



IMAM AL-RIDĀ (A.S.)
IN THE SUNNĪ TRADITIONS

MUĤAMMAD MUĤSIN ṬABASĪ

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Introduction

Hajj Shaykh Najm al-Dīn Ṭabasī,
Professor, Islamic Seminary in Qum

Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being and Peace be upon the best of all His creatures Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allah peace be upon him and upon his Pure Descendant.

I enthusiastically studied the valuable book, *Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions*, written by my dear son, the learned scholar and the authoritative researcher, Shaykh Muḥammad Muḥsin Ṭabasī. It is about a personality, who is acclaimed as the Learned of the Holy Prophet’s household (S.A.W.A.) and an integral part of his body according to the Sunnī and Shī‘a beliefs.

An honorable personage that the reward of going on pilgrimage to his holy shrine is equal to seventy Hajj pilgrimages and the recompense for passing a night by his tomb is equal to visiting the Heaven and his pilgrims will stand in a holy place besides the immaculate Imams (A.S.) on the Day of Judgment.¹

He is a distinguished personality that the eminent Sunnī and Shī‘a scholars bowed before his shrine and humbly respected him. They considered visiting his shrine a virtuous and Islamic tradition. As they have reported about Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma Shāfi‘ī, that “When he arrived at the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), we saw such a respect and humbling towards the shrine that we all were astonished. We said if this learned religious

¹ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991), *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, 2nd print, Riḍā Mashhadī, Qum, 1363 sh. vol. 2, Bāb 66, P. 263 Ḥ 20; Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 722/1322), *Farā'id al-Simṭayn fī Faḍā'il al-Murtaḍā wa al-Batūl wa al-Sibṭayn wa al-A'immat min Dhurriyyathim*, 1st print, Mu'assasat al-Maḥmūdī, Beirut, 1400. vol. 2, P. 194.

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leader did not consider it as a virtuous tradition he did not behave so.”¹

He is a great luminary that the Sunnī and the Shī‘a unanimously believe that in invoking him they are certain that Allah will answer their prayers: as Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Sahl, a distinguished Shāfi‘ī jurist says, “I visit the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) for solving my worldly and spiritual problems, and I pray to Allah beside the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Allah answers my prayer, and my problem is solved. I learned it by experience and it became a habit for me. Thus, whenever I face a difficulty I enter his holy shrine and pass the night near his blessed grave.”² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi‘ī also says, “I would frequently go on pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). While I was in Ṭūs, whenever I faced a problem I visited the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Allah’s blessing be upon his ancestor and him, and I prayed to Allah to answer my call, and He solved my problem. I experienced it many times.”³ Truly the eminent Sunnī scholars had stated these facts many centuries before Ibn Tamiya (d. 728/1328) and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1206/1792), the founder of Wahhabism lived. They are reasonable proofs that nullify the Wahhabi doctrine, about the illegality of imploring help, seeking refuge and going on pilgrimage to the shrine s of the Fourteen Impeccable personalities the pious, the believers

This book is compiled by extensive research and analysis on more than two hundred reliable works written by the Sunnī scholars of different schools of thought, which demonstrates their realistic and their views on Imam al-Riḍā’s position and personality. By studying it you will find that the Salafi and Takfiri groups, who impose themselves as the spokesmen of Muslims and Sunnī sects, are but the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and his pure

¹ *Ibid*, vol. 2, 198; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad b. ‘Alī (d. 852/1448), *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1404, vol. 7, P. 339

² Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, 220

³ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi‘ī (d. 354/965), *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1393, vol. 8, P. 426

descendant's enemies and the followers of the Umayyad. They are much different from the Sunnī sects.

It is worth mentioning that leading Sunnī scholars like Abū Zur‘a Rāzī Ḥanbalī, Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī along with some twenty thousand people welcomed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) when he arrived in Neyshābūr, and as Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi‘ī says, “On the arrival of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) some were crying and bursting into tears out of excitement, some were kneeling down and kissing Imam al-Riḍā’s mule feet”.¹

Retelling these facts is a great contribution to the new Muslim generation and to create love and proximity among various schools of Islamic thought and Muslim scholars. The honorable author has accomplished his work successfully. I hope this discussion, under the title of “Imams from Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions”, will be continued and will be presented to all Muslims. I wish Allah assists him more in his task.

Was Salaam
Najm al-Dīn Ṭabasī,
Qum al-Muqaddasa

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451), *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma fī Ma‘rifat Aḥwāl al-A‘imma*, 2nd print, Dār al-Aḍwā’, Beirut, 1409, P. 242

Prologue

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), the Holy Prophet's son, the eighth leader of the truth seeking, is a radiant reality, and the shining light of personality and knowledge not only revive the Shī'a school, but also covers the Sunnī schools, who are obliged to praise and eulogize him. One can find this fact through examining the important Sunnī books. Of course they have not explained the true position of the "Learned of the Holy Prophet's Household" in their books, but most of them, in special views and different explanations, have acknowledged the greatness of the personality of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

Consequently, we can mention the viewpoints, words and acts of the Sunnī, especially those scholars who have referred to the enlightening truth of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his lifetime up to now. Thus, collecting and classifying this invaluable legacy, which makes the basis of this work, is a necessity, in spite of obvious shortcoming and the deliberate prejudices of some of the compilers.

The necessity of this research: The ever increasing number of pilgrims, from every sect, who visit the sacred shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) from far and near; the unclear viewpoint of the Sunnī about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and their different remarks about him; the Wahhabi intrigues for misreporting the position of the holy Prophet's Household and their troublemaking legal decrees for demolishing the sacred thresholds including the shrines of Shī'a Imams in Iraq and Arabia and the sacred shrine of Imam Riḍā in Iran; and the lack of a comprehensive research book on this subject are the four factors that demand composing this research.

The aims of the research: Regarding the necessity of this research, we are going to follow the three succeeding aims: a comprehensive and realistic knowledge of the thoughts and the viewpoints of the Sunnī scholars about the different features of the

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personality of Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.); creating concord and proximity between the Sunnī and the Shī'a on the basis of the sacred personality of the Holy Prophet's son, Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) and finally preventing the evil deeds of the Wahhabi groups from trying to sow discord among the Muslim schools of thought.

The background of the research: No one has written such a comprehensive monograph about Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) with this approach up to now, but in this regard we can see some good steps in the Sunnī books. Among them are:

Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254), *Maṭālib al-Su'ul fī Manāqib Āl al-Rasūl*; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451), *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma fī Ma'rifat Aḥwāl al-A'imma*; Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī, (d. 660/1261), *al-Na'im al-Muqīm li 'Itrat al-Naba' al-'Azīm*; Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419), *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb*; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492), *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī (d. 903/1497), *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*; Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā* and *Wasīlat al-Khādim ilā al-Makhdūm dar Sharḥ i Ṣalwāt i Chahārdah Ma'sūm*; Ibn Ṭulūn Damashqī Ḥanafī (d. 953/1546), *al-A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar*; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 942/1535), *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar fī Aḥwāl Afrād Bashar*; Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi'ī (d. 974/1566), *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*; Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610), *Akḥbār al-Duwal wa Āthār al-Uwal*; Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī (d. 1172/1758), *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*; Qundūzī Ḥanafī (d. 1294/1877), *Yanābī' al-Mawadda li Dhawī al-Qurbā*; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī (d. 1298/1880), *Nūr al-Abṣār fī Manāqib Āl Bayt al-Nabī al-Mukhtār*; Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi'ī (d. 1412/1991), *Manāqib Ahl Bayt az Dīdgāh Ahl Sunnat*.

Among the Shī'a scholars we cannot ignore the tasks of the Third Martyr, Qāḍī Nūr al-Allah Shūshtarī in *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq wa Izhāq al-Bāṭil* and the inimitable annotations of Grand Ayatollah Mar'ashī Najafī on *Mulḥaqqāt Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq* for introducing the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.) from the Sunnī point of view. Their endeavor laid the groundwork for this book and I bestow the reward of my work to the pure souls of these two great

scholars.

About this book: regarding the dependent and dispersed works on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) from the Sunnī point of view and the lack of an independent comprehensive book on this subject, we compiled *Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions* as a monograph in seven chapters:

Chapter One: Imam's Biography, it contains Imam al-Riḍā's genealogy, lineage, surnames, titles and ancestors, his birthday and birthplace, his martyrdom, the Sunnī point of view regarding the martyrdom of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); and his children.

Chapter Two: Imam's Personality, this chapter contains the sayings of Imam's contemporaries and the viewpoints of the prominent Sunnī scholars from the second/eighth century up to now regarding different aspects of his personality.

Chapter Three: Tradition, it contains the narratives of the historical event of Imam's arrival in Neyshābūr where he received unique welcome from the people and the eminent Sunnī scholars as well as the texts of the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*) from the Sunnī point of view and other texts of his tradition.

Chapter four: Imamate, it surveys the usage of the term "Imamate" by the Sunnī scholars since the seventh/thirteenth century and the texts implying the Imamate of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in their books.

Chapter Five: The heir apparent to Ma'mūn, it discusses the nomination of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as heir apparent, which was imposed on him by Ma'mūn and answers some questions about this nomination. It also clarifies whether Ma'mūn or Faḍl b. Sahl proposed this nomination was Ma'mūn true in his offer or he followed some political aims. What was Imam's stance on this suggestion?

Chapter six: Imam's charisma, it refers to the charisma, praiseworthy actions and miraculous deeds of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), recorded in the Sunnī books, before he was born up to his martyrdom.

Chapter Seven: Pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-

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Riḍā, it includes the virtues of visiting the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), and insistence of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.), Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) and Imam al-Hādī (A.S.) on visiting Mashhad al-Riḍā, the history of building a shrine on the grave of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the supplication of the distinguished Sunnī scholars for seeking help from Allah in this shrine from the third/ninth century up to now.

Some Points: It is worth mentioning that by the Sunnī schools of thought we mean the Shāfi'ī, the Mālikī, the Ḥanbalī, the Ḥanafī and the Zāhirī schools of thought from the second/eighth century up to now. Thus we did not discuss the views of the newly invented group of Wahhabism which is even rejected by the Sunnī schools of thought.

Although we compiled and classified all the historical reports, information and the Sunnī sayings concerning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), in some cases we had to analyze or criticize some of them. This procedure is based on the views and doctrines of Sunnī schools of thought and we did not try to compare them to the Shī'a sources, except for special cases.

The subject matters of this research are based on more than two hundred Sunnī sources which we quoted directly; except for the books which were lost or they were in manuscript forms unavailable to us, so we quoted them indirectly. We did not mention the materials on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Shī'a books quoted from the Sunnī sources. Although this monograph may be a new step in this field, the author does not claim it is a faultless work and welcomes sympathetic and impartial criticisms.

Finally I acknowledge the guidance of Hajj Shaykh Najm al-Dīn Ṭabasī and Hajj Shaykh Muḥammad Hādī Yūsufī Gharawī. I also appreciate the valuable points mentioned by Hajj Shaykh Muḥammad Bāqir Pūr Amīnī and Ḥasan Bulqānabādī which helped in enriching this work.

Muḥammad Muḥsin Ṭabasī,
Qum al-Muqaddasa

Chapter One: Imam's Biography

Genealogy

Sam'ānī Shāfi'ī describes Imam al-Riḍā's genealogy as 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.).¹

It is fully obvious that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is from the Holy Prophet's lineage, as Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī refers to this point and says,

“One of the great honors and merits of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is that he is a direct descendent of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the Sunnī scholars also believe it. All the jurists of Ḥijāz agree on it. Whoever disagrees with this fact has fought against the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Sunna* of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), and he has confronted the truth. He would be the enemy of 'the two lords of the youth of Paradise' and their descendants up to the Day of Judgment.”²

It is worth mentioning that some movements in the Islamic history, having enmity with Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.), tried to separate them as the offspring of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), but the resistance of some aware scholars such as Ḥākim Neyshābūrī did not let their malicious dreams become true.

Surnames and titles

His glorified name is 'Alī and from to the Sunnī point of view he is the third one called 'Alī after Imam 'Alī (A.S.) and Imam al-Sajjād (A.S.) ('Alī b. al-Ḥusayn).³ His surname name is Abū al-Ḥasan¹ as

¹ Sam'ānī Shāfi'ī, (d. 562/1166), *al-Ansāb*, 1st print, 1408, vol. 3, P. 75

² Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, 220, Ḥ 481, quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*.

³ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254), *Maṭālib al-Su'ul fī Manāqib Āl al-Rasūl*, 1st print, Mu'assasat al-Balāgh Beirut, 1419, P. 295

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his honorable father Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) often told, “My son’s surname name is the same as mine.”

Although some people think his surname was Abū Bakr,² but it is a wrong assumption and his famous surname is Abū al-Ḥasan. Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī says, “He has several titles.”³

Totally they are Riḍā,⁴ Hāshimī, ‘Alawī, Ḥusaynī, Qurashī, Madanī,⁵ Walīy, Ḥafīy, Ṣābir, Zakīy, Zākīy,⁶ Qā’im,¹ and the most famous of them is Riḍā.²

¹ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1201), *al-Muntaẓam fī Tawārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam*, 1st print Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1415, vol. 6, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257), *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ min al-Ummah bi Zikr Khaṣā’iṣ al-A’imma*, 1st print, Mu’assasat Ahl al-Bayt Beirut, 1417, P. 315; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 11th print, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1417, vol. 9, P. 387; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *al-Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, vol. 1, P. 266

² Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī (other) (d. 356/967), *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, 2nd print, Manshūrāt al-Raḍī, Qum, 1405, P. 375

³ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 942/1535), *Ta’rīkh Ḥabīb al-Siyar fī Aḥwāl Afrād Bashār*, 2nd print, Intishārāt Kitābfurūshī Khayyam, Tehran, 1353 sh, vol. 2, P. 82

⁴ Sam‘ānī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, P. 75; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, ‘Izz al-Dīn (d. 630/1233), *al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb Ansāb*, 3rd print, Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, 1414, vol. 2, P. 30; Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125; Fīrūzābādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 817/1414), *Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, Dār al-Jīl, Beirut, n.d, vol. 4, P. 337; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Tadhhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Nashr al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha, Cairo, 1425, vol. 13, P. 408; Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi‘ī (d. 774/1372), *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, 5th print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1409, vol. 10, P. 261

⁵ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tadhhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 13, P. 408; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9 P. 387; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Ta’rīkh al-Islam wa Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa al-A’lām*, 1st print, Beirut, 1417 (the events of the years 201/816 – 210/825) P. 269; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, vol. 1, P. 266; Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, P. 261; Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī Ḥanafī (d. 874/1469), *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhira*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya Beirut, 1413, vol. 2, P. 219

⁶ Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 234; 236; Suwidī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1246/1830), *Sabā’ik al-Dhahab fī Ma’rifat Qabā’il al-‘Arab*, al-Maktabat al-‘Ilmiyya, n. p. , n. d, P. 75;

Who gave the title “al-Riḍā” to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)?

Some Sunnī writers believe that Ma'mūn conferred on him the title al-Riḍā in 201/816, while he imposed him to be his heir apparent,³ but as Abī Naṣr Bazanṭī narrated that Imam al-Jawād (A.S.), renounced this claim:

Abī Naṣr Bazanṭī once told Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) that Imam's opponents believe Ma'mūn gave the title “al-Riḍā” (consent) to his father because he consented to be Ma'mūn's heir apparent. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) rejected it and said, “By Allah they tell lies. Allah, the Exalted gave the title “al-Riḍā” to my father because all his opponents and supporters were consented to him.”⁴

Some Sunnī scholars as Juwaynī Shāfi'ī⁵ and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī⁶ have affirmed it, and they have written it in verse:

The blessed Imam named 'Alī (b. Mūsā al-Riḍā),
The leader of the Arab and the shelter of non-Arab
Allah was consented to him, Thus he was entitled Riḍā.¹

Shablanjī Shāfi'ī (d. 1298/1880), *Nūr al-Abṣār fī Manāqib Āl Bayt al-Nabī al-Mukhtār*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1418, P. 232 Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 1372/1952), *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, 1st print, Beirut, 1395, vol. 4, P. 28

¹ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Wasīlat al-Khādīm ilā al-Makhdūm dar Sharḥ i Ṣalwāt i Chahārdah Ma'ṣūm*, 1st print, Intishārāt Anṣāriyān, Qum, 1375, P. 238

² Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 234; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 232; Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, vol. 4, P. 289

³ Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, 2nd print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1408, vol. 5, P. 138; Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*; Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb Miskwayh (other) (d. 421/1030), *Tajārib al-Umam*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1424, vol. 3, P. 366; Ibn al-'Ibrī (Barhebraeus) (d. 685/1286), *Ta'rikh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*, 1st print, Mu'assasat Nashr al-Manābi' al-Thiqāfiyya, Qum, n.d, P. 134; Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī (d. 749/1348), *Tatimma al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, 1st print, Dār al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1389, vol. 1, P. 318

⁴ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 1, P. 13, Bāb 1, Ḥ 1

⁵ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, 187

⁶ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī Ḥanafī (d. 898/1942), *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, ed. Professor Sayyid Ḥasan Amīn, 1st print, Daftar Nashr Ṭayyib, Tehran, 1379 sh, P. 183

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Imam's parents

His noble father was Mūsā b. Ja'far, Imam al-Kāzim (A.S.), but there are some differences about his mother's name. She was a slave girl and they have quoted many names for her: as Sukayna,² Arwā,³ Khayzurān Mirīsiyya,⁴ Najma,⁵ and her title was Shaqrā' Nūbiyya,⁶ or Umm al-Banīn.⁷

It is worth mentioning that Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī praising Imam al-Riḍā's mother says, "His mother was one of the non-Arab nobles and she was the leading women in her time in wisdom and religion."⁸

Imam's birth

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was born in Madina on a Friday, one year after the martyrdom of his grandfather Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.). Some believe it was 143/760,⁹ some other guess it was 148/765,¹⁰

¹ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'riḫ Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 82

² Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 387

³ Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, vol. 4, P. 289

⁴ Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315; Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, P. 295

⁵ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'riḫ Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 83

⁶ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, P. 295; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 387

⁷ Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak (d. 764/1362), *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, 1st print, al-Nasharāt al-Islāmiyya, Germany, 1381/1961, vol. 22, P. 248

⁸ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419), Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā, Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khitāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābir' al-Mawadda*, 2nd print, Dār al-Uswa, Qum, 1422, vol. 3, P. 166

⁹ Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 232

¹⁰ Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn (d. 606/1209), *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'riḫ*, 1st print, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, Beirut, 1408, vol. 4 P. 178; Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī, *Tatimma al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 1 P. 320; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 387; Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 248; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 232

151/768,¹ or 153/770.²

Some have recorded that he was born on the sixth, seventh, or eighth of Shawwāl.³ The Sunnī writers have narrated miraculous events about Imam al-Riḍā's birth that we will refer to them in chapter six.

Imam's death or martyrdom

There are some differences regarding his day of Martyrdom.

On Saturday the end of Şafar 203/818 during Ma'mūn's reign⁴

¹ Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī (d. 768/1366), *Mir'āt al-Jinān wa 'Abrat al-Yaqzān fī Ma'rifat mā Ya'tabir min Ḥawādith al-Zamān*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, vol. 2 P. 10

² Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 346/957), *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, vol. 4 P. 34; Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī (d. 681/1282), *Wafayāt al-A'yān wa Anbā' Abnā' al-Zamān*, 1st print, Dār Şādir, Beirut, 1398, vol. 3 P. 270; Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2 P. 10; Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī (d. 953/1546), *A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar, al-*, Manshūrāt al-Riḍā, Qum, n.d, P. 97

³ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3, P. 270; Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10; Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, *A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar, al-*, P. 98

⁴ It is the view of most Sunnī writers. See Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ (other) (d. 240/854), *Ta'rikh Khalīfat b. Khayyāṭ*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1415, P. 312; Ya'qūbī (other) (d. 284/897), *Ta'rikh Ya'qūbī*, Dār Şādir, Beirut, n.d, vol. 2, P. 453; Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr Ṭabarī *Ta'rikh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 5, P. 146; Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 4, P. 33; Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8, P. 457; Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, *al-Muntazam*, vol. 6, P. 121 Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb Miskwayh, *Tajārib al-Umam*, vol. 3, P. 376; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, 'Izz al-Dīn (d. 630/1233), *al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb Ansāb*, , vol. 2, P. 30; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, P. 187; Ibn al-'Ibrī, *Ta'rikh Mukhtaşar al-Duwal*, P. 134; Abū al-Fidā' Damashqī Shāfi'ī (d. 732/ 1331), *al-Mukhtaşar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, 1st print, Dar al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, n.d, vol. 2, P. 23; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 9 P. 389; 44; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *al-Kāshif fī Ma'rifat man laḥū Riwayātun fī al-Kutub al-Sitta*, 1st print, Dār al-Qibla Mu'assasat 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Jidda, 1413, vol. 2, P. 287; Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, P. 261; Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. , vol. 2, P. 219; Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, *A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar, al-*, P. 98; 59; Diyār Bakrī Shāfi'ī (d. 966/1558), *Ta'rikh al-Khamīs fī Aḥwāl Anfus Nafīs*, Dār Şādir, Beirut, n.d, vol. 2, P. 335

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On the first of Ṣafar, 203/818¹

On a Friday night in Ramaḍān, 203/819²

On the fifth of Dhū al-Ḥijja, 203/819³

On the thirteenth of Dhū al-Qa'da, 203/819⁴

In 202/817⁵

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred when he was about fifty years old.⁶ There are some disagreements about his exact age when he was martyred. Some believe he was martyred at the age of 44,⁷ and some have recorded the age of 47,⁸ 49,⁹ 50,¹⁰ and 53.¹¹

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred, during Ma'mūn's reign, in Ṭūs (Khurāsān) in a village called Sanābād¹² in the region of Nawqān,¹³ and he was buried beside Hārūn al-Rashīd's grave by

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 346/957), *al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*, 1st print, Mu'assasat Nashr al-Thiqāfat al-Islāmiyya, Qum, n.d, P. 303

² Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3, P. 270; Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 248; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339

³ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3, P. 270; Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

⁶ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī (d. 852/1448), *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2nd print, Dār al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1395, vol. 2, P. 45

⁷ Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh Ya'qūbī* vol. 2, P. 453

⁸ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 4, P. 33

⁹ *Ibid*; Ibn Najjār Baghdādī Shāfi'ī (d. 643/1245), *Dhayl Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1417, vol. 19, P. 142; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 383; Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 248; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339

¹⁰ Mughaltay Ḥanafī (d. 762/1360), *Ikmāl Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, 1st print, al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha, Beirut, 1422, vol. 9, P. 380

¹¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 4, P. 33

¹² One of the Nawqān villages in the province of Ṭūs, See Yāqūt Ḥamawī (other) (d. 626/1229), *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, Beirut, 1399, vol. 3, P. 259

¹³ At that time Ṭūs consisted of two big cities, Ṭābirān and Nawqān, which of them consisted of more than one thousand villages. See Yāqūt Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5, P. 311

order of Ma'mūn.¹ Imam prophesied his martyrdom and there are some amazing events narrated which took place after his martyrdom that we will refer to them in chapter six.

Sunnī views about Imam's martyrdom

Although Imam (A.S.) had prophesied his martyrdom many times and had foretold that he would be killed by poisoning and buried in exile;² and he had also introduced Ma'mūn as his murderer;³ and many distinguished Sunnī writers have narrated this prediction in their works as Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī believes that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) passed away while he was poisoned⁴ some other writers regrettably have ignored this fact and have transmitted incorrect matters in this regard. They have reported Imam's death or his martyrdom in different ways that we refer to them:

Ṭabarī claims that the reason for Imam's passing away was due to eating too much grapes and he says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

¹Ibn Hibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8, P. 457; Hirawī Mawṣilī (other) (d. 611/1214), *Kitāb al-Ishārāt ilā Ma'rifat al-Ziyārāt*, Ma'had al-Faransī, Damascus, 1953, P. 7; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 339; Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 248; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339

²Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 812, Ḥ 492, P. 192, Ḥ 496, Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 167

³Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ul*, pp. 300-302; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 250; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 389-392; 172; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī (d. 903/1497), *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, Intishārāt Kitābfurūshī Markazi, Tehran, 1339 sh. vol. 3 pp. 49-52; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, pp. 88-91; 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manāwī Shāfi'ī (d. 1031/1621), *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya fī Trājim al-Sādat al-Ṣūfiyya*, 1st print, Cairo, vol. 1, P. 256; Badakhshī Hindī (12th/18th century), *Miftāḥ al-Najā fī Manāqib Āl 'Abā'*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uzmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, P. 82; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 244; Sanhūti Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1344/1925), *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyya fī Manāqib al-Sādat al-Naqshbandiyya*, 1st print Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda Cairo, n.d, P. 39

⁴Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī (other), *al-Ṣilat bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū'*, 3rd print, Dār al-Andulus, Beirut, 1982, vol. 1, P. 244

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ate too much grapes and he passed away suddenly.”¹

Some other historians like, Majd al-Dīn b. Athīr Jazarī Shāfi‘ī,² Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī,³ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī,⁴ Abū al-Fidā’ Damashqī Shāfi‘ī⁵ and Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi‘ī⁶ have accepted this claim. Some other writers like, Abū ‘Alī Miskwayh al-Rāzī, Yāfi‘ī Shāfi‘ī and Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī regard Ṭabarī’s statement doubtfully and they dither over Imam’s death or martyrdom.

Abū ‘Alī Miskwayh al-Rāzī says, “As it is said he died suddenly because he ate too much grapes.”⁷

Yāfi‘ī Shāfi‘ī, says, “The reason for Imam’s death, as they have narrated, was eating too much grapes, they have also said he passed away through poisoning.”⁸

Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī hesitates to agree or disagree about the death or martyrdom of Imam and avoids mentioning his view about it.⁹

Others like, Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi‘ī¹⁰ and Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī¹¹ ponder the reason for the sudden death of Imam (A.S.) was eating poisoned pomegranates or grapes, but they do not mention who poisoned him. However, there are some writers like Mas‘ūdī Shāfi‘ī, Ibn Ṭiḡṭaqā, Maqrīzī Shāfi‘ī and from the contemporaries Dr. Tarmānīnī who accept that Imam (A.S.)

¹ Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Ta’riḫ al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 5, P. 146

² Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta’riḫ*, vol. 4, P. 177

³ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī, *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3, P. 23

⁴ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 121

⁵ Abū al-Fidā’ Damashqī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. , P. 23

⁶ Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, P. 260

⁷ Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb Miskwayh, *Tajārib al-Umam*, vol. 6, P. 376

⁸ Yāfi‘ī Yamanī Shāfi‘ī, *Mir’āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

⁹ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb*, cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābīr al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 168

¹⁰ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī Shāfi‘ī (d. 973/1565), *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, 1st print, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1417, vol. 2, P. 539

¹¹ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 233

was poisoned and doubtfully introduce Ma'mūn as his killer.

Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) passed away in Ṭūs during Ma'mūn's reign while he was poisoned."¹

Ibn Ṭiḡṭaqā says, "It is said that Ma'mūn poisoned Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) by grapes."²

Maqrīzī writes, "Ma'mūn is accused of poisoning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) by grapes."³ Of course somewhere else he openly says, "Ma'mūn poisoned Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)."⁴

Dr. Tarmānīnī says, "Ma'mūn partook to poisoning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), he forced Imam (A.S.) to eat poison."⁵

On the contrary, many historians and traditionists like Muḥammad b. 'Alī known as Ibn al-'Aẓīmī, Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi'ī, Sam'ānī Shāfi'ī,⁶ Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī, Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī, Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, Maqrīzī Shāfi'ī (in some of his books),⁷ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālīkī, Shablanjī Shāfi'ī,⁸ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī,⁹ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī and 'Abbās b. 'Alī Makkī Shāfi'ī¹⁰ explicitly introduce Ma'mūn as the killer of Imam (A.S.).

Ibn al-'Aẓīmī writes, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred by the poison Ma'mūn forced him to take."¹¹ Ibn Ḥibbān writes,

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 4, P. 4; idem, *al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*, P. 303

² Ibn Ṭiḡṭaqā (other) (d. 709/1309), *al-Fakhrī fī Ādāb al-Sultāniyya wa al-Duwal al-Islāmiyya*, 1st print, Dār al-Qalam al-'Arabī, Ḥalab, 1418, pp. 215 and 216

³ Maqrīzī Shāfi'ī (d. 845/1441), *Kitāb al-Muqaffā al-Kabīr*, 1st print, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmi, Beirut, 1412, vol. 4, P. 284

⁴ Maqrīzī Shāfi'ī (d. 845/1441), *al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyya al-Mussmā bi Shudhūr al-Uqūd fī Dhikr al-Nuqūd*, 1st print, Manshūrāt al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Qum, 1407, pp. 72 and 73

⁵ Tarmānīnī (other), 'Abd al-Salām, *Aḥdāth al-Ta'rīkh al-Islāmī bi Tartīb al-Sinīn*, 1st print, Dār Ṭallās, Damascus, 1417, vol. 2, P. 1169

⁶ Sam'ānī al-Tamīmī (Shāfi'ī), Abū Sa'd 'Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr (d. 562/1166) *al-Ansāb*, 1st print, 1408, vol. 3, P. 74

⁷ Maqrīzī Shāfi'ī, *al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyya*, pp. 72, 73

⁸ Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 324, 325

⁹ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rīkh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 50

¹⁰ Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 1180/1766), *Nuzhat al-Jalīs wa Munyat al-Anīs*, 1st print, Maktabat al-Ḥaydariyya, Qum, 1417, P. 105

¹¹ Ibn al-'Aẓīmī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī Tanūkhī Ḥalabī (other), *Ta'rīkh Ḥalab*, P. 242

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“Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) died in Ṭūs by the poisoned juice Ma'mūn forced him to take. He suddenly passed away”¹ Somewhere else he writes, “Imam was poisoned by pomegranate juice. Ma'mūn force him drink it.”²

Şafadī Shāfi'ī writes, “The relations between Imam (A.S.) and Ma'mūn changed until he poisoned Imam (A.S.) to attract the Abbasid's attention.”³ Abū al-Faraj Işfahānī writes, “Ma'mūn appointed 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent, but later, as they have narrated, he forced him to eat poisoned grapes, and he passed away due to this reason.”⁴

The term martyrdom

It is worth mentioning that Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, Ibn Şabbāgh Mālikī and Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Işfahānī described Imam al-Riḍā's death as martyrdom.

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred in Sanābād, located in the district of Ṭūs.”⁵

Ibn Şabbāgh Mālikī says that “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred.”⁶

Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Işfahānī writes, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred by poison.”⁷

Qādī Bahjat Afandī clearly introduces Imam (A.S.) as a martyr and considers Ma'mūn as his killer. He says, “Ma'mūn was displeased with Imam al-Riḍā's illumination of guidance and dissemination of wisdom, finally he poisoned him unfaithfully, and by this cruel act he demonstrated that justice and cruelty; truth

¹ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8, P. 457

² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī (Shāfi'ī), Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad b. Ḥibbān (d. 354/965), *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, Dār al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1412 vol. 2, P. 107

³ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 315 1

⁴ Abū al-Faraj Işfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, P. 375

⁵ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 393; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339 both quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'riḫ Neyshābūr*.

⁶ Ibn Şabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 264

⁷ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Işfahānī Ḥanafī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, P. 223

and wrong; knowledge and ignorance, could not gather together.”¹

Further study

In addition to the above mentioned facts which recount that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was poisoned and martyred, his natural death is not reasonable. Regarding to the historical events during the Ma'mūn's reign, in which he assumed Imam (A.S.) as a high threat for his sovereignty; thus by the trick of nominating him as his heir apparent he could not fulfill his dreams. The dissatisfaction of most of the Abbasids for the appointment of Imam as heir apparent was another factor for eliminating Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Everyone who is aware of the history cannot accept Imam's natural death and they knew that Imam (A.S.) was a man who used to sleep too little and would fast too much, thus eating too much grape cannot be the reason of his sudden death.

Conclusion

In any case in spite of reliable accounts, stipulating most of the trustworthy Sunnī scholars and the hypocritical policy of Ma'mūn towards Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), there is no doubt that Imam (A.S.) was martyred and Ma'mūn poisoned him so there is no room left for personal thoughts and untruthful notions of such historians as Ibn Khaldūn Mālikī² and Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī.³

Imam's children

According to Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī Shāfi'ī, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had four sons called Imam Abū Ja'far Muḥammad Taqī, Ḥasan, 'Alī, Ḥusayn, Mūsā and a daughter called Fāṭima. The historians are unanimous

¹ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931), *Tashrīḥ va Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, translated [into Persian] by Mīrzā Mahdī Adīb, 2nd print, Bunyād Ba'that, Tehran, 1376 sh, pp. 157-159

² Ibn Khaldūn Mālikī, (d. 808/1405), *al-'Ibar wa Dīwān al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabar fī Ayyām al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam wa al-Barbar wa man 'Āṣarhum min Dhawī al-Sulṭān al-Akbar*, known as *Ta'rikh Ibn Khaldūn*, 2nd print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1408, vol. 4, P. 38

³ Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī, *Ḍuḥī al-Islām*, 2nd print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabī, Beirut, n.d, vol. 3, P. 296

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in their opinions that the descendants of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) were from Imam al-Jawād (A.S.)¹ some believe that his children were Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) and Ḥusayn,² but Zarandī Ḥanafī says, “Truly he had no children except Muḥammad b. ‘Alī entitled Taqī and the latter had some children.”³ Sam‘ānī says, “Imam al-Riḍā’s descendants and progeny are called Raḍawī.”⁴

¹ Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Shāfi‘ī (d. 606/1209), *al-Shajarat al-Mubāraka fī Ansāb al-Ṭālibiyya*, 1st print, Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-‘Uzmā Mar‘ashī Najafī, Qum, 1409, P. 77; Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī (d. 660/1261), *al-Na‘īm al-Muqīm li ‘Itrat al-Naba’ al-‘Azīm*, 1st print, Dār al Kutub al-Islāmī, Qum, 1423, P. 409; Qundūzī, *Yanābī‘ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 165

² Ibn Ḥazm Andalusī Zāhirī (d. 456/967), *Jamhurat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, P. 62

³ Zarandī (Ḥanafī), Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf (d. 757/1356), *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl ilā Ma‘rifat Faḍl Āl al-Rasūl wa al-Batūl*, ed. Muḥammad Kāzīm Maḥmūdī 1st print, Majma‘ Iḥyā’ al-Thiqāfat al-al-Islāmiyya, Qum, 1425, pp. 159 and 160

⁴ Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, P. 75; see also Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, ‘Izz al-Dīn, *al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb Ansāb*, 3rd print, Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, 1414, Suyūṭī Shāfi‘ī, Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *al-Lub al-Lubāb fī Tahṛīr al-Ansāb*, 3rd print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1411, vol. 1, P. 354

Chapter Two: Imam's Personality

Imam's position as authority in *ḥadīth* from the Sunnī point of view

Although from the Shī'a point of view Imam al-Riḍā's position is above these arguments and he is the eighth immaculate successor of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), but he Sunnī classify him in the eighth category of Ḥadīth narrators and Successors [*Tābi'in*] in Madina,¹ and some consider him in the tenth category of Ḥadīth narrators.²

Imam's position as a traditionist and a scholar from the Sunnī point of view is so because, as Dhahabī Shāfi'i says, among the compilers of The Six Reliable Tradition Collections (*Ṣiḥāḥ Sitta*) only Tirmidhī, Abū Dā'ūd Sajistānī and Ibn Māja have transmitted traditions from Imam (A.S.) in their books, *Sunan*, in the chapters of *Zakāt*, *Īmān* etc.³

Mazzī Shāfi'i writes, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) has transmitted traditions from many notable persons, including his fathers and his uncles, like Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.), Ismā'il, Ishāq, 'Abd Allah, 'Alī, Ja'far's sons, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī al-Mawālī etc. and some people like Abā Ṣalt 'Abd al-Salam al-Hirawī, Aḥmad b. 'Āmir Ṭā'i, 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās Qazwīnī, Ādam b. Abī Ayās, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Muḥammad b. Rāfi', Naṣr b. 'Alī Jahḍamī or Juhnī, Khālīd b. Aḥmad Dhuhlī, Ibn Rāhuwayh, Abū Zur'a Rāzī, Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī,

¹ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

² Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, P. 45, it worth mentioning that divergence in groups is due to the norms that are valid from the Sunnī point of view. see *Ibid*, vol. 1, P. 5

³ Dhahabī Shāfi'i, *Ta'rīkh al-Islam wa Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa al-A'lām*, (the events of the years 201/816 – 210/825) P. 269; Dhahabī Shāfi'i, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 393, it is worth mentioning that the traditions claimed by Dhahabī are not found in *Sunan Tirmidhī* and *Sunan Ibn Māja* available now.

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etc. have transmitted Ḥadīth from him.”¹

Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi‘ī, venerating Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and his descendants, considers his traditions authentic and says, “Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is of the nobles and wise men of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and of the distinguished personalities of Banī Hāshim. Every tradition transmitted from him should be given the due importance.”²

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī concerning Imam’s position as a traditionist, states that the leaders and leading traditionists have transmitted ḥadīth from him. He says, “The leaders of tradition as Ādam b. Abī Ayās, Naṣr b. ‘Alī Jahḍamī, Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ Qushayrī and others have transmitted from him.”³

It is worth mentioning that some traditionists like Ibrāhīm b. Abī Mukarram Ja‘farī,⁴ Ibrāhīm b. Dā’ūd Ya‘qūbī,⁵ Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā,⁶ Aḥmad b. Ḥasan Kūfī Usaydī,⁷ Ismā‘il b. Humām Baṣrī,⁸ Thalj b. Abī Thalj Ya‘qūbī,⁹ Ja‘far b. Ibrāhīm Ḥaḍramī,¹⁰ Ja‘far b. Sahl,¹¹ Ja‘far b. Sharīk,¹ Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm Kūfī,² Di‘bil Khuzā‘ī,³ ‘Abd

¹ Mazzī Shāfi‘ī (d. 742/1341), *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414, vol. 13, P. 408; see also Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rīkh al-Islam wa Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa al-A’lām*, (the events of the years 201/816 – 210/825) P. 270 and idem, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9 pp. 387 and 388

² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8, P. 456, he continues whenever it is narrated by someone other than his descendants, his followers and especially by Abā Ṣalt. He accepts Imam Riḍā’s traditions narrated by people except this group. Now we pose this question if we ignore the accounts of this group, it remains no other tradition from Imam Riḍā. However we wonder what Ibn Ḥibbān means by putting aside these traditions.

³ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339 quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr*.

⁴ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 852/1448), *Lisān al-Mīzān*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1416, vol. 1, P. 93

⁵ *Ibid*, P. 55

⁶ *Ibid*, P. 116

⁷ *Ibid*, P. 151

⁸ *Ibid*, P. 241

⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, P. 83

¹⁰ *Ibid*, P. 107

¹¹ *Ibid*, P. 115

al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ (Abā Ṣalt),⁴ Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Riqqī,⁵ Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān Jurjānī⁶ and Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān⁷ are among the followers and narrators from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), but the Sunnī consider them weak because they were Shī‘a and had close relations with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), they transmitted key traditions from him.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Holy Prophet's words

They have transmitted from Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) that he said, “I saw (in my dream) the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.) that they told me O Mūsā, your son sees the light of Allah, he speaks wisely, he is trustworthy, immaculate and brimming with knowledge and wisdom.”⁸

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Sunnī narrations

Second/eighth century

1 Ḥasan b. Hānī known as Abū Nawās (d. 196/811): Abū Naswās' friends once told him, “We know no man more audacious than you in composing poems, you have composed poems on everything, even on wine, but in spite of being contemporary to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) you have not written any poems on him yet.” He answered, “By Allah, I praise him, but I am not in such a position to write poems on such a great personality.” After a moment he wrote, “They have often told me, you are unique in

¹ *Ibid*, P. 115

² *Ibid*, P. 192

³ *Ibid*, P. 403

⁴ Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 365/975), *al-Kāmil fī Du‘afā’ al-Rijāl*, 3rd print Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1409, vol. 5, P. 331; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kāshif fī Ma‘rifat*, vol. 1, P. 652

⁵ *Idem*, *Al-Mughnī fī al-Du‘afā’*, vol. 1, P. 48

⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 1, P. 218

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, P. 382; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rīkh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 84; Qundūzī, *Yanābī‘ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 166

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your time in prose and poetry. You are so powerful in speech that you have poured pearls by your tongue. What is the reason of your silence about our master ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), the Holy Prophet’s son? I answered how I can praise someone whose father’s servant is Gabriel? Prose and poetry are not adequate for his praise and he is too admirable to be venerated in speech.”¹

Sayyid ‘Abbās Makkī Ḥusaynī says, “There is no doubt that Allah, the Exalted, will pardon the past and the future sins of the poet.”²

Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī states that, once Abū Nawās came out of his house. He saw a man riding beside him and Abū Nawās could not see his face. He wondered who he was. They told him that he was ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.). As soon as he came to know this, he wrote an ode as follow: “Whenever our eyes sight you from a long distance and they doubt in your being, our hearts testify your truthfulness. If someone chooses you as his leader, the gentle breeze of your existence will guide him and all people will be guided by it.”³

Once Abū Nawās saw Imam (A.S.) coming out of Ma’mūn’s house, he approached him to tell that he had written a poem about him. He said, “O the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)! I have written a poem on your praise and I like you hearken to it.” Imam

¹ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī , *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 321; Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī, *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3, P. 270; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rikh al-Islam* (the events of the years 201/816 – 210/825) P. 271; Yāfi‘ī Yamanī Shāfi‘ī, *Mir’āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 11; Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. , vol. 2, P. 220; Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, *A’imma al-Ithnā ‘Ashar*, al-, P. 98; Qarmānī Damashqī (other), Abū ‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Yūsuf b. Aḥmad (d. 1019/1610), *Akhbār al-Duwal wa Āthār al-Uwal fī al-Ta’rikh*, ‘Ālam al-Kutub, Beirut, n.d, 114

² Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Nuzhat al-Jalīs*, P. 266, while Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī prejudicially says, It is not acceptable to write such things unless there some script (*naṣṣ*) for it, and there is no script for it, see Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tadhhib Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 7, P. 45. Ibn Ṭūlūn in his *A’imma al-Ithnā ‘Ashar*, al-, (pp. 98-99) quotes this poem in a different way.

³ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 202, Ḥ 481, quoted from Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī, *Ta’rikh Neyshābūr*.

(A.S.) told him to recite it. He declaimed it as follow: "There are pure and good hearted individuals, whenever someone mentions their names people acclaim them. We cannot find such praise in honour of someone who is not a descendant of 'Alī. When Allah created good creatures, He chose you from them. You are distinguished people that the knowledge of the Book (the Holy Qur'ān) and what is in its chapters (*suras*) are with you."¹

After hearing it Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) encouraged him and awarded him three hundred (dinar) gold coins.²

Third/ninth century

2 Muḥammad b. 'Umar Wāqidī (d. 207/822) says Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was a trustworthy person; he gave *fatwās* in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina while he was only 24 years old and he was among the eighth group of Successors [*Tābi'īn*] in Madina.³

3 Ḥasan b. Sahl (d. 215/830) says, "Ma'mūn appointed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent. He could not find anyone more excellent and more virtuous than he among the descendants of 'Alī (A.S.) and 'Abbās."⁴

4 Ma'mūn 'Abbāsī (d. 218/833), the murderer of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) addressing his vizier, Faḍl b. Sahl concerning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, "I saw no one more excellent than he (Imam al-

¹ Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī (d. 660/1261), *al-Na'im al-Muqīm li 'Itrat al-Naba' al-'Azīm*, 1st print, Dār al Kutub al-Islāmī, Qum, 1423, P. 396; Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3, P. 271; Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 201, Ḥ 480; Şafadī Shāfi'ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 250; Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 11; Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, *A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar*, al-, P. 99

² Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 201, Ḥ 480; Shibrāwī (Shāfi'ī), Shaykh 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir (d. 1172/1758), *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmī, Iran, 1423, pp. 320 and 321; Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, vol. 4, P. 290

³ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 315

⁴ Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 5, P. 138 Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb Miskwayh, *Tajārib al-Umam*, vol. 3, P. 366; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh*, vol. 4, P. 162; Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, P. 258

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Riḍā (A.S.).”¹

5 ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Sa‘īd (d. 229/843), at the same time when Ma‘mūn imposed his heir apparent on Imam (A.S.), went to Madina and about this historical event said, “The heir apparent of Muslim is ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)” then he recited this poem, “Six of his ancestors and forefathers are the same nobles who are beyond description and they are the best people endowed with Allah’s mercy.”²

Affirming this verse, Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī said, “How beautiful it is composed.”³

6 Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī⁴ (d. 236/850), Badakhshī Hindī quoting from Abā Ṣalt says, “I saw no one more learned than ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and every wise man who saw him shared this belief.”⁵

7 Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abbās Ṣulī (d. 243/857) while congratulating Imam (A.S.) when the state of heir apparent was imposed on him, composed this poem, “Nominating Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as the heir apparent to the caliph consoled all the pains and sorrows of the Shī‘a.”⁶

He also wrote this eulogy on Imam’s martyrdom, “O son of Mūsā b. Ja‘far, there is no event more tragic than the incident of your passing away which made us weep. Although patience is

¹ Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, P. 402

² Abū Sa‘d Mansūr Ābī (d. 421/1030), *Nathr al-Hay‘at al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma li al-Kitāb*, Egypt, n. d, vol. 1, P. 363; Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 13, P. 409, the original poem was written by Nābigha Dhibyānī and ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Sa‘īd repeated it, Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Na‘īm al-Muqīm*, P. 393; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 245; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 239

³ Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Na‘īm al-Muqīm*, P. 393

⁴ For Abā Ṣalt sect affiliation, see below Section Three: Tradition.

⁵ Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 179

⁶ Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī (other) (d. 356/967), *Al-Aghānī*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, n.d, vol. 10, P. 63

good everywhere, but patience in your tragedy is to weep and cry."¹

8 Abū Zur'ā Rāzī Ḥanbalī (d. 261/874) and Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī (d. 242/856) the two prominent Sunnī scholars were in Neyshābūr when Imam (A.S.) arrived there. They addressed him and requested him to show his face to them and narrate a tradition from his forefathers, so that they could always narrate it from him.²

9 (d. 279/892) attended Imam's Presence when his child had died and offered his condolence as follow, "You are higher than our admiration, and we are incapable of your veneration. You enjoy vast knowledge. Allah may console you for your sorrow."³

10 'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. Ṣūl: Ibrāhīm b. 'Abbās quoting from 'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. Ṣūl, one the contemporaries of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), says, "Imam (A.S.) answered every questions he was asked. I had never seen a man more learned than he was. Ma'mūn examined him by asking different questions and Imam responded all by convincing answers. He slept little and he fasted much. He fasted three days in a month and commented that three days fast in a month is equal to one year fasting. He used to perform many

¹ Nuwayrī Shāfi'ī, *Nahāyat al-Irab fī Funūn al-Adab*, Wizārat al-Thiqāfa, Cairo, n.d, vol. 5, P. 160

² Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 243; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115; Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 16 Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 236; Nāblusī Damashqī (Ḥanafī), 'Abd al-Ghanī b. Ismā'īl (d. 1143/1730), *Asrār al-Sharī'a*, or *al-Faṭḥ al-Rabbānī wa al-Fayḍ al-Raḥmānī*, 1st print, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1405, pp. 223-224; Tābi'ī Shāfi'ī, Shaykh Aḥmad, *al-I'tisām bi Ḥabl al-Islām*, 1st print, Maṭba'at al-Sa'āda, Cairo, 1327, P. 205 quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*.

³ Nuwayrī Shāfi'ī, *Nahāyat al-Irab fī Funūn al-Adab*, vol. 5, P. 168; (Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Balādhurī was one of the greatest Muslim authors and historians of the 3rd/9th century. Little is known of his life. Neither the date of his birth nor that of his death is directly attested. According to the editors of Balādhurī, (*Jumal min*) *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, Ed, by Suhayl Zakkār and Riyāḍ Ziriklī, Beirut, 1417/1996 (Introduction, vol. 1, P. ج) he was probably born in Baghdād between the years 170/786 to 180/796 and he eulogized Ma'mūn in a poem. For the date of his death, Muslim authors believe that he died in 279/892)

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good deeds. He gave alms secretly and often in the darkness of nights. In summer he sat on a mat and in winter on a hide (animal skin).¹

11 Nawfilī, a poet contemporary to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), writes, “I do dislike white beard and old age, but there is a pride in them because they can never be combined with sin. When an old man commits a sin, you should not hope that he would repent. The malady of the singers is the cause of my white hair. Whoever outlasts, his hair would become white. Therefore I would live by the side of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) till my dying day (lest I could commit any sins).²

Fourth/tenth century

12 Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma Shāfi‘ī (d. 311/923) and Abū ‘Alī Thaqafī Shāfi‘ī (d. 328/929), Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates from Muḥammad b. al-Mu‘ammal b. Ḥasan b. ‘Isā who said, “Once we went on pilgrimage to Ṭūs to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) along with some eminent ḥadīth scholars as Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma and Abū ‘Alī Thaqafī. We saw a large number of people who had come to visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). We were surprised when we saw Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma honored the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), wept and humbled towards it.”³

More astonishing are the continuing words of Muḥammad b. al-Mu‘ammal that some narrators did not transmit them. He said, “Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma’s modesty and humility beside the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was in presence of some highly esteemed people from Neyshābūr, Harāt, Ṭūs and Sarakhs. They all watched and recorded his action and behaviour while visiting the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). They became very pleased and granted alms

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 241 Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 235- 236; see also Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 338; Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, vol. 4, P. 289

² Ṣafadī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 251;

³ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 198, Ḥ 477; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339 both quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr*.

for this virtuous action and told if such a visiting was not the norm and virtue, then Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma would never do so.”¹

13 Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Ṣūlī (d. 335/946), quoting from Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Balādhurī, from Sha‘bī says, “On one occasion Sha‘bī asked what is the best verse? They answered him the verse recited by the Helpers (*Anṣārs*) on the Day of Badr, which says, “When the leaders of the polytheists were defeated beside the wells of Badr, Gabriel and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) were under our (the Helpers) flag.”

Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā Ṣūlī judged that the verse of Abū Nawās concerning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was the best.² He also composed verses, as, “When people swore allegiance to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) for the state of heir apparent, there was no one among us (Banī Hāshim) to reject wrongdoing except him. He is a generous person, who gives the property to its owner or returns it.”³

14 Mas‘ūdī Shāfi‘ī (d. 346/957) says, “Ma‘mūn found no one superior and greater than ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) for heir apparent at his time. Therefore he nominated him as his heir apparent and swore allegiance to him and inscribed his name on coins.”⁴

15 Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi‘ī (d. 354/965) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is one of the nobles and wise men of Banī Hāshim. I visited his shrine many times. When I was in Ṭūs, whenever I faced a difficulty, I visited his shrine (blessings of Allah be upon his ancestor and upon him). My calls were answered and my problems were solved, by the dispensation of Allah, and I experienced it several times. O Allah! Make us die with the love of Your chosen Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and his progeny, blessings of Allah

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 198, Ḥ 477

² Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 P. 388

³ Ṣūlī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā (other) (d. 335/946), *Ash'ār Awlād al-Khulafā' wa Akhbārihim min Kitāb al-Awrāq*, 3rd print, Dār al-Maysara, Beirut, 1401, P. 30

⁴ Mas‘ūdī Shāfi‘ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 6, P. 33; Ibn al-‘Ibrī, *Ta'rīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*, P. 134; Yāfi‘ī Yamanī Shāfi‘ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

40 Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

be upon him and his entire descendant.”¹

16 Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad Muhallabī (d. 380/990) says about Nawqān and Imam al-Riḍā’s personality, “Nawqān is one of the best and the most prosperous cities of Khurāsān. The shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is located in this town. There is a yard around the shrine of Imam (A.S.) and the believers stay there to worship Allah.”²

17 Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Sahl Shāfi‘ī (d. 384/994), Ḥākim Neyshābūrī relates that Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Sahl the famous jurist says, “I visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) for solving my worldly and spiritual problems; and I pray to Allah beside the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Allah answers my prayer and my problem is solved. I learned it by experience and it became a habit for me. I usually pass the night there.”³

18 Dāriqūṭnī⁴ Shāfi‘ī (d. 385/995) names Imam (A.S.) reverently and says, “He is ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-‘Alawī al-Ḥusaynī. He narrates from his father Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) from his forefathers and from ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.).”

Fifth/eleventh century

19 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī (d. 405/1014), one of the greatest Shāfi‘ī scholars, has collected many remarkable resources about Imam al-Riḍā’s grandeur and personality in his invaluable book, *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr*. Although the book is not available now, we are not uninformed about its materials, because many great Sunnī scholars have relied on this book and quoted from it.

Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī in his book, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn fī Faḍā’il al-Murtaḍā wa al-Batūl wa al-Sibṭayn wa al-A’immat min Dhurriyyathim*, has somewhat preserved the narrations, about

¹ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8 p., 457

² Muhallabī (other) (d. 380/990), *Kitāb al-‘Azīzī* or *Masālik wa al-Mamālik*, , edited and annotated by Taysīr Khalaf, 1st print, Nashr al-Takwīn, Damascus, 2006, P. 155

³ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā’id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 220, Ḥ 496, quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr*.

⁴ Dāriqūṭnī, *al-Mu’talaf*, vol. 2, P. 1115

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

In any case, Ḥākim Neyshābūrī says about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), "He gave *fatwas* in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina, while he was in his twenties. Great scholars such as, Ādam b. Abī Ayās, Naṣr b. 'Alī Jahḍamī, or Juhnī, Muḥammad b. Rāfi' Qushayrī and others have narrated Ḥadīth from him,"¹

Concerning Imam's noble genealogy, he says, "One of the most distinguished virtues of his lineage is that he is a descendant of the best of mankind, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.), the Chosen One."²

He also says, "Allah showed me one the best benevolences of his tomb. I was suffering rheumatism and I used to walk painfully. So I came out and visited this mausoleum, and returned to Nawqān with canvas shoes. The next morning I was in Nawqān. I went back to Neyshābūr while I had been healed and not suffering from my pain anymore."³

He also testifies the confessions of some great Sunnī notable that were miraculously healed in the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he relates them as follow:

A. Ḥamza the Egyptian pilgrim, Ḥākim through his chains of transmissions of Ḥadīth relates that Ḥamza came from Egypt to visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). He believed in spiritual deeds of Imam (A.S.).⁴ We will elucidate it in Chapter Seven, titled Pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā.

B. Muḥammad b. Qāsim Shāfi'ī did not believe in Imam's miraculous deeds and visiting his mausoleum. However after some miraculous happenings he came across in the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), he changed his mind and became one of the pilgrims of Imam's Holy shrine and in spite of the hard conditions of travelling in the past, he visited Imam al-Riḍā shrine twice a year.⁵

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 199, Ḥ 478; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339

² Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 202, Ḥ 481

³ *Ibid*, P. 220, Ḥ 497

⁴ *Ibid*, P. 196, Ḥ 474

⁵ *Ibid*, P. 197, Ḥ 475

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C. Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Adīb Janadī Shāfi‘ī was also one of the visitors of Imam al-Riḍā’s tomb. and witnessed miraculous deeds there ¹

D. Abū al-Naḍr Mu’adhdhin Neyshābūrī Shāfi‘ī was also one of the Sunnī notables who were miraculously healed by the blessing of Imam’s tomb.²

E. An unknown man, Ḥākīm witnessed an interesting episode of an unknown man in the Holy shrine and narrates it,³ which we will discuss it in Chapter Seven titled Pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā .

F. Zayd Fārsī suffered from an incurable disease and he was miraculously healed by the blessing of Imam’s tomb.⁴

G. Ḥamawayh b. ‘Alī was one of the visitors of the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he believed in spiritual personality of Imam (A.S.) and he witnessed some miracles from his Holy shrine.⁵

20 Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr Shāfi‘ī, Ḥākīm says, “I heard Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr, the jurist who said, Allah answered every request I asked Him in the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). I asked Him to give me a child and He bestowed it on me after I was disappointed.”⁶

21 Abū Sa‘d Manṣūr Ābī (d. 421/1030) devotes some pages of his book (*Nathr al-Durar*) to the biography of Imam (A.S.) and quoting his pious sayings. Among the most important of them is the historical event of Imam’s arrival in Neyshābūr while he was warmly welcomed by the people and the eminent Sunnī scholars; narrating of the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*), the Sunnī point of view towards this tradition and the miraculous healing effects of the tradition.⁷

22 Khaṭīb Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 463/1071) concerning Imam

¹ *Ibid*, Ḥ 476

² *Ibid*, P. 217, Ḥ 491

³ *Ibid*, P. 218, Ḥ 493

⁴ *Ibid*, P. 219, Ḥ 494

⁵ *Ibid*, Ḥ 475

⁶ *Ibid*, P. 220, Ḥ 498

⁷ Abū Sa‘d Manṣūr Ābī, *Nathr al-Durar*, vol. 1, P. 361-365

(A.S.) says, "By Allah he was Riḍā (unanimously accepted) as he was entitled so."¹

23 Ibn Mākūlā Shāfi'ī (d. 457/1065) about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, "Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) was prominent in his family in knowledge and virtue."²

Sixth/twelfth century

24 Sam'ānī Shāfi'ī, (d. 562/1166) says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was learned and virtuous and he enjoyed a noble lineage."³

25 Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1200) says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) gave *fatwas* (legal judgment) in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina while he was in his twenties. He came out of Madina on Ma'mūn's order. When he arrived in Neyshābūr he was riding on a white grayish mule in a litter. The scholars of the city like Ibn Rāhuwayh, Muḥammad b. Rāfi' and Aḥmad b. Ḥarb welcomed him to Neyshābūr. He stayed there for a while."⁴

Somewhere else he says, "'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was one of the great leaders and belonged to the Successors of the Successors [*Atbā' al-tābi'in*]'s group. He was 'Alī the son of Ja'far, the son of Muḥammad, the son of 'Alī, the son of Ḥusayn, the son of Imam 'Alī (A.S.) of Banī Hāshim family. He was entitled al-Riḍā. He was very trustworthy and he passed away in 203/ 818."⁵

Seventh/thirteenth century

26 Majd al-Dīn b. Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī says, "Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b.

¹ Khaṭīb Baghdādī Shāfi'ī (d. 463/1071), *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1417, vol. 5, P. 481

² Ibn Mākūlā Shāfi'ī (d. 457/1065), *al-Ikmāl fī Raf' al-Irtiyāb an al-Mu'talaf wa al-Mukhtalaf fī al-Asmā' wa al-Kunā wa Ansāb*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1411, vol. 4, P. 75

³ Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, P. 74; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 340

⁴ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125

⁵ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1201), *Funūn al-Afnān fī 'Ajā'ib al-Qur'ān*, al-Majma' al-'Ilmiyya al-'Arāqī, Baghdad, 1408, P. 59

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Mūsā entitled al-Riḍā lived with his father for 24 years. He lived 20 years after his father. He was the leaders of the Shī'a in his time. His virtues are numerous. Allah's mercy and consent be upon him."¹

27 Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223) while enumerating Imam Ḥusayn's children, says, "Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, Abū Ja'far al-Bāqir, Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq Mūsā b. Ja'far, 'Alī b. Mūsā all are Imams with them Allah is pleased and their virtues are numerous."

Then concerning the immaculate Imams (A.S.) especially Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), he says, "There are some Hadīths narrated by Imam (A.S.) from his forefathers. If you recite these Hadīths for the insane they will be healed."²

28 Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī Shāfi'ī (d. 623/1226), says, "Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) is of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and of their nobles and great men."³

29 Muḥyī al-Dīn b. 'Arabī Shāfi'ī (d. 638/1240) concerning Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, "Alī is the divine secret and the observer of the truth, as truly they are, the light of spiritual and humanity world, the proof of the complete instructor and the witness of the unseen, the evidence and the validation of the spirit of the greatest spirit. He is the clear proof of the Creator and the cause of special possibilities, the perpetual eternity, the hidden treasure, the book free of doubt and involution, the leader of the mankind, the full Moon, Abū Muḥammad, 'Alī b. Mūsā, entitled al-Riḍā."⁴

¹ Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn (d. 606/1209), *Tatimma Jāmi' al-Uṣūl fī Aḥādīth al-Rasūl*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1412, vol. 2, P. 715

² Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī (Ḥanbalī), Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 620/1223), *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshiyīn*, 2nd print, 'Ālam al-Kutub, Maktabat al-Nihḍat al-'Arabiyya, Beirut, 1408, pp. 132-133

³ Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī (Shāfi'ī), 'Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad (d. 623/1226), *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1408, vol. 3, P. 425

⁴ *Kitāb al-Manāqib* printed at the end of Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 296 cited in Mar'ashī Najafī, *Mulḥaqqāt Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, 2nd print, Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uzmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, 1423, vol. 28, P. 658

30 Ibn Najjār Baghdādī Shāfi'ī (d. 643/1245) says, "He was born in Madina, he heard Ḥadīth from his father, his uncles and other notable people of Ḥijāz. He enjoyed a high religious and scientific position and he gave *fatwās* in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina while he was in his twenties."¹

31 Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254), Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, quoting from Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa, concerning Imam al-Kāẓim's children says, "Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) had more than thirty seven, sons and daughters. The oldest, the wisest and the noblest of them were 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)."²

He also says, "We stated some characteristics of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) and Imam Zayn al-'Ābidīn, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) previously. 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is the heir of these two and the third leader whose name is 'Alī. His faith, his high state and the great number of his followers and lovers made Ma'mūn nominate him as his heir apparent and join him in his government. He possessed high qualities and merits. His nature is the same as the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). He inherited them from his noble forefathers. His morale is Hāshimī and his esteemed family is Prophetic (*Nabawī*). Every virtue attributed to him, is less than his great position and his good characters is beyond description."³

32 Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257) says Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was learned, virtuous and generous.⁴

33 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī Shāfi'ī (d. 656/1258) considers

¹ Ibn Najjār Baghdādī Shāfi'ī, *Dhayl Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 19, P. 135, No. 969

² Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 310, it is worth mentioning that there is not such a subject in Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*. Shibrāwī may have narrated it from Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa's other book, *Zubdat al-Maqāl fī Faḍā'il al-Āl*, which is not available. See Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭbā'ī (1416/1995), *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) fī al-Maktabat al-'Arabiyya*, edited and published by Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt li Ḥyā' al-Turāth, 1st print, Qum, 1417, P. 205, No. 346

³ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, P. 295

⁴ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 321

46 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunni traditions

Imam (A.S.) as one the nobles of Ahl-Bayt.¹

Somewhere else he says, “Imam was chosen for caliphate and he was nominated as heir apparent. He was the most learned, the most generous and the most hospitable person.”²

34 Ganjī Shāfi‘ī (d. 658/1259) says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was born in Madina in 148 and he passed away in Ṭūs in Khurāsān region. He was Imam after his father Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.).”³

35 Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī (d. 660/1261) devoted a chapter of his book to, Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.). In this chapter he says, “He was of great insight, learned and patience. He transmitted many traditions and he was accurate in understanding them. He was a powerful scholar, but extremely patient. He was an eminent pious and God fearing personality, with impeccable bravery and generosity.”⁴

36 Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī (d. 681/1282) says, “According to Shī‘a beliefs he [Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)] is one of the twelve Imams. Ma’mūn had mint gold coins which bore Imam’s name and made him come from Madina to Ṭūs. There was no one worthier than he for heir apparent, so Ma’mūn swore allegiance to him.”⁵

Eighth/fourteenth century

37 Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 722/1322) devotes a part of his magnum opus (*Farā'id al-Simṭayn fī Faḍā'il al-Murtaḍā wa al-Batūl wa al-Sibṭayn wa al-A'immat min Dhurriyyathim*) to Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and on his grandeur. He says, “Remembering some virtues of the eighth Imam, the manifestation of the hidden mysteries and the revealer of the obscurities, the source of benevolence, the man who is followed by the great, the high

¹ Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu‘tazilī (Shāfi‘ī), ‘Abd Allāh ‘Abd a-Ḥamīd b. Hibat Allāh (d. 656/1258), *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, 2nd print, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Ma‘rifat, Damascus, 1385, vol. 12, P. 254

² *Ibid*, vol. 15, P. 377

³ Ganjī Shāfi‘ī (d. 658/1259), *Kifāyat al-Ṭālib fī Manāqib ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, 3rd print, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth Ahl al-Bayt, Tehran, 1404, pp. 457-458

⁴ Mawṣilī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Na‘īm al-Muqīm*, P. 377

⁵ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī, *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 3, pp. 269-270

esteemed and highly respected, the rainy cloud, one whose generosity is unparalleled, the best merciful, the prince of great persons, the comfort of Yā Sīn and 'Abd Manāf family, the pure and immaculate master, the knowledgeable of the true knowledge and the informed of the complicated and secret affairs, the announcer of the past and the present events, the consented by Allah in every state and entitled al-Riḍā (consented) for this reason, Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), O Allah bless Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and his descendants until the clouds rain and the plants blossom. We remind some of his virtues and some of the traditions he transmitted from his forefathers, the proofs of Allah to His servants."¹

38 Abū al-Fidā' Damashqī Shāfi'ī (d. 732/ 1331) says, "They also call 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) 'Alī al-Riḍā. He is the eighth Imam of the Shī'a, the son of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) and the father of Muḥammad al-Jawād the ninth Imam."²

39 Dhahabī Shāfi'ī (d. 748/1347) says, "The great chief, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), son of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), son of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.), son of 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) is Hāshimī. He has a high position in knowledge, faith and nobility."³

Somewhere else he says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is doyen of the nobles, he is an Imam, a chief, a great man and one the eminent personalities of Banī Hāshim in his time. Ma'mūn glorified him and praised him greatly and he appointed him as his heir apparent."⁴

He also says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) enjoyed a high position. He influenced the heart of people. Ma'mūn appointed him as his heir apparent because of his majesty and grandeur."⁵

Somewhere else he says, "He is one the twelve Imams whom the Shī'a believe them to be immaculate and the obligation to

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 187

² Abū al-Fidā' Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 2, P. 24

³ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. , 9 pp. 386-388

⁴ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh al-Islam*, P. 270

⁵ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, P. 121

48 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

follow them.”¹ He says, “He gave *fatwās*, simultaneously to Mālik b. Anas, when he was young.”² He also says, “He was the leader of Banī Hāshim and the noblest of them in his time. Ma’mūn exalted him highly.”³

40 Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi‘ī (d. 749/1348) says, “According to the Shī‘a beliefs, he is the eighth Imam.”⁴

41 Zarandī Ḥanafī (d. 757/1356) says, “The eighth Imam the light of guidance and the source of piety, knowledgeable, faithful, pure, refined, oppressed scholar, victimized stranger, poisoned, killed, departed, comfort of the believers, relief of the hopeful, sun of the suns, buried in Ṭūs, the chosen, the approved, the hopeful, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was of the pious and upright scholars and the gifted and chose saints.”⁵

42 Ṣafadī Shāfi‘ī (d. 764/1362) says, “He was one the twelve Imams of the Twelver Shī‘a and he was their chief and their lord. Ma’mūn respected him greatly; he was humble to him and highly eulogized him.”⁶

43 Yāfi‘ī Yamanī Shāfi‘ī (d. 768/1366) says, “The glorious Imam Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) was a highly esteemed leader, a descendant of benevolent persons, one the twelve Imams of the Twelver Shī‘a. He was most honest and virtuous and the Shī‘a followed him as their Imam.”⁷

44 Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi‘ī (d. 774/1372) concerning the date of Imam al-Riḍā’s heavenly departure, says, “In this year (203) died one of the great personalities, ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far b.

¹ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Duwal al-Islam*, 1st print, Dār Ṣādir, 1999, vol. 1, P. 178

² Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9, P. 388

³ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tadhhib Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 7, pp. 44-45

⁴ Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tatimma al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 1, P. 320

⁵ Zarandī Ḥanafī (d. 757/1356), *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl ilā Ma‘rifat Faḍl Āl al-Rasūl wa al-Batūl*, ed. Muḥammad Kāẓim Maḥmūdī 1st print, Majma‘ Iḥyā’ al-Thiqāfat al-Islāmiyya, Qum, 1425, P. 175

⁶ Ṣafadī Shāfi‘ī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak (d. 764/1362), *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, 1st print, al-Nasharāt al-Islāmiyya, Germany, 1381/1961, vol. 2, P. 251

⁷ Yāfi‘ī Yamanī Shāfi‘ī, *Mir’āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) Qurashī, Hāshimī, 'Alawī."¹

45 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa Marrakeshī (d. 779/1377) says, "We travelled to Mashhad al-Riḍā. He is 'Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Shahīd (A.S.) the son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), may Allah be pleased with them. Mashhad al-Riḍā is a big town. They built a high dome over his mausoleum which is very magnificent. Its walls were decorated by tiles. There was a silver framework over his burial chamber and over it there were silver niches hanging. The framework of his burial chamber door was of silver and its curtain was of gold brocades silk. The courtyard of his mausoleum was covered with different carpets. Hārūn al-Rashīd's grave was beside it. Whenever the Shī'a visited Imam's tomb they saluted Imam's tomb and trampled Hārūn's grave."²

46 Khalīfa Neyshābūrī (8th/14th century) in his summarized version of *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*, describing Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and other respected persons says, "Among them is the lord of the saints, the proof of the pious, the heir of the apostles' knowledge, the alighting-place of the secrets of the Lord of the Worlds, the Friend of Allah, Allah's chosen one, the rescuer of the community, the revealer of the secrets when the sinners are seized by the forelock and their feet, al-Imam Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), blessings of Allah upon His Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and upon the immaculate Imams (A.S.) and upon all their followers until the Day of Judgment, was born in Madina in 148. He went to Baṣra in 194. He taught tradition and he spread knowledge there. He set off to Khurāsān and he arrived in Neyshābūr in 200. The city became well known as Paradise by his light."³

Ninth/fifteenth century

47 'Aṭā Allah Shīrāzī (d. 803/1400) says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

¹ Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, pp. 260 261

² Ibn Baṭṭūṭa Marrakeshī (other) (d. 779/1377), *Tuḥfat al-Nuzzār fī Gharā'ib al-Amṣār*, known as *Riḥla Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, P. 401

³ Khalīfa Neyshābūrī (8th/14th century), *Talkhīṣ va Tarjumeḥ Tārikh Neyshābūr Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī*, 1st print Kitābkhāneh Ibn Sīnā, Tehran, pp. 131-132

50 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

always spoke to people in their languages and he was the most eloquent and the most knowledgeable in all languages. Pilgrims from all over the world frequently visit his holy shrine.”¹

48 Ibn Khaldūn Mālikī, (d. 808/1405) says, “Imam ‘Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) was a great personality of Banī Hāshim.”²

49 Qalqashandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 821/1418) says, “When Ma’mūn observed Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā’s bright knowledge, and piety and he knew that the people were enamored of him and he learned that all people unanimously agree on his virtues and humane characters, he appointed him as his heir apparent.”³

50 Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) the son of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) is the Imam from Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.). Allah be pleased with both of them”

In continuation, he describes Imam’s virtues and the event of his arrival in Neyshābūr and the grand and unique welcoming of people and narrating the Golden Chain Tradition by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).⁴

51 Ibn ‘Inaba (d. 828/1424) says, “He was unique among the Abī Ṭālib family in his time, and he was magnanimous and generous.”⁵

52 Maqrīzī Shāfi‘ī (d. 845/1441) refers to the reverent and respectful behaviour of Ma’mūn towards Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and minting golden coins in his name to commemorate in gratitude for accepting his state of heir apparent and in the end he says that later he also poisoned Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).⁶

¹ ‘Aṭā Allāh Shīrāzī (other) (d. 803/1400), *Rawḍat al-Aḥbāb*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-‘Uẓmā Mar‘ashī Najafī, Qum

² Ibn Khaldūn Mālikī, *Ta’rīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 4, P. 38

³ Qalqashandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 821/1418), *Ṣubḥi al-A’shā fi Ṣanā’at al-Inshā’*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, vol. 9, P. 383; idem, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fi Ma’ālim al-Khalāfa*, 1st print, ‘Ālam al-Kutub, Beirut, 1427, P. 304

⁴ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb*, cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābīr al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 168

⁵ Ibn ‘Inaba (other) (d. 828/1424), *Umdat al-Ṭālib fi Ansāb Āl Abī Ṭālib*, 1st print, Mu’assasa Anṣāriyān, Qum 1417

⁶ Maqrīzī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyya*, pp. 72 ,73

53 Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī (d. d. 852/1448) says Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was a truthful man and belonged to the tenth group of the Successors [*Tābi'in*].¹

54 Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451) says, "He was the eighth Imam", then he explains his virtues that are the best witness for his great position,² and he continues, "The virtues of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) are of the highest ones and they are numerous like the soldiers in a row who repetitively walk one after another. His guardianship (*wilāya*) was praiseworthy from the beginning and they were wonderful. His position is so high that no one can reach it. Cheering on his followers and hating on his enemies. The grandeur and the honesty of his ancestors are as clear as the day. He followed the way of his forefathers, a way the children inherit from their fathers. Their enemies wanted to belittle them, but Allah praised them. They wanted to disperse them, but Allah elevated them."³

55 Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī Ḥanafī (d. 874/1469) says, "Imam Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) was a knowledgeable leader and the chief of Banī Hāshim during his time. Ma'mūn greatly respected him and highly praised his grandeur, so as he appointed him as his heir apparent."⁴

56 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī Ḥanafī (d. 898/1942) devotes a chapter of his book to 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and says, "He is the eighth Imam. What the writers wrote and what the orators said about him is a drop in the sea comparing the amount of his virtues. Inevitably I suffice to explain some of his marvelous and supernatural characters." Then he narrates his miracles.⁵

¹ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 852/1448), *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2nd print, Dar al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1395, vol. 2, P. 42, according to Ibn Ḥajar the tenth group of Successors, the [*Tābi'in*] are those who had not seen, Successors, the [*Tābi'in*] themselves, but they narrated from the followers of Successors, the [*Tābi'in*] See *Ibid*, vol. 1, P. 6.

² Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, pp. 133-234

³ *Ibid*, P. 251

⁴ Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 2, pp. 219-220

⁵ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 380-382

52 Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

Tenth/ sixteenth century

57 Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī (d. 903/1497) in an astonishing report mentions that the visitors of the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) other than Iran are from Byzantine (Eastern Roman Empire), India and other countries. He says, "Narrating the characteristics of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), May Allah be pleased with him, the blessed Mashhad, and Imam's holy shrine are the destination of the Iranians and the aim of the young and old travelers. Different tribes and people from the Byzantine Empire and India come to visit his shrine every year and consider this as great grace and resource for their happiness in this world and the hereafter. His merits are so abundant that no one can explain them. There are many anecdotes narrated about his virtues which are witnesses for his grandeur and greatness."¹

58 Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505) considers Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as one the nobles and the chiefs.²

59 Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520) says, "Visiting the blessed shrine of Imam 'Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.), the son of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), the son of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), the son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.), the son of 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ābidīn (A.S.), the son of Ḥusayn al-Shahīd (A.S.), the son of 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (A.S.), may Allah be pleased with all of them, comforts the souls and hearts. People often recite the Glorious Qur'ān in this sacred abode and we can say that it is one of the holy places. This threshold is never empty of worshippers and why it should not be so. It is the shrine of an Imam who is the expression of the Holy Prophet's knowledge and the inheritor of the Chosen virtues, the true Imam, the absolute guidance and the heir of the Prophethood."³

He also composed some eulogies on Imam's praise and

¹Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 41-52

² Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī, Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *Ta'rikh al-Khulafā'*, 1st Mu'assasat 'Izz al-Dīn, Beirut, 1412, P. 351

³ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, 2nd print, Bungāh Tarjumi va Nashr i Kitāb, Tehran n.d, P. 336

composed a supplication book for the pilgrims.¹

60 Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 942/1535) says, "The noblest of Imam Mūsā al-Kāzim's children and the noblest all mankind was 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)."² He devoted a chapter of his book to 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as "*Dhikr Imam Hashtum 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.). Ṣalwāt Allah 'Alayhumā* (remembrance of the eighth Imam, 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), blessings of Allah be upon them)" and he names Imam (A.S.) as, "'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), the worthy to respect and honorable Imam (A.S.)." About his holy shrine he says, "Blessings of Allah be upon the family of Tā Hā and Yā Sīn, Peace be upon the family of the best of the prophets. Blessings of Allah be upon the garden in which, rests an Imam (A.S.) that the world and the religion are proud of him."³ At the end he opens a chapter on the virtues and qualities of Imam (A.S.) which includes some poems in Imam's praise and explains some of his miracles and virtues."⁴

61 Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī (d. 953/1546) says, "The eighth of them is Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), blessings of Allah be upon him." Then he narrates some statements of his contemporaries in his praise.⁵

62 Diyār Bakrī Shāfi'ī (d. 966/1558) says, "'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is one the twelfth Imams that Shī'a believe in his immaculateness and obeying his orders."⁶

63 Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi'ī (d. 974/1566) says, "'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is one the noblest and the most honorable of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.). Ma'mūn respected him greatly and married him his daughter and entrusted his caliphate to him."⁷

¹ Idem, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, P. 223 and passim

² Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 81

³ *Ibid*, P. 82

⁴ *Ibid*, P. 83

⁵ Ibn Ṭūlūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, , *al-A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar* pp. 97-99

⁶ Diyār Bakrī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh al-Khamīs*, vol. 2. P. 335

⁷ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 593

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Eleventh/seventeenth century

64 Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610) assigned a chapter of his book to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). He says, “The eighth distinct character in resemblance of courage to the courage of his ancestor, ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā (A.S.). His virtues are numerous, his qualities are high, his miracles are abundant and his virtuous deeds are famous over the world. He slept little and fasted much. He sat on a mat in summer and on a hide in winter.”¹

65 ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1031/1621) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim b. Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) was a high personality, he was virtuous and well-known all over the world.”²

66 Ibn al-‘Imād Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1676) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was entitled Imam Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī (A.S.). He is buried in Ṭūs. His shrine is grand; and many pilgrims go to visit there. He transmitted Ḥadīth from his father and forefathers; and according to the Shī‘a belief he was one of the twelve Imams.”³

Twelfth/eighteenth century

67 Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1172/1758) says, “The eighth Imam was ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.). He was generous, magnanimous and impressive. His father Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) loved him too much. It is said that once he freed one thousand slaves for the sake of Allah. At night, he kept awake and recited the night recommended prayers and performed his minor ritual ablution for each prayer. Some of his companions say when they see ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) they remember the Qur’ān verse (**Little of the night would they slumber.**⁴) He continues, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was the noblest man from Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) in his time and he enjoyed a special position. His followers were abundant and his reasons

¹ Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, pp. 114-115

² ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya*, vol. 1, pp. 265-266, No. 265

³ Ibn al-‘Imād Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1676), *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār min Dhahab*, 1st print, Dār Ibn Kathīr, Damascus, 1406, vol. p. 14

⁴ Qur’ān: 51/17

were very strong. His behaviour and morale were excellent. His characters were Hāshimī. His genius was Prophetic and his miraculous acts were inestimable.”¹

68 Sayyid ‘Abbās Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1180/1766) says, “The virtues of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) are innumerable and unlimited.”²

Thirteenth/nineteenth century

69 Zabīdī Ḥanafī (d. 1205/1790) says, “Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā, entitled al-Riḍā was truthful and Ibn Māja transmitted traditions from him.”³

70 Suwīdī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1246/1830) says, “He was born in Madina and he possessed brown features. His miraculous acts were abundant and his virtues were too many to be explained in this book.”⁴

71 ‘Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1293/1876) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is well-known, and he performed many miracles”,⁵ thereafter he, describes Imam al-Riḍā’s miracles.

72 Qundūzī Ḥanafī (d. 1294/1877) extols the positions of the immaculate Imams (A.S.) especially the eighth Imam (A.S.) from the Sunnī point of view.⁶

73 Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1298/1880) in “Mentioning the virtues of our master ‘Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) the son of Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) the son of Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) the son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.) the son of ‘Alī, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.) the son of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.)” mentions his miracles and his good virtues.⁷

74 Bahādur Khān Hindī Ḥanafī (13th/19th century) Stating the

¹ Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, pp. 312-313

² Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Nuzhat al-Jalīs*, vol. 2 , P. 105

³ Zabīdī (Ḥanafī), Sayyid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 1205/1790), *Ittiḥāf al-Sādat al-Muttaqīn bi Sharḥ Asrār Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, Khazānat al-Sādāt, Egypt, n.d, vol. 7, P. 360

⁴ Suwīdī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1246/1830), *Sabā’ik al-Dhahab*, P. 75

⁵ ‘Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1293/1876), *Natā’ij al-Afkār al-Qudsiyya*, Jāmi‘at al-Darwīshiyya, Damascus, n.d., vol. 1 P. 80

⁶ Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, pp. 105-174

⁷ Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 232- 245

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biography of Imam al-Kāẓim's children, mentions Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) respectfully, and quoting some books he considers him as the best of Imam al-Kāẓim's children. He glorifies him by expressing some anecdotes of his life and some of his miraculous deeds.¹

Fourteenth/twentieth century and afterwards

75 Sanhūtī Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1344/1925) says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is a precious jewel and he is a descendant of the noble Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Words cannot describe him and languages are incapable of his portraying. Ma'mūn glorified him and shared him in his rule. He decided to entrust his caliphate to him and he himself resigned from it, but the Abbasid prevented him from it. He died before taking over the caliphate. Ma'mūn displayed extreme grief. He was endowed with miraculous power."²

76 Nabhānī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931) says, "Alī b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) is one of the great Imams and the leading light of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.). He is the source of knowledge, generosity and manliness".³

77 Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931) says, "The next Imam to Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) according to his will is his elder son Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). His status and virtues are too numerous to be included in this book." Then he adds that he possessed the knowledge of unseen and says, "He was aware of concealed acts and he revealed Ma'mūn's wrongdoing and deceit." Finally he describes Imam's arrival in Neyshābūr and recounts the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*).⁴

78 Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 1372/1952) reviewing social,

¹ Bahādur Khān Hindī Ḥanafī (13th/19th century), *Ta'rikh al-Aḥmadī*, ed. Muḥammad Sa'īd Ṭurayḥī, 1st print, Markaz al-Dirāsāt wa al-Buḥūth al-'Ilmiyya wa Mu'assasat al-Balāgh, Beirut, 1408, P. 342

² Sanhūtī Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī, *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyya*, P. 39

³ Nabhānī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931), *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414, vol. 2, P. 311

⁴ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931), *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, Manshūrāt Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, n.d, pp. 157-159

scientific and devotional positions of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), quotes from Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abbās who said “Imam (A.S.) knew the answer to each question they asked him. I had never seen anyone more learned than he was. Ma’mūn examined him by asking different questions and he would give him adequate and convincing answers. He slept little and fasted much. He fasted three days in a month which he considers equals to one year fasting. He often gave alms and contributed the charities at late in the dark nights lest he would be known. Once Abū Nawās offered him his eulogy on praising Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and Imam (A.S.) gave him 300 dinars. So did Di‘bil Khuzā‘ī and Imam (A.S.) offered him 100 dinars and tendered apology to this little amount. He was very pious, so as he sat on a mat in summer and on a hide in winter.”¹

79 Farīd Wajdī (d. 1373/1954) says, “According to Shī‘a beliefs he is one of their twelve Imams. Ma’mūn married him his daughter and he is considered as one of the learned and dignities of Ahl-Bayt (A.S.).” At the end he quotes Abū Nawās eulogy in his praise.²

80 Ṣa‘īdī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1377/1957) Professor of Arabic language in al-Azhar University, Cairo, says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was born in 150/767 and he enjoyed a high position in piety and knowledge.”³ Somewhere else he says, “He was the leading light in piety.”⁴

81 Ziriklī Damashqī (d. 1396/1976) says, “Alī b. Mūsā entitled al-Riḍā, according to Shī‘a beliefs, is one of their twelve Imams and he is considered one the learned and dignities of Ahl-Bayt (A.S.).”⁵

82 Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1412/1991) devotes many pages of his book to the virtues and miraculous

¹ Fikrī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Aḥsan al-Qiṣaṣ*, vol. 4, P. 289-290

² Farīd Wajdī, *Dā‘irat al-mu‘ārif al-qarn al-‘ishrīn (Encyclopedia of the Twentieth Century)*, vol. 4. P. 251

³ Ṣa‘īdī Shāfi‘ī, ‘Abd al-Muta‘āl (d. 1377/1957), *al-Mujaddidūn fī al-Islām*, Maktab al-Ādāb, Cairo, 1416, P. 69

⁴ *Ibid*, P. 77

⁵ Ziriklī Damashqī (other) (d. 1396/1976), *al-A‘lām*, 9th print, Dār al-‘Ilm li ‘l-Mallā‘īn, Beirut, 1990, vol. 5, P. 26

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deeds of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and quotes the sayings of the leading Sunnī scholars about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).¹

83 Muḥammad Amīn Ḍannāwī relates that ‘Alī entitled al-Riḍā was the eighth Imam of the Twelver Shī‘a and he was one the learned and dignities of Ahl-Bayt (A.S.).”²

84 Aḥmad Zakī Şifwat Shāfi‘ī names Imam and his noble ancestors reverently and he describes the event of his being appointed as heir apparent to Ma‘mūn.³

85 Dr. ‘Abd al-Salām Tarmānīnī, says, “According to the Shī‘a beliefs ‘Alī b. Mūsā, Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.), entitled al-Riḍā is their eighth Imam. He was born in Madina and he was of the dignities of the learned of Ahl-Bayt (A.S.).”⁴

86 Hādī Ḥamuw Shāfi‘ī says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) lived in the brightest age of the Islamic civilization. He was contemporary to Ma‘mūn for a short time. He attended in the debating assemblies which were held by Ma‘mūn and convinced all his opponents by his answers. Ma‘mūn summoned the scholars, theologian and jurists of all religions to attend these meetings. They asked Imam (A.S.) different questions and he replied their enquiries so persuasively that all confessed his superiority in knowledge and their ignorance comparing him. ‘Īsā Yaqqīnī compiled these debates in a book, containing these questions in addition to their answers. This book and some other important ones are lost at present, which is a great loss for the Arabic Islamic heritage. There is a precise book available to Shī‘a in this regard which is called *Şahīfat al-Riḍā*.”⁵

87 Amīnward Shāfi‘ī says, “According to Shī‘a belief ‘Alī b.

¹ Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1412/1991), *Manāqib Ahl Bayt az Dīdgāh Ahl Sunnat*, 1st print, Islamic Research Foundation, Mashhad 1378, 202-233

² Ya‘qūbī (other) (d. 284/897), *al-Buldān*, 1st print, ed. Muḥammad Amīn Ḍannāwī, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1422, P. 93, footnote

³ *Jamhurat Rasā’il al-‘Arab fī ‘Uşūr al-‘Arabīyya al-Zāhira*, vol. 3, P. 405

⁴ Tarmānīnī (other), ‘Abd al-Salām, *Aḥdāth al-Ta’rīkh al-Islāmī*, vol. 2, P. 1169

⁵ Hādī Ḥamuw Shāfi‘ī, *Aḍwā’ ‘alā al-Shī‘a*, 1st print, Dār al-Turkī, Tunisia, 1989, P. 134

Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is the eight one of their twelve Imams. He is one of the dignities and of the learned of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.).” At the end he refers to the Treatise of Medicine (*al-Risālat al-Dhahabīya fī al-Ṭibb*) of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and elucidates it comprehensively.¹

88 Dr. Khaldūn Aḥḍab Ḥanbalī, quoting Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī's words about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and emphasizing the term “*Ṣadūq*” truthful concerning Imam (A.S.) says, “His father and forefathers were all trustworthy, virtuous and knowledgeable.”²

89 Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd b. Sharīf say, “Ma’mūn respected Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) highly and he made him his heir apparent, but he died before Ma’mūn. He was born in Madina in 148/765 and died in Ṭūs in 203/818. Then they explain his miracles.”³

90 Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was engaged in knowledge as ‘Abd Allah b. Ja‘far says he answered fifteen thousand questions. It happened before people’s consensus on his superiority in knowledge. He was an example of his grandfather Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.). He had some views about Imamate, its transfer and its signs. He had a *Ṣaḥīfa* (book) in which he collected all the traditions transmitted from his forefathers. The chains of all these Hadīths are found in Qushayrī's traditions.”⁴

Two unanswered questions

First, as we mentioned above, according to the Sunnī views, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) enjoyed a distinguished position in science, religio-gnosis and social status. Regarding him they said: “He gave *fatwās*

¹ Amīnward Shāfi‘ī, Bāqir, *Mu‘jam ‘Ulamā’ al-‘Arab*, 1st print, ‘Ālam al-Kutub, Beirut, 1406, vol. 1, P. 153

² Khaldūn Aḥḍab Ḥanbalī, *Zawā‘id Ta’rīkh Baghdād ‘alā al Kutub al-Sitta*, 1st print, Dār al-Qalam, Damascus, 1417, vol. 7, P. 440

³ Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī (d. 465/1072), *al-Risālat al-Qushayriyya fī al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd b. Sharīf, Ḥassān printing, Cairo, n.d, vol. 1, pp. 65-66

⁴ Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī, *al-Ṣilat bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū‘*, vol. 1, pp. 236-238

in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina while he was only 24 years old and he was among the eighth group of the Successors [*Tābi'īn*] in Madina.”, “Imam (A.S.) answered every question he was asked.”, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was one of the nobles and wise men of Banī Hāshim.”, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Kāẓim b. Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) was a great personality, he had many virtues and he was well-known all over the world.”, “He was the excellent and the most virtuous among the descendants of ‘Alī (A.S.) and ‘Abbās.”, “He possessed high qualities and merits. His nature was the same as the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), and his noble character was the same as noblemen. He inherited them from his noble forefathers. His morale was Hāshimī and his esteemed family was Prophetic.” He was of great insight, learned and patience. He transmitted many traditions and he was perfect in understanding them. He was a powerful scholar and extremely patient. He was perfect by pious and God fearing, with impeccable bravery and generosity.”, “He was the leading light in piety.”, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was one the noblest and the most honorable of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)”, “He was the lord of the saints, the proof of the pious, the heir of the apostles’ knowledge, the alighting-place of the secrets of the Lord of the Worlds, the Friend of Allah, Allah’s chosen one, the Rescuer of the *Ummah*, the revealer of the secrets, when the sinners are seized by the forelock and their feet.” and so on. All these statements show that he was a learned jurist, he gave *fatwās* in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in Madina in his twenties, he was the leading light in piety the source of benevolence, the man who was followed by the great, the high esteemed and highly respected; the rainy cloud, one whose generosity was unparalleled, the best merciful, the prince of great persons, the pure and immaculate master, the knowledgeable of the true knowledge and the presenter of the past and the present events, the consented by Allah in every state. Now we wonder, in spite of the qualities he possessed, no tradition is transmitted from him in the Sunnī *Ṣaḥīḥs* or *Musnads* or even they weaken his

traditions.¹

Second, in other word if we review Imam al-Riḍā's era we perceive that many Sunnī scholars like Mālik b. Anas (d. c. 190/806), Abū Bakr b. 'Ayyāsh (d. 193/809), Sībawayh the grammarian (d. 194/810), 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Maḥdī (d. 194/810), Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf b. Asbāṭ (d. 195/811), Wakī' b. Jarrāḥ (d. 197/812), Sufyān b. 'Uyayna (d. 198/813), Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd b. Qaṭṭān (d. 198/813), Muḥammad b. Idrīs Shāfi'ī (d. 204/819), Abū Dā'ūd Ṭayālasī (d. 204/819) and many other prominent Sunnī traditionists and jurists lived at that time, each of them a distinguished intellectual of his region; and emphasizing the word of Dhahabī Shāfi'ī who says, "He gave *fatwās*, simultaneously to Mālik b. Anas, when he was young.", "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is one of the prominent nobles, he is an Imam, a chief, a great man and one the leading nobles of Banī Hāshim in his time." and with his other merits we discussed before, the question at issue is why they did not transmit a tradition from him or they did not consult him about legal questions. What is the reason of this dual approach of Sunnī scholars contemporary to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and even the scholars after him?

¹ Only one tradition is transmitted from him in *Sunan Ibn Māja* which is weakened by critics only because its narrator Abā Ṣalt was Shī'ite. For more information see Section Three: Tradition, under «Abā Ṣalt's Position from the Sunnī Point of View»

Chapter Three: Tradition

The Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*) is a term reminding the historical arrival of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Neyshābūr, and the matchless welcome Imam (A.S.) received by the people, especially from the learned and the famous Sunnī traditionists on his arrival in Neyshābūr and recording of this famous Ḥadīth by twenty thousand writers and transmitters.

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī (d. 405/1014) says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) arrived in Neyshābūr in 200/815.”¹

Locating the place of narration

Two traditions as the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*), different in denotation but similar in chains (*isnāds*) were narrated by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Neyshābūr and the Sunnī scholars recorded them in their works: First the Fortress tradition (*Ḥadīth Ḥiṣn*); second the Faith tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*). There are some other traditions narrated by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), as well as these two, which he narrated from his sublime ancestors; however they are different in context from the Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) and the Faith tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*). There are some other Golden Chain traditions (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*), which Imam (A.S.) narrated them from his sublime ancestors, and apparently the Imam’s method was to narrate the son from his father (*Riwāyat al-Abnā’ an al-Abā’*). Imam’s companions collected these traditions in a book (*al-Ṣaḥīfa*), as Sam’ānī says, “He transmits a book (*al-Ṣaḥīfa*) from his ancestors.” or “among his famous traditions is *al-Ṣaḥīfa*.”² This collection was also called *Musnad al-Riḍā*.³

Ibn Shīrawayh Daylamī Shāfi’ī attested this book (*al-Ṣaḥīfa*)

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi’ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 199, Ḥ 478, Quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*

² Sam’ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 3, pp. 74-75: see Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī, *al-Ṣilat bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū'* vol. 1, P. 238.

³ Rāfi’ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 1 P. 470; vol. 2, P. 306, 407

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as authentic and he narrated some parts of it in his *Musnad*.¹ However, some transmitters unfortunately, have weakened this *al-Ṣahīfa* or *Musnad* and considered its traditions unauthentic without any acceptable reason.²

For more information, I shall refer first to Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*) and the Sunnī views about the Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) and the Faith (*Īmān*) traditions and then to other ones which have a chain (*isnād*) like Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*).

The Transmitters of the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*)

Those who reported the magnificent event of Imam al-Riḍā's arrival in Neyshābūr are said to be more than ten thousand,³ twenty thousand,⁴ and thirty thousand people of which twenty thousand is more famous.

One: The Fortress tradition (*Ḥadīth Ḥiṣn*)

The Tradition Text

قال علي بن موسى الرضا عليه السلام، حدثني أبي موسى الكاظم، عن أبيه جعفر الصادق، عن أبيه محمد الباقر، عن أبيه عليّ زين العابدين، عن أبيه الحسين الشهيد بكر بلاء، عن

¹ Daylamī *Firdaws al-Akhbār*, vol. 1, P. 40

² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 1, P. 106; idem, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 2, P. 456

³ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, 2nd print, Bungāh Tarjumi va Nashr i Kitāb, Tehran n.d, P. 345

⁴ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 243 Samhūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505), *Jawāhir al-'Iqdayn fī Faḍl al-Sharafayn*, Wizārat al-Awqāf wa al-Shu'ūn al-Dīniyya, Baghdād, 1407, P. 344; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 595; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115; 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manāwī Shāfi'ī (d. 1031/1621), *Fayḍ al-Qadīr bi Sharḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, 2nd print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1391, vol. 4, P. 489; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 236 and Nāblusī Damashqī, *Asrār al-Sharī'a*, P. 224. All these authors have quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*.

³ Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 229

أبيه علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام، قال: حدّثني حبيبي و قرّة عيني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله، قال: حدّثني جبرائيل، قال: سمعت ربّ العزّة سبحانه و تعالي يقول «كلمة لا إله إلا الله حصني فمن قالها دخل حصني و من دخل حصني أمن من عذابي»¹

‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) narrated from his father Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), from his father Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) from his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.), from his father ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.), from his father Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Shahīd (A.S.) at Karbalā’, from his father ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), from the Messenger of Allah who narrated the words of Gabriel, who quoted the divine words of the Exalted God as follows: “*The phrase ‘lā ilāh illā ‘Allah’ (there is no god but Allah) is my Fortress. One who states it will enter My Fortress (Ḥiṣn) in which he will dwell safely, and he will not suffer from My wrath.*”

The Transmitters of the Tradition

This event has been narrated by some distinguished Sunnī scholars, as well as the Shī‘a traditionists. We see at a glance that among those ten thousand or twenty thousand or thirty thousand transmitters only fifty narrators have remained. We shall name them respectively from the Imam’s time up to now.

Third/ninth century

- 1 Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) (d. 220/835)²
- 2 Muḥammad b. ‘Umar Wāqidī (d. 207/822)³
- 3 Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā Tamīmī Minqarī (d. 226/840)⁴
- 4 Aḥmad b. Ḥarb Neyshābūr (d. 234/848)⁵
- 5 Abā Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī (d. 236/850)¹

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, pp. 242-243

² Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā‘id al-Simṭayn*, vol 2, P. 189, Ḥ 466; Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Hubb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 2 p. , 147.

³ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁴ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. P. 125

⁵ *Ibid*, Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

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- 6 Ibn Rāhuwayh Mirwazī (d. 238/852)²
- 7 Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī (d. 242/856)³
- 8 Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ Qushayrī (d. 245/859)⁴
- 9 Abū Zur‘a Rāzī (d. 261/874)⁵
- 10 Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’i⁶
- 11 Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā ‘Alawī⁷
- 12 Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Ṣadaqa⁸

Fifth/eleventh century

- 13 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī’s Shāfi‘ī (d. 405/1014)⁹
- 14 Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Shīrāzī (d. 407/1016)¹⁰

¹ Qundūzī, *Yanābi‘ al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, pp. 122-123 and 128 Most Sunnī scholars consider Abā Ṣalt Sunnī, which we shall discuss about him in this chapter.

² Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, pp. 242-243; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, pp. 594-595; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4, 489; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 236

⁶ Ibn ‘Asākir Damashqī (Shāfi‘ī), Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Hibat-Allāh (d. 571/1175), *Ta’rīkh Damashq al-Kabīr*, 1st print, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, Beirut, 1421, vol. 41, P. 253, Ḥ 11473; see also Muttaqī Hindī (other), ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Malik (d. 975/1567), *Kanz al-‘Ummāl fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wa al-Af’āl*, 5th print, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1405, vol. 1, p. 52 and Wāsi‘ī Yamānī (Ḥanafī), Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wāsi‘, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, Manshūrāt Dār al-Maktabat al-Ḥayāt Beirut, 1966, P. 439

⁷ Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 213

⁸ Quḍā‘ī (Shāfi‘ī), Muḥammad b. Salāma (d. 454/1062), *Musnad al-Shihāb*, 2nd print, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1407, vol. 2, P. 323, Ḥ 1451

⁹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, 242-243 quoting from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, pp. 594-595; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4 P. 489; Shablanjī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 236.

¹⁰ Suyūṭī (Shāfi‘ī), Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr min Ḥadīth al-Bashīr al-Nadhīr*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, P. 376, Ḥ 6047; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4, pp. 489-490 quoting from Shīrāzī, *al-‘Alqāb*- (unfortunately this book is lost, however some historians believe that there are some of its manuscript copies available in some libraries), See

- 15 Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 430/1038)¹
 16 Quḍā‘ī Shāfi‘ī (d. 454/1062)²
 17 Shajarī Jurjānī Ḥanafī (d. 499/1105)³

Sixth/twelfth century

- 18 Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī Shāfi‘ī (d. 505/1111)⁴
 19 Ibn Shīrawayh Daylamī Shāfi‘ī (d. 509/1115)⁵
 20 Zamakhsharī Ḥanafī (d. 538/1144)⁶
 21 Ibn ‘Asākir Damashqī Shāfi‘ī (d. 571/1175)⁷
 22 Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1200)⁸

Seventh/thirteenth century

- 23 Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223)⁹
 24 Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī Shāfi‘ī (d. 623/1226)¹⁰

Ta’rīkh al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, vol. 1, P. 376 and Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 17, P. 242; an abridged manuscript of *al-Alqāb* is available See *al-Fihrist al-Shāmil li ‘l-Turāth al-‘Arabī al-Islāmī al-Makhtūṭ*), edited and published by Mu’assasat Āl al-Bayt li al-Fikr al-Islāmī, Amman, Jordan, 1426, vol. 1 p. , 63, No 454 and P. 233.

¹ Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī (Shāfi‘ī), Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 430/1038), *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā’*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1416, vol 2 P. 191-192

² Quḍā‘ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, vol. 2, P. 323, Ḥ 1451

³ Shajarī Jurjānī (Ḥanafī), Yahyā b. Ḥusayn (d. 499/1105), *al-Amālī al-Khamīsiyya* , 1st print, Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1422, vol 2, P. 15, Ḥ 16

⁴ *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*, a manuscript of which is available in Muḥammadiyya Library in India, see Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ṭabāṭbā‘ī (1416/1995), *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) fī al-Maktabat al-‘Arabiyya*, edited and published by Mu’assasat Āl al-Bayt li Iḥyā’ al-Turāth, 1st print, Qum 1417, 237, No 391.

⁵ Daylamī, *Firdaws al-Akḥbār*, vol. 1, P. 148, Ḥ 371

⁶ Zamakhsharī, *Rabī‘ al-Abrār*, vol. 2, P. 385, Ḥ 227

⁷ Ibn ‘Asākir Damashqī, *Ta’rīkh Damashq al-Kabīr* vol. 51, pp. 252-253, Ḥ 1472, 1473, No 5742

⁸ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125

⁹ Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī (Ḥanbalī), Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 620/1223), *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshīyīn*, 2nd print, ‘Ālam al-Kutub, Maktabat al-Nihdat al-‘Arabiyya, Beirut, 1408, 133.

¹⁰ Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī (Shāfi‘ī), ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad (d. 623/1226), *al-Tadwīn fī Akḥbār Qazwīn*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1408, vol. 2, P. 213

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25 Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254)¹

26 Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257)²

Eighth/fourteenth century

27 Ibn Manzūr Ifrīqī (d. 711/1311)³

28 Juwaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 730/1329)⁴

29 Dhahabī Shāfi'ī (d. 748/1347)⁵

30 Zarandī Ḥanafī (d. 757/1356)⁶

31 Khalīfa Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī (8th/14th century)⁷

Ninth/fifteenth century

32 Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419)⁸

33 Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī (d. 852/1448)⁹

34 Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451)¹⁰

Tenth/sixteenth century

35 Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505)¹¹

36 Samhūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505)¹

¹ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, P. 227; it is worth mentioning that Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa did not narrate this tradition in his *Maṭālib al-Su'ul fī Manāqib Āl al-Rasūl*. He may have narrated it in his other book, *Zubdat al-Maqāl fī Faḍā'il al-Āl*, which is not available. See Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭbā'ī, *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) fī al-Maktabat al-'Arabiyya*, 205, No 346.

² Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 315

³ Ibn Manzūr Ifrīqī (other), Muḥammad b. Mukarram (d. 711/1311), *Mukhtaṣar Ta'rīkh Damashq*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1409, vol 20 p. , 293

⁴ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 189, Ḥ 466

⁵ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, P. 390

⁶ Zarandī, *Ma'ārij al-Wuṣūl*, pp. 165-166

⁷ Khalīfa Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad (8th/14th century), *Talkhīṣ va Tarjumeh Tārīkh Neyshābūr*, Ibn Sīnā Library, Tehran, 131-132

⁸ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, P. 168

⁹ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 852/1448), *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1404, vol. 2, P. 339

¹⁰ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, 242-243

¹¹ Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr min Ḥadīth al-Bashīr al-Nadhīr*, 376, Ḥ 6074

- 37 Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520)²
 38 Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi‘ī (d. 974/1566)³
 39 Muttaqī Hindī (d. 975/1567)⁴

Eleventh/seventeenth century

- 40 Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610)⁵
 41 ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1031/1621)⁶

Twelfth/eighteenth century

- 42 Nāblusī Damashqī Ḥanafī (d. 1143/1730)⁷
 43 Mīrzā Muḥammad Khān Badakhshī Hindī (12th/18th century)⁸

Thirteenth/nineteenth century

- 44 Zabīdī Ḥanafī (d. 1205/1790)⁹
 45 Qundūzī Ḥanafī (d. 1294/1877)¹⁰
 46 Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1298/1880)¹¹

Fourteenth/twentieth century and afterwards

- 47 Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1350/1931)¹²
 48 Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1412/1991)¹³
 49 Shaykh Aḥmad Ṭābi‘ī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī¹

¹ Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘Iqdayn*, 342-343

² Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 227; idem, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, 343-345

³ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, 594-595

⁴ Muttaqī Hindī, *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 1 P. 52, Ḥ 158

⁵ Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115

⁶ Manāwī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4, pp. 489-490

⁷ Nāblusī Damashqī, *Asrār al-Sharī‘a*, pp. 223-224

⁸ Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 179

⁹ Zabīdī, *Ittiḥāf al-Sādat al-Muttaqīn* vol. 2, p. , 147

¹⁰ Qundūzī, *Yanābi‘ al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, pp. 122-123, 168

¹¹ Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 236

¹² Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, pp. 190-191

¹³ Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1412/1991), *Manāqib Ahl Bayt az Dīdgāh Ahl Sunnat*, 1st print, Islamic Research Foundation, Mashhad 1378, P. 202

70 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

50 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Ishāq Baghdādī Ḥanafī²

The Ways of Narrating the Tradition

Although more than ten, twenty or thirty thousand transmitters have recorded and preserved the event of the arrival of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Neyshābūr and the Fortress (*Hiṣn*) tradition, unfortunately, this event, like Ghadīr Khumm tradition which had been preserved by many traditionists, was neglected and its chains (*isnāds*) were lost for no reason. In any case it is known that Abā Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī narrated this tradition from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), so some people think, by weakening him, his tradition would become unreliable. In answer to them, first we should say that most of the Sunnī scholars trust in him, secondly some other traditionists have narrated it from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) that we shall refer to their names and to Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī’s as follow:

1 Imam al-Jawād (A.S.), Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī³ and Zabīdī Ḥanafī⁴ narrated it from Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) each one by his own chain (*isnād*).

2 Abā Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī, who was Imam al-Riḍā’s servant and companion, narrated this historical event in details and most of the Sunnī traditionists narrated Abā Ṣalt’s tradition in their own way.⁵

3 Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’ī: Ibn ‘Asākir Damashqī Shāfi‘ī narrates this tradition from Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’ī by his chain (*isnād*).⁶

4 Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā ‘Alawī, Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī Shāfi‘ī narrates this tradition from Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā ‘Alawī by his chain (*isnād*).⁷

¹ Ṭābi‘ī Shāfi‘ī, *al-I’tiṣām bi Ḥabl al-Islām*, pp. 205-206

² Wāsi‘ī, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, pp. 439-40

³ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 189, Ḥ 466

⁴ Zabīdī, *Ittiḥāf al-Sādat al-Muttaqīn*, vol. 2, P. 147

⁵ Qundūzī, *Yanābīr al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, pp. 122-123, 168

⁶ Ibn ‘Asākir Damashqī, *Ta'rikh Damashq al-Kabīr*, vol. 51, P. 253, Ḥ 11437, see *Muttaqī Hindī*, *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 1, P. 52, Ḥ 158, Wāsi‘ī, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, 439.

⁷ Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 213.

5 Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ṣadaqa Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad b. Salāma Quḍā’ī Shāfi‘ī narrated this tradition from Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Ṣadaqa by his chain (*isnād*).¹

6 Muḥammad b. ‘Umar Wāqidī, Sibṭ b. Jawzī narrates this tradition from Wāqidī.²

7 Abū Zur‘a Rāzī,

8 Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī emphasizes on this important event.³

9 Ibn Rāhuwayh Mirwazī

10 Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ Qushayrī

11 Aḥmad b. Ḥarb Neyshābūrī

12 Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī⁴ and Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī have narrated these three instances through Wāqidī⁵

13 Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā Tamīmī Minqarī

14 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī narrates this instance, too.⁶

Continuation of the Tradition

«ألا بشروطها و أنا من شروطها»

Verily it depends on some conditions, and I am considered to be one of the conditions.

Although the continuation of the tradition has been omitted in many Sunnī books, some others like Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī and Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi‘ī have narrated this continuation which refers to the lofty position of Imam (A.S.).

¹ Quḍā’ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, vol. 2, P. 323, Ḥ 213

² Sibṭ b. Jawzī (Ḥanafī) (d. 654/1257), *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

³ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr*; according to Ibn Ṣabbāgh, Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, 242-243, Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā’iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594-595; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 115; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol 4 P. 489-490; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār* 236.

⁴ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p, 125

⁵ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁶ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p, 125

Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419)

عن أبي الصلت عبدالسلام بن صالح بن سليمان الهروي قال: كنت مع الرضا عليه السلام حين خرج من نيسابور و هو راكب بغلته الشهباء، فإذا احمد بن الحرب و يحيى بن يحيى و إسحاق بن راهويه و عدة من اهل العلم قد تعلقوا بلجام بغلته فقالوا: يا بن رسول الله! بحق آبائك الطاهرين حدثنا بحديث سمعته عن أبيك عن آباءه؛ فأخرج رأسه الشريف من مظلمته و قال لقد حدثني أبي موسى، عن أبيه جعفر، عن أبيه محمد، عن أبيه علي، عن ابيه الحسين، عن أبيه علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام، عن رسول الله أنه قال: سمعت جبرائيل عليه السلام: سمعت الله جل جلاله يقول: «إني أنا الله لا إله إلا أنا فأعبدني من جاء بشهادة أن لا إله الا الله بالإخلاص دخل حصني، فمن دخل أمن من عذابي» و في رواية، فلما مرت الراحلة نادانا: «ألا بشروطها و أنا من شروطها» قيل من شروطها الإقرار بأنه إمام مفترض الطاعة.¹

He narrated from Abā Ṣalt who had been related who said, "I was accompanying 'Alī al-Riḍā, Allah may bless him, while he was leaving Neyshābūr, on a blackish grey mule, when Aḥmad b. Ḥarb, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā and Ibn Rāhuwayh took his mule's rein and said, "O son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), by your infallible parents, narrate a tradition which you have heard from your father and your parents." Then Imam (A.S.) took his head out of the mule-litter and said, "I heard from my father Mūsā, from his father Ja'far, from his father Muḥammad, from his father 'Alī, from his father Ḥusayn, from his father 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), from the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.A.) who narrated the words of Gabriel, who quoted the divine words of the Exalted God Who would say, "Truly I am the One God, there is no god but Me, so worship Me whoever truly

¹ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 168

testifies that there is no god but Allah enters in My Fortress (*Hiṣn*) in which he will dwell safely, and he will not suffer My wrath." While the caravan was leaving, he told us, "Verily it depends on some conditions, and I am considered to be one of those conditions." It has been said that these conditions are to confess the obedience to Imam (A.S.) which is incumbent upon people.

Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1350/1931)

إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ أَبِي: أَنِّي سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ جَعْفَرَ إِنَّهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي، مُحَمَّدَ الْبَاقِرِ إِنَّهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي، عَلِيٍّ إِنَّهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي، الْحُسَيْنِ إِنَّهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مِنْ أَبِي عَلِيٍّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّهُ قَالَ: «مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ دَخَلَ حَصْنِي فَمَنْ دَخَلَ حَصْنِي أَمِنَ مِنْ عَذَابِي» ثُمَّ قَالَ: «أَلَا

بشروطها—و قال الإمام—أن من شروطها»

He narrated from Abā Ṣalt b. Ṣāliḥ who said "I was in Imam's presence while he was leaving Neyshābūr. He was riding on a blackish grey mule, departing for Khurāsān. Some scholars of Khurāsān including Ibn Rāhuwayh, Aḥmad b. Ḥarb and Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā attended his presence and requested him to narrate them a tradition which he had heard from his sublime ancestors. Then Imam took his head out of the mule-litter and said, "I heard from my father Mūsā , he heard from his father Abī ‘Abd-Allah Ja‘far , from his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.) , from his father ‘Alī (A.S.), from his father Ḥusayn (A.S.), who said I heard from my father ‘Alī, Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.), who said he had heard from the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.A.) who said, "One who truly testifies that there is no god but Allah enters in My Fortress (*Hiṣn*) in which he will dwell safely, and he will not suffer My wrath." Then he said, "Verily all this depends on some conditions, and I am considered to be one of those conditions."¹

¹ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, pp. 190-191

The Sunnī Viewpoints on the Fortress tradition (*Ḥadīth Ḥiṣn*)

There are two views posed to discuss concerning the Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) tradition:

Some Sunnī scholars, who supposed Abā Ṣalt was the only narrator of the tradition, tried to weaken him in order to prove that the tradition is unauthentic. While some great and distinguished Sunnī scholars have attested it and authenticated the reliability of Abā Ṣalt. Moreover they have also uttered some astonishing words about this tradition and experienced its miraculous healing which we refer to them as follow:

Proponents

1 Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī (d. 236/850), on the importance of the tradition says, “If I quote these chains (*isnāds*) to an insane person he becomes sane.”¹

2 Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) says, “If I quote these chains (*isnāds*) to an insane person he will be miraculously healed.”² In another saying he declares “If I quote these chains (*isnāds*) to an insane person he becomes sane.”³ Again he also states the same sayings about the Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) tradition.⁴

3 Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn Ḥasanī (d. 298/910), concerning the successive chain (*isnād*) of this tradition often stated that if these words were uttered to the insane they would be healed.⁵

4 Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 430/1038), concerning this tradition, in a comprehensive sentence, says, “It is a sound and well known tradition which is narrated by sublime men from their sublime ancestors in this chain (*isnād*). Some of our teachers, relating it, believed if they recited it to the insane they would

¹ Sibṭ b. *Jawzī Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

² Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, p. , 595

³ Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 326

⁴ Shajarī Jurjānī, *al-Amālī al-Khamīsiyya* , vol. 1, P. 15, Ḥ 16; Wāsi‘ī Yamānī, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, P. 441; Tābi‘ī Shāfi‘ī, *al-I‘tiṣām bi Ḥabl al-Islām*, P. 206.

⁵ Zamakhsharī, *Rabī‘ al-Abrār*, vol. 4, P. 79 Ḥ 236

certainly be healed.”¹

5 Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī Shāfi‘ī, (d. 465/1072), in a fascinating anecdote concerning this tradition, says, “This tradition with its chain (*isnād*) was recited to one of the Samanid kings [Nūḥ b. Maṣṣūr]. He had this tradition written in gold ink and he willed that it should be buried with him in his grave. They dreamed him after his death and asked him about what Allah had done to him. He answered “He forgave me for testifying ‘there no god but Allah and Muḥammad is His Apostle’.”²

6 Abū Ḥamid Ghazālī Shāfi‘ī (d. 505/1111), attesting this tradition commented and explained it.³

7 Daylamī Shāfi‘ī (d. 509/1115), attested this tradition and said, “It is authentic.”⁴

8 Zamakhsharī Ḥanafī (d. 538/1144) repeated the sayings of Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn Ḥasanī on the importance of the chains of Imam al-Riḍā’s book *al-Ṣaḥīfa*) and he often stated that if this Ḥadīth was uttered to the insane they would be healed.⁵

9 Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223) narrated from one of the learned who had said. “If this Ḥadīth is uttered to the insane they will be healed.”⁶

10 Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257) repeated Ibn Qudāma’s statement on the greatness of the tradition and said, “If this Ḥadīth is uttered to the insane they will be healed.”⁷

11 Zarandī Ḥanafī (d. 757/1356), on the greatness of this tradition said, “O Allah, make us of those who will not suffer Your

¹ Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī, *Hilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2 P. 192.

² Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 243; Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘Iqdayn*, P. 334; Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, P. 342; idem, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 229; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, 115; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4. P. 489; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, 236; Tābi‘ī Shāfi‘ī, *al-I’tisām bi Ḥabl al-Islām*, 206

³ *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*, see Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ṭabāṭbā‘ī, *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S) fī al-Maktabat al-‘Arabīyya*, P. 237, No 391.

⁴ ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4, pp. 489-490

⁵ Zamakhsharī, *Rabī‘ al-Abrār*, vol. 4, P. 79, Ḥ 346

⁶ Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī, *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshīyīn*, P. 133

⁷ Sibṭ b. Jawzī (Ḥanafī) (d. 654/1257), *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

wrath, only You are the Most High, the Most Honored, the Most Generous, and the Most Great.”¹

12 Suyūṭī Shāfi‘ī (d. 911/1505) attested the tradition and said, “It is a valid tradition.”²

13 Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520) quoting the researchers who had said, “If you recite it to the insane they will be healed.”³ Again he said, “It is a glorious tradition and it has sound and excellent chains. A traditionist recited it in the presence of the King of Bukhārā. He asked the traditionist to write down the tradition with its chain for him. He asked to keep it in his shroud and put in his grave with him after his death.”⁴

14 Wāsi‘ī Ḥanafī also says “It is worthy to write this tradition and its chain with gold, which reaches to the pure and noble household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

The healing property of the Golden Chain Tradition

Up to now we recounted the views and the claims of the Sunnī scholars about this noble tradition. Now we will discuss how some Sunnī scholars experienced the healing property of this tradition and asserted that some patients had been healed with the blessing of this tradition.

The Account of Ibn Khallikān Shāfi‘ī (d. 681/1282)

When Abū Dulaf ‘Ijlī (d. 226/841) became seriously ill, people were prevented from visiting him. Before his death he unexpectedly became better for a few days. Then he asked his servant if anyone had come to see him. He answered ten Sayyids from Khurāsān have come to visit you and they have been waiting here for some days. Abū Dulaf admitted their presence, welcomed them and asked them the reason of their visit. They answered that they had gotten into financial difficulty, they had heard of his

¹ Zarandī Ḥanafī, *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl*, P. 166

² Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr min Ḥadīth al-Bashīr al-Nadhīr*, P. 376, Ḥ 6074

³ Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 229

⁴ idem, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, P. 342; idem, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 229

generosity and they had come to seek his help.

Abū Dulaf took off twenty bags each containing one thousand golden coins. He gave two bags to each of them in addition of some more money for the expense of their travel. He ordered them not open the bags until they had arrived home. He asked them to write down their names and their ancestors' names up to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (S.A.) and to mention their great grandmother's name, Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.), and then they write, "O Prophet of Allah, we had gotten into trouble, so we went to Abū Dulaf and sought his help. He granted each of us two thousand gold coins. He hopes that you are pleased with him and intercede for him with Allah. "They did so. Abū Dulaf took the papers and ordered his shrouding executive to put them in his shroud so that he can show them to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) when he sees him.¹

Samhūdī Shāfi'ī considers this subject as a witness for the spiritual blessings of the Golden Chain tradition and he explains it in details under the Fortress Tradition.²

The Account of Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (927/1520)

He reports that one of the qualities of this tradition is that if you recite it with devotion to a person facing the agony of death, but he is not decreed to die he is miraculously healed immediately. I have recited it to many sick people and I have experienced its results.³ Somewhere else says, "I, the humble man, have experienced that whenever I visited an ill person who was not decreed to die and I recited the tradition to him with devotion. Allah healed him and the signs of health appeared in him immediately. This is of my own experiences."⁴

Opponents

Some Sunnīs, who supposed Abā Ṣalt was the only narrator of the Golden Chain tradition, tried to weaken him to show that the

¹ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4, P. 77

² Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-'Iqdayn*, pp. 346-347

³ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, P. 342

⁴ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, P. 229

tradition is inauthentic. Whereas, it is only their guess and baseless claim and we are going to analyze this claim in this chapter.

Two: The Faith Tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*)

The Tradition Text

In another account the Golden Chain tradition has been narrated as follow:

لما دخل علي بن موسى الرضا نيسابور علي بغلة شهباء، فخرج علماء البلد في طلبه منهم يحيى بن يحيى، إسحاق بن راهويه، أحمد بن حرب، محمد بن رافع، فتعلّقوا بلجام دابته فقال له إسحاق: بحق آبائك حدثنا. فقال: «الإيمان معرفة بالقلب و إقرار باللسان و عمل بالأركان»¹

When Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) entered Neyshābūr on a blackish grey mule the city's scholars including Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā, Ishāq b. Rāhuwayh, Aḥmad b. Ḥarb and Muḥammad b. Rāfi' welcomed him and took his mule's rein, then Ibn Rāhuwayh said, "O son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), by your infallible parents, narrate us a tradition." Imam (A.S.) said, "Faith (*Īmān*) is to make it out with heart, to confess it with tongue and to act it with organs."

The Transmitters of the Tradition

Most traditionists have recorded this tradition as well as the Fortress one and they have uttered amazing words attesting it. We will refer to them respectively from Imam al-Riḍā's time up to

¹ Ibn Māja Qazwīnī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd (d. 275/888), *Sunan Ibn Māja*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1409 vol 1, p. , 25, Ḥ 65, *bāb al-īmān*; 'Ijlūnī Jarrāḥī (Shāfi'ī), Shaykh Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad 'Ijlūnī (d. 1162/1748), *Kashf al-Khifā' wa Muzīl al-Albās 'ammā Ashtahar 'alā Alsanat al-Nās*, 6th print Mu'assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1416, vol. 1, p. , 22; Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi'ī (d. 936/1529), *Tanzīh al-Sharī'a al-Marfū'a 'an Akhbār al-Shanī'at al-Mawḍū'a*, 2nd print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1401, vol. 1, P. 152

now. In a short glance we will see that out of those ten thousand, twenty thousand or thirty thousand transmitters of this famous Ḥadīth, only forty eight transmitters have remained from third/ninth century up to now.

Third/ninth century

- 1 Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā (d. 226/840)¹
- 2 Aḥmad b. Ḥarb Neyshābūrī (d. 234/848)²
- 3 Abā Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī (d. 236/850)³
- 4 Ishāq b. Rāhuwayh Mirwazī (d. 238/852)⁴
- 5 Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī (d. 242/856)⁵
- 6 Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ Qushayrī (d. 245/859)⁶
- 7 Abū Zur‘a Rāzī (d. 261/874)⁷
- 8 Ibn Māja Qazwīnī (d. 275/888)⁸
- 9 Muḥammad b. Sahl b. ‘Āmir Bajalī⁹
- 10 Muḥammad b. Ziyād Sulamī¹⁰
- 11 Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān Qazwīnī¹¹
- 12 ‘Alī b. Azhar Sarakhsī¹²
- 13 Haytham b. ‘Abd Allah¹³

¹ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam* vol. 6, P. 125

² *Ibid*, Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

³ Mazzī Shāfi‘ī (d. 742/1341), *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf bi Ma‘rifat al-Aṭrāf ma‘a al-Nukat al-Zīrāf ‘alā al-Aṭrāf Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 852/1448)*, 2nd print, al-Maktab al-Islāmī wa al-Dār al-Qayyima, Beirut, 1403, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 1007

⁴ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁵ Bayhaqī Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn (d. 458/1065), *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1421, vol. 1, P. 47, Ḥ 17; idem, *al-I‘tiqād wa al-Hidāya ilā Sabīl al-Rashād*, 1st print, Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, Beirut, 1401, 180

⁶ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p. , 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁷ Zarandī Ḥanafī, *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl*, 164

⁸ Ibn Māja Qazwīnī, *Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1 P. 25, Ḥ 65, *bāb al-īmān*

⁹ Mazzī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kāmil fī Du‘afā’ al-Rijāl*, 342

¹² *Ibid*

¹³ *Ibid*

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14 Aḥmad b. ‘Abbās Şan‘ānī¹

15 Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’ī²

Fourth/tenth century

16 Dūlābī Ḥanafī (d. 310/922)³

17 Abū Bakr Ājurrī (d. 360/970)⁴

18 Ṭabarānī Ḥanbalī (d. 360/971)⁵

19 Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi‘ī (d. 385/995)⁶

Fifth/eleventh century

20 Ibn Mardūya Işfahānī (d. 410/1019)⁷

21 Manşūr b. Ḥusayn Ābī (d. 421/1030)⁸

22 Abū Nu‘aym Işfahānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 430/1038)⁹

²³ Bayhaqī Shāfi‘ī (d. 458/1065)¹⁰

24 Khaṭīb Baghdādī (d. 463/1071)¹

¹ *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 198

² Abū al-Wafā’ Ḥalabī Ṭrāblusī (other), Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Sibṭ b. ‘Ajāmī (d. 841/1437) *al-Kashf al-Ḥathīth*, 1st print, ‘Ālam al-Kutub wa Maktabat al-Nihḍat al-‘Arabiyya, Beirut, 1407, 49-220

³ Dūlābī (Ḥanafī), Abū Bashār Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḥammād (d. 310/922), *al-Kunā wa al-Asmā’*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1420, vol. 1 pp., 478-479, Ḥ 1698

⁴ Abū Bakr Ājurrī, (d. 360/970), *al-Arba‘in Ḥadīthan*, 1st print, Maktabat al-Mu‘allā, Kuwait, 1408, 47, Ḥ 12

⁵ Ṭabarānī Shāmī (Ḥanbalī), Sulaymān b. Aḥmad (d. 360/971), *al-Mu‘jam al-Awsaṭ*, Dār al-Fikr, ‘Ummān, 1420, vol. 4, p., 363, Ḥ 6254, vol. 6, p., 222, 8580

⁶ Dāriqūṭnī Baghdādī (Shāfi‘ī), Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḥmad (d. 385/995), *Al-Mu‘talaf wa al-Mukhtalaf*, 1st print, Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, Beirut, 1406, vol. 2, P., 1115

⁷ Suyūṭī (Shāfi‘ī), Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *al-Durr al-Manthūr fi al-Tafsīr bi al-Ma‘thūr*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414, vol. 6, p. 100

⁸ Abū Sa‘d Manşūr Ābī (d. 421/1030), *Nathr al-Durar*, Hay‘at al-Miṣriyya al-‘Āmma li al-Kitāb, Egypt, n. d, vol. 1, p., 362

⁹ Abū Nu‘aym Işfahānī (Shāfi‘ī), Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 430/1038), *Tārīkh Işfahān (Dhikr Akhbār Işbahān)*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1410, vol. 1, p. 362

¹⁰ Bayhaqī Shāfi‘ī, *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, vol. 1 P. 47-48, Ḥ 16, 17

25 Shajarī Jurjānī Ḥanafī (d. 499/1105)²
Sixth/twelfth century

26 Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī Shāfi'ī (d. 505/1111)³
 27 Ibn Shīrawayh Daylamī Shāfi'ī (d. 509/1115)⁴
 28 Zamakhsharī Ḥanafī (d. 538/1144)⁵
 29 Ibn 'Asākir Damashqī Shāfi'ī (d. 571/1175)⁶
 30 Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1200)⁷

Seventh/thirteenth century

31 Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223)⁸
 32 Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī Shāfi'ī (d. 623/1226)⁹
 33 Sibṭ b. Jawzī (d. 654/1257)¹⁰
 34 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī Shāfi'ī (d. 656/1258)¹¹
 35 Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī (d. 660/1261)¹²

Eighth/fourteenth century

36 Ibn Manzūr Ifriqī (d. 711/1311)¹

¹ Khaṭīb Baghdādī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 463/1071), *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1417, vol. 1, p., 255-256, vol. 11, p., 385-386, vol. 11, p. 47

² Shajarī Jurjānī, *al-Amālī al-Khamīsiyya*, vol. 1, P. 13, Ḥ 6, 14-15, Ḥ 15

³ *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*, see Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭbā'ī, *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) fī al-Maktabat al-'Arabiyya*, P. 237, No 391.

⁴ Daylamī, *Firdaws al-Akhhār*, vol. 1, P. 148, Ḥ 371

⁵ Zamakhsharī Ḥanafī (d. 538/1144), *Rabī' al-Abrār wa Nuṣūṣ al-Akhhār*, 1st print, Mu'assasat al-'Alamī li 'l-Maṭbū'āt, Beirut, 1412, vol. 2, P. 385, Ḥ 227.

⁶ Ibn 'Asākir Damashqī, *Ta'rikh Damashq al-Kabīr*, vol. 46, pp. 126-127, Ḥ 10066 No 5137

⁷ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p, 125

⁸ Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī, *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshiyīn*, P. 133

⁹ Rāfi'ī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhhār Qazwīn*, vol. 1, P. 167-168, 462

¹⁰ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

¹¹ Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī (Shāfi'ī), 'Abd Allāh 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Hibat Allāh (d. 656/1258), *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, 2nd print, Dār Iḥyā' al-Ma'rīfat, Damascus, 1385, vol. 19, P. 51, Ḥikmat 223

¹² Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī, 'Umar b. Shujā' al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid (d. 660/1261), *al-Na'im al-Muqīm li 'Itrat al-Naba' al-'Azīm*, 1st print, Dār al Kutub al-Islāmī, Qum, 1423, P. 394

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- 37 Mazzī Shāfi'ī (d. 742/1341)²
38 Dhahabī Shāfi'ī (d. 748/1347)³
39 Zarandī Ḥanafī (d. 757/1356)⁴
40 Şafadī Shāfi'ī (d. 764/1362)⁵
Ninth/fifteenth century
- 41 Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi'ī (d. 833/1429)⁶
42 Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī (d. d. 852/1448)⁷
43 'Abd al-Raḥmān Şafūrī Shāfi'ī (d. 894/1388)⁸
Tenth/sixteenth century
- 44 Samhūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505)⁹
45 Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī (d. 911/1505)¹⁰
46 Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi'ī (d. 974/1566)¹¹
47 Muttaqī Hindī (d. 975/1567)¹

¹ Ibn Manẓūr Ifriqī, *Mukhtaṣar Ta'riḫ Damashq*, vol. 2, P. 159, item P. 78,

² Mazzī Shāfi'ī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076; see also Būşayrī Qāhirī (Shāfi'ī), Abū 'Abbās Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr (d. 840/1436), *Miṣbāḥ al-Zujāja fī Zawā'id Ibn Māja*, ed. 'Iwaḍ b. Aḥmad Shahrī, 1st print, Jāmi'at al-Islāmiyya, Madina al-Munawwara, 1425, pp. 121-122, Ḥ 23

³ Dhahabī (Shāfi'ī), Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Tadhhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Nashr al-Fārūq, Cairo, 1425, vol. 6, P. 92, No. 4097; idem, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 15, P. 400

⁴ Zarandī, *Ma'ārij al-Wuṣūl*, P. 163

⁵ Şafadī (Shāfi'ī), Şalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak (d. 764/1362), *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, 1st print, al-Nasharāt al-Islāmiyya, Germany, 1381/1961, vol. 2, P. 250,

⁶ Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi'ī (d. 833/1429), *Asnā al-Maṭālib fī Manāqib Sayyidinā 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib Karram Allāh Wajhah*, Maktabat al-Imam Amīr al-Mu'minīn Işfahān, n.d, pp. 122-126

⁷ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tadhhīb al-Tadhhīb*, vol. 6, p., 286, No. 619; Mazzī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076

⁸ Şafūrī (Shāfi'ī), 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd al-Salām b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 894/1388), *Nuzhat al-Majālis wa Muntakhab al-Nafā'is*, 3rd print, Shirkat Maktabat wa Maṭba'at Albānī al-Ḥalabī, Cairo, 1387, vol. 1, P. 92 23

⁹ Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-'Iqdayn*, pp. 345-346

¹⁰ Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmi' al-Şaghīr min Ḥadīth al-Bashīr al-Nadhīr*, 185 Ḥ 3094, 3095; idem, *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, P. 100

¹¹ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Şawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 595

Eleventh/seventeenth century

48 ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1031/1621)²

Twelfth/eighteenth century

49 Mīrzā Muḥammad Khān Badakhshī Hindī (12th/18th century)³

Thirteenth/nineteenth century

50 Qundūzī Ḥanafī (d. 1294/1877)⁴

Fourteenth/twentieth century and afterwards

51 Ḥafṣī ‘Adwī (d. 1332/1914)⁵

52 Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1412/1991)⁶

53 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Ishāq Baghdādī Ḥanafī⁷

The ways of narrating the tradition

As we said before some suppose that the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition is narrated only by Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī, so they try to weaken him and show the tradition as an unauthentic one. However Abā Ṣalt has such a high position before the Sunnī scholars and the learned men that these accusations leveled against him, as we will see, are totally baseless.

Despite Ṭabarānī’s view, who believed the only narrator of the tradition was Abā Ṣalt, it is necessary to say that this tradition is not restricted only to Abā Ṣalt, but Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi‘ī,⁸ Ibn ‘Adī

¹ Muttaqī Hindī, *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 1, pp. 273-274, Ḥ 1631, 1632

² Manāwī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 2, P. 185

³ Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, Manuscript in Āyatullāh al-‘Uzmā Mar‘ashī Najafī Library, Qum, P. 180

⁴ Qundūzī, *Yanābī‘ al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, pp. 123-124

⁵ Ḥafṣī ‘Adwī, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. ‘Īsā b. Aṭfayyish (d. 1332/1914), *Jāmi‘ al-Shaml fī Ḥadīth Khātām al-Rusul*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d, vol. 1, P. 3

⁶ Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi‘ī *Manāqib Ahl Bayt*, P. 202

⁷ Wāsi‘ī, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, P. 443

⁸ Dāriqūṭnī, *al-Mu’talaf*, vol. 2, P. 1115

84 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī,¹ and Mazzī Shāfi‘ī² confirm that it has more other chains (*isnāds*).

Dāriquṭnī, concerning the Ḥadīth chain and the methods of narrating it from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), fairly says, “This tradition is found in many available books.”³

We will refer to some transmitters and their method of narrating.

1 Abā Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī

2 Muḥammad b. Sahl b. ‘Āmir Bajalī

3 Muḥammad b. Ziyād Sulamī

Mazzī Shāfi‘ī, narrates Abā Ṣalt’s tradition on the authority of Ibn Māja, and adds, “After him Muḥammad b. Sahl b. ‘Āmir Bajalī and Muḥammad b. Ziyād Sulamī narrated it from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S).”⁴

Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī verifying the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition narrates it in other chains (*isnāds*) from Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.).⁵

Mazzī Shāfi‘ī, defending Abā Ṣalt, again says, “Ibn Māja has narrated this tradition and its chain (*isnād*) is excellent. He has narrated it from Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Aḥmasī, from Sahl b. Zanjala Rāzī. Its excellence is fixed for us by two qualities.” Confirming Abā Ṣalt, he goes on to narrate two other chains (*isnāds*) from Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) and Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.). He says, “Ḥasan b. ‘Alī Tamīmī al-Ṭabaristānī narrated it from Muḥammad b. Ṣadaqa ‘Anbarī, from Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.), and Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā ‘Alawī, who followed ‘Abbād b. Ṣuhayb, from Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (A.S).”⁶

¹ Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī, vol. 2, P. 42

² Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 1 p, 167-168, 462

³ Dāriquṭnī, *al-Mu’talaf*, vol. 2, P. 1115

⁴ Mazzī Shāfi‘ī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, Yūsuf b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 742/1341), *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414, vol. 11, P. 465, No. 4003

4 Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī says, Bayhaqī Shāfi‘ī narrates the tradition according his chains from Muḥammad b. Aslam Kindī.¹

5 Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān Qazwīnī

6 ‘Alī b. Azhar Sarakhsī

7 Haytham b. ‘Abd Allah

Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī refers to this ḥadīth in his book on the Biography of Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ ‘Adawī. Baṣrī, when he reaches the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition, he, says, “Abā Ṣalt, Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān Qazwīnī, ‘Alī b. Azhar Sarakhsī and others have narrated this tradition from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and they are more famous than Haytham b. ‘Abd Allah from whom Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ ‘Adawī Baṣrī has narrated.²

8 Aḥmad b. ‘Abbās Ṣan‘ānī

Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī refers to this ḥadīth in his book.³

9 Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’ī

Abū al-Wafā’ Ḥalabī refers to this ḥadīth in his book.⁴

10 Ibn Rāhuwayh⁵

11 Muḥammad b. Rāfi⁶

12 Aḥmad b. Ḥarb⁷

13 Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā Tamīmī Minqarī⁸

14 Abū Zur‘a Rāzī⁹

These fourteen Sunnī traditionists are among those who have narrated the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition directly from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

¹ Bayhaqī Shāfi‘ī, *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, vol. 1 P. 47-48, Ḥ 17; idem, *al-I‘tiqād wa al-Hidāya*, 180

² Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī *al-Kāmil*, vol. 2 P. 342

³ *Ibid*, vol. 1, P. 189

⁴ Abū al-Wafā’ Ḥalabī, *al-Kashf al-Ḥathīth*, pp. 49, 220

⁵ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁶ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, P. 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁷ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p. , 125; Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁸ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 4, p. , 125

⁹ Zarandī Ḥanafī, *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl*, P. 164

It is worth mentioning that the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition with the same contents has also been narrated from Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), Imam Ja‘far al-Şādiq (A.S.) and other Holy Prophet’s Companions [*Şahāba*] and Successors (*Tābi‘īn*), which proves not only its authenticity, but also demonstrate the prejudice of those who try to weaken this noble tradition unreasonably.

1 Muḥammad b. Şadaqa ‘Anbarī: Mazzī Shāfi‘ī says, "He has narrated the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition from Imam Ja‘far al-Şādiq (A.S.)"¹

2 ‘Abbād b. Şuhayb: Mazzī Shāfi‘ī says, "‘Abbād has narrated the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition from Imam Ja‘far al-Şādiq (A.S.)."²

3 Mālik b. Anas

4 Ḥammād b. Zayd

5 Aḥmad b. Abī Khaythama

6 ‘Abd Allah b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal

Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, attesting the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition, narrates it from four other people excluding Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) not only he does not suffice to name these four men but also considers this ḥadīth as a widely transmitted narrated by successive transmitters.³

7 ‘Alī b. Ghurāb

Suyūṭī Shāfi‘ī, verifying this tradition, narrates it from ‘Alī b. Ghurāb.⁴

8 Abū Qatāda Anşārī the Holy Prophet’s Companion.

9 ‘Ā’isha

Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi‘ī, attesting the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition, narrates it from the last two persons.⁵

The Sunnī viewpoints on the Faith Tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*)

¹ Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, p. , 465, No. 4003

² Mazzī Shāfi‘ī, *Tuḥfat al-Aşhrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076

³ Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, *Asnā al-Maṭālib fī Manāqib Sayyidinā ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 122-126

⁴ Suyūṭī (Shāfi‘ī) Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *al-La’ālī al-Maşnū’a fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū’a*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub ‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1417, vol. 1, P. 38

⁵ Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi‘ī, *Tanzīh al-Şarī’a*, vol. 1, P. 152

Two views are expressed for discussing the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition. Some Sunnī, who supposed Abā Ṣalt was the only narrator of the tradition, tried to weaken him and prove the tradition unauthentic. As we will see later, weakening Abā Ṣalt is an unreasonable claim and a useless effort, since some great and distinguished Sunnī scholars have attested the tradition and authenticated Abā Ṣalt. Moreover he is not the only narrator of the tradition from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) but some other traditionists have also related it. On the contrary most of the Sunnī scholars have defended his personality and exalted his position as the narrator of the tradition and uttered some astonishing words about the chain of this ḥadīth and their experiences about its healing property, which we refer to them as follow:

Proponents

There are two views in this respect: first the Sunnī scholars who have confirmed and expressed their views concerning the authenticity of the tradition; such as Abū Ḥātim Rāzī Shāfi‘ī who claims Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal did so and the patient was miraculously healed by the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*).

1 Muḥammad b. Idrīs Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/819), the leader of one of the Sunnī schools of jurisprudence; accepted and commented on the tradition.¹

2 ‘Abd Allah b. Ṭāhir (d. 230/844) was the governor of Khurāsān, Jurjān (Gurgān) and Ṭabaristān (Mazandaran).² His son, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allah who was a writer and a poet, says, “Once I was standing by my father. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Ibn Rāhuwayh and Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī were with us, too. My father asked them to recite a tradition. Abā Ṣalt began narrating the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition with its chains (*isnāds*). One of the audiences wonderfully exclaimed, “What a magnificent chain (*isnāds*) it is!” My father replied, “This is like a miraculous medicine for the insane. Whenever it is recited to them, they will be healed and

¹ Zarandī, *Ma‘ārij al-Wuṣūl*, P. 146

² Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9, pp. 483-484 No. 5114

become wise.”¹ The astonished man must have been Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal; because Ibn Rāhuwayh had previously heard it on the arrival of Imam al-Riḍā in Neyshābūr thus he should not have been amazed.

³ Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī (d. 236/850) says, “If you recite it to the insane they will be miraculously healed.”²

⁴ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), the leader of one of the Sunnī schools of jurisprudence, says, “When I recited it to an insane person he was healed of his insaneness.”³ In addition “If I quote the chains (*isnāds*) of this ḥadīth to an insane person he will be cured.”⁴ It is said that once he recited it to an epileptic and he was healed of his epilepsy.

⁵ Ibn Māja Qazwīnī (d. 275/888) concerning this tradition says, “If it is recited to the insane they would be healed of their insaneness.”⁵

⁶ Abū Ḥātim Rāzī Shāfi‘ī (d. 277/890) quoting from his father says, “Verily Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal recited it to an insane person and he was healed.”⁶

⁷ Yaḥyā b. Ḥusayn Ḥasanī (d. 298/910) about this chain (*isnād*) often stated that if they were uttered to the insane they would be miraculously healed.⁷

⁸ Abū Bakr Ājurrī (d. 360/970) decisively says, “This tradition, from the view point of the past and the present Muslim jurists, is one of the great and important bases of faith and it is in complete accord with the Holy Qur'an; no one disagrees on it but the malignant, excommunicated and unfaithful people. I will make it clear so that those who look at it be aware of it, and know

¹ *Ibid*, vol 5, pp. 418-419 No. 2932

² Ibn Māja Qazwīnī, *Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, P. 25

³ Ṣafūrī, *Nuzhat al-Majālis*, vol. 1, P. 23

⁴ Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. , 595; Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘Iqdayn*, P. 346 Abū Sa‘d Maṣṣūr Ābī, *Nathr al-Durar*, vol. 1, P. 25

⁵ Ibn Māja Qazwīnī, *Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, P. 25

⁶ Abū Sa‘d Maṣṣūr Ābī, *Nathr al-Durar*, vol. 1, P. 363; Ḥafṣī ‘Adwī, *Jāmi‘ al-Shaml*, vol. 1, P. 30

⁷ Zamakhsharī, *Rabī‘ al-Abrār*, vol. 4, p 79, Ḥ 12

that it is guidance for them.¹ He attests the soundness of this tradition according to the Holy Qur'ān, and *Sunna*.

9 Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi'ī (d. 385/995), although it has been said that he was opposed to Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī, but he had accepted the original tradition. Narrating this tradition, he says, "Many of our scholars have narrated it in their books through Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī."²

10 Abū Sa'd Mansūr Ābī (d. 421/1030) dignifying this tradition, quotes the saying of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Abū Ḥātim Rāzī.³

11 Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī Shāfi'ī (d. 430/1038) narrates an astonishing expression from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal concerning this tradition and he adds, that Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. 'Alī Anṣārī, quoting from Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, told him, "If anybody quotes these chains (*isnāds*) to an insane person his devil will go off. The only defect of this tradition is the excellence of his chain!"⁴

12 Bayhaqī Shāfi'ī (d. 458/1065) narrated the Faith tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*) and for attesting it he availed other traditions from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.).⁵

13 Shajarī Jurjānī Ḥanafī (d. 499/1105) narrates it by his chain from Abu Ḥātim Rāzī, from 'Abd al-Salām (Abā Ṣalt) who said, "If you recite it to the insane they will be healed."⁶

14 Abū Ḥāmid Ghazālī Shāfi'ī (d. 505/1111) confirming the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*), elaborated and commented on it.⁷

15 Zamakhsharī Ḥanafī (d. 538/1144) concerning the greatness of the tradition, frequently quoted the word of Yaḥyā b.

¹ Abū Bakr Ājurrī Shāfi'ī, *al-Arba'īn Ḥadīthan*, P. 47, Ḥ 12

² Dāriqūṭnī, *al-Mu'talaf*, vol. 2, P. 1115

³ Abū Sa'd Mansūr Ābī, *Nathr al-Durar*, vol. 1, P. 362

⁴ Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, *Tārīkh Iṣfahān (Dhikr Akhbār Iṣbahān)*, vol. 1, P. 174, No 173

⁵ Bayhaqī Shāfi'ī, *Shu'ab al-Īmān*, vol. 1, P. 47-48, Ḥ 16, 17.

⁶ Shajarī Jurjānī, *al-Amālī al-Khamīsiyya*, vol. 1, P. 13, Ḥ 7.

⁷ *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*, see Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭbā'ī, *Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) fī al-Maktabat al-'Arabīyya*, P. 237, No 391.

90 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunni traditions

Ḥusayn Ḥasanī who said “If these words were uttered to the insane they would be healed.”¹

16 Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223) says some scholars believe “If you recite it to the insane they will be healed.”²

¹⁷ Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257) concerning the importance the tradition repeats Ibn Qudāma’s saying who said “if you recite it to the insane they will be healed.”³

18 Mazzī Shāfi‘ī (d. 742/1341) says Ibn Māja has narrated this tradition, it has sound and proven chains; and then he continues narrating the other chains and methods of the tradition.⁴

¹⁹ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 852/1448) affirming the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition, presents it through other way than Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), that is Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.)⁵

20 Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi‘ī (d. 833/1429) says this tradition is sound in wording and meaning, its transmitters are all reliable except Abā Ṣalt Imam al-Riḍā’s servant, that in spite of his worthiness some people have weakened him. In any case this tradition whose chains trace back to one of the pure progeny of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) is a sound and acceptable tradition.⁶

21 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ṣafūrī Shāfi‘ī (d. 894/1388) repeats the sayings of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Abū Ḥātim Rāzī in dignifying this tradition.⁷

²² Suyūṭī Shāfi‘ī (d. 911/1505) says the fact is that this tradition is not a false and a fabricated tradition, and in affirming it, he narrates some other ways.⁸

23 Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 963/1555) attests the

¹ Zamakhsharī, *Rabī‘ al-Abrār*, vol. 4, P. 79, Ḥ 346

² Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī, *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshiyīn*, P. 133

³ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 315

⁴ Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, P. 465, No. 4003

⁵ Mazzī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf*, vol. 7, P. 366, Ḥ 10076

⁶ Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi‘ī, *Asnā al-Maṭālib fī Manāqib Sayyidinā ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 122-126

⁷ Ṣafūrī, *Nuzhat al-Majālis*, vol. 1, P. 23

⁸ Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī, Abū al-Ḥasan (d. 1138/1725), *Sharḥ Sunan Ibn Māja*, 2nd print, Dār al-Ma‘rifa, Beirut, 1418, vol. 1, P. 52

tradition's soundness in two stages: first he dignifies Abā Ṣalt and in this way he ascertains the trustworthiness of the tradition's chain; second he introduces two other witnesses so as there would be no doubt for the reliability of the tradition. This tradition has two witnesses: Abū Qatāda Anṣārī says, "Whoever testifies the unity of Allah and the Prophethood of His Apostle (S.A.W.A.), and accepts it from the bottom of heart, the Hell Fire would not burn him. Bayhaqī Shāfi'ī has narrated it in his *Shu'ab al-Īmān* from 'Ā'isha who said, "Īmān is to confess by tongue, accept by heart, and act by organs." Daylamī and Shīrāzī have narrated it in *al-Alqāb*.¹

24 Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī (d. 1138/1725) is one of the commentators of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Sunan Ibn Māja*. He mentions the sayings of the Sunnī Scholars and defends the notable personality of Abā Ṣalt. He quotes Suyūṭī's saying in confirming the tradition and says, "The fact is that the tradition is not a false and fabricated one."²

25 'Ijlūnī Shāfi'ī (d. 1162/1748) rejects Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī who believes it is a fabricated tradition; and defends Abā Ṣalt's personality. Affirming the tradition he says, "Among the subtle and intricate points of this tradition is narrating of the sons from their ancestors throughout the chain."³ Taking all the statements and affirmations of the Sunnī dignitaries into account, he quotes Suyūṭī's word who says, "The fact is that this tradition is not a false and fabricated tradition."⁴ Not only does it prove that the word of Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, who believes the Faith Tradition is a fabricated one, is baseless, but also shows that this tradition is certainly delivered by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

26 Qundūzī Ḥanafī (d. 1294/1877) also affirms this tradition by quoting Ibn Māja and Abā Ṣalt's words about it.⁵

27 Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī Ḥanafī in his comment on

¹ Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi'ī, *Tanzīh al-Sharī'a*, vol. 1, P. 152

² Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī, *Sharḥ Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, P. 52

³ 'Ijlūnī, *Kashf al-Khifā'*, vol. 1, P. 22

⁴ Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī, *Sharḥ Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, P. 52

⁵ Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, pp. 123-124

Sunan Ibn Māja, under this tradition, repeats Abā Ṣalt's word, that he says, "He would be healed of his insanity for the sake of the virtuous people named in the chain who are the essence of the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.), May Allah be pleased with them."¹

28 Dr. Fārūq Ḥamāda after narrating the *Īmān* tradition and in affirming Abā Ṣalt's word, says they are the Family of Holy Prophet's House, May Allah be pleased with them."²

Opponents

As it was said before some Sunnī scholars, who supposed Abā Ṣalt was the only narrator of the tradition, tried to weaken him and show the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition as an unauthentic one. We will discuss Abā Ṣalt's position from the Sunnī point of view and their inclinations towards his religious and his trustworthiness in this chapter.

Abā Ṣalt's Position as authority in *ḥadīth* from the Sunnī Point of View

By not giving attention to the sayings and approaches of the Sunnī scholars who supported the Golden Chain traditions (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*) (the Fortress and the Faith), some traditionists considered these two traditions as fabricated and forged. Supposing the way of narrating the traditions is confined only to Abā Ṣalt they pretended they were fabricated by him. However, as it was discussed before, the transmitters of these traditions were not limited to Abā Ṣalt and more than ten relaters transmitted these traditions. In any case, it is necessary to describe Abā Ṣalt's position in transmitting the traditions and his transmissions.

Abā Ṣalt is a trustworthy narrator from the Shī'ite point of

¹ Ma'rūf 'Awwād, *Tahqīq wa Ta'liq Sunan Ibn Māja, Tahqīq Bashshār Ma'rūf 'Awwād*, 1st print Dār al-Jīl, Beirut, 1418, vol. 1, P. 26, Ḥ 65

² Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 430/1038), *Kitāb al-Du'afā'*, 1st print, Dār al-Thiqāfa, Maghrib, 1405, P. 108, note 140

view and his transmissions are sound.¹ However in the Sunnī biographies (*Rijāl*) three viewpoints on the personality of Abā Ṣalt are brought forth to discussion.

First The proponents of Abā Ṣalt's position in transmitting the traditions and his transmissions have accepted his traditions without any religious prejudice.

Second Those who accept his position in transmitting the traditions and his transmissions, but they criticize some traditions narrated by him, without charging any accusation, fabrication, or lie against him.

Third The opponents of Abā Ṣalt's position in transmitting the traditions and his transmissions fused their religious prejudice with the scientific subjects and unreasonably accused him just because he loved the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.) and narrated traditions about their merits. They strongly weakened him and accused him of lying and fabricating the traditions.

The first view

Although, the Sunnī scholars knew Abā Ṣalt as a Sunnī with Shī'a inclination, he enjoyed a high position among his contemporary Sunnī scholars (*'Ulamā'*) and the later ones. The historical reports show that he was of a very high position and personality. He was an intimate friend of Ibn Rāhuwayh, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal,² 'Abd al-Razzāq Ṣan'ānī, Yaḥyā b. Ma'in, Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī Shāfi'i,³ Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Allah b. Numayr⁴ and Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb

¹ Najāshī (Imāmī), Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. 'Abbās Asadī Kūfī (d. 450/1058), *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, ed. Sayyid Mūsā Shubayrī Zanjānī, 6th print, Intishārāt Jāmi'a Mudarrisīn, Qum, 1418, P. 245, No 643; Shaykh Ṭūsī (Imāmī), Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 460/1067) *Ikhtiyār Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, ed. Ḥasan Muṣṭafawī, Mashhad University Press, 1348, pp. 615, 616, Ḥ 1148 and 1149

² Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, vol. 5, pp. 418-419

³ *Ibid*, vol. 11, P. 47

⁴ Yaḥyā b. Ma'in (other), Abū Zakariyyā Murri Ghaṭfānī Baghdādī (d. 233/847), *Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Maṭbū'āt Majma' al-Lughat al-'Arabiyya, Damascus, 1405, P. 79, No 231

Fasawī¹ and they held regular gatherings to discuss science and tradition. Some great Sunnī scholars and authors, aware of Abā Ṣalt's Shī'a inclination, without any religious prejudice, strengthened and authenticated his position in transmitting the traditions. They accepted his traditions and narrated from him. Moreover, they characterized him as preserver of traditions (*ḥāfiẓ*), trustworthy (*thiqa*), reliable (*ma'mūn*), trustful (*ṣadūq*), retentive (*dābiṭ*), a man of letters (*adīb*), jurist (*faqīh*), learned (*ālim*) and traveler for acquiring and preserving traditions (*raḥḥāl*). These scholars are as follow:

Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn (in many cases), Abū Dulaf 'Ijlī, Abū Dā'ūd Sajistānī (the author of *Sunan Abī Dā'ūd*), Ibn Shāhīn, Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī, Ḥākim Ḥaskānī Ḥanafī, Abū Ya'lā Qazwīnī, Mazzī Shāfi'ī, Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī Ḥanafī, Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi'ī, Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī and 'Ijlūnī Shāfi'ī.

Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn (d. 233/847): Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī says, "Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, the leader of the traditionists authenticated him (Abā Ṣalt)."² Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn defended his position in many cases. He confirmed his trustworthiness while he knew that he was a Shī'a. It shows Abā Ṣalt's great and prominent position in the sight of Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn. 'Abbās b. Muḥammad Dawry says, "I enquired Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn about Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī, and he replied he was trustworthy."³ Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad says, "I questioned Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn about Abā Ṣalt, he responded that he was truthful."⁴ Ibn Muḥriz says, "I inquired Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn about Abā Ṣalt, he responded who was not one of the liar transmitters."⁵ Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd Allah b. Junayd says, "I asked Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn about Abā Ṣalt,

¹ Fasawī (other), Ya'qūb b. Sufyān (d. 277/890) *al-Ma'rifat wa al-Ta'rīkh*, 2nd print, Mu'assasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1401, vol. 3, p. , 77

² Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, pp. , 286-287, No 619

³ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī (Shāfi'ī), Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 405/1014), *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. Yūsuf 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mar'ashlī, Dār al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1406, vol. 2, P. 137, Ḥ 235/4637

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, *Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, 79, No 231

he answered that he had heard traditions from him and he had not known him as a liar.”¹ In another place he narrates from Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn who told Abā Ṣalt was not considered as a liar for us.² Somewhere else Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn conclusively says that Abā Ṣalt was trustworthy except who had Shī‘a inclinations.³ In Many cases Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn proved Abā Ṣalt’s trustworthiness and vindicated him of the fabricating traditions. They accused him of inventing the tradition أنا مدينة العلم و عليّ بابها “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī (A.S.) is its gate”, but Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn’s words about the tradition, the ways of narrating it and confirming Abā Ṣalt’s trustworthiness justified him.⁴ Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad says, I saw Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn coming to Abā Ṣalt and greeting him.⁵ This anecdote shows Abā Ṣalt’s standing as someone like Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn, the prominent Sunnī leader of the traditionists goes to him and salutes him.

Abū Dulaf ‘Ijlī (d. 261/874) concerning Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī (d. 236/850) says, “Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ (Abā Ṣalt) is from Baṣra and he is trustworthy.”⁶

Abū Dā‘ūd Sajistānī (d. 275/888) says, “Abā Ṣalt narrated the traditions accurately.”⁷

Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl Bukhārī, (d. 256/869) was the

¹ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11, pp. 48-49, No 5728; Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, P. 465, No. 4003; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, P. 286, No 619

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 2, P. 137, Ḥ 235/4637; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, P. 286, No 619

⁵ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 3, P. 137, Ḥ 235/4637; Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 8, P. 448

⁶ Abū Dulaf ‘Ijlī, (other), Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ (d. 261/874), *Ta’rīkh al-Thiqāt*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1406, P. 303, No 1002

⁷ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, P. 287, No 619

contemporary of Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī and lived in the same town. Regarding his special relations with the Sunnī scholars and traditionists as Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn and his frequent travelling for acquiring and preserving traditions, Bukhārī, had doubtlessly heard of him. Nonetheless he does not mention him as the weak traditionists in his famous book, *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ al-Ṣaghīr*.¹

Ibn Shāhīn (d. 385/990) acknowledges Abā Ṣalt's Shīʿa inclination, but without any prejudice he authenticates his reliability. He says, "Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī is reliable and authentic except that he is a Shīʿa."²

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī (d. 405/1014) says, "Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, the leader of the traditionists authenticated him (Abā Ṣalt)."³ He also says, "Abā Ṣalt is reliable and trustworthy."⁴

Abū Yaʿlā Qazwīnī (456/1063) refers to the significant position of Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī in the sight of the Sunnī scholars and says, "Abā Ṣalt is famous and the important scholars have narrated his traditions from him."⁵

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī Ḥanafī (c. 490/1096) considers Abā Ṣalt 'Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Hirawī trustworthy and says that Yaḥyā b.

¹ Bukhārī, (d. 256/869), *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ al-Ṣaghīr*, 1st print, ʿĀlam al-Kutub, Beirut, 1404

² Ibn Shāhīn (other), Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. Aḥmad b. ʿUthmān (d. 385/990), *Taʾrīkh Asmāʾ al-Thiqāt*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, 1406, P. 277, No 836

³ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 2, P. 137; Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, P. 286-287, No 619

⁴ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 2, P. 137, Ḥ 235/4637, it is worth mentioning that Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī attributes to Ḥākim Neyshābūrī who said Abā Ṣalt narrated unusual traditions; see Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, P. 286-287. Supposing it right, it is not contrary to Ḥākim's sayings who introduce him as an authentic traditionist. From the Sunnī point of view narrating unusual traditions does not spoil the traditionists' trustworthiness (See: Lucknowī (Ḥanafī), Abū al-Ḥasnāt Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥayy (d. 1304/1886), *al-Rafʿ wa al-Takmīl fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghudda, Muʿassasat Qurṭuba, Aleppo, n.d, 98, *īqāz* 7). In addition most of the Sunnī scholars have authenticated Abā Ṣalt.

⁵ Abū Yaʿlā Qazwīnī (other), Khalīl b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Khalīlī (456/1063), *Al-Irshād fī Maʿrifat ʿUlamāʾ al-Ḥadīth*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1414, P. 335

Ma'īn admired him and said about him that he was reliable.¹

Mazzī Shāfi'ī (d. 742/1341) refers to Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī respectfully and continues, "He resided in Neyshābūr and travelled to Baṣra, Kūfa, Ḥijāz and Yemen for acquiring the traditions. He was 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā's servant, and he was a learned, jurist, scholar and a man of letters. Ibn Māja narrated us the *Īmān* tradition from him and it is a sound tradition with excellent chain in our view."²

Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi'ī (d. 833/1429) explained noteworthy words about the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition and concerning Abā Ṣalt he said, "He was 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā's servant, and in spite of his merits, some people weakened him."³

Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī (d. 852/1448) says, "Abā Ṣalt resided in Neyshābūr and travelled to some cities for acquiring traditions. He was 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā's servant"⁴ Somewhere else emphasizing his Shī'a inclinations and in all fairness, he considers him trustworthy and he believes those who accused him of telling lies are radical and prejudicial. He says, "Abā Ṣalt is trustworthy, he is a Shī'a and he has narrated unusual traditions, but 'Uqaylī Makkī exaggeratingly calls him a liar."⁵ As we said before, from the Sunnī point of view narrating unusual traditions does not harm the traditionists' trustworthiness.⁶

Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī Ḥanafī (d. 874/1469) refers to Abā Ṣalt with eminent words and says, "Abā Ṣalt was *ḥāfiẓ* and he often travelled to different cities for acquiring traditions. He heard the traditions from the traditionists and vice versa. It is known that he

¹ Ḥākim Ḥaskānī Ḥanafī (c. 490/1096), *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, ed. Muḥammad Bāqir Maḥmūdī, Tehran, 1411, vol. 1, P. 105, Ḥ 118

² Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, P. 460-465, No 4003

³ Muḥammad b. Jazarī Shāfi'ī, *Asnā al-Maṭālib fī Manāqib Sayyidinā 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, pp. 122-126

⁴ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 285, No 619

⁵ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 852/1448), *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2nd print, Dar al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1395, vol. 1, p. 506, No 1190

⁶ (See: Lucknowī, *al-Raf' wa al-Takmil fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 98, iḳāz 7)

had the Shī‘a inclinations.”¹

It is worth mentioning that the term “*ḥāfiẓ*” is a praising word and a symbol of gratitude for the ḥadīth narrator. Its real meaning is open to discussion. Some argue that “*ḥāfiẓ*” is someone who knows one hundred thousand traditions with their chains and texts by heart; and some state the one who knows three hundred or seven hundred thousand traditions by heart.² In any case the epithet “*ḥāfiẓ*” shows that he was an expert in preserving and recording traditions.

Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi‘ī (963/1529) presents two ways for validating the tradition and rejecting the claim of fabricating it. First he emphasizes on defending the authority of Abā Ṣalt on the basis of Yaḥyā b. Ma‘īn’s discourse on authenticating him and refutes his accusation of fabricating the tradition. Second he introduces two more transmitters i.e. ‘Ā’isha and Abū Qatāda Anṣārī who had previously narrated the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition. Thus he puts the statement “Abā Ṣalt narrated unusual traditions” in doubt.³

Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī (d. 1138/1725) verifying the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition and recounting the Sunnī scholar concerning Abā Ṣalt’s authentic position says, “The fact is that this tradition (the Faith tradition) is not fabricated.”⁴

‘Ijlūnī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1162/1748), refuting the scholars who believe it is a fabricated tradition and defending Abā Ṣalt says, “Among the subtle and intricate points of this tradition is its narration by the sons from their ancestors through the proper chain.”⁵

The second view

¹ Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī (Hanafī), Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf (d. 874/1469), *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhira*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya Beirut, 1413, vol. 2, P. 344

² Suyūṭī (Shāfi‘ī), Jalāl al-Dīn, (d. 911/1505), *Tadrīb al-Rāwī fī Sharḥ Taqrīb al-Nawawī*, ed. ‘Abd al-Waḥhāb ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1409, pp. 49-52

³ Abū al-Ḥasan Kinānī Shāfi‘ī, *Tanzīh al-Sharī‘a*, vol. 1, p. 152

⁴ Abū al-Ḥasan Sindī Ḥanafī, *Sharḥ Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, p. 52

⁵ ‘Ijlūnī, *Kashf al-Khifā’*, vol. 1, p. 22

Abā Ṣalt's narrative position and personality is accepted, but some criticize the traditions narrated by him.

Zakariyyā b. Yaḥyā Sājī Baṣrī Shāfi'ī (d. 307/919) does not discuss Abā Ṣalt's trustworthiness in narrating traditions, but he mentions that he narrated unusual traditions and were weak from their (the Sunnī) point of view.¹

Naqqāsh Ḥanbalī (d. 414/1023) does not say anything about Abā Ṣalt's narrative position and personality as traditionist either, but he says that he narrated unusual traditions.²

Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī Shāfi'ī (d. 430/1038) does not allude to Abā Ṣalt's trustworthiness or reliability, but claims that he narrated unusual traditions.³

Analysis

The second view does not weaken Abā Ṣalt's trustworthiness and reliability, since from the Sunnī point of view, narrating merit traditions which are interpreted as unusual do not hurt the traditionists' trustworthiness. There should be other reasons for weakening a traditionist.⁴

The third view

In this stage some bigoted Sunnī scholars fully rejected Abā Ṣalt's narrated traditions and his personality as a traditionist. They criticize, accuse and hate him just because of he was an ardent lover of the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.) and he narrated Ahl al-Bayt virtues from the Sunnī scholars.

1 Ibrāhīm b. Ya'qūb Jūzjānī (d. 259/873), with much

¹ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ Baghdād*, vol. 11, p. 51; Mazzī, Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, p. 466; Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 11, p. 466; 37. Dhahabī (Shāfi'ī), Shams al-Dīn (d. 748/1347), *Mizān al-'itidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, n.d., vol. 2, p. 286; Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, p. 91; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 286

² Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 286

³ Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 430/1038), *Kitāb al-Du'afā'*, 1st print, Dār al-Thiqāfa, Maghrib, 1405, p. 108, No 140

⁴ (See: Lucknowī, *al-Raf' wa al-Takmil fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dil*, 98, iḳāz 7)

prejudice ignores the authenticating of Abā Ṣalt by Sunnī scholars like Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn and other traditionists, rudely and impolitely says, “He was deviated from the right path and the main stream. One of the traditionists narrated to me that he was a liar. He was polluted and dirtier than the dung of *Dajjāl* ass.”¹

2 Abū Ḥātim Rāzī Shāfiʿī (d. 277/890) says he was not trustworthy and he was weak.²

3 Abū Zurʿa Damashqī Ḥanbalī (d. 281/894): Abū Ḥātim Rāzī says that Abū Zurʿa Damashqī ordered not to narrate Abā Ṣalt’s tradition and he said that he did not narrate from him and he did not approve his narrations.”³

4 Nasāʾī Shāfiʿī (d. 303/915) tried to weaken Abā Ṣalt and said that he was not reliable.⁴

5 ʿUqaylī Makkī (d. 322/934) rudely and with deep prejudice and with deep prejudice says, “He was a Rāfiḍī and his creed is not correct.”⁵ Again, he says, “He was a liar.”⁶

6 Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfiʿī (d. 354/965) weakens Abā Ṣalt’s traditions in two instances. First he says, “It is necessary to consider Imam al-Riḍā’s traditions sound, unless they are narrated by his sons or his followers, especially Abā Ṣalt. Hence the traditions related from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) are weak, for they are narrated by Abā Ṣalt or his sons and his followers.”⁷ Again he says, “Abā Ṣalt has narrated unusual tradition on the virtue of Imam ʿAlī

¹ Jūzjānī Nāṣibī, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Yaʿqūb, (d. 259/872), *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Muʿassasat al-Risāla, Beirut, 1405, pp. 205-206, No 379

² Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, vol. 6, p. 48, No 275

³ *Ibid*

⁴ However, this subject is not found in his book (See: Nasāʾī Shāfiʿī, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Shuʿayb (d. 303/915), *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa al-Matrūkīn*, 2nd print, Muʿassasat al-Kutub al-Thiqāfiyya, Beirut, 1407); others have attributed it to him (See: Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11, p. 51; Mazzī, Shāfiʿī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmāʾ al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, p. 466; Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 11, p. 444; 37; Idem, *Mizān al-ʿitidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 2, p. 416).

⁵ Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2, p. 70-71, No 1036

⁶ Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p., 286; Idem, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, p. 506

⁷ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 2, P. 456

(A.S.) and his household, if he has reported them individually, they are unreliable.”¹

7 Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 365/975) weakens Abā Ṣalt and his traditions especially the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition and accuses him of fabricating them. He says, “Abā Ṣalt has narrated unusual traditions (from ‘Abd al-Razzāq) on the virtues of ‘Alī, Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.), Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (A.S.); and he [Abā Ṣalt] is accused (of fabricating) for all of them.”²

8 Dāriqutnī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 385/995). They have attributed that he made offending remarks about Abā Ṣalt He said; “Abā Ṣalt was a base and improper Rāfiḍī.” Again he accused him of forging traditions and said, “He narrated from Ja‘far b. Muḥammad (A.S.) from his ancestors who had said الإيمان إقراراً بالقول

و عملٌ بالجوارح “Faith (*Īmān*), is to confess it with tongue and to act it with organs” He is accused of forging this tradition.”³

9 Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir Maqdisī Zāhirī (d. 507/1113) considers him a liar.⁴

10 Abū Sa‘d Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Karīm Sam‘ānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 562/1166), repeating the words of Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, criticizes Abā Ṣalt’s traditions and says, “Abā Ṣalt narrated unusual traditions on the virtues of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) and his household, if they are individually narrated by Abā Ṣalt, they are unreliable.”⁵

11 Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī (d. 597/1200) considers him

¹ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 2, P. 151

² Ibn ‘Adī Jurjānī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kāmil fī Ḍu‘afā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 5, pp. 331-332 No 518/1686

³ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11, P. 5, Mazzī, Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, P. 464; Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Mizān al-Itidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 2, P. 286; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, P. 286

⁴ Mughaltay Ḥanafī (d. 762/1360), *Ikmāl Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, enclosed with the views of Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir Maqdisī Zāhirī, 1st print, al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha, Beirut, 1422, vol. 8, P. 274, No 3296

⁵ Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, vol. 5, P. 637

as a weak (*daʿīf*) and rejected (*matrūk*) traditionist.¹

12 Dhahabī Shāfiʿī (d. 748/1347) mars Abā Ṣalt's position by introducing him weak and unreliable and discredits his traditions. He says, "Abā Ṣalt was a great pious scholar and a glorified learned Shīʿa, but I wish he were trustworthy."² Again he says, "He is praiseworthy except he is a prejudiced Shīʿa."³ More than one person has accused him; Abū Zurʿa believes he is not trustworthy; Ibn ʿAdī Jurjānī Shāfiʿī says he is accused (of fabricating traditions) and some others say he is Rāfiḍī.⁴ "Abā Ṣalt b. ʿAbd al-Salām is worthless."⁵ Once again he says, "Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī, the Shīʿa, is a pious man, but the traditions narrated by him are obsolete (*matrūk*) and they are not accepted."⁶ He also says, "Abā Ṣalt was Imam al-Riḍā's servant, in spite of his merits he was a worthless Shīʿa and accused (of fabricating traditions).⁷ Criticizing Ḥākim Neyshābūrī's words, he says, "No. By God, Abā Ṣalt was neither trustworthy, nor reliable."⁸

13 Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfiʿī (d. 774/1372) considers Abā Ṣalt a weak traditionist.⁹

14 Considering these views, some prejudiced commentators of *Sunan Ibn Māja* have strictly rejected the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition

¹ Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī Ḥanbalī, Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (d. 597/1201), *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa al-Matrūkīn*, Dar al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Baghdād, 1406 vol. 2, P. 106, 1936

² Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 11, pp. 446-448

³ Idem, *Mīzān al-ʿItidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 2, P. , 616, No 5051

⁴ Idem, *Dīwān al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa al-Matrūkīn*, 1st print, Dār al-Qalam, Beirut, 1408, vol. 2, P. 112, No 2528

⁵ Idem, *al-Muqtanā fī Sard al-Kunā*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, 1418, vol. 1, P. 382, No 3219; Idem, *Al-Mujarrad fī Asmāʾ Rijāl Sunan Ibn Māja*, 1st print, Dār al-Rāya, Riyāḍ, 1409, P. 213, No 1739

⁶ Idem, *Al-Mughnī fī al-Ḍuʿafāʾ* 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, 1418, vol. 1, P. 624, No 3694

⁷ Idem, *al-Kāshif fī Maʿrifat man laḥū Riwayātun fī al-Kutub al-Sitta*, 1st print, Dār al-Qibla Muʿassasat ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān, Jidda, 1413, vol. 1, pp. 652-653, No 3368

⁸ Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 3, P. 137, Ḥ 235/4637

⁹ Ibn Kathīr Damashqī (Shāfiʿī), Abū al-Fidāʾ, (d. 774/1372), *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, 5th print, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, Beirut, 1409, vol. 10, P. 329

and claimed that Abā Ṣalt fabricated, and concocted, and then narrated it.

15 Būṣayrī Qāhirī Shāfi'ī (d. 840/1436) says, "The chains of this tradition are weak since there is a consensus among the scholars that Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī was a weak traditionist."¹

With regard to distinguished Sunnī scholars who authenticated and honored Abā Ṣalt, it is clear that using the term "consensus" for weakening him is completely baseless. Some scholars like Ma'rūf 'Awwād,² Ṣafā' al-Ḍawwī, Aḥmad 'Adwī³ and Nāṣir al-Dīn Albānī Ḥanbalī,⁴ have explicitly accused Abā Ṣalt of fabricating the Faith (*Īmān*) tradition and considered it a forged one.

Analysis

A. The first and the second views, and the position of the old traditionists, as Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn and other prominent Sunnī scholars who supported and authenticated Abā Ṣalt are the best proof for invalidity of the baseless accusations against Abā Ṣalt.

B. It is not clear that Nasā'ī Shāfi'ī and Dāriqutnī Shāfi'ī weakened Abā Ṣalt since they did not mention 'Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī's name in their books on the weak (*du'afā'*) traditionists.

C. Supposing Nasā'ī did it, we should say that his weakening by Nasā'ī Shāfi'ī, Abū Ḥātim Rāzī Shāfi'ī, Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi'ī and Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn is worthless from the biographical point of view, since according to explicit sayings of the biographers they are known for having extreme ideas for weakening the transmitters and they consider them weak for the least reasons. It is wise to think carefully about the transmitters whom this group

¹ Būṣayrī Qāhirī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zujāja fī Zawā'id Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, pp. 121-122, Ḥ 23

² Ma'rūf 'Awwād, *Taḥqīq wa Ta'liq Sunan Ibn Māja*, vol. 1, P. 89-90, 65

³ Ṣafā' al-Ḍawwī and Aḥmad 'Adwī, *Ihdā' al-Dībāja bi Sharḥ Sunan Ibn Māja*, 1st print, Dār al-Yaqīn, Bahrain, 1422, vol. 1, pp. 68-69, Ḥ 65

⁴ Nāṣir al-Dīn Albānī, *Ḍa'īf Sunan Ibn Māja*, 1st print, al-Maktabat al-Islāmī, Beirut, 1408, vol. 6, pp., 6-7, Ḥ 11; Idem, *Ḍa'īf al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr wa Ziyādatuhū (al-Faṭḥ al-Kabīr)*, 3rd print, al-Maktabat al-Islāmī, Beirut, 1410, P. 339, No 2309

has weakened.¹ It is worth mentioning that Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn is among this group, but he authenticated Abā Ṣalt. This authentication is commendable for biographers, because validation by a man who invalidates the narrator for the least reasons is a sound proof of how reliable Abā Ṣalt was, and there were no weak points in his narrations.

D. The main problem for this view and the main reason for his weakening are Abā Ṣalt's school of thought and the traditions he narrated. They weaken him only because of his love for the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.) and narrating traditions on their virtues from the famous Sunnī scholars such as 'Abd al-Razzāq Ṣanʿānī. They curse him with impolite words that are only fit for them. Historically, the root of this rudeness and weakening of Abā Ṣalt is Jūzjānī. He, with his blind prejudice, rudely weakens and curses not only Abā Ṣalt, but also every Sunnī traditionist who narrates the virtues of the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.). Unfortunately some biographers have repeated his words inconsiderately. Jūzjānī, who is the origin of this accusation against Abā Ṣalt, has no position and value among the great Sunnī scholars; and they consider him *Nāṣibī*² and they do not esteem him and his followers' views.

Jūzjānī, the origin of accusation against Abā Ṣalt

The origin of accusation against Abā Ṣalt's great personality is Ibrāhīm b. Yaʿqūb Jūzjānī Nāṣibī (d. 259/873). He weakened Abā Ṣalt unreasonably just because he narrated traditions on the virtue of Imam 'Alī (A.S.) and his household, which the great Sunnī scholars like Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn had attested them. He rudely cursed a man who was esteemed by great Sunnī scholars and said that he was out of the right path and deviated from the main stream. He added that one of the traditionists had narrated him who was a liar and he was filthy and dirtier than the dung of *Dajjāl* ass and he

¹ Lucknowī, *al-Rafʿ wa al-Takmīl fī al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, pp. 117-122, *īqāz* 19

² Someone with 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) or one of the Shī'a Imams is the enemy.

was polluted with dirt since the old times.¹ Some biographers unknowingly and, as we said before, on the basis of Jūzjānī's sayings, have also weakened Abā Ṣalt.

The Sunnī scholars accept Jūzjānī's enmity towards Ahl al-Bayt

Weakening Abā Ṣalt by Jūzjānī has no weight and it does not mar his personality and his traditions. Because:

The majority of Sunnī scholars among them, Ibn 'Adī Shāfi'ī, Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi'ī, Dhahabī Shāfi'ī and Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī and among the contemporary ones Ghimārī Shāfi'ī and Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Saqqāf Shāfi'ī specify that Jūzjānī harbored enmity against Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.). Such a *Nāṣibī* person naturally, refutes Imam 'Alī's virtues and considers weak the narrator of Imam 'Alī and his family's virtues.

1 Ibn 'Adī Jurjānī Shāfi'ī says, "He [Jūzjānī] lived in Damashq (Damascus), he made speeches on the pulpit and he had a strong tendency toward the Damascene school of thought in enmity towards 'Alī (A.S.)."²

2 Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi'ī says, "He was deviated from 'Alī (A.S.)."³

3 Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi'ī says that Ibrāhīm b. Ya'qūb Jūzjānī professed a Ḥarīzī school of thought."⁴

4 Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, annotating Ibn Ḥibbān's saying, says that Ḥarīzī is attributed to Ḥarīz b. 'Uthmān who was known for his *Nāṣibī* beliefs and Ibn 'Adī Jurjānī Shāfi'ī confirms it.⁵

5 Dhahabī Shāfi'ī quoting and affirming the words of Ibn 'Adī Jurjānī Shāfi'ī about Jūzjānī says, "*Nāṣibī* was the belief of then residents of Damascus."⁶

6 Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī after quoting Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, Dāriqūṭnī, and his views on Jūzjānī as a *Nāṣibī*, considers his book

¹ Jūzjānī *Nāṣibī*, *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, P. 205, No 379

² Ibn 'Adī Jurjānī Shāfi'ī, , *al-Kāmil fī Du'afā' al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, P. 310, No 132/132

³ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 159, No 332; Yāqūt Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2, p. , 173

⁴ Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 1, P. 456

⁵ Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 159, No 332

⁶ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-I'tidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, P. 76, No 257

as a proof for this claim and says, “His book on the weak (*al-Du‘afā’*) [*Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*] clarifies his belief.”¹ He weakens many people who are considered to be Imam ‘Alī’s followers or his lovers and he curses some of them very rudely, so Ibn Ḥajar does not accept his weakening, and measures it worthless.² He criticizes Jūzjānī again, and says, “Jūzjānī was *Nāṣibī* and deviated from ‘Alī. (A.S.) He was hostile toward the Shī‘a who did not follow ‘Uthmān. It is a religious obligation to love Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) all and it is not suitable to accept the words of an innovator about an innovation.”³

7 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ghimārī Shāfi‘ī explicitly introduces Jūzjānī as follow: “Abū Ishāq Jūzjānī is *Nāṣibī* and he is known for it. He criticizes and attacks insolently all the traditionists who are known as Shī‘a, he uses this method for all the Kūfan and he pronounces very rude and offensive language against them. He refutes their traditions. This method which is specific to him is worthless. They elaborate that his weakening of the Kūfan’s position or those with Shī‘a inclination has no value and it should not be heeded.”⁴

8 Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Saqqāf Shāfi‘ī also says, “Jūzjānī is one of the mean and ignoble predecessors; he is deviated from the right path. He invites people to deviation for no reason. Allah may darken his face. He is a man who curses the distinguished Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] [of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)] and he has a tendency to the sinners.”⁵

Conclusion

Regarding the views of the distinguished Sunnī scholars, the

¹ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 159, No 332

² *Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 81

³ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī (Shāfi‘ī), Aḥmad b. ‘Alī (d. 852/1448), *Hady al-Sārī* known as *Muqaddimat Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, 1st print, Dār al-Rayyān li al-Turāth, Cairo, 1407, P. 410

⁴ Ghimārī (Shāfi‘ī), ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *Bayān Nakth al-Nākith al-Mu‘tadī*, 3rd print, Nashr Dār al-Imam al-Nawawī, Jordan, p. 54.

⁵ Muḥammad b. ‘Aqīl (Shāfi‘ī), (d. 1350/1931), *al-‘Atb al-Jamīl ‘alā Ahl al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, ed. Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Saqqāf, 1st print, Dār al-Imam al-Nawawī, Jordan, P. 122

weakening, disparaging, and accusations of Jūzjānī against the lovers of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) and the transmitters of his virtues are invalid and worthless.

The distinguished Sunnī scholars, and above them Yaḥyā b. Ma'īn, have attested the traditions narrated by Abā Ṣalt and they have transmitted them in different ways to make their authenticity clear for others.

If we decide to weaken the traditions just because they narrate the virtues of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) and the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.) as Jūzjānī did, we should put aside many traditions and many Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] and Successors [*Tābi'īn*] who narrated these traditions. Dhahabī Shāfi'ī believes, "If we put aside the traditions on virtue of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī (A.S.) and the Holy Prophet's Household (S.A.W.A.), we will lose a great part of the Holy Prophet's heritage, and it is a great disaster."¹

The tradition at issue [*Īmān*], that Abā Ṣalt has narrated from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the latter from his ancestors up to Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) has been recounted in other ways, which shows the reliability of the tradition and its narrator.

The great Sunnī scholars' confirming Abā Ṣalt and his tradition, moreover, the miraculous healing property of its chains, and above all experiencing and being miraculously healed with blessing of this Ḥadīth, leaves no doubt about the reliability and authenticity of this tradition.

Abā Ṣalt's school of thought

From the viewpoint of the most of the Imāmī scholars, Abā Ṣalt is an Imāmī Shī'a,² but Shaykh Ṭūsī¹ and, following him, Ibn

¹ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-Itidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, P. 5

² Najāshī (Imāmī), Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. 'Abbās Asadī Kūfi (d. 450/1058), *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, ed. Sayyid Mūsā Shubayrī Zanjānī, 6th print, Intishārāt Jāmi'a Mudarrisīn, Qum, 1418, P. 245, No 643; Māmqānī, Shaykh 'Abd Allāh (d. 1351/1932), *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl fī 'Ilm al-Rijāl*, 1st print, Maṭba'at al-Murtaḍawiyya, Najaf Ashraf, n.d., vol. 2, P., 153; Khu'ī, Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim

Dā'ūd Ḥillī² and 'Allāma Ḥillī³ consider him a Sunnī; however from the most Sunnī scholars' point of view he is a Sunnī with Shī'a inclinations. You may ask whether to use the terms "Shī'a", "extremist Shī'a (*Shī'a Jalad*)" and "vile Rāfiḍī (*Rāfiḍī khabīth*)" for Abā Ṣalt by the Sunnī does not mean he was Shī'a. We say, "No." They have a specific intention by using these terms, which we will point out below.

The meanings of the terms "Shī'a" or "Rāfiḍī" from the Sunnī point of view

The term "Shī'a" and its application in Imāmī beliefs completely differ from that of the Sunnī views. The meaning of the term "Shī'a" in the Imāmī scholars' opinions refers to the believers in the immediate guardianship (*wilāya*) of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) and the eleven Holy Imams (A.S.) after him up to the present Imam; and by a Shī'a companion of Imams they mean someone who believes in the immediate guardianship (*wilāya*) of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) up to the present living Imam (A.S.), whereas, the term "Shī'a" and its derivations have a different meaning from the Sunnī scholars' point of view. Therefore by the terms "Shī'a", "Extremist Shī'a" and "vile Rāfiḍī" we cannot judge that Abā Ṣalt was an Imāmī Shī'a. There are two views concerning the term "Shī'a". Some believe that Shī'a is someone who loves Imam 'Alī (A.S.), he prefers him to 'Uthmān and considers that Imam 'Alī (A.S.) was right in all of his battles; and his opponents were guilty, but he gives priority to *Shaykhayn*

(d. 1413/1992), *Mu'jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth wa Tafṣīl Ṭabaqāt al-Ruwāt*, 3rd print, Manshūrāt Madina al-'Ilm, Qum, 1403, vol. 10, pp. 16-18 No 654

¹ Shaykh Ṭūsī (Imāmī), Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 460/1067), *Rijāl al-Ṭūsī*, ed. Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣādiq Āl Baḥr al-'Ulūm, 1st print, Maṭba'at al-Ḥaydariyya, Najaf Ashraf, 1381, 380, 396 No 5

² Ibn Dā'ūd Ḥillī (Imāmī), Taqī al-Dīn Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 707/1307), *Kitāb al-Rijāl*, 2nd print, Tehran University Press, 1383, P. 474, No 295

³ 'Allāma Ḥillī (Imāmī), Abū Manṣūr Ḥasan b. Muṭahhar Asadī (d. 726/1325), *Khulāṣat al-Aqwāl fī Ma'rifat al-Rijāl*, ed. Shaykh Jawād Qayyūmī, 1st print, Mu'assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, Qum, 1417, P. 209, No 672

(Abū Bakr and ‘Umar)¹ Some other believe that Shī‘a is someone who prefers Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) to all the Holy Prophet’s Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] even *Shaykhayn* (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar) and considers him the most meritorious (*afḍal*) but not the rightful (*aḥaqq*) for caliphate.²

There are also two views concerning the term “extremist Shī‘a (*Shī‘a Jalad*)”. Some believe that “extremist Shī‘a” is someone who prefers ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) in all virtues to all the Holy Prophet’s Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] even *Shaykhayn* (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar)³ Some others, believe that an extremist Shī‘a is someone who loves Imam ‘Alī (A.S.), even if he does not prefer him to *Shaykhayn*, but he prefers him to ‘Uthmān and curses ‘Uthmān, Mu‘āwiya, Ṭalḥa, al-Zubayr and those who fought against Imam ‘Alī (A.S.).⁴

“Vile Rāfiḍī (*Rāfiḍī khabīth*)”, in general consensus of the Sunnī scholars, is someone, who in addition to loving Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) and preferring him for his virtues over all Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] even *Shaykhayn*, entitles him to immediate Caliphate after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), repudiates *Shaykhayn* and the Caliphate usurpers and curses them.⁵

Therefore the terms “Shī‘a” and “extremist Shī‘a” are used for a Sunnī who has special inclinations. However the term Rāfiḍī is used for someone who believes in immediate caliphate of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.) and it includes Zaydī, Kaysanī, and Wāqifī, and so on; thus, by this term we cannot judge that someone is Imāmī.

Analysis

Concerning the above mentioned terms and the evidences from

¹ Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 81; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Hady al-Sārī* known as *Muqaddimat Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, P. 483

² Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 81

³ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-I‘tidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, pp. 5-6; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Hady al-Sārī* known as *Muqaddimat Faṭḥ al-Bārī*, P. 483

⁴ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-I‘tidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, p. 6

⁵ Dhahabī, *Mizān al-I‘tidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 1, p. 6; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1, P. 81

the Sunnī history and the sayings they have narrated from Abā Ṣalt in their texts, we can conclusively say that Abā Ṣalt was Sunnī, but he was not Rāfiḍī, or at the most what we can understand from their historical reports, is that Abā Ṣalt was a Sunnī with extremist Shī‘a inclinations. The historical reports that prove his Sunnī Faith are as follow:

Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī frequently narrated the virtues of the household of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), such as “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate,”¹ and the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*).²

Khaṭīb Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī, narrating from Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī’s *Ta’rīkh Marw* says that Abā Ṣalt was a well-known Shī‘a theologian.³

About Abā Ṣalt’s view on the Caliphs, narrating from Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī Shāfi‘ī, he also says, “I saw Abā Ṣalt preferring Abū Bakr and ‘Umar to ‘Alī, he sympathized with ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān and he reminisced about the Holy Prophet’s Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] with good words, and he said that it was his belief.”⁴

Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī Shāfi‘ī believes that the only weak point of Abā Ṣalt was his criticizing the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*] such as Abū Mūsā Ash‘arī and Mu‘āwiya and narrating their defects (*mathālib*).⁵

In another narration, Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi‘ī claims that Abā Ṣalt said, “A dog belonging to Alid is better than all the Umayyad, he was told that ‘Uthmān was among the Umayyad. Then he said yes ‘Uthmān is among them.”⁶

¹ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11, pp. 48-51

² See chapters one and two for its chains (*isnād*)

³ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11, pp. 47-48

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ *Ibid*, vol. 11, p., 51

This word is in contradiction to Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī's claim, thus Dhahabī Shāfi'ī does not accept Dāriqūṭnī's statement, he doubts in its chain,¹ and accepts Mirwazī narration.

Conclusion

We conclude that Abā Ṣalt was a Sunnī and he believed that *Shaykhayn* (Abū Bakr and 'Umar) were caliphs, but he was greatly inclined towards Imam 'Alī (A.S.) and he narrated his virtues. However he criticized Abū Mūsā Ash'arī and Mu'āwiya. These inclinations caused him to be called extremist Shī'a (*Shī'a Jalad*). Therefore, 'Uqaylī Makkī and Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi'ī's, introducing Abā Ṣalt as Rāfiḍī are baseless and it is not in accord with the Sunnī definition of Shī'a and its derivations.

The sameness of *Ḥiṣn* and *Īmān* traditions

The main question is whether the *Ḥiṣn* and *Īmān* traditions are the same or they have occurred in two different occasions. Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī, regarding this subject says, "Maybe they have been two different events."²

It seems that these two traditions have doubtlessly been narrated by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). There are some proofs that the *Ḥiṣn* and the *Īmān* traditions were narrated on one occasion. There are also some evidences that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) narrated these two traditions in Neyshābūr. Regarding the available attestations, maybe Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) declared the Faith tradition (*Ḥadīth Īmān*) when he arrived in Neyshābūr, and he narrated the Fortress tradition (*Ḥadīth Ḥiṣn*) while he was departing from there.

The Arrival of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Neyshābūr and the Stand of People and the Sunnī Scholars

If we review the reports of Imam al-Riḍā's arrival in Neyshābūr, the people and the Sunnī scholar's positions and their cheerful

¹ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Tadhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, vol. 6, P. 91, No 4097

² Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 595

applause on his arrival, we will find important points some of which will remain unanswered. So we will glance at the related reports, and then we will refer to its important remarks.

Wāqidī's report

When the year 200/816 arrived, Ma'mūn dispatched some men to Madina to take Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to Khurāsān. As he arrived in Neyshābūr, the scholars there, like Ibn Rāhuwayh, Muḥammad b. Rāfi', Aḥmad b. Ḥarb and others attended to his presence for receiving blessings and for requesting him to recite traditions.¹

Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī's report

When Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) arrived in Neyshābūr and he came out of the litter on his blackish grey mule, the scholars there like Ibn Rāhuwayh, Muḥammad b. Rāfi', Aḥmad b. Ḥarb and others attended to his presence. Then he stayed there for some days.²

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī's report

Unfortunately Hakim Neyshābūrī's *Ta'riḫ Neyshābūr* is not available now; this invaluable history book has been lost. So we quote Ḥākim's report from the works of other traditionists and historians to whom it was accessible in their time.

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al Ḥasan Khalīfa Neyshābūrī (8th/14th century),³ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451),⁴ Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi'ī (d. 974/1566),⁵ Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610),⁶ 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manāwī Shāfi'ī (d. 1031/1621)⁷ and Shablanjī Shāfi'ī (d. 1298/1880)⁸ have narrated it in detail and

¹ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, 315

² Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6, P. 125

³ Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad, *Talkhīṣ va Tarjumeḥ Tāriḫ Neyshābūr Ḥākim Neyshābūrī*, 131-132

⁴ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, 243

⁵ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594

⁶ Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, 115

⁷ 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manāwī Shāfi'ī, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, vol. 4, P. 185

⁸ Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, 236

Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī (d. 748/1347)¹ and Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 852/1448)² have reported it in brief. It is worth mentioning that Samhūdī Shāfi‘ī (d. 911/1505)³ and Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520)⁴ have narrated it from Ḥākim’s *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr* indirectly. They have related Ḥākim’s report from Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī’s work.

Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī quoting from Ḥākim on the moment of the arrival of Imam (A.S.) in Neyshābūr says, “Two ḥadīth preservers, Abū Zur‘a Rāzī and Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī with a group of experts in ḥadīth and science came near Imam (A.S.) and requested him to show his face to them and recite a tradition from his ancestors.”⁵

In another report, ‘Ijlūnī says, “When ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) arrived in Neyshābūr he was riding on a blackish grey mule, the city scholars like Ibn Rāhuwayh, Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ and Aḥmad b. Ḥarb sought to meet him; they grasped the rein of his mule and asked him to recite a ḥadīth.”⁶

Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī narrating from Ḥākim’s *Ta’rīkh Neyshābūr* says, “As Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) arrived in Neyshābūr on a journey during which he was martyred, he was riding on a blackish grey mule in a litter covered by woolen cloth. The road leading to bazaar was being opened for him. Meanwhile Abū Zur‘a Rāzī and Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī attended his presence. A group of scholars, students and traditionist was accompanying these two scholars. They said, ‘O! Our great master, the son of magnificent Imams (A.S.), for the sake of your sublime ancestors, and your respectful passed away relatives show us your face, and narrate us a tradition from your forefathers and your ancestor the Holy

¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9, P. 390

² Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, P. 339

³ Samhūdī, *Jawāhir al-‘Iqdāyn*, pp. 342-343

⁴ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, 227; Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, pp. 342-345

⁵ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594

⁶ ‘Ijlūnī, *Kashf al-Khifā’*, vol. 1, P. 22

Prophet (S.A.W.A.) so we can always remember you for it. Then holy Imam (A.S.) halted the mule, and he ordered his servants to pull back the litter curtain. The people burst into tears out of excitement, some cried and some knelt down and began kissing the animals feet. All were crying. Abū Zur‘a asked them to remain silent so as he could hear Imam’s voice. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “My father Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) narrated from his father Ja‘far al-Šādiq (A.S.), from his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.) from his father ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.) from his father al-Ḥusayn al-Shahīd (A.S.) at Karbala, from his father ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), from the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.A.). He narrated the words of Gabriel, who quoted the divine words of the Exalted God Who said, “The phrase *‘lā ilāh illā Allah’* (there is no god but Allah) is my Fortress. One who states it will enter My Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) in which he will dwell safely, and he will not suffer from My wrath.” Then he drew the curtain and left. He says they counted the people present holding pens and ink, and wrote the ḥadīth, were more than twenty thousand.¹

The main topics of the historical reports

The chief points of this important tradition can be divided into two categories:

- A. People’s response to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)
 - 1 Their unique and grand welcoming of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)
 - 2 Their bursting into tears out of excitement and crying
 - 3 Their kneeling down
 - 4 Their kissing Imam al-Riḍā’s mule feet
- B. The well-known Sunnī scholars’ response to Imam al-Riḍā
 - 1 Their seeking blessings from him
 - 2 The famous scholars, their students and other scientists’ welcoming Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)
 - 3 The Sunnī scholars requesting and beseeching Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to show his blessed face out of litter

¹ Ibn Šabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, pp. 242-243

4 The Sunnī scholars requesting and beseeching Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to narrate a tradition from his sublime ancestors

5 The presence of ten or twenty thousand or thirty thousand of reporters and transmitters

6 The distinguished Sunnī ‘*Ulamā*’ overtaking each other for grasping the rein of Imam al-Riḍā’s mule

Maybe the writers of the Sunnī canonical books (*Kutub al-Ḥadīth*) and *Ṣaḥīḥs* censored and deleted this tradition from their books for the sake of this unique historical event!

The position of Sunnī scholars in Neyshābūr

Reviewing and knowing the position of the personalities mentioned in the historical reports shows clearly that how the then prominent Sunnī scholars knelt down before Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), crying, weeping and beseeching him to show first his face out of the litter and then narrate a tradition from his sublime ancestors. These famous Sunnī scholars are:

1 Ādam b. Abī Ayās ‘Asqalānī (d. 220/835), he was the leader of the traditionalists (*Ahl al-Ḥadīth*), an authentic and a reliable man, a noble person in Syria and one of the six individuals who preserved the tradition correctly. Concerning him Dhahabī says, “He was Abū al-Ḥasan al-Khurāsānī, *al-imam, al-ḥāfiẓ* (preserver of the traditions) and the spiritual leader of Syria.”¹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī Shāfi‘ī says, “He was reliable, trustworthy, worshipper and obedient to Allah.”² Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal states, “He was of one the six individuals who recorded and preserved traditions correctly.”³

2 Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā Tamīmī Minqarī (d. 226/840), he was Shaykh al-Islam, the religious leader of Khurāsān and as some have said, the leader of the worldly people. Abū Bakr Abd al-Raḥmān says, “*Al-ḥāfiẓ*, Shaykh al-Islam, and the religious leader of Khurāsān.” Abū al-‘Abbās Sarrāj says, “The leader of the worldly people.” Abū Aḥmad al-Farrā’ says, “He was the leader, the

¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10, P. 335

² Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, (Shāfi‘ī), Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 327/938), *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 1st print, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, n.d, vol. 2 P. 268

³ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2, P. , 28

example and a light for Islam.”¹ Nasā’ī Shāfi’ī says, “He is trustworthy, reliable and a clear proof.”² Aḥmad b. Sayyār Mirwazī Shāfi’ī says, “He was trustworthy, pious and learned.”³

3 Abū ‘Abd al-Allah b. Fīrūz Neyshābūrī (d. 234/848), he was the chief and a perfect model for the traditionists and jurists, the religious leader of Neyshābūr and the most pious. He was a matchless man. Dhahabī Shāfi’ī says, “He was the exemplar authority, the pious religious leader of Neyshābūr and a great jurist and pious.” Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā Tamīmī Minqarī says, “If he is not an exalted saint (*abdāl*), then I wonder who he is.”⁴

4 Abū Ya‘qūb Ibn Rāhuwayh Mirwazī (238/852). He was one of the Sunnī religious leaders; and preserver of Ḥadīth; he was an expert in jurisprudence and tradition; he was pious and trustworthy, but his affiliation to Shāfi’ī or Ḥanbalī school is open to dispute. Suyūṭī Shāfi’ī says, “Ibn Rahuwayh was one of the Muslim and the religious leaders; he was pious and trustworthy and he was an expert in jurisprudence and tradition.”⁵

5 Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī (242/856). He was a reliable man and a preserver of Ḥadīth He was as learned as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. Suyūṭī says, “He was trustworthy, and preserver of Ḥadīth and he was one of exalted saints (*abdāl*),” and quoting from Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma Shāfi’ī, he says, “He was a divine man, I had seen no one like him before, and he was like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal.”⁶

6 Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad b. Rāfi‘ Qushayrī Ḥanbalī (245/859). He was reliable and a prominent personality in Neyshābūr during his time. Ḥākim Neyshābūrī says, “He was a prominent personality during his time in Khurāsān and he was an

¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10 P. 512

² Mazzī, Shāfi’ī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*, No. 1524

³ Dhahabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10 P. 512

⁴ *Ibid*, vol. 11, pp. 32-44

⁵ Suyūṭī (Shāfi’ī), Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 911/1505), *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāz*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1403, pp. 191-192

⁶ *Ibid*, P. 238

itinerant for acquiring knowledge.¹ Muslim and Nasā'ī say, "Ibn Rāfi' was trustworthy and reliable."² Dhahabī Shāfi'ī says, "He was a Muslim leader, preserver of ḥadīth and the heir of the learned."³

7 Naṣr b. 'Alī Jahḍamī or Juhnī (250/864). He was considered one of the most distinguished and reliable personalities and preservers of ḥadīth, the most learned traditionalist and the leader of them. Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī says, "Naṣr is more lovable, more reliable and more learned in ḥadīth than any other man, and he is trustworthy."⁴ Nasā'ī Shāfi'ī says, "He is trustworthy."⁵ 'Abd Allah b. Muḥammad Farhayānī says, "From my point of view Naṣr was one of the distinguished nobles of his time."⁶ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī says, "He was preserver (of ḥadīth), very learned, and one the leaders. He preserved the narrations of his teachers."⁷

8 Abū Zur'a Rāzī (d. 261/874). He was the leader of the traditionists in Khurāsān and a reliable man, and of the preservers of ḥadīth, Suyūṭī says, "He was one of the great men in Islam, and he was the preserver of ḥadīth."⁸ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī Shāfi'ī says, "I saw no one humbler than Abī Zur'a. He and Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī Shāfi'ī were among the religious leaders of Khurāsān."⁹ Nasā'ī Shāfi'ī says, "He was trustworthy." And Dhahabī Shāfi'ī says, "He was the leader of Muslims and the preserver (of ḥadīth)."¹⁰

9 Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Khuzayma Shāfi'ī (d. 311/923). He was a person that the Muslim leadership and preserving ḥadīth in Khurāsān are traced back to him" Ibn Ḥibbān Shāfi'ī says, "I saw no one on the earth like Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma who was aware of the Holy Prophet's practices and norms. He knew the wordings of

¹ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 10, P. 512

² Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 37, P. 68

³ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, P. 135

⁴ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 8, P. 466

⁵ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, P. 135

⁶ Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, vol. 12, P. 288

⁷ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 12, P. 135

⁸ Suyūṭī *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāz*, P. 254

⁹ Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 5, P. 325

¹⁰ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 13, P. 75

the traditions and their addenda more than anyone else, as if all the Holy Prophet's traditions were before him." Dāriqūṭnī Shāfi'ī says, "He was a distinctive and reliable leader."¹

10 Abū 'Alī Thaqafī Shāfi'ī (d. 328/929). He was the leader of the traditionalists and religious leader of the Khurāsān people and as the Sunnī claimed he was the proof of Allah on earth. Dhahabī Shāfi'ī says, "He was a leader, a jurist, a pious man, a devotee and leader of the Khurāsān people and the proof of Allah on earth during his time. He was leader in most of the religious sciences."²

11 The position of the above mentioned renowned Sunnī scholars and their beseeching and kneeling down before Imam (A.S.) indicates the importance of Imam al-Riḍā's scientific and spiritual leadership among all the Muslims.

An unanswered question

The occasion of Imam's arrival in Neyshābūr and the narrators of the Golden Chain tradition (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-Dhahab*), which was recorded by ten, twenty or thirty thousand traditionists; narrating the Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) and Faith (*Īmān*) traditions by more than ninety transmitters in tens of their reliable books; the amazing position and discourse of the great Sunnī scholars in confirming the contexts and the chains of these traditions give rise to this question why the collectors of the books on the Holy Prophet's traditions (*Ṣiḥāḥ*) ignored this important tradition. What were their reasons for eliminating these traditions and why they did not refer to them in their books? What was the reason of this duality between the Sunnī scholars of Neyshābūr and the collectors of the Sunnī canonical books concerning traditions narrated by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)?

Three: other golden chain traditions

So far we have narrated two traditions: Fortress (*Ḥiṣn*) and Faith (*Īmān*) known as Golden Chain traditions (*Ḥadīth Silsilat al-*

¹ *Ibid*, vol. 15, p. 372

² *Ibid*, vol. 15, pp. 281-282

Dhahab). Here we will discuss other Golden traditions (*Silsilat al-Dhahab*), which Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) narrated from his sublime ancestors and the Sunnī traditionists included them in their books on Holy Prophet's traditions (*Kutub al-Ḥadīth*)

١. ما من قوم كانت لهم مشورة فحضر معهم من اسمه أحمد أو محمد فشاوره الا خير لهم.^١

Ibn Najjār Baghdādī Shāfi'ī (d. 643/1245) narrated through his chains from 'Abd Allah b. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal from his father from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, "Every group who is engaged in counseling and there is someone named Aḥmad or Muḥammad among them, Allah will destine them good and prosperity."

٢. يقول الله، تبارك و تعالي، يابن آدم! ما انصفتني، اتحب اليك بالنعمة و تنقمت اليّ بالمعاصي. خيري عليك منزل و شرك اليّ صاعد و لا يزال ملك كريم يعطني عنك كل يوم و ليلة بعمل قبيح. يابن آدم! لو سمعت وصفك من غيرك و انت لا تدري من الموصوف لسارعت الي مقته.^٢

Ibn Najjār Baghdādī Shāfi'ī narrated through his own chains (*isnāds*) from Yūsuf b. 'Abd Allah Ghāzī from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, "Allah, the Exalted, addressing the Children of Adam says you did not deal with Me fairly. I befriended you by sending down my favour and you got my wrath by your sins. I sent down My favour upon you and you ascended your evil to the heaven and the angels submit Me your errors every day and night. O Child of Adam! If you hear the report of your sins and you do not know who had committed them, you

¹ Ibn Najjār Baghdādī (Shāfi'ī), Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Ḥasan (d. 643/1245), *Dhayl Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 1st print, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1417, vol. 19, P. 135

² *Ibid*, 136; Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 4

would soon get angry.”

٣. من عامل الناس فلم يظلمهم و حدثهم فلم يكذبهم، و وعدهم فلم يخلفهم، فهو من كملت مروءته و ظهرت عدالته و وجبت اخوته و حرمت غيبته.^١

Muḥammad b. Salāma Quḍā'ī Shāfi'ī (d. 454/1062) narrated through his chains from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, "Whoever deals with people and do not oppress them, speaks to them and do not lie them, and promises them and fulfills his promise is among those who have completed manliness and proved their justice; his brotherhood is incumbent upon people and his backbiting is forbidden."

Some other golden chain traditions

١. رأس العقل بعد الدين التودد إلي الناس و إصطناع الخير إلي كل برٍّ و فاجر.^٢

Bayhaqī Shāfi'ī (d. 458/1065) narrated through his chains from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, "The basis of wisdom, after faith, is expressing love to people and wishing blessing for all people, whether good or bad."

٢. اشدّ الاعمال ثلاثة إعطاء الحقّ من نفسك و ذكر الله علي كلّ حالٍ و مواساة الأخ في

المال^٣

Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī Shāfi'ī (d. 430/1038) narrated through his chains from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who

¹ Concerning this tradition Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī says, "It is a wonderful tradition thus I do not narrate it without its chains." see *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol.

2, P. 428, of course the phrase "والمحب له" is not seen in this source, but it is narrated in Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 428

² Bayhaqī Shāfi'ī, *Shu'ab al-Īmān*, vol. 6, P. 256, Ḥ 8062

³ Abū Nu'aym Iṣfahānī, *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 1 P. 85

said, “The hardest deeds are three: accepting justice concerning you, remembering Allah in all moments and aiding your brother with his financial needs.”

٣. العلم خزائن و مفتاحها السؤال فاسألوا، يرحمكم الله، فإنه يؤجر فيه أربعة: السائل و المعلم والمستمع و المجيب لهم و المحب له.^١

Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī narrated through his chains from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Knowledge is a treasury and its key is question, so, Allah blesses those who ask questions, since Allah rewards four groups: the inquirer, the instructor, the audience, the responder and one who loves questioning.”

٤. لا يزال الشيطان ذعراً من المؤمن ما حافظ علي الصلوات الخمس، فإذا ضيَّعن تجرّاً عليه و أوقعه في العظام.^٢

Dā‘ūd b. Sulaymān narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Satan is always afraid of a believer who is watchful upon his five daily prayers, but when he spoils his prayers, Satan overcomes him and traps him in the net of great sins.”

٥. خير الأعمال عند الله تعالى إيمان لا شكّ فيه و غزو لا غلول فيه..^٣

Dā‘ūd b. Sulaymān narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu‘minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet

¹ Concerning this tradition Abū Nu‘aym Iṣfahānī says, “It is a wonderful tradition, thus I do not narrate it without its chains.” see *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2, P. 1, 428, of course the phrase “and his lover له و المحب” is not seen in this source, but it is narrated in Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 428.

² Rāfi‘ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 125

³ *Ibid*, 216; this tradition is also narrated from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), see Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), *Musnad Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, Dār Ṣādir Beirut, n.d., vol. 3, 258

(S.A.W.A.) who said, “The best acts before Allah are a faith that there is no doubt in it and a holy war (*jihad*) that there is no treason in it.”

٦. من مرّ علي المقابر فقرأ فيها إحدى عشر مرة قل هو الله أحد، ثم وهب أجره للأموات أعطي من الأجر بعدد الأموات.^١

Dā'ūd b. Sulaymān narrated from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Whoever passes through a cemetery and recites “Say: 'He is Allah, the One...,” (*Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*) eleven times, and dedicates its reward to the dead, Allah rewards him as the number of the dead buried there.”

٧. تعلموا من أنسابكم ما تصلون به أرحامكم، فإنّ صلة الرحم منسأة في الأجل مشرأة للمال مرضاة للربّ تعالى.^٢

'Alī b. Ḥamza 'Alawī narrated from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Recognize your lineage and family in order to keep ties of kinship intact. Since keeping the ties of relationship postpones the death, increases the wealth, and gladdens Allah the Exalted.”

٨. من حفّظ علي أمتي أربعين حديثاً ينتفعون بها، بعته الله يوم القيامة فقيهاً عالماً.^٣

Aḥmad b. 'Āmir Ṭā'ī narrated from 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Whoever preserves forty traditions for my community to avail from, Allah will associate him on the Day of Judgment as a learned and a jurist (*faqīh*).

¹ Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 2, P. 125

² Khaṭīb Baghdādī (Shāfi'ī), Aḥmad b. 'Alī (d. 463/1071), *Mawḍiḥ Awhām al-Jam' wa al-Tafriq*, 1st print, Dār al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1407, vol. 2, P. 454

³ Wāsi'ī, *Musnad al-Imam Zayd*, 443; Abū al-Faraj b. Jawzī (Ḥanbalī), (d. 597/1201), *al-'Ilal al-Mutanāhiya fī al-Aḥādīth al-Wahiya*, 1st print, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1403, vol. 1, p. 119

٩. «مَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِحَوْضِي فَلَا أُوْرِدُهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى حَوْضِي، وَ مَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِشَفَاعَتِي فَلَا أَنَالَهُ اللهُ شَفَاعَتِي.» ثم قال «إِنَّمَا شَفَاعَتِي لِأَهْلِ الْكِبَائِرِ مِنْ أُمَّتِي، فَأَمَّا الْمُحْسِنُونَ فَمَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ.»^١

Shablanjī in a disconnected tradition (*mursal*) narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Whoever does not believe in my Heavenly Waters (*Hawḍ-i-Kawthar*), will not enter it in the Day of Judgment, and whoever does not believe in my intercession he will not receive it. Then he said, “My intercession is only for the sinners of my community, and the good-doers and righteous do not need it.”

١٠. لا يكون إلي يوم القيمة مؤمن إلا و له جارٌ يؤذيه.^٢

Shablanjī in a disconnected tradition (*mursal*) narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Up to the Day of Judgment, there is no believer, but that he has a neighbor who troubles him.

١١. الشيب في مقدّم الرأس يُمن، و في العارضين سخاء و في الذوائب شجاعة و في الفقاء شؤم.^٣

Shablanjī in a disconnected tradition (*mursal*) narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “White hair in front of the head is a sign of auspiciousness, on the two sides of the head a sight of munificence, on the forelock a sight of bravery and on the back of the head a sight of inauspiciousness.⁴

١٢. لَمَّا أُسْرِي بِي إِلَى السَّمَاءِ رَأَيْتُ رَحِمًا مَعْلَقَةً فِي الْعَرْشِ تَشْكُو رَحِمًا إِلَى رَبِّهَا

¹ Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 237

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

أنها قاطعة لها، قلت: كم بينك و بينها من أب؟ قالت: تلتقي في أربعين أباً.^١

Shablanjī in a disconnected tradition (*mursal*) narrated from ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from his ancestors from Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, “As I was ascended to the Heaven I saw a womb (relative) hanging from the Celestial Throne who was complaining to Allah of his relative who had broken off the ties of relationship. I asked how far between him and his relatives were. He replied that they reach each other in the fortieth father.

Another unanswered question

As we said before, in “the chapter on Imam’s Personality”, the prominent Sunnī scholars have reported outstanding accounts about the knowledgeable personality of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and they have described his high and magnificent position clearly. The only way of availing Imam’s vast knowledge is transmitting the traditions narrated from the Holy Imam (A.S.) from his sublime and grand forefathers. The complete works of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is collected by his close companions in a book named *Ṣaḥīfa al-Riḍā* or *Muṣḥaf al-Riḍā* so that people can gain Imam’s knowledge. Some scholars like Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī, ‘Alī b. Ṣadaqa Riḡqī, Dā’ūd b. Sulaymān Jurjānī, Aḥmad b. ‘Āmir Ṭā’ī, Ḥasan b. Faḍl b. ‘Abbās and tens other scholars whose names are recorded in different books, but the Sunnī critics have weakened them unjustly and invalidated their accounts and unfairly narrated the *Ṣaḥīfa* or *Muṣḥaf* from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).² Now the question arises is that on one hand the Sunnī scholars admire Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and dignify his great personality, but on the other hand they obstruct in attaining his knowledge by weakening and invalidating his traditions. What is the reason for this dual approach?

¹ *Ibid*

² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 2, p. 106; idem, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* vol. 8 P. 457

Chapter four: Imamate

The meaning of the term Imam

Imam and Imamate are sacred terms in Shī'a culture. They have a holy meaning and they remind the Shī'a of their twelve immaculate Imams appointed by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and they bore the standard of Imamate and the leadership of the community one after another. This term has a general and a special meaning which we refer to them.

A. General meaning

The meaning of this term is completely different from the Shī'a and Sunnī points of view. If some Sunnī scholars use the term Imam for Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) or other Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) we should not suppose that by this term they mean the same as Shī'a understand from it, unless it is supported by some proofs according to Shī'a beliefs.

The meaning of the term Imam in the Sunnī saying

Reviewing the Sunnī accounts about Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) we come upon phrases in which the term "Imam" is used for Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Some of them have used it according to their views and some other have used it for coming to terms with the Shī'a, and they have called him as "The eighth Imam" and some recounted his trusteeship (*wiṣāya*) and his guardianship (*wilāya*) which we will refer to them.

The first Sunnī scholar who apparently used the term "Imam" for Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 346/957).¹ Accurately it does not mean the Sunnī scholars before the fourth century did not call him "Imam" in its general meaning, but it means that the use of the term "Imam" for Imam Riḍā (A.S.) in the

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī (d. 346/957), *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya li 'l-Imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*, Manshūrāt al-Raḍī, Qum n.d, P. 170

Sunnī sources is reported in the fourth century.

Later, especially in the seventh, eighth and tenth centuries, some other Sunnī scholars used this word for Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.), including Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī Shāfi'ī (d. 606/1209),¹ Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī Ḥanbalī (d. 620/1223),² Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī Shāfi'ī (d. 623/1226),³ Muḥyī al-Dīn b. 'Arabī Shāfi'ī (d. 638/1240),⁴ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254),⁵ Sibṭ b. Jawzī Ḥanafī (d. 654/1257),⁶ Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī Shāfi'ī (d. 656/1258),⁷ Ganjī Shāfi'ī (d. 658/1259),⁸ Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī (d. 660/1261),⁹ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī (d. 681/1282),¹⁰ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 722/1322),¹¹ Abū al-Fidā' Damashqī Shāfi'ī (d. 732/1331),¹² Dhahabī Shāfi'ī (d. 748/1347),¹³ Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī (d. 749/1348),¹⁴ Ṣafadī Shāfi'ī (d. 764/1362),¹⁵ Yāfi'ī Shāfi'ī (d. 768/1366),¹⁶ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī (d. 822/1419),¹⁷ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451),¹⁸ Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī Ḥanafī (d. 874/1469),¹ 'Abd

¹ Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, *al-Shajarat al-Mubāraka*, P. 77

² Ibn Qudāma Maqdisī, *al-Tabyīn fī Ansāb al-Qurayshīyīn*, P. 133

³ Rāfi'ī Qazwīnī, *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwīn*, vol. 3, P. 425

⁴ *Kitāb al-Manāqib* printed at the end of Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 296 cited in Mar'ashī Najafī, *Mulḥaqqāt lḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 28, P. 657

⁵ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, P. 295

⁶ Sibṭ b. Jawzī, *Tadhkirat al-Khawaṣṣ*, P. 321

⁷ Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd Mu'tazilī, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, vol. 2, P. 254

⁸ Ganjī Shāfi'ī (d. 658/1259), *Kifāyat al-Ṭālib*, pp. 457-458

⁹ Mawṣilī Shāfi'ī, *al-Na'im al-Muqīm*, P. 377

¹⁰ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3, pp. 269, 270

¹¹ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 187

¹² Abū al-Fidā' Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 2, P. 24

¹³ Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, P. 387; idem, *al-'Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, vol. 1, P. 266; idem, *Ta'rīkh al-Islam wa Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wa al-A'lām*, P. 270

¹⁴ Ibn Wardī Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī, *Tatimma al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 1, P. 32

¹⁵ Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 251

¹⁶ Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

¹⁷ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 165

¹⁸ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 234

al-Raḥmān Jāmī Ḥanafī (d. 898/1942),² Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī (d. 903/1497),³ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520),⁴ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 942/1535),⁵ Ibn Ṭulūn Damashqī Ḥanafī (d. 953/1546),⁶ Diyār Bakrī Shāfi'ī (d. 966/1558),⁷ Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī Shāfi'ī (d. 974/1566),⁸ Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610),⁹ Ibn al-'Imād Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1676),¹⁰ Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī (d. 1172/1758),¹¹ Bahādūr Khān Hindi Ḥanafī (13th/19th century),¹² Shablanjī Shāfi'ī (d. 1298/1880),¹³ Sanhūtī Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī (1334/1925),¹⁴ Nabhānī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931),¹⁵ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931),¹⁶ Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī (d. 1373/1954),¹⁷ 'Abd al-Muta'āl Ṣa'īdī Shāfi'ī (d. 1377/1957),¹⁸ Ziriklī Damashqī (d. 1396/1976),¹⁹ Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi'ī (d. 1412/1991),²⁰ Dr. 'Abd al-Salām Tarmānīnī,²¹ Hādī Ḥamuw Shāfi'ī,²² Bāqir Amīnward,¹ Muḥammad Amīn Ḍannāwī.²

¹ Ibn Taghrī-birdī Atābakī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 2, P. 219

² 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 380-382

³ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 4

⁴ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Mihmān-Nāmi Bukhārā*, P. 336 Idem, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 223

⁵ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 81

⁶ Ibn Ṭulūn Damashqī Ḥanafī, *A'imma al-Ithnā 'Ashar*, al-, P. 97

⁷ Diyār Bakrī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh al-Khamīs*, vol. 2. P. 335

⁸ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 593

⁹ Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114

¹⁰ Ibn al-'Imād Ḥanbalī, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab* vol. 3, p. 14

¹¹ Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 312

¹² Bahādūr Khān Hindi Ḥanafī, *Ta'rikh al-Aḥmadī*, P. 342

¹³ Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Absār*, P. 232

¹⁴ Sanhūtī Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī, *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyya*, P. 39

¹⁵ Nabhānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 311

¹⁶ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārikh Āl Muḥammad*, P. 157

¹⁷ Farīd Wajdī, *Dā'irat al-mu'ārif al-qarn al-'ishrīn (the Encyclopedia of the twentieth century)*, vol. 4, P. 251

¹⁸ Ṣa'īdī Shāfi'ī, *al-Mujaddidūn fī al-Islām*, pp. 69 and 77

¹⁹ Ziriklī Damashqī, *A'lām*, al-, vol. 5, P. 36

²⁰ Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭāhir Hāshimī Shāfi'ī *Manāqib Ahl Bayt*, P. 202

²¹ Tarmānīnī, 'Abd al-Salām, *Aḥdāth al-Ta'rikh al-Islāmī*, vol. 6, P. 1169

²² Hādī Ḥamuw Shāfi'ī, *Aḍwā' alā al-Shī'a*, P. 134

B. Special meaning

As we said before, each writer took into consideration a special aspect of Imam al-Riḍā's personality, for example his knowledge, his piety and so on and considering according to that dimension used the term "Imam" for him, while, some Sunnī scholars used it according to Shī'a dogma. They courageously presented him as the eighth Imam and explained the reasons for his trusteeship (*wiṣāya*) and his guardianship (*wilāya*) in detail.

The texts (*naṣṣes*) denoting Imam Riḍā's Imamate

Among the Sunnī scholars only Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī and Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī narrated it in details about the Imamate of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā did it in brief. Qādī Bahjat Afandī also narrated it explicitly, but without explaining the reasons for his trusteeship (*wiṣāya*).

Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī explicitly describes the traditions and the reasons for the Imamate of the twelve Shī'a Imams including Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).³

Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī narrated three traditions concerning Imam al-Riḍā's Imamate.

First. One of the learned and the pious who narrated this tradition is Dā'ūd b. Kathīr Riqqī. He says, "I told Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) 'May I be thy ransom' I am old and longstanding, help me and save me from the Hell Fire. Who is our leader (Imam) after you?' Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) pointed to his son Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said he is your Imam after me."⁴

Second. Makhzūmī who was a close relative of Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.), and his mother was a descendant of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, says, "Once Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) summoned us and addressed us, 'Do

¹ Amīnward Shāfi'ī, Bāqir, *Mu'jam 'Ulamā' al-'Arab*, vol. 1, P. 153

² Ya'qūbī, *al-Buldān*, ed. Muḥammad Amīn Ḍannāwī, footnote P. 93

³ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, P. 170, assuming that 'Alī b. Ḥusayn Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī the author of *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar, al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*, is also the author of *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*.

⁴ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 243

you know why I have gathered you round?’ We answered no. Imam (A.S.) pointing to his son ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, testify that my son (‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā) is my trustee and the executor of my affairs after me. Whoever is a credited to me, he can take it from this son and whoever wants to meet me, he can do it by his permission.”¹

Third. Ziyād b. Marwān says, “Once I visited Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), and his son ‘Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) was with him. He told me, Ziyād! This is my son ‘Alī. His order is my order, his speech is my speech and his tidings are my tidings. Whatever he says would be a proof.”²

It is worth mentioning that Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī narrates this tradition from Shaykh al-Mufīd.³ He points out that all the transmitters were pious and learned. We can assume that he approves the narration and even the acceptability of these types of traditions and it is also worth pondering.

Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī narrates from Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) that he said, “My son ‘Alī is my eldest son, and the most heedful and the most obedient among my children. Whoever follows him would be guided.”⁴

Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī taking into consideration these traditions says, “After Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), his elder son Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was Imam according to his testament.”⁵

Conclusion

We conclude from what was said before that the term “Imam” and its use for Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) by the Sunnī scholars does not refer to his administratorship and his Imamate, but it may have two explanations.

¹ *Ibid*, P. 244

² *Ibid*

³ Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022), *al-Irshād fī Ma’rifat Hujaj Allāh ‘alā al-‘Ibād*, 1st print, Mu’assasat Āl al-Bayt, Qum, 1413, P. 248

⁴ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 166

⁵ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, P. 157

130 Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.) in the Sunnī traditions

- A. It refers to dimensions of Imam Personality such as his deep knowledge of religious jurisprudence and gnosis, that he is distinguished and the most eminent from the Sunnī points of view, so they use the term “Imam” for him.
- B. It means trusteeship (*wiṣāya*) and guardianship (*wilāya*), as narrated from the Shī‘a points of view.
- C. Thus its use by the Sunnī scholars is relative and we cannot conclude that they were Shī‘a by using these terms in their works

Chapter Five: The heir apparent to Ma'mūn

Among the very important and tumultuous events of the history of Islam is the incident of transferring the caliphate and finally the state of heir apparent to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), which Ma'mūn wanted to do it superficially. It was an unpredicted action. It caused turmoil in that age and in the ages later on, and it is a matter of dispute and different discussions at present time. Ma'mūn was the heir of the Abbasid caliphate. The main policy of this dynasty was clash with the descendants of 'Alī (A.S.) and annihilating them since it captured power, if it was not crueller than the Umayyad, it was not less cruel than them. Its policy towards Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and the descendants of 'Alī (A.S.) was a continuation of the Umayyad strategy. Maṣūm the Abbasid caliph had an inhumanely and irreligious position toward the descendants of 'Alī (A.S.). He would torture and martyr them cruelly.

Hārūn al-Rashīd's crimes are unforgettable. Ma'mūn was brought up in a family full of enmity and hatred toward the Alid. The government had employed every social, economic, cultural, and political mean to annihilate the Alid, and Ma'mūn was the offspring of such a family. He was expected to continue his predecessor's inhumane policy. Then suddenly things turned out the other way and contrary to his forefathers Ma'mūn behaved courteously toward the Alid. So he summoned Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) from Madina to Marw (Khurāsān). At first he proposed him to accept caliphate, but he refused it, so he imposed his heir apparent on Imam and he changed the black standard of the Abbasid to the green standard of the Alid. He minted coins in Imam al-Riḍā's name and married him his daughter.

Ma'mūn's behaviour was surprising for both the Abbasid and the Alid and a new political arena was introduced by this unexpected action. There remain many questions in this field, for example why did Ma'mūn put kind behaviour toward 'Alī's

descendant in his agenda? Why did he propose the position of caliphate to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)? Who recommended the position of caliphate or heir apparent to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Ma'mūn or Faḍl b. Sahl? Did they propose it sincerely; did truly they want to restore caliphate to the Alid or did they pursue other political aims? Why did they impose on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) the position of heir apparent? What was the reason for the moderate conducts of Ma'mūn toward the Alid? And there are also many other questions. The origins of these questions return to three problems.

A. Did Ma'mūn or Faḍl b. Sahl offer this proposal?

B. If Ma'mūn offered this plan, was he sincere in his proposal and did he truly want to restore caliphate to the Alid or it was only a deceit and Ma'mūn pursued other aims?

C. What was Imam's reaction toward this proposal?

We are going to answer these questions in this chapter, since answering them can explain the relations between the Abbasid caliphs; and Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) generally and Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) specifically. It can clarify whether their relations were one-sided or mutual; or were they friendly or Ma'mūn followed other objectives

First question: Did Ma'mūn or Faḍl b. Sahl offer this proposal to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

It is known that Ma'mūn offered this proposal to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), but some people believe that Faḍl b. Sahl did it. When Ma'mūn subdued Baghdad and killed his brother Amīn, Faḍl b. Sahl, Ma'mūn's vizier, appointed his brother Ḥasan b. Sahl to the governor of Baghdad. On the other hand as he was not of the Arab origin, the Kūfan and the Baghdadi emirs did not accept his rule and they agreed on 'Alawī authorities. They started supporting the Alid to rebel against Ma'mūn and the Abbasid caliphate, and the country was in complete chaos and disorder because of insurrections. Faḍl b. Sahl advised Ma'mūn since the Alid longed to caliphate and the Arabs supporting them, it was better to propose an eminent Alid, who was the noblest and the most superior of

them and all of the Alid agreed on him, as the caliph so that those rebellions would cease. Ma'mun accepted it and finally they decided to appoint Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to that post.¹ Some points have to be clarified to answer this issue.

1 Ma'mun was an alert, clever, cunning and deceitful man and he was also decisive in making his decisions.

2 Faḍl b. Sahl also was known as a clever and cunning person and special adviser of Caliph Ma'mun.

Considering these two facts those who conclude that Faḍl b. Sahl offered this proposal probably are not aware of Ma'mun's cleverness and intelligence and they believe that Faḍl was the manager of the government, while it was not so. However if Faḍl had initiated, it would not have changed the fact, since Ma'mun set forth the idea, and Faḍl at most was an advisor and a consultant to Ma'mun. In view of Ma'mun's cleverness and shrewdness, he could not have accepted this proposal without bearing in mind his plans and aims. Ma'mun reviewed all sides of this suggestion and with the awareness of confronting with the dangers from the Abbasids Then he accepted it. So it was not reasonable for Ma'mun to depend on Faḍl's viewpoints and follow him. On the other hand if Faḍl had been the initiator of this idea; he would have been reprimanded after this plan was aborted. However chronicles have never reported such an event. Thus it can be ascertained that Ma'mun himself decided to do it and Faḍl at most might be an advisor.

Second question: If Ma'mun offered this plan, was he sincere in his proposal?

As we said before Ma'mun first offered caliphate to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) but then he forced him to be his heir apparent the case is whether he was sincere in his proposal and he truly wanted to

¹ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, pp. 232-223; see also Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī, *Ḍuḥī al-Islām*, vol. 3, P. 295; Jurjī Zaydān, *Ta'rikh Tammadun Islam*, translated [into Persian] by 'Alī Jawāhir Kalām, 7th print, Amīr Kabīr, Tehran, 1372 sh, vol. 4, P. 797

restore caliphate to the Alid or it was only a deceit and Ma'mūn pursued other aims? To answer this important question we should find out the motives of Ma'mūn for this suggestion. We will first revise the scholars' opinions about it and we will explain our view at the end.

The scholars' views about Ma'mūn's motives

At a glance we can divide the scholars' views into three types. Those who supposed:

A. Ma'mūn was true in his suggestion and there were no politics or deceptions in his offer.

B. Ma'mūn was not sincere in his action and followed other objects.

C. Ma'mūn was sincere at first, but later he changed his mind and martyred Imam (A.S.).

A. Those who supposed that Ma'mūn was true in his suggestion and they reported some motives denoting his sincerity, which we refer to them:

1 Ṭabarī, Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, and others say, "Ma'mūn studied the progenies of Abbas and 'Alī (A.S.) and he found no one more learned, more virtuous and more eminent than Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)."¹

2 Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī says, "During his conflict with his brother Amīn, Ma'mūn swore an oath to Allah if he could overthrow his brother Amīn, he would entrust caliphate to the best among the Alid, and 'Alī b. Musā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was the best of them."²

3 Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī says, "Ma'mūn, because of his extremism in

¹ Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 5, P. 138; the flesh of the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn i; Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb Miskwayh, *Tajārib al-Umam*, vol. 3, P. 366; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, in, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'riḫ*, vol. 4, P. 162; Ibn al-'Ibrī, *Ta'riḫ Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal*, P. 134; Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10; Ibn Kathīr Damashqī Shāfi'ī, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, P. 258; Qalqashandī Shāfi'ī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma'ālim al-Khalāfa*, P. 304; Idem, *Ṣubḥi al-A'shā fī Ṣanā'at al-Inshā'*, vol. 9, P. 366

² Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, P. 357

Shi'ism,¹ forced Imam (A.S.) to accept the position of heir apparent, he also wanted to resign from caliphate and bestow it to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).”²

4 Ibn Ṭiqṭaqā says, “Ma'mūn pondered over the caliphate after him. He wanted to choose someone who would be worthy of it and he would be responsible to Allah. He studied the progenies of Abbas and 'Alī (A.S.) and he found no one more learned, more virtuous and more excellent than 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.).”³

5 Dr. Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī says, “By this deed, Ma'mūn wanted to achieve reconciliation between the Abbasid and the Alid and change their rift to unity and suppress the revolt to help him in what is right and correct. He as a Mu'tazilī knew the right and the superiority of 'Alī (A.S.) and his progeny for caliphate. He also under the influence of Faḍl b. Sahl and his brother Ḥasan b. Sahl, the children of an Iranian named Sahl learned that if the Alid did not accept caliphate they would retain an aura of holiness, but if they took over the reins of caliphate their faults would be exposed to people's sight and their good and bad deeds would be obvious to them, and they would lose their holiness. I think Ma'mūn did it for benevolence and kindness.”⁴

B. Those who believe that Ma'mūn was not sincere in his suggestion and followed other objects.

1 Dr. 'Alī Sāmī Bashshār says, “Ma'mūn was completely aware of the dangers of Ismaili Da'wat, thus he wanted to annihilate them. Imam 'Abd Allah al-Raḍī had initiated a far-reaching activity so Ma'mūn approached Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and swore allegiance to him as his heir apparent.”⁵

2 Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī says, “Ma'mūn made him his heir apparent because he wanted to unite people against the Abbasid

¹ By the term Shi'ism he means the use of it by the Sunnī, See Chapter 3, tradition, (Abā Ṣalt's sect affiliation).

² Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī, Jalāl al-Dīn, *Ta'rikh al-Khulafā'*, P. 327

³ Ibn Ṭiqṭaqā, *al-Fakhrī*, P. 214

⁴ Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī, *Ḍuḥī al-Islām*, vol. 3, P. 295

⁵ 'Alī Sāmī Nashshār (other), *Nash'at al-Fikr al-Islāmī al-Falsaphī fī al-Islām*, 4th print, Dār al-Ma'ārif Alexandria, 1969, vol. 2, P. 391

who fought against him and supported his brother Amin.”¹

3 Sayyid Hāshim Ma‘rūf Ḥusaynī says, “Ma‘mūn put Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) under his control and prevented him from inciting new rebellion with the help of the Alid. Imam (A.S.) was discontent with his position as the heir apparent.”²

4 Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Muẓaffar, says, “Ma‘mūn’s motive for swearing allegiance with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent was a political decision and for the interest of the Abbasid rule, because he was a clever and a shrewd politician.”³

5 Sayyid Ja‘far Murtaḍā ‘Āmilī says, “We may doubt in everything, but we do not doubt that Ma‘mūn was aware of his time conditions and of what might happen and the aftermath of them, and of the matters that the fallacious writers have hidden from us, though he could achieve all them.”⁴

C. Those who believe that Ma‘mūn was sincere at first, but later he changed his mind and martyred Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)...Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī confirms this probability and says, “Some believe that Ma‘mūn was a shrewd person and he himself desired to return caliphate from the Abbasid to the Alid. He did not aim dishonesty and deceit, but he intended to restore the right and to deliver trusts back to their owners. However after appointing Imam (A.S.) as his heir apparent the Abbasid called Ma‘mūn a bastard and they revolted against him, but as he saw the situation transformed he purchased the present life at the price of the world to come and he poisoned Imam.”⁵

¹ Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī, *al-Ṣilat bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū‘*, vol. 1, P. 236

² Sayyid Hāshim Ma‘rūf Ḥusaynī, *Aqīdat al-Imamiyya*, Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnānī, Beirut, 1376, P. 161

³ Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Muẓaffar, *Ta’rīkh al-Shī‘a*, 2nd print, Dār al-Zahrā’, Beirut, 1408, pp. 59 and 60

⁴ Sayyid Ja‘far Murtaḍā ‘Āmilī, *al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya li ‘l-Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, 3rd print, Mu’assasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, Qum, 1416, P. 253

⁵ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, pp. 234-235; see also Muṭahharī, Murtaḍā (martyr 1399/1979), *Majmū‘a Āthār*, vol. 8, Intishārāt Ṣadrā, Tehran, 1420, vol. 18, P. 119

Analysis

In this writing we believe that all the aims mentioned are true in some way, but they cannot represent the fact alone. In other words it is true that Ma'mūn, as he himself and his companions have confessed, was not sincere in his suggestion and followed other aims, and we can prove it from the authentic Sunnī sources. What is completely true and the Sunnī sources have referred to it is as follow:

- A. We cannot believe the sincerity of Ma'mūn, a shrewd politician, when he proposed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) the state of heir apparent. It is naïve to think Ma'mūn was honest in his offer.
- B. The main aim of Ma'mūn was to purge Imam (A.S.) from the political and the social scenes of the community.
- C. Other minor aims were under Ma'mūn's consideration to deceive and divert the public opinion.
- D. Even at that time the Abbasid and the Alid viewed Ma'mūn's proposal doubtfully. So it is necessary to explain some points to clarify its dimensions.

The four points

First: who was Ma'mūn?

Ma'mūn was born on 15 Rabī' I, 170/14 September 786, the day of the accession of his father Hārūn al-Rashīd as the Abbasid caliph. When he heard this good news, he called the newly-born child, Ma'mūn that is "a good omen". His mother, Marājil, was an Iranian slave girl. She worked in the kitchen of Hārūn's palace.

Dimyarī Shāfi'ī relating from historians says, "Ma'mūn's mother was one of the ugliest slave girls. One day Hārūn al-Rashīd and his wife Zubayda were playing chess. Finally Zubayda won the game. She obliged Ma'mūn to go in bed with one of the ugliest slave girls in the palace. Hārūn did not accept and offered her the tax of Egypt and Iraq instead of it, but she refused and insisted on her demand. Hārūn al-Rashīd, on his wife's persistence had sex with Marājil and Ma'mūn was born out of this intercourse. Ma'mūn's mother Marājil died soon after his birth and he was

brought up by Yaḥyā b. Jaʿfar Barmakī.”¹

The specialties of Maʾmūn in the Sunnī sayings

1 Dimyarī says, “No one among the Abbasid was more learned than Maʾmūn. He was a scholar with political expertise and cleverness.”²

2 Ibn al-Nadīm says, “He was the most learned caliph in Islamic jurisprudence and theology.”³

3 Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnawarī says, “He was the shining star of the Abbasid in knowledge and wisdom and he availed from all branches of knowledge.”⁴

4 Suyūṭī Shāfiʿī says, “He was the best of the Abbasid in wisdom, cleverness, determination, steadfastness, knowledge, cleverness, awe and bravery.”⁵

5 Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʿAlī (A.S.) foretold, “Woe betides the community for his men! It is a cursed tree whose beginning is fruitful and its end is fruitless. Then a group of people would take over the rein of Muḥammad community (*Ummah*), their first is ... and the seventh of them is the most knowledgeable of them.”⁶

Of course, Maʾmūn is blamed and reproached seriously in Shīʿa reports. He is represented as the killer of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he is called a “tyrant demon”⁷ and an “unbeliever demon.”¹

¹ Dimyarī Shāfiʿī (d. 808/1405), *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān al-Kubrā*, 1st print, Intishārāt Nāṣir Khosrow, Tehran, vol. 1, P. 110,

² *Ibid.* P. 111

³ Ibn al-Nadīm (other) (d. 4th/10th century), *al-Fihrist*, Dār al-Maʿrifa, Beirut, n.d., P. 168

⁴ Abū Ḥanīfa Dīnawarī (other) (d. 283/896), *Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, translated [into Persian] by Maḥmūd Mahdawī Dāmghānī 4th print, Nashr Nay, Tehran, 1371 sh, P. 442

⁵ Suyūṭī Shāfiʿī, Jalāl al-Dīn, *Taʾrīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, P. 326

⁶ Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192), *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, Intishārāt ʿAllāma, Qum, n.d., vol. 2, P. 276

⁷ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991), *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Niʿma*, 1st print, Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, Tehran, 1390 sh, Bāb 28, pp. 308-311, Ḥ 1; idem, *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 1, Bāb 6, pp. 41-45, Ḥ 2; ʿAllāma Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir (d. 1111/1699), *Biḥār al-Anwār li Durar Akhbār al-Aʿimmat al-Aṭḥār*, 2nd print, Muʾassasat al-Wafāʾ, Beirut, 1403, vol. 36, pp. 195-197

Second: the unstable position of Ma'mun in the Abbasid sight

As we said before Ma'mun was the product of Hārūn al-Rashīd illicit relation with Marājil and it was an excuse for the Abbasid to debase Ma'mun, as Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī says, "The Abbasid called him bastard."² On the other hand Amīn's mother, Zubayda was an Arab, while Marājil was a non-Arab Iranian. These two factors: the Arabian origin of Amīn's mother and the non-Arabian and concubine origin of Ma'mun's mother was an excuse for debasing and satirizing Ma'mun and his incapability for the post of caliphate.

Suyūṭī says, "When Amīn learned that Ma'mun mentions Amīn's faults in detail, he, in a poem, addressing his brother blamed him for his mother. Ṣūlī composed and quoted it thus:

"When men fight for their virtues and qualities you should stay at home since you are not the man of the battlefield. Your Lord granted you what you wanted. The only exception is your mother, Marājil. You go up the pulpits and you wish something that you would never achieve it after me. You find fault with someone who is superior to you for his merits and abilities. You repeat a false claim against me."³

Thus the Abbasid first swore allegiance to Amīn and when he was killed they were forced to pledge allegiance to Ma'mun. The process of Imam al-Riḍā's position as an heir apparent created an excuse for the Abbasid to swear allegiance to Ibrāhīm b. Mahdī, Ma'mun's uncle secretly.⁴ All these reports show Ma'mun's unstable and wavering position among the Abbasid.

Third: The social and political conditions during Ma'mun's time

¹ Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067), *al-Amālī*, 1st print, Dār al-Thiqāfa, Qum, 1414, Majlis 11, pp. 291-292, Ḥ 566; Majlisī, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 36, pp. 202-203

² Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 235; Some other books have narrated that Hārūn al-Rashīd called Ma'mun "the son of a fornicatress" see Fīrūzābādi, *Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, vol. 12, P. 166

³ Suyūṭī Shāfi'ī, Jalāl al-Dīn, *Ta'rikh al-Khulafā'*, pp. 323-324; Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*, P. 302; Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, vol. 2 p. 328; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, vol. 10, P. 182

⁴ Ibn Khallikān Shāfi'ī, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 1, p. 39

After defeating Amīn and Ma'mūn succeeding to caliphate in 198/813, there occurred many armed conflicts, and the Alid revolted with full force; the Abbasid government was about to collapse. In the same year Naṣr b. Shīth 'Uqaylī revolted in Aleppo and dominated the city and its surroundings.¹ There occurred violent clashes between the Yamāniyya and Nizāriyya in Mawṣil which six thousand Nizārīs were killed.² In 199/814, Banī Usāma and Banī Tha'laba clashed with each other.³ In the same year a full-fledged revolution began in Iraq led by the Alid; Abū al-Sarāyā (Serrī b. Maṣṣūr Shaybānī) under the leadership of Ibn Ṭabāṭabā (Abū 'Abd Allah Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'il b. Ḥasan b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib). He minted coins in Kūfa and he had his army advanced towards Baṣra, Wāsiṭ and the surrounding cities. He carried out assaults on different fronts. The Baṣra front was commanded by 'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. 'Īsā Ja'farī; Makka front by Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan Aftas; Yemen front by Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā b. Ja'far; Fārs front by Ismā'il b. Mūsā b. Ja'far; Ahwāz front by Zayd b. Mūsā b. Ja'far and Madā'in front was commanded by Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. Dā'ūd b. Ḥasan b. Ḥusayn. These revolutions continued for more than one year and then it was suppressed.⁴ In 200/816 Muḥammad b. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq revolted, but was surrendered sent to Ma'mūn.⁵ In 201/817 there was a great calamity in Baghdad, so as most of its inhabitants left the city because of famine, bondage, destruction and pillage.⁶

Fourth: Concealing secrets in the Abbasid government

Jurjī Zaydān writes, "One of the Abbasid specialties was concealing the secrets and safeguarding intelligence reports very carefully.

¹ Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh*, vol. 4, P. 124

² Sulaymān Ṣā'igh Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rīkh al-Mawṣil*, Maṭba'at al-Salafiyya, 1342, vol. 1, P. 76; Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh*, vol. 4, pp. 146-147

³ Sulaymān Ṣā'igh Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rīkh al-Mawṣil*, vol. 1, P. 76

⁴ Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn, *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh*, vol. 4, pp. 147-151

⁵ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bāb 47 P. 207, Ḥ 8

⁶ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *al-'Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, vol. 1, P. 263

They kept their plans secret and they did not reveal them to anybody, especially when it was concerned about the government affairs or the elites of the country. Maṣṣūr's behaviour toward Abū Muslim Khurāsānī and his own uncles, Hārūn al-Rashīd's attitude toward Barmakid and Ma'mūn's actions against Faḍl b. Sahl, 'Alī b. Mūsā [al-Riḍā] and Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn prove this claim. Keeping the plans as top secret and concealing the mysteries and intelligence reports was one of the reasons for the success of the Abbasid caliphs."¹

Conclusion

- 1 Ma'mūn was political, decisive, foreseeing, consistent and schemer in his decisions
- 2 His position was unstable among the Abbasid
- 3 The situation of the internal unrest and disorders during his time
- 4 Keeping the Abbasid government plans as a top secret

Reviewing a question

Studying these four points, we clearly trace that Ma'mūn was not sincere in his suggestion and he sought other aims. Ma'mūn intended to entrust 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent because:

- 1 He believed that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was the most pious, the most learned and the wisest man during his time.
- 2 He had made a vow to Allah that he would abdicate the caliphate or the position of heir apparent to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) if he defeated Amīn.
- 3 Ma'mūn's belief in Shi'ism made him do so.
- 4 He wanted to solve his worries regarding his successor and fulfill his obligation.
- 5 He wanted to bring peace between the Abbasid and the Alid.

¹ Jurjī Zaydān, *Ta'rīkh Tammadun Islam*, translated by 'Alī Jawāhir Kalām, vol. 4, P. 799

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- 6 He wanted to expose Imam al-Riḍā's faults and mistakes.
- 7 He wanted to suppress the Ismaili movement.
- 8 He wanted to revenge the Abbasid who had humiliated him and supported his rival, Amīn.
- 9 He wanted to subdue the Alid revolutions and to bring peace to the country.
- 10 He wanted to secure the Abbasid political interest.

Answering

Some of the above points presented as Ma'mūn's motives are personal beliefs and they lack historical sources and documents. However we can accept some concepts as Ma'mūn's motives, because he himself stated them.

- 1 Ma'mūn did so because Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was the most pious; the wisest and the wisest man during his time.
- 2 Ma'mūn's vow to Allah for defeating Amīn
- 3 His belief in Shi'ism and his belief in Mu'tazilī school of thought.
- 4 Exposing Imam al-Riḍā's faults and mistakes
- 5 Revenging the Abbasid for their support for Amīn and for humiliating him
- 6 Subduing the Alid revolutions and normalizing the country.

Ma'mūn's main motive

In a passage quoted by Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, Ma'mūn explicitly revealed his motives of the appointment of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and openly explained that his real aim of this suggestion and imposing the heir apparent on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was based on pre-meditated plans and his own special intention. This narrative overshadows all other motives. When the spiritual personality and the miraculous deeds of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) reached their peak at Marw and the Abbasid exerted pressure on Ma'mūn in answer to the opposing groups he explained his real motive and said,

“This man was hidden from us, and was calling people to him. We made him our heir apparent in order that he would call people to us and it would be an invitation towards us. We wanted

to know his opponents and we wanted the kingdom remain for us and his followers would know that he is not as he claims and this affair belongs to us not to him. We were afraid to free him in this situation, so we did what we wanted. We made a mistake in the case of him. We made him renowned and magnificent and we were about to lose our rule by this fault, so we thought that we should not be neglectful of him anymore. We waited to rout him gradually and show people that he is not worthy of being our heir apparent and then we managed to uproot him completely.”¹

This shocking report shows the internal and the real motive of Ma'mūn.

1 Ma'mūn designed only to entrust the position of heir apparent to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), not caliphate.

2 His main motive was to protect his own caliphate and to eliminate Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) his real rival.

3 Ma'mūn proposal of caliphate to Imam (A.S.) was superficially not sincerely.

4 His aim of imposing the heir apparent on Imam was to give legitimacy to his caliphate and to suppress the Alid revolutions by this action.

5 His real policy and aim, like the other Abbasid caliphs before him, was to eliminate Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.), but his method was different from them. He desired to confer on Imam (A.S.), who deserved to be the caliph, the position of heir apparent which was lower than it; draw Imam (A.S.) to political arena and show his weak points to the people.

6 He wanted to have control over Imam's supporters and followers, as Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī refers to it.²

Although Ma'mūn imposed the position of heir apparent on Imam (A.S.), he was wise enough not to be misled by Ma'mūn. In order that Ma'mūn could not realize his political goals, he cleverly accepted it on a condition that he would never meddle in

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 214, Ḥ 490; Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bab 59, P. 239. Ḥ 3

² Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi'ī, *Ḍuḥi al-Islām*, vol. 3, P. 295

governmental and political affairs.

Giving consideration to these points we can say that Ma'mūn was a cunning politician, and concealing the facts was one of the basic characteristic of the Abbasid. He propounded some objects and motives especially concerning the affairs of caliphate to deflect people's thoughts and to keep his real aim that is to eliminate Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), as a secret. Ḥākim Neyshābūrī's report refers to the last phase of Imam al-Riḍā's life that Ma'mūn's policy did not materialize and thus he revealed his secret plans.

Reviewing Ma'mūn's policies toward Imam al-Riḍā (A.S)

- 1 He propounded spiritual motives for entrusting caliphate or at least the position of heir apparent to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).
- 2 He celebrated the event of appointment of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent and awarded gifts and prizes to people.
- 3 He held debate meetings and defended the Alid rights.
- 4 He changed the black colour of the Abbasid standard to green colour of the Alid.
- 5 He minted coins with Imam's name.
- 6 He declared and publicized Imam al-Riḍā's position as his heir apparent throughout the domain of caliphate.
- 7 He married his daughter to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).
- 8 He wept and mourned on Imam's martyrdom.

These demagogical policies of Ma'mūn demonstrate the climax of his political astuteness and the Abbasid strategy and deceit for keeping their schemes and their political aims as a secret for a long time. Thus concerning Ma'mūn's hypocritical policy, Jahshiyārī says, "He killed Faḍl b. Sahl and he wept for his death. Then he executed his murderers. He poisoned and killed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he cried for him. He killed Ṭāhir b. Ḥusayn and put his son in his place. He killed his brother Amīn and accused Faḍl and Ṭāhir for murdering him. These acts are proofs of Ma'mūn's cunning attitudes."¹

¹ Jahshiyārī (other), (d. 331/942), *Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa al-Kuttāb*, Dār al-Fikr al-Ḥadīth, Beirut, 1408, pp. 197-208

Third question: What was Imam's reaction toward this proposal?

Reviewing the situations and events during Imam al-Riḍā's Imamate, we come to know that Ma'mūn, in a pre-planned strategy, confronted Imam (A.S.) in his working agenda.

Ma'mūn invited Imam (A.S.) from Madina to Marw deceitfully and forcefully. At first he proposed to abdicate the caliphate in favour of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); when he resisted this proposal decisively, he offered to appoint Imam (A.S.) as his heir to caliphate. Again Imam (A.S.) refused it. Finally he revealed his secret intention and showed his real face. He imposed the heir apparent on Imam (A.S.) with threat and force. Imam (A.S.) accepted it under duress and with conditions. Sunnī records show that: first, Imam (A.S.) was completely aware of Ma'mūn's ulterior motives for inviting him to Marw and proposing to abdicate the caliphate in favour of Imam (A.S.) and to appoint him as heir to caliphate; second, he consented reluctantly to Ma'mūn's appointment as his heir apparent.

1 Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī says, "...Ma'mūn insisted that Imam (A.S.) should accept the position of heir apparent, but he refused; lastly he swore Imam (A.S.) to accept it and he gave his consent."¹

2 In answer to the covenant Imam (A.S.) says, "al-Jāmi'at and Jafr denote opposite to it. **(and I know not what shall be done with me or with you.²), (the judgment is Allah's alone. He relates the truth and He is the Best of deciders.³),** but I accepted Ma'mūn's order and I preferred his consent to mine; and Allah would defend me and him **(and Allah might be a witness to me Allah suffices for a witness.⁴)⁵**

3 At the beginning of the answer to the covenant Imam (A.S.) says, "Praise belongs to Allah, Performer of what He wills. None

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣīyya*, P. 179

² Qur'ān: 46/9

³ Qur'ān: 6/57

⁴ Qur'ān: 4/79

⁵ Qalqashandī Shāfi'ī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma'ālim al-Khalāfa*, pp. 305-306; Idem, *Ṣubḥi al-A'shā fī Ṣanā'at al-Inshā'*, vol. 9, P. 391

repels His judgment. None rejects his creeds. He knows the treachery of the eyes and what the hearts conceal.”¹

4 Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī says that contrary to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Ma’mūn insisted on his offer, but Imam (A.S.) did not accept it. He told Imam (A.S.) if he did not consent to caliphate; at least agree to be heir-apparent; Imam (A.S.) did not agree to it again and said to him, “By Allah, my father narrated me from his forefathers, may Allah be pleased with them, from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) that I will leave this world before you while I am oppressed. The angels in the Heaven and in the earth would weep for me. I would be buried in a distant land.” However Ma’mūn forcefully insisted on his offer and Imam (A.S.) accepted it reluctantly.²

5 Qundūzī Ḥanafī also repeat this statement.³

6 Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi’ī also says, “He was forced to do so. He did not accept at first, but he admitted it later.”⁴

7 When Imam (A.S.) accepted the position of heir apparent, his followers became happy. One of them narrated that as Imam (A.S.) witnessed their happiness, he told them, “Do not engage your hearts to the good appearance of what you see. It will not last long.”⁵

These evidences demonstrate Ma’mūn’s hostile and evil intentions and Imam’s reluctance to accept his proposal.

The Imāmiyya sources have also narrated similar accounts.

1 Shaykh al-Ṣadūq says, “Yāsir narrated, when Imam (A.S.) accepted the position of heir apparent, he raised his hands towards the heaven and said, Oh Allah You know that I was reluctant and constrained 'Do not take me to task as You did take

¹ Qalqashandī Shāfi’ī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khalāfa*, pp. 305-306; Idem, *Ṣubḥi al-A’shā fī Ṣanā’at al-Inshā’*, vol. 9, P. 3

² Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābī’ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 166

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Aḥmad Amīn Miṣrī Shāfi’ī, *Ḍuḥi al-Islām*, vol. 3, P. 294

⁵ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 245; Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 178

Joseph Your servant and Your prophet to task when attained power in Egypt.”¹

2 Muḥammad b. ‘Arafa says, “I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), O, the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), what made you to accept the position of heir apparent? He answered the same that made ‘Alī (A.S.) to accept the member of the Shūrā.”²

3 Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī says, “By Allah Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) did not want to accept this case, but he was taken to Kūfa by force, thence via Baṣra and Fārs to Marw.”³

4 Rayyān b. Ṣalt says, “I told Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) that people say you accepted the position of heir apparent in spite of your abstemious way in the world. He answered “Allah is aware of my reluctance to accept it. I had the option to accept or to be killed. I preferred accepting to be heir apparent rather than being killed.”⁴

5 Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī narrates that Ma'mūn told Imam (A.S.), “By Allah, you should accept the position of heir apparent, or I would oblige you to do so. Otherwise I would kill you.” Thus Imam consented to accept it and Ma'mūn appointed him as his heir apparent in spite of Imam's unwillingness.⁵

Numerous reactions of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in this regard indicate some points:

1 The most important point is to unveil Ma'mūn's real face. He accepted the position of heir apparent conditionally. Thus he

¹ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, P. 525, Majlis 94, Ḥ 13; Majlisī, , *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, P. 130

² Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bāb 40, P. 140, Ḥ 4; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49. P. 140

³ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bāb 40, P. 141, Ḥ 5; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49. P. 140

⁴ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, P. 68, Majlis 17, Ḥ 3; Idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i’*, 1st print, Maktabat al-Ḥaydariyya, Najaf Ashraf, 1385, vol. 1, p. 239; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bāb 40, P. 139, Ḥ 2 and see also Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49. P. 130

⁵ Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, P. 65, Majlis 16, Ḥ 3; Idem, *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i’*, vol. 1, P. 237; idem, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, vol. 2, Bāb 40, P. 139, Ḥ 3 and see also Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49. pp. 128-130

explained to people and to the history that they should not be influenced by Ma'mūn's demagoguery and cunning motives.

² Although under the pressure of Ma'mūn he was forced to accept this position, he admitted it conditionally. This conditional acceptance aborted Ma'mūn's ulterior motives, because according to Juwaynī Shāfi'ī quoting from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, Ma'mūn intended to show to the people Imam's weaknesses in political and social scenes, but Imam's conditions that he would not appoint or dismiss anyone from administrative posts was in opposition to Ma'mūn's aims, and a sign of Imam's wisdom and intelligence.

³ Imam's other deployment against Ma'mūn, for example the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer and its wide and unique acceptance by the people, and other important events made Ma'mūn to react against Imam (A.S.) and expose his real face. On the other hand Imam (A.S.) proved Ma'mūn's hostility towards the Alid and Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) to the people and to the history; and Ma'mūn's other acts such as choosing the green standard, minting coins in honour of Imam (A.S.) and other motives were nothing but plays to deceive the people.

Conclusion

We conclude from what was mentioned that:

A. Ma'mūn's proposal for the appointment of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent did not happen incidentally and by chance and he was not sincere in his offer for abdicating caliphate to the Alid, but he implemented it by a pre-planned and hostile strategy. Thus we cannot say that Ma'mūn was sincere in his motives first, but later he deviated.

B. The suggestion for the position of heir apparent was not really a proposal, but it was sheer compulsion and threat. He threatened Imam (A.S.) to accept the position of heir apparent.

C. Ma'mūn's main motive was to weaken Imam al-Riḍā's influence among people as a caliph and keep him under his control and surveillance. He wanted to legitimize his rule and suppress the Alid revolutions by imposing this position on Imam (A.S.) and explain to people that he is only worthy of being the heir apparent

not the caliph. Thus the other motives of Ma'mun were only for deviation of people's thoughts and deceiving them. They were perpetrated by a deceitful man like Ma'mun.

D. Imam's behaviour towards Ma'mun and his reaction against his wishes, for example refusing to accept caliphate and the position of heir apparent and admitting the latter position conditionally, performing the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer and other events unveiled the real face of Ma'mun and he revealed to everyone the real policy of Ma'mun in confronting the Alid and Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) especially Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and caliph's other actions were only demagogy and deceit.

Thus we cannot call this imposed position of heir apparent as a unity between the Alid and the Abbasid during Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and Ma'mun's era, but it manifests the climax of oppression and forced loneliness perpetrated against the Imam (A.S.).¹

¹ Because of Ma'mun's demagogy and deceit some scholars concerning him say, "His treachery and hypocrisy is unknown to most people. Everyone who studies the related narratives and think over it will understand the reality." Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī (d. 1359/1940), *Safīnat al-Biḥār wa Madīnat al-Hikam wa al-Āthār*, 1st print, Bunyād Pazhūhishhāyi Āstān Quds Raḍawī, Mashhad, 1416, vol. 1 P. 115; idem, *Muntahā al-Āmāl fī Tawārīkh al-Nabī wa Āl*, 9th print, Intishārāt Hijrat, Qum, 1375, vol. 2, P. 512; idem, *Tatimmat al-Muntahā dar Tārīkh Khulafā'*, 1st print, Intishārāt Dalīl Ma, Qum, 1342, P. 350; Namāzī Shāhrūdī, Shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī (d. 1405/1985), *Mustadrakāt 'Ilm Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, 1st print, Isfahan, 1412, vol. 6, P. 340, No, 12132; *al-Ḥayāt al-Siyāsiyya li 'l-Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, P. 243

Chapter six: Imam's charisma

Imam's charisma, which was observed before his birth or during his Imamate especially during his travel from Madina to Marw, denotes his high status and grace; and its narration by the Sunnī scholars is very interesting and wonderful. What you see in this chapter are some of the Imam's charisma and virtues. The confessions of the Sunnī scholars in this regard narrated in their authoritative sources clearly depict Imam's personality and his holy shrine; and it helps to strengthen the Sunnī spiritual bonds with the Imam (A.S.). They would also prevent the Wahhabi sect from causing differences among the Muslims.

It is worth mentioning that the term "charisma" differs from "virtue", but in this writing both terms have the same meaning that is the miraculous and extraordinary deeds which the Sunnī scholars call them "*Karāmat*" and "*Manqabat*" or "charisma" and "virtue".

Sunnī point of view towards Imam's charisma

The Sunnī scholars have confessed and explained in wonderful narrations regarding the esteemed and lofty personality and position of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) which are explained below.

1 Majd al-Dīn b. Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī (d. 606/1209) says, "Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.), known as al-Riḍā, his virtues are innumerable. Allah's blessings be upon him."¹

2 Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī (d. 652/1254) says, "His high characters, noble qualities and good morals are the same of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). His characteristics were Arabic, and his origin was Hāshimī. He was the Holy Prophet's progeny. What you may consider it magnificent is not more magnificent than he is,

¹ Ibn Athīr Jazarī Shāfi'ī, Majd al-Dīn Shāfi'ī, *Tatimma Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*, vol. 2, P. 715

and what you explain of his high characteristics he is higher than it is.¹

3 Juwaynī Shāfi'ī (d. 722/1322) has dedicated a part of his book to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and his virtues and miraculous deeds and he says, "Some laudable features of the eighth Imam ... and some of his admirable qualities and high virtues are brilliant and miraculous."²

4 Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī (d. 768/1366) says, "The generous, the glorious Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Kāzim (A.S.), the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) is a highly esteemed leader, a descendant of benevolent persons, one the twelve Imams of the Twelver Shī'a. The Shī'a ideology is based on his views. He is virtuous and excellent."³

5 'Aṭā Allah Shīrāzī (d. 803/1400) says, "'Alī [b. Mūsā] al-Riḍā (A.S.) talked to different people in their own languages. He was the most eloquent while speaking and the most knowledgeable to all languages. His illuminated grand shrine is the center of the pilgrims from all over the world."⁴

6 Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī (d. 855/1451) quoting from renowned scholars says, "The virtues of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) are of the highest of good qualities, his superiorities are overwhelming and uninterrupted like a military parade when the soldiers march together. The beginning and the extreme of his love are clear. His wonderful qualities are the best wonders. His superiority and dignity stand on the peak. He is as the auspicious star for his friends and an inauspicious star for his enemies."⁵

7 Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī (d. 903/1497) on description of some virtues of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), May Allah be pleased with him, the sanctified Mashhad and the holy shrine of the infallible

¹ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ul*, pp. 295

² Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 187

³ Yāfi'ī Yamanī Shāfi'ī, *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 2, P. 10

⁴ 'Aṭā Allāh Shīrāzī, *Rawḍat al-Aḥbāb*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uzmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, vol. 4, P. 43; Bahādur Khān Hindi Ḥanafī, *Ta'rikh al-Aḥmadi*, P. 36

⁵ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 251

Imam (A.S.) says, “It is the center of Iran and the destination of the noble and the humble travellers. Different people from far and near, from the Byzantine Empire and from India leave their country and their friends, and go to visit his holy shrine. They consider this as great blessing and a treasure and asset in this world and the world hereafter. His virtues and marvels are too numerous to be enumerated, but we describe some of them briefly.” Then he describes Imam’s virtues and his miraculous deeds and states “Many anecdotes are narrated regarding the life of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) that shows his grandeur and abundance of virtues.”¹

8 Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520) says, “Visiting the holy shrine of leader of the right-guided, the lord of jinn and men, Imam ‘Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.), the son of Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), the son of Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), the son of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.), the son of Imam ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.), the son of Ḥusayn al-Shahīd, the son of ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā (A.S.), may Allah be pleased with all of them is a great antidote for his lovers. All people’s wishes are fulfilled by his sacred threshold. It is a blessed place and his abode is one of the best houses. People often recite the Glorious Qur’ān in this sacred place and we can say that it is one of the holy thresholds on the earth. This place is never empty from worshippers and why it should not be so. It is the shrine of an Imam (A.S.) who is the expression of the Holy Prophet’s knowledge and the inheritor of the Chosen virtues, the true Imam, the absolute guidance and the heir of the Prophethood.”²

9 Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 942/1535) under the title “Discourse on the virtues of the holy Imam Peace be upon our Prophet and on him says, “the holy shrine of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is in the land of Khurāsān, the blessed and the infallible Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), the son of Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.), the son of Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), the son of Imam

¹ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā’*, vol. 3, pp. 41-51

² Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, P. 336,

Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.). His friends and the aliens from East and West confess his grandeur. His virtues are more than you can think. His Imamate is proved by the texts expounded by his respected forefathers.” Then he adds some verses on his eulogy.¹

10 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī Ḥanafī (d. 898/1493) opens a chapter in his book under the title “Dhikr Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far” (remembrance of Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.)) and regarding him, says, “He is the eighth Imam. What people say concerning him and what is written in the books about him are only a small part of his virtues and are like a drop in the vast ocean. This summary cannot contain all of them, thus I explain only some his marvels and virtues.”²

11 Qarmānī Damashqī (d. 1019/1610) devotes a chapter of his book to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and says, “Chapter Seven reminds of his courage to his grandfather ‘Alī Murtaḍā (A.S.). His virtues are abundant and his miraculous deeds are well-known.”³

12 ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1031/1621) says, “‘Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) b. Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A.S.) b. Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) was a great personality and he was very virtuous and renowned all over the world.”⁴

13 Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1172/1758) says, “The eighth Imam was ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.). He was generous, magnanimous and respectable. His miraculous deeds were abundant and his virtues were sublime. His noble soul was Hāshimī and his origin was from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) His vast virtues were far beyond to be explained.”⁵

14 Sayyid ‘Abbās Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1180/1766) says, “The virtues of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) are innumerable and unlimited.”⁶

15 Suwīdī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1246/1830) says, “His

¹ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rīkh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 83

² ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 380-382

³ Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, pp. 113-115

⁴ ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya*, vol. 1, pp. 265-266

⁵ Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, pp. 312-313

⁶ Makkī Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Nuzhat al-Jalīs*, vol. 2, P. 105

miraculous deeds were abundant and his virtues were too many to be explained in this book.”¹

16 ‘Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1293/1876) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is well-known. He performed many miracles.”² Thereafter he describes his miracles.

17 Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1298/1880) introducing the Imam (A.S.) he explains his miracles and his good virtues in detail.³

18 Nabhānī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1350/1931) says, “‘Alī b. Imam Mūsā al-Kāzīm (A.S.) is one of the great Imams and the leading light of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.). He is the source of knowledge, generosity and manliness and performed many miracles.”⁴

19 Sanhūti Naqshbandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1344/1925) says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had performed many miracles.”⁵

20 Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī says, “Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was treasures of knowledge and miracles.”⁶

21 Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd b. Sharīf say, “He performed many miracles.” and enumerates some of his virtues.⁷

The radiance of Imam’s charisma

Before his migration to Ṭūs

A. Before his birth

1. The Holy Prophet’s glad tidings for Ḥamīda

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was born by the blessing of the Holy Prophet’s favour recommendation. The Sunnī transmitters have narrated that while Ḥamīda, Imam Mūsā al-Kāzīm’s mother, bought a slave girl called Najma, she saw in her dream that the Holy Prophet

¹ Suwīdī Baghdādī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1246/1830), *Sabā’ik al-Dhahab*, P. 75

² ‘Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī, *Natā’ij al-Afkār al-Qudsiyya*, vol. 1 P. 80

³ Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, pp. 232- 245

⁴ Nabhānī Shāfi‘ī, *Jāmi‘ Karāmāt al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2, P. 311

⁵ Sanhūti Naqshbandī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyya*, P. 39

⁶ Dr. Kāmil Muṣṭafā Shaybī, *al-Ṣilat bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyuf*, vol. 1, P. 237

⁷ Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī, *al-Risālat al-Qushayriyya fī al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Dr. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Maḥmūd b. Sharīf, vol. 1, pp. 65-66

(S.A.W.A.) told her, "Offer this girl to your son Mūsā, since this girl would bear a baby, who would be the most eminent person in this world." Ḥamīda did so and changed the girl's name to Ṭāhira.¹

2. A miracle during pregnancy

His noble mother says, "During my pregnancy I did not feel the burden of the weight, and during my sleep I heard my unborn baby praise and glorify Allah."²

B. After his birth

3. Supplications to Allah soon after his birth

His noble mother says, "When he was born he put his hands on the ground and raised his head towards the heaven, his lips were moving as if he was supplicating to Allah. Meanwhile his honorable father entered and said to me, 'Allah bless you His miracle!', and then I gave the new born baby to his father. He recited *adhān* in his right ear and *iqāma* in his left one, and then he moistened the baby's palate with the Euphrates water."³

4. Hārūn al-Rashīd would not overcome me

Ṣafwān b. Yahyā narrated that, "After the martyrdom of Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) and at the beginning of Imam al-Riḍā's Imamate we

¹ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 41; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, pp. 83-84; Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, vol. 4, P. 43; Sirāj al-Dīn Ḥanafī, Shaykh 'Uthmān, *Ta'rikh al-Islam wa al-Rijāl*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, P. 369; Qāḍī Nūr al-Allāh Shūshtarī, Shahīd Thālith (Martyr 1019/1610), *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq wa Izhāq al-Bāṭil*, 1st print, Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, vol. 12, P. 350

² Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 42; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 87; Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 166; 'Aṭā Allāh Shīrāzī, *Rawḍat al-Aḥbāb*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, vol. 4, P. 43; 'Abd al-Faṭṭāḥ b. Nu'mān Ḥanafī, *Miftāḥ al-Ma'ārif*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā Mar'ashī Najafī, Qum, P. 79

³ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 42; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'i, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 84; Qundūzī, *Yanābī' al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 166

were afraid of Hārūn al-Rashīd's conspiracy against Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and we conveyed our anxiety to him. He answered that Hārūn may try, but he would not be successful." Ṣafwān in another narration says, "One of my reliable friends narrated me that Yaḥyā b. Khālīd Barmakī had told Hārūn al-Rashīd that "Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) had claimed caliphate." He wanted to incite Hārūn by this statement. Hārūn answered "What we did against his father is enough for us. Do you want us to kill all of them?"¹

5. Hārūn al-Rashīd and I would be buried at the same place

Mūsā b. 'Imrān says once I saw 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the Mosque of Madina while Hārūn al-Rashīd was lecturing. Imam (A.S.) told me, "You will witness a day when Hārūn and I will be buried at the same place."² In *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf* it is narrated from Mūsā b. Marwān.³

6. The news of Amīn's murdering by Ma'mūn

Ḥusayn b. Yasār says that once 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) told me that 'Abd Allah (Ma'mūn) would kill his brother Muḥammad (Amīn). I asked him, "Will 'Abd Allah b. Hārūn kill his brother Muḥammad b. Hārūn?" He answered, "Yes he will." According to Imam's foretelling this incident happened.⁴

7. Bakr b. Ṣāliḥ's wife would bear twin

Bakr b. Ṣāliḥ says, "I met Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and told him that my wife, who is Muḥammad b. Sanān's sister, and one of your true followers, is pregnant. I would like you ask Allah to give me a son." Imam (A.S.) said, "Your wife is pregnant with two unborn babies." I went out Imam's home and told to myself that I would name one

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 235; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 243; Nabḥānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 311 see also, Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 314

² Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 236; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 244; Nabḥānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 312

³ See Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. P. 316

⁴ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 237; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 242; Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 317

of them Muḥammad and the other 'Alī. No sooner had I left him, Imam (A.S.) summoned me and without asking any question said, "Name one of them 'Alī and the other Umm 'Amr. When I arrived in Kūfa my wife gave birth to a son and a daughter, and I named them as Imam (A.S.) had ordered. Then I asked my mother about the meaning of Umm 'Amr. She replied that your grandmother was named Umm 'Amr.¹

8. Ja'far would become rich

Ḥusayn b. Mūsā says, "Some of the Banī Hāshim youths were sitting around Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Meanwhile, Ja'far b. 'Umar 'Alawī in poverty-stricken condition passed beside us. Several of us looked at him mockingly. "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told us, "Soon you would see that his life would change, his wealth would increase and he would possess many servants and would be well-dressed." Ḥusayn b. Mūsā says, "One month later the governor of Madina was deposed, and Ja'far was appointed as the new governor. His life, as Imam (A.S.) had predicted, changed. Thenceforth, Ja'far often passed beside us and his attendants marched before him. We stood up, welcomed him and praised him."² In *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf* the narrator is Ḥasan b. Mūsā.³

9. Ready to die

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī narrated from Sa'īd b. Sa'd that once Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) looked at a man and told him, "O servant of Allah, write your last will and make yourself ready for what is inevitable." Three days later the man died.⁴

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 236; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 242; Nabhānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 313

² Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 243; Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 176

³ Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 318

⁴ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 237; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 387; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114; 'Abd al-Ra'ūf

10. Replying an unrequested demand

Someone narrates that he was ready to go to Ḥajj pilgrimage. His slave girl made two pieces of cloth ready for his pilgrim's garb (*iḥrām*). When the pilgrim's day arrived he was really nervous whether he was permitted to put on the patched cloth or he was not. Thus he did not wear it and he performed his consecration rite in another cloth. When he arrived in Makka he wrote a letter and sent it to Imam (A.S.) along with some gifts. He wanted to ask Imam (A.S.) whether he was permitted to put on for the consecration rite the patched cloth or he was not, but he forgot to write it in his letter. Soon afterwards he received a letter from Imam (A.S.) who had written, "It is permissible to wear the patched cloth in consecration rite."¹

11. Sparrow's seeking refuge to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

One of the Imam's companions says, "Once we were sitting around Imam (A.S.) in a garden talking together. Suddenly a sparrow came down to Imam (A.S.) and she threw her on the ground and began twittering. Imam (A.S.) asked me "Do you know what the sparrow is saying?" I answered only Allah, His Messengers and you know what she says. Imam (A.S.) said that the sparrow is uttering that a snake is near her nest and it wishes to swallow her chicken. He ordered me to stand up and go to the sparrow's nest and kill the snake. I got up and went there. I saw a snake wandering around the sparrow's nest. I killed it as Imam (A.S.) had ordered me."²

12. Interpretation of Abū Ḥabīb's dream

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrated from Abū Ḥabīb that the latter said, "I saw the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in my dream in a place where the

Manāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya*, vol. 1, P. 466, No. 265; Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 318; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 243; Sanhūti Naqshbandī Shāfi'ī, *al-Anwār al-Qudsiyya*, P. 39; Nabhānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 311; 'Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi'ī, *Natā'ij al-Afkār al-Qudsiyya*, vol. 1 P. 80

¹ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 388

² *Ibid.*

Hajj pilgrims usually stay there. I greeted him. He had a dish of special dates from Madina before him. He gave me eighteen dates and I ate them. When I awoke I interpreted my dream that I would live for eighteen years. Twenty days after this event Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) came to Madina from Makka. He stayed at the same place where I had stayed before. People were welcoming him. I went there and I saw he was staying just at the same place where I had seen the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in my dream, and there was a dish of special dates from Madina before him too. He called me and gave me a handful of dates. I counted them and I found they were eighteen, just as the same number as the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) had given me in my dream. I requested Imam (A.S.) to give me some more dates. He answered if the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) had given you more I would also had given you more.”¹

13. The fall of the Barmakid government

Ḥamza b. Ja‘far Arrajānī says that Hārūn al-Rashīd came out from one door and ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) from another door of the Holy Mosque in Makka. Whereupon, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), pointing to Hārūn, asserted, “O Ṭūs, how far our houses are from and how near our visiting places are to you. You would gather me and him in the same place.”²

¹ Mas‘ūdī Shāfi‘ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, P. 178; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 236; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 387; Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, pp. 224-225; Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 594; Qarmānī Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114; ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Manāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya*, vol. 1, P. 466, No. 265; Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 317; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Absār*, P. 243; Nabhānī Shāfi‘ī, *Jāmi‘ Karāmāt al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2, P. 311; ‘Arūsī Miṣrī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1293/1876), *Natā’j al-Afkār al-Qudsiyya*, Jāmi‘at al-Darwīshiyya, Damascus, n.d., P. 80; Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 376; Hindī Lucknowī Ḥanafī, *Wasīlat al-Najā*, Lucknow, 1309, P. 385; Ibn Kathīr Ḥaḍramī, *Wasīlat al-Mi‘āl*, ms. Kitābkhāneh Āyatullāh al-‘Uzmā Mar‘ashī Najafī, Qum, P. 212.

² Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī, *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 7, P. 266; Shibrāwī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 316; Shablanjī Shāfi‘ī, *Nūr al-Absār*, P. 244; Nabhānī Shāfi‘ī, *Jāmi‘ Karāmāt al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2, P. 313.

Musāfir said that he was beside Imam (A.S.) in Minā. Suddenly Yaḥyā b. Khālīd Barmakī, whose face was covered with dust, came near them. Imam (A.S.) addressing them told, "How miserable they are. They do not know what will happen to them this year." Musāfir said that during the same year the Barmakid were outset from power and Imam's foretelling became true. He continued that Imam (A.S.) said, "More wonderful than it are Hārūn al-Rashīd and my fates that we are the same as these two fingers; and he showed us his middle and his index fingers. Musāfir acknowledged that he did not understand the meaning of Imam's speech concerning Hārūn, until Imam (A.S.) passed away and he was buried beside Hārūn.¹

14. Birth of Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) and invalidating Wāsiṭī's claim

One of the Imam's companions narrated that once Ḥusayn Wāsiṭī,² one of the leaders of the Wāqifī sects,³ insisted that he wished to meet Imam Riḍā (A.S.). He asked the former to get permission from Imam (A.S.) for the meeting. He gave the permission to meet him. As soon as he saw Imam (A.S.) he said, "O, Abā al-Ḥasan, it is well-defined for me that you are not Imam." After a short pause Imam asked him, "How do you claim that I am not Imam?" He answered that he had heard a tradition from Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) that Imams are not childless. Again Imam (A.S.) paused for a short time and said, "Allah will give me a son before the end of this year."

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 209, H 487; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 236; Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 315; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Aḥṣār*, P. 243; Nabḥānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 313.

² Ḥusayn b. Wāsiṭī Ṣayrifī was one of Imam al-Kāzim's companions and after Imam's martyrdom he followed the Wāqifī sect. Shī'ite scholars have condemned him. See Namāzī Shāhrūdī, *Mustadrakāt 'Ilm Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, vol. 3, P. 182, No, 4615.

³ It is worth noting that after Imam al-Jawād's birth, Wāsiṭī came to visit Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and Imam addressing him said, "Allāh certainly gave me someone who would be my inheritor and the inheritor of the House of Dā'ūd" See Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 50, P. 18.

‘Abd al-Raḥmān, one of the narrators of this event says, “Not before the end of the year Imam Muḥammad al-Taḳī (A.S.) was (A.S.) born.”¹

After his migration to Ṭūs

15. Curing a person stuttering in speech

It was narrated that once the bandits raided a merchant during the snowy weather on way to Kirmān. They robbed all his properties and filled his mouth with snow, so that his tongue was damaged and he had great difficulty in speaking. He learned that Imam al-Riḳā (A.S.) was in Neyshābūr. He told to himself “He is of the Holy Prophet’s Household (S.A.W.A.). I would go to him. He may have a remedy for my pain.” At night he saw in his dream that he went near Imam al-Riḳā (A.S.) and requested him to cure him. Imam (A.S.) told him to get some sa‘tar (thyme), kamyūnī (Cumin) and salt, then wet them with water and put them in his mouth twice or thrice until his tongue was healed. The merchant woke up from sleep but ignored his dream. Then he set off for Neyshābūr. When he arrived there, he learned that Imam (A.S.) had gone out of the city and settled in a caravanserai. The merchant went to Imam (A.S.) and told him the incident of the robbery, but he said nothing about his dream. Imam (A.S.) told him that his medicine was what he had prescribed him in his dream. The merchant said, “But O Son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), I want to hear it from you.” Imam (A.S.) told him to get some sa‘tar, kamyūnī and salt, then wet them with water and put them in his mouth twice or thrice until his tongue was healed. He did as Imam had told him and he was healed.²

16. The instability of Imam’s position as heir apparent

Madā’inī says, “When Imam al-Riḳā (A.S.) took his seat of heir apparent and wore his special rob; and the orators were delivering speeches Imam (A.S.) saw one of his companions in a

¹ Mīr Khwānd Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’riḳh Rawḳat al-Ṣafā’*, vol. 3, pp. 46-47.

² ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, P. 387

very joyous condition. Imam (A.S.) summoned him and silently whispered in his ear not to be happy, since this case would not last long.”¹

17. Disgracing the plotters

Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi‘ī narrates an event and considers it one of the proofs of Imam’s sublime personality, he says, “What Allah has bestowed on him are the evidences of his honest character.” He continues, “When Ma’mūn nominated Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent, there were some people who were angered with this nomination and they feared lest the Abbasid lose the caliphate to Banī Fāṭima. Thus they hated Imam (A.S.) and spited him; they waited for a chance to show their hostility. While Imam (A.S.) visited the caliph he usually crossed through a corridor on which a curtain was hanging; some servants and the guard of honour were in charge of standing up before Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and pulling up the curtain and venerating Imam (A.S.) while he was passing. Once they arranged not to honour Imam (A.S.) and not to pull up the curtain. As Imam (A.S.) entered the passage as usual, they all involuntarily stood up, greeted Imam (A.S.) and drew back the curtain. Then they blamed each other for pulling up the curtain; and they decided not to do it the next day. The next day Imam (A.S.) entered the hall, they greeted him, but they did not draw back the curtain. Whereupon a powerful wind blew and drew back the curtain more than usual. The wind blew again while Imam was going to leave the corridor. As a result of which they discussed with each other and assumed that Imam (A.S.) had a high position before Allah. Consider how the wind blew from two sides, before and after his entrance in the corridor, so serve and respect him as you did before, that is better for you.”²

¹ Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 2454; Badakhshī Hindī, *Miftāḥ al-Najā*, P. 178

² Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi‘ī, *Maṭālib al-Su’ūl*, P. 296; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma*, P. 234; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 382; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rīkh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā’*, vol. 3, pp. 46-47; Qarmānī

Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī has narrated this event with a slight different wording.¹

18. Replying unasked questions

One of the Kūfans says that he left Kūfa for Khurāsān. His daughter gave him a piece of cloth to sell and get a turquoise for her from Khurāsān. He adds, "When I arrived in Marw [Khurāsān], Imam al-Riḍā's servants came to me and told me that one of the Imam's servants had died and asked me if I had a piece of cloth to sell them for his shrouding. I answered I have no cloth with me to sell them. They came again, and told that their master gave his regards to me and said, "Your daughter had given you a piece of cloth to sell and buy her a turquoise." He adds, "I sold them the cloth and said to me that I have some question, I should ask him and see how he answers them. If he answers them I would know he is the real authority and the Imam of our Time. I wrote down my questions and I set off for his home at dawn, but there was a big crowd over there and I could not ask my questions. I wondered if I could see Imam (A.S.), whereupon I saw one of his servants came out. He called my name; gave me a letter and told me, "O, so and so this letter is yours. As I opened it I saw Imam (A.S.) had answered all my questions. So I knew that he is the Imam and one of the distinguished saints and the infallible"²

19. Awareness from the internal wishes of Rayyān

One of Imam's companions says that once Rayyān b. Ṣalt asked him to get permission from Imam (A.S.) to meet him, and he hoped that Imam (A.S.) would give him some of his garments and some of the coins which bore Imam's name. He adds, "I went to Imam's house. Before I started to speak Imam (A.S.) said Rayyān b. Ṣalt

Damashqī, *Akhbār al-Duwal*, P. 114; Nabhānī Shāfi'ī, *Jāmi' Karāmāt al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2, P. 257

¹ Shibrāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Ittiḥāf bi Ḥubb al-Ashrāf*, P. 313

² Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣīyya*, pp. 180-181; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 386; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rīkh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 46.

wants to see me and he hopes that I give him some clothes and coins which bear my name. Let him get in. Rayyān entered and Imam (A.S.) gave him two garments and thirty silver coins.”¹

20. The wild beasts on the threshold of Imam (A.S.)

The story of “Zaynab the Liar” and her entering into the beasts’ cage is well-known for both the Shī’a and the Sunnī scholars. It shows the high position and absolute guardianship (*wilāya*) of the Holy Imam (A.S.). Although there are some differences in quoting this event, it does not mar the actual episode. The disagreement is on the time of this event. Some believe that it happened during Imam Riḍā’s life and others consider that it happened during Imam al-Hādī’s time or both of them. We will refer to both the narrations.

First narration: There was a woman in Khurāsān named Zaynab who claimed that she was ‘Alawī and a descendant of Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.). Imam (A.S.) was informed of her and he disproved her claim. He summoned her and refuted her relation to Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.) and stated that she was a liar. She ridiculed Imam (A.S.) and proclaimed that she also doubts Imam’s ancestry. Imam (A.S.) became angry, and ordered the governor of Khurāsān to throw her in the beasts’ cage. At that time the governor had a special place in the city where wild animals were kept so that he could punish the deceitful and the criminals. Imam (A.S.) presented the woman to the governor and told him that she was a liar and falsely claimed that she was a descendant of Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.) and ‘Alī (A.S.), while she was not. If she was right and she was an offspring of Fāṭima bint Rasūl Allah (S.A.) and ‘Alī (A.S.) her flesh would be forbidden for the beasts. So throw her inside the wild animals’ cage. If she was right the beasts would not come near her, but if she was a liar the wild animals would tear her to pieces. As soon as Zaynab heard this, she demanded Imam (A.S.) to do it first if he was right. Imam (A.S.)

¹ Mas‘ūdi Shāfi‘ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, P. 180; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 386-387

entered the wild animals' cage willingly while the governor and the people were amazingly watching this incident. The wild beasts had been tamed and Imam (A.S.) went near each of them. He gently caressed the wild animals and they fawned on their tails favorably until Imam (A.S.) got out of the cage. Afterwards, Imam (A.S.) told the governor to throw the liar woman into the beasts' cage to know the truth. The woman refused to enter the cage, but the governor forcibly made her enter. The beasts attacked on her as soon as she entered the cage and they tore her into pieces. Thus she was known as "Zaynab the Liar" in Khurāsān.¹

Second narration: Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī quoting some ḥāfizes (preservers of the traditions) also says, in the time of Mutawakkil, the Abbasid a woman claimed that she was 'Alawī. Mutawakkil called Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to know the fact. He asked Imam (A.S.) about it and the latter answered that Allah has forbidden the flesh of the descendants of al-Ḥasan (A.S.) and al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) for the beasts. He ordered Mutawakkil to throw the woman into the beasts' cage to find the truth. Mutawakkil did so, and the woman was ready to enter the cage, but she confessed that she had told lie. Some asked Mutawakkil if he examined it on Imam (A.S.). Whereupon he ordered to get three lions into the palace and he summoned Imam. As he entered the palace they closed the door. The lions' roaring deafened the ears. As he arrived at the middle of the palace, the lions came near him while they were fawning on their tails gently. They were rubbing along with him. He also rubbed his sleeves along them. Then they sat down on their legs. He climbed up the ladder and talked to Mutawakkil for a while. Then he went down the ladder and repeated the same actions in the cage until he went out of the palace. Mutawakkil ordered to give a grand prize to Imam (A.S.). People requested Mutawakkil to do the same as his cousin [Imam] did, since he was one of Banī 'Abbās nobles. But he replied to his companions that they wanted

¹ Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, P. 297; Juwaynī Shāfi'ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 209, Ḥ 487; Tanūkhī (other), Qāḍī Abū 'Alī, *al-Faraj ba'd al-Shidda*, 1st print, Dār Ṣādir, Beirut, n.d, vol. 4, pp. 172-173.

him to be killed by the wild animals. He ordered them to hide this event.¹

Mas'ūdī narrated the event, but he said that the main character of the episode was the son of 'Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) that is Imam al-Hādī (A.S.), because 'Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) died during Ma'mūn's reign and he could not have been the contemporary of Mutawakkil.²

Although in the Sunnī belief this event is famous among the Shī'a,³ but its origin is unanimous between the Shī'a and the Sunnī. So as the great Sunnī scholars like Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī quoted it from some *ḥāfizes* (preservers of the traditions)⁴ and Qāḍī Abū 'Alī Tanūkhī considered it a firm narration and affirmed its relation with the Sunnī sources. He accounted a similar event which had happened to him; and considered it a real action.⁵ The disagreement is about the time of the event, whether it happened during the lives of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) or Imam al-Hādī's time, and who the then caliph was. Some writers presented Mutawakkil as the then caliph and it might be because of some mistakes in manuscripts, since Mutawakkil was neither contemporary to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) nor Imam al-Jawād (A.S.). Thus after narrating Mas'ūdī's account they add, it is acceptable because Mutawakkil was not contemporary to Imam al-Jawād (A.S.), but he was contemporary to his son,⁶ and they record the story of "Zaynab the Liar" as the incidents of Imam al-Hādī's time.

21. A journey without return

Someone said he had heard Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) who said, "As they summoned me from Madina to Marw, I gathered together all my family members and asked them to weep for me, so as I could hear

¹ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, pp. 595-596

² Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 4, P. 86

³ Tanūkhī, Qāḍī Abū 'Alī, *al-Faraj ba'd al-Shidda*, vol. 4, P. 172

⁴ Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 596

⁵ Tanūkhī, Qāḍī Abū 'Alī, *al-Faraj ba'd al-Shidda*, vol. 4, P. 173

⁶ Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 248

you cry. Then I distributed twelve thousand silver coins among them and told them that I would never return back to you.”¹

22. Imam's talking in Sindhī language

Abū Ismā'īl Sindī said, “I had heard in Sind² that Allah had a proof among the Arab. I left home to see this proof. They introduced ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) to me. I attended his presence, but I did not know Arabic, so I greeted him in Sindhi language and he answered me in the same language. I asked him many question in Sindhi language and he answered me in the same language. Then I told him about the motive of my journey, and my desire to see the proof of Allah among the Arab. Imam (A.S.) answered that I had got my desire. He said that he was the proof of Allah and I could ask him any questions. I put forward my questions and also told him that I did not know Arabic. I request him to pray Allah to inspire me this language. He rubbed his hand on my mouth and I could speak Arabic since then.”³

23. Imam's knowledge of all languages and dialects

Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) talked to people in their own languages. By Allah he was the most eloquent and the most learned person in every language and dialect. Once I told him that his knowledge of languages and dialects surprised me. Imam (A.S.) answered, “O, Abā Ṣalt I am the proof of Allah for His creatures. It is impossible that Allah ordains someone as His proof for His creatures and he does not know the people's languages. Have you not heard Amīr al-Mu'minīn ‘Alī's tradition who said, Allah gave us speech decisive (*Faṣl al-Khiṭāb*).”Is speech decisive anything but the knowledge of languages?⁴

¹ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, P. 389

² Sind (Sindh) previously was a part of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, but as Pakistan was established in 1947 it constitutes one of the provinces of this country. For more detail about its past history, see Yāqūt Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 3, P. 267

³ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, P. 388; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 84

⁴ *Ibid*

24. People's grand welcome in *Eid al-Fitr*

A short time after Ma'mūn imposed the position of heir apparent on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he accepted it with conditions, the crescent moon of the Shawwal month was sighted. Ma'mūn requested Imam (A.S.) to perform the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer and recite the sermon. Imam (A.S.) excused, but Ma'mūn insisted on his wish and said that people should be certain of your position and be aware of your virtues. In spite of Ma'mūn's insistence, Imam (A.S.) sent a message to excuse him from this task; otherwise he would perform the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer and recite the sermon as the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) did. Ma'mūn answered that that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was free to perform as he wished. Then the caliph commanded all the nobles of the cities, the authorities of the government and the masses to gather near Imam's residence. A lot of ordinary people and army commanders had gathered there before the sunrise of *Eid al-Fitr*. Women and children were standing at the thresholds of their houses and on the streets waiting for Imam (A.S.) to pass before them. At the sunrise, Imam (A.S.) performed the *Eid al-Fitr* ritual ablution, wore his new and perfumed clothes, put his turban on his head and fold part of it under his chin. He held his iron stick in his hand and told all his followers to do the same and walk in front of him. Imam (A.S.) walked to the *Muṣallā* (*Eid* prayer place) barefooted. He drew his trousers up to his leg then came out of his house in this fashion.

The army commanders of Ma'mūn and the nobles were astonished as they saw the scene. They dismounted their horses, took out their shoes and walked barefooted as Imam (A.S.) did. He was saying the slogan "*Allah Akbar*" and people were, too. The narrator of the event added that for a short moment he felt that the earth and the sky were answering Imam's cry of "*Allah Akbar*" and the exclamation was heard from everywhere. The city became tumultuous and the people were shouting, crying and weeping when they saw Imam (A.S.) in this condition and his raising the slogan of "*Allah Akbar*".

Ma'mūn was informed of the situation. His vizier, Faḍl b. Sahl told him, "If he continues going to the *Muṣallā*, people would be fascinated by him and your throne and crown would be in danger. It is better to call him back." Ma'mūn sent someone to tell Imam (A.S.) that he had offered him to perform the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer, but it is causing trouble for him to do it, and Ma'mūn did not wish him to put into trouble. Then he demanded Imam (A.S.) to return back to his home and the prayer would be performed by the person who previously did it. Imam (A.S.) put on his shoes, mounted his horse and turned back to his home. People were annoyed and angry, because they had lost the grace and the privilege of performing prayer with Imam.¹

25. Praying for rain and Imam's supplication granted

Ḥākim Neyshābūrī writes in his *Ta'rīkh Neyshābūr* when Ma'mūn nominated Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent, by chance it was the rain season, but it did not rain that year. It paved the way for all those opposed to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as the heir apparent to find fault with him and remark sarcastically, "Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) the heir apparent, have deprived us of rain." Ma'mūn heard this claim and he was insinuated by it. On a Friday he complained to Imam (A.S.) that there was a long time it had not rained. He told him that it was a good time to pray for rain. Imam (A.S.) answered that he would pray. Ma'mūn asked him when he would do it. He answered that that he would pray for rain on Monday. He said, "Last night I saw the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.), in my dream. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) told me, "O, my son, wait until Monday. On Monday, then go to the outdoor plain and pray for rain. Allah the Compassionate will send down His rain of mercy. O, my son, demonstrate to people Allah's benevolence toward you and let them know how great your position is before Allah."

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, pp. 179; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rīkh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, P. 44

On Monday Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) along with a great crowd of people set off for outdoor plain. Imam (A.S.) stood up on a hill and praised Allah then he recited,

“O, Allah, O, my Lord, You glorified the right of we Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and they implored us as You ordered them. They hope for Your bounty and mercy and they expect Your kindness and blessing, so sent them down a common, harmless and profitable rain. Let the rainfall commence as soon as the people return back to their homes.”

The narrator quotes, “By Allah Who sent forth Muḥammad the Messenger, as soon as ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) completed his prayer, the rainy clouds appeared in the sky, accompanied by thunder and lightning. People thought there would a rainstorm soon and they sought refuge from the rain. Imam (A.S.) assured them that the clouds were not for them, but they were for so and so district. It happened for ten times. At the eleventh time Imam (A.S.) told the crowd that the Glorious God had sent these clouds for them and they should praise Allah for His blessing. It would not rain until they reach back to their homes. Then he ordered them to return back to their homes as soon as possible so that Allah showers down His blessing upon them.

Then Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) came down the pulpit and set off for home, so did the crowd. When all of them returned back to their homes, it began to rain and water started flowing through the city. People were joyed and praised Imam (A.S.), and they said Allah may shower His blessing and grace upon the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Imam (A.S.) took the opportunity and began to preach the people. He said,

“O, people fear Allah and do not drive away His blessings upon you by disobeying Him. Cause to continue the blessings upon you by obeying Him and know that after believing in Allah and admitting the rights of His friends and the rights of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) no praise is more desirable to Him than cooperating with your faithful brethren in their worldly affairs which is a passage to the Paradise of their Lord. Those who do it are Allah’s exceptional friends.”

Then he narrated an anecdote of a man about whom people said to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) that he is perished because of committing a sin. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) answered, on the contrary he is saved and Allah made his life end in blessing, and He turned his sins into the virtues. The event of the man was that once he was passing a route. He came across a believer whose private parts were uncovered. He covered them in such a way that he was not aware. When he learned that his private parts were covered by the man in such a way that he would not be aware and be ashamed of it, he prayed Allah to give him the best reward and facilitate his accounts. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said that the man was blessed on account of this believer's prayer. He was informed of the Holy Prophet's sayings. He repented of his sins and Allah accepted it. Then he joined the Holy Prophet's army and participated in the Holy War (*Jihād*) and he was martyred in his entourage. Imam (A.S.) delivered this speech then he set off.¹

This miraculous event demonstrated Imam's sublime personality, exhibited some aspects of the Imamate's divine knowledge and also attracted people's hearts to the Holy Prophet's teachings.

26. Turning the portrait of a lion into a living lion

The miraculous deed we are discussing here is one the historical wonders of Imam (A.S.) which had illuminated his position of heir apparent. Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī consider this act as "one of the wonders of Allah's Friends which people witnessed."²

After the wonderful and historical event of miraculous rainfall due to Imam's prayers the plan of his enemies, who had planned to abdicate the Alid from the position of heir apparent, was miscarried, since they could not grab this occasion to ruin Imam's personality; on the contrary it opened a chance for Imam (A.S.) to show his personality, charisma and grandeur. When the enemies' plans were miscarried, they pleaded with Ma'mūn with

¹ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, pp. 212-214, Ḥ 490, quoted from Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*.

² *Ibid*, P. 208, Ḥ 487

another trick. They debated with him on the position of the heir apparent and asked him, “Why did you appoint ‘Alī b. Mūsā as your heir apparent? Why do you intend to return the grandeur, honour, and respect which belonged to the Abbasid for a long time to the Alid? ‘Alī b. Mūsā is a sorcerer; you saw how he sent down out of the heaven the rain by his magic, we are afraid that he would deprive the Abbasid from caliphate and return it to the Alid by his magic. O, Ma’mūn you committed such a grave crime against yourself and the caliphate?”

Ma’mūn then explained his real motive of nominating Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent. He said,

“My aim for nominating ‘Alī b. Mūsā as my heir apparent was to put him under surveillance and have control over him, since he secretly invited people to him in Madina. Thus I nominated him as my heir apparent so that people understand he is not as he claims; and caliphate belongs only to us. If I did not do so people would be inclined to him and the process would continue, and I could not afford combating it. Now I am very regretful about it, and I know I made a great mistake. If it (the position of heir apparent) continues we will perish. Yet we cannot ignore this situation and we should think carefully about it. We need time to reduce ‘Alī b. Mūsā’s influence and people distinguish his incompetence for caliphate.”

Ḥumayd b. Mihrān, one of Imam’s opponents asked Ma’mūn, “O, the Commander of the Faithful, let me debate with ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and denounce him and his supporters and malign his personality. Were it not your awe I would show to the people that he is not worthy to be heir apparent. Ma’mūn welcomed him and said, “I like nothing more than your appeal to disgrace him.”

Then he had a debate meeting held at his palace and invited the leading and the distinguished civil and military personalities. When the promised day arrived, all those invited attended the meeting. Ḥumayd b. Mihrān abruptly addressed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, “People portray and exaggerate your virtues. You would deny them if you knew them. They saw you pray for rainfall and Allah sent down the rain in its due time. They thought it was

by your beseech and it was a miraculous deed and you are a unique personality, but no one is comparable with Ma'mūn, the Commander of the Faithful, long live his rule. He has bestowed the position of his heir apparent on you. Thus it is inadmissible that people praise you and while tell lies and talk irrelevant about the caliph. Imam (A.S.) answered I wonder why I should prevent people from explaining the blessings which Allah had bestowed on me, and I did not rise up out of evil intention or greed neither to perpetuate corruption nor wrongdoing, but the position which you claim Ma'mūn has given me, is nothing but the position that Pharaoh the ruler of Egypt gave to Joseph.

Ḥumayd b. Mihrān became angry and said, "O, the sun of Mūsā, you have overstepped the limits and you speak higher than your position. You attributed to yourself the event of the rainfall, which Allah sent down in its due time and which you cannot put it back nor put it forward, and you acted as if you performed a miracle as the same way as Abraham (A.S.) who took four birds, and twisted, then he set a part of them on every hill, then he animated them by the leave of Allah and summoned them.¹ If you are truthful in your claim, give life to the portraits of the two lions and change them to real savage beasts and give them authority over me, if you did so it would be your miracle. However we cannot attribute the rain which showered in its due time to your prayer. It might be due to others prayers. "During his speech Ḥumayd b. Mihrān was pointing to the portraits of two lions which were painted on the curtain and mockingly requested Imam (A.S.) to animate them. Ḥumayd's words made Imam (A.S.) angry and he loudly addressed the portraits and said, "O, you two lions come and tear apart this corrupt man and leave no part of him on the earth."

As soon as Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) ordered the lions, they were animated by the leave of Allah, they tore and ate him up and cleared the earth out of him. Then they came to Imam (A.S.) and by the leave of Allah spoke to him and asked, "O, the proof of Allah on

¹ See Qur'ān: 2/260

the earth what do you say concerning Ma'mūn?"

When Ma'mūn heard this he thought his fate would be the same as Ḥumayd and he fainted. Imam (A.S.) told them to pause and ordered to splash some water on Ma'mūn's face. When he recovered his consciousness the two lions requested Imam (A.S.) to permit them to do the same to Ma'mūn as they did to his associate. Imam (A.S.) did not let them and said Allah would do what He wills.

The lions returned to the portrait on Imam's order and were changed to pictures again.

Shivering in fear, Ma'mūn told Imam (A.S.), "Praise belongs to Allah Who saved us from Ḥumayd b. Mihrān's evils, then he said to Imam (A.S.) that this caliphate belongs to your grandfather the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.); if you like I would abdicate it in your favour."¹

27. Imam foretelling his martyrdom and the place of his grave

One of the most important and the last miraculous deed during Imam's life was the foretelling of his martyrdom which is explained in detail as below:

Ibn Ḥajar Haytamī concerning it says, "Before his death Imam (A.S.) foretold that he would be killed by some poisoned grapes or pomegranates and Ma'mūn would try to bury him below al-Rashīd (his father) tomb, but he would not be able to do it. These events happened as Imam (A.S.) had foretold."²

The Prophecy of poisoning Imam (A.S.) and his burial place are narrated by Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī and Harthama b. A'yan separately from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):

Abā Ṣalt's account: Abā Ṣalt, one of the Imam servants narrates a wonderful anecdote. This episode refers to Imam's knowledge of the coming events as well it answers some historians who try to absolve Ma'mūn of his crimes for martyrdom

¹ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, pp. 214-216, Ḥ 490, quoted from Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rīkh Neyshābūr*.

² Ibn Ḥajar Haythamī, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqa*, vol. 2, P. 593

of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); and they do not wish to introduce him as the murderer of Imam (A.S.). This event which is narrated by both the Sunnī and the Shī'a scholars reveals the secrets about Imam's death and portrays a clear picture of the oppressed Imam (A.S.).

This incident is so surprising for 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī that before narrating it he says, "It is one the miraculous deeds, which are narrated by Abā Ṣalt" and then he explains the event as below:

Abā Ṣalt al-Hirawī says, "Once I was standing beside Imam (A.S.). He pointed to a dome under which Hārūn al-Rashīd was buried. He looked at it and told me to fetch him some soil from the four sides of the mausoleum." He adds, "I went there on Imam's order and brought him some soil. Imam smelled the soil and then threw it back on the earth and said, "They will soon dig a grave for me there. While digging some rock will appear there and they will not be able to break it as much as they try. No picks in Khurāsān will be able to cut the rock." Then he ordered me to bring him some soil from another side of the mausoleum. I did so; and Imam (A.S.) said, "They will dig my grave here. Tell them, in due time, to dig the tomb there; and also tell them to dig it as deep as seven steps, then dig it as wide as a human body; if they prevented from doing it, ask them to make a niche (*laḥad*) as wide as two cubits (*dhirā's*) plus a span; and Allah would expand it by His favour and mercy."

He also said to me, "While digging the grave, some moisture will appear above my head. I instruct you some words. Recite these words until the water spurts and fills the niche. You will see some little fish in it. I give you this bread; slice it up and throw it into the water so that the fish eat it up. Suddenly a big fish will appear and eat all of the little fish, and then it will disappear. Do not touch it and say what I instructed you in so far as the water drains and nothing is left. And do all that I teach you in front of Ma'mūn?"

Then he said, "O, Abā Ṣalt, I will visit Ma'mūn tomorrow. You can speak to me if you see I have nothing on my head, but do not speak to me if you see I have put my cloak on my head." Abā Ṣalt says that the next day Imam (A.S.) put on his clothes and waited

until Ma'mūn's servants came and summoned Imam to Ma'mūn's palace. Imam (A.S.) went there. There were some dishes of fruit in front of Ma'mūn. He had a bunch of grapes in his hand and he was eating them. He stood up as soon as Imam arrived. He hugged and embraced him and kissed his forehead and seated Imam besides him. He offered him the bunch of grapes he had in his hand. He asked Imam (A.S.), "O the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.); have you ever seen grapes better than these?" Imam (A.S.) answered, "The best grapes are in Heaven" Ma'mūn asked him to eat the grapes, but Imam (A.S.) requested Ma'mūn to excuse him from eating them. Ma'mūn insisted on his request and asked Imam (A.S.) if he was suspicious of him. Imam (A.S.) ate one or two grapes and threw the rest on the ground and then he stood up. Ma'mūn asked him where he was going. He answered, "Where you sent." Abā Ṣalt continues, "Imam (A.S.) had his cloak on his head when left the palace. I did not speak to him. He returned to his home and ordered me to close the door. He went to his room and lay down. I was standing in the house sorrowfully. Suddenly I saw a handsome black-haired young man in the house. He looked much similar to Imam (A.S.). I went hurriedly toward him and asked where he entered the house while the doors were closed. He answered, "One who brought me from Madina in a moment could pass me through the closed door."

I asked him who he was. He answered that he was the proof of Allah, Muḥammad b. 'Alī [b. Mūsā al-Riḍā]. As soon as Imam (A.S.) saw him, he stood up; he hugged and embraced him and kissed the forehead of his son. They were talking secretly. Then some foam as white as snow appeared on Imam's lips. Muḥammad b. 'Alī (A.S.) sucked it then he put his hand under Imam's shirt and pulled something like a sparrow out of Imam's chest. He took it with him, and then Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) passed away.

Muhammad b. 'Alī (A.S.) said, "Abā Ṣalt! Stand up and get some water and boards from the cellar." I answered him that there were no water and boards in the cellar. He told me to do what he said. I went there and I found what he had wanted. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) washed his father's body. I wanted to help him wash his

father, but he told me that someone else was helping him. He washed his father's body and then he told me that there was a suitcase in the cellar and there were some camphor and a shroud in it. I went there and I found the suitcase which I had never seen there before, I brought the shroud and the camphor. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) shrouded his father. He said the funeral prayer over his dead father and told me to bring the coffin. I said I will have the carpenter make it. He said that it was not necessary and ordered me to go to the cellar; I saw a coffin that I had not seen there before. I brought it. He put Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in it, and then he said a two *rak'a* prayer. He had not finished his prayer when the ceiling of the home split and the coffin arose and went out into the sky. I said, "O the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), Ma'mūn will come soon and he will ask for the dead body." He ordered me to keep quiet because the coffin will return soon. Then he said, "O Abā Ṣalt if a Prophet passes away in the east and his successor deceases in the west Allah, the Exalted will gather their souls and their bodies."

Abā Ṣalt says, "Imam al-Jawād's saying was not over the ceiling split again and the coffin returned. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) took the dead body out of the coffin; put it on the floor and it looked as if no one had washed or shrouded it. Then he told me to stand up and open the door." When he opened the door, Ma'mūn and his servants entered the house while they were mourning. They were sorrowful; they were tearing their shirts. Ma'mūn was weeping and cried, "O, my lord, I was grieved for your death." Then they began to wash and shroud Imam's body. Ma'mūn had a grave dig for Imam (A.S.). Abā Ṣalt says, "I was present there. What Imam (A.S.) had said came true." When Ma'mūn saw the water and the fish he said, "Imam (A.S.) has supernaturally behaviors even after his death as when he was alive." One of Ma'mūn's attendants asked him, "Do you know what the meaning of this incident is. It refers that the likeness of Abbasid rule is as the likeness of the little fish." Ma'mūn affirming this interpretation said, "Yes, you are right."

Abā Ṣalt says, "I did what Imam (A.S.) had told me; and when

the little fish appeared I recited what he had instructed me. After finishing Imam's funeral Ma'mūn asked me to teach him Imam's words. I answered that I had forgotten the words at the same moment; and really I had forgotten them. Ma'mūn became angry and ordered to imprison me. I was incarcerated for a year enduring pains and difficulties in the jail. When the conditions became too hard to bear, I called upon Allah by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and his progeny (A.S.) to relieve me of my sufferings. I had not finished my supplication that I saw Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Riḍā (A.S.) came and asked me if I was homesick. I replied, O yes by Allah. He told me to stand up and come along with him. We walked out of jail. The guards and the servants of the prison saw us while they could not speak and prevent us from going out. When he released me from the prison he said, "Go, Allah be with you. You will not see Ma'mūn henceforth. And I have not seen Ma'mūn thenceforth."¹

Harthama b. A'yan's account: Harthama b. A'yan was a military commander of the Abbasid period.² However he loved Ahl

¹ Mas'ūdī Shāfi'ī, *Ithbāt al-Waṣīyya*, pp. 181-182; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Shawāhid al-Nabowwa*, pp. 389-392; Mīr Khwānd Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā'*, vol. 3, pp. 49-52; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, pp. 88-91

² Harthama b. A'yan was a governor of the Abbasid period, a native of Khurāsān. On the death of Abbasid caliph, al-Hādī, it was he who brought Hārūn out of prison and took part in his enthronement. The new caliph consequently entrusted him with important offices, appointing him to be governor first of Palestine, then of Ifrīqiyyā, whence he was recalled to take over command of the guard under the orders of Ja'far b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī. Next he took a share in the arrest of the Barmakid and became one of the most prominent military leaders. After the uprising of Rāfi' b. al-Layth he was given the governorship of Khurāsān and was in Samarqand when the Hārūn died in 193/809. In the ensuing struggle between al-Ma'mūn and al-Amīn he sided with the former and, together with Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn was given command of the troops which laid siege to Baghdad in Dhū 'l-Ḥijja 196/August 812. Although still faithful to al-Ma'mūn, he vainly tried to procure the escape from Baghdad of the defeated caliph Amīn, who was captured by Ṭāhir's soldiers while making away in a boat. Harthama played a major part in restoring calm in Iraq after the revolt of Abū al-Sarāyā. On being appointed governor of Arabia and Syria, he decided

al-Bayt (A.S.) profoundly and considered himself one of their followers. He often served Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and assisted him in spite of his closeness to Ma'mūn.

He says, "Once Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) summoned me and said that he wanted to reveal some secrets that nobody should know before Imam's death. If I revealed them Allah would be my enemy. I swore that I would keep them secret during Imam's lifetime." Then Imam (A.S.) said, "O Harthama, my departure from this world and joining to my ancestors is near. My term has come. I will die of eating poisoned grapes or pomegranates. The caliph decides to bury me below his father's grave, Hārūn al-Rashīd, but Allah will not be pleased with it and the earth will not allow Ma'mūn to do so. They will not be able to dig the earth and bury me below Hārūn's grave as hard as they try. You will see it later. O Harthama, my grave will be at that special place. Inform Ma'mūn of the matters I told you after my death and shrouding to know more about me. Tell him no one is allowed to say the funeral prayer over me and they should wait for a short time until a veiled unknown Arab on whose face is the journey dust appears; he hurriedly will come towards my body; he will make his camel kneel down and he will dismount it and will say the funeral pray over my body. You should say prayer with him and then bury my dead body in that special place I told you before. O Harthama, I am worried lest you should reveal my secrets before my death." Harthama continues, "It did not last long that Imam (A.S.) died. It happened all he had told me. Imam (A.S.) ate poisoned pomegranates and grapes; and he passed away. Thenceforth I did what he had told me. I attended

not to take up his post but instead to go to Marw to see al-Ma'mūn and to keep him in touch with the situation; but al-Faḍl b. Sahl, who had been described by Harthama as a *majūs* and accused of committing acts of tyranny, had him arrested and imprisoned, with the caliph's approval; some days later he was put to death by his rival, in Dhū 'l-Qa'da 200/June 816. (*The Encyclopedia of Islam*) He had been killed before Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) set out for Marw early in 201/late summer 816 thus the narrator of this account must be someone other than the above mentioned Harthama. (trans.)

Ma'mūn's palace. I saw he had a handkerchief in his hand and he was lamenting the death of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). I asked for permission to tell him some facts. He permitted me to say. I said that Imam (A.S.) told me some secrets when he was alive and I promised not to reveal his secrets during his lifetime, and tell them only to you after his death. Then I told the matter to him. He was much surprised when he knew it. Then he ordered to perform the funeral ceremony and we were ready to say the funeral prayer with him. Suddenly we saw an unknown man, as Imam (A.S.) had described before, came towards the corpse. He talked with no one and performed prayer over the body of Imam (A.S.). People recited prayers behind him. Ma'mūn ordered to identify the person and bring him before him, but they saw neither the trace of him nor his camel. Then Ma'mūn commanded to dig a grave below his father, Hārūn al-Rashīd's tomb. I reminded him of Imam's prophecy, but he said he wanted to examine whether he was right or wrong."

He adds, "When they began their task, they could not dig a grave as much as they tried. It was as if the soil was harder than rock. The crowd was greatly surprised at this event, whereupon Ma'mūn acknowledged the truth of Imam's prophecy. He asked me to show him the place where 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) had appointed. I showed him the place. As soon as we removed the soil we saw a ready grave just the same as Imam (A.S.) had described before. Ma'mūn was greatly astonished when he witnessed it. The water in the grave was absorbed into the ground and the place became dry. Then we put Imam's body in the grave and we covered it by earth. The caliph was taken in surprise as he saw that Imam's prophecy came true. He was sad over this event and he often asked me to narrate him this incident. Whenever he heard it his sorrow was doubled and he used to pronounce the verse **(Surely we belong to Allah, and to Him we return.)**¹²

¹ Qur'ān: 2/156

² Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa Shāfi'ī, *Maṭālib al-Su'ūl*, pp. 300-302; Ibn Ṣabbāgh Mālikī, *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma*, P. 250; 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Manāwī Shāfi'ī, *al-Kawākib al-Durriyya*, vol. 1, pp. 265-266; Shablanjī Shāfi'ī, *Nūr al-Abṣār*, P. 244; Sanhūṭī

Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa's comment: After narrating this event Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa says, "Consider this great virtue and the lofty miraculous deeds of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) which shows his grace and nearness to Allah, the Exalted."

An important point regarding Imam al-Riḍā's greatness

Certainly Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) did not live more than two or three years after his migration to Khurāsān. He passed most of his life in Madina. If we have a look at his charisma we will see that the number of his miraculous deeds after his arrival in Khurāsān is even more than the ones in Madina. He performed thirteen miraculous deeds when he lived in Madina; and after his migration to Khurāsān he performed fourteen ones. It shows that while Ma'mūn's aim of bringing Imam (A.S.) to Khurāsān was to degrade him, but his migration accelerated the demonstration of his sublime personality and propounded his high grandeur. His miraculous deeds after his arrival in Khurāsān were of creative and dominating forms and more than they were before his migration to Khurāsān. Thus, the quality and the quantity of his miracles after his migration raised his high personality and propounded his lofty grandeur in Khurāsān, Iran, India and other Islamic lands, which caused Ma'mūn to martyr Imam (A.S.) a short after his migration.

Chapter Seven: Pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā

In this chapter, first we will discuss the excellence of going on pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) (*Ziyārat*) in the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and Ahl al-Bayt's sayings, and then we will enumerate the visits and the supplications of the great Sunnī scholars in his Holy Sanctuary and will also report on the visits and the appeals of people in the holy shrine and lastly we will relate the history of the construction of the dome and the sacred mausoleum of the eighth Imam of Shī'a from the beginning up to now.

The virtue of going on pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā

Visiting the sacred mausoleum of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and its reflection in the traditions narrated from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), and Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.); and emphasizing on pilgrimage recorded in the reliable Sunnī works assure us clearly of the important position of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and of being a religious norm to visit his Blessed Tomb.

In this chapter we will refer to eleven traditions on the virtue of pilgrimage to Imam al-Riḍā's tomb narrated from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.), Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), Imam al-Jawād (A.S.), and Imam al-Hādī (A.S.) documented in the authentic Sunnī works as follow:

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

1 Hākim Neyshābūrī narrated through his chains from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) who narrated from his ancestors from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), who said, "A part of my body will be buried in Khurāsān, any worried person who visits his tomb, his worries will be obliterated and any sinful person who goes on pilgrimage

to his shrine, his sins will be forgiven.”¹

2 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrated through his chains from Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) who narrated from his ancestors from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), who said, “A part of my body will be buried in Khurāsān, every believers who visits him, the Heaven will be his due and the Hell Fire will be forbidden upon him.”²

3 ‘Ā’isha is related to narrate a tradition from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), who said, “Anyone who performs the pilgrimage to the grave of my son (Imam al-Riḍā) in Ṭūs it is as if he has performed a Ḥajj pilgrimage.” She surprisingly asked one Ḥajj pilgrimage! The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said “two Ḥajj pilgrimages.” She shockingly asked again two Ḥajj pilgrimages! The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said “three Ḥajj pilgrimages.” ‘Ā’isha remained silent. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said to her “if you did not stop I would have enumerated seventy Ḥajj pilgrimages.”³ It is also obvious that ‘Ā’isha already knew what the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) meant by “my son” or “Ṭūs”, thus she did not ask about the meanings of these terms; but she was only astonished by the great reward of the pilgrimage to the grave of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to ask.

Imam al-Kāzim (A.S.)

4 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrated through his chains that Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) said, “Whoever goes on pilgrimage to the shrine of my son ‘Alī (A.S.) his reward is equal to seventy Ḥajj pilgrimages before Allah, and then he added how many Ḥajj pilgrimages which may not be accepted. Whoever visits him or stays one night in his mausoleum it is as if he has visited the Heavenly people and on the Day of Judgment the pilgrims would be with us Imams of Ahl-Bayt (A.S.) and the visitors of my son ‘Alī (A.S.) would be in a higher position and enjoy a spiritual life.”⁴

¹ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 190, Ḥ 476; Qundūzī, *Yanābir' al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, p. 341.

² Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 188, Ḥ 464

³ Qundūzī, *Yanābir' al-Mawadda*, vol. 2, P. 341

⁴ Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 194, Ḥ 471

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S)

5 Juwaynī Shāfi'ī through his chains narrated from Faḍḍāl who said, I heard 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) say that someone came to him and said, "O, the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) I saw the Apostle of Allah in my dream and he asked how you would be when some part [descendant] of mine would be buried in your land and my flesh would be hidden there; how you would keep my deposit." 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) answered him, "It is me who will be buried in your land. I am a part [descendant] of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.); and it is me who is his deposit and flesh. Whoever visits my grave while he has a true knowledge of me and he is obedient to me, my ancestors and I will be his intercessors on The Day of Judgment and whoever we are his intercessors will be delivered from his sins even if he has committed the sins of jinn and men."¹ Affirming this account Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, "Truly my father narrated from his grandfather, from his father, from his ancestor's, from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who said, whoever sees me while in his dream it is the same as he really sees me while he is awake, since Satan cannot present himself in my figure nor the figure of any of my Successors. A true dream is part of the seventy features of the Prophethood."² Therefore Imam's tradition justifies all the dreams about the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and his Successors.

6 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates through his chains that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, "I will be poisoned and then buried in a distant land; I know this as my father, from his father, from his ancestors, from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) from The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) taught me. Be aware, whoever visits me in my loneliness, my ancestors and I will be his intercessors on The Day of Judgment and whoever we are his intercessors will be delivered even if he has committed the sins of jinn and men."³ Juwaynī reports it

¹ *Ibid*; Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi'ī, *Ta'rikh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, pp. 86; Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī, *Wasīlat al-Khādim*, P. 223

² Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 191, Ḥ 468

³ *Ibid*.

astonishingly and quotes, “O, what a miracle! It is a shining miracle and glad tiding for covering and erasing the ugliness of the sins.”¹

7 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates through his chains that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Whoever visits my far away tomb, I will answer his call for help in three places on the Day of Judgment, when he is given his book of deeds in his left or right hand, when passing over the Path (*Ṣirāt*)² and when they weigh his acts in the Divine Balance.”³

8 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī also narrates through his chains that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Do not go on the pilgrimages to other tombs, except our shrines. Surely I will be poisoned cruelly and will be buried in a distant land, whoever visits my shrine, his pleas will be answered and his sins will be forgiven.”⁴

9 Qundūzī Ḥanafī on the authority of Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī quotes when Maʾmūn forcefully imposed his heir apparent on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); he addressed Maʾmūn and said, “By Allah my father narrated me from his father and forefathers, from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) that I will depart from this world before you. The angels in the Heaven and earth will weep for me, and I will be buried in a distant land.”⁵

Imam al-Jawād (A.S.)

10 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates through his chains that Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) said, “Whoever goes on pilgrimage to my father’s shrine Allah will forgive his past and present sins; and on the Day of Judgment he will be seated beside the Holy Prophet’s site until Allah completes the reckoning of His servants.”⁶

Imam al-Hādī (A.S.)

11 Ḥākim also narrates through his chains that Imam al-Hādī

¹ *Ibid.*

² the bridge over Hell, which leads to Paradise

³ Juwaynī, *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 191, Ḥ 468

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Muḥammad Khwāja Pārsā Ḥanafī, *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb li Waṣl al-Aḥbāb* cited in Qundūzī, *Yanābīʿ al-Mawadda*, vol. 3, P. 167

⁶ Juwaynī, *Farāʾid al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 195, Ḥ 473

(A.S.) said, “Whoever goes on pilgrimage to the shrine of my grandfather [Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)], performs his full ritual ablution and then and recites a two *rak‘a* prayer in his mausoleum; and in the *qunūt* of his prayer asks Allah what he needs, Allah the Exalted will answer his requests, except his demands for committing sins or breaking off connections with relative. The mausoleum of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is a part of the Heaven. All the believers who visits there, Allah guards them against the chastisement of the fire and He shall enter them in the Paradise.”¹

Mashhad al-Riḍā

An important issue which has been less discussed is the history of building the mausoleum and the dome over Imam’s grave; and the massive presence of the Sunnī scholars and followers of the Sunnī schools of thought who visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to seek help from the Holy Imam (A.S.). According to the Sunnī historians and traditionists’ reports from the beginning of the third/ninth century, when Imam (A.S.) was martyred, up to now his holy shrine was constituted with a dome and mausoleum; and the great Sunnī scholars and followers, of every school of thought went on pilgrimage to this sacred threshold and invoked Allah to fulfill their needs and accomplish their requests.

These reports show that building mausoleum over graves was a norm and permitted; and visiting the tombs specially the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) graves is a norm not an innovation. Thus seeking refuge to a soul and invoking favour from Allah are permitted and they refute the extremists’ beliefs of Wahhabis.

We continue our discussion of pilgrimages and intercessions of great Sunnī scholars to holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) from the beginning up to now.

The pilgrimages and the invocations of Shī‘a and Sunnī scholars to Mashhad al-Riḍā

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had many virtues and performed miraculous

¹ *Ibid.*

deeds during his blessed life and its climax was after his historical arrival in Neyshābūr, when the leading Sunnī scholars sought blessings from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and some knelt down and kissed his mule's feet.

However his miraculous deeds and virtues are not limited to his lifetime and by the affirmation of the Sunnī scholars since the beginning of the third century his holy shrine was frequented by the pilgrims who sought refuge and healing and according to their reports visiting his mausoleum increased every year.

It seem that the traditions narrated from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) emphasizing on performing pilgrimage to his holy shrine encouraged people to rush to his holy shrine. They constructed a dome and mausoleum on his grave to honour him who is considered as a part of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.).

Fourth/tenth century

1 Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma Shāfi'ī (d. 311/923) and Abū 'Alī Thaqafī Shāfi'ī (d. 328/929): Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates from Muḥammad b. al-Mu'ammal b. Ḥasan b. 'Īsā who said, "Once we went on pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Ṭūs along with some prominent ḥadīth scholars as Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma, Abū 'Alī Thaqafī and some other scholars. We saw a large number of people who had come to visit the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). We were surprised when we saw Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma honored the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), wept and humbled towards it."¹

More astonishing is the narration of Muḥammad b. al-Mu'ammal that some narrators did not preserve them. He said, "Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma's humility before the grave of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) took place in presence of some highly esteemed people from Neyshābūr, Harāt, Ṭūs and Sarakhs. They all watched and recorded his action and behaviour while visiting the shrine of

¹Juwaynī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 198, Ḥ 477; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī Shāfi'ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339 both quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). They became very pleased and granted alms for this virtuous action and told if such a visiting was not the norm and virtue Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma would never do so.”¹

2 Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī (d. 354/965) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) is one of the nobles and wise men of Banī Hāshim. I visited his shrine many times. When I was in Ṭūs, whenever I faced with a difficulty, I visited his shrine (blessings of Allah be upon his ancestor and upon him). My calls were answered and my problems were solved, by the dispensation of Allah, and I experienced it several times. O Allah! Make us die with the love of Your chosen Prophet and his progeny, blessings of Allah be upon him and his entire descendant.”²

3 Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Sahl Shāfi‘ī (d. 384/994): Ḥākim Neyshābūrī relates that Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Sahl, the jurist said, “I always go to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) for solving my worldly and spiritual problems, and I pray to Allah beside the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Allah answers my prayers; and my problem is solved. I learned it by experience and it has become a habit for me. I usually pass the night there.”³

Fifth/eleventh century

4 Ḥākim Neyshābūrī says, “Allah made me to experience the miraculous deeds of Imam al-Riḍā’s tomb. I was suffering from gout. I could hardly walk. Thus I went on pilgrimage to his shrine, and then I went to Nawqān with canvas shoes. I was still in Nawqān that I was healed of my disease and I returned to Neyshābūr while I was completely cured”⁴ In addition to above words he also witnessed the confessions of the other prominent Sunnī scholars who were miraculously healed in the shrine of

¹ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 198, Ḥ 477; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī Shāfi‘ī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7, P. 339 both quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*

² Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī, *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* vol. 8 P. 457

³ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 220, Ḥ 496, quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*

⁴ *Ibid*

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and he narrated them as follow:

5 Ḥamza, the Egyptian pilgrim: Ḥākīm Neyshābūrī narrates through his chains that he was in Marw al-Rud when he met an Egyptian pilgrim called Ḥamza. He said, “I have come on pilgrimage from Egypt to Ṭūs. It was near sunset when I approached this mausoleum; I visited Imam’s grave and performed my prayer. There were no pilgrims except me; when I performed my evening prayer the custodian asked me to leave the shrine so that he could lock the door. I asked him to shut the door but allow me to stay inside and perform prayers; since I have come from a distant land. The custodian consented and locked the door from outside. I performed prayers until I was sleepy and put my head on knees. As I raised my head I saw a piece of cloth hanging on the opposite wall with this couplet written on it: Whoever is happy when he sees by visiting the tomb/ Allah relieves his distress. So let him come near this tomb where resides/ the son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), the Selected. Thus I stood up and said prayers until the day break and then I sat down; I put my head on knees. When I looked again I saw nothing on the wall. What I had seen before was nothing but a passage written with wet ink, as if it was written just now. I got out of the shrine at sunrise.”¹

6 Muḥammad b. Qāsim Neyshābūrī: Juwaynī narrates through his chains from Muḥammad b. Qāsim Neyshābūrī that he says, “I was among those who did not believe in visiting Imam’s grave and I used to prevent people from going on its pilgrimage. One night I saw in my dream that I was in the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was saying prayer beside the grave of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Suddenly I heard a voice say: Whoever wishes to visit a grave/ that Allah shall relieve the distresses of its visitor. Let him visit this tomb where Allah made a descendant of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) rest in. He continues, “When I woke up I was sweating profusely, I called on my servant immediately to prepare my mount. I mounted on my horseback

¹ *Ibid*, P. 196, Ḥ 474

and set off for visiting the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Since then I go to the pilgrimage of Imam al-Riḍā's mausoleum twice a year."¹ Juwaynī says that he narrates this dream and all the accounts of Sallar Abū al-Ḥasan Makkī b. Manṣūr 'Allan Karajī on the authority of Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Muḥyī b. Abū al-Barakāt Ḥarbī by the authority of Imam Majd al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Rabī' b. Sulaymān b. Ḥazzār Wāsiṭī on the authority of Abū Zur'a Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir b. 'Alī Maqdisī.

7 Fakhr al-Dīn 'Adīb Janadī: Juwaynī Shāfi'ī says, "The learned and of noble character and admired merit leader Fakhr al-Dīn 'Adīb Janadī, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote this poem on visiting the sacred grave of Imam al-Riḍā may Allah shower blessings on him: "O, the one who desires the consent of Allah/ be ready and know that the wrong is well blamed. Thus go on pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), peace be upon him.

8 Abū al-Naḍr Mu'adhdhin Neyshābūrī: Ḥākim Neyshābūrī quoting from Abū al-Naḍr Mu'adhdhin says, "I was suffering from a chronic disease. My tongue was locked and I could not speak. It came to my mind to go on pilgrimage to Imam al-Riḍā shrine; pray beside his grave and request him to intercede with Allah on my behalf to cure my disease. I set off from Neyshābūr for visiting his shrine. I performed my prayer in the upper side of his tomb and asked Allah to cure the illness of my tongue for the sake of Imam's position and grandeur. I fell asleep while prostrating. I saw in my dream that the Moon was split and a shining personality came out of it. He came near me and called, O Abū al-Naḍr, say "There is no god but Allah" I explained in sign language that I could not speak and my tongue had been locked. He seriously shouted and said, "Do you not believe in Allah's power? Say, "There is no god but Allah". In spite of my dumbness I could then say "There is no god but Allah". Thenceforth my tongue was unlocked and I could speak. I walked from Mashhad to Neyshābūr in gratitude for this blessing; and I repeated the sentence "There is no god but Allah"

¹ *Ibid*, P. 197, Ḥ 475

continually. Thereafter my tongue was never locked.¹

9 An unknown man: Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates through his chains that a man, whose name he had forgotten, was sitting beside the grave of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, “I thought about the nobleness and grandeur of the buried here. I denied him in my heart. Thus I took the Holy Qur’ān and opened it. I saw this verse, **(They ask thee to tell them, 'Is it true?' Say: 'Yes, by my Lord! It is true; you cannot frustrate Him.**²). By Allah I repeated it for three times and each time I saw the same verse.”³

10 Zayd Fārsī: Ḥākim Neyshābūrī quoting from Zayd Fārsī says, “I was suffering from gout for two years in Marw al-Rud. I could hardly stand up, or say my prayer uprightly. I was told in my dream to go on pilgrimage to Imam al-Riḍā shrine and touch my feet to his tomb and then ask Allah to cure your disease. Thus I hired a mule and went to Ṭūs and rubbed my feet to his tomb. Then I requested Allah to cure my disease. Allah healed my illness. I stayed there for two years and did not suffer from gout anymore.”⁴

11 Ḥamawayh b. ‘Alī: Ḥākim Neyshābūrī also narrates through his chains from Ḥamawayh b. ‘Alī, and says, “I was in Balkh with Ḥamawayh b. ‘Alī. Once he rode and I was with him. We were in the bazaar of Balkh when he saw a man. He ordered to arrest the man and took him to his house. When he returned home he ordered to grant him an agile donkey for his journey; and spread the tablecloth and serve bread and cheese. When it was ready he ordered to bring the man. As he came he told him that you had slapped me in the past and I want to revenge for it now. Do you remember when you and I were visiting Imam al-Riḍā’s tomb and you asked Allah to give you a donkey, two hundred *Dirhams* [silver coins] and a tablecloth full of bread and cheese? And I sought from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to bestow me the government of Khurāsān.

¹ *Ibid*, P. 217, Ḥ 491

² Qur’ān: 10/53

³ Juwaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Farā'id al-Simṭayn*, vol. 2, P. 218, Ḥ 493, quoted from Ḥākim Neyshābūrī, *Ta'rikh Neyshābūr*

⁴ *Ibid*, P. 219, Ḥ 494

You slapped me and said that it was impossible and do not ask for it. Now Allah has bestowed on me what I wanted and given you what you wanted. Now you owe me a slap and it is my right to take revenge for it.”¹

12 Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr Shāfi‘ī: Ḥākim Neyshābūrī narrates from Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr Shāfi‘ī, the jurist, that he said, “Allah answered what I demanded Him in the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Even I besought Him to bestow me a child and Allah answered my prayer while I was completely hopeless.”²

Eighth/fourteenth century:

13 Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī (d. 748/1347): Concerning the pilgrimage to that holy mausoleum he says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) has a shrine in Ṭūs where people visit it for pilgrimage.”³ “And he has a great mausoleum in Ṭūs which is for pilgrimage.”⁴ Concerning Imam al-Kāẓim’s children and his son Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, “He has a great mausoleum in Ṭūs.”⁵

14 Şafadī Shāfi‘ī (d. 764/1362): In a short report he says, “He was buried in Ṭūs and his tomb is pilgrimage center.”⁶

15 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa Marrakeshī (d. 779/1377): As it was said above (Chapter Two: Personality) he reports pilgrimages to the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) by his supporters and even by his opponents.⁷

Ninth/fifteenth century

16 ‘Aṭā Allah Shīrāzī (d. 803/1400): He considers Mashhad al-Riḍā as a final destination for pilgrims from every walk of life and says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā spoke with people in their own languages and he is the most eloquent speaker and the most learned in every languages. His holy shrine and his shining tomb is

¹ *Ibid*, H. 495

² *Ibid*, vol. 2, P. 220, H 498

³ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9 P. 393

⁴ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *al-‘Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, vol. 1, P. 266

⁵ Dhahabī Shāfi‘ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9 P. 393

⁶ Şafadī Shāfi‘ī, *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 22, P. 24

⁷ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuhfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharā’ib al-Amṣār*, known as *Riḥla Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, P. 401

the final destination for pilgrims from Iran and all other parts of the world.”¹

Tenth/sixteenth century

17 Mīr Khwānd Shāfi‘ī (d. 903/1497): He also reports a wonderful account of the pilgrims of Imam al-Riḍā shrine from Iran as well as Byzantine, India and other countries. He says, “Remembering the life of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, May Allah be pleased with him. The sacred Mashhad in general and the shrine of Imam (A.S.) in particular are the capital of Iran and the destination of the noble and the humble pilgrims. Different people from far and near, from the Far Byzance and from India leave their country and their friends, and go to visit his holy shrine. They consider it as a great blessing and a fruitful investment in this world the next world’s welfare. His virtues and marvels are too numerous to be enumerated, but we describe some of them briefly.” Then he describes Imam’s miraculous deeds and in the end he adds’ “Many anecdotes are ascribed to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) that shows his grandeur and abundance of virtues.”²

18 Faḍl Allah b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī (d. 927/1520) in an eloquent wordings and respectful expressions considers Imam al-Riḍā shrine a focal point for the need and where their needs are answered and says, “Visiting the blessed shrine of Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), the leader of the guided and the ruler of men and jinn; the son of Imam Mūsā al-Kāzīm (A.S.), the son of Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), the son of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A.S.), the son of Imam ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.) , the son of Ḥusayn al-Shahīd (A.S.), the son of ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā (A.S.), may Allah be pleased with all of them, comforts the souls and hearts. People often recite the Glorious Qur’ān in this sacred abode and we can say it is one of the holy places. This holy shrine is never empty of worshippers and why it should not be so. It is the shrine of an Imam who is the expression of the Holy Prophet’s knowledge and

¹ ‘Aṭā Allāh Shīrāzī , *Rawḍat al-Aḥbāb*, ms. vol. 4, P. 43; Bahādur Khān Hindi Ḥanafī, *Ta’rikh al-Aḥmadī*, P. 36

² Mīr Khwānd Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rikh Rawḍat al-Ṣafā’*, vol. 3, P. 41, 46 and 52

the inheritor of the Chosen virtues, the true Imam, the absolute guidance and the heir of the Prophethood. People cannot understand his perfection, even if one thousand books are written on his virtuous deeds. Formerly, when I decided to go on pilgrimage to his shrine I wrote this ballad and it is suitable to rewrite here since it is apt to that virtuous Imam.”¹ He also narrates a ballad in praise of the eighth Imam (A.S.).² He also composed an articulated writing on Imam’s virtues and a prayer book for his pilgrims.³ He states highly praising words about the illuminated and the sacred shrine of Imam al-Riḍa (A.S.). He says it is advisable for his lovers, his servants and his followers to read the book *Wasīlat al-Khādīm ilā al-Makhdūm dar Sharḥ i Ṣalwāt i Chahārdah Ma’sūm* in his shrine. He also wrote many poems on Imam’s qualities and virtues.

19 Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi’ī (d. 942/1535) says about Imam al-Kāẓim’s children, “The most meritorious of Imam al-Kāẓim’s children and also the best of creatures was ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā.”⁴ In continuation, under the title “Remembrance of the eighth Imam, ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), blessings of Allah be upon him.” says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) shrine is located in the land of Khurāsān. It is visited by the noble and the notable personalities of the world and it is the final destination of the noble and humble.”⁵ Then he adds the following verses on his eulogy.

Peace be upon the progeny of Ṭāhā and Yāsīn. Peace be upon the progeny of the best prophets.

Peace be upon a green meadow where an Imam (A.S.) is buried/an Imam and are proud of him.

Peace be upon the best of mankind Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)

¹ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Mihmān-nāmi yi Bukhārā*, P. 336

² Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 223

³ *Ibid*, P. 243

⁴ Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi’ī, *Ta’rīkh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 81

⁵ Faḍl Allāh b. Rūzbahān Khunjī Iṣfahānī Ḥanafī (d. 927/1520), *Wasīlat al-Khādīm*, P. 82

and the leader of all the messengers may Allah shower His blessings upon him and the infallible and the pious Imams.¹

In continuation he opens a chapter in his book under the title “Discourse on the virtues of the holy Imam Peace be upon our Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and on him”² and concerning Imam (A.S.) he says, “The abode of the martyr of Khurāsān, the pure and the pious Imam, ‘Alī (A.S.) the son of Mūsā (A.S.), the son of Ja‘far (A.S.), the son of Bāqir (A.S.), is visited by the kinsfolk and the relatives and the aliens, people come on pilgrimage from far and near and all affirm his grandeur and qualities. His virtues are more than you can enumerate and his Imamate is proved by texts narrated from his holy ancestors. Then he adds a verse beginning as follow:

20 Since the world was brightened by the sun’s light, no one has seen a man better than ‘Alī (A.S.) the son of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.).

21 Afterward he describes his virtues and in the end he says, “It should be known that the qualities and miraculous deeds of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) are innumerable. As I am not able to count his blessings and the benedictions of his holy shrine thus, I sufficed to say them briefly.”³

Eleventh/seventeenth century

22 Ibn al-‘Imād Ḥanbalī (d. 1089/1676), says, “He has a great mausoleum in Ṭūs which is visited frequently.”⁴

Fourteenth/twentieth century

23 Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi‘ī (d. 1350/1931) considers the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S) as a great pilgrimage center in the world of Islam and says, “His grand shrine is located in the holy city of Mashhad and it is a great pilgrimage center in the world of Islam. It has a golden dome which is unparalleled in the world.

¹ *Ibid*, pp. 82-83

² Khwānd Amīr Ḥusaynī Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’rīkh Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, vol. 2, P. 81

³ *Ibid*, P. 91

⁴ Ibn al-‘Imād Ḥanbalī, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār min Dhahab*, vol 3, P. 14

Allah may increase his honour.”¹

The holy shrine of Imam al-Riḍā

Third and fourth/ninth century

1 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Maqdisī (d. 380/990) says about the sacred mausoleum of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā’s tomb is in Ṭūs. They have built a fortress around the shrine and it has a bazaar and houses. ‘Amīd al-Dawla Fā’iq constructed a mosque in the shrine which is unrivaled in Khurāsān in magnificence.”² Maqdisī lived in the fourth/tenth century and his account shows that such buildings were constructed around the tomb of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the third century³ and it was not considered an innovation (*bid’a*), but the governors of Khurāsān and the Abbasid caliphs renovated and expanded such buildings; and ‘Amīd al-Dawla Fā’iq one of the Abbasid viziers made a beautiful mosque inside the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

2 Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad Muhallabī (d. 380/990) also gives a description of the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) nearly the same as Maqdisī. He considers Nawqān as one of the important towns of Khurāsān and says about the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) that, “Nawqān is one of the largest and the most prosperous cities of Khurāsān. The shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the grave of Hārūn al-Rashīd are located in this town. There is a citadel around the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the believers stay there to worship Allah.”⁴

¹ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, pp. 158-159

² Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Maqdisī (other) (d. 380/990), *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Ma’rifat al-Aqālīm*, edited by De Goeje, translated [into Persian] by ‘Alīnaqī Munzawī, Shirkat Mu’allifān va Mutarjimān Iran, Tehran, 1361 sh. P. 488

³ That is in the age of the first three "generations"—those of the Companions [*Ṣaḥāba*], or Successors [*Tābi’īn*] or the Successors of the Successors [*Atbā’ al-tābi’īn*] who are considered as the "Pious Predecessors" (*al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*) according to Salafiyya beliefs. (trans.)

⁴ Muhallabī, *Kitāb al-‘Azīzī* or *al-Masālik wa al-Mamālik*, P. 155

Eighth/twelfth century

3 Dhahabī Shāfi'ī (d. 748/1347), in a short report, about the dome and the mausoleum of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says, “Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā has a shrine which is visited by people.”¹ “He has a great mausoleum in Ṭūs where people go on pilgrimage.”² “... and ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) [the son of Mūsā b. Ja‘far] has a magnificent shrine in Ṭūs”³

4 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa Marrakeshī (d. 779/1377) when arrived in Khurāsān described the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and says, “We travelled to Mashhad al-Riḍā, and he is ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Ja‘far b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Shahīd (A.S.) the son of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), may Allah be pleased with them. Mashhad al-Riḍā is a big town. They built a high dome over his grave which is very magnificent. The walls of the dome are decorated with tiles. There was a silver framework over his burial chamber and over it there were silver niches hanging. The framework of his burial chamber was of silver and its curtain was of gold brocades silk. The courtyard of his mausoleum was covered with different types of carpets. Hārūn al-Rashīd’s grave was beside it. Whenever the Shī‘a visited Imam’s tomb they saluted Imam’s grave and trampled Hārūn’s tomb to express their disgust over cruelty perpetrated by him.”⁴

Fourteenth/twentieth century

5 Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī Shāfi'ī (d. 1350/1931) describes the shrine of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as follows, “His magnificent shrine is located in the holy city of Mashhad and it is a great pilgrimage center in the world of Islam. It has a golden dome which is unparalleled in the world. Allah may increase his honour.”⁵

¹ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 9, P. 393

² Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *al-‘Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar*, vol. 1, P. 266

³ Dhahabī Shāfi'ī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 6, P. 274

⁴ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharā’ib al-Amṣār*, known as *Riḥla Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, P. 401

⁵ Qāḍī Bahjat Afandī, *Tashrīḥ wa Muḥākamah dar Tārīkh Āl Muḥammad*, pp. 158-159

An unanswered question

Evaluating the seventh chapter, we observe that 1) the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and Ahl al-Bayt's sayings emphasized the importance of visiting Imam Riḍā's shrine and encouraged people to go on pilgrimage to his shrine and considered pilgrimage not only a norm (*Sunna*) but also an important and emphatic one. 2) Taking this important *Sunna* into consideration caused people to respect his tomb and construct a dome and mausoleum for the honour of the descendant of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). 3) Emphasizing on visiting his holy shrine, encouraged followers of every sect and school of thought from every part of the world to rush to his shrine and beseech Allah to fulfill their needs. Thus we pose this question to the Wahhabis that they ignore the historical facts in spite of their claim of being Sunnī they oppose the fundamental Muslim beliefs and refute pilgrimage and destroy the shrine of Muslim saints.

Epilogue

Regarding the above seven chapters we conclude that:

1 The Sunnī discourses concerning the spiritual and the scientific personality of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) are good subjects for proximity between the Sunnī and the Shī'a schools of thought, although the acts of the compilers of the Sunnī canonical books and the contemporary Sunni for not narrating these traditions are still in question.

2 The position of the Sunnī scholars throughout history, like Abū Bakr b. Khuzayma Shāfi'ī, Ibn Ḥibbān Bustī Shāfi'ī, Ḥākim Neyshābūrī Shāfi'ī and many other Sunnī scholars who, regardless to their sect and affiliation, supplicated, cried, moaned and lamented beside the Imam al-Riḍā's tomb and asked Allah to fulfill their wishes prove that they followed the real norms (*Sunna*) of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and these stands by the prominent Sunnī scholars can be considered as the climax point for creating proximity between the Sunnī and the Shī'ite schools of thought.

3 The Wahhabism who prevents Muslims from visiting the shrines of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), just men, martyrs and the righteous; and it destroys the tombs in Baqī' and the shrine cities of Iraq; and prevents and forbids supplication and invocation from Allah beside these tombs, is in total opposition to the Holy Prophet's traditions and the Muslim norms; and only create obstacles in bringing unity and proximity in the united nation (*Ummah*) of Islam.¹

¹ Here it is worth narrating the letter of Shaykh Ja'far Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' (d. 1228/1813), entitled *Manhaj al-Rashād li man arāda 'l-Sidād* addressed to 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muḥammad b. Sa'ūd (assassinated in 1218/1803), in 1210/1795, some eight years before the Wahhabi sacking of Karbalā'. "I beseech you by the One Who bestowed on you hearing and vision: ponder this matter carefully and purify your soul from all desire to stand apart from others, this being incumbent upon us as is the avoidance of adhering unquestioningly to our fathers and ancestors out of pure love. There is no

Thus, we can decisively say that Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) are the pivot for Islamic unity, as Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) the eighth Imam of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) is the focal point of proximity between the

difference between the living and the dead, for seeking help (*al-istighātha*) from a created being or seeking refuge in him on the assumption that he is an independent agent (*fā'il mukhtār*) is indeed a species of unbelief (*kufr*). Such is the case with [the invocation] of Jesus and Mary. But the simple belief that the dead can either hear or not hear invocations made to them is not a doctrine of religion the knowledge of which is incumbent on the Muslims. The one who holds either of these positions is either in the right and will be rewarded, or he is in the wrong and will be forgiven. Now words that convey hope or trust placed in other than Allah, reliance upon other than Allah seeking refuge (*al-iltijā'*) in or aid from other than Allah, if taken in their literal sense, would not leave any Muslim on the face of the earth. There is no one who does not seek aid against his enemies, and who does not rely upon his friends, and who does not have recourse to a ruler. If what is meant is that the created person upon whom reliance is placed has the ability to regulate and dispose the affairs of the world, independently of divine command, then indeed this is *kufr*; otherwise, the practice is entirely harmless. It will be appropriate to cite here what has been narrated here by al-'Utbī [or Qutaybī as Algar has written]. He relates that he was once sitting next to the tomb of the Messenger of Allah-peace and blessings be upon him-when a Bedouin came offered his salutations to the Messenger, and then recited this verse: يا خير من ذُفنت بالقاع أعظمه قطاب من طيبهن القاع والأكم/ نفسى الفداء لقبر انت ساكنه فيه العفاف، وفيه الجود O best and greatest of those ever buried in the earth who have made it fragrant with their perfume / May my soul be a ransom for the tomb in which you dwell for there lie purity, and generosity, and nobility. The Bedouin then said: "Here I am, o Messenger of Allah; I have wronged myself. I seek forgiveness of Allah and I ask you O Messenger of Allah, that you seek forgiveness for me." Al-'Utbī relates that he then fell asleep, and dreamed that the Prophet told him: "O 'Utbī, find the Bedouin, and give him the glad tidings that Allah has forgiven him." He accordingly rose and gave the Bedouin the good news." (From *Manhaj al-Rashād li man arāda 'l-Sidād*, printed as appendix to Muḥammad Ḥusayn Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', *al-'Abaqāt al-'Anbarriyya fi 'l-Ṭabaqāt al-Ja'fariyya*, ed. Jaudat al-Qazwīnī Beirut, 1417/1998, p. 555 cited in Hamid Algar, *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*, Published and distributed by Islamic Publications International, P.O. Box 705, Oneonta, NY 13820, USA pp. 81-84). (Trans).

Muslim schools, since he was the shelter and the refuge for people regardless to their religious affiliations during his lifetime; and after his martyrdom the people of different sects and schools of thought rush to his holy shrine to seek his benedictions and blessings; and the grandeur and dignity of his holy shrine is ever increasing. In the hope of proximity between the different sects and schools of thought in Islam

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