

## IS IT A CONDITION OF THE IMAAM BEING A *QURAYSHI*?

Know, may Allāh excuse you and ourselves from the deception of the deceivers, that what many of the ignorant do; even if they are labeled as “The *Mashayikh* (*Shaykhs*)” while covering themselves with the *Salafīyyah* from the labeling many of the *Tughāt* of our time with the title of “*Amīr Al-Mu’minīn*” or “*Imām Al-Muslimīn*”, verily they take the path of the *Khawārij* and the *Mu’tazilah* in not considering the condition of *Qurashīyyah* (belonging to the tribe of Quraysh) in the *Imām*. Review for that *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*: The Book of Judgments – Chapter: The Leaders are from Quraysh” and other than that from the books of the *Sunnah* and Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and the rulings of *Sultaniyyah* (*Sultānship*), as it is a known issue, which you should not encounter any difficulties in reviewing. And *Al-Hāfiṭh*, Ibn Hajar narrated in *Al-Fath* from Al-Qādhī ‘Iyād, his statement: “The condition of the *Imām* being a *Qurashī* is the school of thought (*Mathhab*) of all of the scholars (*‘Ulamā*) and they have included it in the matters of consensus (*Ijmā’*) and nothing is narrated from any of the predecessors (*Salaf*) in contradiction to that. And likewise, all of those who came after them in all of the townships.’ He said, ‘And there is no consideration for the saying of the *Khawārij* and those who complied with them from the *Mu’tazilah*.” (Vol. 31/91)

- Then I noticed that the *Shaykh*, ‘Abdullāh Abā Bitīn, who was from the scholars of the *Da’wah* of Najd, making a refutation upon some of those who oppose and object to the labeling of the *Shaykh*, Muḥammad bin ‘Abdulwāhhāb and ‘Abdul’azīz bin Sa’ūd with the title of “*Al-Imām*” while neither of them were Qurashīs. He said, “And Muḥammad bin ‘Abdulwāhhāb, may Allāh be merciful to him, did not claim the leadership (*Imāmah*) of the *Ummah*. Rather, he was only a scholar who called for the guidance and fought upon it. And he was not labeled in his lifetime with ‘*Al-Imām*’ nor was ‘Abdul’azīz bin Muḥammad bin Sa’ud. Neither of them were labeled with ‘*Al-Imām*’. Rather, it only occurred from those who took authority after their death.” [Look to *Ad-Durar As-Saniyyah*, Volume of *Jihād*, page 240] So look to this devout *Imām* and how he freed himself from that and objected to that, despite the fact that those mentioned were from the callers (*Du’āt*) of the guidance. And (consider) the stubbornness of the government *Shaykhs* in this time, who persist upon calling their *Tawāghūt* “*Al-Imām*”, or “*Amīr Al-Mu’minīn*”. So their tidings are that they are upon the path of the *Khawārij*; the very same description, which they constantly accuse the students of knowledge with and the callers (*Du’āt*) of truth with, who oppose their *Tawāghūt*.

*And they accused them out of transgression with what the accusers*

*Are more deserving of, to repel from himself the criminal deed.*

*He accuses the innocent with the crime that he committed as a lie.*

*And for that, they confuse the ignorant ones.*

And all of this concerns the condition of the *Qurashiyyah* so how about adding to that, the absence of justice and knowledge and wisdom and other than that from the conditions of leadership (*Imāmah*)? And how about if the *Islām* and the faith (*Īmān*) are absent? How (then), how?

The above is what our beloved *shaykh* Abu Muhammad Al Maqdise, wrote on the matter in the margins of his virtuous book, “*Millat Ibrahim*” (May Allah free him from the hands of Tawagheet of the Jazeeratul Arab). And this is enough evidence to those who pay heed, *wallahuAulam*. As for a much detailed discussion on the proofs from either sides, we *inshAllah*, detail this issue in the following:

Fisrt of all, the issue is not based on one *hadeeth* but it is based on several *ahadeeth*:-

No.1 Abu Hurayrah reported that Nabi (saw) said “**People are subservient to Quraysh, the Muslims among them being subservient to the Muslims among them and the disbelievers being subservient to the disbelievers among them.**”<sup>1</sup>

No.2 Jabir bin A’bdullah reported that Nabi (saw) said “**People are followers of Quraysh in good (Islam) as well as evil (kufr)**”<sup>2</sup>

No.3 A’bdullah reported that nabi (saw) said “**This affair will remain among the Quraysh even if there are only two people left.**”<sup>3</sup>

No.4 Ibn U’mar reported that Nabi (saw) said “**This affair will remain in Quraysh even if there are only two of them remaining.**”<sup>4</sup>

No.5 Muaawiyah reports Nabi (saw) “**This affair will remain in Quraysh. None will rebel against them except that Allah will throw him down on his face, as long as they establish the deen.**”<sup>5</sup>

No.6 Anaas bin Maalik reported that Nabi (saw) said “**The Imaams are from Quraysh...**”<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4473])

<sup>2</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4475])

<sup>3</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4476])

<sup>4</sup> (Bukhaari Eng/Arabic Vol.9 No.254)

<sup>5</sup> (Bukhaari [Eng. Vers. Vol 9. 190, 253])

No.7 Abu Hurayrah reported that Nabi (saw) said, **"The tribe of Quraish has precedence over the people in this connection (i.e the right of ruling). The Muslims follow the Muslims amongst them, and the infidels follow the infidels amongst them. People are of different natures: The best amongst them in the pre-Islamic period are the best in Islam provided they comprehend the religious knowledge. You will find that the best amongst the people in this respect (i.e. of ruling) is he who hates it (i.e. the idea of ruling) most, till he is given the baya'h."**<sup>7</sup>

No.8 Sulaim bin Mutayr reported on the authority of his father that Mutayr went out to perform hajj. When he reached as Suwaydah a man suddenly came searching for medicine and ammonium anuthorhizum extract and he said 'A man who heard rasool Allah addressing the people and commanding them and forbidding them, told me that he said **"O people accept presents so long as they remain present but when the Quraysh quarrel about the rule and the presents are given for the deen of one of you then leave them."**<sup>8</sup> and similar with the wording **"When the Quraysh quarrel about the rule among themselves and the presents become bribery then leave them..."**<sup>9</sup>

No.9 Jaabir bin Samurah said Nabi (saw) said **"This deen would not cease to be powerful [a'zeezan] and [manee'a'n] dominant until there has been twelve as khaleefah"** Then he said something I could not hear due to the people, I asked my father 'What did he say' He said **"Everyone from Quraysh"**<sup>10</sup>

No.10 Jaabir bin Samurah reported that Nabi (saw) said **"The affairs of the people will not cease to be conducted as long as they are governed [waliyhum] by twelve men."** Then nabi (saw) said something which was unclear to me. I asked my father, 'What did rasool Allah (saw) say?' He said **"Everyone of them will be from Quraysh"**<sup>11</sup> So this hadeeth connected the successful implementation of the deen to the Imaamah of the Quraysh.

No.11 Jaabir bin Samurah reported that Nabi (saw) said **"There will not cease to be a powerful [a'zeezan] Islam until there have been twelve have been khaleefah"** Then Nabi (saw) said something which I did not understand. I asked my father and he said **"Everyone of them from Quraysh"**<sup>12</sup>

No.12 **"This matter will not cease to be powerful [a'zeezan] until there have been twelve as khaleefah"** Then he said something I did not understand. I asked my father 'What did he say?' He said **"Everyone of them from Quraysh"**<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> (Ahmad [3/129] Nasaa'i)

<sup>7</sup> (Bukhaari [Eng/Arabic Vol.4 No.700])

<sup>8</sup> (Abu Dawood Kitaabul Kharaaj [No.2952])

<sup>9</sup> [No.2953])

<sup>10</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4482])

<sup>11</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4478-4479])

<sup>12</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4480])

<sup>13</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4481])

No.13 **“The deen will not cease to be established until the Hour has been established or until there has been upon you twelve as khaleefah, everyone of them from Quraysh”** and I heard him say **“A small group of Muslims will conquer the white house [baytul abyad] the house of Kisraa of the descendents of Kisraa”** and I heard him say **“Before the Day of Judgement there will appear liars, so guard against them.”**<sup>14</sup>

No.14 Jaabir bin Samurah said, ‘I heard Nabi (saw) saying **“There will be twelve as ameer”** Then he said some words I did not hear. My father said **“Everyone of them from Quraysh”**<sup>15</sup>

The view that Qurayshi lineage can be seen from the fact that the jumhoor [majority] of the classical u’lemaa’ and muhadditheen regarded Qurayshi lineage as a binding condition of Imaamah, as for the shi’a then they all agreed that the Imaam should not only be Qurayshi but also Ahlul Bayt [descendents of the Prophet, through either Hasan or Husayn ibn A’li ibn Abi Talib] we have mentioned only a few of them:-

- Imaam Ibn Hazm [ZAAHIRI d.456 hijri] in ‘al Muhalla’
- Imaam an Nawawi [SHAFI’I d.676 hijri] in ‘Minhaajut Talibeen’
- Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al A’rabi [MAALIKI d.543 hijri] in ‘Al A’waasim min al Qawaasim’
- Imaam Barbahaari [HANBALI d.329 hijri] in ‘Sharhus Sunnah’
- Imaam Mawardi [SHAFI’I d.450 hijri] in ‘al Ahkaamus Sultaniyyah wal Wilayatud Deeniyyah’
- Imaam Ibn Hajr al Haytami [SHAFI’I d.974 hijri] in ‘Tuhfa al Muhtaj bi sharhul Minhaaj’
- Imaam Ghazali [SHAFI’I d.505 hijri] in ‘Ihyaa U’loomid Deen’
- Imaam Ibn Juzayy [MAALIKI d.741 hijri] in ‘Qawaninul Fiqhiyyah’
- Haafiz Ibn Katheer [SHAFI’I d. hijri] in ‘Tafseerul Qura’n al A’zeem’

Some scholars of the past and some from the present time have objected that the Imaamah is confined to one from the tribe of Quraysh. The arguments they put forward include the following:-

1 All of the ahadeeth which mention Quraysh are informative (ikhbaari) and none of them came in the form of command (amr).

2 The tribe of Quraysh were the rulers at the time of Nabi (saw) before Islam and the prophet (saw) was from them and the khulafaa’ raashideen were from Quraysh, so this served the maslah of the time and situation but it was not binding due to shari’ command but in later times the masaalih (shari’ah benefits) would not be served by this.

---

<sup>14</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4483])

<sup>15</sup> (Bukhaari Kitaabul Ahkaam [Vol.9 No.329])

3 The warnings about opposing Quraysh were not due to the Imaamah being exclusive to the Quraysh but rather these commands were about opposing the legitimate ruler (shari Imaam) and Quraysh were mentioned as they were the existing legitimate rulers in the time of Nabi (saw).

4 It is now impossible to trace the lineage and therefore Allah does not command to that which is impossible.

5 The early arguments between the muhaajiroon and Ansaar are an indication that such a condition is a misinterpretation as such an important rule would have been well known to all sahaabah and not just some from the muhaajireen.

6 The narration from Mu'awiyah said **"...as long as they establish the deen."**<sup>16</sup> and this is an indication that when they occupied the seat of Imaamah and ruled according to Islam they should not be opposed but if they left Islamic rule they should be removed even for non Qurayshi and that if they did not occupy the seat of Imaamah then there was no obligation to appoint them considering that the aim of Imaamah is to establish the deen.

7 The Qareena (divine indication) in all other ahadeeth concerning Quraysh did not reach the level of waajib but either could be interpreted as recommendation (mandoob) or interpreted in a way which attached obligation or prohibition to the Imaamah rather than the Quraysh, although Quraysh was used to describe those who were in that office at the time.

8 There is a report from AHMAD that U'mar would have made Muadh the khaleefah and he was Ansaari

### **The refutation of this view is as follows:-**

1 If the condition of Quraysh is rejected due to the linguistic structure of the ahadeeth, i.e. that people interpret Quraysh to mean just the ruler of the time then this would mean that those who raised this objection would even be contradicting their own stance as this interpretation of the evidence would mean that Quraysh is not even a preferable condition.

2 How will the ummah be united behind a non Qurayshi Imaam when there are so many ahadeeth that indicated the precedence of Quraysh in this matter and also that the majority of the u'lemaa' agreed that the khaleefah should be Qurayshi and that the khulafaa' raashideen and the early khulafaa' were Qurayshi and even Nabi (saw) was Qurayshi. This would be creating problems in one of the objectives of Imaamah which is to unite the ummah through the acceptance of the common leadership.

3 The wahi came to explain and make clear and from the conditions of Imaamah we see that there is much evidence concerning the condition of Qurayshi lineage, to reject this is to adopt a confusing interpretation of the texts.

---

<sup>16</sup> (Bukhaari)

4 Those who said that Quraysh is impossible to verify also said that it is a preferable condition, this is incoherence from them. This is because all commands from the shari'ah whether obligatory or preferable are commanded according to capability, Allah does not command the impossible.

5 There is a difference between saying that Imaamah must be within Quraysh if possible as opposed to saying Imaamah is only valid within Quraysh. To reject a command when impossible does not abrogate the validity of the condition when circumstances make it possible. The evidences indicated that the Imaamah should be in Quraysh when possible and when they establish the deen. This means it is a necessary condition except when not available, then unity and Imaamah must continue under non-Qurayshi and even some of the u'lemaa' then stipulated that it should be nearest to Qurayshi<sup>17</sup>

6 If a mistake was made in verification of Quraysh this does not refute the rule as all rules are according to capability and exhausting effort. If failure comes after this there is no blame and additionally corrections can be made.

7 Another proof of lineage being a valid science and knowledge that is to be applied at all times is that the numerous ahadeeth that mentioned the Mahdi described that he would be from Ahlul Bayt and therefore this is even more specific than Quraysh. So what would be the purpose of this information of description if such information could not be known.

8 Further proof of this is that the shari'ah stipulated that Ahlul Bayt should not receive the zakah so this rule should be applied.

9 Another point in relation to this is that the neglect of a study, science or knowledge does not justify the neglect nor does it invalidate the rules relating to such knowledge, rather the command would be to revive such knowledge as much as possible.

10 It is well known concerning the family names and tribes that some emanate from Ahlul Bayt and Quraysh and many of them were proud in remembering their kinship to the family of Nabi (saw) or the mention by the wahi of the precedence of Quraysh in ruling. This is even more known to the scholars of hadeeth, genealogy and history.

11 To some people the genealogy and its methods may be unknown but to experts in this field they have various methods of research and verification. Some of the u'lemaa' studied these things due to the related shari'ah lineage and to some specific commands concerning lineage and its knowledge e.g. the report attributed to Nabi (saw) **“Know your genealogies”**<sup>18</sup> However, even if this report is rejected its meaning is implicitly (i.e. by inference [istinbaat]) due to the fact that many ahadeeth commanded matters which required knowledge of genealogy, and the shari'ah principle states ‘that which is necessary to achieve a waajib is waajib in itself’. So

---

<sup>17</sup> (Refer Minhaajut Taalibeen Of Imaam An Nawawi And Its Commentary By Haytami)

<sup>18</sup> (Mawardi)

Nabi (saw) said in Hadeethul Thaqaalayn [two weighty things] recorded by MUSLIM and others to not neglect Ahlul Bayt, also they could not receive zakah<sup>19</sup> Therefore, geneology [nasab] must be known.

12 Every country has its tribes and upperclasses and royal families who have known lineage and such lineage is traced back hundreds of years.

13 The knowledge of tribes was relevant at time of Nabi (saw), before him and after as the comprehensive and unlimited wahi mentioned such things which indicated by extension the significance of tribe and the knowledge of geneology such as Jabir bin A'bdullah reported that Nabi (saw) said **“People are followers of Quraysh in good (Islam) as well as evil (kufr)”** (MUSLIM kitaabul Imaarah [no.4475])

14 Rationally and textually the condition of Quraysh restricts the eligibility for Imaamah. There is wisdom and benefit in this as it means the majority of the ummah is saved from competition and struggle for leadership. This means that the majority of the ummah is then encouraged towards the productive stance of support of authority and submission to Imaamah. There is no doubt about the blessing upon the Arabs as the Quran was revealed in their language and the prophet was first sent to them and within them their was even more blessing for Quraysh as it was the tribe of Nabi (saw). There is further hikmah in the stipulation of Quraysh and that is that its geneology is more known than others and more relevant as it was known to Nabi (saw) and the sahaabah and those who were among the wahi and first to implement its commands, and they were to be the role model for the latter part of the ummah. It could not have been to people other than them as the ruling would have been distanced from the prophet and his followers and thus its knowledge (of nasab) would be non existent and its application beyond their ability. So it was not to others because of i) unknown ii) disconnected physically from them iii) a'jami (non a'rab)iv) ignorant of wahi (thus not suitable to rule) v) non demonstratable but would have only been a command for the latter people with no preceding example.

15 The selection of one tribe above another is similar to one language above another and the two are connected as the language is most sound in the early Qurayshi dialects.

16 It does not mean wrong due to tribe being preferred over the best man being chosen due to the fact that those being quraysh i) they must establish the deen due to various ahadeeth - a) **“as long as they establish the deen”** b) **“as long as they establish salah”** c) **“...unless you see kufr boowaah”** ii) You look for best among quraysh iii) Taqwa, i'lm, experience etc. is a subjective scale that can not be measured for sure. iv) the ahadeeth commanded nasiha and amr bil ma'roof wan nahi anil munkar. So checks were upon the khaleefah whoever he was.

17 The condition of Quraysh is proven also by Ijma as Sahaabah. In the the hall of Bani Saida, Abu Bakr quoted the hadeeth of Nabi (saw) **“The Imaams are from**

---

<sup>19</sup> (Refer To Ahadeeth In Muslim Regarding Zakah And Fadaail Of A'li Ibn Abi Talib)

**Quraysh'** and the ansaar withdrew their claim for khilaafah and thus there was ijma on this issue.

18 Nabi (saw) was Qurayshi and all of the early khulafaa' raashideen were Qurayshi. The Imaamah was kept within the Quraysh for hundreds of years with Bani Umayyah and the Abbaaseeyah. When those of the Uthmaaneeyah who were not Qurayshi were often not referred to as 'Imaams' and 'Khaleefah' by the scholars, subjects and themselves due to the doubts they had concerning the Status of the non Qurayshi ruler, most of the time they were referred to as 'Sultaan'.

19 As for basing non-obligation upon the report attributed to U'mar –

- a) A statement of a sahaabi does not take precedence over many ahadeeth indicating the opposite and also which contain indications of the impossibility of abrogation.
- b) In addition to this the sahaabah did not even act upon such statements themselves but rather they agreed upon acting in opposition to this after Nabi (saw) and this continued for the whole salafi period (i.e. The generations of the sahaabah, tabi'een and tabit tabi'een). So a single isolated statement that was not acted upon and may not even be authentic can not outweigh that which has been authentically reported from the prophet as well as authentically related from the sahaabah and acted upon them generally and continuously.

20 As for the point about no hadeeth coming in the command form, then the conclusion reached from this is wrong. This is because it not simply the linguistic structure which results in a command but it is the import of the evidence. If there is a hadeeth that implies a criticism or punishment that is connected to an act then this will either mean a command to do or a command not to do, whether decisive or indecisive. So the claim that the informative indication does not result in a command [amr] is erroneous when 1) The subject matter of the information is connected to ahkam (such as Imaamah or anything else) and 2) By the indications of punishment or reward connected to the information. These two mean the informative form [ikhbaar] ascends to the level of command [amr] and obligation [wujoob].

21 As for those ahadeeth which some people confused, Abu Dharr said 'My friend (i.e. Nabi [saw]) advised me to **"Listen and obey even if he were a slave with maimed limbs"**<sup>20</sup> and in another version **"...an abyssinian slave with maimed limbs"**<sup>21</sup> This was actually one of the last pieces of advise to be given to the Muslims by Nabi (saw) as confirmed by the following narration Yahya ibn Hussayn who heard from his grandmother that Nabi (saw) was delivering his sermon during the farewell pilgrimage [hajjatil wadaa'] and he (saw) said **"If a slave is appointed over you and he leads you according to the Book of Allah then listen to him and obey."**<sup>22</sup> and in another version **"...an Abyssinian slave"**<sup>23</sup> and in another version **"... a maimed**

---

<sup>20</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4525])

<sup>21</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4526])

<sup>22</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4528])

<sup>23</sup> [No.4529]

**Abyssinian slave**<sup>24</sup> and Yahya ibn Hussein said on the authority of his grandmother Umm Hussayn ‘I performed Hajjatul Wadaa’ in the company of Rasool Allah (saw). He (saw) said a lot of things. Then I heard him saying **“If a maimed slave is given command [ummira] over you...”** the narrator says ‘I think he said **“...a black slave...who leads you according to the Book of Allah then listen to him and obey.”**<sup>25</sup> and Anas bin Maalik reported that Nabi (saw) said **“Listen and obey and even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed over you whose head is like a raisin.”**<sup>26</sup> These ahadeeth do bring two confusing points for some people and that is with regards to the conditions of Imaamah being freedom and Qurayshi lineage. These ahadeeth do not contradict these conditions because we can easily reconcile their meanings. With regards to slavery then these ahadeeth could mean:-

- i) The person used to be a slave
- ii) These ahadeeth could be concerning a temporary authority in specific circumstances such as when a master has given permission for his slave to go on a jihaad expedition and this slave has been appointed from amongst a group of people for a period of time until he returns to his master.
- iii) The slave may have been appointed for specific tasks over other slaves with the permission of his master.

As for the condition of Qurayshi lineage then this is not contradicted due to the following possible means of reconciliation of the meanings:-

- i) These ahadeeth are not necessarily concerning the general imaarah i.e. the position of Imaam but rather they can be related to the lesser authority [imaaratus sughras] or specific authority such as a wali or delegated ameer or wazeer for specific tasks and in such positions, Qurayshi lineage is not a condition.
- ii) It is possible that the Abyssinian is also Qurayshi due to the dispersal of tribes in later times, so that now those who are from Quraysh are found all over the Muslim world due to travel, inter-marriage and the expansion of Islam.

22 As for abrogation then these ahadeeth can not be abrogated, abrogation is impossible due to the following:-

- i) Nabi (saw) was speaking about khilaafah and Imaamah and this starts after himself, abrogation can only occur during the time of wahi [revelation]
- ii) The wording of the ahadeeth concerning Imaamah among the Quraysh also negates the possibility of abrogation, as these implied the continuation of Imaamah under the Quraysh even in adverse conditions, for example A’bdullah

---

<sup>24</sup> [No.4530]

<sup>25</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4532])

<sup>26</sup> (Bukhaari Kitaabul Ahkaam [Vol.9 No.256])

reported that nabi (saw) said **“This affair will remain among the Quraysh even if there are only two people left.”**<sup>27</sup> and Ibn U’mar reported that Nabi (saw) said **“This affair will remain in Quraysh even if there are only two of them remaining.”**<sup>28</sup> These both indicate that there is no change in this matter.

iii) Specific hadeeth indicated the continuation of the Imaamah in Quraysh until the end of time

iv) The sahaabah themselves quoted the ahadeeth of Imaamah being confined to Quraysh and they continued to act upon them.

23 As for the hadeeth **“...as long as they establish the deen”** This proved that the Imaamah should be in Quraysh due to its statement concerning that. Any khaleefah who does not govern by Islam will be removed. However unity and leadership must continue until a Qurayshi is available, due to the Quran and Sunnah commanding unity and Imaamah. The u’lemaa’ (e.g. refer to Imaam an Nawawi in ‘Minhaajut Talibeen’ and its commentart by Ibn Hajr al Haytami) even mentioned that this should go to the nearest tribe of Quraysh as this would be like fulfilling the commands according to the principle of istitaa’ah.

وصلى الله وسلم وبارك على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

---

<sup>27</sup> (Muslim Kitaabul Imaarah [No.4476])

<sup>28</sup> (Bukhaari Eng/Arabic Vol.9 No.254])