

**Forty
Evidences**
on the meaning
of the word
"Maula"

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
اللَّهُمَّ كُنْ لَوْلِيِّكَ الْحُجَّةِ ابْنِ
الْحَسَنِ صَلَوَاتُكَ عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلَى
آبَائِهِ فِي هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ وَ فِي كُلِّ
سَاعَةٍ وَلِيًّا وَ حَافِظًا وَ قَائِدًا وَ
نَاصِرًا وَ دَلِيلًا وَ عَيْنًا حَتَّى

تُسْكِنَهُ أَرْضَكَ طَوْعًا وَ تُمَتِّعَهُ
فِيهَا طَوِيلًا.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ الْعَصْرِ (عج) أَذْرِكُنَا

Forty evidences on the meaning of the word

“MAULA”

The tradition of Ghadeer, in regard of its chain of narrators, is authentic and reliable. On the 18th of Zilhajj, 10 A.H., the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declared the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) by proclaiming.

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيْ مَوْلَاهُ

“Of whomsoever I am the Master (Maula) Ali is his master (Maula) too.”

before of a crowd of more than one lakh Muslims, comprising of both, Mohjajereen and Ansaars. Now, there was no way out for the truth-evaders except by debating on the meaning of the word ‘*Maula*’ and interpreting it to suit their own desires, even if it was against the aims and intentions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Undoubtedly, the clones of the devil are truly cunning.

This was the tactic adopted by some prominent Sunni scholars like Fakhruddin Raazi, Qaazi Azod Eejee and

Nasrullah Kaabuli, with Ibn Hajar, the author of “As-Sawaaeq al-Mohreqah”, heading the list. Some Indian scholars, unfortunately, have tried to tread the same path. Prominent among them are Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (the author of Tohfah Ithna Ashariyyah), Abdul Haq Dehlavi (the author of Lamaat), Qazi Sanaullah Panipati (the author of Saiful Maslool).... They tried their best to conceal the truth from the masses. Hence, the word **‘Maula’** has always been a point of hot debate between the Shia and Sunni scholars, and remains so till date.

According to the Shia scholars, the word **‘Maula’** in the context means leader, guardian, one who possesses complete authority, etc. In the light of this meaning, the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)’s tradition clearly proclaims that of whosoever I am the leader and guardian, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) also is his leader and guardian. Thus, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) announced the Caliphate, Imamate and successorship of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) on the day of Ghadeer. But the Sunnis interpret this word differently. In their opinion, **‘Maula’** means a friend. Therefore, in application, the tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would be translated as

“Of whomsoever I am a friend, Ali is his friend.”

They have even fabricated stories to support their interpretation. Sometimes, they say that there was a

dispute between Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and Zaid Bin Haaresa which resulted in the latter refuting Ali’s friendship. To rebuke Zaid, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) uttered this tradition. Ironically Zaid Ibn Haaresa was martyred in a war before the last Hajj. Truly, it is easy to fabricate but difficult to live with it.

To get themselves out of this tight corner, others argue that it was not Zaid Bin Haaresa but Usaamah Ibn Zaid.

While still others are creating fables that those who had accompanied Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) on the mission of Yemen, like Buraidah Al-Aslami and Khalid Bin Waleed, on their return, lodged complaints to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) against Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). When things reached to unbearable limits, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) gathered the people and spoke about Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s friendship and the consequences of his enmity, ending his sermon with this tradition. It is undoubtedly evident that both of these concocted stories cannot match the authenticity and validity of the actual tradition which has been narrated by innumerable Sunni traditionalists, historians and interpreters. All those stories were fabricated to reduce the significance of the event of Ghadeer.

According to these stories, the meaning of the word **‘Maula’** does not indicate Caliphate or Imamate of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). The actual

debate on the meaning of '**Maula**' concerns the Caliphate and Imamate of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) a right which was usurped by others. Thus, it is not merely a literal discussion.

Shia scholars have presented scores of proofs in support of their viewpoint but till date, no logical answer has been forth coming. Yes, truth cannot be concealed for long. We classify our evidences into four:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Literary Proofs
- 3) Historical Proofs
- 4) Other Proofs

A) Introduction:

Before commencing our discussion on the meaning of the word '**Maula**', we would like to draw your attention towards the important fact that our arguments are confined only to those traditions whose wordings are,

"Of whomsoever I am Maula, Ali is his Maula too"

Or

"this Ali is his Maula too"

because in some other places this tradition is narrated in a different way. The other three ways in which this tradition is narrated is so clear that there remains no place for any doubt whatsoever. These very clearly hail Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as the heir and successor to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They are narrated as follows:

- 1) Tabaraani narrates in his Al-Mojam al-Kabeer, vol. 5, page 186 citing from Zaid Ibn Arqam, "Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) took Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) by his hand and said,

"On whomsoever I have more authority than himself, Ali (a.s.) is his Wali."

Qazi Sanaaullah Panipati, student of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi has also narrated the same tradition in exactly similar wordings in his book 'Saiful Maslool'.

- 2) Sibte ibne Jauzee in his 'Tazkeratul Khawaas' p. 32 quoting Hafiz Abul-Faraj Yahya bin Saeed Isfahaani has taken the meaning of Maula as one possessing authority. To prove his argument, he has brought forward the sentence of the Ghadeer sermon;

"Of whomsoever I am the master and having more authority upon him than he himself, Ali is his authority too".

- 3) The chief of the Hanbali sect, Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, in his book, 'Musnad', vol. 5, page 350, 358, 361, narrates a tradition from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) via Buraidah,

"Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too."

The same tradition has been mentioned by Imam Nesai in his 'Khasaaes' on page 4, 93, 101, 103, narrating from Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.), Buraidah and Sa'd Ibn Majah, in his Sunan, vol. 1, page 42, also relates from Buraa bin Aazib and other companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Apart from them, many other great Sunni traditionalists have quoted this tradition, in a similar way.

Therefore, we see that the sentence,

"Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too"

has come in three different forms which proves that the word '**Maula**' in the Prophetic tradition, only means one having authority and mastership. For, one tradition explains another.

B) Literary Proofs:

- 1) The best judges to solve any literary dispute between Shia and Sunni scholars are Arabic litterateurs and their works. Let us see how this word has been used in Arabic literature. Some Sunni scholars like Fakhruddin Raazi claim that the word '**Maula**' has never been used in Arabic literature as 'one having authority'. From the following points, we will realize the truth of his claim.
- 2) Many Sunni literary writers and interpreters have implied "Aula" (one with authority) from the word '**Maula**'. Those who are in this category number up to fifty. After having so many evidences, only a biased person can agree with Fakhre Raazi. Such attitude must be either due to ignorance or sheer enmity. By confessions of so many scholars, does this sentence not mean that,

"Of whomsoever I am master, Ali is his master too,"

and is this not a sufficient proof of Ali's caliphate and successorship?

- 3) '**Maula**' has been used in the meaning of Aula (one having authority) and the best proof for this argument is the Holy Qur'an itself. Many

Qur'anic verses have used '**Maula**' in this very meaning. Allah the Almighty says:

مَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ هِيَ مَوْلَاكُمْ

"Your abode is the fire that is your Maula."¹

All renowned Sunni interpreters like Kalbi, Ujaaj, Faraa, Abu Obaidah, Akhfash, Abu Zaid, Mubrad, Ibn Al-Anbaari, Ali Ibn Eesa, Tha'labi, Waahedi, Zamakshari, Bagwi, Baizaawi, Nasafi, etc. have interpreted the above verse as, "Your abode is the fire it is your master." Now, if we translate this verse like the Sunnis do for the word '**Maula**' on the Ghadeer occasion, it would sound quite funny. Yet, place is the hell. It is your friend." The so-called scholars like Fakhruddin Raazi, who are unaware of Qur'anic concepts like their leaders, deny the meaning of Maula as master.

- 4) Even in traditions, the word '**Maula**' is used in the meaning of 'Master' (ولي). For example, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

"(Virgin) woman cannot marry without the permission of her master,"

All the traditionalists unanimously opine that the meaning of '**Maula**' in this tradition is nothing but the

¹ Surah Hadeed (57): Verse 15.

one having authority over her' or 'master'. Bukhari and Muslim have quoted this tradition from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in their Sahih.

"I am the master of all the believers upon the earth. Then whoever amongst you leaves debt and property, then I am his master too."

Even in this tradition, the word '**Maula**' clearly indicates one who is having authority or master. How come '**Maula**' has been used as 'master' in all other traditions except that of Ghadeer? Is not this approach based on prejudice and ignorance?

- 5) Even in Arabic poems, Maula means 'master' (Aula). The couplets of Lubaid in "Moallaqaat-e-Khamsah" is quite popular in this regard and in the context of meaning of Maula, litterateurs have given the reference of his poem in many instances. And when in Arabic literature, this word has always been used in the meaning of (Aula) 'master' right from ancient times, how come the uniformed and illiterate deny the word '**Maula**' ever being used to mean 'Master' and that 'Of whomsoever I am Master, Ali is his Master' does not proclaim the successorship of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)?

C) Historical Proofs:

There are many historical incidents which prove that the word '**Maula**' in the sentence,

"Of whomsoever I am Maula, Ali is his Maula",

precisely means 'master', 'ruler', "guardian" and "authority over others." We relate a few of them hereunder:

- 6) On the day of Ghadeer, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) proclaimed the successorship of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.), Islam's famous and well known poet, Hassaan Ibn Thaabit, obtained the permission of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and recited a few verses of poetry. These verses, loudly and clearly, indicate the concept of '**Maula**' as 'Master'.

فَقَالَ قُمْ يَا عَلِيٌّ فَإِنِّي رَضِيْتُكَ مِنْ بَعْدِي إِمَامًا وَهَادِيًا

Then he (s.a.w.a.) said to him, "Stand, O Ali. For certainly I am satisfied to have you as a leader and guide after me."

This couplet, which clearly proves that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) was introduced on that day as Imam, Caliph and Guardian of the Muslim

nation, has also been narrated by well-known Sunni scholars.

- 7) Moawiya wrote a letter to Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) trying to brag about his own excellences. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) replied him thus:

"Is the son of Hind, the eater of (Hamza's) liver imposing his excellences over me?"

Then he (a.s.) immediately composed a few couplets, ordered his stenographer to note it down and sent it to Moawiyah. The meaning of one of these couplets is as follows:

"Then he made his successorship for me obligatory upon You all, the Messenger of Allah on the day of Ghadeer-e-Khum."

This couplet has been narrated by 26 Sunni scholars in their books, leaving no scope for any doubt or dispute about its authenticity. Is not the witness of the gate of the city of knowledge sufficient, with whom truth is always attached?

- 8) In Islamic history, there are various incidents in which the word '**Maula**' in Hadees-e-Ghadeer has been used to prove the successorship of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) in the presence of his enemies and none of them ever

objected to these claims. In the battle of Siffin, Qais Bin Sa'd, the chief of Khazraj, recited the following verse : "Ali is our Imam and Imam of everyone, this came through (divine) revelations, the day Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

"Of whomsoever I am Master, then he is his master too, a majestic statement."

Even a great Sahaabi like Qais Bin Sa'd has derived the meaning of Maula as Caliph and Imam.

- 9) When Moawiya appointed Amr Aas, the old and loyal sycophant of the Umayyids, as the governor of Egypt, Amr Aas did not send him the regular taxes. Moawiya wrote him a letter to immediately send the taxes without further delay. Amr Aas was taken aback because he did not expect Moawiya to order him around. In his reply to Moawiya, he penned a few poems, and describing in them how much he had borne and how many sacrifices he had made to install his government, although he had no right to rule. If anybody had the right to form a government, it was Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). The effect of these poems was so strong that never again did Moawiya demand anything from Amr Aas. Does not Amr Aas' explanation and Moawiya's silence prove the concept of 'Mastership' on the day of Ghadeer? Is it not sufficient evidence for the

followers of Moawiya? Some of Amr Aas poems are as follows: "How many special things have we heard about Ali from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

When he went on the pulpit and conveyed the message on the day of Ghadeer. And bestowed him with the authority of believers' affairs on God's command His hand was in Ali's hand and was proclaiming on divine order. And said: "Of whomsoever I am the master; Ali is his best master too."

- 10) Mohammad Ibn Abdullah Hemyari, a friend of Amr Aas and the poet of Moawiya's court was once attending the court along with two other poets and Amr Aas himself. Moawiya ordered the poets to say something about Ali, albeit warning them, 'but remember, do not say anything except the truth'. (i.e simply in the greed of my rewards, do not speak against Ali.) Hemyari's friends recited such malicious poems against Ali that they were condemned by Moawiya. (The poems were so much far from the truth that even a man like Moawiya had to rebuke them.)

When Hemyari's turn came, he saw that there is not much possibility of a punishment either from Moawiya or Amr Aas. On the contrary, he might even be rewarded. Therefore, he said a few poems on Ameerul

Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.), a couplet of which read as follows:

“Forgot the people the day of Khum, When Ali was appointed by the Creator and the Prophet.”

So, it's quite evident from the above incident that even the sworn enemies of Ahle Bait (a.s.) confessed about the divine appointment of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as Imam on the day of Ghadeer-e-Khum. Is it not better for Sunnis of our age to refer and accept the views of their reliable personalities of early days of Islam in order to understand the Quran and traditions?

11) The sermon of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the day of Ghadeer has been rendered in poetry form by many Islamic poets. Allama Amini (a.r.) in his priceless compilation, 'Al-Ghadeer' has collected about 95 poems from authentic chain of narrators. All these have discussed in detail about the Imamate and Caliphate of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) on the day of Ghadeer.

When poets and litterateurs of every era have taken the meaning of the sentence, “Of whomsoever...” as the proclamation of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s caliphate, Imamate and superiority, will not the denial of this bright fact and clear truth be termed as plain prejudice and detestable short-sightedness? What

can be done for a 'bat' who being scared of sun light, prefers darkness?

12) In the Council (Shura) appointed by Umar, comprising of Usman, Abdur Rahman Awf, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas, Talhah and Zubair, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.), while expressing his virtues and superiority, mentioned the Hadees-e-Ghadeer. He said, *“I ask, for the sake of Allah, is there anybody amongst you except me, about whom the Prophet had said, ‘Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too. O Allah! Befriend him who befriends Ali, be enemy of Ali's enemy, help him who helps Ali?’ They all said, “By God! None except you.”*

The whole crowd (including Uthman the third Caliph of Ahle Sunnat), which had gathered to appoint a Caliph for themselves, unashamedly admitted the appointment of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as Imam by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the day of Ghadeer. None amongst those present objected that '**Maula**' meant friend and not an Imam, leader or Caliph. God only knows who stuffed this stupid idea in the minds of their scholars?

13) Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) had also used Hadees-e-Ghadeer to prove his Caliphate and Imamate on other occasions like in the period of Usman's Caliphate or the battle of

Jamal. He expressed this in presence of companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) like Ammar-e-Yasir, Abu Huraira, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Khuzaymah Ibn Saabit, Qais bin Saabit, etc. But in these instances, none amongst the gathering raised any objections to his claim. On the contrary, they even supported it. Such discussions and debates were even perpetuated by Imam Hasan (a.s.), Abdullah Ibn Jafar, Asbagh Ibn Nubaatah, Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz, Mamoon al-Rashid (the Abbaside Caliph) etc.¹ On all these occasions, no objections were raised by the opponents, on the meaning of the word '*Maula*'. And they have never interpreted the word of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in any other meaning except of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s sucesorship. Thus, it is quite evident that such interpretations are the handiwork of the later devils since we don't find them in the early writings of Islam.

- 14) It was thirty-five Hijri, twenty-five years had passed since the Ghadeer event. Many Muslims of early days had either been dead, martyred or migrated to other cities and dispersed to different places. Some had sold the truth while others had hidden their identity due to the fear of enemies. The opponents of Ahle Bayt (a.s.) were busy in

¹ Al-Ghadeer, Vol. 1, p. 159-212.

destroying the excellences of the Ahle Bayt (a.s.) and fabricating stories of their own greatness. Things reached to such an extent that those who were not present in Ghadeer, nor did they possess any knowledge nor were firm in their beliefs, started doubting about the events of Ghadeer. Noticing the gravity of the situation, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) gathered the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Tabe'een (those who had seen the companions but not the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself). He delivered a sermon and asked only those persons to stand as witnesses who had themselves heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) speaking on the occasion of Ghadeer. Approximately thirty people (12 of whom were even participants of the Battle of Badr) stood up and witnessed that they had themselves heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) say:

"Am I not having more authority upon you than yourselves?"

We affirmed: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah'. Then he (s.a.w.a.) declared:

"Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too."

Amongst them were Abu Ayyub Ansari, Abu Zainab Ibn Auf, Sahl Ibn Hunaid, Abdur Rehman Bin Abdur Rab, Abu Huraira, Noman Bin Ajlan, Khuzaymah Bin Saabit (Dhu Shahadatain), Abdullah Ibn Saabit (the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) servant), Habashi Ibn Janaan, Ubayd Ibn Aazib, Saabit Ibn Darmiyah, etc. Zayd Ibn Arqam, who was also present in the crowd, refused to be a witness. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) cursed him which resulted in him becoming blind.

This incident has been narrated via four companions and twenty four Tabe'een by famous Sunni Scholars like Nisaai in Khassaaes, Ibn Katheer in Al-Kaamil, vol. 5, page 211. Ibne Atheer in Usdul Ghaabah, vol. 4, page 28, Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, vol. 4, page 370, etc. Is this incident, famous as 'Yaum-ur-Rohbah', not sufficient to prove the Shia view point at Ghadeer for those who believe that they should follow the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)?

- 15) The great Sunni Qur'anic commentator, Abul Qasim Jaarullah Zamakhshari (exp. 528 A.H.) in his book 'Rabi-ul-Abraar', narrates the following incident: "One year, Moawiyah went for Hajj. There, he called a black but brave woman named Akramiyyah and inquired: "Why do you love Ali and hate me?" The lady replied: "Will I be safe if I give a true reply?" Moawiya replied in the affirmative. The lady answering his question said, "I like Ali because on the day of Ghadeer, when

you were present too, the Holy Prophet announced his mastership (and not your's). Further, because he loves the poor and respects the religious people. But you indulge in killing Muslims, create rifts between them and act unjustly in your judgements."

When the event of Ghadeer was so popular that it could not be hidden from women who were confined to the four walls of their houses and they were giving evidences of successorship from this event, it is highly surprising that Sunni scholars are uniformed and unaware of such an occasion.

- 16) Before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)'s sermon, the following Qur'anic verse was revealed:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا
بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

"O Messenger of Allah convey 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."¹

What is this all important message, not conveying of which will result into the nullification of the whole messengership? Was it just to announce that the Ali is

¹ Surah Maidah (5): Verse 67.

my friend? What was the need of divine protection in Ali's friendship? Hence, it's quite evident that this message is the proclamation of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s mastership, non-conveyance of which would result in the nullification of Prophethood.

17) After the sermon, the following verse was revealed:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My bounties upon you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.”¹

In other words, today I have perfected for you your religion (by the proclamation of Ali's mastership) and completed the bounties and chose Islam as your religion whose leader is Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). How can one explain this Qur'anic verse if there was no proclamation of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s successorship in Ghadeer? For, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s love has been declared obligatory previously time and again but what was the message on Ghadeer which completed the bounties and made Allah satisfied? What else can it be except the mastership of Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.)?

¹ Surah Maidah (5): Verse 3.

18) The news of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s appointment as master and leader by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on divine command spread like wildfire. A person named Haaris Ibn Noman Fehri came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and said: “You asked us to give two witnesses (of divinity and messengership), we gave. You made prayers, Zakaat and Hajj obligatory upon us, we accepted. Now, you intend to appoint your cousin (Ali) as our master by announcing, “Of whomsoever I am his master, Hazrat Ali is his master too.” Is this announcement from your side or on divine order?” The Messenger of Allah answered,

“I swear by Allah, except Whom there is no God, this command was certainly divine.”

On hearing this, Haaris stood up and walking towards his camel, grumbled, “O Allah, if this order is from your side, then punish me by raining stones upon me.” He had hardly completed his sentence, when a stone fell from the sky and crushed him to death. At this justice, the Qur'anic verse was revealed,

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ

“One demanding, demanded the chastisement which must befall.”¹

The enquiry of Haaris clearly shows that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had announced the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) on the day of Ghadeer. Those who deny the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and give self-seeking explanations to the Ghadeer incident, should learn a few lessons from the fate of Haaris. They should avoid not divine wrath being incurred upon them, although their wisdom has already been stoned to death.

19) After proclaiming the mastership of Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) the Messenger of Islam (s.a.w.a.) told the Mohajireen and the Ansaar,

“Go and tell Ali ‘O Ali, we promise you, and give an oath to you by our tongues and pay allegiance to you with our very hands that we shall definitely convey this matter to our children. We will not go back on our words. You be witness upon us. And Allah suffices as a Witness.” Salute Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as “Ameerul Momineen” and then say, “All praise is for Allah who guided us to this path and guidance was not possible for us had Allah not guided us.”

¹ Surah Maarij (70): Verse 1.

Do all these talks not make Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s Caliphate crystal clear?

20) After listening to the command of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) Abu Bakr, Umar and Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) wives were the first to congratulate Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as a Caliph and master and paid allegiance to him. They congratulated him by these words:

بَخَّ يَحْ يَابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَصْبَحْتَ مَوْلَايَ وَ مَلَائِكُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَ مُؤْمِنَةٍ

“Congratulations, congratulations, O son of Abu Taalib! You have become my master and the master of every believing man and woman.”

Then, the Mohajireen and Ansaar followed suit. It is highly surprising that Abu Bakr and Umar understood the concept of Caliphate and successorship from the hadees:

“Of whomsoever I am master; Ali is his master.”

But those who claim to be their followers like Raazi, Dehlavi, Nadwi, etc. derive some other meaning from the same. God knows whom do these people follow? And how do they attempt to distort the meaning of ‘*Maula*’ despite confessions of their own leaders? The above mentioned evidence has been given in atleast 60 authentic Sunni references.

21) On the day of Ghadeer, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) took off his "Amama" called 'Sahaab' and put it on the head of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.), thereby, crowning him as his successor and heir. Then, he (s.a.w.a.) said:

"Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too."

This incident has been narrated by the following Sunni scholars:

- i) Shahabuddin in Tawzeeh-ul-Dalaael,
- ii) Jamaaluddin Shiraazi in 'Arbaeen' and
- iii) Zarandi in 'Nazm Durar-us-Simtain'.

Does this crowning show an appointment to successorship or a declaration of friendship? Why don't the Sunni scholars accept the truth despite all these proofs and evidences? Why do they waste their time in unnecessary and absurd interpretations?

D) Other Proofs:

If you extract a phrase from a sermon and then discuss about it independently, the chances of misinterpretation or deviation from what was intended by the speaker increase drastically. On the contrary, if we analyse or interpret the sentence by considering the preceding and

proceeding sentences, keeping in view the conditions prevalent at the time and the place of utterance, we may arrive at the correct meaning intended by the speaker.

The statement, "Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too" is no exception to this rule. To understand this sentence, it is necessary to consider the situation prevailing in that desert as well as to keep the entire sermon of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the occasion in view. The sentences which proceeded and preceded it should be thoroughly examined. Such analysis only can give the true spirit of the sentence; otherwise the real concepts will go abegging.

22) Before uttering this sentence (*Of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is his master too*) the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.) asked,

"Am I not having more authority upon you than yourselves?"

When they all replied, "Certainly, you have more authority than all of us." Then he (s.a.w.a.) announced,

"Of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is his master too."

This initial utterance ("Am I not...") has been recorded by 64 Sunni traditionalists like Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Majah, Nisaai, Tirmizi, Tabari, Hakim Neshapoori, Ibne Katheer, Suyuti, Baihaqi... Is not the initial statement

explaining the later statement? By saying so, is there any scope for doubt about the real meaning of Maula?

23) The Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.) commenced his sermon thus,

“Death has invited me and I have accepted its invitation.”

This sentence clearly shows that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had prior knowledge of his approaching death and was, therefore, very eager to appoint his successor. Abu Bakr and Umar had done the same thing. Both had either appointed their successor during the last days of their lives or made similar arrangements for it. By pondering upon this point in the beginning of the sermon, does this act (of appointing a successor) not prove that the sentence (Of whomsoever...) was proclaiming the leadership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)?

24) After completing his sermon, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

“Let those who are present inform those who are absent.”

Does it make sense to say that all the arrangements of Ghadeer like sermon, announcement of mastership, paying of allegiance, congratulations, coronation, Hassaan's poems, etc. were only to declare Ameerul

Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s friendship? No, because Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s friendship does not involve such elaborate arrangements. It was announced innumerable times before. Moreover, the Holy Qur'an declares that believers are friends of each other. Then what was the need of asking those present to inform those who were absent? The entire series of events (arrangements and preparations) show that Ghadeer was the place of the final announcement of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s successorship.

25) After finishing his sermon, the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) hailed,

“Allah is Great, on the perfection of religion, completion of bounties and Allah's satisfaction with my messengership and Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s mastership after me.”

These sentences have been quoted by Tirmizi, Nisai, Hakim Neshapuri, Ahmad-e-Hanbal, Tabari and many other celebrated Sunni scholars. The word 'Wilayah' is clearly showing that not friendship but Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s successorship and mastership is discussed.

26) After the sermon, the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) pleaded,

“O Allah, You are Witness that I have conveyed the message (of mastership) and advised (the people about it).”

This sentence shows that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is conveying a new message while Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s or Ahle Bayt (a.s.)’s friendship was not a new thing and people were already aware of it. This must have been the caliphate and mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.).

27) Muhammad Ibn Jurair Tabari in his book, ‘Al-Wilayah’, narrates from Zaid Ibn Arqam that after the sermon, paying of allegiance and emphasizing on the maintenance of this oath, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

“Go and salute Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as ‘leader of the faithful.’”

This command of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is amply testifies that he was talking about the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). For, if the discussion was about love and friendship, he (s.a.w.a.) would have said,

“Go and salute him as ‘friend of the believers.’”

Sunni scholars are well aware that the title, ‘Chief of the faithful’, involves tasks like leadership, mastership,

guardianship, etc. And this title has always been used for rulers, not for friends.

28) The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) knew quite well that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s caliphate will not be unanimously accepted. The hypocrites and the jealous will not receive it kindly. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) prayed for those who loved Ali (a.s.) dearly and cursed those who bore malice against him. Many renowned Sunni scholars have narrated the following prayer of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) after the Ghadeer sermon,

“O Allah! Befriend him who befriends Ali. Be enemy of one who is Ali’s enemy. Help him who helps Ali and degrade him who (tries to) degrade Ali.”

so that everyone should know that love and obedience of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) will entitle us to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)’s prayers and his disobedience can lead to divine wrath through the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)’s curse. This prayer of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) proves that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s friendship can never lead us toward sins at any state because absolute obedience is meant only for those who are infallible and away from all kinds of vices and sins. Whoever disobeys Ali, will be

subjected to the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) curse and whoever is cursed by the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) can never be guided.

29) Many Sunni traditionalists and Qur'anic commentators like Tabari have narrated from Zaid Ibn Arqam, Huzayfa Ibn Usayd and Aamir Ibn Laila that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked,

"O people! What do you witness?"

They replied, "We witness that there is no god except Allah." He questioned:

"Then, after that?"

They responded: "(We witness) that Mohammad (s.a.w.a.) is His servant and His messenger." He (s.a.w.a.) asked again,

"Who is your master, then?"

They retorted: "Allah and His Messenger are our masters." Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) seized Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) by his arm, raised him and declared:

"Whosoever Allah and His messenger are his masters then this man (Ali) is his master too."

It will be highly in appropriate and absurd if here too the meaning of '**Maula**' is taken as 'friend' due to short-

sightedness and plain bias. If the meaning is friend, then the last sentence will have no relation with the first two, thus rendering the whole paragraph meaningless. Also one cannot expect Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) to indulge in vain talks. Therefore, the only meaning that one can derive from this sentence is that, 'Ali is the master of those who hold Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) as their master.' But one who does not bother about Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.), how can you expect him to be bothered about Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)'s rights?

30) If the time and conditions of the Ghadeer event are taken in to consideration, then too the meaning of '**Maula**' will be "master".

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on his return from Hajj, mid-way, in a barren and open desert where there was no sign of water, called back those who were ahead and waited for those who had yet not arrived. In the afternoon's blazing heat (in which the people in order to save themselves from being burnt, spread their mattresses), performed the Zohr-Asr prayers combinedly, prepared a pulpit from saddles of the camels, delivered a sermon informing about his death, repeated the sentences thrice, raised the hand of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and intimated that he has received a command from the Almighty that must be conveyed immediately.

Were all these pains taken just to declare that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) is the “friend of the believers”? It seems highly unlikely because it was nothing new. The Holy Quran had time and again declared that **“Muslims are brothers of each other,”** and Ali (a.s.), of course, was one of them. Also, the concept of brotherhood is much higher than that of friendship. The interpretation of the Sunni scholars that it was a declaration of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s friendship, is a great insult to the lofty personality of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the most knowledgeable person in the world. For, even an ordinarily wise person would not put one lakh or more people in such inconvenience just to declare somebody’s friendship. It goes on to prove that it was the all important announcement of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s successorship after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which was announced.

31) One cannot help but pity the fact that a magnificent sermon delivered by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and heard by more than one lakh of his companions is not fully narrated by any of the traditionalists and historians. They are satisfied by saying that a very lengthy and detailed sermon was delivered by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Maximum details of this sermon have been recorded by the great historian, Muhammad Ibn Jurair Tabari, narrating from Zaid Ibn Arqam. If this sermon is read attentively

and its sentences thought upon, then it will be clear for the just seekers of truth that the real meaning of the sentence, “Of whomsoever...” is only about Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s mastership and leadership. Some of the sentences of the sermon are as follows:

“Jibraeel, on divine command, has approached me and ordered me to stop over here and make it clear for every black and fair person that surely Ali Ibn Abi Talib is my brother, my successor, my heir and the leader after me. For indeed, Allah has appointed him as your master and leader and made his obedience obligatory on each and every one. Surely, Allah is your master & Ali is your Imam. Certainly, Imamate is in my progeny from his generation till the day of judgement. It is not permissible after me for anyone to be the people’s guide except him. He is my brother my successor, the treasurer of my knowledge, and my successor over anybody who believed in me. The light from Allah is in me, then in Ali, then in his progeny till the Awaited Mahdi.”

Are not these sentences sufficient explanation for the sentence, “Of whomsoever...”?

32) When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) completed his sermon, he said:

“Congratulate Me, Congratulate Me! Surely Allah has chosen me for the honour of Prophethood and my Ahle Bayt (progeny) for the status of Imamate.”

This sentence has been recorded by Haafiz-e-Khargooshi from Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in Sharaful Mustafa, who in turn narrates from Buraa Ibn Aazib and Abu Saeed Khudri. Is not this sentence declaring Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s mastership? For, congratulations seem appropriate for caliphate and mastership and not for friendship.

33) When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was commanded by Allah to declare Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s Caliphate, he was a bit apprehensive because the people were not yet distant from customs of the days of ignorance. They would think that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is intending to enforce his family’s rule over them and hence they would create many hurdles in his path. But Allah ordered him that if this task was not executed divine wrath would be the consequence.¹ Declaration of friendship should be no cause of apprehension for the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) because keeping friends with a believer is the basic

¹ Kanzul Ummaal, vol. 6, page 153 narrating from Ibn-e-Abbas, Taareekhul Khulafa of Suyuti, page 114, Manzelul-Abraar of Badakhshaani, page 20, Tafseer-e-Durrul Mansoor, Vol. 2, page 298.

teaching of Islam. The same tradition quoted above has been recorded by Haakim Haskaani in his book ‘Shawaahedul-Tanzeel’, narrating from Ibn Abbas and Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansaari. “Allah ordered Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) to appoint Ali as the leader of the people and to inform them of this fact, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was apprehensive.”

34) In the incident of Ghadeer, the word ‘appointment’ was used by Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which goes along well with leadership and not with friendship, as the Sunni scholars claim.

Sayed Ali Hamdani in ‘Mawaddatul Qurba’ narrates a tradition from the second Caliph, Umar, that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said on the day of Ghadeer. “The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) appointed Ali as a guide, and declared:

“Of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is his master too.”

If we combine this sentence with the sentence of Ibn Abbas (in proof 33), we see that all the companions followed Imamate and caliphate of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) from Hadees-e-Ghadeer.

35) Shaykul Islam Hamwini in ‘Faraaedus-Simtain’ narrates a tradition from Abu Hurairah, “The announcement on the day of Ghadeer was the last

divine obligatory command whose obedience was compulsory for everybody.’ After the announcement of this duty, the verse of completion of religion (Today, I have perfected...) was revealed.” In other words, whatever was revealed in Ghadeer was never revealed before. The declaration of friendship was neither new nor obligatory. Now only two options remain. Either to take the meaning of **‘Maula’** as master and leader or to deny the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)’s companion, Abu Huraira. Therefore, by considering all other proofs, we have to admit that Imam of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) was the declaration on the day of Ghadeer by which the religion was perfected.

- 36) Considering the meaning of **‘Maula’** as friend does not seem to be in accordance with the history of early Islam, since as find majority of the companions afraid of narrating Hadees-e-Ghadeer. They would not do so until and unless they had absolute confidence in the interrogator. Ahmed Ibn Hanbal in his ‘Musnad’, vol. 4, page 368 records an incident from Atiyah Aufi who says, “I went to Zaid Ibn Arqam and asked that my son-in-law has narrated one tradition about Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) concerning Ghadeer from you. I want to hear it from you directly.” Zaid replied, “You Iraqi

people are double-faced (i.e. I don’t have confidence in you).” I retorted, “You remain assured from my side.” Then Zaid narrated the whole incident.

In another case, Ibn Uqdah in his book, ‘Al-Wilayah’ has narrated from the famous Tabe’ei, Saeed Bin Musayyab that I went to Sa’d-e-Waqqas and sought permission to ask a question but expressed my anxiety. He replied, “You are my cousin (i.e. don’t fear). Ask whatever you wish to.”

This apprehension and anxiety is a clear indication of the fact that the concept of Hadees-e-Ghadeer was not friendship. The fact (of Ghadeer) was unbearable for the then governments, relating of which was not only against politics but would also possibly lead to death. This proves that it was certainly about the successorship of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.).

- 37) Bedouin Arabs, who were notorious for their pride & disobedience once came to Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and saluted him saying, “Peace be upon you O Master”. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) was taken aback thinking that they have accepted his mastership. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) enquired,

“How am I your master?”

Their chief, Abu Ayyub Ansari replied, “We have heard the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) saying “Of whomsoever I am his master, Ali is his master too.” This tradition has been recorded by Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, narrating from Riyaah Bin Haaris. It’s highly surprising that Bedouin Arabs staying in the desert could follow the meaning of **‘Maula’** as master while the so-called civilized and learned scholars, staying in cities, could not grasp the concept.

38) The incident of ‘Yaum-ur-Rohbah’ where Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) reminded his nomination on the day of Ghadeer (discussed previously in proof no. 14) is also an eye-opener. Here, thirty great companions, of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) stood witness to the Ghadeer incident. But Anas Bin Malik, Buraa Ibn Aazib, Jurair Ibn Abdullah, Zaid Ibn Arqam, Abdur Rehman Ibn Yadlej and Yazeed Ibn Wadeeah who were present in Ghadeer, refused to testify. Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) cursed them saying,

“If they have concealed the truth due to enmity and malice, may God incur His wrath on them”

Due to his curse, Buraa and Zaid became blind, Anas suffered from leprosy and Jurair became Murtad

(apostate).¹ If **‘Maula’** meant friend and people concealed only Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s friendship, then many would have been afflicted, not a select few, because the enemies of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) were innumerable. So, it’s quite evident that only those who tried to conceal Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s Imamate and Caliphate had to suffer these afflictions. Why the present day Sunni scholars, who try to conceal Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s appointment to Imamate, do not fear the same fate?

39) Ghadeer was not the first time that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had declared Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) as the inheritor of his mantle. Thus, it’s not possible for the Sunni scholars to interpret this hadees in whichever way they like and shelter their own leaders. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had, on a number of occasions, mentioned that Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) would be his heir. In Ghadeer-e-Khum, on his return from Hajjatul Wadaa, he was only explaining the matter in clearer terms and also, obtaining allegiance of each one present. In the initial days of Islam, when the Qur’anic verse

¹ Ref. Musnad, vol. 1, page 119, Al-Maaref of Ibn Qutaiba, page 251, Al-Ansaab wal Ashraaf, Seerah Halabi, vol. 3, page 302, Al-Arbaeen of Jamaluddin Shirazi, vol. 1, page 211.

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

“And warn your nearest of relatives.”¹

was revealed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) gathered the sons of Abdul Muttalib. After the dinner, he (s.a.w.a.) invited them to believe in and help him in his mission of Prophethood. He (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Whoever of you helps me in this mission (of prophethood) he shall be my brother, my successor, my Caliph amongst you.”

Among forty people, only Ali Ibn Talib (a.s.) accepted the invitation and answered his call, after which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) announced,

“Surely he is my brother, my successor and my Caliph amongst you. Then listen to him and obey him.”

The invitation of Zul Asheerah is the concise form of Hadees-e-Ghadeer. In other words, Hadees-e-Ghadeer is the detailed explanation of the Dhu Asheerah incident found in many reliable and authentic Sunni books.²

¹ Surah Shoa'raa (26): Verse 214.

² Al-Kaamil, vol. 2, page 24, Taareekh Abul Feda, vol. 1, page 116, Sharhe Nahjul Balagha of Ibn Abil Hadeed, vol. 3, page 354, Life of Muhammad by Muhammad Husayn Haykal first edition, page 104, Taareekh-e-Tabari, vol. 2, page 216, Tafseer-e-Tabari, vol. 19, page 74.

40) Finally, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had explained the meaning of ‘*Maula*’ in Hadees-e-Ghadeer, which if referred to, would not require any further debate and discussion. Shaykhul Islam Hamwini, in his book, ‘Faraaedus Simtain’ records a tradition narrated by senior Tabeei Sulaym Ibn Qays. During the period of Usman’s Caliphate, about two hundred people were involved in an informative discussion in the mosque, relating the excellences and virtues of the Quraysh. Those who were participating in this discussion were the likes of Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr, Abdullah Ibn Umar, Abdul Rehman Auf, Talh, Zubair, Miqdad, Zaid Ibn Saabit, Jaabir Ibn Abdullah, Anas Ibn Malik, etc. When they were glorifying the Quraysh, Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) and his Ahle Bayt (Imam Hasan (a.s.), Imam Husain, Abdullah Ibn Jafar, etc.) were listening quietly. People asked Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.): “Why are you silent? Why don’t you say something?” On this, he (a.s.) replied:

“Whatever excellences you have talked about, are yours or your family’s?”

They said: “No, these glories have been bestowed by Allah upon Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his clan.” Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) answered:

“Truth is that which you’ve said. Don’t you know that whatever bounties of this world and the hereafter you receive is due to us Ahle Bait?”

Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) went on speaking till he reached to the Ghadeer issue. Then he (a.s.) said:

“After the congregational prayers, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) delivered a sermon saying, ‘O people, you know that Allah is my Master and I am the master of the believers. I have more authority upon them than they themselves’. They all confirmed saying, “Yes O Messenger of Allah” Then, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: “Stand, O Ali.” So, I stood up. Then, he said again “Of whomsoever I am the master, Ali is his master too...” Here, Salman Farsi, questioned, “What type of mastership?” He (s.a.w.a.) answered, “Like my mastership. As I have more authority over them all.”

Is any further discussion required after this lucid explanation?

A similar tradition has been recorded by Ali Ibn Hamid-e-Qurashi in ‘Shamsul Akhbaar’, page 38. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was asked: “What is the meaning of “Of whomsoever...” He (s.a.w.a.) answered:

“Allah is my Master. He has more authority upon me than myself. My will and authority has no value when compared to His will and authority. Similarly, I am the master of the believers. Their opinion and will has no value when compared to mine. And of whomsoever I am his master; Ali is having equal authority over him. Ali’s authority is more over them than they themselves. Nobody’s will is valid and binding when compared to Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.)’s.”

A similar tradition has been narrated by Sayed Ali Hamdani in ‘Mawaddatul Qurba’. He narrates a part of the sermon of the Messenger of Islam (s.a.w.a.) in Ghadeer:

“O People! Is not Allah my Master? He gives me commands, orders prohibitions and I have no authority over the Almighty.”

Everyone said: “Yes O Messenger of Allah!” Then he (s.a.w.a.) said:

“Of whomsoever Allah and His Messenger are masters, this Ali is his master. He will give you orders and command prohibitions. You don’t have any authority to command or prohibit him.”

It means that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has himself explained and interpreted the mastership of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.) so that there may not remain any place for the ignorant deceivers to interpret it to suit their own needs. Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.), gives preference to their orders, holds them dearer than his life, it does not suit him to interpret '**Maula**' in any other way but master, caliph and leader. Except, if he thinks himself as wiser and more learned than Allah and His Messenger. Allah knows how such people will face the Almighty on the day of judgement and how will they answer the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) when he questions them about their distortions?