

# “Loving us Ahl al Bayt removes sins”

This document is a partial translation of Sheikh Abdullah al Sitri’s answer to a questioner who wanted an explanation for a Hadith.

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**Question:** Can you please explain the following Hadith:

It is narrated from the Prophet (sawa):

“Loving us Ahl al Bayt removes bad deeds and multiples good deeds, and Allah (swt) bears the oppression towards servants that is caused by our lovers, except the oppression that they were persistent in, or the oppression that was towards other believers. Allah (swt) says to the bad deeds: Become good deeds.”<sup>1</sup>

**Answer:** Answering this question requires clarification, and I shall clarify. There is no doubt that the Wilayah of the Prophet (sawa) and Ahl al Bayt (as) is an obligation from Allah (swt) towards his servants, and by Wilayah we mean to follow them in their footsteps<sup>2</sup> and act as per their commands (taking them as Imams), and that Wilayah is a condition for accepting deeds<sup>3</sup>, such that no deed is accepted except if the condition of Wilayah is achieved, and that Wilayah leads to forgiveness of bad deeds, and there are narrations that mention that Allah (swt) forgives the sins of the Shi’a of Ahl al Bayt (as) such as the one narrated by Sheikh al-Mufid in al Ikhtisas<sup>4</sup> with a connected chain to Al Asbagh b. Nabatah:

‘I went to Amir Al-Momineen asws in order to greet him, so I sat down awaiting him He came out to me, so I stood up to him and greeted him. He struck upon my palm, then intertwined his fingers in my fingers, then said: ‘O Asbagh Bin Nubata!’ I said, ‘At your service and assistance, O Amir Al-Momineen!’ He asws said: ‘Our friend is a friend of Allah azwj. So, when a friend of Allah dies, he would be for Allah azwj to (Keep him) the lofty friends, and He azwj would Quench him from a river colder than the ice, and sweeter than the honey, and softer than the butter’. I said, ‘May my father and my mother (be sacrificed for you)! And even if he was a sinner?’ He asws said: ‘Yes, and even if he was a sinner. Have you not read the Quran: so those ones, Allah would Replace their evil deeds with good deeds, and Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful [25:70]? O Asbagh! Our friend, even if he were to meet Allah azwj and upon him were sins like the foam of the sea, and like the number of grains of sand, Allah azwj will Forgive these for him, if Allah azwj the Exalted so Desires’<sup>5</sup>

And the principle of permissibility to forgive the sins of a Mu’min without repentance (that our mutkalimeen companions mention) with both its Aqli and Naqli proofs strengthen these

<sup>1</sup> [http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/188\\_الكتب/1334\\_الأمالى-الشيخ-الطوسى/الصفحة](http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/188_الكتب/1334_الأمالى-الشيخ-الطوسى/الصفحة)

<sup>2</sup> {Say, ‘O Prophet,’ ‘If you ‘sincerely’ love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} 3:31. <https://thaqalayn.net/chapter/8/1/4>

<sup>3</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/203/15>, <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/1/4/86/2>, <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/8/1/399/399>

<sup>4</sup> It is controversial whether Al Ikhtisas is authored by Sheikh al-Mufid or not, and some scholars do not agree it is proven that it is authored by Sheikh al Mufid such as Sayyid al-Khoei ([http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/374\\_الكتب/3002\\_معجم-جال-الحديث-السيد-الخوئي-ج-1-الصفحة](http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/374_الكتب/3002_معجم-جال-الحديث-السيد-الخوئي-ج-1-الصفحة)) Sayyid Shuberi Zanjani (<http://lib.eshia.ir/27369/1/448>) and others.

<sup>5</sup> [https://hubeali.com/books/English-Books/BiharAlAnwaar/BiharAlAnwaar\\_V34.pdf](https://hubeali.com/books/English-Books/BiharAlAnwaar/BiharAlAnwaar_V34.pdf) pg 192

narrations. And the principle of 'Adl does not contradict it except from one perspective which we will talk about soon If God wills.

So the ruling regarding these narrations is that they are authentic and reliable, but on the other hand, there are many other narrations that contradict these narrations, make exceptions to the general statement and describe to us what is the characteristics of a Wali of Ahl al Bayt (as), and these narrations are of two kinds:

**First kind:** Narrations that categorise sins into three different categories:

“A number of our people have narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid from his father from Harun ibn al-Jahm from al-Mufaddal ibn Salih from Sa'd ibn Tarif from abu Ja'far (a.s.) who has said the following: “There are three kinds of injustice: the injustice that Allah forgives, the injustice He does not forgive and the injustices that He does not leave without His judgment. The injustice that He does not forgive is to consider things to be His partners. The one that He forgives is the injustice of people against their own souls in the matters between them and Allah. The one that He does not leave without His judgment is the injustice that one person commits against the other in their dealings.”<sup>6</sup>

And involved in it is also the narration that the questioner wanted an explanation for, as it states that all bad deeds will turn into good deeds except those who were persistent in their oppression or those who oppressed other believers, such that every person who was wronged will have it accounted for in his judgement, as Allah's (swt) Judgement is Just and Fair as is apparent in multiple verses and narrations.<sup>7</sup>

And the principle of the obligation of reprisal (the oppressed giving back to the oppressor) that is clarified in Kalam books strengthen these narrations, for it matches what we believe in, that it is obligatory as per Allah's (swt) Divine Justice that the oppressor must give back what he owes to the oppressor.

**Second kind:** Narrations that state that the Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as) is not fulfilled except through obedience and piety, and that the one who is obedient is the one who is Muwali, and the one who is disobedient to Allah (swt) is not considered a Muwali:

“Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn abu Nasr from Muhammad brother of 'Amr from Muhammad ibn Muslim from abu Ja'far (a.s.) who has said the following: “Do not allow (false) religions to confuse you. Of our Shi'a and true followers are only those who obey Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Holy.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/136/1>

<sup>7</sup> {Be mindful of the Day when you will 'all' be returned to Allah, then every soul will be paid in full for what it has done, and none will be wronged.} 2:281. <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/195/1>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/36/1>

“6. Hamid ibn Ziyad has narrated from al-Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Sama’a from certain individuals of his people from Aban from ‘Amr ibn Khalid from abu Ja’far (a.s.) who has said the following: “Abu Ja’far (a.s.) has said, ‘O the community of Shi’a, Shi’a of Muhammad (a.s.) be the central support so that both al- Ghali and al-Tali refer to you.’ A man from Ansar (people of Madina) called Sa’d, said, ‘May Allah keep my soul in service for your cause, what is the meaning of al-Ghali? The Imam said, ‘They are the people who say about us what we do not say about ourselves. Thus, they are not of our people and we are not of their people.’ The man then asked, ‘Who are al-Tali? The Imam said, ‘They are those who search for good. They receive good instructions (from our Shi’a) and are rewarded for it.’ The Imam then turned to us and said, ‘I swear by Allah that we do not possess any amnesty from Allah and there is no family relation between Allah and us nor do we possess any authority over Allah. We do not seek nearness to Allah through any other means but obedience to Him. Whoever of you is obedient to Allah (our guardianship, Wilayah ) will benefit him, and whoever of you is disobedient to Allah our guardianship, Wilayah, will not benefit him. What is the matter with you? Do not be misled! What is the matter with you? Do not be misled!’”<sup>9</sup>

“3. Abu Ali al-Ash’ari has narrated from Muhammad ibn Salim and Ahmad ibn abu ‘Abd Allah from his father all from Ahmad ibn al-Nadr from ‘Amr ibn Shamir from Jabir from abu Ja’far (a.s.) who has said the following: “O Jabir, do people think just claiming to be our Shi’a and saying they love us ( Ahl al-Bayt) is enough for their salvation? I swear by Allah, of our Shi’a are only those who are pious before Allah and obey Him. No one, O Jabir, would know them except by their humbleness, submissiveness, trustworthiness, their speaking frequently of Allah, fasting, prayer, virtuous deeds toward parents, good relations with neighbors, the needy, the destitute, the heavily indebted, the orphans, by their truthfulness, recitation of the Holy Quran, and restraining of their tongues except for the good of the people and their being trusted among the people of their tribe in all things. I (Jabir) then said, ‘O descendent of the Messenger of Allah, today we do not find anyone with such qualities.’ The Imam said, ‘O Jabir, do not allow (false) religions confuse you. One should not think, since he loves Ali (a.s.) and supports him, thereafter he does not have to be active in anything. If one says he loves the Messenger of Allah who is better than Ali (a.s.) but does not follow his way of life or practice his tradition, his love as such is of no benefit for him. You must be pious before Allah and work to achieve things that exist with Allah. There is no family relation between one and Allah. The most beloved one to Allah, the Most Majestic, the Most Holy, is the most noble before Him, the most pious ones before Him and the most obedient ones to Him. O Jabir, I swear by Allah, nothing helps one to become nearer to Allah, the Most Blessed, the Most High, except obedience to Him. There is no immunity from hell and no one possesses any authority over Allah. Only those who obey Allah, they are our supporters. Whoever is disobedient to Allah, is our enemy. Our guardianship applies only to those who do good deeds and maintain restraint over their desires for worldly things.’”<sup>10</sup>

And other such similar narrations. And these narrations match the verse:

{Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “If you ‘sincerely’ love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”}

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<sup>9</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/36/6>

<sup>10</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/36/3>

That Wilayah is following in their footsteps (their words and actions) and as for the disobedient, then he is not following in their footsteps and such is not considered a Muwali.

We notice a contradiction in these narrations (the first and second kind), as one states that the sins of the Muwalieen of Ahl al Bayt (as) are forgiven, while the latter states that a disobedient person is not a muwali of Ahl al Bayt (as), so why would a Muwali who is not a sinner, need forgiveness for his sins?

There are several ways to combine the understanding of all these narrations together:

**First:** That what is meant by the sinner is the sinner who commits these sins while belittling these sins and not caring about their consequences and depending on Wilayah to cover every sin he commits. These people are not truthful in their Wilayah to Ahl al Bayt (as) and do not deserve the mercy of forgiving sins that Allah (swt) has promised the true Muwali of Ahl al Bayt (as).

We have several narrations that show us the consequences of belittling sins or belittling Allah's (swt) obligations in general:

“Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from ibn abu ‘Umayr from ‘Abd al- Rahman ibn al-Hajjaj from ‘Ubayd ibn Zurara who has said the following: “Once I asked abu ‘Abd Allah (a.s.) about the major sins. The Imam said, “They according to the book of Ali (a.s.) are seven: Disbelief in Allah, Murdering a soul. Disregard of good relations with parents. Consuming unlawful interest from trade with evidence, Consuming the properties of orphans unjustly. Running away from the enemy in battlefield during an offensive and Alienation from religion after accepting it.’ I (the narrator) then asked, ‘Are these the biggest sins?’ The Imam said, ‘Yes, they are.’ I then asked, ‘Is consuming one dirham from the property of an orphan unjustly a bigger sin or disregarding the prayer?’ The Imam said, ‘Disregard of the prayer is a bigger sin.’ “I then said, ‘You did not mention disregard of prayer among the major sins.’ The Imam said, ‘What was the first item that I mentioned to you?’ I said, ‘It was disbelief in Allah.’ The Imam said, **‘One who disregards prayer is an unbeliever (that is, he is considered as such for ignoring prayer without reason<sup>11</sup>)’**”

“Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father and Muhammad ibn Isma’il from Fadl ibn Shadhan all from ibn abu ‘Umayr from Ibrahim ibn ‘Abd al-Hamid from abu ‘Usamah Zayd al-Shahham from abu ‘Abd Allah (a.s.) who has said the following: “Guard against al-Muhaqqarat (sins); they will not be forgiven.’ I then asked the Imam, ‘What is al-Muhaqqarat?’ The Imam said, ‘A man commits a sin and says, “I will have Tuba (a tree in paradise) if I did not have any other sins.<sup>12</sup>”’

And other similar narrations<sup>13</sup>. As seen that one who is persistent in sins is not considered as a true Muwali such as that his sins will be forgiven, and that is evident from the narration in question itself, and from Qur’anic verses such as:

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<sup>11</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/36/6>

<sup>12</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/113/1>

<sup>13</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/3/5/2/14> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/4/3/31/1>

{‘They are’ those who, upon committing an evil deed or wronging themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness and **do not knowingly persist in sin**—and who forgives sins except Allah?}’<sup>14</sup>

As for those who sin due to their desire overcoming them, but feel afraid of the consequence of the sin, feeling pitiful, praying that Allah (swt) forgives him, then those people do not leave the mercy of the Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as), and they still deserve the forgiveness of their sins.

**Second Face:** That Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as) does not necessitate forgiveness such that it would be unfair that Allah (swt) punishes the Muwalieen of Ahl al Bayt (as), rather, the Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as) allows the possibility of Allah (swt) showing special mercy to the true Muwali, which is to forgive his sins. So whoever believes that due to his belief in Wilayah all his sins will necessarily be forgiven, then this person is not a true Muwali and is considered out of the scope of their Wilayah, and the wording from an above quoted hadith presents a similar meaning:

**“and whoever of you is disobedient to Allah our guardianship, Wilayah, will not benefit him. What is the matter with you? Do not be misled! What is the matter with you? Do not be misled!”**

As for those who believe that Wilayah allows them to earn the possibility of Allah (swt) forgiving their sins, then those are still within the scope of Wilayah and they deserve the forgiveness, for they have not been misled with the false hope of the necessitation of forgiveness of sins.

**Third face:** That the Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as) in of itself without acting accordingly is not enough to drop punishment and earn rewards, just like how Belief without acting according to that belief is not enough<sup>15</sup>, such that whoever believes in the Wilayah of Ahl al Bayt (as) but does not act according to the rulings of Allah (swt) then he does not deserve the benefits of the Wilayah.

And we can combine all three faces together to obtain a comprehensive understanding, which is that Allah (swt) forgives the sins of the true Muwalieen of Ahl al Bayt (as) who act accordingly to the rulings of Allah (swt) and Ahl al Bayt (as), and do not believe in the necessity of their sins being forgiven no matter what, but of the permissibility of their sins being forgiven due to the merit of Wilayah, and only the sins which they were not persistent in and did not belittle, and He bears their oppression to non-believers (except those they were persistent in) by rewarding the oppressed non-believers such that they do not ask for reprisal from the Muwaliween anymore, and He deletes their sins and in exchange writes good deeds for them.

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<sup>14</sup> Aal-Imraan 135

<sup>15</sup> <https://thaqalayn.net/hadith/2/1/14/2>