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's time with those of other companions, it becomes evident that the knowledge of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was far greater than that of the others. Fatwas (Islamic Legal Rulings) should be weighed based on this, and the same applies to Sayyiduna Umar ibn al-Khattab as well."*
>
> *(Fatawa Azizi, p. 377)*

Hadrat Allama Ibn Abidin Shami writes:

> *"This is the madhhab (view) of the greatest caliph, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as-Siddiq — who was the most knowledgeable and the most virtuous among the companions."*
>
> *(Fatawa Shami 5/552)*

This is the book that, in that era, was the source and reference for all the Muftis. If you have the courage, then issue a fatwa! Dare to raise your outrageous tongue!"

> *"If you feel no shame, then do as you wish."*
>
> *(Sahih al-Bukhari: 3483)*

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پھول کی پتی سے کٹ سکتا ہے ہیرے کا جگر

مردِ ناداں پہ کلامِ نرم و نازک بے اثر

A Flower Petal May Cut Through Diamond,

But Soft and Gentle Words Have No Effect on an Ignorant Man

CONSENSUS ON THE SUPERIORITY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF SAYYIDUNA Abu Bakr SIDDIQ (RA)

Statement of Hadrat Ibn Battal, the Commentator of Bukhari:

> *"This Hadith proves that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq was the most knowledgeable among the Companions because Abu Saeed testified to this in the presence of a group of Companions, and none among them denied it."*
>
> *(Ibn Battal, Volume 2, Page 115)*

Statement of Ibn Rajab, the Commentator of Bukhari

Under the heading "The People of Knowledge and Virtue are More Deserving of Leadership," Ibn Rajab states:

> *"The Prophet ﷺ gave precedence to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr due to his knowledge and virtue. The consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah is established on his superiority over all other Companions, and likewise on his superior knowledge. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr ibn al-Sam'ani and others have transmitted this consensus of the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah."*
>
> *(Fath al-Bari by Ibn Rajab, Volume 4, Page 117)*

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Hadrat Allama Badruddin Ayni writes:

> *"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke in an implicit manner about a certain person (without explicitly mentioning his blessed name) so that the understanding of the people of insight and the elevated rank of the experts might become manifest. This statement was made by the Prophet ﷺ during the days of his final illness.*
>
> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among all the Companions, because when Hazrat Abu Saʿīd al-Khudrī stated that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among us, not a single Companion who was present objected to it."*
>
> *(Umdat al-Qari, Volume 4, Page 72)*

Even Ibn Taymiyyah—who is regarded as a leading authority by the proponents of tafḍīliyyah—has transmitted a consensus on this issue. He writes:

> *"More than one scholar has transmitted a consensus (ijmāʿ) that Abū Bakr was more knowledgeable than ʿAlī. Among them is Imām Manṣūr ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Samʿānī al-Marwazī, one of the leading authorities of the Shāfiʿī school. He states in his book* ***Taqwīm al-Adillah*** *that there is a consensus among the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah that Abū Bakr was more knowledgeable than Ali"*
>
> *(Minhaj al-Sunnah, Volume 4, Page 135)*

It becomes clear that being the most knowledgeable (aʿlam) is a distinctive attribute of Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq, and if denying a distinctive attribute is considered insolence, then denying the superior knowledge of Ṣiddīq constitutes a grave act of insolence.

1. The most knowledgeable after Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq is Hazrat Umar Farooq. Sayyuduna Ibn Mas'ood said:

> *"If the knowledge of Umar were placed on one side of a scale and the knowledge of all people on the other, Umar's knowledge would outweigh them."*
>
> *(Mustadrak, Hadith 4553)*

Had these words been said about **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha**, Tafdhili followers and the Rafidah would have created an uproar.

Al-Hakim declared this Hadith authentic (Sahih), and Al-Dhahabi agreed with it. Sayyiduna Ibn Masʿud رضي الله عنه made this statement with respect to the period of Umar and thereafter. Its corroboration comes from another narration in which Sayyiduna Ibn Masʿud رضي الله عنه said:

> *"The Companions held the view that nine-tenths of knowledge had departed with Umar. And sitting for a moment in Umar's company was more valuable to me than a year's worth of deeds."*
>
> *(Al-Isti'ab, Page 554)*
>
> *(Authentic (Sahih) chain of narration)*

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This hadith also indicates that Sayyiduna Ibn Masʿud رضي الله عنه was a student of Farooq al-Azam رضي الله عنه, and that he received benefit from him in the manner a disciple derives from his spiritual guide. This Hadith clearly illustrates the proverb:

> *"Spending one moment with the saints is better than a year of worship."*

Regarding the knowledge of Bab-ul-ilm Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him), any statement attributed to Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) or to a Tābiʿī that implies superiority in knowledge pertains to the period after the era of the Khulafā' al-Rāshidīn (the Rightly Guided Caliphs). In particular, when contemporaries or students express their views about their teacher, they are speaking only to the extent of their personal experience and observation, and their judgment is naturally influenced by a favorable bias toward their teacher or peer. Moreover, if a statement attributed to such a student is, in fact, inconsistent with established principles or with authentic ḥadith (marfūʿa), no serious scholar would consider it authoritative.

Hazrat Umar's Humility Regarding Superiority

2. When someone once said to Hadrat Umar Farooq (RA) that he has never seen anyone superior than him, he replied:

> *"Did you see the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?"*

The man said: "No."

"Did you see Sayyiduna Abu Bakr?"

The man said: "No."

Umar responded: "Had you said yes to either, I would have punished you severely."

(Al-Riyad al-Nadhrah, Vol. 1, Page 137; Kanz al-Ummal, 12/223, Hadith 35612 — Hadith graded Hasan)

Hadrat Qabeesah bin Jabir said:

"I have never seen anyone who knew Allah more than 'Umar, who recited the Book of Allah more than Umar, or who possessed a deeper understanding of the religion of Allah than him."

(Fadail al-Sahabah: 472, 692)

If Sayyiduna Ibn Mas'ood and numerous other companions states that nine-tenths of knowledge were with Umar (al-Istiab, p. 554) and likewise Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas later says nine-tenths of knowledge were with Ali (al-Istiab, p. 533). Thus, one may ask: how should one determine preference or reconcile these statements? Clearly, both remarks must be understood within the context of their respective periods.

Allamah Abu Shakur Salami stated:

"Some Rafidah claim that Ali was more knowledgeable than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman, while others argue for greater love towards Ali and Ahl al-Bayt. All these beliefs are innovation (bid'ah) and acts of disobedience (fisq)."

(Al-Tamhid, Page 182)

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ALL COMPANIONS ARE DOORS TO KNOWLEDGE

The following proofs aim not to establish superiority in knowledge, but to affirm that all Companions are gateways to knowledge. Thus, no one should deceitfully divert the discussion from its true context.

1. Allah Almighty sent His beloved Prophet ﷺ to the entire world as a teacher:

"He teaches them the Book and Wisdom."

(Surah Jumu'ah: 2)

"That you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them."

(Surah Al-Nahl: 44)

Numerous verses show that the Prophet ﷺ imparted knowledge not only to Hazrat Ali but to all his Companions.

In the same way, the Qur'anic verse:

> *"You are the best nation produced for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong..."*
>
> *(Surah Aal-e-Imran, 3:110)*

And the hadith:

> *"Convey from me, even if it is only one verse."*
>
> *(Bukhari, 3461)*

along with countless other proofs, establish that the responsibility of propagating all Islamic teachings was entrusted to all the Companions. Therefore, considering only Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha as the "Gate of Knowledge" would necessitate the denial of countless explicit statements from the Qur'an and Sunnah, including the most fundamental teachings.

Compilation of the Qur'an During the Era of the Companions

The Holy Qur'an was compiled during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ by four Companions:

> *Hazrat Ubayy bin Ka'b, Mu'adh bin Jabal, Zaid bin Thabit, and Abu Zaid (may Allah be pleased with them)*
>
> *(Bukhari: 3810, 5003, 5004; Muslim: 6340; Tirmidhi: 3794).*

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> *Later, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq compiled the Qur'an into a single manuscript, and this entire work was carried out by Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit*
>
> *(Bukhari: 4986).*

Sayyiduna Ali himself stated:

> *"Indeed, the one among the people who will receive the greatest reward regarding the compilation of the Qur'an is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. He was the first to collect the Qur'an between two covers."*
>
> *(Fada'il al-Sahabah: 513, 514, 280 — Chain: Hasan)*

Standardization of the Qur'an by Sayyiduna Uthman

Afterward, **Sayyiduna Uthman** compiled the Qur'an upon a single recitation. When **Hazrat Hudhaifah** witnessed differences among the people in recitation, he said to **Uthman**:

> *"O Ameer-ul-Momineen! rescue this Ummah, before they differ regarding the (Holy) Book!"*
>
> *(Bukhari: 4987)*

The Knowledge and Leadership of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

> *Sayyiduna Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was appointed the Imam of all the Companions due to his knowledge and virtue*
>
> *(Bukhari: 678).*

> *Hazrat Umar absorbed all the knowledge left behind by the Prophet ﷺ*
>
> *(Muslim: 6190, 6191; Bukhari: 82, 3681, 7006, 7027, 7032; Tirmidhi: 2284; Mustadrak Hakim: 4552).*

Ali himself narrated the religion from Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq and several other companions. A ḥadīth in this regard, narrated by Ali (RA), reads as follows:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr narrated to me, and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr spoke the truth. He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say..." Further says: I heard the Prophet (SAW) of Allah say: "When a person commits a sin, then stands up, performs ablution, prays, and asks Allah for forgiveness, Allah forgives him."*
>
> *Then the following Qur'ānic verse was recited:*
>
> *"Those who, when they commit an immorality..."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 406; Abu Dawood: 1521; Ibn Majah: 1395)*

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Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal also narrates, with full chain of transmission, that:

> *"Whenever I heard a ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Allah would benefit me through it as much as He willed. When anyone besides the Prophet ﷺ narrated a ḥadīth to me, I would make them take an oath (to confirm the authenticity of their report). When they swore, I accepted it as truth. Indeed, Abū Bakr narrated ḥadīth to me, and Abū Bakr spoke the truth."*
>
> *(Fada'il al-Sahabah: 142)*

Now, one may ask: where is the notion of restricting the "Gate of Knowledge" (Bāb al-ʿIlm)? Here, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq is not merely a "Gate of Knowledge," but has become a *Gate to the Gate* (Bāb li-l-Bāb). It is also evident that Sayyidunā ʿAlī (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated from several other Companions. Moreover, ʿAlī (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated from the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ʿUmar) (Tāreekh al-Khulafa, p. 69), whereas none of the two Shaykhs narrated from ʿAlī (al-Aṣābah, vol. 2, p. 1294; Tāreekh al-Khulafa, p. 131). May Allah be pleased with them all.

Regarding the two Shaykhs (may Allah be pleased with them both), it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said::

> *"Follow those who come after me: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."*

(Tirmidhi: 3662)

The subsequent wording to this Hadees further states:

"Seek guidance from ʿAmmār, and affirm as true whatever Ibn Masʿūd narrates to you."

(Tirmidhi: 3799)

Regarding the Ahl al-Bayt (family of the Prophet ﷺ), he said:

"I am leaving among you two things; if you hold on to them, you will never go astray: the Book of Allah and my Ahl al-Bayt."

(Tirmidhi: 3786)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"My Ummah has my approval regarding whatever interpretation of the Qur'an Ibn Mas'ood provides"

(Mustadrak Hakim: 5474 — Sahih Hadith)

He also said:

"Whatever ḥadīth Ibn Masʿūd narrates to you, accept it as true."

(Tirmidhi: 3799; Mustadrak Hakim: 4509)

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Sayyiduna Ibn Mas'ood himself said:

"By the One besides whom there is no deity, there is no Surah of the Qur'an concerning which I do not know where it was revealed, and there is no verse regarding which I do not know for what purpose it was revealed. If I were to know that there was someone who possessed greater knowledge of the Quran than I, and if my camel could reach him, I would certainly ride my camel to him."

(Bukhari: 5002; Muslim: 6333)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Learn the Qur'an from four: Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and Saalim" (may Allah be please with them)

(Bukhari: 3758; Muslim: 6334)

Tell us, are those from whom the Qurʾān is learned not themselves the gates of knowledge?

The Noble Prophet ﷺ granted Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) an exceptional memory. (Bukhari: 118, 119, 2047, 2350) and for this reason he became the Companion who narrated the greatest number of Aḥādīth.

"When Hadrat Ḥaythamah came from Kūfah to Madīnah, he supplicated to Allah, saying: "O Allah, grant me the company of a righteous man," and he was blessed with meeting Abū Hurayrah"

(Tirmidhi: 3811).

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ supplicated for Sayyidunā Amīr Muʿāwiyah (may Allah be pleased with him), saying:

"O Allah! Make him (Muawiyah) a guide, one who is rightly guided, and grant guidance through him."

(Tirmidhi: 3842; Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat of Tabarani: 656; As-Sunnah by Al-Khallal: 699, 669 — Hadith Hasan)

Regarding all the Companions, the Noble Prophet ﷺ said:

"Indeed, people will be followers of you, and men will come to you from the farthest regions of the earth in order to gain understanding of the religion."

(Tirmidhi: 2650; Ibn Majah: 249)

In one ḥadīth, the diverse excellence of various Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) in different branches of knowledge and virtue is described in a most eloquent manner. He ﷺ said:

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"The most merciful of my Ummah to my Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, the strictest regarding the command of Allah is Umar, the most modest is Uthman, the best reciter of the Qur'an is Ubayy bin Ka'b, the most knowledgeable of the laws of inheritance is Zaid bin Thabit, the most knowledgeable regarding what is halal and haram is Mu'adh bin Jabal, and know that every nation has an honest and trustworthy person; the trustworthy one of this Ummah is Abu Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah."

(Tirmidhi: 3791; Ibn Majah: 154, 155 — Tirmidhi said: Hasan Sahih)

In a hadith, Hazrat Mu'adh ibn Jabal has been described as "the most knowledgeable regarding lawful and unlawful matters".

Another narration states:

"Mu'adh ibn Jabal will come on the Day of Judgment leading the scholars."

(Al-Istiʿab, p. 672; As-Sawaʿiq Al-Muhriqah, p. 79)

Hazrat Kathir ibn Qays narrates:

"I was sitting with Hazrat Abu Darda in the mosque of Damascus when a man came and said, 'O Abu Darda, I have come to you all the way from Madinat-ul-Rasool solely for the sake of a hadith that you narrate from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.'"

(Tirmidhi, Hadith 2682; Abu Dawood, Hadith 3641)

It should be noted that Hazrat Abu Darda passed away during the caliphate of Hazrat Uthman Ghani in 32 AH. This incident occurred at a time when Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha was present in Madinat-ul-Rasool.

Hazrat Mu'adh ibn Jabal passed away at the age of only **33 years** (*Al-Isti'ab*, p. 673). At the time of his death, he was requested to leave some advice. He said:

> *"Seek knowledge from four individuals: Abu Darda, Salman al-Farsi, Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, and Abdullah ibn Salam."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi, Hadith 3804)*

Hazrat Mulla Ali Qari (may Allah have mercy on him) has cited the ḥadīth *"Whichever of them you follow, you will be rightly guided"* and has relied upon it. Although the chain of transmission of this ḥadīth is not reliable, its meaning is corroborated by the consensus of the scholars that all the Companions are upright, by the report of Sayyidunā Ibn Masʿūd (may Allah be pleased with him):

> *"Whoever wishes to follow a path, let him follow that which I and my Companions are upon"*

By the hadith:

> *"The stars are a source of security for the heavens"*
>
> *(Muslim, Hadith 6466)*

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And by the Quranic verse:

> *"If they believe as you believe, then they are rightly guided."*
>
> *(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:137)*

Thus, the scholars have relied upon the meaning of this hadith, and we have also quoted it for this very reason. It is further reported, with reference to the Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imām Shaʿrānī (may Allah sanctify his secret):

> *"According to the people of Kashf (spiritual unveiling), this hadith is authentic (Sahih)."*
>
> *(Fatawa Razawiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 459)*

He states:

> **اہلِ سنت کا بے بیڑا پار اصحابِ رسول**
>
> **نجم ہیں اور ناؤ ہے عترت رسول اللہ کی**
>
> *It is the Companions of the Messenger who carry the People of the Sunnah safely across*
>
> *they are the stars, and the vessel is the noble progeny of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.*

2. Collective Evidence of the Companions' Knowledge of Divine Secrets

Allah Almighty states:

> *"He teaches them the Book and Wisdom."*
>
> *(Surah Al-Jumu'ah, 62:2)*

> *"Wisdom" refers to understanding the Qur'an (Baghawi, Vol. 1, p. 107).*
>
> *"Wisdom" also refers to the Sunnah (Baydawi, Vol. 1, p. 188).*
>
> *Wisdom is that which perfects the soul with knowledge of divine truths and laws (Baydawi, Vol. 1, p. 87).*
>
> *It is an army from the armies of Allah that He sends into the hearts of the Gnostics (Al-Bahr Al-Muheet, Vol. 1, p. 563).*

All these definitions are closely related in meaning (*At-Tibyan* by Ghazali-e-Zaman, p. 344).

The Immense Value of Wisdom

Great good is obtained through wisdom. Allah Almighty declares:

> *"He grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant good."*
>
> *(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:269)*

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The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"When you see a person who is detached from the world and speaks little, stay close to him, for he has been granted wisdom."*
>
> *(Ibn Majah, Hadith 4101; Shu'ab al-Iman, Hadith 4985)*

Holy Prophet ﷺ has bestowed various forms of knowledge among the companions. Each Companion had a unique "fragrance" and "color" in the garden of Mustafa ﷺ.

Sayyiduna Abu Bakr Siddiq :

Accordingly, in being the most learned and in understanding the temperament of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (may Allah be pleased with him) excelled above all:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable among us."*
>
> *(Bukhari 466, 3654, 3904; Muslim 6170, 6171; Tirmidhi 3660)*

He (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) also excelled in the knowledge of secrets (ilm al-Asrar)

"He whose heart was honored."

Sayyiduna Umer-e- Farooq :

In the Ummah of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, the Muḥaddath is Sayyidunā ʿUmar al-Fārūq

(Muslim: 6204; al-Bukhārī: 3469, 3689; al-Tirmidhī: 3693)

"The truth speaks upon the tongue of Umar."

(Tirmidhi 3682; Mustadrak Hakim 4557)

Sayyiduna Uthman :

"The Prophet ﷺ made a covenant with me, and I remain steadfast upon it."

(Tirmidhi 3711)

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha :

Once the Prophet ﷺ had a private conversation with Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. The Companions submitted, "O Messenger of Allah, you spoke at length in private with your cousin." He ﷺ replied:

"I did not converse with him in private, rather, Allah conversed with him in private."

(Tirmidhi 3726 — Hadith is Hasan)

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Unique Secrets Entrusted to Certain Companions

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah said :

"I learned two kinds of knowledge from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. One of them is what I convey, and as for the other, if I were to disclose it, my throat would be cut."

(Bukhari 120)

Sayyiduna Hudhayfah bore the title :

Confidant of the Messenger ﷺ, a secret known to none besides him..

(Bukhari 3761; Mustadrak Hakim 5463)

Reflect for a moment with the eye of imagination. Had these words been spoken regarding Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him), certain people would have raised an uproar in the name of esoteric knowledge. Although every Companion is a bearer of secrets, and Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā (may Allah ennoble his noble countenance) himself is also among the possessors of secrets, here the qualifying phrase ***"which no one else knows"*** is explicitly present.

Let no Rāfiḍī divert this discussion in another direction; our sole objective is to establish that every Companion is a gate of the City of Knowledge. Moreover, the fact that different Companions were granted knowledge of secrets (*ʿIlm al-Asrār*) is itself proof that all the Companions mentioned are also gates to the knowledge of secrets.

The Noble Prophet ﷺ supplicated for Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn ʿAbbas (may Allah be pleased with him), saying:

> *"O Allah, teach him the Book and Wisdom."*
>
> *(Bukhari 75, 3756, 7270)*

Wisdom refers to the knowledge of secrets (*ʿIlm al-Asrār*). He ﷺ also said:

> *"O Allah, grant him deep understanding of the religion."*
>
> *(Bukhari 75; Muslim 6368)*

For this reason, Ibn Abbas became known as **Afqah al-Nas** (The Most learned jurist among the people). He ﷺ also said:

> *"Ibn Abbas is the best interpreter of the Qur'an."*
>
> *(Mustadrak 6401 — Authentic (Sahih) and confirmed by Imam Dhahabi)*

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For the attention of the people of knowledge and spiritual insight, we submit that Sayyidunā Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) was designated by the Noble Prophet ﷺ as *Tarjumān al-Qurʾān* (the Interpreter of the Qurʾān) and *Ḥibr al-Ummah* (the Scholar of the Ummah), and he was supplicated for with the prayer that he be granted the Book and wisdom. In the ḥadīth of Muslim, he was also prayed for to be granted deep understanding of the religion. For this reason, he is called *Afaqah al-Nās* (the most learned jurist among the people). Had even one of these titles been conferred upon Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, then in the atmosphere that certain groups have created today, the Rāfiḍah and Tafdilliyah would have erupted into demonstrative celebration.

Response to the Claim: "Ibn Abbas Learnt Everything from Ali "

Some Rāfiḍīs claim that since Ibn ʿAbbās was a student of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, all of these virtues were acquired by him through Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. The response to this is that Sayyidunā Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) acquired all of the aforementioned excellences directly from the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, as is evident from the very wording of these ahadith. Thereafter, Sayyidunā Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) became a student of numerous Companions. Consider the evidence below:

> *"Ibn Abbas would go to the doors of the Ansar to seek ahadith. He would sit by their doorsteps without knocking or seeking permission. When the owner of the house would come out, he would say: 'O cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ! Had you informed me, I would have come out to you.' Ibn Abbas would reply, 'We have been commanded to seek*

knowledge in this humble manner.' And if he was standing and the door was closed, he would not peep inside."

(Baghawi, Vol. 3, p. 286)

Similarly, another narration exists in **al-Darimi**, inwhich there are additional words stating that Sayyidunā Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"I would spread my cloak at their doorstep and lie down, with dust settling upon my face."

(Al-Darimi: 574)

Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas was among the younger companions. He was only thirteen years old at the time of the Prophet's ﷺ passing. *(Al-Isti'ab, p. 465)*

He would frequently narrate ḥadīth in the form of *irsāl* and would not mention the name of the Companion from whom he had heard the narration. He is counted among the Companions who narrated a large number of reports; however, the number of aḥādīth that he himself heard directly from the Noble Prophet ﷺ is fewer than twenty. Some scholars have stated that they number ten, while others have stated that they are only four (Fatḥ al-Bārī, vol. 11, p. 432).

Hadrat Sufyan al-Thawri states regarding a certain hadith:

"This is among the ahadith that we reckon Ibn Abbas heard directly from the Prophet ﷺ."

(Bukhari: 6424)

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We now present a hadith that will cause the Rafdhilis (extremists in favor of Ali RA) to be dumbfounded and despair internally and would bring mourning in their ranks. It is narrated in **each of the Sihah Sittah** (the six authentic books of hadith) that Sayyidunā Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) said while narrating a hadith:

"Righteous men, whom I am pleased with, have narrated to me, and among them, the most beloved to me is ʿUmar."

(Bukhari: 581; Muslim: 1921; Tirmidhi: 183; Abu Dawood: 1276; Nasa'i: 561; Ibn Majah: 1250)

Sayyiduna Ibn ʿAbbas (may Allah be pleased with him) had as his greatest teacher **Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq**. Sayyiduna Farooq-e-Azam said to him:

"Whatever knowledge you think I possess, ask me about it."

(Bukhari: 4913)

Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas states:

"I found a great amount of the knowledge of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with this group of the Ansar."

And further says:

"Regarding each matter, I used to ask thirty of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ."

(Siyar A'lam al-Nubala, Vol. 1, p. 1085) — with an authentic chain (Isnad Sahih).

Indeed, he benefited from all the Companions, including Sayyidunā ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā (may Allah be pleased with him).

This is the complete situation. May Allah guide those who harbor suspicions or twist clear statements into false meanings, and protect the Muslims from their harm.

3. In his commentary on the "Hadith of the City of Knowledge" (Ḥadīth Madīnat al-ʿIlm), Shaykh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlvi states:

"There is no doubt that the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ reached us through other Companions as well, and it is not exclusive to Ali al-Murtadha. Rather, this distinction is in a particular aspect in which he excels, being broader, more open, and greater. For instance, it is narrated in a hadith that among you, the best judge is Ali. This ḥadīth was narrated by Abu al-Ṣalt al-Hirawi, who is a Shi'a but trustworthy and does not diminish the respect of the Companions (Sahaba). "

(Ashi'at al-Lam'aat, Vol. 4, p. 677)

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Thus, Shaykh Abdul Haqq affirms that **all Companions are gates of knowledge**, and the attribute is **not exclusive to Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha**. He connects Ali's special knowledge primarily to his excellence in judicial matters (Qadha).

Mulla Ali al-Qari explains:

“Ali is one of the doors among many doors of the City of Knowledge." He further states that **all the Companions are doors to knowledge**, as evident from the hadith:

"Whichever of them you follow, you will be rightly guided."

However, there is certainly a difference in ranks. Accordingly, the followers of the Companions (the Tabiʿin) acquired various types of knowledge—recitation, exegesis, ḥadith, and jurisprudence—from numerous Companions besides Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. Therefore, the distinction of being the sole gate of knowledge for Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha no longer remains.

"It becomes clear that the status of being a door to knowledge is not confined solely to Ali."

(Mirqat al-Mafatih, Vol. 11, p. 345)

He beautifully explains:

"The House of Wisdom (Dar al-Hikmah) is greater than the House of Paradise (Dar al-Jannah). If the House of Paradise has eight gates, why should the House of Wisdom not have even more gates?

(Marqat, vol. 11, p. 346)

The great Muhaddith and eminent Sufi, Imam Sharaf al-Din Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him), writes:

The great Muhaddith and eminent Sufi, Imam Sharaf al-Din Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him), writes that the statement "Aqdākum Ali" does not mean that he, may Allah be pleased with him, was a greater judge than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them. Rather, it signifies that he was the greatest judge for the audience present at that time. Being a greater judge for one group does not imply being greater than everyone, nor does it mean that others must follow his judgment. Indeed, for a mujtahid, it is not permissible to blindly follow another mujtahid; rather, when through ijtihad the truth becomes apparent against another's opinion, it becomes obligatory to act upon what has been made clear.

(Fatawa Nawawiyyah, p. 265)

Mulla Ali al-Qari further clarifies:

"The meaning of being the most judicious (aqda) is that Ali was more knowledgeable regarding judicial matters requiring judgments. However, being the best judge does not necessarily mean being more knowledgeable than others overall."

(Mirqat al-Mafatih, Vol. 11, p. 361)

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Mir Sayyid Abdul Wahid Bilgrami

The great Chishti saint writes:

"All the Companions are doors of this City (of Knowledge), because all knowledge of religion has reached the scholars of the Ummah through these blessed doors."

(Sab'ah Sanabil, p. 17)

Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlvi

He writes:

"The quality of being a 'Gate of Knowledge' — and even more — is established for many other Companions as well according to Ahl al-Sunnah."

(Tuhfa Ithna Ashariyyah, p. 212)

Now tell us:

What verdict would you pass against these great scholars?

And what fault lies with the mere transmitter (Naqil) of these statements?

Analysis of the Hadith of Madinat al-'Ilm and the Correct Sunni Perspective

Hazrat Mulla Ali Qari states that:

> *The Hadith of Madinat al-'Ilm ("I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate") has been declared authentic (sahih) by Al-Hakim, whereas Al-Dhahabi has classified it as fabricated (mawdu'). Abu Zur'ah mentions that many people have erred regarding this Hadith. Yahya ibn Ma'in stated that "La asla lahu" (it has no basis). Abu Hatim and Yahya ibn Sa'id also expressed similar views. Al-Daraqutni declared it established, while Al-Tirmidhi termed it "denounced" (munkar). Imam Al-Bukhari stated that there is no authentic chain for it. Ibn al-Jawzi included it among fabricated traditions (mawdu'at). Ibn Daqiq al-'Id mentioned that the scholars of Hadith did not affirm its authenticity and declared it invalid. However, Abu Sa'id al-'Ala'i, Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, and Imam al-Suyuti have declared it hasan (acceptable) (Mirqat al-Mafatih, Vol. 11, p. 253).*

Our preferred opinion is also that this Hadith is *hasan*.

Understanding the Meaning of "Gate of Knowledge"

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While Hazrat Ali, the Problem Solver (*Mushkil Kusha*), may Allah honor his face, is the "Gate of Knowledge," it is essential to also regard the rest of the Companions as "Gates of Knowledge."

> *Whoever denies Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) as a "gate" is a Kharijite.*
>
> *Whoever recognizes only him and denies the others is a Rafidhi.*
>
> *The one who acknowledges all the noble Companions as "Gates of Knowledge" is from Ahl al-Sunnah.*

If only Hazrat Ali were considered the sole "Gate of the City of Knowledge," then no other Companion or member of the Ahl al-Bayt would have any right to narrate Hadiths.

However, the reality is quite different: numerous Companions, male and female, and members of the Ahl al-Bayt have narrated countless Hadiths from the Beloved Prophet ﷺ.

It is **not** the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah that being the "Gate of Knowledge" is exclusive to Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), and this is not our personal opinion — it is cited with references.

Misinterpretation by the Shi'a and Clarifications by Scholars

Allama Tayyibi writes:

> *"Perhaps the Shi'a might argue from this metaphor that acquiring knowledge and wisdom is exclusively tied to Hazrat Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and that it cannot reach others except through him."*
>
> *(Sharh Tayyibi, Vol. 11, p. 269)*

Mulla Ali Qari has also cited this (Mirqat al-Mafatih, Vol. 11, p. 345). Similarly, Allama Pirharwi echoes the same view (Maram al-Kalam, p. 47).

Dear readers, you have seen a sea of evidences. If all the noble Companions and the pure Ahl al-Bayt were not "Gates of Knowledge," the integrity of the present Qur'an would have to be denied. Moreover, thousands, rather millions, of Hadiths narrated by other Companions would have to be abandoned, leaving only the Rafidhi ideology, which neither validates the compilation of the Qur'an nor acknowledges the major books of Ahl al-Sunnah.

It is now clear, denying that all Companions are "Gates of Knowledge" is a denial of the preservation of religion itself. With this complete clarity, understanding the Hadith of ***Madinat al-'Ilm*** becomes very easy.

4. The scholars have laid down a principle:

> *"Specifying something in mention does not necessitate the negation of others."*

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An easy example is given in *Nur al-Anwar*:

> *Saying "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" does not deny the messengership of other prophets (Nur al-Anwar, p. 158).*

The Prophet ﷺ called Sayyiduna Hamzah (may Allah be pleased with him) "Asadullah" (the Lion of Allah):

> *"Hamzah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib is the Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger" (Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4961).*

Yet, we also call Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) "the Lion of Allah," and rightly so. In the same way, the Prophet ﷺ calling Sayyiduna Ali the "Gate of Knowledge" does not negate the status of other Companions as "Gates of Knowledge."

A Tafdhili raises an objection:

> *"If everyone is a Gate of Knowledge, what then is the benefit of the Prophet's specific statement?"*
>
> *(Sharh Asna al-Matalib, p. 522)*

From the detailed explanation above, it is clear what benefit is intended. Otherwise, the objector himself should answer:

If Sayyiduna Ali is "Asadullah," then what about the Prophet's declaration that Hamzah is also "Asadullah"? Otherwise, you yourself should explain: when Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) is Asadullah, then what is the benefit of the Prophetic statement "Hamza is the Lion of Allah"?

Only those who are correct in creed and firmly grounded in knowledge are able to appreciate how indispensable reliance on the established works of the scholars is for understanding the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. As for those who oppose the methodology of the pious predecessors, this point will still remain beyond their understanding.

5.

> *To refer to Siddiq al-Akbar merely as a political caliph is pure insolence and Rafidhism.*
>
> *Denying his superiority is a second insolence and Rafidhism.*
>
> *Denying his knowledge and excellence is a third insolence and Rafidhism.*
>
> *Considering Hazrat Ali alone as the sole "Gate of Knowledge" is a fourth insolence and Rafidhism.*

In the monthly magazine *Su-e-Hijaz* (March 2010, p. 64), it is written addressing Ahl al-Sunnah:

> *" "They should also stop from the ungrateful attempt to create back doors (Choor Darwazay) in the City of Knowledge."*

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Calling the rest of the Companions "backdoors" is a fifth insolence, Rafidhism, and an act of cursing (*tabarra'*) upon the Companions.

CONSULTATION AND GUIDANCE: CLARIFICATION

The Tafdhilis also claim that the Rashidun (The Four Rightly Guided Caliphs) sought guidance from Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him)."

The answer is that Hazrat Ali was their minister and advisor, and the role of an advisor is to consult, not to provide "guidance".

Allah Almighty commanded:

> *"And consult them (Sahabah) in affairs" (Qur'an 3:159).*

This does not mean that the Prophet ﷺ was seeking guidance from his Companions. Similarly, the Hadith says:

> *"The Prophet ﷺ would consult Sayyiduna Abu Bakr in all matters" (Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4463).*

This wording also does not mean "guidance" in the sense that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was guiding the Prophet ﷺ; rather, it refers to consultation.

Noble Hadith confirms that the opinions of Sayyiduna Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) were often correct, so much so that revelation would descend to confirm them. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ referred to him as the *Muhaddith* (divinely inspired) of the Ummah and said:

> *"Indeed, Allah has made truth flow upon Umar's tongue and heart."*

But even this does not mean Umar was the Prophet's guide.

Sayyiduna Umar greatly valued Sayyiduna Ali's advice. This reflects Umer's broad-mindedness and commitment to truth, not any notion of inferiority.

We have already mentioned at the beginning of the book the statement of Sayyiduna Umar Faruq (may Allah be pleased with him), ***"If Ali had not been there, Umar would have been ruined,"*** as a great virtue and merit of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him). Therefore, no Rafidhi can now succeed in fulfilling his habit of suspicion and false accusations.

However, it is regrettable that even here the overall context has not been kept in view. The complete picture is that Sayyiduna Faruq-e-Azam (may Allah be pleased with him) had the practice of consulting many Companions.

> *"He would even call Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas along with the Companions of Badr for consultation"*
>
> *(Bukhari: 4294).*

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He would consult Sayyiduna Uthman, Sayyiduna Ali, Sayyiduna Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Sayyiduna Mu'adh ibn Jabal, and Sayyiduna Zayd ibn Thabit (Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', Vol. 1, p. 735).

Umar once announced:

> *"Whoever seeks to learn Fiqh should go to Mu'adh ibn Jabal."*
>
> *(Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', Vol. 1, p. 735)*

Hazrat Umer (RA) would openly acknowledge the correctness of every sound opinion. About Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), he said:

> *"The day of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's battle against the apostates is better than all the days of my life, and the night of the Cave of Thawr (with the Prophet ﷺ) is better than all the nights of my life. Sayyiduna Abu Bakr was right in waging jihad against the apostates, and I was mistaken in trying to stop him.*

On this occasion, Sayyiduna Faruq-e-Azam (may Allah be pleased with him) kissed the head of Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar and said:

"May I be sacrificed for you! Had you not been there, we would have been ruined."

(Al-Riyad al-Nadrah, Vol. 1, p. 148)

Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"By Allah, if Sayyiduna Abu Bakr had not been appointed as Caliph, Allah would not have been worshipped on Earth."

(Al-Riyad al-Nadrah, Vol. 1, p. 148)

This is true assistance and problem-solving ***(Mushkil Kushayi)*** !

The Incident of a Pregnant Woman During the Absence of Her Husband

Once, a man presented himself before **Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq** and said, *"I had been away from home for two years. Upon returning, I found my wife pregnant."*

Sayyiduna Umar sought advice from the people regarding punishing the woman by stoning. **Sayyiduna Mu'adh ibn Jabal** submitted, *"O Leader of the Believers! What is the fault of the child in her womb? Spare her at least until the child is born."*

Thus, Sayyiduna Umar refrained from executing the punishment. When the child was born, he already had teeth. The man, upon seeing the child, recognized him and declared, *"By the Lord of the Ka'bah, this is indeed my son."*

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At this, Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq praised Sayyiduna Mu'adh ibn Jabal saying:

“Women have become incapable of giving birth to the likes of Mu'adh. If it were not for Mu'adh, Umar would have been destroyed.”

(Al-Sunan al-Kubra of al-Bayhaqi, vol. 7, p. 443; Jami' al-Masanid of Ibn Kathir, vol. 11, p. 363; Ibn Asakir 24/374; Siyar A'lam al-Nubala, vol. 1, p. 735; Al-Isabah of Ibn Hajar, p. 1848 — Isnad: Authentic)

Exactly these same words are found in some sources regarding **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha** as well. If both narrations are correct, then selecting only the narration related to **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha** and neglecting the one related to **Mu'adh** is not an act of fairness and honesty. And if one of the two reports is fabricated, then it raises the question:

Who are those people skilled in forging narrations and altering names?

Who could replace the name of Mu'adh with Ali?

On the matter of the amount of **Haqq-e-Mahr**, a woman objected to **Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq** . Upon realizing her point, Umar said:

“The woman is right, and the man is mistaken.”

This narration is widely found under the tafsir of **Surah an-Nisa, Ayah 20** across numerous commentaries.

Here, **Sayyiduna Faruq-e-Azam** made an additional statement:

> *"Every person is more knowledgeable than Umar."*
>
> *(Sunan Sa'id ibn Mansur, 598; Al-Sunan al-Kubra of al-Bayhaqi, Hadith 14336; Al-Basit of al-Wahidi, vol. 6, p. 400; Ibn Kathir, vol. 1, p. 641; Al-Durr al-Manthur, vol. 2, p. 255 — Its chain of narration is Strong and Reliable)*

Now the deniers have only two options left:

> *Either they take such statements of Farooq-e-Azam as expression of humility and correct themselves,*
>
> *Or they take these words literally and, by considering the whole world wiser than Farooq-e-Azam, end up proving themselves insane.*

These are all beautiful statements that have become proverbial. Yet, **the Rawafid (Shia extremists)** selectively choose only, *"If it were not for Ali, Umar would have perished",* and then dance with joy over it, ignoring the broader context.

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On the contrary, there were occasions when the advice and opinion of other Companions proved more correct than that of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, may Allah be pleased with him. If the opinion of Farooq-e-Azam, may Allah be pleased with him, being less preferred is not considered disrespect toward Farooq, then in exactly the same way, the opinion or judgement of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, may Allah honour his face, being less preferred is also not disrespect toward Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. One only needs a balanced mind—neither Kharijite nor Rafidhi.

Once, **Sayyiduna Ali** prayed two Rak'ahs after Asr. **Sayyiduna Umar al-Farooq** became angry at this action:

> *"فَتَغَيَّظَ عَلَيْهِ"*
>
> *(Musnad Ahmad: 102)*

Example 2: Burning of the Sabaites

Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha burned Ibn Saba and other Rafidhis with fire. **Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas** remarked:

> *If I had been in his place, I would have killed them (lawfully) but not burned them, because the Prophet ﷺ said:*
>
> *"Do not punish with the punishment of Allah (i.e., fire)."*

Sayyiduna Ali acknowledged this and said:

> *"Ibn Abbas has spoken the truth."*
>
> *(Sahih al-Bukhari: 3017; Jami' al-Tirmidhi: 1458; Al-Mustadrak al-Hakim: 6405)*

When **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** assumed leadership, he took up the sword against the fitnah of apostates (those who had reverted from Islam). Several Companions differed with him and said that these people were from the people of the qiblah and recited *La ilaha illa Allah*, therefore fighting them was not permissible. Similar discussions also took place between Sayyiduna Ali and Sayyiduna Siddiq. Ultimately, all the Companions acknowledged that the view of Siddiq Akbar was correct. *(Tasfiyah Mabayn Sunni wa Shi'a, p. 19 by Pir Mehr Ali Shah Golravi (may Allah have mercy on him))*

A man asked Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha, may Allah be pleased with him, about an issue. He gave his answer. Someone present said, "The ruling is not like this; rather, it is such and such." Sayyiduna Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said:

> *"You are correct, and I was mistaken. Above every possessor of knowledge, there is one more knowledgeable."*
>
> *(Tafsir Ibn Jarir, vol. 8, part 13, p. 32; Kanz al-Ummal 10/134, Hadith no. 29503)*

Just as the Rāfiḍīs derive an element of insult and alleged lack of knowledge against Sayyiduna Faruq from the statement:

> *"If Ali has not been there, Umar would have perished,"*

similarly, here a **Khariji** could misuse such incidents regarding **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha.**

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In response, it should be said that the very points we have presented in defense of the other Companions are the same points and the same breadth of heart that also defend Sayyiduna Ali. If one reflects, it becomes clear that the Companions accepting one another's advice reflects their greatness, breadth of heart, and sincerity for Allah. The Rāfiḍīs and Khārijīs may burn in their hostility, but the statement *"If Ali had not been there, Umar would have perished"* only increases the **Faruqi greatness** and **breadth of heart**, and Sayyiduna Ali's recitation of the verse *"Above every possessor of knowledge there is one more knowledgeable"* only further enhances the **Alawi greatness** and **breadth of heart**.

THE SIXTH QUESTION OF THE TAFDHILIYYA

We harbor no enmity towards the three Caliphs, but due to the close kinship and relationship of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) with the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, our affection leans more towards him, and thus we regard him as superior.

Answer:

First, to declare someone superior merely out of love is a serious matter. Even keeping love dominant without accepting proper superiority is itself the root of discord. Hazrat Allama Abdul Aziz Parharwi writes:

> *"It is mentioned in Al-Kururi that there is no harm (la ba'sa bihi) in it, but in Al-Natiqi, narrated from Imam Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy on him), it is stated: Whoever says that Ali is dearer to me than all others, then he is a 'raghul waghl' (i.e., a cheap man). Further, it is said: such a matter should not be publicized."*
>
> *Some elders have advised:*
>
> *"If affection towards one of the four (Rightly Guided Caliphs) dominates your heart, then keep it concealed."*
>
> *I say: If the affection is involuntary, the order to conceal it is due to the etiquettes prescribed by Shari'ah. Possibly, Imam Azam's aforementioned statement also pertains to such cases. Some scholars have further clarified:*
>
> *"If affection is due to religious reasons, then it must be according to the order of superiority. However, if it is based on lineage or family ties, there is no blame upon it — but even then, expressing it openly is not permissible."*
>
> *(Nibras, p. 303)*

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It should be noted that the phrase *"la ba'sa bihi"* (no harm) is generally used for matters that are *contrary to the preferable (khilaf al-awla)*.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"A servant cannot attain the rank of the God-fearing until he leaves that which is of no harm (la ba'sa bihi), out of caution for that which carries harm."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 2451)*

Furthermore, regarding the phrase *"ma la ba'sa bihi" (where there is no harm)*, scholars have translated it as superfluous lawful matters (fudul al-halal). Allama Abdul Ra'uf al-Munawi writes:

> *"That is, he abandons superfluous lawful things out of fear of falling into the unlawful"*
>
> *(Fayd al-Qadir, Vol. 8, p. 668)*

In the commentary on the same hadith, the statement of Imam Ghazali is cited:

> *"Engaging excessively in superfluous permissible matters drags a person towards the forbidden and pure disobedience."*
>
> *(Fayd al-Qadir, Vol. 8, p. 668)*

Hazrat Khwaja Ghulam Farid of Kot Mithan states

My Shaykh, Hazrat Khwaja Fakhruddin al-Millat (may Allah sanctify his secret) used to say:

> *"Whoever holds greater love for Hazrat Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, on the basis that he is Piran-e-Pir, or that he is his noble ancestor, or because he was a person whose profession was bravery and he therefore loves Hazrat Ali more due to his courage — all these forms of love lead toward Rafidhism and should be avoided."*
>
> *(Maqabis al-Majalis, p. 302)*

Put together the sayings of Imam Ghazali, **"It drags towards the forbidden and pure disobedience",** and Hazrat Khwaja's statement, **"Leads towards rejection",** and Allama Abu Shakur Salmi's verdict, **"This is all innovation (*bid'ah*) and sin (*fisq*)",** and Allama Parharwi's warning, **"It should not be disclosed",** alongside the understanding of ***"la ba'sa bihi",*** and the matter becomes crystal clear. But if one remains unaffected by the Prophet's ﷺ instruction:

> *"Leave what is of no harm fearing that which carries harm,"*

then how can such a heart be cured through the scholars' explanations?

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Despite all these restrictions on *"la ba'sa bihi"* (لَا بَأْسَ بِهٖ), Instead of treating such a statement as something to be taken lightly, tremble at the words of Imam al-A'zam Abu Hanifah: **"rajulun waghl" (رَجُلٌ وَغْلٌ)**, which have been explained as **"waghl — meaning corrupt (غْلٌ اَیْ فَاسِدٌ)"**

We have translated Imam al-A'zam's words *"rajulun waghl"* **(رَجُلٌ وَغْلٌ)** as "a cheap man," taking this translation from a Tafḍīlī's book itself. In other words, by his own admission, he has acknowledged such a person to be corrupt — though to what extent, God knows best.

Consider further Admonitions

Allama Abu-al-Shakur Salmi states:

> *"Among the Rawafid are those who say that love for Ali and the Ahl al-Bayt should be given priority and should be greater. All such beliefs are bid'ah (innovation) and fisq (sin)."*
>
> *(Al-Tamhid, p. 182)*

If the spirit of rebellion has still not cooled down, then listen further !

Hazrat Ibrahim al-Nakha'i heard a man say:

"Ali is dearer to me than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."

Upon hearing this, he said:

"Do not sit with us and say such things. If Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) himself heard you, he would have lashed you!"

(Hilyat al-Awliya, Vol. 6, p. 492)

Hazrat Sufyan al-Thawri Tabi‘ — asked ‘Ata’ ibn Muslim:

“How much love for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is in your heart today?” He replied, “Very much.” He then asked, “How much love for Umar is in your heart?” He replied, “Very much.” He then asked, “How much love for Ali is in your heart?” He replied, “Very much,” and in this he spoke with emphasis and at length. Thereupon Sufyan said,

“O ‘Ata’, this is a serious illness — one that calls for branding the head with hot iron.”

(Hilyat al-Awliya’, 5/348)

Hazrat ‘Abd al-Wahhab relates that while performing tawaf of the Ka‘bah, he asked Hazrat Sufyan al-Thawri about a man who loves the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) but loves Hazrat Ali more than them. He replied,

“That man has a sickness; he should be given treatment.”

(Hilyat al-Awliya’, 5/344)

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Imam Qastallani writes:

"If a person acknowledges that after the Prophet ﷺ the best of this Ummah are Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali, but still feels more affection towards Ali than Sayyiduna Abu Bakr — if this affection is religious, then his statement is baseless. This is because religious love is the result of one’s belief in superiority. Thus, such a person has only verbally acknowledged the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, while in his heart he believes in the superiority of Ali.”

(Al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah, 3/392)

The renowned Chishti elder, Hazrat Mir Sayyid Abdul Wahid Bilgrami (may Allah sanctify his secret), said:

Persian Original:

محبت بهر چارگر استوار

ولی فضل شیخین مفرط شمار

ورت فضل شیخین در دل کم ست

بنائی تو در رفض مستحکم ست

Translation:

> *Love for the Four (Rightly Guided Caliphs) is a firm cure,*
>
> *But count the virtue of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) as immense.*
>
> *And if the virtue of the Shaykhs is little in your heart,*
>
> *Then your foundation is firmly rooted in Rafidhism (rejection of the righteous caliphs).*

This has been the unanimous consensus (*ijma'*) of all the noble Companions, their successors, the successors of the successors, and all the scholars of the Ummah. This consensus is clearly recorded in the books of the predecessors and the later generations alike. (*Saba' Sanabil*, Urdu ed., p. 61)

Secondly, scholars have clearly written that if affection is due to religious reasons, then it must follow the order of superiority. The noble Companions and the Tabi'in have consistently both the superiority and love for the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) together.

Imam Sha'bi states:

> *"The love of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar and the recognition of their virtues, is part of the Sunnah."*
>
> *(As-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Hadith 1296; Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunnah, Hadith 2319)*

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Thirdly, Those who claim such excessive love, even if they do not speak of Tafdil, still cannot maintain balance and often show disrespect toward other Companions, and at the very least, they always harbor enmity toward Sayyiduna Amir Mu'awiya, may Allah be pleased with him. Test it yourself: a person who exaggerates in love for Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha will always be an enemy of Amir Mu'awiya.

Fourthly, Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

> *"O Allah! Send Your curse upon everyone who harbors hatred towards us, and upon every extremist who loves us excessively."*
>
> *(Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shaybah, vol. 7, p. 507; Al-Riyad al-Nadhirah, vol. 2, p. 195)*

Now, if you wish, you may align your love according to the correct order of superiority, or if you prefer, you can embrace the 'gift' mentioned above (i.e., the curse) by allowing your love to become excessive.

Fifthly, The extremist Rawafid (Shiites) also claim to have immense love (for Sayyiduna Ali), and they are merely one step ahead in this extremism. Thus, by merely using the word "love," one cannot deceive Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. True love is only that which conforms to the decision of the majority of the Ummah (Sawaad-e-Azam), and it must not make one a candidate for the Ali's (RA) statement:

> *"Two types of people will be ruined because of me."*

Sixthly, To consider someone superior merely due to love is utterly illogical and baseless. For example, every person loves their own mother, but it does not imply that his mother is superior to all other mothers in the world.

Seventhly, If closeness of relation (to the Prophet ﷺ) were the standard for superiority, then Sayyiduna Hamzah and Sayyiduna Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib (may Allah be pleased with them both) would be closer to the Prophet ﷺ than Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). An uncle is closer than a cousin. In matters of inheritance too, a cousin is deprived in the presence of an uncle. Moreover, even closer than all of them is Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra (may Allah be pleased with her), the Leader of the Women of Paradise. Thus, following the same logic, one would have to regard her as superior even to Sayyiduna Ali and consider her the rightful claimant to the Caliphate.

Eighthly, throughout history, scholars and saints (may Allah have mercy on them) have always shown great love towards the family of the Prophet ﷺ. However, this love never surpassed their love for the first two caliphs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar), and therefore, they never denied the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them).

Sayyiduna Bishr al-Hafi said:

> *"I saw the Prophet ﷺ in a dream.*
>
> *He said to me: "O Bishr! Do you know why Allah has elevated your rank above your contemporaries?'*
>
> *I replied, 'No, O Messenger of Allah!'*
>
> *He ﷺ said: 'Because of your love for my companions and my family."*
>
> *(Al-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah, p. 31)*

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Sayyiduna Abu Bakr ibn Ayyash said:

> *"If Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Umar al-Faruq, and Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with them) were to enter my home together, I would first ask Sayyiduna Ali what command he had for me, due to his relation to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. However, falling from the sky to the earth would be more beloved to me than ever considering Ali to be superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."*
>
> *(Al-Shifa, vol. 2, p. 40)*

When Sayyiduna Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) would visit the blessed resting place of the Noble Messenger ﷺ, he would first offer salutations to his father, Sayyiduna Faruq-e-Azam (may Allah be pleased with him) before Sayyiduna Siddiq-e-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him). He would then say:

> *"If you were not my father, I would never have greeted you before Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Al-Riyad al-Nadhirah, vol. 1, p. 211)*

THE SEVENTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

In the books of Hadith, the virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) are mentioned more abundantly than the virtues of all other companions. This is proof of his superiority.

The Answer:

Firstly, this is not the case in every book. In the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* (in all the six authentic collections of Hadith) and the highest-ranking books of Hadith, the virtues of al-Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar (may Allah be pleased with him) are recorded more abundantly than those of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. In the authentic and the earliest books of Hadith, the comparative situation regarding the Siddiqi and Alawi virtues is as follows:

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Book	Ahadith regarding virtues of Sayyiduna Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar	Ahadith regarding virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha
Bukhārī	27	7
Muslim	18	13
Abū Dāwūd	10	In 3 ahadith, mentioning his incidental virtue alongside other companions
Tirmidhī	30	25
Nasa'ī al-Mujtabā	1	0
Ibn Mājah	9	8
Muwaṭṭa' Mālik	0	0
Muwaṭṭa' Imam Muḥammad	4	0
Musnad Imām A'ẓam	2 marfū'* narrations	1 marfū' and 1 mawqūf ** narration
Dārimī	0	0
Musnad Shāfi'ī	2 (in *Kitāb al-Imāmah* and *Faḍā'il Quraysh*)	0

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* ***marfū'*** *— A report that is attributed directly to the Prophet* ﷺ

** ***mawqūf*** *— A report that stops at a Companion and is not attributed to the Prophet* ﷺ

For the sake of brevity, we have presented only the number of narrations related to the virtues of Sayyidunā al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar and Sayyidunā 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (may Allah be pleased with them both), relying solely on chapters dedicated to their merits.

Secondly, Even if, hypothetically, the number of narrations about Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha's virtues in some books is relatively greater, **Āmannā wa ṣaddaqnā** (We believe and affirm). To refute a universal claim, it suffices to present a partial negation, and we have demonstrated the dominance of al-Ṣiddīq's virtues in most, superior, and more authentic books. Furthermore, scholars have explicitly mentioned that in certain books, the reason for recording a greater number of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha's virtues was to silence the outcry of the Khawārij against him. Therefore, some scholars widely publicized many narrations in his favor. (Refer to *Ṣawā'iq Muḥriqah*, p. 121; *Mirqāt*, vol. 11, p. 335; *Iẓālat al-Khafā'*, vol. 2, p. 260)

Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal stated that:

> *"The virtues of Sayyidunā ʿAlī have been narrated in abundance."*

However, ʿAllāmah Suyūṭī, Shaykh al-Muḥaqqiq, and Mullā ʿAlī Qārī (may Allah have mercy on them) asserted that:

> *"The virtues of the first three caliphs exceed those of Sayyidunā ʿAlī, and even surpass them."*
>
> *(Ashiʿat al-Lamaʿāt, 4/674)*

Mullā ʿAlī Qārī stated:

> *"They (the first three caliphs) possess virtues equal to and greater than those of Sayyidunā ʿAlī."*
>
> *(Mirqāt, 11/335)*

ʿAllāmah Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī wrote:

> *"Due to the large number of opponents of Sayyidunā ʿAlī, the Ahl al-Sunnah felt the need to spread his virtues widely. However, if the virtues of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs are recorded fairly and justly, they never depart from the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah."*
>
> *(Fatḥ al-Bārī, vol. 7, p. 82)*

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Imām Nawawī wrote:

> *"It is not possible to enumerate even a tenth of the virtues of al-Ṣiddīq."*
>
> *(Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt, vol. 2, p. 55)*

Therefore, the statement of Imām Aḥmad would either require the exception of the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ʿUmar), or it should be understood as pertaining to his era, thus reconciling all scholarly statements and aligning with documented historical facts.

In today's era, since the activities of the Rāfiḍah have intensified, just as the earlier scholars made efforts to highlight the virtues of Sayyidunā ʿAlī, we are obliged today to abundantly narrate the virtues of the first three caliphs, searching for and publicizing relevant Hadiths. However, it is extremely necessary that just as the earlier scholars bore no malice in their hearts against the Shaykhayn while narrating the virtues of ʿAlī, similarly, today, while narrating the virtues of the Shaykhayn, there should be no malice against Sayyidunā ʿAlī.

Neither should any wicked individual accuse those who narrate the virtues of the Shaykhayn of being haters of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha. Such an attitude can only come from someone who himself harbors ill suspicion in the manner of the Rafidhis. It has long been their practice to hastily **label Ahl al-Sunnah as Nasibis**. Casting unfounded suspicion upon Muslims has been a defining trait of the Rafidhis.

Thirdly, The virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) mentioned in the books are not superior in rank or strength compared to the virtues of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them). Imām Ahl al-Sunnah said:

> *"Some virtues are so high in acceptance and divine approval that they outweigh thousands of other virtues."*
>
> *(Maṭla‘ al-Qamarayn, p. 20, manuscript)*

Several examples are mentioned by Aʿlā Ḥaḍrat at the same point in *Maṭla‘ al-Qamarayn*. For instance:

The Hadith states:

> *"If any of you were to spend (in charity) gold equivalent to Mount Uḥud, it would not equal even a handful or half a handful of what they (the Companions) gave."*
>
> *(Bukhārī, 3673)*

Another Hadith mentions:

> *"‘Umar is a single good deed among the good deeds of Abū Bakr."*
>
> *(Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah, 678; Musnad Abī Yaʿlā, 1604)*

Third narration states:

> *"By Allah! A day and night of Abū Bakr is better than the lifetime of ‘Umar."*
>
> *(Maṭla‘ al-Qamarayn, manuscript p. 20)*

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Another Hadith mentions:

> *"If the faith of Abū Bakr were weighed against the faith of all the worlds, Abū Bakr’s faith would outweigh it."*
>
> *(Ibn Adi, 1012 — from the narration of Ibn Umar with a weak chain; and Al-Bayhaqi in Shu‘ab al-Iman, 36, reported as mawquf upon Umar with an authentic chain; also in Fada'il al-Sahaba, 653, through another chain)*

The monthly magazine **Mahnama Daleel-e-Rah**, Lahore, whose Editor-in-Chief is **Allama Syed Riaz Hussain Shah**, in its January–February 2010 issue, page 43, begins an article by **Al-Hajj Bashir Hussain Nazim** titled: “The Rightly Guided Caliphs and Hazrat Sayyiduna Data Ganj Bakhsh (**علیہ الرحمہ**)”. Mr Nazim writes:

> *"The noble statement of the Prophet ﷺ: 'The best of humanity after the Prophets is Abū Bakr (Afdal al-bashar ba‘d al-anbiya’ Sayyiduna Abu Bakr)' outweighs thousands of virtues attributed to any other Companion. To deny this is to deny the Messenger; and*

denying the Messenger is a foolish and ignorant attempt to attain Saqar (Hell). May Allah protect us."

(Mahnama Daleel-e-Rah, Lahore, January–February 2010, p. 44)

Pir Sayyid Naṣeer ud-dīn Shah Sahab Golarvi writes:

*"According to my humble belief, if the **two-word affirmation** of faith given by al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar at the very earliest moments of the Messenger of Allah's ﷺ declaration of Prophethood were placed in one scale of the balance, and the accumulated faith of all believers from the time of the Prophet's announcement until the Day of Judgment—including the Companions, Ahl al-Bayt, Tābiʿīn, the Awghath and Aqtab (saints), scholars, jurists, and martyrs—were placed in the other, then by Allah, the side of my Abu Akbar would outweigh them."*

(Rāh o Rasm-e-Manzilhā, p. 236)

The entire grandeur, virtues, and specialties of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha are accepted and undeniable; to reject them is akin to the deviance of the Khawārij. However, in light of the explanations above, it must be acknowledged that the Prophet ﷺ appointing al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar as the Imam (leader in prayer) is a virtue that encompasses all others.

Even Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha himself cited this merit, saying:

"When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made him our religious leader, why should we not accept him as our worldly leader?"

(Ṣawāʿiq Muḥriqah, p. 62)

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Similarly, in just the Hadith of Migration (*Bukhārī*: 3905), there are at least seven distinct virtues mentioned specifically for Ṣiddīq-e-Akbar, filled with excellence and distinction.

Fourthly, Some of the scholars who have comparatively narrated more virtues of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (**رضی اللہ عنہ**) were also accused by the scholars of truth of being inclined toward Shiʿism — such as Al-Hakim. Among these individuals with Shiʿi leanings, some later recanted.

Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that Muḥammad ibn Sirin said, considering the fabricated narrations of the Rāfiḍah:

"The majority of narrations attributed to ʿAli are lies."

(Bukhārī, 3707)

THE EIGHTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

Among the Ahl al-Bayt (may Allah's pleasure be upon them), the Noble Prophet ﷺ walked side by side with some, while he carried others on his blessed shoulders. The noble Companions (Sahabah) would kiss the hands and feet of the Messenger ﷺ out of respect, whereas the Messenger ﷺ himself would kiss the members of the Ahl al-Bayt.

When speaking with the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions would say, "May my father and mothers be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ," whereas the Prophet ﷺ himself said regarding Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra (peace be upon her) and the two grandsons, Hasan and Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them both), "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you," and "May my father be sacrificed for them and my mother" (Referenced in Hakim, Ibn Hibban, Ibn Abi Shaybah, and Tabarani).

Thus, it is proven that the outward caliphate (khilafah zahiriyyah) and the internal sainthood (wilayah batiniyyah) are two distinct virtues. Therefore, the loyal and reverant followers of the Prophet (SAW), can never conceive of rivalry or comparison between the noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them), and the esteemed Ahl al-Bayt (peace and blessings be upon them).

(Al-Qawl al-Wathiq, pp. 42–43).

Answer:

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The entire Ummah (Muslim nation) has engaged in comparisons and evaluations, and the conclusion has been that the virtues of the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar, may Allah be pleased with them) are overwhelming and comprehensive, whereas the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (may Allah be pleased with them) are partial. This is not an unsolvable issue such that the questioner should label the entire Ummah as disloyal or disrespectful.

For example, Imam Ibn Hajar al-Makki (may Allah have mercy upon him) states:

> *"There is a consensus (ijma') of the Ummah on the superiority of the two Shaykhs over Hasan and Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them)"*
>
> *(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 58).*

He further explains:

> *"The fact that Hasan and Husayn (may Allah be pleased with them) are beloved pieces of the heart of the Messenger ﷺ is an undeniable virtue. However, sometimes a person who is less virtuous (mafdhul) may possess a specific excellence that the more virtuous one (afdhal) does not possess. Such specific excellences do not indicate a greater overall reward but rather a special honor and distinction.*
>
> *Within the pure progeny of the Prophet ﷺ, there is a special honor which the two Shaykhs do not possess, but in terms of abundance of reward, benefit to Islam and*

Muslims, and the highest levels of fear of Allah and piety, the two Shaykhs are superior to all others without exception"

(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 59).

It is a straightforward reality that in this world every individual possesses some unique quality that others may not. However, such specific distinctions do not determine overall superiority.

Among the noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them):

***Ibn Umar** was always with the Prophet ﷺ during Umrah (Bukhari: 4254).*

***Sayyiduna Amir Hamzah** is the leader of martyrs (Sayyid al-Shuhada) (Mustadrak Hakim: 4947).*

***Sayyiduna Ja'far** is the one blessed with two wings (Dhul-Janaḥin) (Bukhari: 3709, 4264).*

***Khalid ibn Walid** is the Sword of Allah (Bukhari: 4262); he broke nine swords in a single battle (Bukhari: 4265, 4266).*

***Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas** is the first archer (Bukhari: 4326, 4327).*

***Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah** is the trustworthy of the Ummah (Ameen-ul-Ummah) (Bukhari: 4380).*

***Ibn Abbas** is the scholar of the Ummah (Hibr al-Ummah) (Mustadrak: 6390).*

***'Umar ibn al-Khattab** is the Muhaddith (person who can guess things that come true later on, as if the person has been inspired by a divine power) of the Ummah (Bukhari: 3469).*

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***Abu Hurairah** is the most prolific narrator of Hadith and was gifted an extraordinary memory (Bukhari: 118, 119).*

***Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman** is Sahib Sirr Rasul Allah ﷺ (the keeper of the Prophet's ﷺ secret) (Bukhari: 3761).*

***Tamim al-Dari.** All people narrate from the Noble Prophet ﷺ, whereas the Noble Prophet ﷺ narrated the story of the Dajjal from **Tamim al-Dari**, saying: "Haddathani Tamim al-Dari" (Muslim 7386). (It should be noted that here haddathani is used in its linguistic sense, not its technical legal sense; and this is mentioned merely as a distinction.)*

***Zayd ibn Harithah** is the only Companion whose name is mentioned in the Qur'an.*

Now reflect: if the name of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah ennoble his face) had been mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an, how far would the Rafidhis and Tafdhilis have exaggerated it?

The greatest Qari (reciter) was Ubayy ibn Ka'b.

The greatest expert in inheritance was Zayd ibn Thabit.

The greatest scholar of halal and haram was Mu'adh ibn Jabal.

The most truthful was Abu Dharr.

The most modest (haya: decent shyness that deters individuals from immoral actions) was Uthman ibn Affan.

The greatest judge was Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha.

The honor of being a "piece of the heart" was shared by all four daughters including Sayyidah tul-Nisa Fatimah tul-Zahra (peace be upon her), as well as the blessed sons: Sayyiduna Qasim, Sayyiduna Abdullah (Tayyib and Tahir), and Sayyiduna Ibrahim (may Allah be pleased with them all).

Thus, all these distinct virtues among the noble Companions are partial and specific in nature. None of these individual excellences affect the cumulative superiority of the two Shaykhs. Even if Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah ennoble his face) possessed such specific virtues, comparing them to the overall superiority of the two Shaykhs would not constitute any disrespect.

Threatening the entire Muslim Ummah with accusations of disrespect merely due to their established position is nothing but an ancient Rafidhi tendency. When the conscience of the entire Ummah is satisfied, and the whole Ummah observes reverence toward the pure Ahl al-Bayt (may Allah be pleased with them), then why should we abandon the path of the great majority (Suwad-e-Azam) in fear of the baseless verdict of any Rafidhi?

The questioner has cited, as a special distinction, the statement of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ regarding *Sayyidat al-Nisā'* and the noble Hasanayn (may Allah be pleased with them), that ***"May my father and mother be sacrificed for them"***. But alas, great regret, that he did not notice that in the highly authoritative collections such as *Bukhari* and *Muslim*, the same words of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ were also spoken concerning Sayyiduna Zubayr ibn al-Awwām and Sayyiduna Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ."

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For example:

Regarding Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Shoot (your arrow), may my father and mother be sacrificed for you"

(Bukhari: 2905, 4058, 4059, 6184; Muslim: 6233; Tirmidhi: 3754; Ibn Majah: 129).

And regarding Zubayr ibn al-Awwam (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said:

"May my father and mother be sacrificed for you"

(Bukhari: 3720; Muslim: 6245; Tirmidhi: 3743; Ibn Majah: 123).

THE NINTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

Ibn Abd al-Barr writes that Sayyidunā Salmān, Abū Dharr, Miqdād, Khabbāb, Jābir, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, Sayyidunā Qays ibn Saʿd, Sayyidunā Hassān ibn Thābit, and Zayd ibn Arqam (may Allah be pleased with them all) regarded Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah honor his countenance) as superior.

Answer:

First and foremost, the consensus (ijmāʿ) on the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ʿUmar – may Allah be pleased with them) had already been established during the era of the Companions – indeed, even during the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself. This consensus was so well-known and widespread that the Noble Prophet ﷺ himself became aware of it, yet he did not reject it

> *"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard of this and did not deny it"*

Now, if suddenly, Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr — who passed away in 463 AH — presents such a narration without any corroborating evidence before or after it, then what should such a narration be called if not fabricated (*mawḍūʿ*) or an interpolation (*ilhāqī*)?

Thus, ʿAllāmah Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī wrote in al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muhriqah (p. 58), Shaykh Muḥaqqiq in Takmīl al-Īmān (p. 57), and ʿAllāmah Parhārvī (may Allah have mercy on them) in Marām al-Kalām (p. 46) that this narration is unreliable.

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> ***The first said:***
>
> *"It is something strange (gharīb), reported solely by him, apart from others who were greater than him in memorization and awareness; therefore, it is not to be relied upon."*
>
> ***The second said:***
>
> *"This statement of Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr is not acceptable or reliable, because a solitary (shādh) narration that contradicts the position of the majority is not considered authoritative, while the majority of the Imams report consensus in this matter."*
>
> ***The third said** (may Allah have mercy upon him):*
>
> *"This is among those reports uniquely transmitted by Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr."*

After an extensive discussion, Ḥaḍrat Faḍil-e-Barelvi Ala Hazrat (may Allah have mercy on him) states:

> *"This peculiar account of Abū ʿUmar is narratively defective (riwāyatan maʿlūl), and analytically unacceptable (dirāyatan ghayr maqbul). Accepting it would entail compromising the reverential status of the Companions. And even if its authenticity were hypothetically established, the strongest presumption—approaching certainty—is that the statement of those Companions would be interpreted as referring only to a partial or specific virtue."*

Scholars of knowledge may reflect: in just a few words, Aʿlā Ḥazrat decisively settled the matter.

ʿAllāmah Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī (may Allah have mercy on him) writes:

> *"In this matter, Abū ʿUmar (Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr) committed a clear and manifest mistake." (al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah, vol. 2, p. 180)*

The scholars have clearly explained that the issue of the superiority of the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ʿUmar) is definitive (qaṭʿī) and established by consensus (ijmāʿ), and that narrations presented in opposition by the Shīʿah and other innovators hold no weight:

> *"There is no consideration given to the statements of the people of Shiʿism and the people of Biddah (innovation)."*
>
> *(al-Bāʿith al-Ḥathīth of Ibn Kathīr, al-Nawʿ al-Tāsiʿ wa al-Thalāthūn: Bāb Maʿrifat al-Ṣaḥābah, p. 128; Tadrīb al-Rāwī, vol. 2, p. 196)*

Imām al-Sakhāwī (may Allah have mercy on him), strongly refuting all statements presented against the consensus of the Companions, writes:

> *"All of this is rejected due to what has previously been mentioned regarding the consensus of the Companions and the Followers upon the superiority of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar over the rest of the Companions, then ʿUthmān, then ʿAlī. This is what has been proclaimed in public gatherings, assemblies, and upon the pulpits."*
>
> *For this reason, our Shaykh stated:*
>
> *Whoever claims the superiority of ʿUmar (in contradiction to this established order) bases himself upon weak and baseless arguments; and whoever claims the superiority of Sayyidunā al-ʿAbbās holds a reprehensible position. The one who holds such a view is not from Ahl al-Sunnah — rather, not even from the people of faith.*
>
> *(Fatḥ al-Mughīth, 3/129)*

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If *tafdīliyyah* possessed even a slight fear of God in their hearts—and if nothing more, at least understood the subtle wisdom of the prophetic principle, ***"Leave that which causes you doubt for that which does not cause you doubt"*** — then the aforementioned words of Imām al-Sakhāwī would pierce their hearts, and they would repent decisively from relying upon such fabricated, isolated, far-fetched, and weak statements.

Further admonition may be observed, Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (may Allah have mercy on him), while declaring those who promote various divergent claims, to be expelled from Ahl al-Sunnah, writes:

> *Those who claim the superiority of ʿUmar (in contradiction to the established order) are called **Khaṭṭābiyyah**.*
>
> *Those who claim the superiority of ʿAlī are called **Shīʿah**.*
>
> *Those who claim the superiority of al-ʿAbbās are called **Rāwandiyyah**.*

(Tadrīb al-Rāwī, vol. 2, p. 196)

Ḥaḍrat Mīr Sayyid ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Bilgrāmī (may Allah have mercy on him), refuting the preferentialist Rāfiḍīs, states:

> *"Those narrations and issues that oppose and contradict the consensus of the Ummah are entirely inadmissible, unacceptable, and purely erroneous."*
>
> *(Sabʿa Sanābil, p. 18)*

Now listen further regarding the book *al-Istīʿāb*:

Imām al-Nawawī (may Allah have mercy on him) writes:

> *"Among the finest and most beneficial books concerning the Companions is al-Istīʿāb by Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr—were it not for its shortcoming in mentioning the disputes that occurred among the Companions and in transmitting reports from the Akhbāri Narrators, he fell into impropriety (or exercised poor judgment)."*
>
> *(Taqrīb al-Nawawī, vol. 2, p. 184)*

Explaining this passage, Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (may Allah have mercy on him) states:

> *"By Akhbari Narrators (means the people) with predominant trait of (creating) exaggeration and confusion in what they narrate."*
>
> *(Tadrīb al-Rāwī, vol. 2, p. 185)*

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Ibn Abd al-Barr made a clear error when he wrote about Sayyiduna Abu Tufayl (may Allah be pleased with him), claiming that he considered Sayyiduna al-Murtadha Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar). However, Mulla Ali Qari (may Allah have mercy on him) has refuted this, stating that Hazrat Abu Tufayl only considered al-Murtadha Ali superior to Sayyiduna Uthman Ghani (may Allah be pleased with him). Read his powerful words:

> *"It is not hidden that considering Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to the two Shaykhs contradicts the madhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, which is the way of all the Salaf. Indeed, some of the later scholars held the view of preferring Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) over Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him), and among them was Abu Tufayl from among the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all)"*
>
> (Sharh Fiqh Akbar, p. 64).
>
> *After this, any such statement by Ibn Abd al-Barr carries no weight.*

Secondly, even if this narration were to be accepted hypothetically, rejecting the majority and the great body (Sawad-e-Azam) of scholars is no minor calamity. If such isolated narrations are elevated and given precedence, then given the numerous individual opinions (tafarudaat) of scholars on every subject, a complete mythology, separate from Islam, could be constructed. Fazal-e-Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on him) has provided some excellent examples of this. He states:

*"The authenticity of the hadith **'Man kuntu mawlahu fa-Aliyyun mawlahu'** (For whoever I am his master; Ali is his master) is disputed. The majority of Imams consider it authentic, while eminent senior muhaddithun like Abu Dawood (author of Sunan), Abu Hatim al-Razi, and others have criticized it. If a person, relying on their criticism, were to refuse to accept, God forbid, Hazrat Ali's status as the Mawla of the Muslims, you would condemn him severely. But you yourselves would be more deserving of condemnation. In fact, if a discerning sage were to present before you the weaknesses of the hadith **'Lahmuhu min lahmi wa damuhu min dami'** (His flesh is from my flesh and his blood is from my blood), exposing its dark and unsound chain of narration, you would become his enemy, even though in reality, this is exactly the kind of narration that no skilled and righteous expert can deem acceptable or reliable."*

(Matali al-Qamarayn, manuscript, p. 75).

Thirdly, our discussion concerns who is foremost in terms of abundance of reward, nearness and prestige, whereas, the narration in question clearly carries the possibility that it refers only to partial preference. For instance, within this very narration, there are words: ***"Inna Aliyyan awwalu man aslama"*** (Indeed, Ali was the first to accept Islam). This was stated based on narrations that credit Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) with being the first to accept Islam. This answer has been provided by the erudite scholar, Allamah Ibn Hajar Makki, Allamah Parharwi, and Fazal-e-Barelvi (may Allah have mercy on them all). In this way, there is no breach of consensus, and a harmonious reconciliation is achieved.

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Fourthly, in a full assembly, the Companions, including Faruq al-Azam (RA), recognized the **absolute superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA)** and accordingly appointed him as Khalifah. Among these Companions were the very same individuals mentioned by Ibn `Abd al-Barr. The question arises: why did these Companions not speak out or affirm the truth at that time (if they held a different view)?

Fifthly, just as Ibn Abd al-Barr recorded this narration, he also made another statement in the same book: "***that among the later generations, some pious individuals are superior to all Companions except those of Badr and Hudaybiyyah".*** This statement of Ibn Abd al-Barr is **absolutely incorrect** and the narration on which it relies is not reliable.

Sixthly: Sayyiduna Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA) and Sayyiduna Jabir (RA) themselves transmitted numerous hadiths that explicitly affirm the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (RA). For example:

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA):

*In **Sahih al-Bukhari:** "If I were to take a close friend..."*

*In **Jami` at-Tirmidhi**: "...the foremost of the people of the earth would be Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."*

*In **Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim**: "Of those most trustworthy to me in wealth and companionship is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*

*In **Sunan Ibn Majah and al-Tabarani:** "Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar are the leaders of the people of Paradise."*

The same hadith regarding *"leaders of the people of Paradise"* is narrated in **al-Tabarani al-Awsat** from Sayyiduna Jabir (RA).

Additionally, **from Jabir (RA),** the narration:

> *"Since the sun rose, none among you has been superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *is recorded in al-Tabarani and in Dar Qutni, Al-'Ilal, vol. 13, p. 380.*

Furthermore, Sayyiduna Hassan ibn Thabit (RA) composed a quatrain in the presence of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ and said:

> *"No one equals him (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr)."*
>
> *(Mustadrak al-Hakim, 4468)*

When these three Companions themselves affirm the superiority of the Shaykhayn, what credibility remains for attributing any preference to others as Mawla? Should we rely on the vast body of authentic narrations from the most reliable books, or disregard them in favor of the statement of a single Ibn `Abd al-Barr?

Seventhly: Surely, there can be no doubt that Ibn `Abd al-Barr's narration is, at the very least, **anomalous (shaaz)**. Among the seven Companions mentioned, Sayyiduna Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (RA) is also included. You mentioned that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"Whoever separates from the Jama'ah even by a span has removed the rope of Islam from around his neck."*
>
> *(Sahih al-Bukhari: 7054, Sahih Muslim: 4790, Mustadrak al-Hakim: 405 — wording his own)*

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How then could it be that a narrator of such a hadith would act contrary to the teachings of his own narrated hadith? If such a statement appears anywhere in Ibn `Abd al-Barr's book, at the very least, one should **not rely on it** and must not metaphorically remove the rope of Islam from one's own neck.

Eighthly: It should also be noted that Ibn `Abd al-Barr himself **did not hold this narration as authoritative**. Rather, he himself affirmed the superiority of the Shaykhyn. He writes:

> *"The belief of Ahl al-Sunnah today is as I have mentioned regarding the precedence in virtue: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr over Umar, Umar over Uthman, and Uthman over Ali."*
>
> *(Al-Isti'ab, Ibn `Abd al-Barr, p. 538)*

Abu Muhjan Thaqafi's verses are transmitted (by Abd al-Barr) as follows:

سِوَاكَ يُسَمَّى بِاسْمِهِ غَيْرُ مُنْكَرِ وَسُمِّيتَ صِدِّيقاً وَكُلُّ مُهَاجِرِ

"You were named As-Siddiq (the Truthful), while all other Muhajirun were called by their own names, and no one objected."

وَكُنْتَ جَلِيساً بِالْعَرِيشِ الْمُشَهَّرِ سَبَقْتَ إِلَى الإِسْلَامِ وَاللَّهُ شَاهِدُ

"You were the first to embrace Islam, and Allah is witness. You were in close company with the Prophet ﷺ in the elevated encampment at Badr."

وَكُنْتَ رَفِيقاً لِلنَّبِيِّ الْمُطَهَّرِ وَبِالْغَارِ إِذْ سُمِّيتَ بِالْغَارِ صَاحِبا

"And in the cave (during Hijrah), you were called the Companion of the Cave, for you were the faithful companion of the purified Prophet ﷺ."

Translation / Meaning:

"You were named *As-Siddiq*, whereas all other Muhajirun were known by their own names without objection. Allah bears witness that you were the first to accept Islam. You sat with the Prophet ﷺ in the elevated encampment at Badr, and you were also his companion in the cave, thus earning the title ***Companion of the Cave***." (Al-Isti'ab, p. 431)

Consider this carefully: In these verses, it is stated with an oath—*"Sabaqta ilā al-Islām wa Allāhu shāhid"*—that **As-Siddiq al-Akbar (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, RA) was the first to embrace Islam**. This is a clear **direct contradiction** of the statement cited regarding seven Companions, in which it was claimed that Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (RA) was the first to accept Islam.

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Moreover, the same **'Allamah Ib `Abd al-Barr** in his book *Al-Isti'ab* reports from **Hakam ibn Hajl** that Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (RA) said:

> *"Whoever I find claiming (me) to be superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I would subject him to the punishment prescribed for the slanderer (had al-muftari)*
>
> *(Al-Isti'ab, p. 434)*

Now consider this carefully: Should we accept the weak, isolated narration you presented, or should we recognize the authentic, mutawatir (mass transmitted) statement of Sayyiduna Ali (RA) as recorded in the same book?

Here is an important point: after this firm and well-established declaration of Sayyiduna Ali (RA), **no one was ever subjected to the prescribed punishment for denying the superiority of the Shaykhyn**, which clearly indicates that from that point onward, **all acknowledged the superiority of the Shaykhyn**, and anyone attempting to deny it had effectively withdrawn. The fact that the punishment was never applied serves as living evidence that among all the Companions mentioned in *Al-Isti'ab*, **no one denied the superiority of the Shaykhyn**, and therefore the isolated narration is unreliable.

Ninthly: Consider this question: in Ibn `Abd al-Barr's narration, is the superiority being referred to **apparent (political) caliphate** or **inner (spiritual) authority**?

If it refers to the apparent caliphate, then it contradicts your own position. And if it refers to spiritual authority **(wilāyah)**, then this narration implies **absolute superiority**, and indeed we maintain that **spiritual superiority entails absolute precedence**, which is exactly what the ***Tafdhiliyyahs*** asserts.

Thus, you are left with three options:

> *Either interpret the superiority of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) as pertaining to political khilāfah (outward leadership),*
>
> *Or accept his superiority in absolute terms and openly declare yourself a* ***Tafḍīlī,***
>
> *Or, recognizing the confusion and ambiguity in this narration, disengage from it altogether.*

As it is said:

> *"I do not tell you what to do; do as you find easier."*

Tenth, To abandon clear and consensus-based beliefs for the sake of such solitary narrations is a deviation from the path of the believers. Sayyidunā Muʿādh ibn Jabal (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

> *"Verily, Shayṭān (satan) is the wolf of man, just as a wolf is to sheep. He captures the one who separates from the flock, who strays far, or lingers on the edges. Beware of narrow mountain passes (devious paths), and stick to the congregation and the masses."*
>
> *(Musnad Aḥmad, Vol. 5, p. 287, Ḥadīth 22168)*

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Thus, we humbly request the Tafḍīlī Rāfiḍīs to reflect upon the unanimous consensus on:

> *The bodily ascension (Miʿrāj) of the Prophet ﷺ,*
>
> *The legitimacy of the four Caliphs' khilāfah,*
>
> *and the evidences prohibiting reviling the two Shaykhs.*

The type of contentious disputation being raised against the consensus on the superiority of the two Shaykhs could be employed with even greater scope for sophistry in all these matters.

In particular, all the objections being raised against the consensus on the superiority of the two Shaykhs could, with even greater force, be directed against the caliphate of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him). Indeed, the methodological corruption of the Tafdhilis would ultimately engulf issues such as the authority of ḥadīth, the continued life of Prophet ʿĪsā (peace be upon him), and the prescribed punishment for one who insults the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The manner in which Tafḍīlīs distort clear-cut evidence and pit decisive texts (*muḥkamāt*) against ambiguous ones (*mutashābihāt*) would erode trust in Islamic scholarship and leave the door wide open for heretical groups such as the Parwēzīs, extremist Rāfiḍīs, and the Qādiyānīs.

Moreover, **even if**, for argument's sake, the belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs were only the view of the majority (*jumhūr*), still, to oppose the majority's decision would invoke the severe warning:

> مَنْ شَذَّ شُذَّ فِي النَّارِ
>
> *"Whoever deviates from the congregation shall be cast into the Fire."*

Ala Hazrat Imam Aḥmad Raza Khan (may Allah sanctify his secret) went to the extent of stating:

> *"If an authentic ḥadīth apparently contradicts the belief in the superiority of the Shaykhs, then it must absolutely be interpreted appropriately (ta'wīl). And if — falsely assumed — no sound interpretation is possible, then that narration must be rejected outright, because the superiority of the two Shaykhs is established by mutawātir reports and consensus (ijmāʿ). And no solitary narrations (āḥād) can ever stand against mutawātir and consensus."*
>
> *(Fatāwā Riḍawiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 509)*

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THE TENTH QUESTION OF THE TAFDHILIYYA

Where the superiority of Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them) has been mentioned, it is claimed that the Ahl al-Bayt (the purified household) are exempted. The Ahl al-Bayt are the beloved members of the Prophet's household — described as pieces of his heart and part of his very being — and they hold a rank inseparably connected to him ﷺ.

In Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah, Volume 1, page 180, a statement is attributed to Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) saying that "Ali is from the Ahl al-Bayt and cannot be analogized to other companions." A similar statement is attributed to Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy on him).

Answer:

This statement in *Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* is quoted **without any chain of transmission or source reference**. Just before this, it is mentioned that based on the Hadith of Ibn Umar, *"ثم نسكت"* ("then we remain silent"), it is incorrect to deny the superiority of Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah honor his face) after the first three Caliphs. While refuting the Kharijites who denied Ali's fourth rank, Muhibb al-Tabari mentioned this so-called exemption. Thus, this exemption relates to companions **other than** the three Caliphs. Read the actual words of *Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*:

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عُلِمَ اَنَّ ابْنَ عُمَرَ لَمْ يُرِدْ بِاَحَادِيْثِهِ الْمُتَقَدِّمِ ذِكْرِهَا فِي بَابِ الثَّالِثَةِ نَفْيَ اَفْضَلِيَّةِ عَلِيٍّ بَعْدَ عُثْمَانَ وَيَدُلُّ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ اَنَّهٗ قَدْ جَاءَ فِيْ بَعْضِ طُرُقِ حَدِيْثِهٖ : فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ لِابْنِ عُمَرَ يَا اَبَا عَبْدِالرَّحْمٰنِ ، فَعَلِيٌّ ؟ قَالَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ عَلِيٌّ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ لَا يُقَاسُ بِهِمْ

"It is known that Ibn Umar did not intend by his earlier narrations to deny Ali's superiority after Uthman. And it is evident from one of the narrations where a man asked Ibn Umar: 'O Abu Abdur Rahman! What about Ali?' He replied: 'Ali is from the Ahl al-Bayt; he is not to be compared with them (other companions).'"

This is the original context of *Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*. Islamic debaters have long observed that the answer to every Rafidhi argument lies either just before or after the passages they quote.

Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlawi writes:

"Indeed, among the companions after Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him), Ali (may Allah honor his face) is the most superior because he is from the Ahl al-Bayt. And the Ahl al-Bayt should not be compared with other companions."

(Fatawa Aziziyya, page 233)

The subsequent words of the cited narration are:

"Fatima is alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in his rank, and Ali is alongside Fatima (peace be upon her)."

(Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah, Volume 2, page 180)

If this narration is accepted as authentic, then after the Prophet ﷺ, **the highest rank would be attributed to Sayyida Fatima al-Zahra** (may Allah be pleased with her). Thus, the entire balance of the doctrine of belief in superiority (Tafḍīl) would be disturbed. Indeed, it is a fact that a person who deviates from the established consensus-based beliefs (Ijma') of the Ummah not only loses scholarly balance — let alone intellectual balance.

Similarly, before the statement of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy on him), the three Caliphs are mentioned. When the question of Ali's superiority arose after them, then the exemption (if any) was made. The particle "Fa" (**فَ**) in "Fa-Aliyyun" (**فَعَلِيٌّ**) clearly indicates this.

Secondly, *Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah* itself records multiple narrations where Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) states:

> *"The most superior among the people is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then myself."*
>
> *(Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah, Volume 1, page 57)*

Why did you not consider these narrations as well?

> *In Hadith, the four rightly guided Caliphs are mentioned in exactly this order: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali.*
>
> *(Refer to: Al-Shifa, Volume 2, page 42; Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah, Volume 1, page 47; Kanz al-Ummal, Volume 11, page 292, Hadith 33089.)*

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Thirdly, the companions and successors (Tabi'un) reached a consensus (Ijma') that **the most superior is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali** (*Fath al-Bari*, Volume 7, page 21).

Moreover, the scholars and the Sufiya masters (may Allah have mercy on them) have explicitly written:

> *"The most superior of the Muhammadan saints (Auliya) after the Prophets and Messengers are: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali."*
>
> *(Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir, page 437; Sharh Fiqh Akbar, page 62; Matn Aqidah al-Nasafiyyah, page 3; Nibras, page 303; Sharh Maqasid, Volume 2, page 298)*

Where then remains the exemption?

Critical Analysis of the "Exemption" Argument

Fourthly: If being described as a “piece of the Prophet’s heart” is taken as the basis for exemption, then Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha cannot be included under that description, for he is not referred to as a “part” (*biḍʿah*) of the Messenger, but rather as his cousin. On what grounds, then, would his exemption be justified?

Fifth point is that, if such an exemption is granted, then **Sayyida Fatima al-Zahra** (peace be upon her) should have the highest rank after the Prophet ﷺ. There is explicit text stating:

"Fatima is a part of me."

(Bukhari, Hadith no. 3767)

Thus, the entire structure of the Tafḍīl doctrine would collapse.

Sixthly, the Ummah is in consensus that **Hasan and Husayn** (may Allah be pleased with them) are not superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them). **(*Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah*, page 59)**

Another important pointy is that if this were indeed the case, then what need was there to introduce the distinction between the outward caliphate (*khilāfat ẓāhiriyyah*) and the inward sainthood (*wilāyat bāṭiniyyah*)? Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha could simply have been declared exempt from every form of preferential comparison.

Moreover, the statement of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) himself also indicates that he was not exempt from this preferential ranking. Thus, he (may Allah honor his noble face) said:

"I am nothing but a man from among the Muslims."

(Bukhari, Hadith no. 3671)

If this statement is interpreted as an expression of humility, then why did Imām al-Bāqir (may Allah have mercy on him) say:

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"He is one among the believers."

(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, page 41)

If this too is not accepted, then consider further. Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) stated:

"Whoever considers me superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I will punish him with eighty lashes."

(Fada'il al-Sahabah, 49 and others)

Now consider, **what kind of humility would it be that one punishes a person so severely merely for speaking what is presumed to be the truth?**

The Prophet's ﷺ Appointment of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr

Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah honor his face) said:

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, being fully aware of my and Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's respective ranking, decided accordingly and commanded Abū Bakr to lead the prayer."

(Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, page 62)

He also said:

> *"Allah deemed Sayyiduna Abu Bakr superior to us and granted him authority (Wilayah) over us."*
>
> *(Mustadrak al-Hakim, Hadith no. 4756)*

Thus, the entire foundation of the exemption argument is shattered.

Correct Understanding of Exemption

If one truly wishes to understand the reality of **supposed exemption,** know that the virtues of Sayyiduna Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), whether stated by himself or his followers, **pertain to his own time and those who followed him** — they do not exempt him from the superiority of the first three Caliphs, **particularly Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar**. The temporal precedence of the Khulafa is a clear proof of this.

Clarification Regarding the Ahl al-Bayt

Now kindly clarify:

> *Who do you consider to be part of the Ahl al-Bayt?*
>
> *Do you include the noble wives (Ummahat al-Mu'minin) (may Allah be pleased with them) among them, whose inclusion in the Ahl al-Bayt is established by the Qur'anic text?*
>
> *And are they also included in your so-called exemption, or are they to be excluded?*

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If you exclude them, then logically all the noble wives should be regarded as superior to the entire Ummah.

If you deny their inclusion, you will be inevitably following the path of the **Rafidah**.

As the poet says:

دو گونہ رنج و عذاب است جانِ مجنوں را
بلائے صحبتِ لیلیٰ و بلائے فرقتِ لیلیٰ

> *"The soul of Majnun suffers doubly, Both from the company of Layla and the separation from Layla."*

Whose Creed Is This Really?

Lastly, know whose creed you are adopting.

Allama Abdul Wahid Seyustani writes:

> *"The belief that the Ahl al-Bayt are superior and specially chosen over all companions, even over the Caliphs, is the belief of the Rafidah."*
>
> *(Rasa'il Seyustani, page 136)*

THE ELEVENTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

In As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, it is written with reference to some scholars that:

"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is Khair (best) and Ali is Afdal (superior)."

Answer:

First: Kindly inform us, **which scholars** have written this? Please mention their **names** and provide **references to their books**.

Second: This statement was written by **Ibn Hajar al-Makki** with the intention of **refuting** it. Yet you have **adopted the rejected statement** and **ignored its refutation**, as if:

*"**You have memorized something but many other things have escaped you!**"*

Why have you committed such a manipulation?

Third: Ibn Hajar wrote this statement as follows:

"Al-Khattabi narrated it from one of his teachers who used to say: 'Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is Khair and Ali is Superior."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 58)

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Now consider how weak and feeble this statement is, and how lifelessly it has been transmitted:

Khattabi only narrated it.

That too, from one of his teachers.

*God knows **who that teacher was** and what his beliefs were.*

And he merely used to say so.

Reflect carefully on all these aspects.

***Every single word of this statement is crippled**.*

Fourth: In the very same line, **Ibn Hajar al-Makki** also **refuted this statement**, yet you conveniently ignored his refutation. He wrote:

"This statement is among the nonsense (hifwat), because the meaning of Khair is the same as Afdal."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 58)

Why did you "digest" this part?

Fifth: If it is meant that **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** is *Khair* due to certain aspects and **Sayyiduna Ali** is *Afdal* due to some other aspects, then **this phenomenon exists among all Companions**, not just between Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Ali.

Almost every Companion possessed certain exclusive virtues not found in others.

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 58)

Sixth: If the teacher of Khattabi intended that **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is absolutely superior** and **Ali has some special attributes**, then this is a valid understanding and **no one disputes this**. Otherwise, the statement of Khattabi's teacher is **extremely fallacious and nonsensical**, as Ibn Hajar said:

"Otherwise, his statement is in the utmost degree of incoherence."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 58)

Now, tell us, what remains in your hands, and how can you still cling to this statement?

Seventh: In the Quranic verse وَاللّٰهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِيْنَ:

"Allah is the Best (Khair) of Providers."

(Al-Quran)

Allah is called Khair. Will you now say that Allah is Khair but someone else is Afdal (superior)?

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ is called:

"Khair al-Anaam (the best of mankind)."

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Can you ever say: "The Prophet ﷺ is Khair but not Afdal?" Especially when sayings like:"Do not give me superiority over Musa (Moses)." (are found in Hadiths).

Eighth: In the verse:

"You are the best nation (Khair-a-Ummat)." (Al-Quran)

This Ummah is called **Khair**. Will you then say: "This Ummah is Khair but some other nation is Afdal?" Especially when it is stated about Bani Israel: "We gave you superiority over all nations." (Al-Quran)

Moreover, for all four **Rightly Guided Caliphs** including **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha**, it is reported:

"They are the best of my companions (Khair-u-Ashabi)."

Now tell us: "Are these four Caliphs Khair, while someone else is Afdal?"

Ninth: There are Hadiths with expressions such as:

"We used to consider (nukhaayir)..." (Bukhari)

"The most superior nation (afdal ummat al-nabi)..." (Abu Dawud)

"We did not equate (laa na'dil)..." (Bukhari)

"The leader of the elders (sayyid al-kuhul)..." (Tirmidhi)

Words of "Sayyiduna" used by Hazrat Umar-e-Faarooq are also present (reported in Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Mustadrak).

And **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha** himself said:

"I do not find anyone who gives me superiority over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, except that I would punish him with the penalty of a slanderer."

(Al-Isti'ab, etc.)

Now tell us:

How will you deal with all these different expressions, especially those explicitly mentioning afdal (superiority)?

Whatever tricks you may attempt, these Hadiths **will block your way**.

Tenth: When scholars reported the **Ijma' (consensus)** of the Ummah, they used the term ***Afdal* (Superior).**

Examples:

Aqaid Nasafi (Text, p. 3)

Imam Nawawi (Vol. 2, p. 272)

Izalat al-Khafa (Vol. 1, p. 311)

Matla' al-Qamrayn (p. 67)

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Imam A'zam Abu Hanifa said:

"The most superior of people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him)."

Mulla Ali al-Qari said:

"He is the most superior of all saints (Auliya), among the earlier and later ones, and consensus has been transmitted on this. The disagreement of the Rawafid is of no consequence (holds no weight)."

(Sharh Fiqh Akbar, p. 61)

Here, **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is referred to as Afdal (most superior)**, not merely Khair (best), and **the consensus of the Ummah** is mentioned regarding this, and **superiority has been affirmed in absolute spiritual excellence (wilayah)**, not limited only to outward caliphate.

Similarly, there is also consensus of the Ummah on Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq being **the Khair (best)** of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr (*Mirqat*, Vol. 11, p. 334).

Thus, it becomes clear that the Ummah has made no distinction between *Afdal* and *Khair* regarding Sayyiduna Abu Bakr. and both terms have been used to establish the superiority of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (may Allah be pleased with him).

Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti even established a chapter titled:

> فَصْلٌ فِيْ اَنَّهٗ اَفْضَلُ الصَّحَابَةِ وَخَيْرُهُم
>
> *"A Section on the Fact that He (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr) is the Most Superior and the Best of the Companions."*
>
> *(Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 37)*

This heading alone **eliminates any supposed difference** between *Khair* and *Afdal*, handing it back to the Tafdhilis. Similarly, **Allama Muhibb al-Tabari** also set a chapter:

> اِخْتِصَاصُهٗ بِالْاَفْضَلِيَّةِ وَالْخَيْرِيَّةِ
>
> *"His Distinction in Superiority and Goodness."*
>
> *(Al-Riyad al-Nadhirah, Vol. 1, p. 136)*

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Finally,

Just as **Qadianis** try to deny the consensus (Ijma') on the issues of the **life of Jesus** and **finality of Prophethood** by clinging to the rejected or weak opinion of someone like **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan**, and argue that if such a person held a differing view, then how can consensus still be claimed? In the same way, **Tafdhilis** today are attempting to **breach the consensus** by relying upon **rejected and anomalous statements**. Thus,

> *"Take heed, O people of insight!"*

THE TWELFTH QUESTION TO TAFDHILIYYA

It is claimed:

> *"Just as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the Seal of the Prophets (Khatam al-Anbiya) and superior to all Prophets, likewise Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha is the Seal of the Caliphs (Khatam al-Khulafa) and superior to all Caliphs."*

Answer:

First: Whose statement is this? **Please provide a proper reference**.

Second: This analogy is incorrect. The matter of Khatm al-Nubuwwah (Seal of Prophethood) is proven through definitive, categorical texts (nass qat'i), and its denial amounts to disbelief (kufr). Khilafah (Caliphate) cannot be compared to it.

Third: Which Caliphs is Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha claimed to be the "seal" of?

> *Political Caliphs?*
>
> *Spiritual Caliphs?*

And with this alleged "sealship," are you trying to prove **outward (zahir)** superiority, or **inward (batin)** superiority? Please answer with your **internal ideology** in mind.

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Fourth: If you claim that Sayyiduna Ali is *Khatam al-Khulafa*, then **how is that possible**, when in Hadith there is mention of **twelve Caliphs**?

> *How can the fourth Caliph be termed the Seal of the Caliphs?*

Fifth: If you interpret *Khatam al-Khulafa* to mean **Seal of the Saints (*Khatam al-Awliya*)**, then you would also have to **accept** that the **first three Caliphs** were also **Awliya (Saints)**, and not merely political rulers.

Moreover, you would have to **believe** that after Sayyiduna Ali , **the door of sainthood (wilayah)** is **closed** — which is clearly false.

Sixth: If **"Khatam al-Khulafa"** is taken to mean "the most superior among the caliphs," then by the same logic the Prophet ﷺ could also be described as **"Khatam al-Anbiya"** in the sense of "the most superior among the prophets." However, such an interpretation would inevitably entail the doctrinal implications associated with **Qadianism** and the views of **Nanawtawism**.

Seventh: When we raise the slogan "**Haq Char Yaar**" (Truth is with the Four Friends — the Rightly Guided Caliphs), some people immediately bring up the name of **the fifth Caliph, Imam Hasan** (Peace and blessings be upon his grandfather and him), to somehow **break the number four**.

But now, how have you yourself declared Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha as the Seal of Caliphs while Imam Hasan still exists? By your own logic, you should now grant the title of *Khatam al-Khulafa* to Imam Hasan and accept his superiority over Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha.

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THE THIRTEENTH QUESTION TO TAFDHILIYYA

"The disagreement among the Ummah is a mercy, and one should demonstrate broad-heartedness in disputed matters. Therefore, writing critically on the subject of Tafdil (preference of Hazrat Ali over Sheikhain) seems to be an act of extremism. Where has your broad-mindedness and tolerance gone?"

Answer:

1. A Simple Proposal

Let us resolve this matter easily: you accept the superiority of the two Sheikhs (Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar), demonstrate your broad-heartedness, and everything will be settled and remained firmly attached to the Quran, Sunnah, and Ijma (consensus).

2. Difference Between Fundamental and Secondary Issues

The mercy associated with differences refers only to **secondary (furu'i) issues**, not to **fundamental (usuli) ones**. We regret that those who make such statements are unaware of the basic distinction between fundamental and secondary issues. An effective way to explain this is by reminding them of the Quranic verses where certain groups were declared **polytheists**, **disbelievers**, **hypocrites**, **transgressors**, **devils**, and **inhabitants of Hell**. These people would admit that the mentioned groups clashed with the **fundamental tenets** of Islam. Similarly, the issue of Tafdil is a **fundamental issue**; it does not belong to secondary topics like *Sujud al-Sahw*, *used water*, *leading prayer via loudspeaker*, or the *chain of a wristwatch*. It is related to **Aqeedah (creed)**, and the one who adheres to the Tafdhili doctrine falls outside Ahl al-Sunnah. The Ahl al-Sunnah is that **seventy-third group** which the Noble Prophet ﷺ declared as destined for Paradise in his words:

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"What I and my Companions are upon" (**ما أنا عليه وأصحابي**).

You have already read in detail in this book what the decision of the Noble Prophet ﷺ and his Companions is. As for the other sects, we have not declared them deviant on our own accord or from personal reasoning. Rather, it is the Noble Prophet **Muhammad Mustafa** ﷺ who, through his truth-speaking tongue, has described them as destined for Hell, as stated in the narration:

"All of them will be in the Fire except one."

(Tirmidhi: 2641, Mishkat: 171)

Tell us now:

Did the Noble Prophet ﷺ, by declaring them as hell-bound, (God forbid) act with severity or extremism?

3. Clear Warnings Against Deviant Sects

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ declared the **Qadariyyah** as the **Magians (Zoroastrians) of this Ummah** (Abu Dawood: 4691). Regarding the **Rawafid**, he said they would **depart from Islam** (Musnad Ahmad, Vol. 1, p. 128, Hadith: 811). Regarding the **Khawarij**, he said:

> *"Glad tidings to the one who fights them and kills them, and the one killed by them."*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 4765)*

Now answer carefully:

> *Are all these warnings acts of extremism?*
>
> *Where is your reliance on the idea of "disagreement being a mercy"?*
>
> *Where is your demonstration of broad-heartedness?*
>
> *Where has your charge (fatwa) of extremism disappeared?*

4. A Humble Reminder

Dear respected one! Please stop assuming others to be naive and imprudent. By Allah's greatness, we have approached many scholars confidentially, in subsidiary **(furu'i)** or even highly complicated issues, invited them toward the truth, and many accepted — without the general public ever knowing. Blessed is the one who has someone to guide him; miserable is the one who either has no guide or refuses to accept guidance. (May Allah protect us from this misfortune!)

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5. Speaking the Truth and Enjoining Good

Remember, It should be borne in mind that identifying error as error is a duty incumbent upon the scholars. Those who confine themselves to an exclusively affirmative mode of discourse and object to refutation are, in effect, rejecting half of the responsibility of religious propagation. The wheel of religion turns on two axes: **Enjoining Good (Amr bil Ma'ruf)** and **Forbidding Evil (Nahi anil Munkar)**. Enjoining good is positive instruction, while forbidding evil is the refutation of falsehood. Throughout history, forces of falsehood have rarely objected to enjoining good; rather, most objections and discord have arisen in relation to forbidding evil.

6. The Prophet ﷺ's Sensitivity on Superiority

The Prophet ﷺ once saw a companion walking ahead of **Siddiq-e-Akbar**. The Prophet ﷺ stopped him and said:

> *"You are walking ahead of a person whom the sun has not seen anyone better than."*

Reflect:

> *Why did the Prophet ﷺ take such a strong stance over such a small matter?*

7. Hazrat Ali's Own Statement

> *"Whoever considers me superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I will punish him with lashes."*

Now tell us, is this leniency or strictness?

8. Views of Imam Sufyan al-Thawri

> *"Whoever considers Ali superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, I do not consider any of his deeds as acceptable." (Abu Dawood: 4630)*
>
> *Is this soft behavior or strictness?*

9. Scholarly Consensus Against Tafdhilis

The scholars of the Ummah declared the **Tafdhilis** outside the fold of **Ahl al-Sunnah**. They even forbade offering their funeral prayers. Eminent scholars like **Shah Waliullah**, **Shah Abdul Aziz**, **Mir Abdul Wahid**, and **Fazil-e-Barelvi** wrote independent refutations against them. All these details you have already read in this book.

Now tell us, is this soft-heartedness or strictness?

10. Severe Warnings by Scholars

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Allama **Ibn Hajar al-Makki** cited the verse "**Nuslihi Jahannam**" against the Tafdhilis (Sawaiq, p. 59). Hazrat **Mir Abdul Wahid Bilgrami** wrote in refutation of the Tafdhilis:

> *"The consensus of the Companions constitutes the foundation of religion, the source of illumination, and the key to certitude. Whoever rejects this consensus is, in his view, repudiated by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and is swiftly rendered rejected in the divine court. The knot of his misfortune cannot be undone, for denial of these illustrious Companions is tantamount to denial of Allah and His Messenger. Thus, whoever adopts a path contrary to the Sunnah bears the collar of divine curse upon his neck."."*
>
> *(Sab'a Sanabil, p. 18)*

Tell us, is this leniency or strictness?

Once **Imam Taftazani** lightly stated that " in terms of abundance of reward, hesitation (tawaqquf) between ʿUthmān al-Ghanī and ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā is acceptable, whereas in respect of other perfections, ʿAlī al-Murtaḍā is superior to ʿUthmān al-Ghanī. Upon examining this statement, scholars reprimanded him harshly, saying that this statement carried the stench of **Rafidhism**. **Mujaddid Alf Thani** in **Maktubat, Volume 1, Letter 266** severely criticized it, stating:

> *"What Mawlānā Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī considered to be justice is in fact far removed from true equity, and that his attempted refutation is entirely unsubstantiated."*

Now, the question is: if such a statement—pertaining only to ʿUthmān al-Ghanī—elicits from the scholars not merely the label of tafḍīl but even accusations of Rāfiḍism, would this be considered severity or leniency? And if a person of deviant belief were to assert the superiority of ʿAlī over the two Shaykhs, would he not be even more deserving of a stricter legal and theological ruling? May Allah be pleased with all the Companions of our Master Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ."

Disturbance in the hierarchy of superiority is not the only issue; even equating the four Rightly Guided Caliphs or adopting a position of suspension (tawaqquf) in this matter is regarded as severely reprehensible and a deviation from the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah. Mujaddid Alf Thani said:

> *"uspension (tawaqquf) in this issue would only be permissible if no explicit clarification had been transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ. However, once clarification from the Lawgiver has been established, then what justification remains for adopting suspension?"*

He wrote:

> *"And the one who considers all to be equal and regards giving preference to one over another as pointless is himself a foolish person; indeed, a strange fool who considers the consensus of the أهل الحق (people of truth) to be futile."*
>
> *(Maktubat-e-Imam Rabbani, First Volume, Letter 266)*

11. Appropriate Use of Leniency and Strictness

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When refuting falsehood, adopting either leniency or strictness according to the situation is correct. However, remaining silent in the face of falsehood is **unwarranted leniency** and a **lack of religious honor**.

Those who speak in such a manner often beat the drum of "moderation" to pave the way for the promotion of their own flawed ideas. Whatever they assert is then labeled as "research," while anyone who refutes them is branded as extreme.

Those who preach "broad-mindedness" to others maintain cordial relations with people who utter disrespectful remarks against the Noble Prophet ﷺ, the Companions, and the purified Ahl al-Bayt (may blessings and peace be upon them). They tolerate such misconduct in the name of tolerance. Yet, when any criticism is directed toward one of their own favored leaders, they cannot bear it at all. One must ask: what answer does a person with a living conscience have to this inconsistency?

Some people, driven by a particular agenda, spend years preaching 'broad-heartedness', 'tolerance' and the idea that difference of opinion is a mercy, only to eventually claim **prophethood, Mahdi-hood**, or introduces a figure whose acceptance is akin to tolerating Satan. The reality is that those who deal in falsehood often have no more effective strategy to promote their corruption than to first cultivate an atmosphere of tolerance and intellectual broad-mindedness. This "lesson of tolerance" is the classical tool of impostors like **Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani**, to make gullible Muslims gradually accept his false claims.

THE FOURTEENTH QUESTION OF TAFDHILIYYA

It is narrated that Ma'mar said:

> *"If someone considers Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), I do not act harshly towards him, provided he loves both Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar)." Waki' liked this statement (as recorded in As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, page 58).*

Answer:

The Noble Prophet ﷺ would take serious notice of such actions. He repeatedly emphasized that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) are superior to all others. He did not even allow anyone to walk ahead of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr.

Now, tell us, *Should we follow the beloved Prophet ﷺ's words or Ma'mar's opinion?*

Secondly, Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) himself demonstrated severe disapproval of such acts. He would order **eighty lashes** for anyone who claimed his superiority over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar.

Now, tell us, *should we accept Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha's strong action or Ma'mar's leniency?*

Thirdly, we have repeatedly mentioned in this book that there is unanimous consensus (Ijma') among the Ummah on this matter.

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> *Why do you prefer an isolated, abandoned, and rejected opinion over the consensus of the Ummah?*
>
> *Why did you not care about the command: "Follow the greater majority (As-Sawad al-A'zam)" and why did you ignore the warning: "Beware of divisions; adhere to the congregation and the majority"?*

Fourthly, we have already explained that an isolated statement can be found supporting almost any absurd notion. For example:

> *One statement claims that Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) was not a prophet.*
>
> *Another claims that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is not superior to all other Prophets.*
>
> *Another says it is permissible to say "May Allah have mercy on Yazid," and that Imam Ghazali did not object to it.*

Tell us:

> *If you are pleased to be associated with Yazid, then you may also embrace Ma'mar's statement. Otherwise, refrain from stepping into such a dangerous valley.*

Fifthly, this statement is essentially narrated by the Muhaddith 'Abd al-Razzaq from Ma'mar (Al-Isti'ab, page 554). It is widely known that 'Abd al-Razzaq had Shi'a tendencies. Thus, great caution must be exercised when accepting his narrations on such sensitive issues. Moreover, even the author of Al-Isti'ab, Abu 'Umar, used this very narration to affirm the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr! Immediately after quoting Ma'mar's statement, he writes:

> *"This indicates that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is superior to Umar."*
>
> *(Al-Isti'ab, page 554)*

Thus, the meaning of Ma'mar's statement is that superiority belongs to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, but Ma'mar did not declare one who denies this superiority as a disbeliever or apply legal punishments. Nevertheless, he had no doubt about the misguidance and bid'ah of such a person.

After quoting this statement, As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah explains that this shows the belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs is based on speculative evidence (zanni), not absolute certainty (qat'i). (As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, page 58). Imam Ibn Hajar al-Makki uses this to argue that denying the superiority of the Shaykhs is not disbelief. This does not harm our position in any way.

Rebuttal by Allama Parharwi

Allama Parharwi also quoted Ma'mar's statement in *Maram al-Kalam* precisely for the purpose of refuting it. You have adopted Ma'mar's statement but overlooked its scholarly rebuttal.

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He writes:

> *" "That is, the stern stance of ʿAlī (may Allah honor his noble face) against those who preferred him over the two Shaykhs—and his punishment of them—serves as a refutation of Maʿmar's leniency."*
>
> *(Maram al-Kalam, page 47)*

Thus, here also your method resembles that of the Qadianis, who selectively quote rejected statements while swallowing the scholarly refutations.

Now, listen about Waki', who approved Ma'mar's statement:

> *Waki' fabricated a narration claiming that the blessed body of the Prophet ﷺ deteriorated like that of ordinary deceased people because of the delay in his burial.*

Mufti Abdul Majeed bin Rawad of Makkah issued a fatwa for his execution. The Ottoman ruler of that time arranged for him to be crucified, but due to someone's intercession, he was released. Later, the ruler regretted having let him go, and Waki' set out towards Madinah. The ruler then wrote to the people of Madinah, instructing that as soon as Wakīʿ arrived, he should be stoned to death. However, Wakīʿ learned of this on the way, so he fled toward Kūfa. (*Nasim al-Riyad*, Volume 1, page 390)

Thus, if Waki; could occur such a grave error, it is not surprising that he showed leniency in the matter of superiority.

Moreover, much of the answer to this Fourteenth Question is already addressed in the Thirteenth Question. We have cited scholars labeling the Tafdhilis as:

> *People of Hellfire, Accursed, Rejected, Mere babblers*

In front of such overwhelming evidence, what significance does Ma'mar's solitary statement hold? By quoting Ma'mar's statement, the Tafdhilis themselves have admitted that the consensus of the Ummah is on the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar. Even Ma'mar agreed with this consensus.

The only difference is that while the entire Ummah reacted strongly, Ma'mar did not advocate legal punishments (like takfir, execution, or other penalties).

Thus, while Tafdhilis try to escape these legal consequences using Ma'mar's statement, they cannot escape the undeniable fact of the Shaykhains' superiority.

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CORRECTION OF A MAJOR SCHOLARLY MISTAKE

The Claim

> *Some people say: "We also accept the superiority (afdaliyyah) of Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, may Allah be pleased with them), but this is the belief of the majority (jumhoor), not a matter of consensus (ijma'). Sayyida Aisha Siddiqa (may Allah be pleased with her) believed that the leader of the women of Paradise, Fatima al-Zahra (may Allah be pleased with her), was the most superior (as narrated by Tabarani in Al-Awsat). Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) believed that Ja'far al-Tayyar (may Allah be pleased with him) was the most superior (narrated in Tirmidhi). Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) believed that among the people of Madinah, Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) was the most superior (mentioned in Fada'il al-Sahabah). Some scholars opine that Umar al-Farooq (may Allah be pleased with him) is the most superior, while others opine that Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) is the most superior, and others say Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) is the most superior. Hence, it is understood that all these beliefs are valid, and adopting one over the other makes no difference. When various sayings exist about the superiority of different Companions, why do you get enraged at the mention of only Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha?"*

The Response

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You have quoted sayings from various noble personalities but did not consider all their statements comprehensively, nor approached their meanings with sincerity and scholarly investigation.

(1) About the Saying of Umm al-Mu'minin, Sayyida Aisha Siddiqa (may Allah be pleased with her)

You presented the statement that Sayyida Aisha Siddiqa considered Sayyida Fatimah al-Zahra (may Allah be pleased with her) superior. However, the complete context is as follows:

The same Umm al-Mu'minin (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates:

> *"I saw in a dream three moons descend into my home."*

The Prophet ﷺ interpreted this by saying:

> *"Three persons from the best of all people on the face of the earth will be buried in your house."*
>
> *(Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4456, 4455; Muwatta Imam Malik, p.162) Hakim declared this narration authentic (sahih), and Dhahabi confirmed it.*

Furthermore, the same Umm al-Mu'minin (may Allah be pleased with her) also narrates:

> *"No people should lead prayer in the presence of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3673)*

She further reports:

> *"Allah and His angels are denouncing anyone who refuses to accept Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, except for Sayyiduna Abu Bakr himself."*
>
> *(Muslim: 6181)*

Thus, it becomes very clear that Umm al-Mu'minin mentioned the superiority of Sayyida Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) in a **partial and specific sense**, i.e., due to her being *Badi'a al-Rasul* (a part of the Prophet ﷺ).

(2) About the Saying of Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him)

You cited that Abu Huraira considered Ja'far al-Tayyar (may Allah be pleased with him) the most superior. Again, you neglected the full picture.

And it is this very Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrates it as a *marfū'* report (i.e., attributed directly to the Prophet ﷺ) :

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr will be the first of my Ummah to enter Paradise."*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 4652; Mustadrak al-Hakim: 4500)*

He also narrates another *marfū'* report:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr will be called from all eight gates of Paradise."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 1897; Muslim: 2371)*

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The same Abū Hurayrah also narrates:

> *"I have repaid the favors of everyone except Sayyiduna Abu Bakr; Allah will repay him on the Day of Resurrection. The wealth of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr benefitted me more than the wealth of anyone else. If I were to take anyone as a khalil (intimate friend), I would have taken Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 3661; Ibn Majah: 94)*

As for the narration you quoted, it is found in Musnad Ahmad where it is stated:

> *"Abu Huraira considered Ja'far al-Tayyar the best in generosity and benevolence after the Prophet ﷺ."*
>
> *(Musnad Ahmad: 9372)*

Thus, it is evident that this narration refers to Ja'far's **superiority in generosity**, not overall superiority.

Bukhari also clarifies:

"The most generous towards the poor was Ja'far ibn Abi Talib."

(Bukhari: 3708)

Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani states:

"The narration in Tirmidhi must be restricted by the explanation given in Bukhari."

(Fath al-Bari, vol. 7, p. 89)

It was due to this generosity that the Prophet ﷺ titled Ja'far as

"Father of the Poor" (Abu al-Masakeen).

(Tirmidhi: 3766; Fath al-Bari, vol.7, p.89)

Another noteworthy point: Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) accepted Islam in Muharram of 7 AH, and Ja'far al-Tayyar was martyred in Jumada al-Awwal of 8 AH during the Battle of Mu'tah. Think for yourself—how could Abu Huraira have made such a grand judgment in such a short period?

(3) About the Saying of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him)

You presented that Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said:

"Among the people of Madinah, Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him) was the most superior," and considered this narration as conflicting with that of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them).

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The answer is simple:

The narration from Ibn Umar contains the wording "while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was alive," whereas the narration from Ibn Mas'ud does not mention this.

Thus, reconciliation is straightforward: Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) made this statement **after** the passing of the Shaykhayn (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar).

Hafiz Ibn Hajar states:

"It is understood that Ibn Mas'ud said this after the martyrdom of Umar."

(Fath al-Bari, 7/68)

Important Note

The scholars have stated:

"It is not permissible for a non-mujtahid (non-scholar) to derive rulings from the apparent wording of Hadith without verifying whether the Hadith is abrogated (mansukh), interpreted (mu'awwal), or restricted (muqayyad)."

Hence, even if someone is a great scholar, he must follow the final verdicts of the Imams after the processes of *abrogation, preference,* and *reconciliation*. Opposing these is like striking against a mountain!

(4) About the Claim That Different Scholars Preferred Different Companions

You wrote that some preferred Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), some Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), and some Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him).

The response:

Those who made such claims have been expelled from Ahl al-Sunnah.

*Those who preferred Umar are known as the **Khattabiyyah**.*

*Those who preferred Ali are known as the **Shi'ah**.*

*Those who preferred Abbas are known as the **Rawandiyyah**.*

(Fath al-Mughith 3/129; Tadrib al-Rawi 2/194)

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Imam Ibn Hajar Asqalani writes:

"Whoever considers Abbas to be the most superior is not from Ahl al-Sunnah, rather, he is not even from the believers."

(Fath al-Bari, vol. 7, p. 21)

Imam al-Sakhawi mentions:

"My Shaykh said: Whoever prefers Abbas is neither from Ahl al-Sunnah nor even from the people of the faith."

(Fath al-Mughith 3/129)

Thus, the claim that Sunnis get enraged only when Ali's name is mentioned collapses here. It is clear that declaring the superiority of Abbas leads to a verdict of disbelief (kufr)! Our scholars have declared that **the hallmark of Ahl al-Sunnah is belief in the superiority of Shaykhayn**.

Reflecting on these words, it becomes clear that according superiority (afḍaliyyah) to anyone among the Companions other than the two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar) is regarded as a departure from Sunni orthodoxy.

The comparatively greater scrutiny given to those who hold the view of the superiority of MawlaAli is not without reason; it is because other sects have already become extinct, whereas this group remains active and continues to persist in its positions without restraint.

Another reason is that no other sect lends support to the Rawafid, whereas this group has effectively become their close ally and support base.

> *Consider this yourself: if you already believe that Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq is the most superior, then why do you insist on creating doubt in this matter?*
>
> *And in doing so, whose interests are you ultimately serving?*
>
> *Moreover, are the Rawafid pleased with such efforts or not?*

Thus, in the light of the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and scholarly consensus (ijmāʿ), it is incumbent upon you—on the basis of sound research, in adherence to the position of the Imams of Ahl al-Sunnah through **taqlīd**, and, if you are aware of the stratagems of the **Rawāfiḍ**, even as a matter of stern insistence—that you **do not retreat by even an inch** from the doctrine of the superiority (afḍaliyyah) of the **two Shaykhs**.

Finally, **a question from us**:

> *If denying the superiority of the Shaykhayn makes no difference (as you say), then would denying the love of the Prophet's two sons-in-law (Uthman and Ali, may Allah be pleased with them) also make no difference? Surely, these are two sides of the same coin!*

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A TAFDHILI SOON BECOMES A RAFIDHI

The Ladder of Misguidance

When a person departs from the Ahl al-Sunnah and adopts Tafdil (belief in the superiority of Sayyiduna Ali over Shaykhayn), it becomes no major matter for him to eventually abuse Sayyiduna Ameer Muawiyah (may Allah be pleased with him). Scholars have stated that Ameer Muawiyah is the **first veil of modesty and dignity**; whoever tears this veil finds it easy to speak ill of other Companions and ultimately becomes a manifest Rafidhi (Shia) (al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah, Vol. 8, p. 147).

The Inevitable Drift Toward Rafidhism

Initially, the arguments of the Tafdhilis naturally lead to Rafidhism. Furthermore, today those who are themselves Tafdhili, or carry its germs, may not necessarily become Rafidhis, but tomorrow their children most certainly will. Such people often maintain good relations with Rafidhis, attend their gatherings, and even deliver speeches there. May Allah guide them! Otherwise, it is almost certain that, God forbid, their funeral prayers will be led by Rafidhis, and after their death, Rafidhi groups will proudly announce:

> *"Praise be to Allah, so-and-so passed away as an Ithna Ashari Shia and departed this world with faith."*

In mentioning this, we hint towards our broad historical experience—those who have insight, let them reflect.

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Lessons from History

In Kufa, it were these very extreme lovers (ghulat) who first invited Sayyiduna Imam Hussain (may Allah be pleased with him) against Sayyiduna Amir Muawiyah (may Allah be pleased with him). Later, they "progressed" into professional mourners and easily accepted the gift of *tabarra* (cursing the Companions) prepared in advance by Ibn Saba.

The great Tabi'i, Amir al-Sha'bi (may Allah have mercy on him), said:

> *"Rafidhism is the staircase to heresy (zandaqah); I have never seen a Rafidhi except that he turned out to be a heretic."*
>
> *(Sab' Sanabil, p. 25)*

Therefore, it is incumbent upon every wise and prudent scholar of this age to take this trial seriously. Otherwise, people will be led down the path of heresy through so-called "Na'at gatherings" filled with frenzied dancing (Dhamaal), the false slogans of Qalandariyyah and so-called love for Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), and **spiritual "digestive pills" filled with the poison of misguidance.**

Warning by Sayyiduna Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani

Sayyiduna Qutb al-Aqtab Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani said regarding these people:

"They consider poetry to be the Qur'an of the Sufi path. They call themselves Qalandari and Haideri and claim to be from Ahl al-Sunnah, whereas they are not from the Ahl al-Sunnah.

(Sirr al-Asrar, p. 58)

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WHERE DID THE TAFDHILIYYAH GO WRONG?

The Tafdhilis fell into error due to several reasons:

1. Becoming Excessive in Refuting the Wahabis

Some individuals, in their fervor to refute the Wahabis, became extremists and unknowingly adopted the belief of Tafdhil (preferring Hazrat Ali over the first two Caliphs).

2. Misinterpretation of the Emphasis on Hazrat Ali's Virtues

When the Khawarij opposed Hazrat Ali , the scholars of Hadith found it appropriate to narrate his virtues abundantly. Some scholars even authored dedicated books on his merits and earned great rewards. However, this was not because Hazrat Ali was superior to others, but to silence the Khawarij. The Tafdhilis failed to understand this nuance, which became a source of their misguidance.

Some pseudo-Shia individuals, when comparing only between Hazrat Uthman and Hazrat Ali, narrated more virtues of Hazrat Ali. This was itself an error, but its side-effect was that ignorant and ill-intentioned individuals derived from it the supposed superiority of Hazrat Ali over the first two Caliphs (Shykhain).

We must not forget that the Rafidhis fabricated numerous Ahadith in the name of Hazrat Ali . In this regard, Imam Muhammad bin Sirin , a Tabi'i, said:

> *"Most of the reports attributed to Ali are lies."*
>
> *(Bukhari: 3707)*

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On the other hand, we find that some Hadith scholars like Imam Hakim were known for being lenient and inclined towards Shiism. This situation owes much to the **Taqiyya (religious dissimulation)** of the Rafidhis and the simple-heartedness of some Sunni scholars. The Rafidhis fabricated Ahadith under the guise of Taqiyya, and Sunnis, out of goodwill and love for Ahl al-Bayt, accepted them without scrutiny. As the Prophet ﷺ said:

> *"The believer is simple and noble, whereas the wicked is deceitful and vile."*
>
> *(Abu Dawood: 4790, Tirmidhi: 1964)*

3. Misrepresentation of Virtues Common to All Companions

Many virtues attributed to Hazrat Ali were in fact shared by other Companions as well. However, the Rafidhis and Tafdhilis presented these virtues as being exclusive to Hazrat Ali. For instance, the Hadith of "**the Gate of Knowledge**" — in reality, **all Companions are gates of knowledge**, as there is consensus on this, as mentioned earlier.

4. Selective Use of Hadith, Leading to Distortion

Numerous Ahadith command adherence to the Quran, Sunnah, Ahl al-Bayt, Companions, and the Majority (Sawaad A'zam). However, isolating only the narrations about Ahl al-Bayt while ignoring the others is a clear distortion and falls under the Quranic rebuke:

> *"Do you believe in part of the Book and disbelieve in part?"*
>
> *(Surah Al-Baqarah: 85)*

The correct and complete picture is as follows:

> *"I leave among you two matters: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet."*
>
> *"I leave among you two weighty things: the Book of Allah and my Ahl al-Bayt."*
>
> *"Hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Caliphs."*
>
> *"Follow after me: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar."*
>
> *"My Companions are like stars; whichever of them you follow, you will be rightly guided."*
>
> *"When you see differences, stick to the majority group (Sawaad A'zam)."*

Thus, **six things** are obligatory to follow: the Quran, the Sunnah, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar , all Companions, the Ahl al-Bayt, and the Majority.

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> *Those who take only the Quran and abandon the rest are the **Khawarij**.*
>
> *Those who accept Quran and Sunnah but reject the rest are a branch of the Khawarij — today's non-followers (**Ghair Muqallids**).*
>
> *Those who hold only to Ahl al-Bayt and reject the rest are the **Rafidhis**, who even deny the authenticity of the Quran and curse the noble companions.*
>
> ***Only Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah believe in all six together.***

The primary cause behind becoming a Khariji or Rafidhi is **failing to consider all Ahadith collectively**. An important principle to remember when refuting the Rafidhis is:

> *"Whatever verse, Hadith, or statement they present in their favor, usually within or around it lies its own refutation. With a little attention, their deceit can be exposed."*

5. Ignoring the Abundant Virtues of the First Two Caliphs

The Tafdhilis strongly clung to some specific virtues of Hazrat Ali while ignoring the numerous and superior virtues of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar , details of which have already been discussed.

6. Misinterpretation of Certain Hadiths

Some virtues of Hazrat Ali were misinterpreted to imply the negation of virtues for others. For example, after reading the Hadith:

"Tomorrow I will give the flag to a man through whose hands Allah will grant victory. He loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger love him."

Some people falsely inferred that others did not possess love for Allah and His Messenger, labeling them as hypocrites, or considered Hazrat Ali's love the strongest, thereby disregarding others. Similarly, from the "Gate of Knowledge" Hadith, they wrongly assumed that others were not gates of knowledge. Likewise, from the Hadith:

"Whomever I am his Mawla, Ali is his Mawla,"

they falsely inferred the negation of the friendship and leadership of other Companions.

7. Misuse of Scholarly Discussions on Tafdhil

When scholars explained the issue of Tafdhil, they first presented the rejected views of the Rafidhis, Mu'tazilites, and Tafdhilis, and then mentioned the Ahl al-Sunnah's accepted opinion. Opportunists abandoned the majority's verdict and clung to the rejected and weak opinions, trying to portray them as breaks in consensus (Ijma'). This is the typical method of those who deny Ijma'. Even the Qadianis used similar deception regarding the belief in the life of Isa (AS). Whoever so wishes may study Qadianism for themselves and see.

8. Lack of Spiritual Depth and Limited Vision

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These consensus-based matters were not spiritually unveiled to them, so that they could become true examples of the saying: **"Whoever combines them has truly attained realization."**

Spiritual narrowness and limited vision prevented them from appreciating the fragrance and beauty of the other flowers in the garden of the Prophet ﷺ. We have merely alluded to the point and will suffice with the translation of the couplet of Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid (may Allah have mercy on him):

The worm that lies hidden within a stone—

for it, that stone itself is its entire earth and sky

9. Influence of Bad Company

Some people developed friendships with the Rafidhis, which negatively influenced them. As mentioned in the Hadith:

"A man follows the religion of his friend; so one should be careful whom he befriends."

(Abu Dawood: 4833, Tirmidhi: 2378, Musnad Ahmad 2/406 Hadith: 8048, Shu'ab al-Iman by al-Bayhaqī: 9436)

It is impossible that the Prophet's ﷺ warning would fail, and that the friend of a Rafidhi would not eventually become a Rafidhi himself.

10. Careless Study of Rafidhi Literature

In the zeal to describe the merits of Ahl al-Bayt, some did not hesitate to study Rafidhi books. The result: alongside praising Ahl al-Bayt, they absorbed the poison of Rafidhism, promoted fabricated Ahadith, and spread falsehoods. This disease has become widespread.

11. Following Doubts Instead of Certainty

Allah Almighty states:

> *"Surely conjecture does not avail against truth at all."*
>
> *(Surah Yunus: 36)*

The Hadith also says:

> *"Leave what makes you doubt for what does not make you doubt."*
>
> *(Tirmidhi: 2518, Nasa'i: 5711, Sunan Darimi: 2535, Musnad Ahmad 1/200 Hadith: 1728, Mishkat: 2773)*

The noble scholars (may Allah have mercy on them) have laid down the principle that ambiguous texts (*mutashābihāt*) must always be referred back to clear and decisive texts (*muḥkamāt*). In fact, when the Christians of Najrān attempted to prove the divinity of ʿĪsā (peace be upon him) by relying on expressions such as "Kalimatullāh" (Word of God) and "Rūḥullāh" (Spirit of God), in opposition to clear statements like, "Do not say: Trinity (لَا تَقُوْلُوْا ثَلٰثَة)" and "Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of Allah is like that of Adam (اِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيْسٰى عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ)" Allah Almighty revealed the opening verses of Sūrah Āl ʿImrān at that very juncture, forbidding the subordination of clear texts to ambiguous ones. He stated:

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> *"Those in whose hearts is deviation pursue what is ambiguous thereof, seeking to create discord."*

Every false sect has stumbled at this very point—or deliberately engaged in deception—by abandoning clear and explicit texts and instead relying on ambiguous reports, including fabricated narrations, Isrāʾīliyyāt, and historical accounts. They have built their doctrines upon anomalous and rejected opinions in opposition to established consensus.ʿAllāmah Ibn Kathīr (may Allah have mercy on him) writes:

> *"Ahl al-Sunnah adhere to the clear texts and refer the ambiguous ones back to them. This is the method of those firmly grounded in knowledge, as described by Allah in His Book. This is precisely the point where many of the people of misguidance have faltered. As for Ahl al-Sunnah, they have no path except following the truth; wherever the truth turns, they turn along with it."*
>
> *(al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, vol. 5, p. 248 — "Chapter on the verses and hadiths forewarning the passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.")*

This principle should be firmly kept in mind. Now consider: the merits (*manāqib*) of Sayyidunā Amīr Muʿāwiyah (may Allah be pleased with him) are grounded in the Qurʾān and Sunnah, and in authoritative

collections such as Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, and others. In contrast, the claims of his opponents revolve around selective readings of historical accounts of the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn, often shaped by conjecture and bias.

Similarly, the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (may Allah be pleased with him) is established by clear Qurʾānic text—**"And the most God-fearing shall be kept away from it"** (*wa-sayujannabuhā al-atqā*)—as well as explicit statements in ḥadīth, clear declarations of Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha (may Allah be pleased with him), and the consensus of the Companions, the Successors, and the entire Ummah. By contrast, the opponents possess no such explicit proofs. Instead, they rely at times on weaker opinions —such as who first accepted Islam—or attempt to argue from secondary considerations, like marital relations, Sufi lineages, or by conflating *virtue* with *superiority*. At times, their argument reduces merely to a subjective claim:

> *"everything may be correct, but the heart does not accept it."*

Beyond these, the extremist Rāfiḍīs follow a similar pattern: while Ahl al-Sunnah rely on the Qurʾān and Sunnah, their doctrines and rituals are largely built upon historical narratives.

Misinterpretations by Other Deviant Groups

The same flawed method appears elsewhere: the priest Pfander ignored the explicit declaration **"There is no god but Allah"** and attempted to derive the doctrine of the Trinity from **"In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate."** Likewise, Mirza Qadiani disregarded the verse affirming the finality of prophethood (*khātam al-nabiyyīn*) and instead tried to infer the continuation of prophethood from other texts such as the Durud-e- Ibrāhīmi.

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It must be remembered that such types of arguments can be constructed on virtually any topic, and anomalous or rejected opinions can always be found to oppose consensus. If the aforementioned principle is not upheld, the integrity of the religion itself would be compromised—God forbid.

Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah, Aʿlā Ḥaḍrat (may Allah have mercy on him), writes:

> *"Very few issues exist in which no anomalous opinion can be found. Many well-established and widely accepted matters—regarded by us as part of our religion and faith—also have weak, flawed, abandoned, and rejected opinions opposing them. Books contain all kinds of material, both sound and unsound, reliable and unreliable. It is only by the grace of sound judgment that one can distinguish between truth and falsehood; otherwise, a person is left wandering in misguidance and confusion. Were it not for the mischief of corrupt minds, I would have presented several such examples in support of this claim. But some temperaments are naturally inclined toward seeking out dubious arguments and chasing after every claim and counterclaim, as Allah says:*
>
> *'Those in whose hearts is deviation follow what is ambiguous, seeking discord and its interpretation.'*
>
> *Such minds, whenever they find even the slightest opportunity, become eager to undermine the very foundations of Islam. May Allah protect us from their evil. Āmīn."*

(Matlaʿ al-Qamarayn, manuscript, pp. 74–75)

Response to Those Who Deny Being Rafidhi or Tafdhili

As for those who refuse to label themselves as Rāfiḍī or Tafḍīlī, it may be said in response: the Qādiyānīs likewise claim they do not deny the finality of prophethood; Parvez also claimed he did not reject ḥadīth; and some who openly engage in disparagement still append honorifics to the names of the Companions. Thus, to promote ideas that contradict the consensus of the Ummah and yet deny being Tafḍīlī is no different—it is merely disputation characteristic of hypocritical argumentation.

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THE SHARIAH VERDICT REGARDING THE TAFDHILIYYAH

Discussion on Whether the Consensus Is Definitive (Qat'i) or Probabilistic (Zanni)

Based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, without any doubt, the superiority of **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** is unanimously agreed upon. Some of the **Marfu' Hadiths** on this topic are **mutawatir** (massively reported), as mentioned earlier. During his own caliphate, **Hazrat Ali al-Murtadha** repeatedly declared the superiority of the two Caliphs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, in that order) in various gatherings. If anyone harbored a corrupt opinion contrary to this belief, Hazrat Ali was strict against him. Not a single objection was raised by the **jurist-companions (fuqaha sahaba)** present at these occasions, and these incidents have reached the level of **tawatur (mass transmission)**:

> *"The jurist-companions were present and no one showed any disagreement or objection, and these traditions have reached the level of tawatur."*
>
> *(Izalat al-Khafa, Vol. 1, p. 313)*

Hazrat Ali al-Murtadha said:

> *"The best of this Ummah is Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar."*

This narration is **mutawatir** and reported by eighty narrators.

> *(Izalat al-Khafa, Vol. 1, p. 313)*

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Shaykh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi writes:

> *"If the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah rely only on these proofs to establish the superiority — and even the definitiveness — of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, they are sufficient and complete."*
>
> *(Takmeel al-Iman, p. 64)*

This belief has been transmitted **continuously (mutawatir)** throughout the Ummah, and even today, the announcement of the superiority of the two Caliphs echoes in Friday sermons around the world, supported by the **spiritual unveilings (mukashafat)** of the Sufis.

Hazrat Ammar ibn Yasir said:

> *"Whoever considers anyone among the companions superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar has accused all the Muhajireen and Ansar of sin."*
>
> *(Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat of Tabarani: 832)*

The same was also said by **Imam Sufyan al-Thawri** *(Abu Dawood: 4630)*

It is frequently narrated from the **Companions and Tabi'un** that the superiority and love of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar are part of **Islamic beliefs**:

(As-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal: 1296; Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahl al-Sunnah: 2319-2324)

The term "**Sunnah**" has been used to refer to **beliefs** as well, for instance, Abu Dawood and Ibn Majah include "Kitab al-Sunnah" dedicated to matters of creed. Several independent books on beliefs are titled "**As-Sunnah**" too, like:

As-Sunnah by Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal

As-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim

As-Sunnah by Imam al-Tahawi (also known as Aqidah al-Tahawiyyah)

Proof from the Hadith on Hadd al-Muftari

The Hadith about **punishment (hadd)** for blasphemy also indicates the definitiveness of this issue, because **no punishment is prescribed for mere speculative (zanni) matters**.

Shah Abdul Aziz writes:

"These words explicitly show that this matter is definitive, because it is established by consensus that punishments are not carried out in speculative matters."

(Fatawa Aziziyyah, p. 383)

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Imam Ahl al-Sunnah, Ala Hazrat Ahmad Raza Khan states:

"The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Repel the hudood (punishments) wherever possible.' Despite this, the fact that Hazrat Ali carried out the hadd against a denier of the superiority of the two Caliphs proves the definitiveness of this belief."

(Al-Hasil al-Zulal al-Anqa, p. 95)

Hence, many great scholars and even the **Imams of Creed** have declared this superiority as **definitive**. Foremost among them is **Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari** .

Numerous scholars have written:

"According to al-Ash'ari, the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and then Umar over the rest of the Ummah is definitive."

(As-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 57; Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir, p. 437; Maram al-Kalam, p. 46)

Shah Waliullah also shares this belief, stating:

"The matter of the superiority of the two Caliphs is definitive within the Muslim Ummah."

(Izalat al-Khafa, Vol. 1, p. 301)

Allama Abdul Aziz Parharwi remarks:

> *"Those who claim this belief is speculative are mistaken. Rather, the Companions unanimously agreed upon it based on the hadiths they heard from the Prophet ﷺ himself, so how can any doubt remain?"*
>
> *(Maram al-Kalam, p. 47)*

Elsewhere, he writes "The superiority of al-Ṣiddīq is considered definitive (*qaṭʿī*) according to Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī, whereas **Qāḍī al-Bāqillānī** and **Imām al-Ḥaramayn** regard it as probabilistic (*ẓannī*). However, anyone who truly reflects on the **mutawatir hadiths** and the consensus of the pious predecessors will realize that **the truth lies with Imam Ash'ari**. And why should it not be so, when he is an Imām of Ahl al-Sunnah, a great authority in the investigation of such matters, and one who preceded his opponents? Therefore, he is more knowledgeable than others regarding the true nature of the hadith and the consensus. This is further supported by the statement of Imām Mālik (may Allah have mercy on him), when asked who was superior after the Prophet ﷺ, he replied:

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar."*
>
> *He then said:*
>
> *"Is there any doubt about that?"*
>
> *(Maram al-Kalam, p. 46)*

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Consensus According to Imam Dhahabi and Other Scholars

Imam Dhahabi writes:

> *"The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah have unanimously agreed that the best of the companions are the Ashara Mubashshara (the ten promised Paradise), and the best among them are Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar, then Uthman, then Ali . No one doubts this except an innovator (Bid'ah), a hypocrite, or an evil person."*
>
> *(Al-Kabair by Imam Dhahabi, p. 236)*

Qadi Sanaullah Panipati writes:

> *"Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari stated that the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr over all other companions is definitive."*

He then defends this belief and refutes those who call it a matter of difference and mentions the discussion he has presented on this issue in his book *al-Saif al-Maslul*.

> *(Tafsir Mazhari, Vol. 7, p. 29)*

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi writes:

"When the consensus is definitive, then the definitiveness of the conclusion (i.e., superiority of the two Caliphs) is beyond dispute. This is the belief of our predecessors and our elders in both Shari'ah and Tariqah."

(Matla' al-Qamrayn, p. 81)

Evidence from the Hadith of Ibn Umar

The hadith of **Ibn Umar** , found in Abu Dawood (Vol. 2, p. 288), Tirmidhi (Vol. 2, p. 212) and Bukhari (Vol. 1, p. 523) contains the wording:

"We used to say while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was alive..."

The use of **"We" (plural)** indicates consensus. In some narrations, the wording "**and we were numerous**" further emphasizes this.

Thus, scholars have established the **consensus of the Companions** based on these words. (Maraam-ul-Kalaam pg 46). Since the consensus is verbal, it proves definitiveness. Based on this hadith, scholars have ruled that the belief in the superiority of the two Caliphs is definitive.

Even if someone argues that the consensus was only **tacit (sukooti)**, it still suffices, because tacit consensus of the Companions is almost equivalent to verbal consensus.

It is worth noting that scholars, out of caution, have not declared the Tafdhilis as disbelievers, but have expelled them from **Ahl al-Sunnah**.

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The Strength of the Consensus

Some may attempt to create confusion regarding whether the consensus was verbal or tacit, but the words of Hadith:

"while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was alive"

And the words of al-tabarani:

"no one objected among us"

have elevated this consensus beyond doubt, and its authenticity is certified by:

"It is nothing but a revelation revealed."

(Surah An-Najm, 53:4)

In fact, this consensus is mirrored in the heavens too. Delightfully, alongside the Companions, the Prophet ﷺ himself is included in this consensus, and alongside the angels, Allah Almighty Himself is part of this consensus:

"Allah and the believers refuse anyone but Sayyiduna Abu Bakr."

(Muslim: 6181)

Despite these overwhelmingly strong proofs, the cautious scholars have refrained from declaring the denier of this consensus as a **disbeliever**, but have labeled him an **innovator (Bid'ah)** — meaning he is not a kafir, but he is outside the fold of **Ahl al-Sunnah**.

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THE TERM "RAFIDHI" AND ITS APPLICATION

Those who curse the Companions are now a days referred to as **"Rafidhi"** in common terminology, and those who deny the superiority of the Two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar) are called **"Tafdhili"**. However, both belong to the same sect of belief. (See: *Radd al-Rafdah*, etc.)

Definition by Allama Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani

Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes:

> *"Tashayyu' (Shi'ism) in the terminology of the early scholars referred to the belief that Ali was superior to Uthman, and that Ali was correct in his battles, and that those who opposed him were mistaken — while still maintaining the precedence and superiority of the Two Shaykhs. Thus, whoever placed Ali above Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar was considered extreme in his Shi'ism (Ghali Shia) and was called a Rafidhi. Otherwise, he was merely called a Shi'i. If this was further accompanied by cursing or explicit hatred, it was termed Tashayyu' according to the later scholars — and such a person was called a Ghali (extremist) Rafidhi."*
>
> *(Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Vol. 1, p. 94; Hady al-Sari, Vol. 2, p. 240; Hashiya al-Raf' wal-Takmil, p. 146; Fatawa Radawiyyah, New Ed., Vol. 28, p. 87)*

Statement of Imam Sha'rani

> *"Whoever asserts the superiority of Ali over Sayyiduna Abu Bakr is a Rafidhi."*
>
> *(Al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir, Vol. 2, p. 437)*

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Statement of Mulla Ali Qari

> *"Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq is the most superior of the saints among the earlier and later generations, and there is consensus on this. The opposition of the Rafidhis carries no weight here."*
>
> *(Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 61)*

Statement of Imam Suyuti

> *"One who does not consider Sayyiduna Abu Bakr superior is a Rafidhi, and his belief is wicked."*
>
> *(Al-Hawi lil-Fatawa, Vol. 1, p. 318)*

Statement of Imam Ibn Humam

> *"Among the Rafidhis, it is established that whoever considers Ali superior to the three caliphs is an innovator."*
>
> *(Fath al-Qadir, Vol. 1, p. 360)*

In this narration Tafdhilis are declared as Rafidhis. The same is mentioned in *Tabyin al-Haqa'iq* (Vol. 1, p. 135).

Statement of Imam Ibn Abidin Shami

> *"If a Rafidhi curses or sends la'n (curse) upon the Two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar), he is a disbeliever. If he merely considers Ali superior to them, he is an innovator (Bid'ah)."*
>
> *(Fatawa Shami, Vol. 3, p. 321)*

Here again, the usage of the term **Rafidhi** is highlighted.

Statement in Fatawa Alamgiri

In *Fatawa Alamgiri*, it is written:

> *"If a Rafidhi curses the Two Shaykhs and sends la'n upon them (Allah forbid), he is a disbeliever. But if he merely considers Ali superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, he is not a disbeliever, though he is an innovator (Bid'ah), similar to the Mu'tazilah."*
>
> *(Fatawa Alamgiri, Vol. 2, p. 264)*

In this passage from *Alamgiri* as well, tafdhilis have been referred to as Rafidhites, termed as innovators (mubtadi‘), and described as being, like the Mu‘tazilah, in opposition to Ahl al-Sunnah as people of innovation.

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Statement of Sayyid Abdul Wahid Bilgrami

> *"Whoever does not acknowledge Amir al-Mu'minin Ali as a caliph is a Khariji, and whoever considers him superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar is among the Rafidhis."*
>
> *(Sab' Sanabil, p. 10)*

Statement of Mujaddid Alf Thani

Mujaddid Alf Thani states:

> *"The superiority of the Two Shaykhs is certain, and the superiority of Uthman is slightly lesser. However, caution demands not declaring as disbelievers those who deny the superiority of Uthman or even the Two Shaykhs; rather, they should be considered innovators and deviants. Scholars have differed regarding their disbelief, and there is debate on the consensus about this matter.*
>
> *Denial of the superiority of the Two Shaykhs aligns a person with the wretched Yazid, and just as scholars refrained from cursing Yazid due to caution, likewise caution is necessary here.*

The harm caused to the Prophet (ﷺ) through the disrespect of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is similar to the harm caused through disrespect to Hasan and Husayn (May peace and blessings be upon him and upon them all)."

(Maktubat Imam Rabbani, Vol. 1, p. 556, Letter No. 266)

If a Tafdhili believes that cursing Yazid is obligatory, then this fatwa of Mujaddid Alf Thani is particularly worthy of their contemplation.

Aala Hazrat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan states:

"The Imams of the religion have included the Tafdhilis among the Rafidhis."

(Fatawa Radawiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 509)

Allama Ghulam Rasool Saeedi writes:

"Whoever considers Ali superior to Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar is a Rafidhi."

(Tadhkirat al-Muhaddithin, p. 282)

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THE IDENTITY AND SIGNS OF AHL AL-SUNNAH

Statement of Sayyiduna Anas ibn Malik

Sayyiduna Anas ibn Malik was asked about the signs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. He replied:

> *"To love the Two Shaykhs (Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar), not to criticize the Two Sons-in-Law (Uthman and Ali), and to perform Masah (wiping) over leather socks."*
>
> *(Fatawa Qadi Khan, Vol. 1, p. 46; Mirqat, Vol. 2, p. 77)*

Statement of Imam A'zam Abu Hanifah

> *"The sign of Ahl al-Sunnah is considering the Two Shaykhs superior and loving the Two Sons-in-Law."*
>
> *(Sharh al-'Aqa'id al-Nasafiyyah, p. 150; Al-Tamhid by Abu al-Shakur al-Salmi, p. 165; Qadi Khan, Vol. 1, p. 46; Takmil al-Iman, p. 78; Nibras, p. 302; Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 63; Fatawa Radawiyyah, Vol. 9, p. 61; Bahr al-Raiq, Vol. 1, p. 288; Bidayah, Vol. 1, p. 146)*

Thus, this is the hallmark and distinct identity of Ahl al-Sunnah:

> *Denial of the superiority of the Two Shaykhs is **Rafidhism**.*
>
> *Denial of the love for the Two Sons-in-Law is **Kharijism**.*
>
> *Affirming both is true **Sunnism**.*

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This is the true "certificate" of Sunnism.

Today, every ignorant person has started issuing certificates of Sunnism! If the denier of the superiority of the Two Shaykhs is not considered outside Ahl al-Sunnah, then likewise, the denier of the love of the Two Sons-in-Law cannot be considered outside either. However, the truth is both are outside, and this is the correct stance.

This principle is the best rebuttal for those who create doubts regarding the superiority of the Two Shaykhs. The belief in the superiority of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar and love for Uthman and Ali are two sides of the same belief.

The scholars have unanimously declared that **claiming Ali as superior to the Two Shaykhs** falls under **Rafidhism**. Now, declaring Mawla Sayyiduna Abu Bakr as merely a **"political caliph"** while assigning Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha the status of a **"spiritual caliph"** exceeds even the earlier Rafidhis. The earlier Rafidhis admitted Sayyiduna Abu Bakr's lesser spiritual status, whereas the latter completely denied his spiritual authority.

THIS IS NOT A TRIVIAL MATTER

The Statement of Hazrat Allama Abdul Aziz Parharvi

Hazrat Allama Abdul Aziz Parharvi states:

> *" In other words, this issue is such that the entire invalidation of the Shia belief hinges on it. Their first foundational belief is that Hazrat Ali is superior to all. According to them, the one who is superior is the rightful claimant to the caliphate. The one who does not give the caliphate to the rightful claimant is considered a usurper and an oppressor. An oppressor is not just, and the religion narrated by one who is unjust is also not credible. The Shia sect uses this sequence to mislead the public. The corruption of this belief is even more severe than the corruption found in the Mu'tazilite and Jabrite sects. Therefore, it is obligatory for scholars to pay special attention to the issue of afdaliyah (superiority).*
>
> *As a sufficient proof for giving special importance to this matter, it is enough that the scholars have made the superiority of the two Shaykhs and the love for the two sons-in-law a distinguishing sign of Ahl al-Sunnah."*
>
> *(Nibras, p.302)*

The author of *Nibras* has fulfilled the duty of awakening Ahl al-Sunnah. It is obligatory upon responsible scholars, who possess a protective zeal for religion, to recognize the significance of this topic and to rise up for it.

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Words Used by Scholars for the Denial of Superiority of the Two Shaykhs

The following are the words used by scholars for the deniers of the superiority of the Two Shaykhs, which we are merely quoting without any addition:

> ***Ghāli Shia and Rafidhi*** *(Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Vol.1, p.94; Hady al-Sari, Vol.2, p.240; Al-Raf' wal-Takmil, p.146; Fatawa Razawiyyah, Vol.28, p.87)*
>
> ***Rafidhi*** *(Fath al-Qadir, Vol.1, p.360; Tabyin al-Haqa'iq, Vol.1, p.135; Shami, Vol.3, p.321; Sab' Sanabil, p.77)*
>
> ***Innovator (Bid'ah), Hypocrite, and Vile*** *(Imam Dhahabi, Kitab al-Kabair, p.236)*
>
> ***Possessor of a Corrupt Belief*** *(Allama Suyuti, Al-Hawi lil-Fatawi, 1/318)*
>
> ***The Foundation of Their Rejection is Firmly Established*** *(Sab' Sanabil, p.10)*
>
> *The one who denies the consensus (ijmā') of the Companions is rejected by Allah and the Prophet ﷺ. Such a person is swiftly cast out from the divine court, and the knot of his misfortune cannot be untied. Denying the Companions is tantamount to denying Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Whoever follows a path contrary to the Sunnah bears around his neck the collar of curses.*
>
> *(Sab' Sanabil, p.18)*

Accursed, Disgraced, and Foolish *(Sab' Sanabil, p.18)*

Tafdhili *is a Companion of the Wretched Yazid (Maktubat Imam Rabbani, Letter No. 266)*

Excluded from Ahl al-Sunnah *(A'la Hazrat, Matla' al-Qamrayn, p.70)*

Excluded from Ahl al-Sunnah *(Many Scholars, Fazail of Hazrat Amir Muawiyah , pp.46–51)*

Summary

The **minimum ruling** regarding the Tafdhiliyyah (those who give preference to Hazrat Ali over the Shaykhs) is that the Tafdhili group is among the sects of Ahl al-Bid'ah (the people of innovation). This innovation relates not to actions but to beliefs. Its opposite is not merely "Sunnah" but "Ahl al-Sunnah."

One who commits this innovation exits from Ahl al-Sunnah just as Jabrites, Qadrites, Mu'tazilites, and Kharijites do. Hazrat Sufyan Thawri said:

> *"Whoever considers Hazrat Ali more deserving of leadership than the Two Shaykhs has declared Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Umar, and the Emigrants and Helpers as sinners. I do not believe that with such a filthy belief, any of his deeds would be accepted by Allah."*
>
> *(Abu Dawud, Hadith: 4630)*

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The superiority of the Two Shaykhs has been declared by the scholars not only as a belief of Ahl al-Sunnah but as their distinguishing sign and hallmark. Thus, whoever lacks this belief is outside the fold of Ahl al-Sunnah.

> *"Thus they have made among the signs of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah the preference for the Two Shaykhs and love for the two sons-in-law."*
>
> *(Sharh Aqaid Nasafi, p.150)*

The scholars of religion do not count the Tafdhiliyyah among the Sunnis. (*Matla' al-Qamrayn*, p.70)

Ruling Regarding Prayer Behind a Tafdhili

Prayer behind a Tafdhili is not valid. If someone has prayed behind such a person, he must repeat his prayer.

> *"It is disliked for the following to lead prayer: a slave, a Bedouin, a flagrant sinner, an innovator, a blind man, and the child of adultery."*
>
> *(Kanz al-Daqaiq, p.28)*

The ruling regarding prayer behind such individuals is the same as behind other innovators: it is severely disliked.

(Matla' al-Qamrayn, p.88)

This is the fatwa of many scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah, as mentioned between pages 46–51 of *Fazail of Hazrat Amir Muawiyah* .

Furthermore, the funeral prayer for such an innovator is also impermissible.

(Fatawa Razawiyyah, Vol.4, p.53, Aaram Bagh Edition)

Even showing respect towards an innovator is prohibited.

Warning of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) stated:

"Whoever honors an innovator has helped in demolishing Islam."

(Shu'ab al-Iman by al-Bayhaqi: Hadith 9464; Mishkat al-Masabih: 189)

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DECISIONS OF THE EMINENT SCHOLARS AND SAINTS OF THE 14TH CENTURY

(1) Hazrat Ghazali of the Era: Allama Sayyid Ahmad Saeed Kazmi

The collective belief (Ijma) of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** and **Sayyiduna Umar al-Faruq**(may Allah be pleased with them) are superior to all the companions, including **Hazrat Ali al-Murtadha** (may Allah be pleased with them all). Anyone opposing this belief is not considered Sunni, and it is impermissible to follow such a person in prayer. Similarly, anyone who (God forbid) calls **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** (may Allah be pleased with him) a sinner (Fasiq) is absolutely not Sunni, and it is impermissible to pray behind him. All the Companions are unanimously deserving of respect according to the Ahl al-Sunnah.

— Sayyid Ahmad Saeed Kazmi (May Allah forgive him), 9 August 1969

(2) Ustadh al-Muhaddithin Grand Mufti Allama Abu al-Barakat Sayyid Ahmad Shah

Anyone who gives **Hazrat Ali** superiority over **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** and **Hazrat Umar al-Faruq** is misguided and a misguider, and he is certainly not from the Ahl al-Sunnah. It is impermissible to appoint such a person as an Imam. Likewise, whoever accuses **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** of sinfulness and slanders him is himself a sinner (Fasiq), and appointing him as an Imam is a sin. The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah deny any notion of **Ameer Muawiyah** being a sinner; calling him a disbeliever is an even greater offense that renders the accuser a disbeliever and accursed.

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— Faqeer Qadri Abu al-Barakat Sayyid Ahmad (May Allah pardon him), 11 October 1969

(3) Hakim al-Ummat Hazrat Mufti Ahmad Yar Khan Naeemi

Anyone who claims that **Sayyiduna Hazrat Ali al-|Murtadha** is superior to **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** and **Hazrat Umar al-Faruq** or calls **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** a sinner is utterly irreligious.

— Faqeer Ahmad Yar Bada'uni Naeemi, 23 October 1969

(4) Shaykh al-Hadith Allama Ghulam Rasool – Jamia Rizvia

After the Prophets (peace be upon them), the Muslim Ummah unanimously agrees on the primary superiority of **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** . **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** was a just, trustworthy, and righteous companion. His real sister, **Umm Habiba** , was the wife of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He was a great scholar and jurist among the Sahabah. The Prophet ﷺ made dua for him. Speaking ill of him is Rafd (a trait of the Rafidah). Such a person is not Sunni, and prayer behind him is absolutely impermissible.

— Ghulam Rasool (May Allah forgive him), Qadri Rizvi, 31 August 1969

(5) Shaykh al-Islam Hazrat Khwaja Muhammad Qamaruddin Sialvi

There is consensus among the companions on the superiority of **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** over all other companions. Whoever denies this consensus falls under the warning of **"Shuzz fi al-Nar"** (those who deviate will be in the fire). The virtues of **Hazrat Muawiyah** are authentically proven. Speaking ill of him leads to disbelief, if not explicitly then at least consequentially.
Allegations against **Ameer Muawiyah** regarding enmity towards **Hazrat Ali** or the Ahl al-Bayt are false, based on fabrications from Rafidhi narrators like Nadr bin Muzahim, Younus bin Khabbab, and others. No true Muslim can forget the noble saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

> *"Fear Allah regarding my Companions."*
>
> *— Muhammad Qamaruddin Sialvi (May Allah forgive him), 10 Ramadan 1389 AH*

(6) Astana Aliya Golra Sharif

Belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs (**Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, RA**) is the way of the entire Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah. Anyone opposing this is an innovator (Mubtadi') whose leadership in prayer is disliked. Accusing any Sahabi of sinfulness, especially **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** , is against the Sunni way and is a bid'ah (innovation). **Hazrat Hasan** handing over the caliphate to **Hazrat Muawiyah** is clear evidence of his righteousness, for it is not befitting for **Hazrat Hasan** to entrust the caliphate to a sinner.

> *— Written by Faiz Ahmad (Resident at Astana Aliya Golra Sharif) — Verified by Muhammad Fazil Chishti, Astana Aliya Golra Sharif*

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(7) Munazir-e-Azam Hazrat Allama Muhammad Umar Achhrovi

Denial of the rightful caliphate of **Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq** and **Sayyiduna Umar al-Faruq** expels a person from Islam. Those who believe **Hazrat Ali** to be superior to them are irreligious and misguided. Those who slander **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** are also outside the fold of Islam.

> *— Muhammad Umar Achhrovi, 1st Muharram al-Haram 1390 AH*

(8) Hazrat Allama Mawlana Muhib al-Nabi

According to the Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, anyone who considers **Hazrat Ali** superior to **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** and **Hazrat Umar** is misguided, sinful, and wicked. Such a person must not be honored. One who speaks ill of **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** cannot be considered Sunni because all the Companions, according to Sunni belief, are wholly just and upright.

> *— Muhib al-Nabi*

(9) Shaykh al-Hadith Hazrat Allama Abdul Mustafa al-Azhari

Whoever considers **Hazrat Ali** superior to **Hazrat Sayyiduna Abu Bakr** and **Hazrat Umar** is not Sunni nor truly a lover of Hazrat Ali .

Imam Ibn Hajar stated in *Sawa'iq Sharifa*:

> *"The consensus of the senior scholars and the Ummah is that the most superior after the Prophet ﷺ are Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, then Umar."*

Hazrat Muawiyah was a noble Companion, a relative of the Prophet ﷺ, a scribe of revelation, and brother-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. His being among the people of Paradise is promised in the Qur'an. He was a jurist among the Companions. **Hazrat Hasan** handed over the caliphate to him voluntarily. Insulting **Hazrat Muawiyah** is tantamount to insulting **Hazrat Hasan**. Such an individual is either a Rafidhi or a Khariji and can never be Sunni, for Sunnis love both the Companions and the Ahl al-Bayt.

> *— Faqeer Abdul Mustafa Azhari*

(10) Hazrat Sahibzada Peer Mian Jameel Ahmad Sharqpuri

I fully agree with the above scholarly statements and affirm that the correct and true belief is: The belief in the superiority of the two Shaykhs (**Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Umar, RA**) and respect and honor for all companions, especially **Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah** , who is a venerable companion of the Prophet ﷺ.Denying this expels one from the Ahl al-Sunnah, and such a person is not fit for Imamate.

> *— Mian Jameel Ahmad Sharqpuri Naqshbandi Mujaddidi*

The detailed writings of these noble scholars are documented from page 46 to 51 in the book *"Fazail-e-Hazrat Ameer Muawiyah"* authored by **Raees al-Ulama, Hazrat Allama Qazi Ghulam Mahmood Sahib Hazrovi**.

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Final Notes

In the end, we ask the Tafdhili Rafidhis:

> *What is your verdict on the entire Ummah that believes in the superiority of the two Shaykhs?*
>
> *What is your proof for your belief?*

Secondly, if a Khariji were to claim that **Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha** was only a political caliph and not a spiritual one, how would you judge him?

Whatever blame and accusations of hypocrisy you impose on such a person, you deserve them **eighty times more**. If making such a claim makes someone a Khariji, then **you are undoubtedly Rafidhi**!

وَمَا عَلَيْنَا اِلَّا الْبَلَاغ

Blessings and peace be upon our Noble Master, Chief of the Created Beings and Leader of the Universe, **Prophet Muhammad** ﷺ, His family, and all His companions — especially upon the four Rightly Guided Caliphs: Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, Sayyiduna Umar, Sayyiduna Uthman, and Sayyiduna Ali al-Murtadha — and upon all of his Ummah, including ourselves.

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