

Imamat and Khilafa

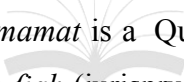
Syed-Mohsin Naquvi

12/31/12

Anyone who confesses to *tawheed*, *nubuwwa*, and the Day of Judgement, is a Muslim. All other stuff is sectarian. Whether or not you reject Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman or Ali does not negate anyone's faith.

Abu Bakr was never called an Imam, before or after the passing of the Prophet. He was declared the *khalifa* of the Prophet of Islam. He was the ruler of the community after the Prophet, that is what the word means.

Umar was the first, after having become the second *khalifa*, to have acquired the title of *Ameer-al-Momineen* ('Commander of the Faithful').

 *Imamat* is a Qur'anic concept which has been thoroughly rejected by the Sunni scholars. The Shia *fiqh* (jurisprudence) argues that *Imamat* is a concept next to *nubuwwa* (prophethood) in the elements of faith. They have accepted twelve *imams* after the Prophet of Islam beginning with Imam Ali.

The more moderate and conciliatory Sunnis accept the twelve Shia *imams* as pious spiritual figures. They are treated as saints. But the main thing in Sunni Islam is the *khilafat*, which consists of Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali in that order - with these being labeled as the rightly guided *khulafa'*.

There is no basis in the Qur'an for declaring anyone a *kafir* who rejects any of the *khulafa'*. Those fatwas in the *Fatawa-E-Alamgiri* are hateful, malicious and totally false.

Even though all the Umayyad *khulafa'*, starting with Muawiyah and up to Marwan and his progeny, who became the rulers one after the other, were all known as *khulafa'*, none of them are taken as rightly guided.

Abu Bakr never led any prayers in the Prophet's lifetime. This is a disputed report.

Ali never accepted anyone else as his Imam. He reconciled with Abu Bakr's appointment as a *khalifa*, only in the interest of peace and tranquility in the *ummah*- and mostly due to the fact that he saw that there was no public support for him. Ali would insist on correcting wrong decisions taken by all three *khulafa'*, including Abu Bakr. If he had accepted Abu Bakr as his *imam*, he would not dare to contradict him in any matter whatsoever.

The report of collection of the Qur'an done by Zayd ibn Thabit during Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman times is a blatant fabrication. This was a very well thought out conspiracy by later historians to impart all credit to the first three *khulafa'* and leave Ali out of that process. They had to find a person who would be present in Abu Bakr's time and would continue to live until Usman's time. Thus they honed in on Zayd ibn Thabit. The Qur'an was collected by no less a person than the Prophet of Islam himself. This has been decisively proven by Burton in his brilliant study titled: *The Collection Of The Qu'ran*. Every time a verse or group of verses would be revealed, the Prophet would sit down at least two scribes and dictate to them those revelations and tell them where exactly (i.e. in which *sura*) to place it. He will then ask them to re-read it to confirm its accuracy. The Prophet had named each and every *sura* as we know it, he had organized every *sura* as we know them. Additionally, the Prophet had trained hundreds of his Companions to memorize the Qur'an. They came to be known as the *qurra*. Therefore, those who insist on the Bukhari report on the collection of the Qur'an do not realize what they are saying.

The Prophet was sent to this world to guide the humanity in a new law and build a community based on justice. Allah had revealed the Qur'an to him for that purpose. Great Sunni scholars insist that the Prophet was not able to collect the Qur'an in one volume in his lifetime and he failed to nominate a successor after him. That would mean the Prophet failed on both

counts: (1) He could not complete the Book of Laws, and (2) He was unable to give the community a line of direction for it to continue after him. Had these people ever read the Qur'an where it says: **طَيِّبُهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ** (“O Messenger! Convey everything revealed to you from your Lord”)? If we believe what they say then we will have to accept that the Prophet did not fulfill that Divine command. On the same lines, Bukhari has also preserved such nonsensical reports that certain verses of the Qur'an were lost forever because the paper on which those verses were written was gobbled up by a goat.



Mohsena Memorial Foundation
Connecting Communities Through Education