

## IN HIS NAME & BY THE REMEMBRANCE OF HIS LAST HUJJAT (ATFS)

### GHADEER LECTURE SERIES

#### Lecture 23: QURANIC VERSES ON IMAMAT

One verse that conclusively establishes the Imamat of Ameerul Momineen (a.s) is the 17<sup>th</sup> verse of Surah Hud.

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوُهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كِتَابٌ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًاً وَرَحْمَةً أُولَئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ

"Is he then who has with him clear proof from his Lord, and a witness from Him recites it and before it (is) the Book of Musa, a guide, and a mercy? These believe in it...." <sup>1</sup>

'The one who has a clear proof from his Lord' refers to Holy Prophet (s.a.w..a). After that is 'the one who testifies to his (s.a.w.a) Prophethood', is Ameerul Momineen (a.s). And he (a.s) is from the family of Holy Prophet (s.a.w..a)

The Holy Quran says, 'Can these two be equal to those not like this?' This is a rhetorical question. It means that the one - who believes in Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a), who possesses the clear signs; and Ameerul Momineen (a.s), who is a witness to the Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a); and before them, the Book of Torah which is witness to both (a.s) – cannot be equal to those who deny them. It is rhetorical question that answers itself.

All scholars and exegetists – of the Ahle Sunnah and the Shias – are unanimous that 'the one who possesses the sign' refers to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) in the above verse.

The bone of contention is the next phrase, "the one who came after him". The word يَتْلُو means 'after', 'later', 'subsequent to'. The recitation of the Quran is also called 'Tilawat' since the words follow each other. Hence, the word يَتْلُو in the above verse implies that there is a person **after** Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) who testifies to his Prophethood and *is like him* (منه). All Shia scholars and most Sunni scholars agree that 'the one who bears witness' refers to Ameerul Momineen (a.s). This verse is conclusive proof to establish the Imamat & caliphate of Ameerul Momineen (a.s). But a few Sunni scholars have criticised this interpretation and have said that this blessed verse does not mean this.

<sup>1</sup> Surah Hud, v 17

Many early Sunni scholars say that ‘*the one who gave witness after him*’ refers to Janab Jibraeel or Janab Ruhul Qudus. This is a baseless assertion. Because neither Janab Jibraeel nor Janab Ruhul Qudus fit the explanation of “after him” (بَعْدُهُ) nor “from him” (مِنْهُ) since they were not from the family of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). They are angels while Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) is a human. Hence, at least one of the attributes of this verse does not fit upon the angels.

Another group of Ahle Sunnah scholars say that ‘witness’ refers to Holy Quran since Holy Quran verifies the truthfulness of his (s.a.w.a) claim to Prophethood. This interpretation, too, is incorrect as per the wordings of the verse. The Quran has not come *after* Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). At the same time, the verse says that the witness who is endorsing the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) has come *after him*. If the Quran was to be the ‘witness’, it should have been revealed after the death of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). Besides, the Quran is a book, and it is not from the category of humans. The Quran says that this ‘witness’ will be from the humans and from the progeny of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) (since the word مِنْ has been used). Thus, this interpretation, that the Quran is the witness is not in harmony with the apparent meaning of the verse. Hence, it is unacceptable.

A third group claims that the tongue and the radiant face of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) are ‘witness’ since they verify and certify the Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). Once again, this is a hollow explanation considering the words of the Holy Quran. Neither the tongue and face of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) come *after him*, nor do they belong to the category of humans.

However, many traditions (33 to be precise) found in the books of Ahle Sunnah affirm that the word ‘witness’ - along with the characteristics mentioned in verse – applies to Ameerul Momineen (a.s). Abdur Rahman Suyooti and Hakim Haskani, two revered scholars of the Ahle Sunnah, in Tafseer Durrul Mansoor and Shawahid-ut-Tanzeel respectively have brought traditions that confirm that Ameerul Momineen (a.s) is:

- The witness who is the testifies to the veracity of the Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a)

- He is “مِنْهُ” i.e. he is from the progeny of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and of the same category (human/infallible/Hujjat)

We bring some examples in this regard.

- In the book of Shawahid-ut-Tanzeel, a tradition is narrated from Ibn Abbas, who says,

حَدَّثَنَا يَعْقُوبُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبِيهِ عَلِيٌّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ فِي قَوْلِ  
اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ قَالَ: النَّبِيُّ صَ وَيَتَلَوُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ قَالَ: هُوَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِيهِ طَالِبٍ<sup>2</sup>

This verse refers specifically to Ameerul Momineen (a.s) and no one else. There is none who was the ‘witness’ to the Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) after him (s.a.w.a) except Ameerul Momineen (a.s).

- Anas bin Malik, whose tradition is narrated in Durrul Mansoor, says that على بينة من ربه refers to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and يتلوه شاهد منه refers to Hazrat Ali (a.s). He was the witness to the Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). Further, he elaborates that when the ‘Naqzeen’ (allegiance breakers) had raised the banner of revolt and decided to withdraw from the treaty signed with the Muslims, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) had sent Ameerul Momineen (a.s) towards them (as a witness of his Prophethood)
- Suyuti brings a tradition in which Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) says

وَأَخْرَجَ ابْنَ مَرْدُوْيَهِ مِنْ وَجْهِ آخْرٍ عَنْ عَلِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَفَمَنْ  
كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ أَنَّا وَيَتَلَوُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ قَالَ عَلَى

“فَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ” is ‘me’, while وَيَتَلَوُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ is ‘Ali’.<sup>3</sup>

- Qais bin Saad bin Obadah, the son of the leader of the Ansar, while discussing with Muawiyah about the usurpation of the right of Hazrat Ali (a.s) at Saqifah, says, “I

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<sup>2</sup> Shawahid-ut-Tanzeel le Qawaaid Tafzeel, vol 1 pg 365

<sup>3</sup> Durrul Mansoor fi Tafseer Ma’soor, vol 3 pg 324

swear by my life! No one other than Ali has the right to the caliphate. Neither the Ansaar nor the Quraish nor any Arab nor any Ajam (non-Arab)" Then he recited the verse

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بِيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتَنَلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ

- Amr Aas received a letter from Muawiyah in which he was ordered to gather his army and come to Damascus to fight against Ameerul Momineen (a.s). Amr Aas refused to accept the orders of Muawiyah. Instead, he shot back a letter in which he listed the virtues and merits of Ameerul Momineen (a.s). The above verse was one of them that he mentioned showing the superiority of Ameerul Momineen (a.s). Muawiyah realised that Amr Aas could not be logically compelled to fight against Ameerul Momineen (a.s). So, he handed over the governorship of Misr (Egypt) to Amr Aas (while it was Hazrat Ali (a.s)'s prerogative to appoint governors) and then instigated Amr Aas to fight Ameerul Momineen (a.s) to claim the governorship of Egypt.