



THE CONFERENCE OF

ZAHRA (AS)
EMPOWERMENT
UMAA 2017

15th Annual Convention

June 30th - July 3rd 2017

Bethesda North Marriott Hotel
& Conference Center, Maryland



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We are **Hand in Hand**





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ZAHRA (AS)
EMPOWERMENT
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The articles that have been contributed to the UMAA magazine are not necessarily the opinions of the UMAA organization or the office bearers and the ads do not necessarily carry the endorsements of UMAA.

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Note from The Editor

Welcome to the 15th annual UMAA Convention. After many successful and memorable conventions in the past years, UMAA is back to the area where it all began - in greater Maryland/Washington DC. As in the prior years, we are pleased to present this annual issue of the UMAA souvenir magazine for you.

We have always picked a theme for the annual UMAA Convention. The theme selected in the past focused on ideas such as justice, peace, diversity, equality, compassion, and understanding, to present Islamic perspective on these issues, to help develop an active and dynamic community and facilitate revival of Shi'ism. This year's convention has been dedicated to the Lady of light, Fatima Zahra, Prophet's (phub) daughter and wife of Imam Ali (a). The convention is designated as The Conference of Zahra.



The Holy Prophet (pbuh) taught Fatima (sa) the divine knowledge and inculcated in her the inner and outer aspects of the Divine Message revealed to him. Divinely gifted with intellectual brilliance and spiritual endowment, and close companion to her father, the recipient of Divine Messages, Fatima Zahra understood and appreciated the true meaning and spirit of faith, piety, and the reality of Islam. In her early years, she had witnessed the sorrow and anguish and hardships her father and mother suffered in pursuit of conveying the Divine Message to the people of Makkah. She had seen how unfairly her father, the Holy Prophet Muhammed (pbuh), was treated by the pagans. She had suffered with her parents the privations and hardships of Sheb-i Abi Talib when the Prophet and his family and his uncle Abu Talib were ex-communicated by the Makkans. She had also seen her mother and Prophet's uncle Abu Talib dying soon after they were allowed by the pagans to come back home.

Fatima inherited the genius and wisdom, the determination and will power, piety and sanctity, generosity and benevolence, devotion and worship of Allah, self-sacrifice and hospitality, forbearance and patience, knowledge and nobility of disposition of her illustrious father, both in words and in actions. "I often witnessed my mother," says Imam Hussain, "absorbed in prayer from dusk to dawn." Her generosity and compassion for the poor was such that no destitute or beggar ever returned from her door empty-handed. She worked, dressed, ate and lived very simply. She was very generous; and none who came to her door ever went away empty handed.

Fatima was called 'az-Zahra' because her light would shine among those in the heavens. She was married to Ali ibn Abi Talib. She had two sons, Hassan and Hussain, and two daughters, Zainab and Umm-e-Kulsum. Her children are known for their outstanding piety, righteousness and generosity. Their strength of character and actions changed the course of history. Allah brought these illustrious personalities in Islamic history through Fatima Zahra. Her position and status cannot be compared to any woman throughout human history. The Prophet is the perfect example for men; Fatima for women. For all the verses revealed in the Holy Qur'an for women, she is the perfect model and embodiment of Islam. In her lifetime, she was a perfect woman, in her respective roles, as daughter, wife and mother.

In the contemporary world, when injustice, inhumanity, terrorism, warfare and killing of innocent people are rampant, when millions of men, women and children are forced to flee from their homeland for threat to their life, safety and freedom, when the custodians of the House of God are engaged in killing their fellow Muslims in Yemen, when terrorists groups like ISIS have hijacked the name of Islam, it is incumbent upon us to present the pure and unadulterated message of Islam, as conveyed and presented by Qur'an, the Prophet of Islam and his Ahlul Bayt. The Lady of Light Fatima Zahra, also known as Sayyeda tun Nissa (Chief of women) is not only the supreme example for women but also for all humanity because she best portrayed, presented and practiced the teachings of Islam, and her sons and daughters helped save the humanity and the Divine Message of Islam in the most difficult and trying times.

The Annual UMAA magazine is in your hands. Every effort has been made to keep the articles informative, interesting and useful for the reader. As always, my sincere thanks to Br. Nasir Shamsi for all the years of his frank critique and guidance, and Br. Mustafa Karim for his hard work and support, in putting together and publishing this magazine over the years.

Lastly, a note of thanks to the learned contributors for their articles and advertisers and well-wishers for their continuing support! With that, we welcome you all to the 15th Annual UMAA Convention.

Dr. Zafar Jaffri
Editor

UNIVERSAL MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Overview and History

The Universal Muslim Association of America (UMAA) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that works on social, political, religious, and humanitarian issues. UMAA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization as well. UMAA has obtained ECOSOC nonprofit status with the United Nations and regularly participates in related initiatives.

Mission Statement

UMAA aims to provide a platform for American Shia Muslims to advance political, social, economic and religious goals important to their community. By providing a platform for American Shia Muslims a forum to foster intra-faith unity, to participate in civic and political responsibilities, to dispel misgivings about Islam and Muslims, to help fellow Americans better understand Islam through the Qu'ran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Ahl al-Bayt (a).

Goals

UMAA provides a forum to address socioeconomic and political issues that may not be addressed in centres of worship such as: - Fostering inter and intra faith unity - Dispelling misgivings about Islam and Muslims through civic engagement - Helping other American understand Islam through the Qu'ran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Ahl al-Bayt (a). UMAA was formally established in September, 2002 as a joint effort between scholars, community organizers and community leaders. Since then, UMAA has grown to support the American Shia community through a variety of Community Development, Advocacy and Media efforts.



Oh Fatima (SA)
The lady of Light
Daughter of our Prophet (SAW)
The soul that is whiter than
white
On the highest of the heavens
You are praised by all the lands
Mother of Hassan and Hussain
(AS)

فاطمة

Beauty of Islam
Zahra (SA) your Light is shining
Brighter than the sun
Oh the flower of heavens
You are the only one
The apple of Muhammad's (SAW)
eyes
The wife of Ali (AS)
The role model for all women

source : www.abna.ir

Message from The President



As salaam alaykum,

In the name of the most High and with great pride, I am pleased to welcome you to the 15th Annual UMAA Convention taking place where it all started - the Washington DC area. Every year, we ascribe an auspicious personality and theme to our conference. In this milestone year, we have chosen the title of **'The Conference of Zahra'** and a theme that embodies Lady Zahra: Empowerment. We have designed a program that will have something for everyone and hope you find your own inspiration for empowerment through the world renown speakers, reciters, and poets you will meet this weekend.

UMAA serves to be a platform for advancement for the Shia American community. We aim to foster talent and programming that will advance our community socially, economically and politically. Our belief is so grounded in collective movements that it is only natural for us to cherish and celebrate the strength of our community by gathering annually to discuss the issues and topics that affect us but may not be discussed elsewhere. God willing, we will continue to maintain this strong sense of community and identity as the Shia community in America continues to grow and evolve.

In the past year, UMAA has been busy in keeping the community up to date and informed about the trans formative political climate by engaging with elected officials, federal agencies, the justice system and other like minded organizations. In the coming year, we hope to continue to be a platform by which the community feel empowered to work towards social justice.

Please download the UMAA app on your smart phone for a full list of activities; the schedule is full of exciting speeches, workshops, and sessions on a assortment of topics, as well as some special events – we hope you have an enjoyable time.

May God bless you and your families.

Sincerely,

Dr. Syed E. Abidi
President, Universal Muslim Association of America

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My father Muhammad (pbuh) stood up with (his) guidance among the people. And saved them from perversion & aberration, and turned their blindness into enlightenment and guided them towards the firm religion. And called (invited) them to the straight way.

Ayan ush-Shia Ataba Al Jadeed Vol. 1



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Message from The Convention Senior Vice President

As salaam alaykum

With the election of Donald Trump, an openly misogynist, narcissist, bigot to the highest office in the land, the general environment in this country has become very toxic.

At no other time in modern history can we recall such hatred and divisions in our society.

The realities of living in this country, the feeling of annihilation without repercussions looms larger and larger with each passing season. The recent acquittal of a cop who shot Philando Castile in front of his young child, and the killing of Nabra Hussain in Virginia are acts that make us feel unwelcome in this society. In these turbulent times public opinion about Islam and Muslims is worsening. Hate crimes are on the rise across the country, while Islamophobia has, unfortunately become mainstream. However, at the same time a good number of individuals both professional and regular folk have spoken forcefully and persuasively in support of Islam and Muslims, and once in a while the Muslim community receives positive media coverage. To quote a Muslim Imam **“This is the worst times for American Muslims, and also this is the best times for Muslims living in America.”**



Acts of discrimination, bigotry and racism against nonwhite and non-Christian minority are not uncommon phenomena in America. The US used to be considered a W.A.S.P (White Anglo Saxon Protestant) nation. That dominant group always felt anxiety and paranoid , hence reacted unfavorably towards the other groups that were sprouting up in the landscape, with whom they had difficulty identifying with.

In 2016 election, although Muslims constituted less than two percent of the total electorate, but still, their presence was front and center, as in the case of Khizr Khan at the Democratic Convention . Trump and his Fox, and Breitbart News surrogates have fomented the notion that **all** Muslims are suspects of holding extremist Wahabbi views, hence Muslim immigration should be banned, although he put up a big show with the root of all evils - King Salman of Saudi Arabia.

The crowd that identifies with Donald Trump have the least exposure to the outside world. They live in cocoons immersed in false reality, comforting themselves with the notion that they are the inheritors of this land . Muslims should brace themselves for a long struggle. Islamophobia will not go away in the near future. A window of opportunity has been opened as Muslims respond in a variety of different ways to this threat to their existence.

Conventions as this one will present a positive and accurate narrative to the American public. There is no doubt that Muslims are growing in their resilience showing political maturity in an atmosphere that is too often hostile, suspicious of their American identity and loyalty.

Now is the time for us to join hands with other groups who faced similar uphill battles on their ascension ladders . Muslims are not unique to this hostile landscape. What is unique is how they react to these adversities. It becomes imperative on all of us to promote unity , harmony amongst different groups and togetherness that will create a loving and sacrificing landscape.

The theme of this Convention, stressing the important role Women play in the development of a Utopian society will take this journey of education and assimilation a long way.

Each and every member of our Society should take up on themselves to do their part and take the high road instead of the easy way. There is no rule that says the responsibility lies amongst a select few.

Let all of join hands and leave behind a world better than the one we inherited from our forefathers, for our generation to come.

Dr. Asad Sadiq

Senior Vice President, Universal Muslim Association of America

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FATIMAH AZ ZAHRA

Mohamedraza Dungersi, Ph.D, New York, New York

The Magnificence of Hazrat Fatimah Zahra (sa) is such that it is difficult to comprehend fully what her status is in the presence of Allah. This is expressed by two eminent scholars: a theologian and an academician, namely Ayatullah Makarem Shirazy and Ali Shariati respectively.

Verdict of the Scholars

Having completed his work titled HAZRAT ZAHRA (sa) AND THE HEART - RENDING EPISODE OF FADAK, he intended to write a Preface to this book. In the process of so, he came across a tradition by Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a) from BIHARUL ANVAR VOL. 43; this tradition stunned him the way it explains the esoteric meaning of the Quranic verse:

INNA ANZALNAHU FI LAYLATIL QADR. WA MA ADRAKA MA LAYLATUL QADR (Surely WE revealed it on the Night of Honor. And what do you know of the Night of Honor) ⁽¹⁾

The tradition in question is "The NIGHT of QADR is the DIVINE DECREES, that is FATIMAH. Therefore, whoever knows Fatimah will have understood the Night of DIVINE DECREE... FATIMAH is that (person who has remained as mystical as LAYLATUL QADR) and mankind has been prevented from obtaining her acquaintance". ⁽²⁾

The Ayatullah then concludes: "Anyone who has really known Fatimah as she is has understood the night of DIVINE DECREE. (As a matter of fact) very few persons have known Fatimah as she is and was". ⁽³⁾

A similar amazement is witnessed by Ali Shariati in his work FATEMAH IS FATEMAH. He says "I do not know what to say about her or how to say it...I got stuck... FATEMAH IS FATEMAH". ⁽⁴⁾

Excerpts from THE HISTORIC FADAK SERMON OF FATIMA Concentration upon the Philosophy and Aim of Divine Ordinances

Faith has been set so as to cleanse you of polytheism; salat (prayers) are prescribed to keep you away from pride, zakat (charity) has been prescribed to purify ones' self and results in the increase of sustenance; sawm (fasting) has been prescribed so that genuineness may be reinforced; hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) has been prescribed to establish the religion; justice is prescribed to establish proper harmony in the hearts; the obligation to obey us (the Ahlul Bayt) has been prescribed to set up order in the community, and our authority (*imamah*) has been prescribed to save the people from differences.

Jihad (struggle) is the honour of Islam and a humiliation for the people of polytheism and hypocrisy; patience has been made a medium for recompense to be bestowed; enjoining good has been prescribed for the general welfare (of the society); righteousness with one's parents is a safeguard against His (Allah's) wrath; kindness with one's relatives is a medium of increasing one's age

and results in an increase of friends and relations; retribution has been prescribed so that people's lives may be safe-guarded; fulfillment of vows leads to forgiveness; consideration of accuracy in measurement in weighing commodities saves one from loss.

Prohibition of intoxicants has been prescribed so that humanity may remain away from filth; the prohibition of defaming (of adultery) has been prescribed so as to keep oneself away from the curse of Allah; robbery has been prohibited so that the hands may be pure; and polytheism has been prohibited so that sincerity may be established in Allah's Divinity.

Thus fear Allah as you should, and (see that) you die not but as Muslims. Obey Allah with regards to His orders and prohibitions for surely only those of His servants are conscious of Allah who are endowed with knowledge.

Allah fixed the reward for His obedience and torment for His Insubordination and disobedience, so that He may restrain His servants from His wrath and fury and lead them to His paradise.

Ayan ush-Shia Ataba Al Jadeed, Taha Al Jadeed. Vol. -1.

Welcome to the 15th Annual UMAA Conference Bethesda, Maryland

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Associate Clinical Professor UMDNJ,
RWJ Medical School NJ
Diplomat American Board of Rehabilitation Medicine
Rehab Medicine Consultant
2 Lincoln Highway, Route 27
Edison, New Jersey 08820

Oh Allah! Belittle me in my eyes & glorify & magnify your station to me. And inspire me (about) Your obedience & the practice which may cause Your pleasure & the shunning & evading from things (matters) which are the cause of Your wrath, oh the most merciful of all!

Ayan ush-Shia Ataba Al Jadeed Vol. 1,

*Best wishes on the
15th Annual UMAA Conference
Bethesda, Maryland*

**Parveen Kazmi and Sibte Irteza Kazmi
Allentown, New Jersey**

Who was then Fatimah?

To comprehend adequately this unique personality, one has to turn to the Prophet (pbuh) and to the Divinely appointed Imams, to see the way they have introduced her to the ummah. In essence, to get closer to understand the status of this great personality, is to approach her through her name and attributes.

Commenting on the way to get closer to Allah, Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a) said that this could be done through appreciating His Attributes - *Asma ul Husna* - **His Best Names**, through which come reflection for humans to seek guidance.

In light of this reality, when a companion of Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a) inquired about Hazrat Fatimah (sa), He responded by naming her attributes; the tradition to that effect goes like this. Yunus bin Dabiyah says that Imam Jaffer Sadiq (a) said "Fatimah possesses nine names in the presence of Allah: Fatimah, **as-Siddiqah** (the honest one), **al-Mubarakah** (the blessed one), **at-Taherah** (the virtuous one), **az-Zakiyyah** (the chaste one), **ar-Radiyyah** (one who is pleased with Allah), **al-Mardiyyah** (one who will be satisfied by Allah), **al-Muhaddatha** (a person other than a prophet with whom the angels speak to), and **al-Zahra** (the splendid one) ..."⁽⁵⁾

The scope of this write-up does not allow the complete explanation of each of these attributes. We shall therefore focus on the essence of the name Fatimah and, briefly dwell on one attribute - **Az Zahra** - as this year's Ummah convention is named ZAHRA and more importantly, this attribute, more often than not, is attached to the name of Hadhrat Fatima (sa) whenever she is mentioned.

Fatimah az Zahra - A Unique Attribute

There are numerous traditions which explain the essential qualities embodied by the two names Fatimah and Zahra.⁽⁶⁾

Suffice it that the name Fatimah originated from the name of Allah, **al-Fatir**, which means the Originator.⁽⁷⁾

As for the name Zahra, Ibn Abbas narrates a tradition from the Prophet (pbuh) stating that Hazrat Fatimah "... was a human huri, who, whenever she stands in prayers in the presence of Her Lord... her light illuminated the skies for the angels, like stars shine to people on Earth." Hence her name Zahra - the splendid one.⁽⁸⁾

Similarly, when Imam Hassan Askari (a) was asked as to why Hazrat Fatimah (sa) was called Zahra, he said "The illuminated countenance of Sayyidah Fatimah shone for Imam Ali (a) in the beginning of the day, similar to the shining sun; and at the time of early evening, similar to the radiant moon; while at sunset it resembled the glowing stars."⁽⁹⁾

Similar traditions from the Infallible Imams abound in the annals of history.

Conclusion

In conclusion, to adequately understand the status of Hadhrat Fatimah (p.b.u.h.), we quote, amongst many, one such tradition from Imam Jaffer Sadiq (p.b.u.h) stating that: "Fatimah is named az - Zahra because a dome of red rubies has been created by Allah for her in Paradise...The dwellers of Paradise will behold the dome just as you see the shining stars on the skies, and it will be said to them: 'This glowing (castle) belongs to Fatimah.'"⁽¹⁰⁾

May Allah help us be worthy servants of Hazrat Fatimah Zahra (sa).

“The illuminated countenance of Sayyidah Fatimah shone for Imam Ali (a) in the beginning of the day, similar to the shining sun; and at the time of early evening, similar to the radiant moon; while at sunset it resembled the glowing stars.”

Imam Hasan Askari (a)

Foot notes:

- (1) Quran, 97:1 -2
- (2) Makarem Shirazy : HAZRAT ZAHRA (p.b.u.h) AND THE HEART RENDING EPISODE OF FADAK pg 8-9, translated by Michele Ahmadi, 1991 (ed), Tehran, Iran.
- (3) ibid;
- (4) Quoted from HOUSE OF SORROWS (BAYTUL AHZAN) By Shaykh Abbas Qummi, Preface pg. ix, translated by Al - Husainee, 2010 (ed) Canada.
- (5) ibid, Pg 7
- (6) ibid pg 7
- (7) ibid pg 7(8) Ordani: FATIMA, THE GRACIOUS, pg 93, 1992 (ed), Qum, Iran.
- (9) and (10) Abbas Qummi pg 8.

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MUSHAF OF FATIMA (SA)

SYED RIZWAN A. RIZVI, NEW JERSEY

What is the Mushaf of Fātimah? Did the prophet and his household know about this book?

Shaykh Kulaynī narrates in his book from Abu Basīr that he said: "I went to Imām as-Sādiq (as) and said: May I be your ransom, I want to ask you a question, what is the book of Fātimah? He replied: It is a book three times the Qur'ān you possess today in length, by Allah it does not consist of one letter of the Qur'ān you possess today! Abu Basir says that I commented: By Allah, this is complete knowledge. The Imām replied: This is also knowledge, but not complete knowledge."¹

Did the Prophet and his companions know about the Qur'ān of Fātimah and its content? If the Prophet did not know about it and its content, then how come his household did? He was a Prophet of Allah and if he knew about it, why didn't he inform the Ummah? While Allah says in the Qur'ān: "O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people. Indeed Allah does not guide the faithless lot."

The Mushaf of Fātimah

Any written content that is compiled between two covers is called a *Mushaf*. Therefore every book can be called a *Mushaf*. During the advent of Islam, the Qur'ān was also called '**The Mushaf**'.² There are certain books mentioned in Islamic sources that are exclusively for the infallibles and that only they were informed of their content, like the **Book of Ali** and the **Mushaf of Fātimah**. In these sources, the last book has been mentioned as, the **Mushaf of Fātimah**, the **Sahifah of Fātimah** and the **Book of Fātimah**.³

The Writing of the Mushaf of Fātimah

After the demise of the Prophet, his daughter, Lady Fātimah was in extreme grief and enduring the absence of her father was very difficult for her. It is mentioned in authentic ahādīth that during the period after the prophet's demise until the martyrdom of Lady Fātimah, an angel would descend upon the prophet's daughter and express his condolences so that she would be calmed. This angel, known to be Gabriel in some ahādīth informed Lady Fātimah of her father's status in Barzakh and of the following incidents that would take place.

WELCOME TO THE 15TH ANNUAL UMAA CONVENTION

Should anyone argue with you concerning him, after the knowledge that has come to you, say, 'Come! Let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our selves and yourselves, then let us pray earnestly and call down Allah's curse upon the liars.'
(Qur'an 3:61)

The verse of Mubalahah

PARVEZ ILYAS SHAH, MD
BILJEES SHAH

WELCOME TO THE 15TH ANNUAL UMAA CONVENTION

Imam Zainul Aabidin (s) narrated from his father Imam al-Husayn (a) that his mother Fatimah (sa) said, "The messenger of Allah (S) said to me: beware of stinginess because it is a defect that does not exist in a generous one...beware of stinginess because it is a tree in Fire and its branches are in this life. Whoever clings to one of its branches it will take him to Fire. Liberality is a tree in the Paradise and its branches are in this life. Whoever clings to one of its branches, it will take him to the Paradise.'

Al-Kawthar fee Ahwaal Fatimah bint an-Nabiy al-At-har, vol. 4 p. 427,
quoted from Musnad of Fatimah az-Zahra', p. 221.

Farzana and Saeed Zaidi, MD and Family
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He would also inform her of the destiny of her progeny. Imam Ali (a) would write these messages and this resulted in the collection of the **Mushaf of Fātimah.**"⁴

The fact that angels would speak to Lady Fātimah is not unlikely; because angels have spoken to Maryam as it is mentioned in the Qur'ān: "And when the angels said: O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you, and He has chosen you above the world's women."⁵ Not to mention that Maryam was the greatest women of her era, while Lady Fātimah was the greatest women of all times.

The content of the Mushaf

When examining the ahādīth, we find that the following issues are mentioned in this book:

1. Future prophecies⁶
2. The will of Lady Fātimah⁷
3. The name of all individuals that will rule until the Day of Judgment⁸
4. Future events regarding her offspring
5. An outline of the prophet's life and his status after his demise that was communicated to Lady Fātimah.⁹

The Imāms' emphasis on the uniqueness between this Mushaf and the Qur'ān

It is understood from some ahādīth that Sunnis were aware of this Mushaf and assumed that, according to the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), Shī'ah believe the Qur'ān has been distorted and the missing verses are mentioned in this Mushaf. Therefore the Imāms have sharply negated the existence of any Qur'ānic verses in this Mushaf.¹⁰ The Late 'Allāmah 'Askarī says: "Some Sunni writers accuse those who defend the Shī'ah school of thought and say that they (Shī'ah) have a different Qur'ān named the Mushaf of Fātimah; because the book of Fātimah is called a Mushaf, and during the emerge of Islam some Muslims would also call the Qur'ān the Mushaf."¹¹ In a hadīth by Imām as-Sādiq he insists: "By Allah, the Mushaf of Fātimah is with us and not one verse of the Qur'ān is mentioned in it."¹²

The sign of an Imām

In a long hadīth Imām Ridā (as) mentions the signs of an Imām and says: "One of the signs of an Imām is that he possesses the Mushaf of Fātimah."¹³ Also Imām as-Sādiq (as) says: "Before being martyred, Imām al-Bāqir (as) gave me

the Mushaf of Fātimah."¹⁴ This Mushaf has been with the Imāms since it was collected and has been passed on from one Imām to the next and it is currently in the hands of Imām Mahdī (aj).

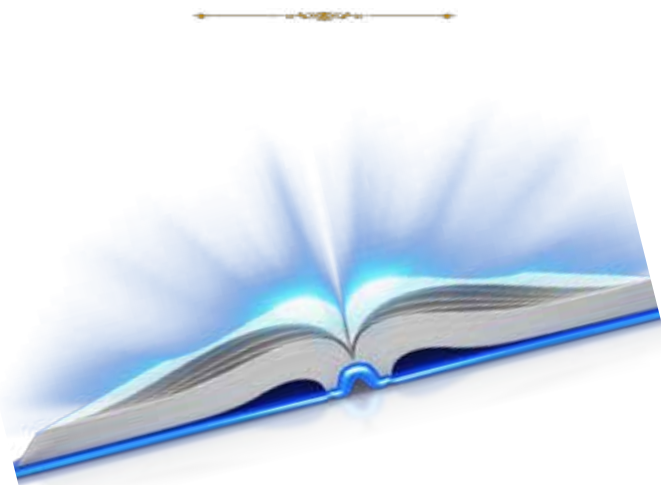
The Prophet's knowledge of the Mushaf

Because according to most ahādīth, this book was written after the time of the prophet, he has not mentioned anything regarding it, but this does not mean he was not aware of it. We believe that he was able to see the future by Allah's will. Even now, according to Qur'ānic verses, he is watching and witnessing our deeds and what takes place. This book is exclusively for the Imāms.

Moreover, the Mushaf of Fātimah is not part of the Qur'ān; therefore the prophet does not bear the responsibility of informing the Ummah of its content.¹⁵ At the same time there are several issues that the prophet did not explain that his household was responsible of explaining instead. Therefore not informing others of an issue does not always mean not being aware of it.

Footnotes

- ¹ Al-Kāfi, v.1, p.239
- ² Lisān al-Arab, vol. 9, pg. 186.
- ³ Ibn Babwayh Qummi, Al-Imamah wal-Tabsirah, pg. 12
- ⁴ Al-Kāfi, vol. 1, pg. 241
- ⁵ Āle Imran 42
- ⁶ Al-Ihtijāj, vol. 2, pg. 134
- ⁷ Ibid, vol. 1, pg. 241
- ⁸ Ibid, vol. 2, pg. 134
- ⁹ Al-Kāfi vol.1, pg. 241
- ¹⁰ Mughniyah, Muhammad Jawad, Al-Shī'ah fi'l-Mizān, pg. 61
- ¹¹ Ma'alim al-Madrasatayn, vol. 2, pg. 32
- ¹² Al-Kāfi, vol. 1, pg. 238
- ¹³ Man Lā Yahduruhu al-Faqīh, vol. 4, pg. 419
- ¹⁴ Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 26, pg. 47.
- ¹⁵ As it is mentioned in the hadith of Thagalain:





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SAYYIDA FATIMA - A SOCIAL ACTIVIST IN LIFE AND DEATH

BASHIR A DATOO, PH.D., ORLANDO FLORIDA

As the only daughter of the last of the prophets, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and the first wife of the first of the imams, Imam Ali (a), Sayyida Fatima (sa) was at the nexus of the two institutions of Islamic leadership, namely, *Nubuwwah* and *Imamah*. She played a crucial role under both those institutions. Under *Nubuwwah*, she complemented a key function of the Prophet -- to live Islam. Under *Imamah*, she had to defend the wilayah of the progeny of the Prophet -- to fight for the right of Imam Ali (a) as the legitimate successor of the Prophet. Thus her role underwent a radical shift from one to the other institution, from being a devoted partner to being a social activist in the cause of Islam.

This article is about Sayyida Fatima's second role under *Imamah*. A social activist is a principled person who is passionate about a socio-economic cause that affects not just themselves but also the welfare of the society as a whole. Furthermore, they take concrete action in support of their cause. Sayyida Fatima was forced into this role when, following the demise of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), a cabal of his companions met in haste in Saqifa, an assembly hall in Medina, to select one of their own as a khalifa, styled as the "successor" of the Prophet. This was done both in contravention of the Prophet's unambiguous and repeated words and actions in regard to his anointed successor, Imam Ali (a), and in the latter's absence along with his close associates at Saqifa as they were at the time busy with the funeral rites of the Prophet.

Activism in Life

Two related events will be described in which Sayyida Fatima (sa) participated soon after the selection of the new khalifa. The "new leaders" (as the cabal will be referred to hereafter) sought to seal the khalifa's appointment, so they quickly acted to cajole the residents of Medina into swearing an oath of allegiance to him. Many Medinites did so but the new leaders knew that the khalifa's position would not be legitimized unless Imam Ali (a) publicly endorsed him. The Imam and his family had retired to their home after the burial ceremony, so the new leaders appeared at their door demanding that the Imam should come out to pledge his allegiance. When they were rebuffed, they struck down the door and, in the process, knocked unconscious Sayyida Fatima (sa) and caused the death of her unborn child. Imam

Ali (a) was then dragged to the Prophet's mosque and, when Sayyida Fatima (sa) regained consciousness, she rushed to the mosque. The situation was extremely delicate. If the Imam had refused to swear allegiance, he would have probably been killed. Sayyida Fatima (sa) intervened and tearfully threatened to remove her veil. Such an unusual protest unnerved the khalifa and he backed down from his demand with the face-saving formula that he would not force the Imam to submit while Sayyida Fatima was still alive.

Having averted an immediate crisis, Imam Ali (a) and Sayyida Fatima (sa) decided to go from house to house at night to meet with the prominent Medinites. The couple reminded them of the public pronouncements of the Prophet, including the most recent installation of Imam Ali (a) as his successor at Ghadir-e-Khum on his return from the farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. The Medinites claimed that they would have supported the Imam had he approached them first but now they had already made their pledge to the new khalifa. Imam Ali (a) realized that he would not have the unanimous support of the community in claiming the succession through evidence and reason, so he decided he would not fight for it by force of arms. He feared that he would divide the ummah while Islam was still in its infancy and had to sink its roots more deeply within the community and more widely across the region. Furthermore, Imam Ali (a) did not, in modern parlance, wish to "burn his bridge," not because he entertained the wish of becoming a khalifa at a later time, but because he wanted the new leaders to call upon him for advice and counsel whenever they were stumped, so Islam's message could be secured and Muslim unity preserved. Sayyida Fatima (sa), however, was free from such constraints and so could continue with her social activism.

Activism in Death

Two additional associated actions of Sayyida Fatima (sa) will be discussed that demonstrate how she persisted with her protest even in death. When the Prophet was on his deathbed, he confided in Sayyida Fatima (sa) that she would be the first from his Ahl al-Bayt to follow him soon after his demise. Sayyida Fatima (sa) thus knew that she did not have much time left. She next resorted to an extraordinary form of protest designed to eternalize its impact. In her testament, one of the instructions she gave Imam Ali (a) was that the new leaders who had usurped his right to the khilafat should



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Imam Hassan (a) said, 'on a Friday night I saw my mother (Fatima (sa)) standing in her arch of prayer. She was continuously kneeling and performing prostration till the dawn broke. I would hear her pray for the faithful men and women, but she did not at all pray for herself. I said, 'Oh mother why did you not pray for yourself like you prayed for others?' She replied, 'Oh my son, first thy neighbor and thereafter your own house.'

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not be allowed to participate in her funeral rites. Hence she asked to be buried in the dead of night, so that they do not learn of her death and burial until the next day.

One other instruction in her testament was that her grave should be flattened so that her burial site remains a secret, hidden from the new leaders (mystery still surrounds the place of her burial; three possible places are mentioned, though Jannat al-Baqee is thought to be the most likely). At first sight, these instructions are highly unusual for any Muslim to give, let alone for the daughter of the Prophet. Muslims are obligated to perform ghusl and conduct the burial of a dead believer and none is absolved from these obligations until some members of the community come

up petitions (to leaders and relevant organizations), though sit-ins and demonstrations in public places, to hunger strikes and self-immolation. These protests are championed by individuals or by organizations. The success of the protests depends upon a number of factors, among them, the public's embrace of the cause, and the effective implementation of and the period over which they are sustained. Depending upon the degree of success of the protest movements in bringing about the desired change, the leaders may be honored at the time or posthumously and/or remembered on the anniversary of a memorable event associated with the protest.

None of the forms used by modern-day social activists

“Fatima is from me and I am from her, whoever hurts Fatima hurts me and whoever hurts me hurts Allah, and whoever hurts her after my death it is as if he has hurt her during my life, and whoever hurts her during my life it is as if he hurt her after my death.”
Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

forward to fulfil them. However, she knew that the Medinites would wonder aloud why the daughter of their Prophet had been buried secretly which is exactly what Sayyida Fatima (sa) wanted; the inquiry would awaken their consciences and lead to the realization of the injustices that had been done to her. Her protest, in fact, constituted a classic instance of the practice of *tabarra*, that is, avowed disassociation with the wrongful actions of the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt.

Conclusion

Modern-day social activists use a spectrum of forms to protest in support of their chosen cause. They range from letter-writing campaigns (to leaders and the press) and sign-

were available to Sayyida Fatima (sa) in the early part of the seventh century. She had to contrive unique – nay, unorthodox – means to register her stark disapproval of the events that transpired after the Prophet's demise. The two distinguishing features of her protests were that each was a one- or two-person protest and a one-time protest. Despite these limiting features, her protests were remarkably effective. When she was taken seriously ill, the new leaders sought to visit her to ward off her wrath. She refused them permission but when they pleaded with Imam Ali, she granted them audience but informed them of her determination to complain about their oppression in the presence of Allah (swt) and His Prophet. Following her burial, the new leaders threatened to exhume fresh graves to ascertain the site of her entombment presumably with a view to seeking her forgiveness for the grievous pain that they had caused her. Imam Ali (a) warned them that he would draw his sword to keep them from following through with their act of desecration, so they desisted. Such was the impact of her protests that Sayyida Fatima (sa) forced the new leaders to come to fear, albeit belatedly, the dire warning of the Prophet: *“Fatima is from me and I am from her, whoever hurts Fatima hurts me and whoever hurts me hurts Allah, and whoever hurts her after my death it is as if he has hurt her during my life, and whoever hurts her during my life it is as if he hurt her after my death.”*



SŪRAH AL-KAWTHAR (ABUNDANCE)

By: Maulana Rizwan Rizvi

The Sūrah that informs the Prophet that God has gifted him with Abundance goodness in this life and far greater resplendence in the Hereafter—for which he is instructed to ever show gratitude and charitable generosity. It takes its name from “the abundance” (al-Kawthar) mentioned in verse 1. The Sūrah comes to reassure the Prophet and as a retort to his enemy.

(Muhammad), (1) *We have granted you abundant virtue.* (2) *So worship your Lord and make sacrificial offerings.* (3) *Whoever hates you will himself remain childless.*

Context of Revelation

This chapter was revealed in Makkah when Prophet had lost both of his sons in their infancy, Qāsim and Abdullah. ‘Āas ibn Walid said, Muhammad’s progeny is cut off after the death of his two sons and therefore, his message and legacy will not survive. This chapter was revealed to console the heart of Prophet that we made a promise to you “...that We will give you something shortly which will satisfy you” and so We give you Kawthar. Your progeny will continue it is your enemy whose tail is cut off and will not have any offspring. This sūrah gives consolation to the Prophet during his early persecution.

Meaning of Kawthar

According to some traditions Kawthar is a name of a pond in Paradise, which will serve only to the believers. Hadith of Thaḳalayn also refers towards a pond, saying: Qur’ān and my household won’t separate until they reach me at the pond.

Kawthar means good in abundance which encompasses many other things:

1. Knowledge: Prophet was sent to ask for knowledge
2. Moral/ethics: Prophet possessed the highest level of ethics
3. Worship: prophet used to worship so much that a verse was revealed by Allah about it. Allah said:
4. Pond/River in Paradise
5. Progeny: Prophet’s progeny is all over the world.

Out of all the possible meanings of Kawthar; offspring and progeny is the closest, since the context of the last verse talks about “*Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off*” indeed your enemy is without a progeny.

Importance of Kawthar:

1. Kawthar is the biggest favor of Allah, in the smallest chapter of Qur’ān
2. Exceptional favor, in an exceptional chapter with exceptional words. Kawthar is a favor one of its kind, in a chapter one of its kind. Although it is the smallest and has least amount of words in it, but Allah didn’t repeat them again in any other place in Qur’ān. - *a’taina, kauthar, wanhar, shani’aka, and abtar* The five words in this chapter were only used once in all of Qur’ān
3. Reason for not repeating could be that He doesn’t want to remind the Prophet of His favors. According to some traditions meaning of *nahr*—while saying takbīratul Iḥrām—is raising both hands to the level of throat around sternal notch, because it is considered to be the adornment of salāt.

Virtues of reciting Sūrah al-Kawthar

Whoever recites this sūrah Allah will quench his thirst from the rivers of Paradise, and will give him the reward of all the sacrifices made by the servants on the day of E’id al-Adhā. [Mustadrak vol.4 pg. 369]

KID'S CORNER - SAYYIDA FATIMA (SA)

BY MUSTAFA KARIM, NEW JERSEY

Bibi Fatima (sa) was born on Friday, 20th Jamadi us Thania. Bibi Khadija (sa), her mother, had said that *"Fatima was born in a halo of radiance and light"* It is narrated that Allah sent Mother Hawaa (Eve); Bibi Aasiya, daughter of Muzahim, Bibi Kulsoom the sister of Hazrat Musa (Moses), and Bibi Maryam the daughter of Imran, and the mother of Jesus to deliver your baby.

The Holy Prophet named her Fatima. Imam Reza (a) has said, "She was given the name Fatima because she and her followers are protected from Hell."

The religion of Islam was still in its infancy and the enemies of Islam made it difficult for the Prophet and his followers. One day Bibi Fatima saw her father come home with his clothes all dusty and his feet bleeding. She found out that someone had thrown rubbish on him and put thorns in his way. She washed his feet and cleaned his clothes. It is because of this that he would call her *Ummu Abiha*, the mother of her father.

Bibi Khadija was very wealthy and she put all her wealth at the disposition of the Prophet in the spreading of Islam. It is narrated in Sahih Muslim: The messenger of Allah said: "God Almighty never granted me anyone better in this life than her. She accepted me when people rejected me; she believed in me when people doubted me; she shared her wealth with me when people deprived me. She is also regarded by Muslims as the *"Mother of the Believers"* (Muslims).

Another person who provided a lot of support to the Prophet was the Prophet's uncle, Hazrat Abu Talib (a), the father of Imam Ali (a). Hazrat Abu Talib was the leader of Banu Hashim a clan of the Quraysh tribe of Mecca. As leader of the Banu Hashim, Abu Talib acted as a protector to Muhammad

Bibi Khadija passed away on the 10th of Ramadan, about 40 days after the passing away of Hazrat Abu Talib (a). The Prophet calls the year *Aamul Huzn* (the Year of Sorrow). Bibi Khadija is buried in Jannatul Moalla in Makkah.

After the death of Hazrat Abu Talib, the enemies of the Prophet were ready to kill him. They had surrounded his house. The Prophet asked Imam Ali (a) to sleep in his bed. When Imam Ali (a) realized that by doing so, it would save the Prophet's life, he (Imam Ali (a)) agreed. The migration, or journey of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Yathrib, later renamed by him to Medina, in the year 622 AD is referred to as Hijrat. Bibi Fatima (sa) also travelled to Yathrib to join Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) and they entered Yathrib (Medina) where they were welcomed by

the people of Yathrib.

When Bibi Fatima (sa) came of age, many people came forward to ask the Holy Prophet (pbuh) for her hand in marriage. When Imam Ali (a) went to the Holy Prophet (pbuh), he smiled then came to find out from his daughter if she was willing. She bowed her head in modesty but her face showed her happiness. The Prophet (pbuh) stood up saying *"Allah o Akbar"*.

On Friday, the first day of Dhul Hijjah, in 2 AH., the wedding of Bibi Fatima (sa) and Imam Ali (a) was celebrated. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) read the *nikah* and prayed for their happiness.

Bibi Fatima (sa), the perfect daughter of the best of the Prophets now began her role as the perfect wife of the best of the Imams.

They lived a simple life, helping each other in the worship of Allah. They both happily shared their food and belongings with anyone who asked for help. No beggar returned empty handed from their door.

Allah blessed Bibi Fatima (sa) and Imam Ali (a) with four children. Imam Hasan (a) was born on 15th Ramadan, 3 AH. Imam Hussain (a) was born on the 3rd of Sha'ban, 4 AH. Her daughter Hazrat Zainab (sa) was born in 5 AH., and the second daughter Umme Kulsoom came a year later.

The *Tasbeeh* (Allah o Akbar - 34 times, Alhamdulillah - 33 times, and Subhanallah - 33 times) that we read after our sala'at every day should remind us of Bibi Fatima Zahraa (sa).

Her father, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught her the *tasbeeh* as something that is better than a servant and a world with everything in it. She followed it so regularly that it has come to be known as **Tasbeeh e Fatima**.

The Holy Prophet (sa) used to say *"Whoever makes Fatima happy, makes me happy; whoever makes her sad, makes me sad."*

*Salaams on you, o Daughter of the Messenger of Allah
Salaams on you, o daughter of the best of Allah's creation
Salaams on you, o leader of women of the world
Salaams on you, o wife of the friend of Allah
Salaams on you, the mother of Hasan and Hussain, masters of the youth of Paradise
Salaams on you, o pious and pure and may the blessings of Allah be upon you.*

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When the verse "Do not call the Prophet like the way you call one another" (24:63) was revealed, even Fâtima, like everyone else, started to address him as "O the Messenger of Allah" instead of saying "O Father!" After hearing Fâtima calling him in this very formal manner, the Prophet said, "O Fâtima, this verse does not apply to you or your children... You should still call me 'O Father' because it brightens my heart and pleases Allah."

DR NUZHAT QARNI AND SOHAIL QARNI

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FATIMAH, THE PERFECT ROLE MODEL

TRANSLATED WITH ADDITIONS BY SALEEM BHIMJI

Amongst the fourteen infallibles, it was necessary for one of them to be a woman and if all of them were men, then all of the advice, recommendations and teachings which we see directed towards the women of the community – things such as how to take care of ones' spouse, how to maintain the home, how to take care of the children, the style and function of the hijab, how to modestly maneuver within society, patience and submission to God in the face of challenges and the hundreds of other teachings would have been mere words which were spoken and simple theological discussion to be studied.

Therefore, the presence of Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), as one of the fourteen infallibles, and her being a role-model for women cemented the guidance and teachings which Islam brought and showed us that they are possible to implement in our daily lives.

It is not only Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), who showed this reality to the women, but also people like her beloved daughter, Zaynab who also becomes the ideal role model and is a grand historical figure for women to follow. Rather, even those who were not from their family – women like Fizzah (the freed-slave of Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), and the daughter of Fizzah, were able to reach such a stage that they become role models and are known as the “walking Qur’ān”!

When we say that Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), is a role model – we do not mean that this is only limited to a few areas of her life– however as this discussion is endless and we can never stop discussing the greatness of his personality, below, we present just some of the examples of how Sayyida Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), is the greatest role model.

1. In the Qur’ān, we read the commandment on being good to one’s parents. Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), was so loyal and devoted to her father, the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, that he said the following about her: “[You are] the mother of your father”. One meaning of this is that the love which she had for her father was much greater than just the average love which a daughter would have for a father.
2. In the Qur’ān, we read the commandment on being generous and munificent. On the night of her wedding, when Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa) was making her way to her husband’s home, was wearing a new wedding dress. Historical accounts narrate that a poor woman approached her (or came to the door of the house she was in and asked for clothing to cover herself with). Rather than giving her the old dress which she had, she actually gave away her brand new wedding dress and wore her old clothes on her wedding night!
3. In the Qur’ān, we read passages in regards to migration in the way of Allah , and as we know,

Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), made the migration from Mecca to Medina along with the early group of Muslims.

4. In the Qur’ān we read numerous verses about patience, sincerity, complete submission to God, consciousness of God and modesty and indeed, Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa) has reached to the pinnacles of perfection in all of these areas.
5. In the Qur’ān, we are advised to gain knowledge and to acquire the tools necessary to be granted wisdom (*Hikmah*) and indeed in this regards Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), shone bright as she has a book known as the *Mushaf of Fātimah* which the infallible Imams would sometimes refer to when they wanted to acquire information on events which would take place in the future.
6. In the Qur’ān we are spoken to in regards to working, striving and struggling and when we glance at the life of Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), we see that on many occasions her hands were calloused and bleeding from the amount of work which she used to perform.
7. In the Qur’ān, there are verses in regards to showing justice in all aspects of life and when we study how Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa) dealt with her house maid, Fizzah, and how she divided the daily tasks of the house, we see how she enacted justice in her life.



“O Fatimah! Glad tidings be upon you, for the almighty Allah (SWT) has selected you above the women of the worlds and the women of Islam, which is the best religion.”

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Dr Fatema Haider, DMD

8. In the Qur’ān, we see verses in regards to the authority and governance of God and those whom He has put into positions of power and leadership and that it is only they who have a right to govern society , and Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), whether it be in her famous Fadak sermon which she delivered in the Masjid of the Prophet, or in the other ways in which she fought for her own rights and that of her husband, we see that in all of these instances, she stood up to the government of the time and openly and flatly rejected their right to rule and supported her husband, the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abi Tālib which ultimately resulted in her own martyrdom for the cause.
9. In the Qur’ān, we are addressed in regards to having faith in the next world and that we should yearn for the next life , and indeed Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), heard from her father that she would be the first person from his nation to leave this world and join him in the next life.

By studying and understanding these few examples from the life of this illustrious woman, we can fully appreciate that Fātimah az-Zahrā (sa), is the practical and real-world example of the verses of the Noble Qur’a’n.

Verify the Muslim men and the Muslim women and the believing men and the believing women and obedient men and the obedient women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the alms-giving men and the alms-giving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their private parts and the women who guard (their private parts), and the men who remember God much and the women who remember God (much) for them hath been prepared forgiveness and a great recompense.

Qur’an Al-Azhab: 35

SURATUL KAWTHAR, ABUNDANT GOOD

ADAPTED FROM FATIMA ZAHRA' IN THE NOBLE QUR'AN
BY AYATULLAH AL-'UZMA AL-HAJJ ASH-SHAYKH NASIR MAKARIM SHIRAZI

The virtue of studying this chapter

In regards to the virtue of the recitation of this chapter, a tradition from the Noble Prophet says:

"Man Qara'ahā Saqāhu-Allahu min 'anhār-il Jannāti wa At'a min-al 'ajri bi'adadi kulli qurbānin qarrabah-ul 'ibādi fī yawmi 'īdin wa yaqrabūna min 'ahl-il Kitābi wal Mushrikīn."

One who recites it (Suratul Kawthar), Allah will quench their thirst from the streams of heaven and will recompense them good rewards as many as the number of every sacrifice which the servants of Allah make on the day of the Feast of Sacrifice, together with those sacrifices which are of the People of the Book and the pagans.³

The name of this chapter, al-Kawthar, is taken from the first verse of the chapter.

Commentary of the Verses

In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful

"Surely We have given you (Muhammad) abundance of good (al-Kawthar). Therefore turn to your Lord in prayer and sacrifice. Indeed your enemy is the one who will be without offspring."

We have given you (Muhammad) much goodness!

In this chapter, similar to what is seen in Suratul Duha and Suratul Inshirah, the Noble Prophet is the focal point of the address, and one of the prime objectives in all three of these chapters is to grant consolation to the Prophet in relation to the continuous painful incidents and numerous taunts of his enemies and their harsh language (towards him).

We first read: Surely We have given you (Muhammad) an abundance of good (al-Kawthar).

The term (*'al-Kawthar'*) is the descriptive case derived from the (Arabic word) "*(Kathrat)*" which means "ample goodness or blessings" and those individuals who are extremely generous are also referred to as "*al-Kawthar*".

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What is the purpose of using the term "al-Kawthar"?

It is mentioned in the narrations that: When this chapter was revealed, the Noble Prophet ascended the pulpit (mimbar) and recited it. His companions asked him what it was that Allah had given him and he answered: "It is a stream in paradise, whiter than milk, more clear than a goblet (made of crystal), and on either side are domes decorated with pearls and rubies."⁴

In a tradition from Imam Jafar as-Sadiq he says: "Al-Kawthar is a stream in paradise which Allah has granted to His Prophet in exchange for his infant son ('Abdullah) who passed away

during the life of the Prophet."

Some scholars have stated that "al-Kawthar" is a 'Pool of Abundance' which belongs to the Prophet from where the believers will quench their thirst when they arrive in paradise.⁵

Other opinions of 'al-Kawthar' include the following:

Some have commented on it as being 'prophecy';

Others mention that it is the Qur'an;

Another opinion is that it refers to an abundance of companions and followers of the Prophet ;

Yet another interpretation is that it refers to the abundance

of descendants all of who will come from his daughter, Fatima Zahra', and will increase to such an extent that it will be impossible to count them.

They do not only exist today, but in fact will continue to remain until the hereafter as reminders of the Noble Prophet;

Some have also commented on this term referring to 'intercession' and have narrated a tradition from Imam Jafar as-Sadiq in this regards.⁶

Even the Sunni scholar, Fakhr ad-Din al-Razi has narrated fifteen different narrations on the meaning of 'al-Kawthar', however most of them are merely statements of the clear examples of this broad concept, because as was mentioned before, 'al-Kawthar' means 'goodness and blessings in abundance', and we know that Allah the Grand, granted the Noble Prophet so many blessings such that each of the ones mentioned above is but one clear example of them.

There are many other examples that may be cited as commentaries for the verse; however we will mention them here.

All of the Divine gifts granted to the Noble Prophet in every aspect - such as the victories in his expeditions against his enemies; the scholars of his community who in every era and age, guard the illuminated torch of Islam and the Qur'an and carry it throughout the world - all in all are contained in this 'abundance of goodness'.

It should not be forgotten that Allah revealed these verses to His Prophet's blessed heart at a time when the manifestations of this 'abundance of good' had not yet appeared.

It was a miraculous piece of news which he was informed about and was to transpire in the near and remote future to confirm the legitimacy of the Noble Prophet .

This great blessing and the 'abundance of good' should have a lofty level of thanks (to be given to Allah), although creatures can never entirely thank the Creator for His blessings because even the ability to be thankful is another blessing from Him which needs thanks. Therefore, Allah says, 'Thus, turn towards your Lord in prayer and (offer the) sacrifice.'

He is the One who grants these blessings, therefore prayer, worship and sacrifice - which is also a kind of worship in itself - has no meaning unless it is done solely for the sake of Allah, particularly in regard to the meaning of the term Lord (*Rabb*) which indicates the constancy of grace and providence.

Briefly it can be stated that: 'worship' - whether it be in the form of the salat (prayer) or making a sacrifice of an animal, is only the Lord's and Benefactor's privilege, and it is exclusively for the Pure Supreme Being - Allah - to be directed towards.

This portion of the verse refers to the behavior of the pagans who used to prostrate and sacrifice animals to the idols, while they knew their thanks for all of the blessings that they had been given truly belonged only to Allah, and the phrase 'your Lord' (*li rabbika*) used in this verse, is a clear evidence for the necessity of pure intentions in all acts of worship.

Many commentators believe that the meaning of salat in this verse is the salat on the Day of the Feast of Sacrifice (Eid al-Qurban), and making the sacrifice of an animal on that day. However, the meaning of the verse is apparently general in its scope and inclusive of many other types of prayers, even though salat and the sacrifice of the Day of the Feast of Sacrifice are clear examples of this term.

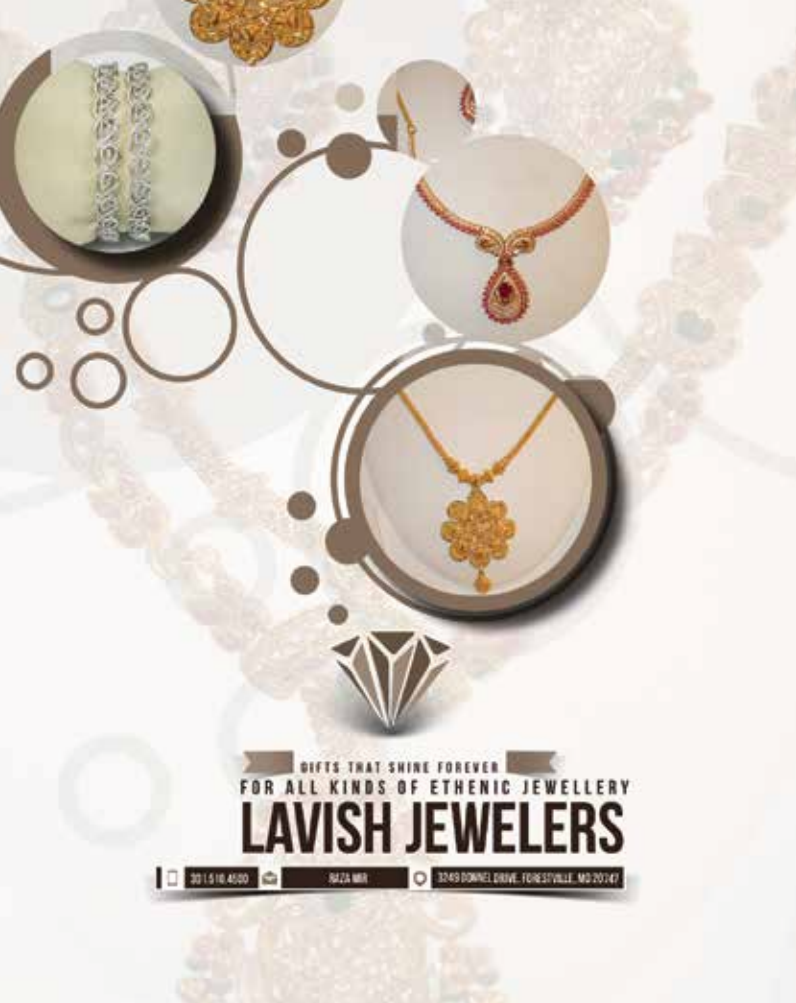
Perhaps the use of the term "*wanhar*" or 'offer sacrifice' which comes from the root '*nahr*' and is specific to the process of slaughtering a camel has been employed because among all of the animals which can be slaughtered (on the Day of the Feast of the Sacrifice and also in general), the camel is the best of them, and among the early community of Muslims, we know that they had a great fondness of slaughtering (and eating) the camel and that slaughtering a camel was not possible without a show of generosity (due to its great worth and value).

Here are two more commentaries which have been offered on the above verse:

1. The implied meaning of the phrase "*wanhar*" is to face the qiblah (the Ka'bah) when performing the salat. This interpretation is given because the word "*nahara*" originally meant the 'throat', and then later on it was used by the Arabs to mean the act of 'standing in front of anything'. It is for this reason that the Arabs say, "*Manāzilunā Tatanāhar*" meaning that "Our stations are opposite of one another."
2. Another meaning is the raising of the hands up to the face and neck when pronouncing the 'takbir' (to begin the salat).

In a tradition we read that when this chapter was revealed, the Noble Prophet asked Gabriel : "What is this "*Nuhayrah*" that my Lord has commissioned me to do? Gabriel said: "This is not "*Nuhayrah* "; rather Allah has commanded you to raise your hands at the beginning of prayer when you say "*Allahu 'Akbar*" and also every time when you are going to perform the ruku or sajdah and after that (particular act), because our prayer (salat) and that of the angels in the seven heavens is exactly like this. Everything has an adornment and the adornment of prayer is raising the hands at the time of saying "*Allahu 'Akbar*".⁷

In another tradition, this one from Imam Jafar as-Sadiq who on the commentary of this verse, indicated with his hands



The Tasbeeh of Fatimah Zahra (sa) is recommended to be read after every Sala'at. The Sala'at is like a beautiful flower and the Tasbeeh of Fatimah Zahra (sa) gives that beautiful flower a beautiful fragrance. So after every Sala'at we should say the Tasbeeh of Fatimah Zahra (pbuh) because we want our Salah to be like a beautiful flower with a beautiful fragrance.

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and said: "The meaning of this verse is that you raise your hands in such a way that your palms face towards the qiblah (the direction of the Kabah)." ⁸

However the first commentary given is the most appropriate in regards to what this verse means, since its meaning was to negate the actions of the idolaters who used to perform acts of worship such as the sacrifice of animals for other than Allah .

However with this said, there is also no problem in combining all of these meanings together and in particular, there are many narrations about raising the hands at the time of saying "Allahu 'Akbar" and there are traditions in the books of the Shia and the Ahlus Sunnah in this regards, and therefore this verse can have such a vast meaning that it covers all of them.

In the last verse of this short chapter, keeping in mind the taunts made by the chiefs of the pagans towards the Noble Prophet, we read, 'Surely your enemy is the one who will be without offspring.'

The term "shani" or 'enemy' is derived from the word "shan'an" which means 'enmity, spitefulness, and bad manners'; thus, the word "shani" is the one who possesses these characteristics.

It is worthy to note that the word "abtar" originally meant 'an animal whose tail is cut off' and the enemies of Islam taunted the Noble Prophet by using this word.

In reality, the usage of the term "shani" clearly shows that in their desire to express their enmity towards the , these people did not even display the smallest amount of ⁹ Prophet respect or dignity - meaning that their enmity was interwoven with hard-heartedness and the use of shameful words! In reality, the Qur'an retorted to such individuals and told them, "It is actually you who have this characteristic (of being cut off of your posterity) and not the Noble Prophet!"

In addition, just as has been mentioned in regards to the history of revelation of this chapter, the Quraysh were waiting for the death of the Prophet to transpire as they felt that with his departure from this world and since he had no son to inherit his position, the dissolution of the rule of Islam would happen.

But the Qur'an, consoling the Noble Prophet told him that it is not him who will be without offspring, but surely his enemy is the one who will not continue on!

Points of Interest

1. Lady Fatima and al-Kawthar

It was said earlier that 'al-Kawthar' has a vast, inclusive meaning which is 'goodness in abundance' and the examples



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are many.

A large number of scholars of the Shia school believe that one of the most clear examples of this word is the auspicious existence of Fatima Zahra, because the occasion of the revelation of the verse indicates that the enemies accused the Noble Prophet of being without offspring to which the

Qur'an replied: *'Surely (Muhammad) We have given you abundance of good (al-Kawthar).'*

From this verse we understand that this 'abundance of good' is that very Lady Fatima Zahra'.

In addition, not only is it the physical and biological offspring of the Prophet which will increase, rather it is these abundant number of offspring scattered which continue his religion and are responsible for the preservation of all of the values of Islam and continue to convey it to the future generations!

This is not only limited to the infallible Imams of the Ahlul Bayt who have a literal number that we can enumerate (12), rather it is the thousands and thousands of children of Fatima which have spread around the entire world from whom so many great scholars, scientists, writers, exegetists, jurists, narrators of the Prophet's sayings and leaders have come from - individuals who have left outstanding works and unmatched fame in this world, and have protected Islam with their selfless giving (of themselves and their efforts) and their hard work and devotions.

Here, we encounter a very interesting discussion from Fakh ad-Din al-Razi who along with other commentators on 'al-Kawthar', says: The third statement of the meaning of this chapter is that it was revealed to reject those who criticized the Noble Prophet for his lack of progeny.

Therefore the meaning of this chapter is that Allah will give him a generation which will remain throughout all of the ages.

Considering the fact that how many members of the Ahlul Bayt have been martyred, we still see that the world is replete with them, whereas the Umayyads (who were the enemies of Islam) there remains no mentionable figure in the world.

Then, behold and see how many of the great men of leadership such as al-Baqir, as-Sadiq, al-Ridha, and Nafs al-Zakiyyah⁹, etc... are found among them (the household)!¹⁰

2. The miracle of this chapter

In reality, this chapter contains three important miraculous predictions:

On one hand, it informs the Prophet of the glad tidings of the 'abundance of good', (although the verb "*A'taynā*" is in the past tense form), it may definitely be considered as

meaning the present and future which has been stated in the form of the past tense and this 'abundance of good' encompasses all victories and successes that were obtained later by the Noble Prophet however which were not predictable in Mecca at the time of the revelation of this chapter.

On the other hand, the chapter foretells that the Noble Prophet will not be without posterity, and his generations and descendants will exist abundantly all over the world.

The third thing which this chapter foretells is that the enemies of the Prophet will be '*abtar*' - without posterity. This too actually happened and those enemies were so rooted out that no trace of their generations can be seen today.

We see that today, tribes such as the Umayyads and Abbasids, who opposed the Prophet and his prophecy and who enjoyed such a population in the past, today their family and children cannot even be counted and they not even present anywhere!

3. Allah and the plural pronoun

It is noteworthy that here and in many other verses of the Noble Qur'an, Allah introduces Himself by the first person plural pronoun and says: *'We' have given you an abundance of good (al-Kawthar).'*

This wording and others like it are for the expression of Glory and Power, as when the noble talk about themselves, they announce not only themselves, but also their commissionaires, and this refers to their power and nobility, as well as to the presence of those in obedience, along with the commands.

In the verse under discussion the term "*Inna*" is also another emphasis on this meaning, and the phrase "*A'taynāka*" - 'We have given you', rather than "*A'taynāka*" is evidence to the fact that Allah has awarded the Noble Prophet "al-Kawthar" which itself is a great glad tidings to the Prophet in order to keep his heart aloof from annoyance resulting from the nonsensical remarks of the enemies; and consequently, languor does not affect his firm determination, and for him to know that Allah is his support and that He is the source of all welfare and grace in abundance

References

3. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 10, pg. 548
4. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 549
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 550
8. Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 548
9. Nafs al-Zakiyyah is another name for Muhammad b. Abdullah, the grandson of Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba who was martyred by Mansur al-Dawaniqi in 145 ah.
10. Tafsir of Fakh ad-Din al-Razi, vol. 32, p. 124

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