Ghadir Khumm, Where Religion Was Brought to Perfection

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This text provides the reader glimpses of the journey back from the farewell pilgrimage heading towards Ghadir Khumm where the religion of Islam was perfected with the divine appointment of Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) as Caliph and successor of the Holy Prophet (S).

The precious moments of selection, announcement, celebration, and public greetings are discussed as the reader reflects on this great event in the history of Islam.

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The Caravan of the Apostle of God

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

We notice that while Ali Ibn Abi Talib after fulfilling his mission at Yemen was with great enthusiasm,

making arrangements for his journey to Mecca. The Holy Prophet, on the other hand, was busy in the preparations necessary for performing the obligatory statute of pilgrimage.

The Prophet of God had not offered pilgrimage after his emigration to Medina. All of a sudden, the good news spread that the Messenger of God was proceeding towards the sacred city of Mecca. In order to avail the opportunity of accompanying the Prophet people from every corner of Arabia thronged in multitude. Within no time tents of more than 100,000 people desirous of pilgrimage were seen planted in the environs of the city of Medina.

On Saturday, the twenty fifth of Zilqa'ad 10 A.H., corresponding with the year 633 A.D., the last Messenger of God took bath and put on some simple garments comprising of a calico mantle for lower part of the body and a wrapper. He applied perfume to the body and clothes, offered noon–prayers and accompanied by the members of his household came out of the city. The caravan was ready to start and waiting for the order of departure. Receiving the signal to move on an immense concourse of human beings was seen surging up on the horizon.

A famous companion of the Holy Prophet, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Al–An'sari narrates, "When I looked to the front and behind and to the right and the left and then towards the extreme end which could come within sight only heads were visible. When the Prophet uttered, 'Here I am at Thy service' thrilling voices joined in chorus chantingly echoed throughout the entire mountain and the desert".

The biographers have very cautiously quoted the figures and numbers. Their estimate is that the number of persons who set out for journey along with the Prophet of God was in no way less than ninety thousand. Besides this the Muslims who reached Mecca from other parts also numbered in thousands.

For instance, Imam Ali (‘a) had led a large congregation of pilgrims to Mecca. Keeping this consideration in mind the observation of the famous historian, Ibn Atheer Al–Jazari that the crowd on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage swelled to more than 140,000 seems to be quite correct.

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Glimpses of the Journey

The mighty pen of the biographers has spared not a single event of the sacred life of the Prophet. But you will have to admit that the minutest details concerning the passage and halting places through which this caravan passed has been treasured in the annals of history in a unique manner. We get no other example where one solitary occurrence has been described so comprehensively. Nor we can trace any other instance when so many resources have publicized an affair with such prominence and vividity as

we witness in respect of this great festival.

It would be no exaggeration if we assert that history has preserved each and every impression of the footprints of this caravan in its pages. It has transmitted the reflections of this memorable event to its readers from various points of views and angles.

The journey from Medina to Mecca was completed in ten days. Its details are that in the early morning of Sunday, the twenty sixth of the month of Zilqa'ad 10 A.H. this caravan reached

Yalamlam. For a short while during the night it stopped for prayers and meals at Sharfus Sayyala.

Morning-prayers was offered at Irquz-Zubya and in the early hours the caravan was at Rauha. Few moments were spent at Munsarif for noon-prayers and at the place of Muta'asha there was a short break of journey for evening prayers and supper. In the dusk of night, the Prophet graced the alighting place known as Isaba.

When the golden rays of the sun were emerging from the east the soil of Arj, watching the dust of the caravan, was all welcome for the worthy guest. On Tuesday the Apostle of God entered Lahi Jamal and on Wednesday he got down at Suqya. Most of the night was spent in the way and at dawn he arrived at Abwa. At Abwa the shrine of the Prophet's beloved mother is situated and there the noble son of A'minah offered prayer.

On Friday the caravan was at Johfa and on Saturday it halted at Qudaida. It reached Asfan on Monday and starting hurriedly, from here the members of the caravan stayed at Marruz- Zahran. After a short rest it headed for its next destination, Sarf. The sun has almost set at Sarf but the Holy Prophet did not offer evening prayers here. He rather preferred to cover a sufficient distance and perform prayers near the hillocks of Mecca. Satisfied with the safe conclusion of his journey he comfortably passed the whole night at his last destination.

It was Wednesday when the Messenger of God joyfully entered the sacred city of Mecca. He went round the House of God and thereafter became completely engrossed in prayers. In the meantime, Ali Ibn Abi Talib also arrived. After performing the rites of pilgrimage, the last Apostle of God bid good-bye to the House of God and left the sacred soil.

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The Desired Destination

More than 100,000 travellers were accompanying him when the Holy Prophet started from Medina. By the time of the return journey this number had increased not by hundreds but by thousands. It was the forenoon of Thursday, the eighteenth of the month of Zilhaj 10 A. H. (21st March 633 A.D.) when this caravan reached Johfa with great dignity and grandeur.

The town of Johfa is situated at a distance of 13 miles from Mecca. This is the junction from where routes for Medina, Egypt, Syria and Iraq radiate in different directions. On its border is a pond. In Arabic the synonym of the word pond or watering place is 'Ghadir'. Because of its location the terminology of Hadith (tradition) and History refer to it as 'Khumm'.

The appreciation of this particular event that took place at 'Ghadir Khumm' is difficult. Its eminence and importance cannot be fully conceived. Every aspect of this epoch-making incident achieved eternal fame and glory. On the edge of this inspiring and exhilarating watering place arrangements for the preservation of the Message of God were completed. It is a place scented with the spiritual fragrance, which presents an ever-blooming atmosphere of piety.

The good news guaranteeing protection of the Islamic civilization, a refined order of justice and the glorious devotions of the Holy Prophet flashed from there. This was the same place where the sincere and long-awaited desires of the Apostle of God were fulfilled.

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The Holy Voice of Heaven

Reaching the border of Ghadir the caravan had to halt unexpectedly. Why? Because, Archangel Gabriel had come down with the word of God and the Apostle of God were all ears to the voice of heaven. God ordained:

"O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people" (***Qur'an, 5:67***).

The trustee of the words of God conveyed the divine proclamation and the Holy Prophet entrusted all his energies for its proper execution and accomplishment. It was terribly hot. The earth was burning like fire. Some people had gone forward and some were left behind. The Prophet of Islam recalled the swift-footed persons and sent a message advising the slow moving to reach him quickly. The ardent lovers of

the Apostle of God began to flock together group by group.

The Prophet gave instructions for making arrangements and setting in order a meeting place where the divine wish may be proclaimed. He ordered the people to be seated and told them that nobody should occupy a place around those five gum-acacia trees, which were in front of them. The pulpit platform, he said, should be erected under the shadow of the gum acacia trees; the ground to be encompassed should also be cleared and swept. And as to the pulpit, the camels' packsaddles were to be placed.

The arrangements being thus completed it was already time for noon-prayers! Bilal in a melodious tone proclaimed the call for prayer. People began to form lines. The Holy Prophet walked briskly towards his place of prayer and started praying.

As soon as the prayers were completed the Beloved Messenger of God cast a glance of surprise and astonishment over the surging crowd and gracefully moved towards the unique and historic pulpit.

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From The Heights of the Pulpit

The possessor of unique distinction of 'not speaking out of personal desire' gracefully ascended the pulpit, glanced at the anxious crowd and started his speech cast in the mold of revelation:

"All praise is for God, We seek only His help. We have Faith in Him. We rely only upon Him. Also we seek shelter with Him from blemishes of our character and evil desires. There is no guide for one who goes astray and one whom He guides nothing can cause him to deviate from the right path. I witness that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is His servant and Messenger".

Therefore, the Prophet said, "God, the Knower of subtleties and the Aware has apprised me that no prophet had lived more than half of the age of his predecessor. Now very soon I shall meet death. Yes! What about the message of God? Look here! In this respect not only will I be held responsible but you also will be interrogated. Now let me know what would be your answer?"

The historians relate that in reply to this question of the Holy Prophet the surging congregation of 150,000 persons with one voice said, "O God! We witness that you have ably performed the responsibilities of Prophet Hood, advised us and constantly kept yourself busy for our guidance. God may bestow upon you His reward".

The stream of eloquence overflowed again and the 'interlocutor of the Holy of Holies' continued his fascinating discourse, "Do you not acknowledge that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah, and

Muhammad is His servant and Apostle? Do you not believe that His Paradise, His Hell, His 15 Law of Death, the Prospective Doomsday (devoid of any doubt or suspicion) and restoration of life afresh on the Day of Resurrection are incumbent and positive?"

The participants of the congregation said in chorus, "Without the slightest doubt we unequivocally affirm all these eternal truths". When the voices gradually died down the Prophet said, "O God! Be our witness". Then he enquired, "Is my voice reaching all of you?" The Muslims replied in the affirmative saying, "Yes my Lord! Every word of yours is piercing our hearts".

Continuing his sermon the Apostle of God said, "I am reaching the Fountain of Kawthar before you and you all will follow me. The width of the Fountain of Paradise would be equal to the distance that lies between Sana'a and Basra (the way between Yemen and Syria). What to say of the number of silver bowls and drinking-vessels? They are countless like the stars in the sky. Now it is to be seen that after me with what respect you regard these two most precious things that I shall leave behind".

At this stage somebody from the crowd said loudly, "O Apostle of God! What do you mean by these two most precious things?" The Prophet rep lied, "One is the Book of God. One end of which is in the Hand of God, the Glorious and Majestic and the other is in your hands. Hold it fast, lest you deviate from the right path. And the second valuable thing is 'my Descendants'. God, the Knower of the subtleties and the Aware has informed me that both these things will never separate from each other till they reach me at the Fountain of Kawthar. (Their union is eternal). I have also sought the same for them from my God. You should never dare to linger behind or surpass them. If you venture to do so you would be doomed and ruined".

Saying this, the Prophet of Islam taking the hand of Ali raised it high to its full extent. And then he addressed the grand mammoth gathering in these words, "O Muslims! Let me know, who else has got more power over the believers than they themselves?" The audience replied, "God and His Prophet know better".

Hearing this, the 'confidant of the Holy Secrets' declared from the heights of the pulpit of Ghadir, "God is my Master. I am the master of the faithful and I have right over them even more than they themselves possess. Therefore, of whomsoever I am master[1] Ali is his master too"

The historians write that the Messenger of God repeated this sentence thrice. But Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal insists that the Prophet repeated this sentence not only three times but also four times. After that the Prophet said, “O My God! Be a Friend of him who is a friend of Ali and treat him like a Foe who opposes Ali. Help them who help Ali and abandon them who go against Ali. And O My Lord! Whichever way Ali turns orient, the Right is in the same direction”.

He continued, "Look here! This is binding upon them who are here that they should convey this message to those who are not present".

The celebrated historian Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari (deceased 310 A.H.) in his book 'Al– Wilaya' with reference of the famous companion, Zaid Ibn Arqam (died in 66 A.H.) has discussed a few more parts of the sermon.

According to his description the Prophet at the end said, "O Muslims! Say that we pledge for this. We give our word of honor and extend our hands of allegiance. We shall transmit your message to our children and other members of our family. We shall not make any sort of alteration or change in it. You should stand witness to our pledge and acknowledgement and for this God's witness is enough".

Later the Prophet said, "Gentlemen! Repeat whatever I have said and salute Ali on his designation as the Commander of the faithful".

Zaid Ibn Arqam narrates that at the end of the Prophet's discourse people advanced group by group towards the pulpit and amidst the tumult of greetings and congratulations they began to swear allegiance to Imam, Ali.

According to the research of the commentators, in the meantime, the possessor of the Revelation descended with this word of God,

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion " (***Qur'an, 5:3***).

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1. The word used for `master' by the Holy Prophet (S) was `Mawla' (in Arabic)

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Coronation Celebrations

If there had been any worldly empire or the occasion of the accession to the throne of any Imperial Majesty, the ornamented crown and jewel bedecked diadem would have definitely dazzled the eyes of imagination. But the occasion related to an Islamic State and a Sovereign appointed by the Prophet of Islam as his immediate successor and vicegerent.

Every manner of Islam is strange by itself and so are all of its aspects unique. Neither does the civilization of this religion resemble another nor does its culture harmonize with any other creed.

The civic decorum brought by the religion of God is without any blemish and its social order is far

removed from other civilizations and is rather unique.

On the plains of Khumm and near the border of Ghadir we see that the Apostle of God after proclaiming the vicegerency and lieutenancy of the 'Master of the pious' under mandate of God called Imam Ali by his side. He wound his special turban over his head and said, "O Ali! The turbans are the crowns and tiaras of Arabs".

Allama Shablanji, the writer of ‘Nur al-Absar' writes, "Among various appellations of honor a title of the Holy Prophet was Possessor of the crown' ". Illustrating his assertion the same writer further says, "Here the crown means ‘turban' because it is confirmed by a Hadith of the Holy Prophet".

The turban wrapped by the Holy Prophet over Ali's head was called ‘Sahab' or cloud. Interesting details of Ali's coronation are available in the books such as, ‘Isaba', ‘Kanz al-Ummal', ‘Riazun Nazara', ‘Faraedus-Simtain' and Ibn Asir's ‘Nihaya'.

According to the narration of Ibn Shazan the Apostle of God with his own hands wound the turban over the head of the Commander of the faithful, leaving one of its ends at the back and the other one on the shoulders. After that he asked Ali to turn his back. Ali did likewise. Then he said, "Alright! Now turn your face towards me". And Ali stood face to face with him. The Apostle of God glanced Ali with delight from head to foot and in a tone of profound love and affection said, "The crowns worn by the angels are as the same".

We find yet another narration in ‘Kanz al-Ummal' ascribed to Imam Ali. Its gist is, "The Prophet after performing this ceremony at Ghadir Khumm said, "O my beloved cousin Ali! The angels through whom God Almighty helped us in the battles of Badr and Hunain were all wearing turbans. Turban is that sign of distinction which distinguish between paganism and Faith in God, in His Word and in His Apostles". The Prophet always used to recall this turban of eminence and superiority. This recollection was very dear to him".

Allama Ali Ibn Burhan Uddin in his book 'Insanul Oune Fi Seeratil Mamoon' write, "The Prophet had a turban which was called ‘Sahab' or cloud. He had adorned Ali Ibn Abi Talib's head with it on the day of Ghadir Khumm. Whenever Ali wearing this turban appeared before the Prophet, the Apostle of God addressing the people would say, "Here comes Ali wearing the ‘Sahab' ".

This means that the Prophet of Islam himself was always delighted on seeing the robe of honor which lie had bestowed on Ali and was also desirous to see Ali's coronation celebrations being commemorated in the Islamic Society.

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The Congregation Greets Ali

A renowned historian Ibn Khawand Shah (deceased 903 A.H.) on page 173 of the First Volume of his book ‘Rawzatus Safaa' and yet another famous historian, Ghiasliddin (deceased 942 A.H.) on page 144, volume III of his great presentation, ‘Habibus Siyar' write, "When the meeting held under the serene and blissful atmosphere of the Revelation ended, the Holy Prophet made Imam Ali sit in a specially pitched tent and ordered the Muslims to proceed group by group and congratulate I mam Ali for his succession. When the males leave finished their greetings the Apostle of God ordered his revered wives to go and offer their congratulations.

According to the narration of a respectable companion of the Prophet, Zaid Ibn Arqam, immediately on receiving the orders of the Prophet the entire crowd with one voice said, "By all means we shall most willingly obey the mandate of God Almighty and His Apostle".

Later all present moved forward towards Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman, Talha and Zubair were first to clasp the hand of Ali and swear allegiance.

The Muhajirs and Ansars one by one, by the rest of the congregation who swore allegiance and congratulated Ali on his designation as Commander of the Faithful, followed them. This grand celebration continued for full three days. (Kitab al-Wilayah, by Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari, deceased 310 A.H.).

Abu Hamid Ghazali (deceased 505 A.H.) describes the words which Omar Ibn Khattab uttered at the time of greetings and they are, as follows, "Excellent! How fortunate you are O father of Hasan! Now you have become my master as well as of all the Muslims". (‘Sirr al-Alamain' page 9).

Hafiz Abu Bakr Khateeb Baghdadi (deceased 463 A.H.) has also quoted these words in his book on history. If we go through the pages of history, biography, Hadith, Tafseer and Arabic literature we shall find that this great festival of the Islamic world was begun with the recitation of an ode of Hassan Ibn Thabit, who was an esteemed p6et of the court of the Prophet and died in 54 A.H.

Hafiz Ibn Abdullah Marzbani (deceased 378 A.H.) with reference of the companion of the Prophet, Abu Saeed Khudri, writes in ‘Mirqatush Sher' that when the Apostle of God had declared the proclamation of Ali's succession Hassan Ibn Thabit said, "O Messenger of God! I have composed a few couplets in praise of Imam Ali and I beg you to allow me to recite them". The Holy Prophet said, "Alright, you can recite".

On getting this permission Hassan began to recite his ode. The opening couplet was:

‘Yunadihumu Yawmal Ghadir Nabiyyuhum Be Khummen Wasma' Bir Rasule Munadiya'

This impromptu and befitting poem of the Prophet's court has reached us through thirty- eight most authentic and correct literary sources. One very important phase of Hassan's ode is that this renowned literary figure of the seat of Islam gave such an apt elucidation and explanation of the word ‘Mawla' that it presents a vivid and clear meaning of this expression. The result was that this explanation left no room for any conjectures on the part of the non-Arab critics and thus put stop to any possible adverse effects on the good literary taste.

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Ali the Master

The event of 18th Zilhaj 10 A. H. was neither a matter of secrecy, nor an underground gathering nor a hidden endeavor. As such no room is left for any sort of doubt, suspicion, uncertainty or ambiguity. This mammoth congregation attended by thousands was held by the mandate of God, under the supervision of the Prophet of Islam, in a vast desert, in the full light of the day. The main proceedings of this feast are preserved in the official documents of Islam (Qur'an and Hadith).

Similarly, statements, the accounts of the eyewitnesses and feelings of prominent literary figures and intellectuals who attended this important session of Islamic History has been recorded in the books of history and biography. How strange it is that in spite of all these undeniable facts some persons have tried to present their own biased sentiments in regard to the event of Ghadir. In the writings of such prejudiced writers the word ‘Mawla' has been the center of discussion and comments.

They consider that the word ‘Mawla' does not mean ‘master, leader, head, superior' but it has been used in the sense of ‘friend, helper and cousin'. Had this been a minor objection we would have definitely overlooked it. But the word ‘Mawla' is the most important word uttered on the day of Ghadir.

Every reasonable person would have to admit that the Holy Qur'an does not present enigmas and the Apostle of God never indulged in quibbles and puns. This mode of conversation is against the very spirit of sincere guidance and purity of thought and speech.

The word ‘Mawla' in the Arabic language has twenty-seven meanings. The Prophet while using this word in his Prophetic discourse had clarified its reference and its context so clearly that everyone among those who heard his sermon proclaimed, "Ali, is ‘Mawla' in the same sense in which the Prophet is master".

Moreover, the Holy Prophet later on explained the true sense of this word at length. Ali Ibn Hameed on page 38 of his book ‘Shamsul Akhbar' writes, "When it was enquired from the Apostle of God about the

Hadith ‘Whose master am I' he said, "As God is My Master, so I am the master of the faithful and in the same sense Ali also is their master".

Among the companion of the Prophet, Abu Bakr, Omar, Abdullah Ibn Ja'afar, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Salman Farsi, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Al–Ansari, Abu Saeed Khudri, Zaid Ibn Arqam, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Qais Ibn Sa'ad Ibn Ubada, Hassan Ibn Thabit and Ammar Ibn Yasir have also considered the meaning of the word ‘Mawla' to be the master who holds the greatest right of disposal.

Among the religious heads and scholars Muhammad Ibn Saib Kalbi (deceased 146 A.H.), Yahya Ibn Ziad Kufi (deceased 207 A.H.), Abu Obaida Basri (deceased 210 A. H.), Abul Hasan Akfash Nahwi (deceased 215 A.H.), Abu Zaid Ibn Aus Basri (deceased 125 A.H.), Ibn Qutaiba Deenwari (deceased 276 A.H.), Abul Abbas Salab Shaibani (deceased 291 A.H.), Abu Bakr Anbari (deceased 328 A.H.), Abul Hasan Rummani (deceased 384 A.H.), Abul Hasan Wahidi (deceased 468 A.H.), Sa'ad– Uddin Taftazani (deceased 791 A.H.), Shahab Uddin Khafaji (deceased 1069 A.H.), Hamzawi Maliki (deceased 1303 A.H.). Abu Is'haq Salabi (deceased 427 A.H.), Husain Bin Mas'ud (deceased 510 A.H.),

Jarullah Zamakhshari (deceased 538 A.H.), Abu Baqa Ukbari (deceased 616 A.H.), Qazi Nasiruddin Baizawi (deceased 692 A.H.), Alla Uddin Khazin Baghdadi (deceased 741 A.H.), Muhammad Ibn Ismail Bukhari (deceased 215 A.H.), Ibn Hajar Haithami (deceased 974 A.H.), Mohammad Ibn Jarir Tabari (deceased 310 A.H.), Hafiz Uddin Nasafi (deceased 701 A.H.), Abu Sa'ud Hanafi (deceased 972 A.H.), Sharif Jurjani (deceased the reflections of the event of Ghadir have continued to shed their rays throughout the wide expanse of the entire human civilization.

Ask the commentators of the Qur'an, contact the compilers of Hadith, interrogate the historians, inquire from the biographers, discuss with the intelligentsia, consult the scholars and then ponder on the importance of the event of Ghadir.

Every heart has been moved by the event of Ghadir and every soul has been stirred by it. This event has established its authority among various religious and social groups and almost every school of thought has acknowledged its authenticity.

Ghadir is that living truth which emerged from the horizon of history shedding its light, like the sun and the stars on every age and region.

Anyone researching on Ghadir would surely come to know that five verses of the Holy Qur'an describing this august event have been revealed vis., verse 68 of Chapter ‘The Food' (Chap. 5), verse number 3 of the same chapter and three verses of chapter, ‘The Ways of Ascent'.

Regarding the revelation of the first verse a summary of the research of thirty famous commentators is that when the caravan of the Apostle of God, while on his way from Mecca to Medina, stopped at the place of ‘Khumm' the archangel Gabriel descended with the proclamation of God Almighty, "O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord".

Sixteen eminent scholars presenting their researches regarding the second verse write that when the Prophet Muhammad (S) had proclaimed the succession of Ali Ibn Abi Talib as the Commander of the Faithful the angel assigned with the task of conveying the words of God descended with the Holy verse, 'Today have I perfected for you your religion'.

The reason why three verses of the chapter 'The Ways of Ascent' (Chap. 70) came down is said to be that Hadith Ibn Noaman Al-Fahri or Nazr Ibn Harith Al-Abdari denying the leadership of Ali had said, "If God has bestowed this exaltation on Ali and the Prophet Muhammad (S) is correct in respect of the declaration of the leadership of Ali then I may be cursed with God's punishment".

That very moment he received chastisement and God Almighty through threefold verses viz., 'One demanding, demanded the chastisement which must befall' preordained the universal and eternal proclamation of this great event. The literary investigations of thirty most prominent commentators of the Qur'an' and Hadith have confirmed this event.

In the same way when we look towards the origins, sources and authorities of Ghadir we feel that the enthusiasm and spirit, which the scholars, commentators and historians have shown in this connection, has been exemplary. Perhaps no other event of Islamic History has been related or written with such zeal and zest. For brevity's sake only a brief statistic is presented here:

In the list of the narrators of the event of Ghadir we find 110 names of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (S)

Among the narrators we come across the names of 84 "Tabe'in". Tabe'in (followers) were those respected persons who had not seen the Prophet, but who followed him immediately in time and had remained in the company of the Prophet's companions.

If you hurriedly go through the period from the first century Hijri to the fourteenth century Hijri you will find that there are about four hundred scholars of Hadith, commentary, history and criticism who have discussed the details of Ghadir in their world famed writings. About one of them, Hafiz Abul (See Note page 43- 3 8) Ya'ala Al-Attar Al-Hamdani who belonged to the fifth century Hijri. It is said that he used to relate the tradition of Ghadir under the authority of quotations from 250 narrators (Al-Qawlul Fasl, Vol. 1, page 545).

During the early history of Islam, the event of Ghadir has been quoted many times, but on it has been recorded on 22 definite occasions for reference.

About 32 full-fledged books have so far been written on the subject of Ghadir; e.g., the famous historian and commentator Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari has collected the traditions of Ghadir in two volumes (Tarikh Ibn Katheer, Vo1.V); and some other historians have written books on this subject in at least 29 volumes (Yanabi-ul-Mawaddah, page 36).

In every age, Ghadir has stirred the imagination of so many poets and writers. From the very inception of this event up to this day in all ages the masters of art and poetry have written in praise of Ghadir. This event is an ever-living topic for the literary gatherings of the Orient.

A celebrated Lebanese Christian literature of our age, Polas Saldma has versified his feelings under the name of 'Al-Ghadir'. This masterpiece comprises 3,151 couplets and Al-Nasr Press, Beirut, has published it. Allama Amini in a number of volumes of his celebrated book 'Al-Ghadir' has dealt with the poems and literary works relating to this event and it is considered to be a scholarly work.

Impressed by the extra-ordinary fame and importance of the event of Ghadir no less a scholar that the famous Allama Zia-Uddin Muqbibi (deceased 1108 A.H.) had to decide that 'if the tradition of Ghadir is not considered to be wellknown then no aspect of the religion of Islam can be traced and proved'.

Abu Reihdn Al-Biruni, Sa'alebi, Ibn Talh'a Shafeyi, Ibn Khallekan and Mas'udi have regarded the day of Ghadir among the big days of rejoi cings of the Islamic world. For reference books, Al-A'sarul Baqiya, page 334; Thamarat al-Quluob, page 511; Matalib as-Su'ul, page 53; Al-Wafiyat, Vol.II, page 223; and Al-Tanbeeh wal Ishraf, page 221, can be consulted. Muhaqqiq Al-Kulaini (deceased 329 A.H.) in his valuable writing 'Usul-e-Kafi' narrates from Sahl Ibn Ziad that it was enquired from Hazrat Imam Ja'afar Sadiq ('a) whether there is any other day of rejoicing in the Islamic world besides the days of rejoicings of Friday, Eid Al-Azha and Eid Al-Fitr. The great Imam said, "Yes, the most revered one".

The questioner asked, "Which celebration is it?" The reply was, "When the Apostle of God appointed the Commander of the Faithful as his successor and proclaimed 'whose master I am Ali also is his master' ". When asked about the date the Imam replied, "Eighteenth of the month of Zilhaj".

When further asked as to what the Muslims should do on this auspicious day the Imam said, "Keep fast on this day, busy yourselves in prayers, and devote yourselves to the service of God. It is also essential to remember and narrate the virtue of Prophet Muhammad (S) and his Descendants because the Prophet had asked Ali to observe the day of Ghadir as a day of rejoicings. The conduct of all the Prophets had been to declare the day of appointment of their successors to be the day of rejoicings".

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Final Note

It is necessary to mention that this Hadith (tradition) is 'Mutawatir' (i.e. narrated by so many people that no doubt can be entertained about its authenticity); and the late Allama Amini in a number of volumes of his celebrated book 'Al Ghadir' (of which eleven volumes have been published so far) has given with full

references the names of 110 famous companions of the Holy Prophet; who have narrated this Hadith. Just to give an example, I am enumerating the names given under letter 'Alif'. (The years of deaths are given in brackets):

1) Abu Laila Ansari (37 A.H.);

2) Abu Zainab Ibn Awf Ansari;

3) Abu Fudhala Ansari (38 A.H.);

4) Abu Qudama Ansari;

5) Abu Umra Ibn Amr Ibn Muhassan Ansari;

6) Abul-Haitham Ibn At-Taihan (37 A.H.);

7) Abu Rafey Qibti, the slave of the Holy Prophet;

8) Abu Dhu- waib Khuwailad (or Khalid) Ibn Khalid Al-Hadhli;

9) Usama Ibn Zaid Ibn Haritha (54 A.H.);

10 Ubay Ibn Ka'ab Ansari (30 or 32 A.H.);

11) As'as Ibn Zurara Ansari;

12) Asma bint Umais;

13) Ummu Salma, wife of the Holy Prophet;

14) Ummu Hani bint Abi Talib;

15) Abu Hamza Anas Ibn Malik Ansari;

16) Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Qahafa; and, of course, Abu Huraira.

If a Hadith is 'Mutawatir', there is no need to look at individual 'Asnad' (documents) at all. Still to show the hollowness of this charge, I would like to give here opinions of some of the famous traditionalist.

A) Hafidh Abu Isa Tirmidhi has said in his 'Sahih' (one of Sihah Sitta) that a Hasan and Sand, (correct) Hadith".

"This is

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

B) Hafidh Abu Ja'afar Tahawi has said in 'Mushkil-ul-Athar:

فهذا الحديث صحيح الإسناد و لا طعن لأحد في رواته

"So, this Hadith is Sahih (correct) according to 'Asnad' and no one has said anything against its narrators"

C) Abu Abdillah Hakim Neshapuri has narrated this Hadith from several chains in 'Mustadrak' and has said that this Hadith is Sahih (correct).

Abu Muhammad Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Asimi has said in 'Zainul Fata':

وهذا حديث تلقّته الأمة بالقبول و هو موافق للأصول

"This Hadith is accepted by Ummah and it is confirming to the Usool".

Likewise, the following traditionalists (among hundreds of others) have said that this Hadith is Sahih (correct):

1) Abu Abdillah Mahamili Baghdadi in his 'Amali';

2) Hafidh ibn Abdil Bar Qartabi in isti ab';

3) Ibn ul-Maghazili Shafi'i in 'Manaqib';

4) Ghazali in 'Sirr al- Alamin';

5) Abul-Faraj ibn Jauzi in his 'Manaqib';

6) Sibt ibn Jauzi in ' Tadhkira';

7) Ibn Abil Hadid Mu'tazili in his 'Sharh al-Nahjul-Balagha';

8) Abu Abdillah Ganji Shafi'i in 'Kifaya';

9) Alauddin Semnani in 'Al- Urwatul-Wuthqa;

10) Ibn Hajar Asqalani in ' Tahzibut- Tahzib';

11) Ibn Katheer Demashqi in his 'Tarikh';

12) Jalaluddin Suyuti;

13) Qastalani in 'Mawahib';

14)Ibn Hajar Makki in 'Sawa'iq';

15) Abdul-Haq Dehlawi in ‘Sharh al-Mishkat' and many others.

It should be mentioned here that all the names mentioned above are of Sunni scholars.

[1] [1]
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