

# **Understanding a Passage in the Ziyarat Texts**

# Understanding a Passage in the Ziyarat Texts - Islamic Queries 18



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## Understanding a Passage in the Ziyarat Texts

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## Question

In many *ziyarat*, including *Ziyarat al-Warith* and *Ziyarat al-Arbaʿeen*, this phrase appears:

إِنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَيَأْيَابِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“Indeed, I believe in you, and I am certain of your return (*rajʿah*), (and I follow you) in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds.”<sup>1</sup>

What is the actual meaning of:

بَشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي...

“...(And I follow you) in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds,” and how does it relate to the previous part of the *ziyarah*?

## Brief Answer

Belief in the Divinely-appointed Leadership (*Imamah*) of the twelve Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a’), and belief in their return (*rajʿah* – before the Day of Judgement) are among the foremost principles of Shīʿa Islam. Thus, the phrase:

إِنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَيَأْيَابِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“Indeed, I believe in you, and I am certain of your return, (and I follow you) in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds,” which contains these two fundamental Shīʿa beliefs appears in numerous supplications and *ziyarat* texts.

With that said, based on some interpretations, this line:

بَشَرَائِعِ دِينِي

“(And I follow you) in the laws of my religion” can somewhat vary in its meaning.

According to one interpretation, and considering that the word “*tābiʿ*” (follower) is implied but not expressly mentioned in the *ziyarat* texts, the meaning of the phrase could be:

إِنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَيَايَاكُمْ مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“(I bear witness that) I believe in you, and I am certain of your return (*rajah*), and in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds, I am your follower.”

## Detailed Answer

Belief in *rajah* is one of the main beliefs of Shia Islam, to the extent that Imam Ja'far al-*adiq* ? said:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَقُلْ بِمُتَعَتِنَا وَ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَجَعَتِنَا.

“That person is not from us who does not believe in our *mutah* (temporary marriage) and our return (*rajah*).”<sup>2</sup>

It seems that belief in these two (*mutah* and *rajah*) was among the carefully guarded secrets of Shiaism. In another narration, Imam al-*adiq* (a') considered these things two to be signs of a believer.<sup>3</sup>

*Mutah*, or temporary marriage, is among the disputed rulings between Shias and most Sunnis; and belief in the *Imamah* of the twelve Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a') and the *rajah* are doctrinal matters specific to Shia Islam. Therefore, they have been emphasized in the narrations.

One of the frequently repeated phrases in supplications and *ziyarat* transmitted from the immaculate Imams (a') is:

أَشْهَدُ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَيَايَاكُمْ مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am certain of your return, [and I follow you] in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds,”<sup>4</sup> & <sup>5</sup> and this encompasses belief in the Imams (a'), and belief in *rajah*.

Breaking this line down into a few components, along with their translation, we can see that there are three aspects to this line:

- I bear witness to the fact that I believe in you. (أَشْهَدُ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ)
- I am certain of your return (*rajah*). (وَيَايَاكُمْ مُوقِنٌ)
- With the laws<sup>6</sup> of my religion, and the final outcomes<sup>7</sup> of my deeds [I am certain of your return]. (بِشَرَائِعِ)

دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

Parts “a” and “b” of this phrase are clear and obvious, and what somewhat affects the fluency and clarity of the phrase is part “c.”

Several theories have been proposed for translating the part:

بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي...

“...in the laws of my religion and the final outcomes of my deeds” which we will first present with an introductory explanation.

As we know, in the Arabic language, prepositions and the nouns they govern (jār and majr) are not independent, and for their meaning to be clear in a sentence, they must be interpreted with an independent word [that is sometimes intended, but not expressly mentioned in the text].

The phrase “in the laws of” – “*bi-sharā'ihī*” 8 (بِشَرَائِعِ), and consequently “my religion” – “*dīnī*” (دِينِي), as well as the phrase conjoined to it “and the final outcomes of my deeds” (وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي), must be interpreted with an independent word, and according to Arabic grammarians, must be related to an independent word [that is intended, but not expressly mentioned].

Considering this, several theories have been proposed regarding what these prepositional phrases are related to, and consequently, several meanings have been suggested for this sentence:

1. It has been said that “in the laws of my religion” (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to the verb “I bear witness” – “*ashhadu*” (أَشْهَدُ), meaning that for emphasis we say: “Not only do I bear witness, but the laws of my religion and the final outcomes of my deeds **also** believe in you and testify to your return along with me.”<sup>9</sup>

2. The phrase “in the laws of my religion” (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to “believe, be certain” – (*muḥmin, maḥqin*) – (مُؤْمِنٌ، مُؤَقِّنٌ), in which case the meaning is: “With the help of these two (meaning the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds), and by adhering to them, I believe in you and have faith in your return.”<sup>10</sup>

3. The phrase in question can be read as follows, considering Arabic grammar, and the pause we create in recitation:

أَشْهَدُ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَيَايَاكُمْ

“I bear witness that I am a believer in you and in your return.”

Then after a short pause, read the other sentences:

مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“I am certain of the laws of my religion, and the outcomes of my deeds.”

In this case, “your return” – *“iyyābikum”* (إِيَابِكُمْ) is conjoined to “believer” – *“muḥmin”* (مُؤْمِنٌ); and “laws of my religion” (شَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to “certain” – *“mūqin”* (مُوقِنٌ); and *“mūqin”* (مُوقِنٌ) itself is the second predicate for *“anna”* (أَنَّ) and is interpreted with it.

With that said, the meaning of the sentence would be: “I bear witness that I believe in you and your return... and I am certain of the laws of my religion, and the final outcome of my deeds (which is either Paradise or Hell).” [11](#)

4. It is possible that the “wa” (وَ) before “laws of my religion” – (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) has been omitted here, as can be seen in some supplications.

In the ziyārah of Imam al-ḥusayn (a) on the night of *Eid al-Fiṭr*, it is stated:

وَإِيَابِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ وَبِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِيمِ عَمَلِي

“And I am certain of your return, and the laws of my religion, and the outcomes of my deeds.” [12](#)

In this case, the probability that a word has been omitted is very high; that is, what the phrase “in the laws of my religion” (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to has been omitted, in which case its meaning will be the same as the third meaning offered above. [13](#)

5. Contrary to the fourth possibility, the conjunctive “wa” (وَ) has not been omitted, but what “in the laws of my religion” (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to has been omitted. It seems that the independent word that has been omitted is a word from the root *“tabiʿa”* (to follow) – (تَبِعَ), for which several pieces of evidence and reasons are presented:

**Firstly:** Considering the meaning of the entire phrase and the meaning that “in the laws of my religion” (بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي) interprets well with, it is better for a word from the root *“tabiʿa”* (تَبِعَ) to come; that is, I **follow** you with the laws of my religion.

**Secondly:** Given that “certainty” (مُوقِنٌ) and “believe” (مُؤْمِنٌ), which appear in the previous phrases, are active participles, it is better for that omitted word – which is from the root *“tabiʿa”* (تَبِعَ) – to also be of the same form and context.

**Thirdly:** Considering the numerous contextual evidence we have in supplications and ziyārat, this

omitted word could be “*tabiʿ*” (تَابِعٌ) (follower); because in these supplications and *ziyarah*, which are numerous, “in the laws of my religion” (شَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to a word from the root “*tabiʿa*” (تَبِعَ).

For example, we refer to several cases:

In the *ziyarah* of Imam al-ʿusayn (aʿ), we recite:

أَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَلَكُمْ تَابِعٌ فِي ذَاتِ نَفْسِي وَشَرَائِعِ دِينِ وَخَاتِمَةِ عَمَلِي

“I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am your **follower** in my own self, in the laws of my religion, and in the final outcome of my deeds.” [14](#)

2. In another *ziyarah* for Imam al-ʿusayn (aʿ), we recite:

أَشْهَدُكُمْ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَبِإِيَابِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ وَلَكُمْ تَابِعٌ فِي ذَاتِ نَفْسِي وَشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَاتِمَةِ عَمَلِي

“I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am certain of your return, and I am your **follower** in my own self, in the laws of my religion, and in the final outcome of my deeds.” [15](#)

3. In the *ziyarah* in which we send salutations and blessings upon both Imam ʿasan (aʿ) and Imam ʿusayn (aʿ), we recite:

أَشْهَدُ أَنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَبِمَنْزِلَتِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ وَلَكُمْ تَابِعٌ بِذَاتِ نَفْسِي وَشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِمِ عَمَلِي

“I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am certain of your status, and I am your **follower** in my own self, in the laws of my religion, and in the final outcomes of my deeds.” [16](#)

In all these cases and similar ones, “in the laws of my religion” (شَرَائِعِ دِينِي) is related to “*tabiʿ*” (تَابِعٌ), which makes its meaning clearer and more fluent. Considering that “*tabiʿ*” (تَابِعٌ) is implied, the meaning of the phrase is as follows: “I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am certain of your return (*rajiʿah*), and in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds, I am your **follower**.”

## In Conclusion

The phrase *إِنِّي بِكُمْ مُؤْمِنٌ وَبِإِيَابِكُمْ مُوقِنٌ بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِمِ عَمَلِي* is a fundamental declaration in Shīʿa Islam, affirming belief in the Imams (aʿ) and their return (*rajiʿah*). This article explored various interpretations of the latter part, *بِشَرَائِعِ دِينِي وَخَوَاتِمِ عَمَلِي*, with particular focus on its grammatical structure and implied meaning.

After examining multiple possibilities, the most favoured interpretation suggests that the word “*tabiʿ*” –

follower – is implied, but not explicitly stated. This interpretation is supported by similar phrases in other supplications and *ziyarat*. Thus, the complete meaning can be understood as:

“I bear witness that I believe in you, and I am certain of your return (*raj'ah*), and in the laws of my religion, and the final outcomes of my deeds, I am your follower.”

This interpretation emphasizes the devotee's commitment to following the Imams (a') in religious matters and personal conduct, as well as reinforcing the central role of the Imams (a') in Shia Islamic beliefs and practices. [17](#)

O Allah! Send Your prayers upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad!

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1. This is an approximate translation, as this article will review other possibilities of what this line means. (Tr.)
  2. Shaykh al-Muf'ad, *Al-Mas'ail al-Sarawyyah*, Pg. 30, Kungrih-yi Shaykh Muf'ad, Qum, 1413 AH.
  3. Shaykh al-Qadiri, *Ma'rifat al-Shaykh*, Pg. 30, *Intishar-i A'lam*, Tehran, 1403 AH.
  4. Shaykh al-Qasbi, *Tahdhib al-Ak'adim*, Vol. 6, Pg. 114, *Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyah*, Tehran, 1407 AH.
  5. This phrase appears in *Ziyarat al-Arba'in*, *Ziyarat of Imam Husayn (a')* on the Day of Arafah, *du'aa* during travel (part of this phrase), and in other *ziyarat* and supplications.
  6. *Shar'iyat* is the plural of *shar'iah* and means 'Divine laws that are obligatory for human beings to follow.' Bustani, *Fu'ud Afrim*, *Muhyar*, *Ri'at*, *Farhang-i Abjad al-Arab-Fars*, Vol. 1, Pg. 525, *Intishar-i Islam*, Tehran, 2nd edition, 1416 AH.
  7. *Khaw'atim* is from the root *khatm* and means 'conclusion and end of work.'
  8. *Bi-shar'iyat*: It is *jar* and *majr*, and *d'nan* is *mu'af ilayh* for *shar'iyat*, and since the next phrase (*khaw'atim amal*) is conjoined to it, any composition and relation explained for the first phrase (*bi-shar'iyat d'nan*) also applies to the second phrase.
  9. *Majlis*, *Muhammad Baqir*, *Mal'udh al-Akhyar*, Vol. 9, Pg. 306, *Kitabkhanih-yi 'ayatullah Mar'ash Najaf*, Qum, 1406 AH.
  10. *Majlis*, *Muhammad Baqir*, *Mal'udh al-Akhyar*, Vol. 9, Pg. 306, *Kitabkhanih-yi 'ayatullah Mar'ash Najaf*, Qum, 1406 AH.
  11. *Mal'udh al-Akhyar*, Vol. 9, Pg. 307.
  12. *Qamil*, *Muhammad ibn Makk* (*Shahid al-Awwal*), *Maz'ar*, Pg. 158, *Intishar-i Madrasah-yi Imam Mahd (a')*, Qum, 1410 AH.
  13. *Mal'udh al-Akhyar*, Vol. 9, Pg. 307.
  14. Shaykh Kulayn, *Al-K'af*, Vol. 4, Pg. 573, *Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyah*, Tehran, 4th edition, 1407 AH.
  15. *Ibn Q'lawayh*, *Ja'far ibn Muhammad*, *Qamil al-Ziyarat*, Pg. 202, *Dar al-Murta'awiyah*, Najaf Ashraf, 1st edition, 1397 AH.
  16. *Ibn 'aw'as*, *Al' ibn M's*, Pg. 488, *Jam' al-Usb' bi-Kam' al-Amal al-Mash'ar*, *Dar al-Ra'at*, Qum, 1330 AH.
  17. This summary was provided by the Translator.

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