

# ZAYDISM

## ITS ORIGINS AND BELIEFS

**Extracted from**

*al-Zaydiyyah Nash'atuhā wa Mu'taqadātuhā*

by

Qāḍī Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī al-Akwa'

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## Transliteration key

أ - 'ā	ض - ḍ
آ - ā	ط - ṭ
ب - b	ظ - ṣ
ت - t	ع - 'c
ث - th	غ - gh
ج - j	ف - f
ح - ḥ	ق - q
خ - kh	ك - k
د - d	ل - l
ذ - dh	م - m
ر - r	ن - n
ز - z	و - w, ū
س - s	ه - h
ش - sh	ي - y, ī
ص - ṣ	

## Preface to the Second Edition

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ  
صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

*My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and to work righteousness of which You will approve and make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed, I am of the Muslims.*<sup>1</sup>

This second edition of the treatise: *Zaydism, its origins and beliefs*, was necessitated by the urgent need for a revised and expanded reprint. This was in response to the aspirations of those lovers of knowledge and seekers of understanding who read it and requested further elaboration on its contents; to clarify what I summarised and to expand upon what I had condensed in the first edition. This includes providing more examples, evidences, arguments, and documented references to ensure the accuracy of its contents and for it to serve as a resource for those seeking more knowledge about Zaydism. I acceded to the wishes of these individuals, who have thought well of me, thanking them for their praise of the issuance of the treatise on Zaydism and praying for guidance and success in speech and action for them and myself.

As for those who were not pleased with what I wrote about Zaydism, when I clarified its reality and explained its position among the Islamic sects and schools of thought, I hoped that they would refute what they objected to with compelling arguments and clear evidences that negate the validity of what I presented about it, to reinforce their

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1 Sūrah al-Aḥqāf: 15.

argument with action so that both align, lest they be among those of whom Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* said:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

*O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? How despicable it is in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do!*<sup>1</sup>

so that their argument becomes stronger and more indicative of the truth of their claim. As for them merely objecting for the sake of objecting, while persistently practicing on actions contrary to their statements, as I have mentioned in the treatise, this is an argument against themselves. Those who doubt or are sceptical about the accuracy of what I have written about Zaydism in Yemen today need only to attend the gatherings, congregations, assemblies, and lessons of these critics and their allies to assure themselves that what I have written about Zaydism is not baseless speculation but rather reflects the reality in its most evident manifestations and prominent features.

What is happening today on the Yemeni scene and the bloody events in Sa‘dah, funded by some regional powers and religious positions therein, is the greatest testimony to the witnessed shift of some followers of this sect towards the Twelver Shī‘ī sect, unfortunately.<sup>2</sup>

ومهما تكن عند امرىء من خليقة وإن خالها تخفى على الناس تعلم

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1 Sūrah al-Şaff: 2-3.

2 I added this sentence in the introduction to show the importance of what is transpiring today in Sa‘dah and its surrounds.

No matter what characteristic a person possesses,

It is always known, even if he thinks it to be hidden from people.

Allah is the bestower of success and He is sufficient for me and the best disposer of affairs. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon Muḥammad, his family, all his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment.

Ṣan'ā', 21 Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1417 AH, corresponding to, 2 November 1996.

Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī al-Akwa'





## Introduction

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ

Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." Say, "Obey Allah and the Messenger. But if you turn away, then indeed, Allah does not like the disbelievers."<sup>1</sup>

رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

Our Lord, we have believed in what You revealed and have followed the messenger, so register us among the witnesses [to truth]."<sup>2</sup>

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions.<sup>3</sup>

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّوْكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

1 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 31-32.

2 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 53.

3 Sūrah al-Nisā': 69.

And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.<sup>1</sup>

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ

Indeed, those who have divided their religion and become sects, you, [O Muḥammad], are not [associated] with them in anything. Their affair is only [left] to Allah; then He will inform them about what they used to do.<sup>2</sup>

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.<sup>3</sup>

Many historians, researchers, and scholars have focused on writing about the various Islamic sects and the diversity of their beliefs, especially the Shīʿī sects, which have received a significant share of comprehensive studies regarding their origins, objectives, and areas of spread. This is due to the impact their emergence had on fracturing the structure of the Islamic community and tearing apart its unity. Therefore, a large number of extensive and brief works, as

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1 Sūrah al-Anʿām: 153.

2 Sūrah al-Anʿām: 159.

3 Sūrah al-Anfāl: 46.

well as scholarly research in various prominent languages, have been dedicated to discussing these groups, except for the Zaydiyyah sect along with its known divisions. The works regarding this sect, which were given importance to by its own followers, have been limited to writing biographies<sup>1</sup> of some of its famous figures, describing their lives, virtues, and commendable merits, and honouring their memory by constructing tombs, domes, and shrines over their graves to encourage people to visit and seek blessings from them.

However, as a sect or a school of thought, Zaydism, to the best of my knowledge, has not received the attention it deserves, in writing, to adequately understand its reality; as what was written about it in the past was only in passing when discussing the Ja'farī and Ismā'īlī Shī'ī

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1 Professor Wilferd Madelung published texts about the Zaydi Imāms in a book in the series of texts and studies issued by the German Institute for Oriental Research in Beirut, titled *Arabic Texts Concerning The History of the Zaydi Imāms of Ṭabaristān, Daylamān and Ghīlān*. This book includes extracts from the following: The first part of *al-Nāǧī fī Akhbār al-Dawlat al-Daylamiyyah* by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābī, a section from *al-Maṣābīḥ* by Abū al-'Abbās al-Ḥusaynī, a piece from *al-Ifādah fī Tārīkh al-A'immah al-Sādah* by Imām Abū Ṭalīb, excerpts from *Jalā' al-Abṣār* by al-Ḥākim al-Jashmī presented by Aḥmad ibn Sa'd al-Dīn al-Sūrī in his book *Tuḥfat al-Abrār*, a copy of a book sent to al-Faqīh 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥasan al-'Alawī al-Hamdānī, an extract from *al-Risālah al-'Āmilah bi al-Adillah al-Ḥākimah* by Imām 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah, a section from *al-Ḥadā'iq al-Wardiyyah fī Manāqib A'immah al-Zaydiyyah* by Ḥumayd ibn Aḥmad al-Maḥallī, as well as an extract from the fourth part of *Rawḍat al-Ḥujayriyyah*. Additionally, Dr. Suhayl Zakkār published *Sīrat al-Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rayy*. Dr. 'Abd al-Ghanī Maḥmūd 'Abd al-'Āṭī published what is available from *Sīrat al-Imām 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah*. He, along with Dr. Riḍwān al-Sayyid, published the biography of the two princes, Muḥammad ibn Ja'far ibn al-Qāsim ibn 'Alī al-'Abānī and his brother al-Qāsim that was written by al-Mufriḥ ibn Aḥmad al-Rabī, from the publications of Dār al-Muntakhab al-'Arabī.

sects. Although there is a book that has been attributed to al-Ṣāḥib<sup>1</sup> ibn ‘Abbād (326-385 AH/938-995 CE) by the name *Nuṣrat Madhāhib al-Zaydiyyah*, I am doubtful that this book is the book *Kitāb al-Zaydiyyah* referred to by al-Nadīm in his *al-Fihrist* under the biography of al-Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād; because this book, *Nuṣrat Madhāhib al-Zaydiyyah*, primarily discusses the concept of Imāmah and who is deemed worthy of it from a purely Imāmah perspective, following the statement that the author attributed to Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، “Whoever claims the Imāmah and is not worthy of it, he is a disbeliever.” This is despite the fact that al-Nadīm mentions that al-Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād wrote *Kitāb al-Imāmah*, in which he discussed the precedence of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib over others and the establishment of the Imāmah of those before him.<sup>2</sup>

Since no Muslim historians other than al-Ṣāḥib ibn ‘Abbād has undertaken to write an independent and comprehensive work on the Zaydiyyah, neither from its followers nor others, Professor Rudolf Strothmann<sup>3</sup> took an interest in it and wrote a book titled *The Zaydiyyah*, from a purely historical perspective, covering the concept of Imāmah

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1 He is the one who said:

وفي تفضيل أولاد النبي  
أخْلِدها بتيم أو عدي

دخول النار في حب الوصي  
أحب إلي من جنات عدن

Entering hellfire for the love of the Custodian,  
And for giving precedence to the progeny of the Prophet,  
Is dearer to me than the Gardens of Eden,  
In which a Taymī and ‘Adī will forever reside.

He prefers entering Hell-fire over Paradise if it contains Abū Bakr and ‘Umar! There is no power and no strength except with Allah.

2 *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 150.

3 He was born on 4 September 1877 and died on 15 May 1960.

and worship according to them, published in Leipzig in 1912. He also wrote a paper titled *Der Kultus der Zaiditen*, which he published in the journal of the Oriental Institute in Strasbourg in 1912, as well as research papers that he published in the first and second volumes of the journal *Der Islam* under the title *Die Literatur der Zaiditen*, in 1910 and 1911-1923. He also published letters and poems of Zayd ibn ‘Alī (1:13-52) and *Das Problem der literarischen Persönlichkeit Zaid b. ‘Alī* (1923).<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, amongst those interested in the Zaydiyyah is Professor Roy Mottahedeh (whose father is a Persian while his mother is American), a professor at Princeton University. He informed me that he has research on the Zaydiyyah published in both Arabic and English.

Recently, Dr. Faḍīlah ‘Abd al-Amīr al-Shāmī from Iraq has taken the forefront in writing about the Zaydiyyah, authoring a book on the Zaydis of Gilan and Daylaman titled *Tārīkh al-Firqaḥ al-Zaydiyyah* between the second and third centuries Hijrī, published in 1394 AH/1974 CE.

Regarding the Zaydis of Yemen, Professor Dr. Aḥmad Maḥmūd Ṣubḥī, while a professor at the University of Ṣan‘ā’, authored a significant work titled *al-Zaydiyyah*, which gained popularity among followers of the Zaydi Hādawī doctrine. Some of them praised it, citing its commendable mention of some Zaydi thoughts. This is because Dr. Ṣubḥī lauded them when he recounted their merits at the onset of their appearance. He believed that the Zaydis of Yemen, starting from the late third century Hijrī and continuing to our time, are an extension of the second-century Zaydis who emerged from Kūfah during the

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Mustashriqūn*, 2/788, and additional information from Professor Wilferd Madelung in a response letter to me dated 17 January 1994, and further information from the German Ambassador Dr. Werner Daum.

era of its founder, Zayd ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. However, this is not entirely accurate because the connection between the Zaydis of Yemen and those of Kūfah was severed from the third century Hijrī, the period during which Shī‘ah sects appeared, as will be explained later in this treatise, Allah willing.

Dr. Ṣubḥī’s conclusion is definitely based on the references he had access to, which revolve around the Zaydiyyah from the perspective of its proponents and followers, and perhaps he was not able to review what neutral historians, both Yemeni and non-Yemeni, have written, which will be mentioned in the course of this study. This is what I have committed myself to do, Allah willing.

Zaydi scholars should have undertaken such a task, to comprehensively and fully introduce the Zaydiyyah, highlighting the differences between the Zaydis of Kūfah and those of Yemen, their relationship with the Twelver Shī‘ah sect, and where they stand in relation to it. As the saying goes, “The owner of the house knows best what is inside it.”

Yet, within the scope of my knowledge, I have not seen such efforts. What was written by Qāḍī Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad al-Sayyāghī, who passed away in 1407 AH, in his introduction to the book *Bayān ibn Muẓaffar* when it was printed and later issued as a separate edition, is not what was needed. He had discussed the foundations of the Yemeni Zaydi doctrine, its principles, its development, mentioned its scholars and their eras, and then provided a summary of the juristic rules established by the scholars of this doctrine on the principles of jurisprudence on which they based their legal rulings. He also mentioned the names of books by scholars of the Zaydi doctrine.

In a similar manner, what ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Fuḍayl wrote in his study *al-Zaydiyyah: Naẓariyyah wa Taṭbīq* is far from the intended purpose. He discussed matters relating to the principles of religion and other such principles of Zaydi jurisprudence, as well as principles of the Twelver and Ismā‘īlī sects, intending to present the Zaydiyyah in a guise that was not its own.

Therefore, relying solely on Allah, I have taken up this task by writing this brief treatise, aiming only to clarify the ambiguities and confusions surrounding this doctrine for both its followers and others, to elucidate its truth and provide a decisive statement on it, so that the seeker of knowledge is safeguarded from error. If I have succeeded in what I intended, then that is a grace and mercy from Allah, striving for fairness and detachment from the whims of the soul inclined to evil. And if I have erred—unintentionally—then it is due to my lack of knowledge, keeping in mind the poet’s saying:

فمن الذي ما ساء قط                      ومن له الحسنى فقط

Who is the one who has never erred and who has only done good?

And my success is only through Allah; upon Him, I rely, and to Him, I return.

Ṣan‘ā’, 1 Rajab, 1412 AH, corresponding to 5 January 1992 CE.

Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Alī al-Akwa‘





## Zaydism

A sect attributed to Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. They are as al-Nadīm described in his book, *al-Fihrist*:

الزيدية الذين قالوا بإمامة زيد بن علي عليه السلام ثم قالوا بعده بالإمامة  
لولد فاطمة كائنا من كان بعد أن يكون عنده شروط الإمامة

The Zaydiyyah [Zaydis] are those who advocated the Imāmah of Zayd ibn ‘Alī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. They then supported the Imāmah of the descendants of Fāṭimah, whoever they may be, provided they possess the qualifications for Imāmah.<sup>1</sup>

Imām al-Mahdī ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā described them in *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* saying:

فالزيدية منسوبون إلى زيد بن علي عليه السلام لقولهم جميعا بإمامته  
وإن لم يكونوا على مذهبه في مسائل الفرع وهي تخالف الشافعية  
والحنفية في ذلك لأنهم إنما نسبوا إلى أبي حنيفة والشافعي لمتابعتهم  
إياهما في الفروع

The Zaydiyyah are attributed to Zayd ibn ‘Alī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام due to their unanimous support of his Imāmah, even if they do not follow his school in jurisprudential issues. They differ from the Shāfi‘iyyah and Ḥanafiiyyah in this regard, as they are only attributed to Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Shāfi‘ī owing to following them in jurisprudential matters.<sup>2</sup>

Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Jindārī mentioned them in his book *al-Raḥīq* describing them as:

1 *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 226.

2 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pg. 96.

اسم مطلق على أئمة الآل ومن تابعهم في العدل والتوحيد والقول بإمامة  
زيد بن علي ووجوب الخروج على الظلمة

A name given to the Imāms of the household: and those who follow them in justice, monotheism, the belief in the Imāmah of Zayd ibn ‘Alī, and the necessity of rising against the oppressors.<sup>1</sup>

As for Shaykh al-Mufīd, he described them by saying:

وأما الزيدية فهم القائلون بإمامة أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب  
والحسن والحسين وزيد بن علي عليهم السلام وإمامة كل فاطمي دعا  
إلى نفسه وهو على ظاهر العدالة ومن أهل العلم والشجاعة وكانت  
بيعته على تجريد السيف للجهاد

The Zaydis are those who advocate the Imāmah of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and Zayd ibn ‘Alī عليه السلام and the Imāmah of every Fatimid who calls to himself while being visibly just, knowledgeable, and brave, with his call to allegiance based on unsheathing the sword for Jihād.<sup>2</sup>

Zaydism is one of the three Shī‘ī sects: Zaydiyyah, Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah [Twelver] (Ja‘fariyyah), and Ismā‘īliyyah (Imāmiyyah Bāṭiniyyah). From amongst them, Zaydism is considered the most moderate and closest to the Sunnī doctrine. This is because Zaydis do not believe in the concepts held by the Ja‘fariyyah, such as the infallibility of the Twelve Imāms, the doctrine of *Badā’* (the belief that Allah only learns of things after they occur), *Taqiyyah* (dissimulation), and *Mut‘ah* (temporary marriage). Initially, Zaydism was in line with the practices of the

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1 *Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 16.

2 *Awā’il al-Maqālāt*, pg. 4.

righteous predecessors, focusing solely on the rulings of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ, except that it differed from the Sunnī community in two respects as narrated:

**Firstly:** Its inclination, in creed, towards *I’tizāl*<sup>1</sup>, following Zayd ibn ‘Alī, who—it is claimed—adopted this from Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’, the head of the Mu’tazilah<sup>2</sup>, when they met during Zayd ibn ‘Alī’s scholarly journey to Baṣrah. Some say that it occurred in Madīnah. This led to debates with his brother, al-Bāqir Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, due to their close relationship.

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1 Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned in his book, *Minhāj al-Sunnah* [1/70], that the Mu’tazilah did not criticise the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم. They are actually in agreement on affirming the Khilāfah of these three. However, regarding preference, the majority of them preferred Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما while some of the later Mu’tazilah abstained from showing preference and a few favoured ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, highlighting differences and similarities between them and the Zaydis in terms of monotheism, justice, Imāmah, and preference.

2 Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā mentioned in his book *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu’tazilah*, pg. 33, that Wāṣil entered Madīnah and stayed with Ibrāhīm ibn Yaḥyā, leading Zayd ibn ‘Alī, his son Yaḥyā ibn Zayd, ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan, his brothers, Muḥammad ibn ‘Ajlān, and Abū ‘Abbād al-Faynī to meet him. Ja’far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq told his companions to join him in meeting Wāṣil, where they found Zayd ibn ‘Alī and his companions. Ja’far said, “Allah sent Muḥammad with the truth, clear signs, warnings, and miracles, as stated in the Qur’ān, ‘*And relatives are more entitled [to inheritance] from Allah.*’ (Sūrah al-Anfāl). We are the family of the Messenger of Allah and closest to him. O Wāṣil, you bring a matter that divides the word and attacks the Imāms. I invite you to repentance.” Wāṣil responded, praising Allah’s justice and generosity, implying that Ja’far and the Imāms were preoccupied with worldly love. Zayd ibn ‘Alī remained silent, prompting Ja’far to reprimand him for not following the truth, leading to their separation.

This narrative is detailed in the book *Faḍl al-I’tizāl wa Ṭabaqāt al-Mu’tazilah wa Mubāyanatuhum Sā’ir al-Mukhālifīn*, pg. 35, (*The Virtue of I’tizāl and the Classes of the Mu’tazilah and Their Differences with Other Opponents*) of Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad,

The contention was not because Zayd became a Mu‘tazilī, as I‘tizāl had spread among some of their family, rather because he adopted views from those who accepted the possibility of error in their grandfather’s (‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib) decisions in the battles against the defectors, the unjust, and the rebels. This was based on Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’s belief that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not certain of being right in his wars against the Ṣaḥābah in the Battle of the Camel and the people of Syria, suggesting that one of the sides was mistaken, without specifying which. Furthermore, Zayd differed in his views on predestination from those of his ancestors, just as he stipulated rebellion to be a condition for someone to be considered an Imām. Al-Bāqir pointed out to him, “According to your principle, your father was not an Imām because he never rebelled nor sought to rebel.”<sup>1</sup>

The Zaydi doctrine requires an Imām to rebel at the time of his declaration of Imāmah, as its founder, Zayd ibn ‘Alī, did. He is quoted as saying:

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a leading Mu‘tazilī who died in 415 AH, as narrated by al-Ḥākim and others, with Allah knowing best its authenticity.

Ibn Yazdād stated, “Zayd ibn ‘Alī did not differ from the Mu‘tazilah except in minor issues.”

As for Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr, it has been narrated by the author of *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, that Zayd studied under Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’. He said, “What Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Abī Bakr, known as al-Shahrastānī, wrote in his book, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, about Zayd ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه adopting the Mu‘tazilī doctrine from Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’ as a follower and the debates between him and his brother al-Bāqir رضي الله عنه about this is undoubtedly false and probably among the lies fabricated by the Rawāfiḍ.”

1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/156; *Ṭabaqāt Al-Mu‘tazilah*, pg. 33; *Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn*, 2/529.

من شهر سيفه ودعا إلى كتاب ربه وسنة نبيه وجرى على أحكامه وعرف بذلك فذلك الإمام الذي لا تسعنا وإياكم جهالته فأما عبد جالس في بيته مرخ عليه ستره مغلق عليه بابه يجري عليه أحكام الظالمين لا يأمر بالمعروف ولا ينهي عن المنكر فأنى يكون ذلك إماما مفروضة طاعته

Whoever unsheathes his sword, calls to the Book of his Lord, the Sunnah of his Prophet, acts according to their judgments, and is known for that, then he is the Imām who neither we nor you can afford to ignore. But as for a man who sits in his house, his door shut, living under the judgments of the oppressors, neither commanding good nor forbidding evil, cannot be an Imām whose obedience is obligatory.<sup>1</sup>

**The other matter is:** The Imāmah, which is the focal point of concern for all Shī'ī sects, their primary preoccupation, and the axis of their political beliefs. Zayd ibn 'Alī believed that 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the most entitled to it after the death of the Messenger Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, due to his position and close relationship both as a relative and son-in-law. This view is shared by all Shī'ī sects, which state:

إن عليا عليه السلام كان أولى بمقام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعده وأحقهم بالإمامة والقيام بالأمر في أمته وأجمعوا على ذلك

'Alī عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was most worthy of succeeding the Messenger Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and was the most entitled to the Imāmah and to lead the affairs of his Ummah. And they unanimously agree on this.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-'Īn*, pg. 188.

2 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-'Īn*, pg. 154.

Despite this, Zayd saw it as permissible for a less qualified person to take the position of Imāmah, even if it be in the presence of a more qualified person<sup>1</sup>, as he explicitly stated:

كان علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه أفضل الصحابة إلا أن الخلافة فوضت إلى أبي بكر لمصلحة رأوها وقاعدة دينية راعوها من تسكين ثائرة الفتنة وتطبيب قلوب العامة فإن عهد الحروب التي جرب في أيام النبوة كان قريبا وسيف أمير المؤمنين علي من دماء المشركين من قريش وغيرهم لم يجف والضغائن في صدور القوم من طلب الثأر كما هي فما كانت القلوب تميل إليه كل الميل ولا تنقاد له الرقاب كل الانقياد فكانت المصلحة أن يكون القائم بهذا الشأن من عرفوه باللين والتؤدة والتقدم بالسن والسبق في الإسلام والقرب من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألا ترى أنه أي أبا بكر لما أراد في مرضه الذي مات فيه تقليد الأمر عمر بن الخطاب زعق الناس وقالوا لقد وليت علينا فظا غليظا فما كانوا يرضون بأمر المؤمنين عمر بن الخطاب لشدة وصلابته وغلظه في الدين وفضاظته على الأعداء حتى سكنهم أبو بكر بقوله لو سألني ربي لقلت وليت عليهم خيرهم

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام was the best among the Companions, but the Khilāfah was entrusted to Abū Bakr because they saw it as beneficial, and they followed this religious principle to calm the storm of discord and to appease the hearts of the masses. The era of wars that occurred during the days of Prophethood were still recent and the sword of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, was not yet dry from the blood of the idolaters from Quraysh and others. The grudges in the hearts of the people for seeking revenge were still present, so the hearts were not completely

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1 Al-Faṣl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Niḥal, 4/163.

inclined towards him nor were necks fully submissive. It was deemed beneficial that the one who takes this role should be known for his gentleness, calmness, advanced age, precedence in Islam, and closeness to the Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ. Do you not see that when Abū Bakr, during the illness he passed away from, intended to delegate the authority to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the people protested, saying, “You have appointed over us a harsh, hard man.” They were not pleased with the Commander of the Faithful ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb due to his harshness, firmness, and strictness in religion and his severity towards the enemies, until Abū Bakr reassured them by saying: “If my Lord questions me, I will say, ‘I appointed over them the best among them.’”<sup>1</sup>

Zayd ibn ‘Alī believed that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) was more entitled to the Khilāfah after the Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ, and had more right to it than the Khulafā’ who preceded him, despite these Khulafā’ being adherents to the Messenger’s ﷺ way of life, pious, and just in their own conduct and towards their community. It is only natural that Zayd also believed that he was more deserving of the Khilāfah than the Umayyad Khulafā’, who had turned the Khilāfah into a hereditary monarchy. Although he did not explicitly state this belief in his declaration outlining the reasons for his rebellion against Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, the underlying sentiment of Zayd’s desire to assume the Khilāfah and his efforts to attain his goal were undoubtedly apparent to Hishām, given his experience in control over state affairs. He therefore became suspicious of Zayd and perceived him as a threat to his reign.

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1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/155.

Consequently, Hishām instructed his governor in Madīnah, Khālīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn al-Ḥārith (or according to some sources, Ibrāhīm ibn Hishām), to monitor Zayd’s movements, as noted in historical records. The governor was to track Zayd’s actions and possibly to provoke him by encouraging some of his relatives to dispute a shared inheritance with him. Hishām was also aware of Zayd’s trip to Iraq with some relatives during the governorship of Khālīd ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qasrī, who had permitted their journey. Therefore, when Yūsuf ibn ‘Umar al-Thaqafī became the governor of Iraq, he sought to identify those who had accompanied Zayd and the permissions they had obtained, in a lengthy affair recounted by al-Ṭabarī in his *al-Tārīkh*.

He then wrote a letter with this information to Hishām. The governor of Madīnah then used it as an opportunity to harass Zayd, thereby distracting him from his pursuit of the Khilāfah. Zayd ibn ‘Alī was compelled to approach Hishām to complain about his governor. Each time he submitted a petition for permission to meet with Hishām, he was denied entry and was instructed to return to his commander with the note, “Go back to your leader.” Zayd declared, “By Allah, I will never return to Khālīd. I am not asking for money, but I am a man with a grievance.” Eventually, after a long time, he was granted permission to meet.

When he appeared before Hishām, he found no place to sit, so he sat where the assembly ended and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, no one is too great for the piety of Allah, and no one is too small for it.”<sup>1</sup>

Hishām then said to him, “I have heard, O Zayd, that you mention the Khilāfah and desire it, yet you are not eligible as you are the son of

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 7/165; *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 3/218.



a slave.” [His mother was Sindiyyah, who al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī had gifted to his father.]

Zayd replied, “You, O Commander of the Faithful, deserve an answer.”

He said, “Speak,” and Zayd said, “No one is closer to Allah or holds a higher status in His sight than a prophet He has sent. Ismā‘īl was the son of a slave woman, and his brother was the son of a free woman, like you. Yet, Allah chose him and from him came the best of mankind.”

Hishām then said, “Leave!”

Zayd replied, “I will leave, and you will only see me where you dislike.”<sup>1</sup>

In another narration:

قال هشام لزيد بن علي بلغني عنك كذا فقال ليس بصحيح قال قد  
صح عندي قال أحلف لك قال لا أصدقك قال إن الله لا يرفع من  
قدر من حلف له بالله فلم يصدق قال اخرج عني قال إذا لن تراني إلا  
حيث تكره

Hishām said to Zayd ibn ‘Alī, “I have heard such and such about you,” to which Zayd replied, “It is not true.”

Hishām said, “It is true to me.”

Zayd said, “I swear to you.”

Hishām replied, “I don’t believe you.”

Zayd said, “Allah does not elevate anyone who swears by Him and is not believed.”

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 7/165; *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 3/218; *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 189; *Ibn al-Athīr: al-Kāmil*, 5/84.

Hishām then said, “Leave my presence!”

Zayd replied, “Then you will only see me where you dislike.”<sup>1</sup>

Then it was known of Zayd ibn ‘Alī that he went to Kūfah and announced his rebellion against Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. When his companions gathered to fight Yūsuf ibn ‘Umar, the governor of Iraq, he addressed them and instructed them to follow the example of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in war. They said to him, “We have heard your speech. What is your opinion about Abū Bakr and ‘Umar?”

He replied, “May Allah have mercy on them and forgive them. What else can I say about them? They accompanied the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the best manner, migrated with him, and strived in Allah’s cause rightfully. I have never heard anyone from my family disown them or speak anything but good of them.”

They said, “So, why then do you seek to avenge the blood of your family and redress their grievances except if the two of them snatched your authority, grabbing it from your hands, and placing people on your backs to fight you all until this day?”

He replied, “The harshest thing I can say about what you mentioned is that we were more entitled to the rule of Allah’s Messenger than all the people, and that the people gave them preference over us and pushed us away from it; but according to us, that did not qualify as Kufr. They were granted authority, then acted justly among the people, and practiced upon the Qur’ān and the Sunnah.”

They said, “Then how did the Umayyads wrong you if Abū Bakr and ‘Umar did not wrong you? Why do you call to fight against the

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1 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 5/391.

Umayyads if they are not unjust to you? Because these people only followed the precedent of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.”

He replied, “Abū Bakr and ‘Umar are not like these people, and these people are unjust to me, to you, and to themselves. We only invite you to act according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, to revive the Sunnah, to extinguish innovations, and to reject and banish the oppressors among the Umayyads. If you respond to us, you will be blessed, and if you refuse, you will lose, and I am not a guardian over you.”

They said, “Disavow them (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar), otherwise we will reject you!”

He exclaimed, “Allah is the greatest! My father told me that the Messenger of Allah said to ‘Alī, ‘There will be people who claim to love us, known by their epithet. If you meet them, kill them, for they are polytheists.’ Go away, for you are the rejecters [al-Rawāfiḍ].”<sup>1</sup>

This is reported in the book of divorce from the book of rulings by Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, narrated through his chain from his father and uncles Muḥammad and Ḥasan, from their father al-Qāsim, from his father, from his grandfather Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥasan, from his father, from his grandfather Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ from the Messenger, that he said:

يا علي يكون في آخر الزمان قوم لهم نبي يعرفون به يقال لهم الرافضة  
فإذا أدركتهم فاقتلهم قتلهم الله فإنهم مشركون

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 7/181; *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 184-185; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 101; *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 9/330. I found no basis for it in the reliable Ḥadīth books.

O ‘Alī, at the end of times, there will be people, they are known by an epithet, referred to as the Rāfiḍah. So, if you encounter them, kill them; may Allah destroy them, for they are indeed polytheists.”<sup>1</sup>

They parted ways with Zayd and deceived him. From then on, they were known as the Rāfiḍah.

‘Īsā ibn Yūsuf said:

جاءت الرافضة زيذا فقالوا له تبرأ من أبي بكر وعمر حتى ننصرك قال بل  
أتولاهما قالوا إذا نرفضك فمن ثم قيل لهم الرافضة

The Rāfiḍah came to Zayd and said to him, “Disavow Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, so we can support you.”

He replied, “Rather, I associate myself with both of them.”

They said, “Then we reject you!”

Hence, they were called the Rāfiḍah.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Muqbilī reported the following: Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī said:

الرافضة حربي وحرب أبي في الدنيا والآخرة مرقت الرافضة علينا كما  
مرقت الخوارج على علي

The Rāfiḍah are my enemies and my father’s enemies in this world and the Hereafter. The Rāfiḍah have rebelled against us as the Khawārij rebelled against ‘Alī.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Note: Some parts of the narrative have been rendered in various forms before. I found no original basis for them in the reliable Ḥadīth books.

2 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 7/160-173, 180-191; *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 3/218; *al-Kāmil*, 5/84-89; *al-Ḥadā’iq al-Wardiyyah*, 1/143.

3 *Al-‘Ilm al-Shāmikh*, pg. 108.

In *Rasā'il al-‘Adl wa al-Tawhīd* by Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, it is mentioned:

فلما كان فعلهم على ما ذكرنا سماهم حيثئذ زيد روافض ورفع يديه  
فقال اللهم اجعل لعنتك ولعنة آبائي وأجدادي ولعنتي على هؤلاء الذين  
رفضوني وخرجوا من بيعتي كما رفض أهل حرورا علي بن أبي طالب  
عليه السلام حتى حاربوه

When their action was as described, Zayd called them *Rawāfiḍ* (rejecters) and raised his hands, saying, “O Allah, let Your curse, the curse of my fathers and forefathers, and my curse be upon those who rejected me and withdrew from my allegiance as the people of Ḥarūrā’ (the Khawārij) rejected and fought against ‘Alī.”<sup>1</sup>

The Zaydis, however, agreed with his statement and fought alongside him.<sup>2</sup> They adhered to his belief regarding the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما), and faced his opponent until he was martyred in Kunāsah of Kūfah on the second day of Ṣafar in the year 122 AH/738 CE, may Allah have mercy on him.

This is the creed of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding the two Shaykhs, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما, which he declared openly and clearly, for he truly feared Allah and was intensely aware of Him, even though it was within his means.

If a worldly man were to appease these dissenters who wanted to coerce him into following their whims by joining them in disparaging

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1 *Rasā'il al-‘Adl wa al-Tawhīd*, 2/76.

2 *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, 5/390; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 10/95; *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, 1/35, 39; *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, 92-106.

Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا even under the guise of Taqiyyah as the Imāmiyyah do, it would be to win them over to his side to support and assist him in achieving his goal of rebelling against Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. However, he refused and rejected their request, preferring to adhere to the truth that must be followed, even if it displeases all humanity, in seeking the pleasure of Allah. This is because he could not deviate from the path followed by his father, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and before him, his father and then his grandfather, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in their sincere love for Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said:

يا معشر أهل العراق يا معشر أهل الكوفة أحبونا حب الإسلام ولا  
ترفعونا فوق حقنا

O people of Iraq, O people of Kūfah, love us with the love of Islam  
and do not elevate us above our status.

And in another narration:

أحبونا حب الإسلام لله عز وجل فإنه ما برح بنا حبكم حتى صار علينا  
عارا

Love us for the sake of Allah, the Majestic and Almighty, because  
your love has become a burden upon us, turning into disgrace.<sup>1</sup>

And in one of the narrations, he added:

بما كنتم تنالون من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى  
أبغضتمونا إلى الناس

<sup>1</sup> *Hilyat al-Awliyā*, 3/137.

Because of what you claim against the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, you have made us detestable to people.

It is reported in *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'* by Abū Nu'aym with his chain of transmission from 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, that some people from Iraq spoke ill of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. After they finished, 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَحِمَهُ اللهُ asked them, “Are you the early emigrants *who were driven out of their homes and wealth, seeking bounty from Allah and His pleasure, and supporting Allah and His messenger? These are the truthful.*”

They said, “No.”

He said: “Are you those *who provided a home and faith before them, loving those who migrated to them, without finding any desire in their hearts for what they were given, preferring others over themselves even if they were in need, and whoever is protected from the greed of his soul, they are the successful?*”

They said, “No.”

He said, “Then you have clearly disowned being from either of these two groups.”

He then affirmed, “As for me, I testify that you are not from those whom Allah ﷻ said, ‘*And those who came after them say: Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any resentment towards those who believe. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful.*’<sup>1</sup> Get out, may Allah deal with you.”<sup>2</sup>

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1 Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 10.

2 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, 3/137; *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 9/107.

And in another narration: “Leave me, may Allah not bless you nor bring your homes closer; you mock Islam, and you are not of its people.”<sup>1</sup>

This is because ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was knowledgeable about the authentic ḥadīth agreed upon, which prohibits cursing the Companions of the Messenger Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, narrated by Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

لا تسبوا أصحابي فوالذي نفسي بيده لو أن أحدكم أنفق مثل أحد ذهباً ما أدرك مد أحدهم ولا نصيفه

Do not curse my Companions, for by the One Who controls my life, if one of you spent gold equivalent to Mount Uḥud, he would not reach a mudd of theirs, not even half of it.<sup>2</sup>

As well as:

الله الله في أصحابي لا تتخذوهم غرضاً بعدي من أحبهم فبحبي أحبهم ومن أبغضهم فببغضي أبغضهم ومن آذاهم فقد آذاني ومن آذاني فقد آذى الله ومن آذى الله فيوشك أن يأخذه

Fear Allah, fear Allah, regarding my Companions; do not make them a target after me. Whoever loves them, it is on account of his love for me that he loves them, and whoever hates them, it is on account of his hatred for me that he hates them; and whoever harms them has harmed me and whoever harms me has harmed Allah; and whoever harms Allah, it is imminent that He will seize him.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 9/107.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth: 3673; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth: 2540 and 2541.

3 Al-Albānī declared it ḍa‘īf in *al-Silsilah al-Ḍa‘īfah*, 6/403, Ḥadīth: 1901.



And his saying:

إذا رأيتم الذين يسبون أصحابي فقولوا لعنة الله على شركم

If you see those who insult my Companions, say: May the curse of Allah be upon your evil.<sup>1</sup>

This is because the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were true to their covenant with Allah; they did not change it, and the praise of Allah for them did not change as mentioned by the scholar ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Abidīn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aydārūs in his response to Ḥasan ibn al-Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad:

وعلمه جل وعلا لم يتحول جهلا له، ما بين أيدينا وما خلفنا وما بين ذلك وما كان ربك نسيًّا نعتقد أن من وعدهم الله به في كتابه الحكيم في عمله السابق القديم من الرضوان في جنات النعيم الشامل لأولهم وآخرهم وأنصارهم ومهاجريهم حيث يقول ويقول يهتدي المهتدون **وَالسَّيِّئُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ** واقع لا محالة من القطع بالاستحالة أن يكون لم يعلم منهم التعاون على الإثم والعدوان والمخالفة لما أخبر به سيد ولد عدنان والنبد لعهد من وعده ليظهره على الدين كله

His knowledge—exalted and lofty is He—did not turn to ignorance; to Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us and what is in between and your Lord was not forgetful. And we believe that what Allah promised them in His Wise Book is in His eternal knowledge of happiness in the gardens of bliss encompassing

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1 Al-Albānī declared it ḍa‘īf jiddan in *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḡhīr wa Ziyādatuhū*, 1/153, Ḥadīth: 1536.

the first of them and the last, their Anṣār and Muhājirīn, where it says, and by His saying the guided ones are guided: *And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who followed them with good conduct, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.*<sup>1</sup> This is inevitably true. It is impossible that He did not know about them cooperating in sin and aggression, opposing what the master of the children of ‘Adnān informed, and renouncing the covenant of whom He promised to manifest it over all religions.<sup>2</sup>

Then the Zaydi sects were divided into many groups; al-Shāṭibī mentioned that they were three: the Jārūdiyyah, the Sulaymāniyyah, and the Batriyyah.

Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah mentioned in *al-Risālah al-Wāzi‘ah*, pg. 33, that they are five groups: the Jārūdiyyah, the Ṣāliḥiyyah, the Batriyyah, the ‘Aqbiyyah, and the Ṣabāḥiyyah.

Al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā mentioned that they, i.e., the Zaydis, ended up being six: the Jārūdiyyah, the Batriyyah, the Ṣāliḥiyyah, and the Jarīriyyah, and then the later Jārūdiyyah split into the Muṭṭarrifiyyah, the Ḥusayniyyah, and the Mukhtari‘ah.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 100.

2 *Al-Mashrū‘ al-Rawī*, 2/489.

3 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 96.

## The Most Prominent Zaydi Sects

### 1. The Jārūdiyyah

Named after Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād ibn al-Mundhir al-Kūfī al-Hamadhānī, or al-Thaqafī, or al-Nahdī. Weaker reports suggest: Ziyād ibn Munqidh al-‘Abdī or Ziyād ibn Abī Ziyād.

Ibn al-Nadīm described him saying:

من علماء الزيدية أبو الجارود ويكنى أبا النجم زياد بن منذر العبدي  
يقال إن جعفر بن محمد بن علي عليهم السلام سئل عنه فقال ما فعل  
أبو الجارود أرجأ بعد ما أولى أما إنه لا يموت إلا بها ثم قال عن أبي  
الجارود لعنه الله فإنه أعمى القلب أعمى البصر وقال فيه محمد بن  
سنان أبو الجارود لم يمت حتى شرب المسكر وتولى الكافرين

Among the scholars of the Zaydis, Abū al-Jārūd, who is also called Abū al-Najm Ziyād ibn Mundhir al-‘Abdī.

It is said that Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī عليه السلام was asked about him, and he said, “What happened to Abū al-Jārūd? He procrastinated after having been supportive; indeed, he will not die except by it.”

Then he said about Abū al-Jārūd, “May Allah curse him, for he is blind in heart, blind in sight.”

Muḥammad ibn Sinān said about him, “Abū al-Jārūd did not die until he drank intoxicants and supported the disbelievers.”<sup>1</sup>

He died in the year 150 AH, or 160 AH in a weaker report.

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1 *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 226-227, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/159,162.

Despite this astonishing confusion about his name, his agnomen, his title, his lineage, and also the date of his death, Imām al-Bāqir Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ called him: Sarḥūb, which he explained means a blind devil that lives in the sea. Abū al-Jārūd had companions and followers, among whom were Faḍl al-Rummān and Abū Khālīd al-Wāsiṭī.

The Jārūdiyyah claimed that the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ indicated ‘Alī through description and gesture without naming and specifying him and he was the Imām after him. The people fell short because they did not recognise the description. They did not ask for the described one, but rather they appointed Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ by their choice, thereby disbelieving.<sup>1</sup> This led Shaykh al-Mufīd to classify the Jārūdiyyah among the extremist Shī‘ah, aligning them with the Imāmiyyah.<sup>2</sup>

Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah (d. 749 AH) described them as ‘specifically distinguished among the Zaydi factions for faulting and deeming the Companions as corrupt’. Some among them were reported to have declared some Companions as disbelievers; and Allah is sufficient against them in what they claim and believe and He is watching over them. This statement is not attributed to any of the prominent Ahl al-Bayt, their scholars, or their Imāms. Overall, this matter is clear and without doubt, we disassociate ourselves before Allah from this statement and our responsibility is only to present the argument and

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1 *Awā’il al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pg. 84; *Masā’il al-Imāmah*, pg. 42; *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pg. 66; *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘In*, pg. 155; *al-Jawharah al-Khālīṣah*; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/157,159; *Tawḍīḥ al-Masā’il al-‘Aqliyyah*; *al-Mustaṭāb*, *Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn*, 2/534; *al-Khuṭaṭ al-Maqrīziyyah*, 2/352.

2 *Awā’il al-Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pg. 40, quoting from the book *Mas’alat al-Taqrīb bayn Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Shī‘ah*, 1/162.

explain the reasoning. Whoever is guided, it is for himself. And that is what is expected of us. There is a saying of the Messenger ﷺ:

إذا ظهرت البدع ولم يظهر العالم علمه فعليه لعنة الله والملائكة والناس  
أجمعين ولا يقبل الله له صرفا ولا عدلا

When innovations appear and a scholar does not reveal his knowledge, the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people will be upon him. Moreover, Allah will not accept any obligatory or optional acts from him.<sup>1</sup>

He concludes by saying:

واعلم أنه ليس أحد من فرق الزيدية أطول لسانا ولا أكثر تصريحاً بالسوء  
في حق الصحابة من هذه الفرقة

And know that no group among the Zaydis speaks more disparagingly and more explicitly ill of the Companions than this sect.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Dāmaghānī mentioned that this statement contradicts the statement of Zayd ibn ‘Alī; however, he alone realised this, stating:

Few now are those who hold this view among them. What is apparent now from their statements is their neutrality concerning the two Shaykhs.

(This contradicts the reality) while believing that the Imām after the Messenger ﷺ is ‘Alī. They made a mistake in their approach to him, a mistake that does not definitively constitute sin, which is why they hesitated in their stance. They said,

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1 I did not find it with this wording in the reliable books of the Ahl al-Sunnah.

2 *Al-Risālah al-Wāzī‘ah*, pg. 33.

“We only hesitated about them because the text regarding ‘Alī was not clear, like saying: ‘He is the Khalīfah after me over my nation and he stands in my place,’ and the like. Instead, it was said: ‘He is my Waṣī, the judge of my religion, and the one who surrenders my affairs to my Lord. He is to me like Hārūn was to Mūsā, except that there is no prophet after me. Whoever I am his master, then ‘Alī is his master. Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are Imāms whether they stand or sit and their father is better than them,’<sup>1</sup> and similar things from which it is deduced by reasoning that the intended meaning is the Khilāfah. So, because this was not understood explicitly, it was not right to condemn; for we admit that they might have understood from these evidences something other than the Khilāfah, as those who opposed them later on understood.

The second point is that those who narrated these aḥādīth believed in the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, which indicates that they understood that the Messenger ﷺ did not intend the Khilāfah by them.

The third is that the Companions, as a group, agreed on this. And to find fault with all of them would be a grave difficulty; because it would undermine trust in the Sharī‘ah, since they are the ones who transmitted it to the Ummah.

The fourth reason is that several aḥādīth state that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar are among the people of Paradise and that the people of

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1 He is my Waṣī, the judge of my religion, and the one who surrenders my affairs to my Lord: Al-Albānī mentions this during a narration and comments, “The ḥadīth is a fabrication.” (*Al-Silsilah al-Ḍa‘īfah*, 10/436.) He is to me like Hārūn was to Mūsā: The ḥadīth is documented by both al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Whoever I am his mawlā, then ‘Alī is his mawlā: Al-Albānī quotes it in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘ wa Ziyādatuhū*, 1/53.

Badr have been forgiven and they could do as they wished. The sayings of the Messenger ﷺ cannot be turned around and these aḥādīth could well be authentic, so not passing judgement on them is safer and disparaging them is dangerous.

The fifth reason is that ‘Alī, being the rightful person, has not been reported by anyone to have cursed them, disowned them, or stated that they were of the disbelievers or of the people of Hell. Rather, it has been narrated that he prayed for them, thanked them for their efforts in Islam, supported them in their matter, strived with them with himself, his opinion, and his tongue, and pledged allegiance to them and supported them.

The Zaydis said: Therefore, we are hesitant about their situation and believe that they are among the virtuous Companions who committed a sin in the matter of leadership; Allah ﷻ knows best about their situation in it, and we say: *‘That was a nation that has passed, it will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.’*<sup>1</sup>

They claim that this method is the method of all the Alawites like Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan, and their children, and it is the method of the pious Shī‘ah.<sup>2</sup>

A group of the Jārūdiyyah claimed that Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, known as Dhū al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah, is alive, was not killed, and will not die until he fills the earth with justice as it was filled with oppression, and they waited for him—as

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1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 141.

2 *Al-Jawharah al-Khāliṣah*.

a group of the Mughīriyyah did—and denied his killing.<sup>1</sup> Another group among them claimed that the one described with these characteristics is Yaḥyā ibn ‘Umar ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Zayd ibn ‘Alī,<sup>2</sup> while a third group claimed that the one referred to with these characteristics is Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn<sup>3</sup> (Ṣāhib al-Ṭāliqān<sup>4</sup>), and they differ in rulings and biographies, so some of them claim that the knowledge of the descendants of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا is like the knowledge of the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, so they naturally and necessarily acquire knowledge before learning, while some claim that knowledge is common among them and others, and it is permissible to take from them and from others among the general populace.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. The Sulaymāniyyah or Jarīriyyah

The Sulaymāniyyah or Jarīriyyah, attributed to Sulaymān ibn Jarīr, argue that the Khilāfah is a matter of consultation, that it is valid if agreed upon by two of the best among the Muslims, and that it can be valid in a less qualified person, although the more qualified is better in all respects. They affirm that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was the leader after the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, but they also confirmed the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا as a rightful decision made by the Ummah, albeit the Ummah erred in their pledge to them, an error that does not

1 *Masā’il al-Imāmah*, pg. 46; *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 6/218; *al-Ansāb fī Māddah al-Jārūdiyyah*, 2/160; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/159.

2 *Al-Faṣl*, 4/179; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97.

3 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 151; *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 10/192; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/159.

4 A city close to Faḥrīn. (*Mu’jam al-Buldān*.) Probably, in current Afghanistan.

5 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/159.



warrant the label of disbelief, nor of transgression, hence they strayed from what was more suitable.

This sect disavowed ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ due to the incidents he [allegedly] caused and they declared him a disbeliever for that. Similarly, they declared ‘Ā’ishah, Zubayr, and Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ as disbelievers for their initiation of the battle against ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. They also criticised the Rāfiḍah for their belief in Badā’, which is when they show a statement suggesting they will gain power and ascendancy, but when things do not turn out as they professed, they say: “Allah has manifested His will differently.” They also speak of Taqiyyah<sup>1</sup>, which is to say something and when told that it is not true or when its falsehood is revealed, they say, “We said it or did it out of Taqiyyah.”<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Batriyyah

The Batriyyah are the companions of Kathīr al-Nawwā’, nicknamed al-Abtar. They were so named for their practice of not reciting the Bismillāh aloud between the Sūrah. It is said that when Sulaymān ibn Jarīr denied the evidence for ‘Alī, al-Mughīrah ibn Sa‘īd called him al-Abtar. They are also known as the Ṣāliḥiyyah, after al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥayy al-Hamadhānī (d. 169 AH). They differ from the Jārūdiyyah as mentioned by Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah and disagree with them on the method of Imāmah being contract and choice.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Taqiyyah*: To conceal the truth and display to people other than what they believe. (This definition is according to the Shī‘ah.) (*Al-Mu‘jam al-Wasīṭ, waqiya.*)

2 *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pg. 68; *al-Jawharah al-Khāliṣah*; *Sharḥ Risālat al-Hūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 155; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/159-160; *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, pg. 16; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97; *al-Khuṭaṭ al-Maqrīziyyah*, 2/352.

3 *Al-Risālah al-Wāzi‘ah*, pg. 33.

They believed that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the best of people after the Messenger Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the most deserving of Imāmah. They argue that the pledges of allegiance to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا were not mistakes; because ‘Alī let them take charge, consenting and delegating the matter willingly and relinquishing his right cheerfully, so we are content and submit to what he submitted to, seeing no other way permissible, as they do not acknowledge ‘Alī’s رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ Imāmah except when he was pledged to.

As for ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, they are reserved in their opinion about him and his killers, not advancing excommunications against them, despite reports that al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ disavowed ‘Uthmān following the events he was criticised for.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā (d. 840 AH) said:

وخالف متأخروهم هاتين الفرقتين حيث أثبتوا إمامة علي عليه السلام  
بالنص القطعي الخفي وخطؤوا المشايخ لمخالفته وتوقفوا في تفسيقهم  
واختلفوا في جواز الترضي عنهم

Their later followers opposed these two groups by affirming ‘Alī’s رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ Imāmah through a definitive unclear text, faulting the elders for opposing him, hesitating in declaring them corrupt, and differing on the permissibility of announcing pleasure upon them.<sup>2</sup>

These are the famous Zaydi sects that arose in the second century of the Hijrah. All their followers agree on the superiority of ‘Alī ibn Abī

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1 *Masā’il al-Imāmah*, pg. 44; *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, pg. 68; *Sharḥ al-Risālah*, pg. 155; *al-Jawharah*; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/161; *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, pg. 16; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 23-24, 97-98; *al-Khuṭaṭ al-Maqrīziyyah*, 2/532.

2 *Masā’il al-Imāmah*, pg. 43; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 24.

Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ over others after the Messenger Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. But they differ—to varying degrees among themselves—in their judgments against those who preceded him from the Rightly Guided Khulafā’, opposing their Imām, Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. However, the Ṣāliḥiyyah or Batriyyah are closer to what Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was upon, and to some extent, the Jarīriyyah as well, as Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn stated in his *al-Ṭabaqāt*:

فالذي كان من قبل أي من قبل المئتين هم الصالحية والجريية وهو الذي كان عليه مذهب زيد بن علي وأما سائر الفرق فإنما حدث بعد ذلك وخالفت زيد بن علي في أصوله وفروعه ولم يوافقوه إلا في الترتير اليسير

What was before—i.e. before the second century—were the Ṣāliḥiyyah and the Jarīriyyah, they conformed to the doctrine of Zayd ibn ‘Alī. As for the other sects, they emerged later and differed from Zayd ibn ‘Alī in primary and secondary aspects, and only agreed with him in very few aspects.

Then he said:

إلى هنا انتهى ذكر الزيدية الذين كانوا على المذهب الأول وهو مذهب زيد بن علي

This concludes the mention of the Zaydis who were upon the original doctrine, which is the doctrine of Zayd ibn ‘Alī.<sup>1</sup>

1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pg. 40, *al-Mustaṭāb, Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā*, tablet 2.



## The Zaydis of Gilan and Deylam

The Zaydi order was not organised after the martyrdom of Zayd ibn ‘Alī and his son Yaḥyā, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh Dhū al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah, and his brother Ibrāhīm until al-Nāṣir al-Aṭrūsh, al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib appeared in Khorasan in the year 284 AH, and some say in 287 AH. He was sought, thus disappeared and withdrew from the matter (leadership) in the year 302 AH, then moved to the lands of Gilan and Deylam. There, he called people to Islam according to the doctrine of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ which they accepted. They supported him and the Zaydiyyah remained dominant in those lands.<sup>1</sup>

However, they later deviated from the doctrine of the Imāmah of the less qualified [being valid], and criticised the Companions as the Imāmiyyah did<sup>2</sup>, after the emergence of the Buyid dynasty (320-447 AH/932-1055 CE) which was initially Zaydiyyah but then turned to extremist Shī‘ah, introducing innovations not based on knowledge, the Qur’ān, or Sunnah. Among these, for example, was celebrating the festival of Ghadīr, building shrines for their Imāms in places they claimed to be the burial sites of their dead, and criminalising those who preceded ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ among the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 10/149; *al-Kāmil*, 8/26.

2 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/156; *Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn*, 2/525.



## Yemeni Zaydism

Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim al-Rassī emerged in Yemen, who came from Ḥijāz in 284 AH (897 CE). He proclaimed himself as the Imām and was nicknamed al-Hādī. He was a great, diligent scholar. He learned the fundamentals (the science of theology) from his teacher Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī al-Mu‘tazilī; his opinions in the fundamentals were mostly in agreement with his teacher. However, in the branches of knowledge, he was independent in his jurisprudence, differing from Zayd ibn ‘Alī in his juristic efforts. He did not adhere strictly to Zayd’s sayings included in Zayd ibn ‘Alī’s *Majmū‘ al-Fiqh al-Akbar* (major jurisprudential collection) and *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kāfi* for the sayings of Zayd ibn ‘Alī.<sup>1</sup> No one strictly followed the original Zaydi doctrine in fundamentals and branches.<sup>2</sup> To verify these differences, one should refer to the book *Mukhālafāt al-Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn fī Kitābihī al-Aḥkām li al-Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī* (*Differences of Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn in his book al-Aḥkām of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī*).<sup>3</sup>

Despite this, the Zaydi denomination’s name prevailed over Imām al-Hādī’s school because al-Hādī and his followers advocated for the Imāmah of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, believing in the necessity of rebellion against oppressors. They recognise his superiority and leadership, restricting the Imāmah to those descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا who rise and call for it, meeting the Imāmah conditions recorded in their books. Therefore, anyone who acknowledges his Imāmah is Zaydi, even if they do not adhere to his school in jurisprudential

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1 *Al-Mustaṭāb* named *Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā*.

2 *Al-Mustaṭāb*.

3 Of the researcher ‘Abbādī Muhammad Aḥmad al-‘Awlī.

branches, as most Zaydis follow different opinions in jurisprudential and theoretical matters, including their Imāms like al-Qāsim, al-Hādī, and al-Nāṣir, who align with Zayd ibn ‘Alī—though they, like him, exercised independent judgement and often disagreed with him on many issues.<sup>1</sup>

This is what Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā confirmed by saying:

فالزيدية منسوبة إلى زيد بن علي لقولهم جميعا بإمامته وإن لم يكونوا على مذهبه في مسائل الفروع وهو تخالف الشافعية والحنفية في ذلك لأنهم إنما انتسبوا إلى أبي حنيفة والشافعي لمتابعتهم لهما في الفروع

The Zaydiyyah are attributed to Zayd ibn ‘Alī because they all agree on his Imāmah, even if they do not follow his jurisprudence in the derivative matters (*furū*), which differs from the Shāfiī and Ḥanafī schools; because they are attributed to Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Shāfiī for following them in these matters.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Hākīm said:

والزيدية يجمع مذهبهم تفضيل علي على سائر الصحابة وأوليته بالإمامة وقصرها من بعد الحسنين في البطنين أي في ذريتهما واستحقاقهما إنما يثبت بالفضل والطلب لا بالوراثة كما تقول العباسية ويعتقدون وجوب الخروج على الجائرين من أهل الأمر بخلاف ما تزعم الحشوية ويرون القول بالتوحيد والعدل والوعد والوعيد كالمعتزلة فهذه الأمور لا يختلفون فيها

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1 *Hadyat al-Rāghibīn; al-Raḥīq*, pg. 16.

2 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pg. 96.



The Zaydiyyah doctrine is distinguished by their preference of ‘Alī over all other Companions, their belief in his right to the Imāmah, and limiting it after al-Ḥasanayn (Ḥasan and Ḥusayn) to their descendants, arguing their entitlement through merit and demand rather than inheritance<sup>1</sup>, as the Abbasids claim. They believe in the necessity of rebellion against unjust rulers, contrary to what the Ḥashwiyah claim, and they hold views on monotheism, justice, promise, and threat similar to the Mu‘tazilah<sup>2</sup>. In these matters, they are in agreement.

Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah added to the aforementioned:

فمن كان على عقيدته في الديانة والمسائل الإلهية والقول بالحكمة  
والاعتراف بالوعد والوعيد وحصر الإمامة في الفرقة الفاطمية والنص  
في الإمامة على الثلاثة الذين هم علي وولده وإن طريق الإمامة الدعوة  
في من عداهم فمن كان مقرا في هذه الأصول فهو زيدي

Whoever holds the same creed in religious and divine matters, believes in wisdom, acknowledges promise and threat, confines the Imāmah to the Fatimid faction, specifies the Imāmah to the three who are ‘Alī and his two sons, and believes that the path of Imāmah is through invitation to others besides them, such a person is a Zaydi.<sup>3</sup>

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1 This principle is one of the most unique aspects of the Zaydi school compared to other Shī‘ī sects, but it was only practiced in rare cases while the common practice was the hereditary transfer of Imāmah, done without a will or covenant, so as not to accuse the Imāms of this sect of contravening this principle. Therefore, they fell into what they denounced the Umayyads for: transferring rule to their offspring through a covenant from the ancestors to the successors, as Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān رضي الله عنه did when he appointed his son Yazīd as his successor.

2 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 96.

3 *Al-Risālah al-Wāzi‘ah*, pg. 28.

Furthermore, the Hādawiyah Zaydis in Yemen believe that ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, and Ḥasanayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are infallible like prophets, and their consensus is a proof, just as the consensus of their scholars’ descendants is also a proof because they alone are the family of Muḥammad among the Ummah of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The consensus of the family is authoritative, specifically ‘Alī is infallible, and his word is as authoritative as the Qur’ān and the Sunnah.<sup>1</sup>

When Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn arrived in Yemen, the latter Zaydis in Gilan and Deylam had split into the Qāsimiyah<sup>2</sup> and Nāṣiriyyah<sup>3</sup>, and they used to declare each other erroneous, until al-Mahdī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dā’ī<sup>4</sup> emerged and declared to them, “Every mujtahid is correct.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the Zaydis of Yemen believed that only

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1 Al-Yaman: *al-Insān wa al-Ḥaḍārah*, pg. 102.

2 Al-Qāsimiyah: Attributed to al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ismā’īl ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan, born in the year 170 AH. He proclaimed himself as the Imām in Kūfah in the year 230 AH. His call did not succeed. He then settled in al-Rass near Madīnah Munawwarah, and was nicknamed al-Ramī. He died in the year 243 AH. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 29.)

3 Al-Nāṣiriyyah: Attributed to al-Nāṣir al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, nicknamed al-Aṭrūsh because of a deformity in his ears, born in the year 230 AH. He proclaimed himself as Imām in Gilan and Deylam and was called al-Nāṣir. He was killed in the year 304 AH. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 11.)

4 Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dā’ī: Imām al-Mahdī Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, who was acknowledged as the Imām in Hawsam, then corresponded with the people of Deylam and reached them in the year 353 AH, then he headed to Hawsam and took control after extensive sieges and commanded several times. He was the one who asserted in Deylam that every mujtahid is correct, because the Qāsimiyah declared the Nāṣiriyyah erroneous and vice versa, so they returned to his word after many debates. He died from poison in Hawsam in the year 360 or 359 AH. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 33.)

5 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97.

one person is correct in juristic efforts and the truth is with him until the time of Imām al-Mutawakkil Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān.<sup>1</sup> Then they reverted from this statement.

Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 840 AH) mentioned that the Zaydiyyah (Zaydis of Yemen) were one faction of the Shī'ah that split into the Mukhtari'ah, Muṭṭarrifiyyah, Jārūdiyyah, Ṣāliḥiyyah, and Ḥusayniyyah<sup>2</sup>, and in the branches [there are] Mu'ayyadiyyah<sup>3</sup>, Hādawiyyah<sup>4</sup>, Nāṣiriyyah, and Qāsimiyyah.

The people of Kūfah among them follow the school of thought of Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā<sup>5</sup>, al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā<sup>6</sup>, and Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr<sup>7</sup> as mentioned by the author of *al-Jāmi' al-Kāfi*<sup>8</sup>:

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1 Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān was born in the year 500 AH. He proclaimed himself as an Imām in the year 533 AH and died in Baydān in Khawlān ibn 'Amr in the region of Sa'dah in the year 566 AH. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 4.)

2 Details on these sects will appear shortly.

3 Al-Mu'ayyadiyyah: Attributed to al-Mu'ayyad al-Kabīr, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Hārūnī, born in Āmil, Ṭabaristān in the year 333 AH. He proclaimed himself as the Imām in the year 380 AH and died on the day of 'Arafah in the year 411. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 4.)

4 Al-Hādawiyyah: Attributed to al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn.

5 Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā ibn Zayd ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn: He was imprisoned during the days of al-Mahdī al-'Abbāsī, then during the days of al-Rashīd. He disappeared until he died in Baṣrah in the year 247 AH.

6 Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā: The Jurist of the Zaydis in Kūfah; he was one of the students of al-Qāsim al-Rassī.

7 Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr ibn Yazīd al-Murādī al-Kūfī al-Zaydī: Nāṣir al-Aṭrūsh and others took from him. He died after 290 AH. He is the author of the book *Amālī Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā*. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 36.)

8 *Al-Jāmi' al-Kāfi* by Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-'Alawī al-Kūfī. He is known as the compiler of the family of Muḥammad.

ووقع بينهما تفسيق وتأثيم على الاختلاف في الفروع كما حكاه أبو العباس في تلقيفه رحمه الله دع عنك الأصول واشتد خلافهم من بعد الإمام المنصور بالله في الأئمة فافترقوا على الداعي وعلى الإمام المهدي بن الحسين افتراقا قبيحا كفر بعضهم بعضا

There occurred between them charges of transgression and sinfulness over differences in the branches as narrated by Abū al-‘Abbās<sup>1</sup> in his compilation: *Da‘ ‘anka al-Uṣūl*. Their disagreement intensified after Imām Maṣṣūr bi Allāh<sup>2</sup> regarding the Imāms, so they split horribly between al-Dā‘ī and Imām al-Mahdī ibn al-Ḥusayn<sup>3</sup>, some of them accusing the other of disbelief.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Abū Al-‘Abbās: Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm. He was an Imāmī and then returned to the school of the Zaydiyyah while a weaker view suggests that he did not. He died in 353 AH.

2 Maṣṣūr bi Allāh: Perhaps he is al-Maṣṣūr al-Qāsim ibn ‘Alī al-‘Iyyānī, who died in ‘Iyyān in the year 393 AH; and Allah knows best.

3 He is Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Hārūn, the brother of al-Mu‘ayyad al-Kabīr. He proclaimed himself as the Imām after the rule of his brother Aḥmad in the year 411 AH and died at the end of the year 424 AH. (*Al-Raḥīq*, pg. 41.)

4 *Al-‘Awāsim wa al-Qawāsim*, 3/457.

## Sources of Imām al-Hādī's Jurisprudence

Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn relied on deriving his fiqh, in which he exercised discretion and chose as his doctrine, on evidence narrated from his predecessors. Some of these were *mursal* (narrations with a broken chain of transmission) and some were *mawqūf* (statement attributed to a Companion), and he did not pay attention to the narrated evidence among the Sunnis, from which he could derive the rulings of his jurisprudence, as did the famous Imāms of the four schools, Shāfi'ī, Ḥanafī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī, and some later scholars of the Hādawiyyah. However, he ignored them and even denied their authenticity, as Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā explained in his book *al-Ghāyāt*, quoting al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn in mentioning the opposition, where he said:

ولهم أي لأهل السنة كتابان يسمونهما بالصحيحين صحيح البخاري  
وصحيح مسلم ولعمري إنهما عن الصحة لخليان

For them—i.e., the Ahl al-Sunnah—are two books they call the Ṣaḥīḥayn, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and by my life, they are devoid of authenticity.

Al-Mahdī commented on al-Hādī's words by saying:

ولعمري إنه أي الهادي لا يقول ذلك على غير بصيرة أو كما قال

By my life, he—i.e., al-Hādī—does not say that without insight, or as he said.<sup>1</sup>

This is what Imām al-Mahdī himself inclined towards and he affirmed it by saying in poetry:

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1 *Al-Manār fī al-Mukhtār min Jawāhir al-Baḥr al-Zakḥkhār*, 1/352.

إذا شئت أن تختار لنفسك مذهبا ينجيك يوم الحشر من لهب النار  
فدع عنك قول الشافعي ومالك وحنبل عن كعب أخبار  
وخذ من أناس قولهم ورواتهم روى جدھم عن جبريل عن الباري

If you wish to choose for yourself a doctrine that saves you on the Day of Resurrection from the flames of fire,

Then leave aside the sayings of Shāfi'ī, Mālik, Ḥanbal, and what is narrated from Ka'b al-Aḥbār,

And take from the people whose sayings and narrators, narrated by their grandfather from Jibrīl from the Creator.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, Aḥmad ibn Sa'd al-Dīn al-Miswarī (d. 1079 AH/1668 CE), declared in his treatise called *al-Risālah al-Munqidhah min al-Ghawāyah fī Ṭuruq al-Riwāyah* that he composed in the year 1052 AH, that all which is in the six mothers (a reference to the six ḥadīth collections) is not to be used as evidence and that it is falsehood.<sup>2</sup> This is because al-Hādī and those who followed his path from the Imāms and followers of his doctrine do not consider it significant in any matter, since in their belief, its narrators were not from the Shī'ah. Therefore, they restrict themselves to the narrations transmitted from their ancestors and with their chains of transmission, as clarified by Imām 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah (d. 614 AH/1217 CE) in his book *al-Majmū' al-Manṣūrī*. He

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1 The last verse mentioned in *al-Risālah al-Munqidhah min al-Ghawāyah fī Ṭuruq al-Riwāyah* by Aḥmad ibn Sa'd al-Dīn al-Miswarī attributed to al-Nāṣir al-Aṭrūsh is the phrase, "And their saying is a tradition from their grandfather from Jibrīl from the Creator when they say."

2 *Bahjat al-Zaman*, in the events of the year 1052 AH.

responded to the Jurist ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Manṣūr ibn Abī al-Qabā’il, the author of *al-Risālah al-Khāriqah*, by saying:

كم بين قولي عن أبي جده وأبي أبي فهو النبي الهادي  
وفتي يقول حكى لنا أشيائنا ما ذلك الإسناد من إسنادي  
ما أحسن النظر البليغ المنصف في مقتضى الإصدار والإيراد  
خذ ما دنا ودع البعيد لشأنه يغنيك دانيه عن الإبعاد

How far is my saying from my father, his grandfather, and my father my father, for he is the guiding Prophet.

While a youngster says: Our Shaykhs have narrated to us. How far is this chain of narration from my chain of narration?

How beautiful is the eloquent and fair consideration in the requirement of issuing and presenting?

Take what is near and leave the distant for its own sake, the near suffices you from the distant.<sup>1</sup>

And this is what al-Hādī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 822 AH/1419 CE) adhered to when he wanted to convince his brother Muḥammad, who abandoned taqlīd after having mastered independent reasoning and acted according to the rulings of the Book and the authentic Sunnah, to return to what he was upon from adhering to the Hādawī doctrine, illustrating the difference between the chain of his ancestors and the chain of the Ahl al-Sunnah. He said in his famous Dāliyah poem addressing his brother:

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1 Al-‘Iqd al-Fākhīr al-Ḥasan: *Tawḍīḥ al-Masā’il al-‘Aqliyyah; al-Qawl al-Ma’qūl wa al-Manqūl fī Iqāz Ahl al-Takāsul wa al-Fuḍūl.*

ما لي أراك وأنت صفوة سادة طابت شمائلهم لطيب المحتد  
تمتاز عنهم في مأخذ علمهم وهم الذين علومهم تروي الصدى  
أخذوا مباني علمهم وأصوله عن أهلهم من سيد عن سيد  
سند عن الهادي وعن آبائه لا عن كلام مسدد بن مسرهد  
سند عن الآباء والأجداد في أحكامهم وفنونهم والمفرد

Why do I see you, whereas you are the elite of leaders whose traits are purely refined,

Differing from them in the sources of their knowledge, while they are the ones whose sciences echo through the ages?

They took the foundations of their knowledge and its principles from their people, from a Sayyid to a Sayyid.

A chain of narration from al-Hādī and his forefathers, not from the speech of Musaddad ibn Musarhad.<sup>1</sup>

Their chain of narration from forefathers and grandfathers in judgments, sciences, and the unique.<sup>2</sup>

And for the scholar ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī al-Wazīr:

في كفة الميزان ميل واضح عن مثل ما في سورة الرحمن  
فاجزم بخفض النصب وارتفاع رتبة الدين واكسر شوكة الميزان

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1 Musaddad ibn Musarhad: Al-Dhahabī describes him in *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 10/591: The Imām, the Ḥāfiẓ, the authority, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Asadī al-Baṣrī, a prominent figure in Ḥadīth. Al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, and others narrated from him. He passed away in the year 228 AH.

2 *Al-Jawāb al-Nāṭiq bi al-Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn li Ṣudūr al-Muttaqīn*.



In the scale's balance, there is a clear inclination, similar to what is in Sūrah al-Raḥmān.

So be decisive in lowering the raised and elevate the rank of religion and break the thorn of the balance.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, they prefer to act according to what the scholars of their sect have determined, especially in acts of worship, over others, even if it contradicts the evidence of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. For example, if what the people of the sect deem correct in a matter conflicts with the text from the Qur'ān or the Sunnah or both, it is said in this case, "The sect is to the contrary," completely ignoring the evidence. An example of this is that Allah ﷻ has permitted Muslims to eat the food of the People of the Book and likewise the marriage of a Muslim to a woman of the People of the Book<sup>2</sup> as stated in His saying:

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ  
حِلٌّ لَهُمْ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ

*Today all good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you.*<sup>3</sup>

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1 Muqaddamat al-Rawḍ al-Naḍīr, 1/25.

2 Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr mentioned that Zayd ibn 'Alī, his grandson Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā, and Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah allowed marriage to a Kitābī woman. (Al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim, 8/214.)

3 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 5.

But the Hādawī sect did not accept what Allah permitted for Muslims in this noble verse. Perhaps this is what prompted Nashwān ibn Saʿīd al-Ḥimyarī (d. after 570 AH) to declare his denunciation of some of the muqallids from the scholars of his time due to their preference of Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn’s view over Allah’s *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* statement. This is his statement:

إذا جادلت بالقرآن خصمي أجاب مجادلا بكلام يحيى  
فقلت كلام ربك عنه وحي أتجعل قول يحيى عنه وحي

When I argue with my opponent using the Qur’ān, he responds with the words of Yaḥyā.

So, I said, “Your Lord’s speech is revelation. Do you consider Yaḥyā’s words as revelation too?”<sup>1</sup>

This matter is not specific to the Zaydi sect, but is also prevalent in some other sects. This was pointed out by Imām al-Shawkānī in his book *Adab al-Ṭalab*, where he talks about the followers in all Islamic sects, saying:

إنهم اعتقدوا أن إمامهم الذي قلده ليس في علماء الأمة من يساويه أو يدانيه ثم قبلت عقولهم هذا الاعتقاد الباطل وزاد بزيادة الأيام والليالي حتى بلغ إلى حد يتسبب عنه أن جميع أقواله صحيحة جارية على وفق الشريعة ليس فيها خطأ ولا ضعف وأنه أعلم الناس بالأدلة الواردة في الكتاب والسنة على وجه لا يفوت عليه منها شيء ولا تخفى منها خافية فإذا أسمعوا دليلا في كتاب الله أو سنة رسوله قالوا لو كان هذا راجحا على ما ذهب إليه إمامنا لذهب إليه ولم يتركه لكنه تركه لما هو أرجح منه عنده فلا يرفعون ذلك رأسا ولا يرون بمخالفته بأسا

1 *Al-Mustaṭāb*.

They believed that their Imām, whom they follow, is unparalleled and unmatched in the Ummah’s scholars. Their minds accepted this false belief and it grew over days and nights to the extent that it caused them to believe all his statements are correct and conform to the Sharīah, without any error or weakness, and that he is the most knowledgeable about the evidence in the Qur’ān and Sunnah, in such a way that nothing escapes him and no detail is hidden. So, if they hear an argument in Allah’s book or the Messenger’s Sunnah, they say, “If this was valid over what our Imām adhered to, he would have followed it and not left it, but he abandoned it for what he deemed superior.” So, they do not consider it at all and see no harm in opposing it.<sup>1</sup>

He then affirmed this saying:

وهذا صنيع قد اشتهر عنهم وكاد يعمهم قرنا بعد قرن وعصرا بعد عصر  
على اختلاف المذاهب وتباين النحل فإذا قال لهم القائل اعملوا بهذه  
الآية القرآنية أو بهذا الحديث الصحيح قالوا لست أعلم من إمامنا حتى  
تبعك ولو كان هذا كما تقول لم يخالفه من قلدناه فهو لم يخالفه إلا إلى  
ما هو أرجح منه

And this action has become famous among them and nearly encompassed them generation after generation and era after era, despite the differences in sects and doctrines. So, when someone says to them: Follow this Qur’anic verse, or this authentic ḥadīth, they say, “You are not more knowledgeable than our Imām, so that we must follow you. If this were as you say, he whom we follow would not have contradicted it, for he only contradicted it for what is more plausible.”<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Adab al-Ṭalab*, pg. 122.

2 *Adab al-Ṭalab*, pg. 123.

He concluded by stating the situation among the Zaydi followers in Yemen, saying:

وأما في ديارنا هذه فقد لقنهم من هو مثلهم في القصور والبعد عن معرفة الحق ذريعة إبليسية ولطيفة مشؤومة هي أن دواين الإسلام الصحيحين والسنن الأربع وما يلحق بها من المسندات والمجاميع المشتملة على السنة إنما يشتغل بها ويكرر درسها ويأخذ منها ما تدعو حاجته إليه من لم يكن من أتباع أهل البيت لأن المؤلفين لها لم يكونوا من الشيعة فيدفعون بهذه الذريعة الملعونة جميع السنة المطهرة لأن السنة والواردة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هي ما في تلك المصنفات ولا سنة غير ما فيها هؤلاء وإن كانوا لا يعدون من أهل العلم ولا يستحقون أن يذكروا مع أهله ولا تنبغي الشغلة بنشر جهلهم وتدوين غباوتهم لكنهم لما كانوا تلبسوا بلباس أهل العلم وحملوا دفاثره وقعدوا في المساجد والمدارس اعتقدتهم العامة من أهل العلم وقبلوا ما يقلنونهم من هذه الفواقر فضلوا وأضلوا وعظمت بهم الفتنة وحلت بسببهم الرزية فشاركوا سائر المقلدة في ذلك الاعتقاد في أئمتهم الذين قلدوهم واختصوا من بينهم بهذه الخصلة الشنيعة والمقالة الفظيعة فإن أهل التقليد من سائر المذاهب يعظمون كتب السنة ويعترفون بشرفها وأنها أقوال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأفعاله وأنها من دواين الإسلام وأمهات الحديث وجوامعه التي عول عليها أهل العلم في سابق الدهر ولا حقه بخلاف أولئك فإنها عندهم بالمنزلة التي ذكرنا فضموا إلى شنيعة التقليد شنيعة أخرى هي أشنع منها وإلى بدعة التعصب بدعة أخرى هي أفظع منها ولو كان لهم أقل حظ من علم وأحق نصيب من فهم لم يخف عليهم أن هذه الكتب لم يقصد مصنفوها إلا جمع ما بلغ إليهم من السنة بحسب ما بلغت إليه مقدرتهم وانتهى إليه علمهم لم يتعصبوا فيها لمذهب ولا اقتصروا فيها على ما يطابق بعض المذاهب

دون بعض بل جمعوا سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأمته ليأخذ  
كل عالم منها بقدر علمه وبحسب استعداده

As for our lands, they have been taught by those like them in deficiencies and detachment from knowing the truth, a cunning and unfortunate Satanic pretext. Namely that the registers of Islam—the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* and the four *Sunan*, along with their associated *Musnads* and collections containing the *Sunnah*—only engage with it, study it, and take from it as required by your need, from those who were not followers of the *Ahl al-Bayt*; since the authors of these books were not from the *Shī'ah*. Thus, they use this accursed pretext to reject all the pure *Sunnah*, because the *Sunnah* that comes from the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم is what is in those compilations and there is no *Sunnah* beyond them.

These people, although they are not considered among the knowledgeable nor deserve to be mentioned with them, and their ignorance should not be propagated nor their foolishness documented, yet because they have donned the garb of the learned, carried their notebooks, and sat in *Masjids* and *Madrasahs*, the masses believe them to be scholars and accept the deficiencies they dictate, thus they went astray and led others astray, and the tribulation grew with them and a calamity befell because of them, sharing this belief with the rest of the *muqallids* in their religious leaders whom they followed, yet were distinguished among them by this vile characteristic and terrible statement.

Indeed, the *muqallids* from all the schools of thought honour the books of *Sunnah*, recognising their nobility, that they are

the sayings and actions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and they are the registers of Islam and the sources of Ḥadīth and their compilations that scholars have relied upon in the past and continue to do so. Unlike those, for they are considered as mentioned, thus adding to the ugliness of conformity another that is uglier, and to the innovation of fanaticism another that is more terrible.

And if they had the least portion of knowledge, and the most minor share of it, those who understand will not fail to see that these books were compiled by their authors with the sole intention of collecting what they could of the Sunnah, to the extent of their ability and knowledge. They did not show bias towards any particular school of thought, nor did they limit their collections to what aligns with certain schools over others. Instead, they gathered the teachings of the Messenger Muḥammad for his Ummah, so that each scholar could take from it according to their knowledge and readiness.<sup>1</sup>

He then said:

ومن لم يفهم هذا فهو بهيمة لا يستحق أن يخاطب بما يخاطب به النوع  
الإنساني وغاية ما ظفر به من الفائدة بمعادة كتب السنة التسجيل على  
نفسه بأنه مبتدع أشد ابتداع فإن أهل البدع لم ينكروا جميع السنة ولا  
عادوا كتبها الموضوعه لجمعها بل حق عليهم اسم البدعة عند سائر  
المسلمين لمخالفة بعض مسائل الشرع

And whoever does not understand this is a beast, unworthy of being addressed in the manner humans are addressed. The

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1 *Adab al-Ṭalab*, pg. 123.

most they achieve in opposing the books of Sunnah is to label themselves as the most extreme innovators, for even the people of innovation did not deny all of the Sunnah<sup>1</sup>, nor did they oppose all its compiled books. Instead, they were labelled as innovators by other Muslims for differing on certain religious matters.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Comment by Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr regarding the presence of some aḥādīth in the books of Sunnah that do not meet the criteria of authenticity, stating that this should not lead to their dismissal or non-adherence to their content. He warned, “Beware of listening to this speech, which might turn you away from the books of Sunnah, thinking that they mix the authentic with the weak and the correct with the incorrect. Those who compiled these books are leaders in the field of Ḥadīth and critics in this matter and they are the ultimate authorities in their knowledge. If there are errors in their books, what do you think of the others? Rather, this should encourage one to rely on and refer back to these books. Do you not see that if you found an error in the book of Sībawayh on Arabic, you would not discard everything he narrated in his book because of that, for if Sībawayh can err despite his meticulousness in the field, then what about those who are less careful? (*Al-‘Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 8/323.)

2 *Adab al-Ṭalab*, pg. 123-124.





## Opening the Door to Ijtihād

Despite the clear differences between the Zaydi Hādawī school and the Sunnī tradition, the former has a commendable and praiseworthy feature unique among other Islamic schools: the door to *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) is open for those proficient in its sciences and skilled in its arts. This includes knowledge of Qur’anic verses related to legal rulings, aḥādīth, the science of Ḥadīth terminology, as well as principles of Islamic jurisprudence, grammar, morphology, semantics, rhetoric, and logical language, among other narrative and analytical sciences. This follows the principle of: *Every mujtahid is correct*, proclaimed by al-Mahdī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dāī, as previously explained. Consequently, a significant number of Zaydi scholars in Yemen, who Allah has blessed, have ascended to this pedestal of *ijtihād*, delved into the sciences of the Glorious Qur’ān and its exegesis, and the study of foundational Ḥadīth books and their sciences. They found in the Qur’ān and authentic Sunnah enough guidance, negating the need for unqualified opinions. Thus, they discarded blind conformity and called others to act according to the Qur’ān and Sunnah’s rulings, leading to the emergence amongst them of Imāms renowned for their absolute *ijtihād*.

Among them were Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 840 AH/1436 CE) author of *al-‘Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim fī al-Dhabb ‘an Sunnat Abī al-Qāsim*; al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad al-Jalāl (d. 1084 AH/1673 CE) author of *Ḍaw’ al-Nahār al-Mushriq ‘alā Ṣafaḥāt al-Azhār*; Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Mahdī al-Muqbilī (d. 1108 AH/1696 CE in Makkah) author of *al-‘Ilm al-Shāmikh fī Īthār al-Ḥaqq ‘alā al-Ābā’ wa al-Mashāyikh*, *al-Arwāḥ al-Nawāfikh li Āthār Īthār al-Ābā’ wa al-Mashāyikh*, and *al-Abḥāth al-Musaddadah fī Funūn*

*Muta'addadah*; Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Amīr (d. 1182 AH/1768 CE), author of *Subul al-Salām Sharḥ Bulūgh al-Marām fī Adillat al-Aḥkām*; 'Abd al-Qādir ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Qādir Sharaf al-Dīn (d. 1207 AH/1792 CE); and Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Shawkānī (who assumed his position in 1250 AH/1834 CE), the author of *Nayl al-Awṭār Sharḥ Muntaqā al-Akḥbār*.

I only mention these individuals because their works have been exceptionally well-received, especially *Subul al-Salām* and *Nayl al-Awṭār*, which have spread widely in the Muslim lands. They have become references for scholars and students interested in studying the jurisprudence of the Sunnah in Islamic schools, institutes, and universities, regardless of any particular *madhhab* (legal school). These works have been translated into several languages of the Muslim world, such as Urdu, Turkish, and Malay, among others, for those who cannot read Arabic. This is because they found in these books something that removed the numerous sectarian differences from themselves, uniting them on the common word: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, returning to the way of the predecessors of this Ummah, which is the best of nations that were brought forth for people.

However, although *ijtihād* became a known principle in the Zaydi school, those among them who adopted it, leaned towards it, and realised it in themselves, did not escape the severe criticism of the Zaydi scholars and their followers who still blindly adhere to their previous rulings. This is because they find it difficult to abandon their conformity and for a *mujtahid* (a scholar who practices *ijtihād*) to leave their school and engage with the rulings of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Sunnah. Therefore, they target him with accusations and animosity towards the Ahl al-Bayt to provoke the anger of the general public against him and fabricate baseless and unreal accusations against him,

making him a lesson for others who are inclined to follow the Qur’ān and the authentic Sunnah. In this regard, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr endured much harm from the scholars of his time who refused to abandon conformity, even from his own people, leading to his retreat to the mountainous regions, where he would spend months in isolation in empty Masjids. Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Mahdī al-Muqbilī faced many types of slander and vilification as well. Among this was what the poet al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī al-Habal accused him of, saying:

المقبلي ناصبي أعمى الشقاء بصره  
 فرق ما بين النبي وأخيه حيدر  
 لا تعجبوا من بغضه للعترة المطهرة  
 فأمه معرفة لكن أبوه نكره

Al-Muqbilī is a Nāṣibī<sup>1</sup>; misfortune blinded his sight,

Who differentiates between the Messenger and his brother Ḥaydar.

Don’t be surprised by his hatred for the purified progeny,

The mother who birthed him is known, but the one who fathered him is not.<sup>2</sup>

1 In this manner, do they slander every person who abandons blind conformity to their faith, choosing to act upon the evidences of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, branding him with the epithet of Wahhābī! As Qāḍī ‘Aqīl ibn Yaḥyā al-Iryānī, who took office in the year 1346 AH/1928 CE, said, “If I glorify my Deity above the rivals, they say, ‘You are a Wahhābī,’ but in the chosen one [Prophet Muḥammad] is a model, his nation named him al-Ṣābī (apostate).”

2 And this is the logic of the radical Shī’ah in every time and place; they accuse those who love the Companions of the Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ of hating ‘Alī and

He was ultimately forced to sell his house and emigrate with his family to Makkah, where he lived until he died; because he renounced conformity and advocated for ijtihād and following the evidences of the Qur’ān and the authentic Sunnah.

As for Muḥammad ibn Ismā’īl al-Amīr, he was greatly harmed, especially after he delivered the Friday sermon in the Masjid of Ṣan‘ā’ and did not mention some of the Yemeni Imāms in the second sermon, as was customary. This angered the fanatics among the ignorant people, including some relatives of Imām al-Mahdī al-‘Abbās, who then ordered the arrest of al-Amīr and those who caused the disturbance. Al-Amīr said in a poem addressing the Messenger of Islam ﷺ:

فإني قد أوديت فيك لنصرتي لستك الغراء في البر والبحر  
وكم رام أقوام وهموا بسفكهم دمي فأبى الرحمن نيلي بالضر

I have been harmed for supporting your noble Sunnah on land and sea.

And many people sought to shed my blood, but the Most Merciful prevented them from harming me.<sup>1</sup>

Then, when the scholars of Banū al-‘Ansī from Baraṭ learned about Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismā’īl al-Amīr’s omission of the Yemeni Imāms in the Friday sermon, they wrote a letter to the scholars of Ḥūth inciting them to stand with them against the Amīr. We will mention this as it

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his sons رضي الله عنهم, claiming they are of unknown parentage, as al-Ṣāhib ibn ‘Abbād said, “Whoever is of doubt and negligence and harbours ill for the Messenger’s household, the blame lies on his mother who was frequented by some of her neighbours.”

1 From his *Dīwān*, pg. 205. The beginning of the poem reads, “When weakness overcame me from all sides and I passed the age of eighty.”

was phrased and composed and it will be followed by the response of the scholars of Ḥūth, and then their response to the scholars of Ḥūth.

It was mentioned in the letter addressed to the leaders and Shī'ah of Ḥūth that the people of Ṣan'ā' were deviating from and changing the doctrine of the Ahl al-Bayt and that Sayyid 'Allāmah Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Amīr was the one changing the doctrine of the Ahl al-Bayt, a long discussion which the observer will become aware of.

And these are the letters:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

This is a letter from the judges of Banū al-'Ansī to the people of Ḥūth and its tribes: To all the distinguished, honourable scholars, and all of the pure, prominent jurists residing in the region of Ḥūth and all from their tribes, may Allah protect them. Peace be upon you, and Allah's mercy and blessings.

After praising Allah and salutations upon our master Muḥammad and his family, and may Allah preserve for us and you the religion of Islam and make us adhere to the creed of the family of our Prophet, upon him and his family be the best of prayers and peace; for whoever adheres to them is indeed following the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, as he صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I leave among you that which if you hold fast to, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my family..." to the end, and he said, "This knowledge will be carried by just successors from my family who will remove from it the distortion of the extremists, the false claims of the fabricators, and the ignorance

of the ignorant.”<sup>1</sup> These suffice for those who want to adhere to them.

The reason for raising this to you is that we witnessed matters in Ṣan‘ā’ instigated by Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr, from prince and minister, in denigrating the doctrine of the Ahl al-Bayt, misleading those who followed them and belittling the knowledge of the Ahl al-Bayt, which they derived and acquired from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, and paying attention to the disparagement of the opposers and considering the Imāms of truth as false. The conditions of Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr has become apparent to you, that he has been expelled from Yemen twice, and prevented from revealing anything of what is now evident!

The state’s affairs have become apparent to both the elite and the masses that they have usurped Allah’s wealth from its rightful owners and misallocated it, using it to adorn gardens and houses; they acquired the wealth of the subjects as if they were unaware that their final destination is the grave. They collected with stinginess and monopoly, and when they gave, they gave extravagantly and wastefully, appointing tyrannical governors as a means to establish injustices by imposing taxes without any basis in the Book or the Sunnah. When they spent some money, they would recover many times more from the people, fearing neither Allah’s disdain nor the ruler’s punishment. When

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1 The ḥadīth’s text is:

يحمل هذا العلم من كل خلف عدوله ينفوه عنه تحريف الغالين وانتحال المبطلين وتأويل الجاهلين

This knowledge will be carried by the just successors who refute the distortion of the extremists, the false claims of the fabricators, and the interpretation of the ignorant. (*Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ*, 1/53, al-Albānī graded it ṣaḥīḥ.)

appointing a ruler, they ensured his sufficiency to prevent him from criticising them, which is of utmost importance. The Messenger said, “He who deems Allah’s prohibitions permissible does not believe in Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

Seeing this, we were compelled, and so Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr began to gather false claims to entice them with the love of the worldly life, as if Allah’s prohibition of what they deemed permissible was not mentioned in His Book, neglecting religious zeal. We then declared to our tribes, whom we must inform, and they responded by following the truth, ensuring their sincere unity in pleasing Allah and we secured a firm agreement with them to act in accordance with Allah’s will. Our and their guide is the Book of Allah and they follow our lead in what is permissible and forbidden. If we find someone to lead the community, we all follow him; if not, we and they, along with whoever acts in this matter from the Shi’ites, will present this to the one in Ṣan‘ā’, the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. If he follows them, we will follow him; if he prevents this, then the Muslims should collectively oppose him. This is our position, which we wanted to share with you. If you are aware that it is our duty and yours to gather your tribes and ask from them what we asked from ours, uniting their opinion in agreement with everyone to the market of al-Ḥarf<sup>2</sup> to unite upon what pleases Allah. If you say otherwise, this is what we must adhere to and you have taken upon yourselves the argument for that. As for us, we have already presented our excuses before Allah.

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1 It appears with the wording, “He who deems Allah’s prohibitions permissible does not believe in the Qur’ān.” The narration includes an unknown narrator. (*Irwā’ al-Ghalīl*, 3/360.)

2 Al-Ḥarf: It is Ḥarf Sufyān to the north of Ṣan‘ā’.

Your response is essential, and may Allah protect you and grant you noble peace.

This marks the end of the letter of the judges of the al-‘Ansī family, followed by the response from the people of Ḥūth.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon the honourable judges of the al-‘Ansī family. After praising Allah as He deserves for His majestic sovereignty and immense evidence. His salutations and peace be upon our truthful and trustworthy Prophet and his righteous and honourable family, and upon the guided scholars who follow in the footsteps of the master of the messengers.

Your letter has reached us mentioning that you have witnessed things in Ṣan‘ā’ that contradict the religion, deviate from the methodologies of the most noble family, the Sunnah, and the clear Book. And that the one who introduced them is the great Sayyid, the handsome scholar, the glory of Islam and the eloquence of people, and the guide for the prominent scholars, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Amīr, may Allah protect him for the Muslims and strengthen the religion through him. What you mentioned is a lie, slander, and compounded ignorance without evidence or proof.

We, by Allah, are his testers and among his students, for he—by Allah—has a correct belief, a pure nature, is one of the people of resolution and binding, following the most complete law, which is the Book of Allah ﷻ and the Sunnah of His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and his family. He has truly recognised them and magnified their status, manifested their command,



and diligently worked on them, and on all the sciences of the Ahl al-Bayt and others in the principles and branches of Arabic. He became the ultimate authority of his time, a diligent, knowledgeable, authentic, meticulous, and insightful scholar, deriving Islamic legal rulings from the Qur'ān and the Prophetic Sunnah. He understood the reality of consensus (*Ijmā'*) and analogical reasoning (*Qiyās*) practicing upon what his keen insight leads to aligning with the Qur'ān and Sunnah wherever they lead.

It is imperative for someone who possesses these qualifications to avoid conformity to anyone, including members of the Messenger's family or others. Such a person, endowed by Allah with these qualifications, should not be challenged in their discernments, which some may criticise only in terms of procedural matters like raising hands, folding the hands, and saying *āmīn*, whose legitimacy is well-known from the enlightening Sunnah. Many scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt and others have opined for raising the hands.

It is mentioned in *Bayān Ibn Muẓaffar* that only a few like al-Hādī, Abū al-'Abbās, and al-Qāḍī Zayd disagreed with this view. His apparent wording is that it is the school of all the Ahl al-Bayt, whose statements are well-known and books are famous. Fifty prominent Companions of the Messenger, including 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, reported that the Messenger used to raise his hands at the beginning of the prayer and not repeat this gesture afterward. Among these narrators is 'Ā'ishah, the Messenger's wife, who reported the Messenger's practice of raising his hands before pronouncing the opening *takbīr* and then lowering them.

It is reported that Abū Ḥumayd as-Sā'idī said to ten of the Messenger's Companions, "I am the most knowledgeable among you about the Messenger's prayer." They acknowledged his experience and presence with the Messenger, to which he described the Messenger's prayer: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would stand for prayer, he would raise his hands level with his shoulders, settle each bone in place, then recite and perform takbīr, raising his hands again level with his shoulders, saying 'Allah is the Greatest,' and then lower them," till the end of the ḥadīth. After completing his description, they confirmed, "You have spoken the truth; this is indeed how the Messenger prayed."

The description of the Prophet Muḥammad's ﷺ prayer serves as evidence for the legitimacy of raising hands due to his saying, "My nation shall not agree upon an error."<sup>1</sup> Regarding placing the right hand over the left during prayer, a group from the Messenger's family (Ahl al-Bayt) endorsed this practice. As some scholars noted, Imām Yaḥyā led a nation and other scholars led another; or it was said that he led an independent nation given his extensive knowledge, impressive views, and superior statements. A group of the Messenger's Companions, including Ibn Mas'ūd, were seen placing their left hand over their right during prayer, which the Messenger then corrected by placing his right hand over his left, thereby affirming Ibn Mas'ūd's action. The Messenger's affirmation is considered a fundamental aspect of the Sunnah associated with him, which includes his sayings, actions, and affirmations.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḡhīr wa Ziyādatuhū*, 1/267, al-Albānī graded it ḥasan, the wording is close.

It is narrated that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib would hold his left hand with his right above the navel, an act considered to be following the Messenger’s example, since ‘Alī is referred to as the “gate to the city of knowledge,” a saying attributed to the Messenger: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate.”<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the concept of saying āmīn loudly in prayer is supported by some scholars from the Messenger’s family. This practice is based on narrations like that of Wā’il ibn Ḥujr, who reported that the Messenger ﷺ would say āmīn loudly after reciting, “*Nor of those who go astray.*” This is similarly confirmed by a report from Abū Hurayrah, “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would recite, ‘*Not of those upon whom wrath is nor of those who go astray,*’ he would say āmīn to the extent that those next to him in the first row would hear it.” Regarding this, the Messenger ﷺ said: “When the Imām says ‘*Not of those upon whom wrath is nor of those who go astray,*’ say āmīn because whoever’s utterance coincides with that of the angels, his past sins will be forgiven.”<sup>2</sup> And other aḥādīth like this are narrated.

These aḥādīth are found in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, which is one of the six major collections relied upon in the science of Ḥadīth. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* is particularly referenced by the Ahl al-Bayt عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and those of the school. These three issues: namely, raising (the hands), joining (them), and saying āmīn, even though there is disagreement among scholars about them, are like other matters of dispute; objections should not be made, just as one should not object to a person praying with exposed knees, or

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1 Al-Ṭabarānī: *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr*, 11/65, Ḥadīth: 11061, al-Albānī declared it a fabrication. (*Al-Silsilah al-Ḍa’īfah*, 6/457, Ḥadīth: 2955.)

2 *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Ḥadīth: 927, al-Albānī graded it ṣaḥīḥ.

someone who does not perfectly straighten up between bowing and prostration, or drinking in a manner not recommended, among other disputable matters. Because it coincides with the opinion of some, it is permissible for the layman agreeing with someone's view, and he should not be objected to in this matter. Therefore, the right of the mujtahid, who has exerted effort in examining the evidences and deriving legal rulings from them, is more entitled not to be faulted or objected to, as we have stated, because conformity is forbidden for him, and he must act according to his insight. Indeed, what is obligatory upon us and you, firstly, is to rectify the intention, then to command what is good and forbid what is evil in social matters.

You must prevent yourselves from engaging in oppression and destruction, and be content with the divine decree, and command your tribes to perform the obligatory acts that Allah has imposed upon them, such as praying in the prescribed manner, fasting in Ramaḍān, paying Zakāh to those who deserve it with content hearts, and performing Ḥajj for those who can find a way to it, and you must forbid them from following the judgments of the tyrants, from depriving women of their rightful inheritance which Allah has mandated for them, from engaging in usury, from oppressing the weak and the poor, and from the partisanship of the Age of Ignorance which leads to people killing each other. We also need to do the same. Advising and warning have taken place and they have rectified the world. If things are purely for Allah, they have an impact and are rejuvenating; but if they are not purely for Allah, they are rejected. And on their owner, it brings doom and regret on the Day of Resurrection.

As for what you mentioned about the state of affairs, it is as you said: they usurped wealth from its rightful owners, became indulgent in Allah's wealth and the wealth of Muslims, denied it to its rightful owners, monopolised it, and competed over it in this worldly life by building thoroughfares and palaces. After that, they are destined for the graves, engrossed in the ornaments of horses, slaves, and maidservants. All this was from them, a neglect of Allah's right, boasting over others, and leaning towards the worldly life, without heeding the lessons from the past generations who ended up in the layers of the graves, accompanied there by creatures and worms, and they will weep much as they laughed a little. If they would accept advice, we would advise them, but they do not, especially the people of Ḥūth who think we are 'Usaymāt<sup>1</sup>, not knowing that we seek refuge in Allah from what they are upon, and the difference between us and 'Usaymāt is as vast as between Islam and disbelief, and as between the Messengers and Iblīs. Actions are judged by intentions, and may Allah guide everyone to what is correct and beneficial in the return and abode.

This concludes the response of the people of Ḥūth followed by the response of the judges of Banū al-'Ansī, which is a response to another letter from the people of Ḥūth not mentioned here, as the response of the judges of Banū al-'Ansī was not mentioned.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

To all gentlemen and followers residing in Hijrat Ḥūth, may Allah protect them. Peace be upon you, and Allah's mercy and blessings.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Usaymāt is one of the famous tribes of Ḥāshid. Ḥūth is a migration that took place on their land.

After praising Allah and salutations and peace upon Muḥammad and his family: Following the receipt of your last response, it became clear to us from its content that there was a lack of fairness. You attributed to Imām Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān and Imām al-Qāsim Jārūdiyyah negligence and ignorance, claiming that you are more complete and knowledgeable about the truths of matters. And that Sayyid Muḥammad, whose condition is well-known and who has excessively belittled the Ahl al-Bayt and their doctrines, is more worthy of being followed than the prominent Imāms. If this is your belief, it represents the utmost flaw in religion and a deviation from what has been transmitted from the leader of the messengers. If this is your belief, then all that is required from you is to correct the lineage of Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr to whom he belongs: Is he Fatimid? And likewise, his knowledge from whom he acquired it and to whom is it ascribed in scholarship? Also, Imām Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān and Imām al-Qāsim, correct for us and verify from whom they acquired their knowledge and on whom they relied, because we are seeking guidance and asking you to verify this<sup>1</sup>, otherwise you are bound by the argument with his صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, “Whoever conceals knowledge that he possesses, Allah will bridle him with a bridle of fire.” We are in deficiency, asking you to correct the lineage of Sayyid Muḥammad, seeking benefit and elaboration in verifying that matter to know who is right among them to follow and who the falsifier to avoid is.

As for your statement about prioritising and not denouncing those who advocate for prioritising the Shaykhs over the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, upon him be the best of prayers and peace, and that nothing of that was

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1 This is how it appears in the original.

denounced, this is negligence on your part, for he has explicitly stated what he stated in *Nahj al-Balāghah*. However, we believe we should withhold [our tongues] regarding them. It is not appropriate to delve and discuss this. Our writings focus on those who consider Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr superior to Imām Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān and Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad. We demand from him proof of his claimed lineage and the authenticity of his knowledge and its sources. The knowledge of the aforementioned Imāms and their sources need verification. If he has evidence about the Imāms and their knowledge and their attributions, he should present it; otherwise, we will verify it after he provides us with the information we requested about Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr. He elaborated in his first response and assured us of the accuracy of what he described until his later response revealed the lineage to the Imāms as Jārūdiyyah, showing a consensus of opinion between you and Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr. A person will be resurrected with whom he loves.

As for us loving the Ahl al-Bayt, allying with them, and opposing their enemies is a binding duty due to the verses and traditions about them from the master of humanity. This is exemplified by the ḥadīth reported by al-Ṭabarānī from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه where the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Whoever wishes to live my life and die my death and dwell in the gardens of Eden which my Lord has planted, should befriend ‘Alī after me, and his ally, and follow my family after me: for they are my offspring, created from my clay, endowed with my understanding and knowledge. Woe to those who deny them and sever my relationship with them, they shall not have my intercession.”<sup>1</sup>

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1 Al-Albānī: *Al-Silsilah al-Ḍa‘īfah*, 2/298, Ḥadīth: 894. The ḥadīth is a fabrication.

This suffices to emulate and love them. The response (letter) to you was only because we thought you were Shī'ah, unaware that this matter had reached you. We, by Allah's grace, need your assistance in opening the way, that is, allowing passage from your land to Ṣan'ā' to avenge from the tyrant leaders. Our tribes unanimously agreed to aim solely at the major gateway to confront the tyrant leaders; and fighting them is obligatory. Consenting to their tyranny and their injustice is aiding them in their oppression, and one cannot exit from this except by opposing them physically and verbally.

As for your saying: "This is for worldly gain," by Allah, our only aim is to expel Sayyid Muḥammad al-Amīr and his followers from Ṣan'ā' and to lift the injustices that have established the state of this era; this is what was found, and Allah knows best, and may Allah bless the people of Ḥūth.

As for al-Shawkānī, they accused him of every atrocity, incited their fools against him, and a group armed with weapons entered upon him while he was delivering a lesson of Imām al-Bukhārī's رَحِمَهُ اللهُ *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* in the Masjid of Ṣan'ā' with the intention of assaulting him, approached his place to inflict upon him what they desired, but Allah protected him and diverted them from him so he could fulfil what Allah had obligated upon him in spreading the knowledge of the Sunnah. He narrated this incident in his book *Adab al-Ṭalab* on page 32, referring to the hardship, difficulty, and harm inflicted on those mentioned earlier to prevent them from spreading the pure sciences of the Sunnah.

It is undoubtedly true that the root of this intense hostility towards the people of the Sunnah is the belief of these blind followers that what they practice in their prayers, such as not raising the hands



during the first takbīr of Ṣalāh (*takbīrat al-iḥrām*), letting the hands hang down, reciting *al-Tawajjuh*<sup>1</sup> before the first takbīr, and not saying *āmīn* is what Zayd ibn ‘Alī practiced, and it is his school, and therefore it is obligatory for his followers to adhere to this and defend it. So, if they see someone contradicting this belief of theirs, they denounce him; because they believe he contradicted their Imām, Zayd ibn ‘Alī, as clarified by the scholar Muḥsin ibn Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Shāmī (d. 1224H) in his statement:

My excuse is from a people who veered away due to their ignorance from the truth and substituted knowledge with assumption. They attributed to naṣb, due to their ignorance and misguidance, all those who raised the hands and fold them. They say, “Ignorant is he who narrates with a chain from the Chosen One, the best and purest of creations, the unlettered.” O Lord, grant success to the paths of our guidance and kindness to us, that we may not stray from the knowledge.

The matter mentioned, which led Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Amīr to refute their claims and to clarify to them the truth in that matter, that those who affiliate themselves with the Zaydi school of Zayd ibn ‘Alī should follow him practically in his sayings and deeds, as mentioned in his statement:

There is no excuse for a Zaydi in abandoning and prohibiting raising the hands and folding them before the supplication. It is the school of Zayd, in the view of its scholars. And saying

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1 *Al-Tawajjuh* refers to the recitation of:

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“āmīn” is part of the school, as said by the one acquainted with its rulings. So, act upon this if you are of his party and dismiss the blame from the blamer.<sup>1</sup>

Similar is the statement of Ṣalāḥ ibn Ḥusayn al-Akhfash (d. 1142 AH):

A Zaydi is only one who follows Zayd ibn ‘Alī in the branches and fundamentals, both hidden and apparent.

Thus, this belief followed by the adherents of the Zaydi Hādawī school led to the followers of the four schools—Shāfi‘ī, Ḥanafī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī—to limit the truth to these four schools, as al-Muqbilī mentioned; such that the Zaydi, in their view is considered to have exited from the truth. Thus, they name them in other countries. They have no doubt that adherence to Zaydism is a departure from religion, until it became so among their jurists and authors in the aforementioned way, not by an evidence that led them to it, nor by a suspicion that guided them to it.<sup>2</sup>

For this reason, followers of these four schools link the Zaydi Hādawī sect with the Imāmiyyah (Ja‘farī) sect<sup>3</sup>; due to its alignment in Shī‘ī

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1 His *Dīwān*, pg. 345.

2 *Al-‘Ilm al-Shāmikh*, pg. 440.

3 An example of this is the event with the scholar al-Khaṭīb ‘Alī ibn Yaḥyā after the year 1396 AH; he went to Egypt around 1333 AH or the year before or after, intending to join al-Azhar. When asked about his sect, he said Zaydi, which made the questioner seek refuge with Allah. ‘Alī ibn Yaḥyā responded, assuming he was considered an infidel before converting to Islam, but the enquirer refused his admission saying, “If only it were so.” Upon leaving, he met the Yemeni merchant ‘Alī Yaḥyā al-Hamdānī in Cairo, to whom he recounted his experience. Al-Hamdānī then wrote to Imām Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Dīn, who wrote to King Fu‘ād, pleading to allow the scholar to study at al-Azhar. He was admitted on the condition of choosing one of the four

practices, veneration of the Imāms, glorifying their tombs, and making them a pilgrimage site for their followers. This association is also due to some of their scholars, who mimic others, contradicting aḥādīth in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* and *Sunan*, questioning their authenticity, and opposing the Sunnis. This is due to the close ties between the two sects in many foundational and subsidiary issues. Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn was ideologically influenced by his grandfather al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm al-Rassī, who was born, raised, and proclaimed himself as Imām in Kūfah, the birthplace and cradle of the Shī'ah. He was the first to advocate for reciting *al-Tawajjuh* before saying the *takbīrat al-iḥrām*<sup>1</sup> and also held the opinion that ablution is mandatory for every person standing for prayer, even if they are already in a state of ablution.<sup>2</sup>

Some of al-Hādī's teachers were from Iraq, like al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Kūfī, and others. In al-Hādī's jurisprudence, there are issues taken from Ja'farī jurisprudence, like the constant combining of *Zuḥr* and 'Aṣr prayers, as well as *Maghrib* and 'Ishā', even when not traveling; not performing the Friday prayer unless there is a ruling Imām present, generally not shortening the four-unit prayers during travel, and the annual celebration of *Ghadīr* on the eighteenth day of *Dhū al-Ḥijjah*. Moreover, many of the Imāms who ruled Yemen came from the two Iraqs: Arab Iraq and Persian Iraq, such as al-Qāsim ibn

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well-known Sunnī schools of thought, likely opting for the Ḥanafī school because it is closest to the Zaydi school in jurisprudence. This was the same choice made by his maternal brother, 'Abd Allāh ibn Zayd al-Daylamī, after going to Egypt and joining al-Azhar, claiming to be Ḥanafī, leading to Egyptians who knew him jokingly saying, "A Zaydi in disguise."

1 *Al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 3/34.

2 *Al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 3/31.

‘Alī al-‘Iyyānī and his minister al-Qāsim al-Zaydī, as well as Abū al-Faṭḥ al-Daylamī and others.

Therefore, it is not surprising or objectionable that the Zaydis of Yemen would open their hearts to those who come to them from the Imāmiyyah (Shī‘ah), welcoming them and treating them with great honour, as narrated by the scholar al-Muqbilī, who said:

Then we saw them—the Zaydis—when an Imāmī ruler came to this blessed state in Yemen, the Qāsimī state, during the time of Imām al-Mutawakkil Ismā‘īl ibn al-Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, they leaned towards him, became emotional, and felt revived, saying to Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Jaḥḥāfī, “You see coming to this blessed state a man from the Imāmiyyah: as if a king has come to you, even though among their principles—the Imāmiyyah—is disassociation from you and from all the Islamic sects that deny the text regarding their Twelve Imāms; because they deny what is known as necessary in religion, by their claim, and believe that your Imāms, from Zayd ibn ‘Alī until today, may Allah exalt them, are leaders of misguidance and disbelief and they call anyone who opposes them an infidel, a hypocrite.”

Then al-Muqbilī added, addressing the mentioned:

And when a man from the four Sunnī schools of thought comes to you, it is as if you have seen a devil, although among their principles and core issues is that no one of the Qiblah should be declared an infidel. So, tell me, what is this? The only answer he found was to say, “The Imāmiyyah are not concerned with us or

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1 He was one of the leading scholars of the Hādawī, and was close to Imām al-Mutawakkil Ismā‘īl ibn al-Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad.

with harming us, but these [others] accuse us of innovation,” so I said to them: “Which is the greater accusation? The accusation of innovation with testifying to your Islam or the accusation of disbelief, regarding your blood permissible, taking your women and children captive, and usurping your wealth.” So, I concluded.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, and what has been previously explained, the Imāmī (Ja‘farī) school of thought does not differ much from the Zaydi Hādawī school in Yemen except that it restricts the Imāms to only twelve and that its Imāms are infallible like the Messengers. This necessitated that the same judgment be applied to it as on the Imāmī school.

Therefore, the severity of this judgment on the Zaydi school among the people of the four Sunnī schools was only mitigated by the spread of the works of Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr, the scholar jurist Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Mahdī al-Muqbilī, Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Amīr, and Shaykh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī. Scholars of these four schools—though assumptions are of no avail against the truth—believed that the widespread works of these scholars throughout the Islamic world, which had become references for students and researchers who abandoned taqlīd, are the circulated books studied in Zaydi schools in Yemen, due to their distance from knowing the truth. Even though the reality is that the Zaydi scholars who still blindly conform to their madhhab—although some of the later contemporaries among them still insist that the authors of these books were indeed Zaydi—oppose anyone who reads them or follows the path of the authors. They were the very same individuals who

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1 *Al-‘Ilm al-Shāmikh*, pg. 108-109.

fought these authors during their lives and they are still despised and hated by the Zaydis who blindly conform up to this day.

And I do not know how this assumption spread among some scholars of the four schools that Ibn al-Wazīr, al-Muqbilī, al-Amīr, and al-Shawkānī are Zaydis, even though they severed their ties with it since they discarded blind conformity and acted according to the noble Qur’ān and the authentic Sunnah.

If this misconception arose due to these scholars living in Zaydi regions, then this is due to their origin being connected to this sect and their initial stages of studying its jurisprudence, as we have explained previously. There is no clearer proof of what we mentioned than what we referred to regarding their abandonment of taqlīd, evidenced by the explicit response of Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr to the Chief Judge of Makkah, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥāshim al-Shāfi‘ī. This occurred when, after learning that Imām al-Wazīr did not adhere to any specific sect, he invited him to adopt the Shāfi‘ī school, saying, “How wonderful it would be, my master, if you affiliated yourself with Imām al-Shāfi‘ī.” Imām al-Wazīr replied, “Glory be to Allah, O Qāḍī! If taqlīd was permissible for me, I would not choose anyone over imitating my ancestor Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm or his grandson al-Hādī, as they are more deserving of taqlīd than others.”<sup>1</sup>

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1 Al-Faḍā’il; *al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, 2/90.

## Restricting Imāmah to the Descendants of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn

Just as Imām al-Hādī was concerned with spreading his doctrine, which began to appear during his reign in some regions of Najd and Yemen that came under his influence, he and the subsequent Imāms in Yemen were also concerned with the matter of Imāmah, restricting it to the descendants of the two grandsons of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. They made it a fundamental principle of their creed, which includes their five principles of faith. These are the well-known five principles of the Mu'tazilah, except that the Zaydis replaced the concept of *Manzilat bayna Manzilatayn* known among the Mu'tazilah with the concept of Imāmah. Similarly, the Hādawīs detailed their conditions in a separate section of the book of conduct, which is the final chapter of their jurisprudential works. These conditions include that the Imām must be: male, free, from the lineage of 'Alī and Fāṭimah, physically and mentally sound, diligent, just, generous, putting rights in their proper places, prudent, and his opinion mostly correct, advancing [for battle] provided success is possible, another [Imām] has not preceded him [in calling to his authority] and is being responded to [currently], it is established through invitation [to follow him in battle], it is not inherited, and it is not valid for there to be two Imāms [at the same time].<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Matan al-Azhār*, book on expeditions. These citations are from the theoretical perspective. As for the practical perspective, it has been observed that more than one Imām appears at the same time, but they do not all remain in power, as the strongest among them prevails, and the fate of the others usually ends either in imprisonment, at best, or in their exile to remote areas beyond the reach of the serving Imām. Most often, the life of the defeated ends in death.

Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah (d. 749 AH) summarised these conditions by saying:

أن يكون عالما بأصول الشريعة متمكنا من الفتوى في أحكام الشرع  
أن يكون ذا رأي وسياسة للحرب والسلام أن يكون شجاعا مجتمع  
القلب لا يضعف عند لقاء عدوه أن يكون له ورع يحجزه عن الوقوع في  
المحرمات ويمنعه عن الإخلال بشيء من الواجبات

He must be knowledgeable in the fundamentals of the Sharīah, proficient in issuing legal opinions in matters of the Sharīah, have opinions and policies for war and peace, be courageous, have a collected heart: not weakening when facing his enemy, have piety that prevents him from committing prohibitions and stops him from neglecting any of his duties.<sup>1</sup>

It has been noted that many of the Imāms who assumed leadership did not meet its essential conditions, namely knowledge and justice. This was evident in Yemen where a number of Imāms appeared simultaneously, as was the case during the time of Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah. He was opposed by three other Imāms: ‘Alī ibn Ṣalāḥ ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Tāj al-Dīn, al-Muṭahhar ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Muṭahhar ibn Yaḥyā, and Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Faṭḥī, in addition to the emergence of Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā opposing Imām Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.

The Zaydis argued for confining the Imāmah to the descendants of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn until the end of days, based on the mentioned conditions, and not allowing it for others. They used certain verses<sup>2</sup> and aḥādīth,

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1 *Al-Ma‘ālim al-Dīniyyah*, pg. 144.

2 For example, they referred to verses like the one in Sūrah al-Mā'idah (6:67), “O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you



often interpreted according to their doctrine, disregarding the literal meaning and context, in line with their creed. This differed from the Imāmiyyah who restricted it to Twelve Imāms as well as the Ismāʿīlīs, who believe in the concealment of their Imāms after the fall of the Fatimid state. Furthermore, the Zaydi Imāms do not substantiate their authority from the ḥadīth, “The Imāms are from Quraysh,”<sup>1</sup> because if

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do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.” The prominent scholar Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā mentioned in the commentary of his book *al-Manār*, 6/466, that, “We firmly believe that if there were a clear text in the Qurʾān or Ḥadīth regarding the issue of Imāmah, without any room for disagreement, and it involved the responsibility of leading Muslims after the death of the Messenger, he (the Messenger) would have explicitly mentioned it, clarified it, and conveyed it at that time. It would have been obligatory upon him if he believed that he was the Imām after the Messenger of Allah, to convey it from Allah and His Messenger, but he did not say that. Neither he nor anyone from his family or supporters cited this verse in the context of Saqīfah, or the day of Shūrā after ʿUmar, or before or after that in his time. He, who is free from any blame in the sight of Allah, never showed negligence in word or deed. These issues emerged later and were introduced with narratives and derived evidence after the emergence of divisions and biases among schools of thought. Commanding to choose leaders was not relevant at that time and place. It is not something that the eloquence of the Qurʾān would accept. If the Messenger ﷺ intended to appoint his successor after him and to inform people about it, he would have mentioned it clearly in the Farewell Pilgrimage sermon, which was a testimony for people to convey his message.” For those interested in further understanding, many verses have been diverted from their correct meanings and misrepresented in their contexts. For a comprehensive study, refer to the book *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li al-Qawāʿid al-Tafḍīl* by ʿUbayd ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad, known as al-Ḥākim al-Ḥakkānī, a prominent figure of the fifth century, published by al-Aʿlamī Foundation for Publications, Beirut, Lebanon.

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/421, Ḥadīth: 19792, Shuʿayb al-Arnāʿūṭ graded it ṣaḥīḥ li ghayriḥī and its isnād qawī.

they were to establish it, it would invalidate the restriction of Imāmah to the descendants of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهما only. Imām al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad (d. 1029 AH/1620 CE) said, “This ḥadīth is not authentic, as ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, ‘If Sālim, the freed slave of Abū Ḥudhayfah, were alive, I would not have doubted him.’ This Sālim is not from Quraysh. None of the Companions who were present objected to ‘Umar; if the ḥadīth were authentic, the Companions would have refuted ‘Umar. However, it is solitary and cannot be used as evidence in matters of creed. Even if it were proven true, it is explained by the saying of Imām ‘Alī عليه السلام, ‘The Imāms are from Quraysh within this lineage of Hāshim.’”<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Al-Asās li ‘Aqā’id al-Ikyās*, pg. 161.

## Iḥtisāb

According to the Zaydiyyah, if the land is devoid of a person who can fulfil all or most of the conditions of Imāmah, then a righteous man should rise for the purpose of reformation and accountability by enjoining good and forbidding evil. He should forbid wrong with his tongue and, if necessary, his sword, according to its degrees, and command good with his tongue without the use of the sword. He should guard the borders, mobilise armies to defend the Muslims, protect the weak among them, safeguard endowments, inspect wells, Masjids, and roads, and prevent oppression. It is not a condition for him to be an Alawid or a Fatimid. [This is termed Iḥtisāb.] It is obligatory for the one fulfilling this role to step down upon the appearance of the Imām, because Imāmah is a general leadership in both religious and worldly matters. The difference between the one carrying out Iḥtisāb and the Imām is that the Imām is distinguished by four characteristics: establishing the Jumu‘ah prayers, taking funds by force, mobilising armies to fight oppressors, enforcing legal punishments on those deserving them, and killing those who refuse to submit to them. The person carrying out Iḥtisāb has no legal authority over the wealth of Allah, the Exalted, and it is not permissible for him to take it unless its owners permit and command him to do so.<sup>1</sup>

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1 An anonymous manuscript, author unknown, page 73, located in the State Library in Berlin, Number: 4944.



## Sects of the Jārūdiyyah of Yemen

Hardly a hundred years passed since the arrival of Imām al-Mahdī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn to Yemen and his followers split—after having already transformed to the Jārūdiyyah<sup>1</sup>—to three sects, as Imām al-

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1 All of his followers were not from the Jārūdiyyah. Some of them withheld from cursing the Rightly Guided Khulafā'. In fact, among them are those who praise them and seek approval for them. Al-Imām al-Hādī himself commanded to lash those who curse Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما as narrated by Qāḍī Aḥmad ibn Sa'īd al-Rab'ānī and Qāḍī al-Imām al-Manṣūr 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah. This report is reported by the Historian Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Imām al-Qāsim in *Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā al-Mustaṭāb* where he says, "Ibn al-Wazīr narrated in his footnotes, *al-Hidāyah*, al-Ḥijrī quotes it in his book *Majmū' Buldān Yaman wa Qabā'ilihā*, 1/376, Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn also mentions in his history, *Anbā' al-Mu'min*, in the reports of the year 569 AH the words, 'The Zaydiyyah al-Mukhtari'ah and Muṭṭarrifiyyah are unanimous that 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها is the wife of the Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم in Jannah and that it is not permissible to curse Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and other Ṣaḥābah. This was in the Jāmi' Maṣjid of Ḍa'ār.' Al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad al-Wazīr mentioned it like this in the footnotes of *al-Hidāyah*. He said: 'Upon this is the signature of al-Qāḍī Ja'far ibn 'Abd al-Salām and his testimony. And Allah knows best.'"

Similarly, Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad, known as 'Ākish, mentioned in his book *al-Dībāj al-Khusrawānī* words quoted from al-Imām 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah in his book *al-Shāfi* the gist of which is, "Whoever attributes to any of our forefathers curse of the Sahabah who were before 'Alī is a liar." He writes in the answer of *al-Masā'il al-Nihā'iyyah* after praising the early Ṣaḥābah and enumerating their specialities, his words, "This is our stance. We have not emitted them wrongly or concealed besides them any merit. It is below our dignity to swear, curse, and insult. We exonerate ourselves before Allah from its practice."

One of the renowned Imāms of Yemen who defended the Ṣaḥābah is Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah in his book *al-Risālah al-Wāzi'ah li al-Mu'tadīn 'an Sabb Ṣaḥābat Sayyid al-Mursilīn*. He brought for him Yaḥyā ibn Muẓaffar (d. 875 AH) in his book *al-Bayān*, which is one of the most significant books of the Zaydi Hādawī juristic school a

Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā explained in his saying:

وافترق متأخروا الجارودية إلى مطرفية وحسينية ومخترعة

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statement on his belief on the Ṣaḥābah, like, “The issue of Imām Yaḥyā, it is not correct to perform Ṣalāh behind one who curses the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were before ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ,” and he did not mention any dispute on the topic.

Among the Imāms, scholars, mujtahids is al-Imām Muḥammad ibn al-Muṭahhar ibn Yaḥyā (d. 729 AH). He was with the Sunnah except that he would abstain from proclaiming it out of fear for the hooligans as appears in his statement, “Raising the hands, folding them, and reciting āmīn is our school as well as the school of the Ahl al-Bayt, Companions, and Jurists. I do not leave it, by Allah, out of annoyance. However, I fear the fools attacking my honour.”

The Historian Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim mentioned in his book *Bahjat al-Zaman* that his grandfather al-Imām al-Qāsim stopped cursing the Ṣaḥābah of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ at the end of his life as appears in his treatise called *al-Shajarah*.

Among the latter Imāms who condemned the cursing of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was Imām Ibn Muḥammad Ḥumayd al-Dīn (d. 1367 AH/1948 CE). This condemnation came about when the poet ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Saqqāf al-Ḥaḍramī sent him a poem praising him in which he curses some of the Companions, in his statement, “We are for the religion with you, and if we remember what you endured in your struggles, it should not hide our affection for you, nor should the hearts harbour malice. We argue against the fools about you, defending your honour. When your stories are told, we almost dance from joy. May Allah repeatedly bless the Messenger’s progeny and Companions. So, who is just on the day the Arabs understand their emergence, as your emergence to them is like a rescue for the villages.”

In his response, Ibn Ḥumayd al-Dīn clearly articulated his creed when the poet sought to know it, expressing his pride in the way of the Companions and his discontent with disparaging them. He said of himself, “A man who has in the palace of Sharīah Aḥmad. They are the pinnacle, the highest of the highest, through the Book, without dispute or argument. He calls to the Arabs with all might, adhering to the pure Sunnah, unshakably. He is never swayed by the beliefs of the Rawāfiḍ, who

The later Jārūdiyyah sect split into Muṭṭarrifiyyah, Ḥusayniyyah, and Mukhtari‘ah.<sup>1</sup>

This confirms what Nashwān ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥimyarī explicitly stated:

إنه ليس باليمن من فرق الزيدية غير الجارودية وهم بصنعاء وصعدة وما  
يليهما

There are no Zaydiyyah sects in Yemen other than the Jārūdiyyah, and they are in Ṣan‘ā’, Sa‘dah, and the surrounding areas.<sup>2</sup>

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dishonour the Sunnah of those who followed. Honour be to the Sunnah, who never wavered. Their example is never tarnished by such beliefs.”

As for the scholars other than the Imāms who did not follow the Jārūdiyyah in their claims, they are many, praise be to Allah. Among them, sufficient is the mention of some, like Ṣārim al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Hādī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 914 AH). He mentioned in *al-Bassāmah* about some of the Companions after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the disputes around who would succeed him, and he supplicated for approval for the three Khulafā’, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم in his saying, “Seek approval for them as Abū al-Ḥasan sought. Abstain from curse if you are careful.”

As for the Rāfiḍah from among the Jārūdiyyah, the scholar-poet Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan Barakāt al-Dawlah addressed them with the proper stance, in 1196 AH, saying, “Come to us, O brothers of Rafḍ. If you have the quality of fairness in dīn like our dīn. We praised ‘Alī more than you did. You cursed the Companions of Aḥmad, not us. You said that the truth is what you claim. Has al-Raḥmān not cursed the most deviant of us?”

Imām al-Shawkānī further clarified this meaning, saying, “Extremely repulsive, by the life of your father, is the faith of the Rāfiḍah. They spread it everywhere persistently and omitted the certainty of his virtues. They cursed the Companions of Ṭāhā, without hesitation, and opposed all who opposed them. And they claimed their religion to be a righteous one; may Allah curse the liars.”

1 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97.

2 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*.

Imām al-Manṣūr ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah also said that the Zaydiyyah are the Jārūdiyyah, and there is no known Imām after Zayd رحمته الله who is not a Jārūdī, nor their followers.<sup>1</sup>

This judgment is further confirmed by the historian and scholar Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Kibṣī (d. 1308 AH), the author of *al-Laṭā’if al-Saniyyah*, in his book *al-Nafaḥāt al-Miskiyyah*<sup>2</sup> in the biography of the Jurist Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥamlī, whom he described, “This jurist follows the path of the early Shī‘ah, deeply loyal to the Waṣī of the Messenger of Allah, detesting those who opposed him. He had great love for our master (referring to Imām al-Mutawakkil Muḥsin ibn Aḥmad (d. 1295 AH)) and his belief was sincere and his affiliation correct. He constantly spoke the word of truth. Even though he was blind, his insight was illuminated, and his character was pure. He was from the Jārūdiyyah Shī‘ah, who are, in truth, the purest of the Zaydiyyah and the followers of the noble progeny. They are the ones who follow the path of the Imāms of the Household.”

This is an explanation of the Jārūdiyyah sub-sects:

### 1. The Ḥusayniyyah

Attributed to al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim ibn ‘Alī al-‘Iyyānī, who claimed Imāmah for himself in the year 393 AH/1002 CE, adopting the title al-Mahdī. He alleged that he was the awaited Mahdī prophesied by the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and claimed to be superior to the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, asserting that his words and writings were better than the

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1 Dr. Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥājj Ḥasan al-Kamālī: *Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yahyā al-Murtaḍā*, pg. 22; *al-Risālah al-Mūḍīḥah li al-Ḥaqq al-Rāfi‘ah li al-Talbīs ‘an al-Khalq*, tablet 6.

2 Manuscript, Arabic Library.



Qur'ān and more illuminating in revealing meanings, as well as in silencing opponents. As al-Ḥujūrī mentioned in *al-Rawḍah*, “He was above the celestial realm but below divinity.” He demanded *khums* (one-fifth)—conforming their servitude—from people in everything, including jewellery and wealth, even from slaves and maidservants, and a third of other things such as grains. Those who complied with him were accepted, otherwise, he would treat them like Jews, imposing *Jizyah* upon them and confiscating their weapons. Those who resisted were killed and crucified. He was ultimately killed by the Hamdān tribe in Dhū Gharār in the Bawn plain north of Ṣan‘ā’ in Ṣafar 404 AH/1013 CE. His followers erected a tomb at the site of his death, claiming he was buried there. The Shī‘ah gather there annually on the 18th of Dhū al-Ḥijjah to celebrate the famous Day of Ghadīr. The Shī‘ah of Yemen continue to celebrate this occasion to this day. His followers believe that he is the awaited al-Mahdī, who is alive and did not die, and will not die until he fills the earth with justice. They believe that anyone who does not believe the same as them will reside in Hell.

His followers and supporters later split into two groups: one group claimed he came to them in secret and did not cease visiting them during his absence and that they did nothing without his command. The other group refuted this, saying he would not be seen again until his reappearance and uprising, and that they only acted based on what he had previously instructed in his books. They have many strange sayings, such as the validity of *Tayammum* (dry ablution) despite the presence of water.<sup>1</sup> This sect persisted until the eighth century AH, then vanished.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Al-Mustaṭāb*, tablet: 59.

2 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 156-157; *al-‘Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 3/421; *al-Faḍā’il; Anbā’ al-Zaman*, fī Akhbār Sanah 401 AH; *Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah (al-Mustaṭāb)*; *Maṭla’ al-*

## 2. The Muṭṭarrifiyyah<sup>1</sup>

A sect named after Muṭṭarrif ibn Shihāb, a notable figure from the late fourth and early fifth centuries AH. They were followers of Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn and adhered to his school of thought in legal matters. They did not permit deviation from his teachings and believed in the legitimacy of individual *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) only when it aligned with his views. Consequently, they prohibited departing from his school of thought.<sup>2</sup> When they realised that Imām al-Manṣūr ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah had deviated from al-Hādī in some legal issues, they condemned him for it. This condemnation was one of the causes of discord between them, despite his statement, “We revere the texts of al-Hādī as we revere the texts of the Qur’ān.”<sup>3</sup> The Muṭṭarrifiyyah were highly dedicated to knowledge, diligently engaged in study, and sincere in their obedience and worship. They were known for their asceticism, surpassing all others of their time.<sup>4</sup>

As for their principles, they followed the Mu’tazilah school, adhering to figures such as al-Hādī and Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī. However, they

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*Budūr*, as an excursus in the biography of al-Qāsim ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Zaydi and the biography of Muḥammad ibn Ja’far ibn al-Qāsim.

1 Professor Wilfred Madelung wrote a research paper on this sect in English and sent me a copy. I asked the Egyptian professor Fārūq ‘Askar to translate it into Arabic when he was working at the General Authority for Antiquities and Libraries during my presidency of it.

2 *Al-Faḍā’il*.

3 Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad: *Al-Irshād*. Also mentioned in the chapters on inheritance in the section about relatives (regarding the paternal uncle and the maternal aunt). This was pointed out to me by the scholar Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-‘Ansī, the former Deputy Chief of Appeals.

4 *Al-Faḍā’il*.

declared the belief in the creation of the four elements—water, earth, air, and fire—and in the reaction of everything else<sup>1</sup>, because they believed that the effect of Allah is in the origins of things, not their branches. They also differed from the Zaydiyyah in one of their fundamental principles, Imāmah. They did not require lineage for whoever takes it, as the Zaydiyyah did. Their view aligns with the opinion that “the Imāmah is permissible for all people and not restricted to a particular group; it is deserved by virtue, demand, and consensus of the council.” This is the view held by Ibrāhīm ibn Sayyār al-Nazzām and those who agreed with him from the Mu‘tazilah and others. As stated in their saying, “The Imāmah is for the most honourable and best among the people before Allah.” They supported this with Allah’s words: *O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another.*<sup>2</sup> He called upon all His creation, red and black, Arab and non-Arab, not favouring one over another, and said: *Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.*<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the one who is most pious and most honourable to Him, the most knowledgeable of Allah, and most knowledgeable in His obedience is the most deserving of the Imāmah and leadership among His creation, whether Arab or non-Arab.<sup>4</sup>

However, this opinion did not appeal to Imām ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah. He did not accept the Muṭṭarrifiyyah’s ijtihād in this matter and excommunicated by the principle of *ilzām* (which is to hold another accountable for something he said, which he did not actually say). He

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1 *Al-‘Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 5/268.

2 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 13.

3 Ibid.

4 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 152.

equated their status to that of the belligerents, making their blood and property permissible, destroying their homes and Masjids, and ruling that their Masjids were Masjids of harm.<sup>1</sup> He called them Rawāfiḍ<sup>2</sup> despite the fact that they were his followers and adherents, committed to his congregation and community after pledging allegiance to him following his claim to Imāmah.<sup>3</sup>

Since Nashwān ibn Saʿīd al-Ḥimyarī's belief aligned with the Muṭṭarrifiyyah's view on the validity of Imāmah for those not descended from the two [noble] lines, Imām ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah ruled against him as he did against the Muṭṭarrifiyyah. When Nashwān declared himself Imām, Imām ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah said:

أما الذي عند جدودي فيه فيقطعون لسنه من فيه  
ويؤتمون ضحوة بنيه إذ صار حق الغير يدعيه

As for the one who claims the right of my forefathers, they will cut his tongue from his mouth,

And seek to sacrifice his sons; since it is the right of another that he claims.

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1 *Al-Faḍā'il*.

2 ʿAbbās ibn Maṣūrah al-Burayhī in *al-Burhān fī Maʿrifat ʿAqā'id Ahl al-Īmān*, pg. 67; Asʿad ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Bālī in *al-Firaq al-Thintayn wa Sabʿin*, pg. 76; Abū Muḥammad al-Yamānī in *al-Firaq*, pg. 145, and ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad al-Fakhrī in *Talkhīṣ al-Bayān fī Dhikr Firaq Ahl al-Adyān*, pg. 196, mentioned that the Muṭṭarrifiyyah distinguished themselves by saying that praying in a garment other than the one worn by the worshipper is sound religion, cursing the pious predecessors is great reward, and they were among the most extreme of the Zaydiyyah in their cursing.

3 *Al-Faḍā'il*.

### 3. The Mukhtari‘ah

A sect known by this name for their belief that Allah creates (*ikhtirā*) the attributes in bodies and that they do not occur naturally, as the Muṭṭarrifiyyah claimed. They also believe in the Imāmah of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ by explicit designation, considering the Ṣaḥābah to be in error for giving precedence to him and opposing that explicit designation, and suspended ruling them to be sinful.<sup>1</sup>

They also believe that the sweat of a menstruating woman is impure, as ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Fakhrī mentioned in his book *Talkhīṣ al-Bayān* (pg. 112), proceeding to refute them, saying, “I said: This is invalid and obviously wrong. The Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ used to spend the night with his wives in their beds and take whatever he needed from their hands, whether moist or dry. If the bodies of menstruating women and those in a state of major ritual impurity were impure, he would not have done that. And the opponent acknowledges that the body of a menstruating woman and one in a state of major ritual impurity are pure; however, he erred in declaring sweat and similar things impure. The consensus is that the sweat of a menstruating woman in areas other than the place of impurity is pure, as is the sweat of one in a state of major ritual impurity.”

There was a severe and bitter dispute between them and the Muṭṭarrifiyyah, which ended with the demise of the Muṭṭarrifiyyah at the hands of Imām ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah. The leader of the Mukhtari‘ah was ‘Alī ibn Shahr from the family of Aklab in the Bawn plain north of Ṣan‘ā’, and he followed Abū Hāshim al-Balkhī.<sup>2</sup> This sect is what the Hādawiyyah in Yemen follow to this day.

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1 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 99.

2 *Al-Faḍā’il*.

Additionally, al-Sharīf ‘Abd al-Ṣamad<sup>1</sup> ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Dāmaghānī<sup>2</sup> added other matters concerning the Zaydiyyah, stating: “As for what is criticised about the Zaydiyyah, there are many matters.”

One of them is their belief—shared with most of the Mu‘tazilah—that the Messenger ﷺ will not intercede for the sinners of the Ummah. This is contrary to reason and tradition. Reason clearly indicates this without doubt; for the sinner in the Hereafter is like a drowning person in the sea who needs to be rescued, while the obedient one is like someone on land who is safe and wants to ascend to a higher level. The drowning person is more deserving of being rescued than elevating the safe person. The virtue of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ surpassing all other prophets will not be made apparent in the Hereafter—and his Ummah surpassing all other nations—except through that praised station (*al-Maqām al-Maḥmūd*), his intercession, and the Pond (*al-Ḥawḍ*) he will be given. As for the narrations, there are many aḥādīth affirming that intercession is granted to the sinners of the Ummah. Among them is the ḥadīth used by the Mu‘adhin in his supplication before the Iqāmah, “O Allah, raise him to the Praised

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1 He was one of the prominent figures of the sixth century AH or earlier and authored his treatise *al-Jawharah al-Khāliṣah ‘an al-Shawā’ib fī al-‘Aqā’id al-Manqūmah ‘alā Jamī‘ al-Madhāhib*. This was in response to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn ‘Abd al-Majid ibn ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Dhahabī. When Imām al-Mujtahid Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr reviewed this treatise, he wrote in his own hand on the title page, “I have reflected on the words of this book during dictation and study, and found it unparalleled, with no equal in elegance and perfection. May Allah reward al-Sharīf, for he excelled in the quality of classification and the beauty of description. He is worthy of the saying, ‘The people, a thousand of them like one, and one like a thousand if there be a command. And it is not astonishing for Allah to gather the world in one.’”

2 This refers to Dāmaghān, a large town between Rayy and Qūmis. (*Mu‘jam al-Buldān*.)

Station that You promised him, and make him an intercessor for his Ummah,” as he instructed the Mu’adhin to say this. The Zaydiyyah’s reliance on the verse: *And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased, and they stand in awe for fear of Him,*<sup>1</sup> and the verse: *For the wrongdoers there will be no devoted friend and no intercessor [who is] obeyed,*<sup>2</sup> is invalid because these refer to the disbelievers, for whom there is no intercession by consensus.

They also believe—another belief they share with the Mu’tazilah—that a person does not enter Paradise except by his deeds. This is far-fetched. What value do his deeds—if sincere—have compared to his sins, and compared to the favours of Allah upon him? How can the impurities of deeds, which are beyond counting, be overlooked? The entire ḥadīth indicates that Paradise is deserved only through forgiveness and mercy, not merely by deeds. The Messenger ﷺ wanted to affirm this to his Ummah by saying:

لا يدخل أحد الجنة بعمله

None of you will enter Paradise by his deeds.

They asked, “Not even you, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied:

ولا أنا إلا أن يتغمدني الله بعفوه

Not even me, unless Allah envelops me with His forgiveness.<sup>3</sup>

He has been forgiven for his past and future sins, despite being infallible and not committing anything that would warrant Hellfire. He intended

1 Sūrah al-Anbiyā’: 28.

2 Sūrah Ghāfir: 18.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5/2147, Ḥadīth: 5349, but it does not include “by his forgiveness.”

for his Ummah to understand this, though it is said that mercy and forgiveness come with deeds, as Allah says, *Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good*<sup>1</sup>, not to the rebellious.

Additionally, they, along with some of the Mu‘tazilah, believe that many who disagree with them in doctrine are disbelievers and fight them as they would polytheists. This contradicts the Prophetic law, for the aḥādīth affirm that one who professes the two testimonies, his wealth and blood are protected. Some of the Ahl al-Sunnah also hold this belief like them, such as the Mālikīs, who declare the one who curses a Companion a disbeliever, deeming his execution to be mandatory.<sup>2</sup> [However,] They have no evidence for this; since the Companions fell into disputes among themselves during the turmoil, both with hands and tongues, as was the case with ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. The reason is the same, which is the attack on a Companion: the sin is indeed great regardless of who commits it and the insignificant does not reach the level of the great regardless of who commits it. And no one from the Ummah says that some Companions became disbelievers because they attacked another Companion in any case.

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1 Sūrah al-A‘rāf: 56.

2 Some Mālikī scholars have mentioned to me that this ruling is specific to certain Companions رضي الله عنه whose names are clearly indicated in the Qur’ān. For example, the Khalīfah Abū Bakr, رضي الله عنه, is referenced in Allah’s verse, *If you do not aid him [i.e., the Messenger]—Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, “Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us.* (Sūrah al-Tawbah: 40.) Likewise, ‘Ā’ishah, the Mother of the Believers رضي الله عنها, is exonerated by Allah in Sūrah al-Nūr from the slander against her, in His saying: *Indeed, those who came with falsehood are a group among you... until His saying: That Day, Allah will give them their deserved recompense in full, and they will know that it is Allah who is the manifest Truth.* (Sūrah al-Nūr: 11-25.)



Additionally, amongst their beliefs, they stipulate such conditions for the Khilāfah, majority of which the Sharī'ah has not stipulated. They also apply these conditions to the Imām of the Ṣalāh. This is why they do not maintain an Imām for long due to the lack of fulfilling all the conditions.

Moreover, they allow for two Caliphs in one time, if their territories are far apart, like al-Nāṣir al-Aṭrūsh in Persia and al-Hādī in Yemen. They believe that the decree of each one is valid, even if one of them issues a fatwā for killing the other. This is a great crime in the religion, contrary to clear and evident proof. It has been authentically reported from the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِذَا قَامَ خَلِيفَتَانِ فَاقْتُلُوا الْآخَرَ مِنْهُمَا

When two Caliphs are given allegiance, kill the latter of them.<sup>1</sup>

This is because it divides the affairs of the Ummah, scatters their word, disrupts their system, and diminishes their unity, weakening them and enabling the enemy to overpower them. Hence, it is said in the proverb, “Two swords in one sheath do not meet.”

Also, they and most of the Mu'tazilah have little belief in the righteousness of the pious, denying many of their miracles and disparaging them.

They also have obsessive doubts in their wuḍū', ṣalāh, and beliefs, all of which are contrary to the Sharī'ah.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3/1480, Ḥadīth: 1853, with the wording:

إِذَا بُويعَ لَخَلِيفَتَيْنِ فَاقْتُلُوا الْآخَرَ مِنْهُمَا

When allegiance is sworn to two Caliphs, kill the latter of them.

Furthermore, they contradict their Imām, Zayd ibn ‘Alī رحمته الله, in most branches of jurisprudence, despite their affiliation with him, and claim that they follow the branches of his followers, just as the Shāfi‘iyyah follow the branches of al-Shāfi‘ī’s followers, the Mālikiyyah follow the branches of Mālik’s followers, and the Ḥanafiiyyah follow the branches of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, Abū Yūsuf, and Zufar, the followers of Abū Ḥanīfah. This is not correct, because the followers of each jurist who transmitted from him added to the branches of their Imām, expanded on them, and refined what was authentic among them. The Zaydiyyah did not do this in the jurisprudence of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رحمته الله but treated him like any other opposing jurist in legal issues. They made their main sources in the school of thought three Imāms: two from the descendants of al-Ḥasan<sup>1</sup> and one from the descendants of al-Ḥusayn<sup>2</sup>.

All of them are followers of Zayd in beliefs and Imāmah, and their branches agree with the Ḥanafī school more than with other jurists.

The regions where they can be found and where they hold influence include Gilan and Deylam in Persia, some parts of Gorgan, Isfahan, Rayy, and upper Iraq such as Kūfah and Anbār.<sup>3</sup> In Ḥijāz, they can be found in Makkah and all other cities of Ḥijāz except Madīnah, where the influence belongs to the Twelvers.<sup>4</sup> They are in Najd of Yemen,

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1 They are al-Mu‘ayyad al-Kabīr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Hārūn, mentioned previously, and his brother Abū Ṭālib Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, who passed away in Āmil in the year 424 AH.

2 He is al-Nāṣir al-Aṭrūsh al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, also mentioned previously.

3 The inhabitants of some of these regions have become Twelvers (Imāmiyyah).

4 This was during the time of al-Dāmaghānī, the author of *al-Jawharah al-Khāliṣah*, also known as *Risalāt al-Dāmaghānī*. However, today, the inhabitants of these regions are

prevailing in its cities such as Ṣan‘ā’, Sa‘dah, and Dhamār, and similar places. They are also present in its plains, in cities like Khulay and the region between Khulay and Yemen, including the district of Mikhlāf.

Among them in Morocco are many groups in the mountains known as Aurès, and they have mingled in Sunnī cities, concealing themselves

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from the Ahl al-Sunnah, praise be to Allah. This transformation occurred during the reign of the just king Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Zangī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ who promoted Sunnī Islam in Aleppo, as mentioned by al-Maqrīzī in *al-Dhahab al-Masbūk*, page 68. Its inhabitants were previously Rāfiḍah, and he abolished from the Adhān, saying of the phrase *Ḥayya ‘alā khayr al-‘amal* in 543 AH and established schools for the four Sunnī schools of thought. Subsequently, during the reign of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ who played a crucial role in expelling the Crusader Franks from the Levant, he also succeeded in abolishing the Fatimid state, which had ruled North Africa, Egypt, and the Levant, extending its influence to Ḥijāz and later Yemen through the Sulayhid state. This was in retaliation and alignment, as the Fatimids had allied with the Franks to retake Jerusalem and enabled their control over regions of the Levant as mentioned by the German Historian Adolf Friesen in his book *Medita* pg. 97 that Jeffrey of Bouillon, leader of the First Crusade, received a delegation from the Fatimid Khalīfah al-Mustanṣir while besieging Antioch. This delegation formed an alliance against the Seljuks, and upon their return to Cairo, they were accompanied by a group of Frankish princes. The agreement included sending a Fatimid army to Jerusalem to capture it from the Seljuks, which was achieved in August 1098 CE. The Franks played their role in this, with their first campaign reaching Jerusalem and killing its inhabitants. (Dr. Suhayl Zakkār: *Al-Mawsū‘at al-Shāmilah fī Tārīkh al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībiyyah*, 29/329-333). This left the bitterness of the defeat of the Crusader armies lingering in the hearts of the Franks and their descendants until General Gouraud, the French commander, entered Damascus after World War I. He went to the tomb of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and said, “Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, we have returned. My name is Gouraud, the descendant of Jeffrey. The Crusades have ended now.” (Mālik Bennabi: *Mudhakirāt Shāhid al-Qarn*, pg. 40.) It is also narrated that General Gouraud kicked Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s tomb with his foot, saying, “We have returned, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn.” Furthermore, it is mentioned that the British General Allenby, upon entering Jerusalem, declared, “Now the Crusades have ended.”

under the Ḥanafī school of thought. This is because Abū Ḥanīfah was one of the supporters of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. They are more righteous than the Shī‘ah, were it not for what is criticised about them.<sup>1</sup>

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1 This was during the time of al-Dāmaghānī. As for today, majority of the ‘Alawīs affiliated in school to Zayd ibn ‘Alī and attributed to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and those who trace their lineage to him from the people of Yemen—and there are many of them—have turned to Twelver Shi‘ism after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 CE, under the guise of the school of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī. If the matter was personal to them, it would be less significant, but they actively work to promote this doctrine, propagating it and distributing its books freely, aside from those sold at low prices in specialised bookstores. This is in retaliation against the republican regime that spread education widely throughout Yemen, aiming to unify religious education curricula away from narrow sectarianism, making it acceptable to both Shāfi‘ī and Zaydi followers. This allowed the Ahl al-Sunnah in areas dominated by the Zaydi sect to practice their rituals in Maṣjids openly and freely, without fear or hesitation. Many people voluntarily turned to reading Sunnī books, realising that this was the only way to eliminate sectarian differences and unify them with a single heart, erasing from their memory the judgments of some rulers who used to excommunicate and declare others as sinners based on sectarian differences. Among the Alawites, there were those who left taqlīd and acted according to the rulings of the Qur’ān and the authentic Sunnah, but they turned away from this for political reasons:

But the foolish refuse except to follow desire, even though the path of truth is clear to them.

Even though they know that Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn attacked the Ja‘farī doctrine in his books, stating that its followers are not on the right path concerning the infallibility of the Twelve Imāms, the doctrine of *Taqiyyah* (dissimulation), and *Badā’* (the idea that Allah only learns of things as they occur, changing His opinion as a result), and their excommunication of other sects’ followers, as mentioned in *Rasā’il al-‘Adl wa al-Tawḥīd* (pg. 75). If the followers of Imām al-Hādī’s school were keen on dispelling the misconception among the followers of the four schools of thought that the Zaydi school does not differ from the Ja‘farī school and that they originate from the same source, they should adhere to what Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who they claim to follow in name, adhered to. They should reject what he rejected,

## The Zaydis of Yemen and the Extent of their Connection to the Zaydi Sect of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī<sup>1</sup>

It is a common belief among various Muslim sects and groups that the Zaydis are the followers of the school of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who adhere to his jurisprudence and practice upon his *ijtihād* (independent reasoning), similar to the followers of the four Sunnī schools of thought: the Shāfi‘ī, Ḥanafī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī schools, whose adherents practice the jurisprudence of their respective Imāms and adhere to the limits of their texts.

However, the case for the followers of the Zaydi school is distinctly different. This is because the Zaydis did not strictly adhere to the school of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, following his jurisprudence and adhering to it. Instead, they considered him as one of the opposition in certain jurisprudential matters, as mentioned by al-Sharīf ‘Abd al-Ṣamad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Dāmaghānī, one of the prominent figures of the sixth century AH or earlier, in his treatise *al-Jawharah al-Khāliṣah ‘an al-Shawā’ib fī al-‘Aqā’id al-Manqūmah ‘alā Jamī‘ al-Madhāhib*, where he stated:

ومنا أي ومن الأمور التي نقموا بها على الزيدية أنهم يخالفون زيد بن علي إمامهم في كثير من الفروع مع انتسابهم إليه ويزعمون أنهم أخذوا

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commend what he commended among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, and practice what is mentioned in *Majmū‘ Zayd ibn ‘Alī* concerning raising and folding the hands in prayer and saying *āmīn*.

1 The original version of this topic was presented by the author at the Muslim Dialogue Series Symposium organised by the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman and the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research in Jordan. The symposium, titled *Ijtihād in Islam*, was held in Muscat from 24th to 26th Sha‘bān 1419 AH, corresponding to 12th to 14th December 1998.

بفروع أتباعه كما أخذت الشافعية بفروع أصحاب الشافعي والمالكية بفروع أصحاب مالك والحنفية بفروع محمد بن الحسن الشيباني وأبي يوسف وزفر أصحاب أبي حنيفة وليس بصحيح لأن أصحاب كل فقيه ممن رويوا زادوا على فروع إمامهم وفرعوها ونقحوها الصحيح منها والزيدية لم يفعلوا ذلك في فقه زيد بن علي بل جعلوه كأحد المخالفين في مسائل الفقه وجعلوا عمدتهم في المذهب ثلاثة أئمة من أولاد الحسن اثنين ومن أولاد الحسين واحد وكلهم من أتباع زيد في العقيدة والإمامة وفروعهم توافق الحنفية أكثر من غيرهم من الفقهاء

Among the matters they criticise the Zaydis for is their opposition to Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī in many branches of jurisprudence, despite their affiliation with him. They claim to follow the branches of his followers, just as the Shāfi‘īs follow the branches of the companions of Shāfi‘ī, and the Mālikīs the branches of the companions of Mālik, and the Ḥanafīs the branches of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, Abū Yūsuf, and Zufar, the companions of Abū Ḥanīfah. This is not correct because the companions of each jurist, who transmitted, added to the branches of their Imām and expanded upon them, and they refined and authenticated the correct ones. The Zaydis did not do this with the jurisprudence of Zayd ibn ‘Alī; rather, they considered him as one of the opposition in jurisprudential matters and made three Imāms—two from the descendants of al-Ḥasan<sup>1</sup> and one from the descendants of al-Ḥusayn<sup>2</sup>—the pillars

1 They are al-Mu‘ayyad al-Kabīr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Hārūnī, born in Āmil in Ṭabaristān in 333 AH/945 CE who claimed Imāmah in 380 AH/990 CE and died in 411 AH/1020 CE, and his brother Abū Ṭālib Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn, who claimed Imāmah after the death of his brother Aḥmad and died in Āmil in 424 AH/1033 CE.

2 He is al-Nāṣir al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar, known as al-Aṭrūsh, born in 230 AH/845 CE, who claimed Imāmah in al-Jīl and Deylam and assumed leadership in 304 AH/916 CE.

of their school; all of whom were followers of Zayd in creed and Imāmah. Their branches align more with the Ḥanafī school than with any other jurists.

This was affirmed by Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā, who died in 840 AH/1437 CE, stating:

فالزيدية أي زيدية اليمن منسوبون إلى زيد بن علي لقولهم جميعا بإمامته  
وإن لم يكونوا على مذهبه في مسائل الفروع وهي تخالف الشافعية  
والحنفية في ذلك لأنهم إنما نسبوا إلى أبي حنيفة والشافعي لمتابعتهم  
لهما في الفروع

The Zaydis—meaning the Zaydis of Yemen—are affiliated with Zayd ibn ‘Alī because they all acknowledge his Imāmah, even if they do not follow his school in jurisprudential matters. This contrasts with the Shāfi‘īs and Ḥanafīs, who are affiliated with Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Shāfi‘ī due to their adherence to them in jurisprudential matters.

Al-Ḥākim al-Jushamī said:

والزيدية يجمع مذهبهم تفضيل علي على سائر الصحابة وألويته بالإمامة  
وقصرها من بعد الحسين في البطين أي في ذريتهما واستحقاقهما إنما  
يثبت بالفضل والطلب لا الوراثة كما تقول العباسية ويعتقدون وجوب  
الخروج على الجائرين من أهل الأمر بخلاف ما تزعم الحشوية ويرون  
القول بالتوحيد والعدل والوعد والوعيد كالمعتزلة فهذه الأمور لا  
يختلفون فيها

The Zaydi school is characterised by their preference of ‘Alī over the rest of the Companions and his priority for the Imāmah, limiting it after al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn to their descendants.

They believe that the Imāmah is established by virtue and pursuit, not by inheritance, unlike the Abbasids, and they deem it obligatory to rise against unjust rulers, contrary to the beliefs of the Ḥashwiyyah. They also uphold the doctrines of *tawḥīd* (monotheism), *ʿadl* (justice), *waʿd* (promise), and *waʿīd* (threat), similar to the Muʿtazilah. These principles are unanimous among them.<sup>1</sup>

Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah, who died in 749 AH/1348 CE, added to the above by saying:

فمن كان على عقيدته أي عقيدة زيد بن علي في الديانة والمسائل الإلهية والقول بالحكمة والاعتراف بالوعد والوعيد وحصر الإمامة على الثلاثة الذين هم علي وولده الحسن والحسين وأن طريق الإمامة الدعوة في من عداهم فمن كان مقرا في هذه الأصول فهو زيدي ... فهذه هي معتقدات الزيدية التي هي مصداق اللقب عليها دون المسائل الاجتهادية التي لاحظ لها في هذا اللقب أي لقب زيدي ولكنه أي الإمام يحيى بن حمزة توسع في مدلول هذا اللقب فشمّل حتى الذين يخالفون زيادا في كثير من المسائل الاجتهادية والمضطربات النظرية بمن فيهم أئمة الزيدية المخالفون لزيد بن علي فإن لقب زيدي يشملهم

Whoever adheres to the creed of Zayd ibn ʿAlī in religion, divine doctrines, the belief in wisdom, the acknowledgment of the *waʿd* (promise) and *waʿīd* (threat), and the restriction of the Imāmah to the three: ʿAlī and his sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, with the path to the Imāmah being through proclamation for those other than them; thus, whoever acknowledges these principles is a Zaydi. [He further stated:] These are the beliefs of the Zaydis,

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1 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 96; *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pg. 40.



which justify their label, excluding the jurisprudential issues that have no bearing on this label, that is, the label of Zaydi. However, Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah broadened the meaning of this label to include even those who differ from Zayd in many jurisprudential issues and theoretical matters, including the Zaydi Imāms who opposed Zayd ibn ‘Alī. Thus, the label Zaydi encompasses them.<sup>1</sup>

The Zaydis are one of the sects of the Shī‘ah, but as Imām Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 840 AH/1437 CE) states, they split into: the Mukhtari‘ah<sup>2</sup>, the Muṭṭarrifiyyah<sup>3</sup>, the Jārūdiyyah<sup>4</sup>, the Ṣāliḥiyyah<sup>5</sup>, and the Ḥusayniyyah<sup>6</sup>. In jurisprudential matters, they are divided

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1 *Al-Risālah al-Wāzi‘ah*, pg. 48.

2 The Mukhtari‘ah: They believe that Allah creates the properties in bodies and that these do not arise from their nature, unlike the Muṭṭarrifiyyah. They say that the Imāmah of ‘Alī was designated by a clear text, with the succession of the Ṣaḥābah being an opposition to this text, but suspend from declaring them transgressors. This group represents the Zaydis of Yemen today.

3 Named after Muṭṭarrif ibn Shihāb, a prominent figure of the late fourth and early fifth century AH. They believe that Allah’s influence is in the fundamentals of things, not their branches, and permit the Imāmah in non-descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.

4 Named after Abū al-Jārūd, a prominent figure of the late second century AH. They claim that the Imāmah of ‘Alī was designated by description and indication without explicit naming. This includes the Mukhtari‘ah, the Muṭṭarrifiyyah, and the Ḥusayniyyah.

5 Named after al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Hamadhānī (d. 169 AH/786 CE). They believe that ‘Alī is the best person after the Messenger and the most deserving of the Imāmah and that the pledges of allegiance to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar were not wrong since ‘Alī accepted them and was content with it.

6 Named after al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim al-‘Iyyānī (d. 404 AH/1014 CE). He claimed Imāmah for himself, titled himself al-Mahdī, and claimed to be the awaited Mahdī,

into the Mu'ayyadiyyah<sup>1</sup>, the Hādawiyyah<sup>2</sup>, the Nāṣiriyyah<sup>3</sup>, and the Qāsimiyyah<sup>4</sup>. The people of Kūfah among them follow the school of Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsā ibn Zayd ibn ʿAlī, al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā<sup>5</sup>, and Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr (al-Murādī), as mentioned by the author of *al-Jāmiʿ al-Kāfi*<sup>6</sup>. There were mutual declarations of each other as transgressors and sinful over differences in jurisprudential branches, as narrated by Sayyid Abū al-ʿAbbās<sup>7</sup> in his compilation *Daʿ ʿanka al-Uṣūl*. Their differences intensified regarding the Imāms after al-Manṣūr bi Allāh, leading them to split into followers of al-Imām al-Dāʿī and al-Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, where they even declared each other as disbelievers.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, the later Zaydis in Gilan and Deylam split into the Qāsimiyyah and the Nāṣiriyyah, with each group accusing the other of error until

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asserting that he was superior to the Messenger, that his words and writings were better than the Qurʾān, more illuminating in revealing meanings, as well as in silencing opponents.

1 Named after Imām al-Muʿayyad Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, previously mentioned.

2 Named after Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim al-Rassī.

3 Named after al-Nāṣir (al-Aṭrūsh), previously mentioned.

4 Named after Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl, who claimed the Imāmah for himself from Kūfah in 220 AH/835 CE and settled in al-Rass near Madīnah in 242 AH/856 CE.

5 Al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥyā was a Zaydi jurist in Kūfah.

6 *Al-Jāmiʿ al-Kāfi* by Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAlawī al-Kūfī, a compilation of the jurisprudence of Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsā, the jurisprudence of al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, and the jurisprudence of Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr al-Murādī, also known as *Jāmiʿ Āl Muḥammad*.

7 Abū al-ʿAbbās: Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥasan, who was an Imāmī, then reverted to the Zaydi school, though it is said he did not revert. He assumed leadership in 353 AH/964 CE.

8 *Al-ʿAwāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim*, 3/458.

al-Mahdī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dā‘ī<sup>1</sup> emerged and instructed them that every mujtahid is correct.<sup>2</sup> They accepted his view after many debates. The Zaydis of Yemen had a similar belief, thinking that there is only one correct answer in jurisprudential ijtihād and the truth lies with that, until the time of al-Imām al-Mutawakkil Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān<sup>3</sup>. They then adopted the view that every mujtahid is correct.

Given this state of the Zaydis, their Imāms, and their scholars, and the conflicts that arose among them over divergent jurisprudential issues, which led them to declare each other as disbelievers and sinners, after having distanced themselves from what Zayd ibn ‘Alī رحمته الله was upon, we ask: What was the path of Zayd ibn ‘Alī, may Allah have mercy on him?

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1 Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dā‘ī is Imām al-Mahdī Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Qāsim, who was given allegiance for the Imāmah in the season (of Ḥajj), then the people of Daylam wrote to him, and he reached them in 353 AH/964 CE. He then headed to Hawsam, seized it after many sieges, was captured many times, and died from poisoning in Hawsam in 360 AH/971 CE.

2 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 96.

3 He declared himself Imām in 533 AH/1139 CE and died in Ḥaydān, in the land of Khawlān ibn ‘Amr, near Ṣa‘dah, in 566 AH/1171 CE.



## The beliefs and stance of Zayd ibn ‘Alī

The distinguished scholar, jurist, and historian Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Imām al-Manṣūr al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, who died at the beginning of the eleventh century AH, tells us in his book *al-Mustaṭāb*, known as *Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā*:

The early generations of the Ahl al-Bayt, before the schools of thought were established, were independent mujtahids. Among them were those who referred to other Companions and Tābī‘īn of their time; and they continued in this manner throughout their lives.

The mujtahids, such as al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and their descendants like ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, al-Ṣādiq, al-Bāqir, and Zayd ibn ‘Alī, were unified in religious principles, as was the case with the Messenger ﷺ and his Companions.

As for jurisprudential branches, they differed in them according to their independent reasoning, as documented in *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kāfi* in jurisprudence and religious principles. Afterward, the companions of Zayd ibn ‘Alī split.

Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā stated in *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* that the Zaydis split into six groups: the Jārūdiyyah, the Batriyyah, the Ṣāliḥiyyah, the Jarīriyyah, and the later Jārūdiyyah split into the Muṭṭarrifiyyah, the Ḥusayniyyah, and the Mukhtari‘ah. These are six groups. I say: The Muṭṭarrifiyyah group has become extinct. Some of these groups emerged after two-hundred years and some before that. The ones before were the Ṣāliḥiyyah and the Jarīriyyah, which adhered to the school of Zayd ibn ‘Alī or something close to it. As for the other groups,

they appeared later and opposed Zayd ibn ‘Alī in both principles and branches, agreeing with him in only a few minor aspects.

The dominant group among the Zaydis after the emergence of al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn in Yemen were his followers in both principles and branches. Al-Hādī established his independent school of thought. The Zaydis subsequently adhered to his teachings and texts found in *al-Aḥkām* and *al-Muntakhab* and the later Zaydis adhered to his school, leaving no followers of the original school of Zayd ibn ‘Alī in either principles or branches among them.<sup>1</sup>

From this, it is clear to us that Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did not deviate from the path of his ancestors and contemporaries among the Companions and their followers, the Tābi‘īn, in terms of the methodology of the Qur’ān and Sunnah in both word and deed, except in two matters, as claimed:

Firstly, his inclination towards the Mu‘tazilī doctrine, which he is assumed to have adopted from Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’, the head of the Mu‘tazilah, during his scholarly journey to Baṣrah, or it is said that they met in Madīnah. His brother al-Bāqir, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, debated with him regarding this association. The issue was not that he became a Mu‘tazilī since I‘tizāl had spread among some of his family, but because he adopted it from someone who considered his grandfather’s involvement in the battles against the violators, oppressors, and defectors to be potentially mistaken. Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’ believed that it is not absolutely certain that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was correct in his stance in the battles against the people of the Camel

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1 Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā (al-Mustaṭāb), tablet: 4.

and the people of Syria; stating that one of the two parties was wrong, without specifying which one.

Additionally, Zayd spoke about *Qadr* (divine predestination) differently from his ancestors. Furthermore, he stipulated that an Imām must lead an uprising to be recognised as an Imām. This prompted al-Bāqir to say to him, “According to your doctrine, your father is not an Imām, because he never led an uprising nor attempted to.”<sup>1</sup>

This is because the Zaydi school stipulates that an Imām must rise up when declaring his right to the Imāmah, as Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ himself did. The statement is attributed to him:

من شهر سيفه ودعا إلى كتاب ربه وسنة نبيه وجرى على أحكامه وعرف  
بذلك فذلك الإمام الذي لا تسعنا وإياكم جهالته فأما عبد جالس في  
بيته مرخ عليه ستره مغلق عليه بابه يجري عليه أحكام الظالمين لا يأمر  
بالمعروف ولا ينهي عن المنكر فأنى يكون ذلك إماماً مفروضاً طاعته

Whoever unsheathes his sword, calls to the Book of his Lord and the Sunnah of His Prophet, acts according to its rulings, and is known for that, is the Imām to be followed and ignorance about him will not be tolerated from us nor you. As for a servant who sits in his house, drawing his curtain over himself, locking his door, and following the rulings of the oppressors, without enjoining what is right or forbidding what is wrong, such a person cannot be an Imām whose obedience is obligatory.<sup>2</sup>

The other matter is Imāmah, which is the main concern of all Shī‘ī sects,

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1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/156; *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu‘tazilah*; pg. 533; *Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn*; 2/529.

2 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 188.

their preoccupation, and the centre of their political beliefs. Zayd ibn ‘Alī believed that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was the most deserving of the Imāmah after the death of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ due to his status and close relationship with him, both in lineage and through marriage. This is the view held by all Shī‘ī sects, who say, “‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was the most deserving of the position of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ after him and the most rightful for the Imāmah and leadership of the Ummah,” and they are unanimous on this.<sup>1</sup> However, Zayd ibn ‘Alī allowed for the Imāmah of the less virtuous in the presence of the more virtuous<sup>2</sup>, as evidenced by his statement:

كان علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه أفضل الصحابة إلا أن الخلافة فوضت إلى أبي بكر لمصلحة رأوها وقاعدة دينية راعوها من تسكين ثائرة الفتنة وتطبيب قلوب العامة فإن عهد الحروب التي جرب في أيام النبوة كان قريبا وسيف أمير المؤمنين علي من دماء المشركين من قريش وغيرهم لم يجف والضغائن في صدور القوم من طلب الثأر كما هي فما كانت القلوب تميل إليه كل الميل ولا تنقاد له الرقاب كل الانقياد فكانت المصلحة أن يكون القائم بهذا الشأن من عرفوه باللين والتؤدة والتقدم بالسن والسبق في الإسلام والقرب من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألا ترى أنه أي أبا بكر لما أراد في مرضه الذي مات فيه تقليد الأمر عمر بن الخطاب زعق الناس وقالوا لقد وليت علينا فظا غليظا فما كانوا يرضون بأمر المؤمنين عمر بن الخطاب لشدته وصلابته وغلظه في الدين وفظاظته على الأعداء حتى سكنهم أبو بكر بقوله لو سأني ربي لقلت وليت عليهم خيرهم

1 *Sharḥ Risālat al-Ḥūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 154

2 *Al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Niḥal*, 4/163.



‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام was the best of the Companions, but the Khilāfah was entrusted to Abū Bakr because they saw it as a matter of expediency and a religious principle they observed, to quell the unrest of discord and to appease the general public. The period of wars experienced during the Prophetic era was recent, and the sword of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī, was still stained with the blood of the polytheists of Quraysh and others. The rancour in the hearts of the people seeking vengeance was still present; thus, the hearts did not fully incline towards him, nor did they fully submit to his authority. Therefore, it was deemed expedient for the person undertaking this matter to be someone known for his gentleness, patience, seniority in age, precedence in Islam, and closeness to the Messenger of Allah. Don’t you see that Abū Bakr, when he was ill and near death, wanted to delegate the authority to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the people protested, saying, “You have appointed over us a harsh, hard man.” They were not pleased with Commander of the Faithful ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb due to his harshness, firmness, and strictness in religion and his severity towards the enemies, until Abū Bakr reassured them by saying, “If my Lord questions me, I will say, ‘I appointed over them the best among them.’”<sup>1</sup>

Zayd ibn ‘Alī believed that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام was the most deserving of the Khilāfah after the Messenger of Allah and the most rightful to it compared to the Khulafā’ who preceded him, who were known for their adherence to the Messenger’s path, asceticism, piety, and justice within themselves and towards the Ummah. He considered ‘Alī عليه السلام even more deserving compared to the Umayyad Khulafā’, who turned the Khilāfah into a hereditary monarchy.

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1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/155.

As is well known, Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went to Kūfah and declared his rebellion against Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. When his companions gathered around him to fight Yūsuf ibn ‘Umar, the governor of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik in Iraq, he addressed them and commanded them to follow the conduct of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in battle. They asked him, “We have heard your statement, but what do you say about Abū Bakr and ‘Umar?” He replied:

رحمهما الله وغفر لهما وما عسيت أن أقول فيهما صحبا رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم بأحسن الصحبة وهاجرا معه وجاهدا في الله حق  
جهاده وما سمعت أحدا من أهل بيتي يتبرأ منهما ولا نقول فيهما إلا  
خيرا فقالوا إن برئت منهما وإلا رفضناك فقال اذهبوا فأنتم الراضية

May Allah have mercy on them and forgive them. What can I say about them? They accompanied the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with the best companionship, emigrated with him, and strove in the cause of Allah to the best of their ability. I have never heard any of my family dissociate from them, and we say nothing but good about them.”

They responded, “If you do not disown them, we will reject you.”

He said, “Go away then, for you are the *Rāfiḍah* (rejecters).”<sup>1</sup>

This was the stance of Zayd ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. As for the Zaydis who adhered to his belief regarding the two Shaykhs (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar) and followed his teachings, they faced opposition until he was martyred in Kunāsah of Kūfah, on the second day of Ṣafar in the year 122 AH/738 CE.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 7/180; *Sharḥ Risālat al-Hūr al-‘Īn*, pg. 185-188; *al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 101; *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 9/330.

2 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 5/390; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 10/95; *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, 1/35-39; *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, pg. 92-106.

With his death, the original Zaydi school he followed disappeared. The Zaydis of Yemen, however, trace their practice to Imām al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim al-Rassī, who came to Yemen from Ḥijāz in 384 AH/897 CE, proclaimed his Imāmah, and took the title al-Hādī. He was the first to establish the Imāmah state in Yemen. He was a great scholar and independent jurist, having studied the principles of theology under his teacher Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, a Mu'tazilī. His statements in the principles (*uṣūl*) mostly followed his teacher. However, in the branches (*furū'*), he exercised his own *ijtihād*, differing from Zayd ibn 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his jurisprudential conclusions and not adhering to Zayd's opinions as compiled in *Majmū' al-Fiqh al-Kabīr* of Zayd ibn 'Alī and *al-Jāmi' al-Kāfi* for his statements. Thus, the original school of Imām Zayd ibn 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in both principles and branches had no followers among them.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this, the name of the Zaydi school predominated over al-Hādī's school because al-Hādī and his followers acknowledged the Imāmah of Zayd ibn 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the necessity of rising against tyrants, and held him in high esteem for his virtue and leadership. They limited the Imāmah to those who rose and proclaimed it from the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, provided they met the conditions of the Imāmah documented in their books. Therefore, whoever acknowledged his Imāmah was considered a Zaydi, even if they did not adhere to his school in branches, as most Zaydis followed others' opinions in jurisprudential matters and theoretical matters, as well as their Imāms such as al-Qāsim, al-Hādī, and al-Nāṣir. They are affiliated with Zayd ibn 'Alī, although they were like him in independent reasoning and

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1 *Al-Mustaṭāb (Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah al-Ṣuḡhrā)*.

disagreed with him on many issues.<sup>1</sup> The followers of Imām al-Hādī later turned into the Jārūdiyyah and then split into three groups, as explained by Imām al-Mahdī Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā: “The later Jārūdiyyah split into the Muṭṭarrifiyyah, the Ḥusayniyyah, and the Mukhtari‘ah.”<sup>2</sup> The Ḥusayniyyah and Muṭṭarrifiyyah have become extinct, leaving only the Mukhtari‘ah, who are very close to the Imāmiyyah in many jurisprudential matters, especially in acts of worship. However, in principles, they differ from them; they do not believe in the infallibility of the Twelve Imāms, nor in *Taqiyyah* (dissimulation), *Mut‘ah* (temporary marriage), or *Badā’* (change in divine will). For them, an Imām is established by virtue and claim, not by inheritance, as previously explained.

Despite the clear differences and evident disagreements between the Zaydis of Yemen and the Zaydis of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī, the Hādawī Zaydi school in Yemen possesses a commendable and praiseworthy merit that distinguishes it, as far as I know, from other Islamic schools of thought: it opens the door to *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) wide open. This is for those who excel in their knowledge and master their disciplines, including knowledge of the verses of rulings, their aḥādīth, knowledge of the science of ḥadīth terminology, principles of jurisprudence, as well as grammar, morphology, meanings, and rhetoric, among other sciences of narration and understanding, following the principle that “every mujtahid is correct,” which was advocated by al-Mahdī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Dā‘ī, one of the Imāms of the Zaydi school. Consequently, a significant number of Yemeni Zaydi scholars, whom Allah has enabled, have ascended the ranks of *ijtihād*. They remained engaged

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1 *Hidāyat al-Rāghibīn al-Raḥīq*, pg. 16.

2 *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal*, pg. 97

in the sciences of the Glorious Qur'ān and its exegeses, and studied the foundational books of Ḥadīth and its sciences, finding in the Book of Allah and the authentic Sunnah of His Messenger that which the seeker of truth requires, and does not need anything else which is merely pure opinion without a trace of knowledge.

Among these scholars emerged prominent Imāms of absolute ijtihād, who abandoned taqlīd entirely. Notable among them were Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Wazīr (d. 840 AH/1436 CE), the author of *al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim fī al-Dhabb 'an Sunnat Abī al-Qāsim*, and al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad al-Jallāl (d. 1084 AH/1673 CE), the author of *Ḍaw' al-Nahār al-Mushriq 'alā Ṣafahāt al-Azhār*. Another was Ṣāliḥ ibn al-Mahdī al-Muqbilī (d. Makkah, 1108 AH/1696 CE), the author of *al-'Ilm al-Shāmikh fī Īthār al-Ḥaqq 'alā al-Ābā' wa al-Mashāyikh*, and Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Amīr (d. 1182 AH/1768 CE), the author of *Subul al-Salām Sharḥ Bulūgh al-Marām min Adillat al-Aḥkām*. Also, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH/1834 CE), the author of *Nayl al-Awṭār Sharḥ Muntaqā al-Akḥbār*.

I mention these specifically because their writings have gained unparalleled acceptance, especially *Subul al-Salām* and *Nayl al-Awṭār*, which have spread widely in Muslim lands. They have become references for scholars and students of knowledge interested in studying the jurisprudence of the Sunnah in Islamic schools, institutes, and universities, without committing to a particular school of thought. They have also been translated into some Muslim languages such as Urdu, Turkish, Malay, and others for those who do not read Arabic well. This is because they found in these two books what removes sectarian differences among Muslims, despite their abundance, and unites them on common ground—the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger—to return to what the predecessors of this Ummah

were upon, whom Allah described as You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind.<sup>1</sup>

As for those Zaydi scholars who exercised *ijtihād* while remaining within the boundaries of the Zaydi school, adhering to its texts and derivations, they are numerous. They have established significant legal principles based on the foundations of jurisprudence, upon which they built the recognised legal rulings.

May Allah grant success, and He is sufficient for us and the best trustee.

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1 Sūrah Āl `Imrān: 110.

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