

Abdullah Ibn Saba Part 2

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

After an overview in the previous part, I will Ensha Allah analyze the fictitious story of Abdullah Ibn Saba reported by Sayf, in comparison with the other Sunni reports. First I give a brief tour of the allegations of Sayf Ibn Omar attributed to Abdullah Ibn Saba:

Sayf alleged that a Yemenite Jew, called Abdullah Ibn Saba (also known as Ibn Amutus-Sawda'; son of a black slave), declared his Islam at the time of "Othman ". He willfully associated himself with Muslims and traveled in their cities and towns, from Damascus to Kufa to Egypt, propagating among Muslims that Muhammad (S) will be resurrected like Jesus.

He also said 'Ali is Prophet's executor and was deprived of his divine office by Othman. He provoked Abu Dharr and Ammar Ibn Yasir to agitate against Othman and Muawiyah. He provoked Muslims to kill Othman since he had usurped the seat of 'Ali. Sayf also alleged that Ibn Saba was the key element in the tragedy of the battle of Camel. Let us now discuss each of the above allegations one by one:

The Return of Prophet Muhammad (S)

Saif alleged Abdullah Ibn Saba was the one who invented the idea that Prophet Muhammad (S) would return before the Day of Judgment. Sayf wrote that Ibn Saba said: If Jesus is going to come back, Muhammad will also return because he is more important than Jesus.

Attributing the idea of al-Raj'a/al-Karra (Bodily resurrection of some dead and returning to this world before the Day of Judgment) to Abdullah Ibn Saba was another trick of Sayf Ibn Omar to confuse people's mind with regard to true Islamic beliefs. Had Sayf studied Qur'an carefully he would have seen that many verses Qur'an confirms the miracle of al-Raj'a has happened in the past for some specific nations and individuals and will also happen in the future for some people.

Although the Shi'a sources may not be considered as proof to the Sunnis in general, yet in many of our Hadiths, the Ahlul-Bayt (as) proved the issue of al-Raj'a by Qur'an. Their logical conclusions from the Qur'anic verses are quite interesting and can be presented as proof for all Muslims since we all believe in the same Qur'an. As such, I am quoting some of the traditions of Ahlul-Bayt (as) below by classifying them into three categories:

- I) Those which point to Qur'anic verses about return in the past.
- II) Those which point to Qur'anic verses about return in the future.
- III) Those which point to Qur'anic verses about returning the Messenger of Allah (S) and other Prophets.

1) Qur'an Speaks: Return in the Past

al-Asbagh Ibn Nabata narrated that Abdullah Ibn Abi Bakr al-Yashkari (also known as Ibn al-Kawwaa who was one of al-Khawarij) asked the Leader of Faithful (as) about the possibility of returning to this world after death. Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (as) replied:

... Don't you know that Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, said in His Book, "And Moses chose out of his people seventy men for Our appointment (Qur'an 7:155),

"... and when they said to Moses (as): "we will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly (2:55),

"and Allah said "so the thunderbolt overtook you while you were watching. Then We raised you up after your death that you may be grateful. (Qur'an 2:55-56)

"Don't you see O' Ibn al-Kawwaa that they indeed returned to their homes after they died? Isn't it that (after the above verse) Allah informed in his book "And We made the clouds to give shade over you and We sent to you manna and quails (Qur'an 2:57)"

Thus this was after they died and when Allah raised them again.

And similar to that, O' Ibn al-Kawwaa, for some people from the Children of Israel about whom Allah said:

"Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die, and then He again gave them life (Qur'an 2:243)"

And also saying of Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, about Uzair where (Allah) said:

"Or the like of him (Uzair) who passed by a town, and it had fallen down upon its roofs; he said: How shall Allah give it life after its death? So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him to life. He said: How long have you tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or a part of a day. Said He: Nay! You have tarried a hundred years (Qur'an 2:259)"

So do not cast doubt, O' Ibn al-Kawwaa, on the power of Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty. (al-Bihar, v53, p72, Hadith #72)

There are other verses of Qur'an about return in the past, including but not limited to: 2:260, 3:49, 8:26, 16:38-41, 18:18-19, 18:42, which I skip for the sake of brevity.

2) Qur'an Speaks: Return in the Future

The numerous verses of Qur'an indeed have pointers to a period in the future of the world that some top believers and top disbelievers of each era will return to this world. This phenomenon is called in the language of Qur'an and Hadith is called al-Raj'a/al-Karra. This happens at the time of the rising of Imam al-Mahdi (as) who he will get revenge from all tyrants throughout the history and will implement the government of Justice, and when the righteous will rule over the entire universe (not just this Earth). Let us study some of the verses of Qur'an in this regard through the words of Ahlul-Bayt (as). Abu Basir narrated:

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (as) about the verse: "And on the day when We will gather from every nation a group (27:83)" He (as) said: "What do people say about it?" I said: "They say it is in the Day of Judgment." Thereupon Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "Do you think Allah will gather from every nation only a group, and leave the rest? Verily this verse is about al-Raj'a.

On the other hand, the verse related to the Day of Judgment is:

'and We shall gather them together and shall not leave out anyone. (Qur'an 18:47)''

(Tafsir 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim, as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, p51, Hadith #27)

Also, on the commentary of the verses: "And on the day when We will gather from every nation a group from among those who rejected Our Signs, then they shall be set in arrays. Until when they come, He will say: Did you reject my signs while you could not encompass them in knowledge? Or what was it that you did? (27:83-84)" Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "The Signs are the Leader of Faithful and the Imams (after him)... and this is about al-Raj'a"

(Tafsir 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim, as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, p53, Hadith #30)

Muhammad Ibn Muslim as well as Abu Basir narrated:

On the commentary of verse:

"And (We) have made binding on the society which We destroyed that they shall not return. (Qur'an 21:95)"

Imam al-Baqir (as) and Imam al-Sadiq (as) both said: "Every society that Allah has destroyed by punishment do not return in al-Raj'a. Thus this verse is one of the greatest signs for al-Raj'a since no one among the People of Islam denies that all people return in the Day of Judgment whether they are destroyed by punishment or not.

Therefore His saying 'they shall not return' points to al-Raj'a (returning to the world). This is while they shall return to the Day of Judgment in order to enter the Fire." (Tafsir 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim, as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, p52, Hadith #29)

Also on the commentary of verse "O Lord! Thou caused us die twice, and Thou hast given (back) to us life twice, so we do confess our faults; is there then a way to get out? (40:11)" it is narrated from Imam al-Baqir (as) who said:

"This is exclusive to those (Kuffar) who return to this world after death, and this is their (statement) in the Day of Judgment (after the second rising). So, far removed (from mercy) the wrongdoing folk." (al-Bihar, v53, p116, Hadith #139. Similar narratives are given from Imam al-Sadiq (as) and Imam al-Ridha (as). See al-Bihar, v53, p56, Hadith #36 and also p144)

According to the above verse, in the Day of Judgment the Kuffar who had died twice would be asking a third chance in order to repent for their sins. Note especially in the above verse that death has been mentioned before life. So this giving life means rising after death.

There are two deaths for those people and after each death they will be brought back to life. In other words, after they die in this world, they will return to this world (al-Raj'a) and then will die again, and thereafter they will be resurrected in the Day of Judgment.

Also on the commentary of the verse

"And most certainly We shall make them taste of the nearer punishment before the greater punishment (Qur'an 32:21),"

Mufadhhdhal Ibn Umar narrated:

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "The 'nearer punishment' is the punishment of al-Raj'a (i.e., when they return to this world). And the 'greater punishment' is the punishment of the Day of Judgment about which (Allah said)

‘On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well), and they shall come forth before Allah, the One, the Supreme (Qur’an 14:48).’“(al-Bihar, v53, p24)

Moreover, on the commentary of the verse:

"And surely for those who are unjust there shall be a punishment before that, but most of them do not know. (Qur'an 52:47)"

It is narrated that:

Imam al-Baqir said: "And surely for those who are unjust with regard to the right of family of Muhammad (S) there shall be a punishment before that (i.e., before the Day of Judgment) though most people do not know, and this refers to the punishment in al-Raj'a."(al-Bihar, v53, p117, Hadith #144)

Further, on the commentary of the verses: "Nay! You shall soon know. Thereafter nay! You shall soon know. (102:3-4)"Abdullah Ibn Najih narrated that:

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "The first instance refers to al-Karra (return to this world) and the second instance refers to the Day of Judgment."(al-Bihar, v53, p120, Hadith #156)

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah al-Husayn narrated:

My father asked Imam al-Sadiq (as): "What do you say about al- Karra (return)?"He (as) said: "I say what Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, said and sent its interpretation to the Messenger of Allah... Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, said: ‘They say: That is then a return with loss (79:12).’ This when they will return to this world (and will be punished) while the revenge from them would not expire (i.e., it is a return with loss since their punishment in this world will not suffice their punishment in the hereafter)."(al-Bihar, v53, p46, Hadith #17)

Zurara narrated:

I asked Imam al-Baqir (as) if death and being slain are the same. The Imam replied: "Allah has differentiated between dying and getting killed in Qur'an. Then He (as) recited

‘Then if he dies or is slain (Qur’an 3:144)’

and

‘And if indeed you die or you are slain, certainly to Allah shall you be gathered together (Qur’an 3:158)

‘... and also ‘Surely Allah has bought from the believers their persons and their property for that they shall have the garden; they fight in Allah’s way, so they slay and are slain, a promise on this which is the truth (Qur’an 9:111)’

and also

‘Every soul will taste the death (Qur’an 21:35).’

Don’t you see that the one who is killed (by weapon) does not taste the death? He who is killed by sword is not like the one dies in bed. Thus (concluding the above verses) whoever (among believers) is killed should return to this world till he die (natural death)”(al-Bihar, v53, p65, Hadith #58)

The above-mentioned verse (9:111) (that is ‘Surely Allah has bought from the believers their persons and their property for that they shall have the garden; they fight in Allah’s way, so they slay and are slain, a promise on this which is the truth’) proves that all true believers will be killed and this is Allah’s promise. Allah states they kill and will be killed. Those among true believers who die natural death will rise again and join the army of Imam al-Mahdi (as) and will be killed during in the holy war.

On the other hand, those among believers who were killed will rise and live in the government of justice till they die natural death. This fact has been mentioned in many other Hadiths including the following:

Abdurrahman Ibn Qasir narrated that Imam al-Baqir (as) recited the verse: "Surely Allah has bought from the believers their persons... (9:111)"and then said: "Do you know what it means?"

He (as) then continued: "Anyone among the believers who was killed will be resurrected till he dies, and anyone among them who was died will be resurrected till he is killed. And this is the power of Allah, so do not deny it.”(al-Bihar, v53, p74, Hadith #73; also in Rijal al-Najashi) In another Hadith, Imam al- Baqir (as) said: "For every believer there is a death and martyrdom.”(al-Bihar, v53, p64, Hadith #55)

Also about the verse: "And on the day when We will gather from every nation a group”Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "There shall not remain any killed believer but he shall return till he dies. And no one return

but absolute believers and absolute disbelievers (i.e., only believers and disbelievers of highest degree)"(al-Bihar, v53, p53, Hadith #30)

Himran Ibn A'ayun narrated:

I asked Abu Ja'far (as): "Is there anything in what happened to the Children of Israel that would not happen to our nation?"He (as) said: "No."Then I asked: "So tell me about the saying of Allah (on the Children of Israel):

'Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die, and then He again gave them life (Qur'an 2:243)'

Were they brought to this world again after they died?"The Imam (as) said: "In fact, (Allah) returned them to this world till they stayed another period and eat food and married women and remained here to the extent Allah wished, and then they died (again) on their appointed time."(Muntakhab al-Basa'ir, as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, p74, Hadith #74)

Al-Hasan Ibn Jahm narrated:

Al-Ma'mun asked Imam al-Ridha (as): "O' Abul Hasan! What do you say about al-Raj'a?"The Imam (as) replied: "It is truth. Verily it had been in the ancient nations and Qur'an has spoken about it, and verily the Messenger of Allah (S) said: 'There shall be for this nation all what had been for the previous nations like the similarity of two pair of shoes.'"(Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha (as), as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, and p59, Hadith #45)

Rafa'a Ibn Musa narrated:

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "The first (groups) who shall return to this world is al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali (as) and his companions and Yazid Ibn Mu'awiya (LA) and his companions, and they will fight and kill them one by one (in the same order). Then Imam al-Sadiq (as) recited the verse: "Then We returned for you in a new turn to prevail against them, and aided you with wealth and children and made you the most numerous. (17:6)"(al-Rijal al-Najashi, as quoted in al-Bihar, v53, p76, Hadith #78)

In this connection, al-Mu'alli Ibn Khunais narrated:

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "The first one who shall return to this world (at the time of al-Mahdi (as)) is al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali (as) who rules until his eyebrow falls over his eyes due to his old age."(al-Bihar,

v53, p46, Hadith #19 quoted from Muntakhab al- Basa'ir; Similar traditions can be found in Tafsir 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim al-Qummi, Rijal al-Kashshi, and Tafsir al-Nu'mani)

3) Qur'an Speaks: Return of the Prophet (S)

In the previous part we provided many verses of Qur'an concerning the fact that most perfect believers will return to this world at the end of the world. This naturally follows that the Prophets, peace be upon them, should be among them. In this part, we specifically focus on the verses that point to return of all Prophets as well as those related to the return of Prophet (S) Muhammad and his Ahlul-Bayt (as).

Jamil Ibn Darraj narrated:

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (as) about the verse: "Most surely We help Our apostles, and those who believe, in the life of this world and on the day when the witnesses shall stand (40:51)"The Imam (as) said: "By Allah, this happens in al-Raj'a. Don't you know that many of Allah's Prophets were not helped in this world and were killed, and the Imams (i.e., the believers mentioned in the verse) after them were also killed and were not helped? Thus this (help) will happen in al-Raj'a."I also asked about the verses:

"And listen on the day when the caller shall call from a near place. The day when they shall truly hear the cry; that is the day of rising (Qur'an 50:41-42)."

The Imam (as) replied: "This is al- Raj'a."(al-Bihar, v53, p65, Hadith #57)

Asim Ibn Hamid narrated from Imam al-Baqir (as) who said:

The Leader of Faithful ('Ali), peace be upon him said: "Verily Allah, the most High, the One, was alone in His oneness, then He spoke one word, thereupon it became light and then He created from that light Muhammad (S) and created me and my progeny,

... and while there was no sun, no moon, no night, and no day we were glorifying Him and were praising Him, and this was before He create the creatures and take covenant from the Prophets for faith and aiding us.

And this is the saying of Allah: 'And when Allah took a covenant from the prophets: Certainly for what I have given you of Book and wisdom when an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, that you must believe in him, and you must aid him. (3:81)'"Then the Imam (as) continued:

"This means you (i.e., Prophets) must believe in Muhammad (S) and you must aid his executor. And they all will soon aid his (executor). Allah took the oath for me along with Muhammad (S) for aiding one another. Most certainly, I aided Muhammad (S) and made Jihad along with him and killed his enemies and fulfilled Allah's promise while no one among the Prophets and Messengers aided me.

But they will soon aid me and I hold whatever between the East and the West. And verily Allah shall raise alive from Adam (as) to Muhammad (S) all the sent Prophets, and they fight along with me and along with all (other) notable dead and alive (believers).

How amazing and how astonishing shall be the dead whom Allah shall raise alive group by group while they shall be uttering 'Labbaik Labbaik O the Caller of Allah' holding their weapons over their shoulders by which they shall hit notable disbelievers and the tyrants and their followers from among the oppressors of the first to the last generations till Allah fulfill what he has promised them in

His saying: 'Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers before them, and that He will most certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will most certainly, after their fear, give them security in exchange; they worship Me, not associate anything with Me (24:55).' This means they worship Me in security without fearing from any one and without any dissimulation." (al-Bihar, v53, p46, Hadith #20)

On the commentary of verse: "He is the One Who sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth in order to prevail over all religions, even though the polytheists may be averse. (9:33)," al-

Mufadhdhal Ibn Umar narrated:

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (as): "Didn't the Messenger of Allah (S) prevail over all religions?" He (as) replied: "O

Mufadhdhal! If the Messenger of Allah (S) had prevailed over all religions, there wouldn't have been any Magi, Jew, or Christian, or any sect, disagreement, and doubt, or any polytheism and idol. Verily, His saying 'in order to prevail over all religions' is in the time of al-Mahdi during the al-Raj'a, and this is His saying: 'And fight them until there is no more trouble and till religion is only for Allah (8:39).' " (al-Bihar, v53, p33)

Salih Ibn Maitham narrated:

On the commentary of "And We have not sent you but to ALL mankind as a bearer of good news and as a warner, but most men do not know. (34:28)" Imam al-Baqir (AS) said: "There shall not

remain any place on the Earth but in it (people) give testimony to 'there is no god but Allah and Muhammad (S) is the Messenger of Allah'"and he (as) pointed by his hand to the horizons. (al-Bihar, v53, p113, Hadith #138-15)

Abu Khalid al-Kabuli (ra) narrated:

On the verse "Certainly the one who sent the Qur'an to you, shall return you to the returning (place) (28:85),"Imam 'Ali Ibn al- Husayn (as) said: "Your Prophet (S) shall return to you."(al-Bihar, v53, p56, Hadith #33, also p46, Hadith #19)

Abu Marwan narrated:

I asked Imam al-Sadiq (as) about the verse "Certainly the one who sent the Qur'an to you, shall return you to the returning (place) (28:85)."The Imam (as) replied: "No by Allah! The world does not end till the Messenger of Allah (S) and 'Ali (as) come together in al-Thawiyya and meet each other and build a Mosque with 12000 entrance in al-Thawiyya, a place in al-Kufa."(al- Bihar, v53, p113, Hadith #138-17)

The Sunnis And The Idea Of Al-Raj'a

Qur'an aside, we have no Hadith from the Sunnis to support the idea of al-Raj'a, except probably for the case of return of Prophet Jesus (as). To disclaim the idea that the Imams of Ahlul-Bayt will finally have rule on the Earth without any rival, and to make contrast between the beliefs, the Sunni traditionists and commentators have suppressed any Hadith that could imply the issue of al-Raj'a. Wherever they found any narrator who has narrated a tradition implying al-Raj'a, they have accused him of being Shi'a and extremist. They also interpreted the verses of al-Raj'a/al-Karra in Qur'an to the Day of Judgment, though we have already seen from the words of Ahlul-Bayt (as) (who are the most and only qualified individuals to interpret Qur'an) that this would require believing in contradiction and non-sense.

The Sunnis discredit the notion of al-Raj'a as being a kind of transmigration of the soul. They have not, or choose not to differentiated between transmigration and bodily resurrection. The meaning of transmigration is that the soul moves into another body, and this is not the same as bodily resurrection.

The meaning of the latter is that the soul returns to the same body with all its individual characteristics; and al-Raj'a is the same as this. If al- Raj'a were a kind of transmigration, the restoring to life by Jesus (as) must also be transmigration, and the Resurrection in the Day of Judgment would be like that as well, which we know it is not true.

The same evidence that proves the possibility of resurrection will also prove the possibility of al-Raj'a. There is no reason for amazement, except in that it is unusual for us and we are not accustomed to such things in the life of this world. But we know of no cause or impossibility that would bring us near to refutation of al-Raj'a, except that human imagination does not find it easy to accept what is extraordinary. So there is no more reason to refute it than there is to refute resurrection. Allah states in Qur'an:

He said: Who will revive these bones when they have rotted away. Say: He will revive them Who brought them into existence in the first place, and He is Cognizant of all Creation. (36:78-79)

who belittle the idea of Raj'a of the Prophet (S), and mock the followers of Ahlul-Bayt (as) for their belief, should also know that their master Umar was one of those who claim a similar idea according to the historical evidences. Muslim historians agree that:

Umar stood at the Mosque of the Prophet when the Prophet passed away, and said: "There are hypocrites who allege that the Messenger of God has died. Certainly the Messenger of God did not die, but he went to his Lord, as Moses, son of Imran, went to his Lord (for receiving the heavenly commandments). By God, Muhammad will return as Moses returned, and he shall cut off the hands and legs of those who alleged that the Messenger of Allah has died."

Sunni Reference: al-Sira al-Nabawiyya, by Ibn Hisham, v2, p655

Although Umar's motives in this regard was different and his opinion was not completely identical to the notion of al-Raj'a, yet we can not say that Umar took this idea from Abdullah Ibn Saba. Ibn Saba did not exist at that time, not even in the imagination of Saif Ibn Umar al-Tamimi who invented this character. Saif wrote that Ibn Saba came to Medina and became Muslim during the reign of Uthman, which is far after the death of Prophet (S).

The Doctrine Of 'Ali's Executorship

Sayf further alleged that Ibn Saba is the one who propagated the idea that 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib is the executor and the successor of the Messenger of God. He said that there were a thousand prophets before Muhammad, each of which had an executor after him, and that 'Ali is the executor of the Prophet. Furthermore, Sayf alleged that Ibn Saba said that the three caliphs who ruled after the Prophet were usurpers of the Islamic rule. Sayf and his disciples forgot that they mentioned in their fiction that Abdullah Ibn Saba came to Medina and adopted Islam during the reign of Uthman. This is long after the death of the Messenger of Allah. On the other hand, Sunni history testifies that the Messenger of God himself is the one who declared that 'Ali would be his executor right at the "beginning of his mission". Here is the tradition concerning the first open preach the prophet (S):

'Ali (as) narrated: When the verse: "And warn your closest tribe" was revealed, the Messenger of God called me and said: "Ali, certainly Allah commanded me to warn my closest tribe, and I feel the difficulty of this mission. I know that when I confront them with this warning, I will not like their response." Then Prophet invited the members of his clan to dine with him on a small amount of food and little milk. There were forty of them. After they ate, the Prophet spoke to them:

"O Children of Abdul Muttalib, by God, I do not know of any young man from the Arabs who brought to his people better than I brought to you. I have brought to you the goodness of this world and the Hereafter. The Almighty commanded me to invite you to it. Who among you will assist me on this mission and become my brother, my executor, and my successor?"

No one accepted the invitation, and I said: "O Messenger of God, I shall be your assistant." He held my neck and said to them: "This is my brother, my executor (Wasi), my successor (Caliph) among you. So listen to him and obey him." They laughed, saying to Abu Talib: He (Muhammad) commanded you to listen to your son and to obey him.

إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي وَوَصِيِّي وَخَلِيفَتِي فَيَكُم فَاسْمَعُوا لَهُ وَأَطِيعُوهُ

Sunni References:

- (1) History of Tabari, English version, v6, pp 88-92 (two traditions)
- (2) History of Ibn Athir, v2, p62
- (3) History of Ibn Asakir, v1, p85
- (4) Durr al-Manthur, by al-Suyuti, v5, p97
- (5) al-Sirah al-Halabiyah, v1, p311
- (6) Shawahid al-Tanzil, by al-Hasakani, v1, p371
- (7) Kanz al-Ummal, by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, v15, p15, pp 100-117
- (8) Tafsir al-Khazin, by Ala-ud-Din al-Shafi'i, v3, p371
- (9) Dala'il al-Nabawiyah, by al-Baihaqi, v1, pp 428-430
- (10) al-Mukhtasar, by Abul Fida, v1, pp 116-117
- (11) Life of Muhammad, by Hasan Haykal, p104 (First Edition only. In the second edition the last sentence of Prophet (S) has been removed.)
- (12) Tahdhib al-Athar, v4, pp 62-63.

The above tradition was also reported by important Sunni figures such as Muhammad Ibn Is'haq (who is the most celebrated Sunni historian), Ibn Abi Hatem, and Ibn Mardawayh. It is also recorded by orientalists such as T. Carlyle, E. Gibbon, J. Davenport, and W. Irving.

Here we would like ask the following question: Imam 'Ali reported that the Messenger of God is the one who granted him the office of executorship, brotherhood, and successorship. Sayf Ibn Umar reported that the idea of the executorship of 'Ali had came from a Jew called Abdullah Ibn Saba. We should ask the members of the Takfeer University (who call everyone who disagree with them unbeliever) the following question: Do you believe in Imam 'Ali's report or Sayf Ibn Umar's? Sayf was accused by prominent Sunni scholars of weakness, forgery, and heresy.

Of course, we should not expect any true Muslim to choose the report of a liar such as Sayf Ibn Umar and to reject the report of the Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the Leader of the Faithful, the "brother" of the Prophet (S).

The Messenger of God used to say to 'Ali:

"Your position to me is like the position of Aaron to Moses, except that there shall be no Prophet after me"

أَنْتَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هَارُونَ مِنْ مُوسَى إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي

Sunni References:

- (1) Sahih al-Bukhari, Arabic-English version, Traditions 5.56 and 5.700
- (2) Sahih Muslim, Arabic, v4, pp 1870-71
- (3) Sunan Ibn Majah, p12
- (4) Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, p174
- (5) al-Khas'is, by al-Nisa'i, pp 15-16
- (6) Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v2, p309

The Prophet (S) thereby meant that as Moses had left behind Aaron to look after his people as his Caliph when he went to receive the Commandments, in the same way he was leaving 'Ali behind as his deputy to look after the affairs of Islam after him. Allah said in Qur'an:

"... And Moses said unto his brother Aaron: Take my place among my community."(Qur'an 7:142).

وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ

اخْلُفْنِي

فِي قَوْمِي

Notice that "Ukhluḥni" and "Khalifa" (Caliph) are exactly from the same root.

Do the mercenary writers who endeavor to spread hostility among Muslims forget that while returning from his farewell pilgrimage, and in the presence of over a hundred thousand pilgrims in Ghadir Khum, the Messenger of God declared:

"Do I not have more right over the believers than what they have over themselves?" People cried and answered: "Yes, O' Messenger of God." Then Prophet (S) held up the hand of 'Ali and said:

"Whoever I am his leader, 'Ali is his leader. O' God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him."

Some of Sunni References:

(1) Sahih Tirmidhi, v2, p298, v5, p63

(2) Sunan Ibn Maja, v1, pp 12,43

(3) Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, pp 84,118,119,152,330, v4, pp 281,368,370, 372,378, v5, pp 35,347,358,361,366,419 (from 40 chains of narrators!!!)

(4) Fada'il al-Sahaba, by Ahmad Hanbal, v2, pp 563,572

(5) al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v2, p129, v3, pp 109-110,116,371

(6) Khasa'is, by al-Nisa'i, pp 4,21

(7) Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, p103 (from several transmitters)

(8) Tafsir al-Kabir, by Fakhr al-Razi, v12, pp 49-50

(9) al-Durr al-Manthur, by al-Hafiz Jalaluddin al-Suyuti, v3, p19

- (10) Tarikh al-Khulafa, by al-Suyuti, pp 169,173
- (11) al-Bidayah wal-Nihayah, by Ibn Kathir, v3, p213, v5, p208
- (12) Mushkil al-Athar, by al-Tahawi, v2, pp 307-308
- (13) Habib al-Siyar, by Mir Khand, v1, part 3, p144
- (14) Sawaiq al-Muhriqah, by Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, p26
- (15) al-Isabah, by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, v2, p509; v1, part1, p319, v2, part1, p57, v3, part1, p29, v4, part 1, pp 14,16,143
- (16) Tabarani, who narrated from companions such as Ibn Umar, Malik Ibn al-Hawirath, Habashi Ibn Junadah, Jari, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, Anas Ibn Malik, Ibn Abbas, Amarah, Buraydah,...
- (17) Tarikh, by al-Khatib Baghdadi, v8, p290
- (18) Hilyatul Awliya', by Abu Nu'aym, v4, p23, v5, pp26-27
- (19) al-Istiab, by Ibn Abd al-Barr, Chapter of word "ayn"('Ali), v2, p462
- (20) Kanzul Ummal, by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, v6, pp 154,397
- (21) al-Mirqat, v5, p568
- (22) al-Riyad al-Nadira, by al-Muhib al-Tabari, v2, p172
- (23) Dhaka'ir al-Uqba, by al-Muhib al-Tabari, p68
- (24) Fayd al-Qadir, by al-Manawi, v6, p217
- (25) Usdul Ghabah, by Ibn Athir, v4, p114
- (26) Yanabi' al-Mawaddah, by al-Qudoozi al-Hanafi, p297

... And hundreds more...

No Muslim would ever doubt that the Messenger of God is the leader of all Muslims for all generations. The Prophet in his statement granted 'Ali the same position as his, when he said that 'Ali is the leader of everyone who follows the Prophet.

This declaration which was narrated by more than one hundred and ten companions and rated authentic (Sahih) and frequent (Mutawatir) by the leading Sunni scholars, not only indicates that 'Ali is the executor of Messenger, but also indicates that 'Ali takes the place of the leadership of all Muslims after the Messenger of Allah.

However, these mercenaries still allow themselves to say that the belief that 'Ali was the executor of the Messenger had come from a Jew who declared his Islam during the days of Uthman!!!

Abdullah Ibn Saba has no base on the disputes immediately after the death of prophet related to his successorship, and all relevant claims of Shi'a is proven to be on the death of the prophet or even before that, not during the reign of Uthman which is far long after prophet's demise.

At the very start and immediately after the death of the prophet (S), the Shi'a of 'Ali included those companions who were loyal to Imam 'Ali, such as Ammar Ibn Yasir, Abu-Dhar al-Ghafari, Miqdad, Salman al-Farsi, Ibn Abbas ...etc., all gathered in the house of Fatimah (sa). Even Talha and Zubair were loyal to Imam 'Ali at the beginning and joined the others in the house of Fatimah.

al-Bukhari narrated:

Umar said: "And no doubt after the death of the Prophet we were informed that the Ansar disagreed with us and gathered in the shed of Bani Sa'da. "Ali and Zubair and whoever was with them, opposed us, while the emigrants gathered with Abu Bakr."

Sunni Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari, Arabic-English, v8, Tradition #817

Other Sunni traditionists narrated that on the day of Saqifah:

Umar said: "'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Zubair Ibn Awwam and those who were with them separated from us (and gathered) in the house of Fatimah, the daughter of the messenger of Allah."

Sunni References:

- Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, p55
- Sirah al-Nabawiyyah, by Ibn Hisham, v4, p309
- History of Tabari (Arabic), v1, p1822
- History of Tabari, English version, v9, p192

Also:

They demanded confirmation of the oath, but 'Ali and al-Zubair stayed away. al-Zubair drew his sword (from the scabbard), saying, "I will not put it back until the oath of allegiance is rendered to 'Ali." When this news reached Abu Bakr and Umar, the latter said, "Hit him with a stone and seize the sword." It is stated that Umar rushed (to the door of the House of Fatimah) and brought them forcibly while telling them that they must give their oath of allegiance willingly or unwillingly.

Sunni reference: History of al-Tabari, English version, v9, pp 188-189

Certainly that Jew did not have any role in the division of the companions into two factions right at the death of Prophet since he was non-existent at that time.

Attacking Two of Most Beloved Companions of the Prophet (S) and Their Disciples

Sayf alleged that Ibn Saba is the one who instigated the two prominent companions of the Prophet Muhammad, namely Abu Dharr (ra) and Ammar Ibn Yasir (ra), against Uthman. He said this Jew met Abu Dharr in Damascus, and that he introduced to him the idea of prohibiting treasuring gold and silver. Sayf included the following great companions of prophet and their disciples, among the list of the followers of Ibn Saba:

- (1) Abu Dharr (ra),
 - (2) Ammar Ibn Yasir (ra),
 - (3) Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr (ra), son of the first Caliph,
 - (4) Malik Ashtar (ra).
- ... and more

To better understand the heresy of Sayf and his allegation, let us quickly review the biography of the above great Muslim pioneers:

(1) Abu Dharr al-Ghafari (Jundub Ibn Jonadah): He is the THIRD person in the list of the four pioneers who first embraced Islam. He was a monotheist even before his conversion. He frankly declared his faith in Islam at Mecca beside the Holy House of God. The infidels of Mecca beat him almost to death but he survived, and on the instruction of the Prophet Muhammad (S) he returned to his tribe. After the Battles of Badr and Uhud he came to Medina and stayed with Prophet until the demise of the Prophet (S). During the reign of the early Caliphs, Abu Dharr was sent to Damascus where he could not agree with Muawiyah. Later Muawiyah complained about Abu Dharr to Uthman, the third Caliph, and thus Uthman sent Abu Dharr into exile at Rabadha where he later died. Rabadha was known for having the worst climate.

(2) Ammar Ibn Yasir: He was also known as Abuyaqzan. His mother's name was Somayyah. He and his parents were pioneers in embracing Islam, and he was the SEVENTH person to declare his faith. His parents were executed after the torture by the infidels of Mecca, because of their conversion to Islam, but Ammar managed to escape to Medina. Ammar fought on Imam 'Ali's side in the battle of Jamal (Camel) and later in the war of Siffin where he was killed in the battle field by Muawiyah soldiers, at the age of ninety-three.

(3) Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr: He was adopted by Imam 'Ali after his father, Abu Bakr, died. Muhammad was one of the commanders of the army of Imam 'Ali (as) in the battle of Camel. He was also in the battle of Siffin. Imam 'Ali appointed him as the governor of Egypt, and he took his office 15/9/37 AH. Later, Muawiyah sent an army under the leadership of Amr Ibn al-Aas to Egypt in the year 38 AH, who fought and captured Muhammad, and then killed him. His body was placed in a belly of a dead donkey and then was brutally burnt. (See al-Istiab, v1, p235; History of al-Tabari, v4, p79; Ibn Kathir, v3, p180; Ibn Khaldoon, v2, p182)

(4) Malik Ashtar al-Nakha'i: He met the Prophet and was one of the trustworthy disciple of companions (Tabe'in). He was chief of his tribe, and after receiving an injury to one of his eyes in the battle of Yarmuk, he became known as Ashtar. He was the general of the army of Imam 'Ali in the battle of Siffin and known for his bravery and combating the enemies of Islam. At the age of 38, he was appointed by Imam 'Ali as the governor of Egypt. But on his way to Egypt, near the Red Sea, he died after eating poisonous honey which had been planned by Muawiyah.

The above were the short bibliographies of some eminent Muslim pioneers. It is regrettable that some historians who reported from Sayf's heresy, allege that they followed a mysterious Jew. The mercenary workers did not even hesitate to attack such outstanding companions.

They said that Abu Dharr and Ammar Ibn Yasir met Ibn Saba, were affected by his propaganda, and thus turned against Uthman. However, we should not forget that by their attacking those two prominent companions, they are actually attacking the Messenger of God who attested to their purity and righteousness frequently:

The Messenger of God said: "Certainly Allah commanded me to love four persons and informed me that He loves them." The companions asked:

"O' Messenger of God, who are those four persons?" The Prophet (S) said: "'Ali is from them (repeating that three times), Abu Dharr, Salman al-Farsi, and Miqdad."

Sunni references:

- Sunan Ibn Majah, v1, pp 52-53, Tradition #149
- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p130
- Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v5, p356
- Fada'il al-Sahaba, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v2, p648, Tradition #1103
- Hilyatul Awliya', by Abu Nu'aym, v1, p172

The Messenger of Allah also said:

"Every prophet was given by God seven righteous companions. I was given fourteen righteous companions". He included in them 'Ali, al- Hasan, al-Husayn, Hamza, Ja'far, Ammar Ibn Yasir, Abu Dharr, Miqdad, and Salman

Sunni references:

- Fada'il al-Sahaba, by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v2, Traditions #109, #277
- Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v5, p329, p662
- Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, v1, pp88,148,149 from several chain of narrators
- al-Kabir, by al-Tabarani, v6, p264, p265
- Hilyatul Awliya', by Abu Nu'aym, v1, p128

Also al-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, al-Hakim and many others narrated that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Heaven has not shaded, nor has the earth carried a person more straight forward than Abu Dharr. He walks on earth with the immaterialistic attitude of Jesus, the son of Mary."

Sunni reference:

- Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v5, p334, Tradition #3889
- Tahdhib al-Athar, v4, pp 158-161
- Musnad Ahmad Hanbal, #6519, #6630, #7078
- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p342
- al-Tabaqat, by Ibn Sa'd, v4, part 1, pp 167-168
- Majma' al-Zawa'id, by al-Haythami, v9, pp 329-330

Ibn Majah, in his authentic Sunan, narrated that Imam 'Ali said:

I was sitting in the house of the Prophet and Ammar asked to see him.

Then Prophet said: "Welcome the good and the purified." Ibn Majah also narrated that Aisha narrated that the Messenger of God said

"Whenever Ammar is given two alternatives, he always chooses the most righteous of the two."

There are much more authentic narrations told by the Prophet (S) about Ammar, such as "Ammar is full of faith." Also Prophet said:

"A band of rebels will kill Ammar."

Sunni references:

- Sahih Muslim, English version, Chapter # MCCV, pp 1508-1509, Traditions #6966-6970 (five traditions).

- al-Mustadrak, by al-Hakim, v3, p383

Now to see who those rebels were, look at Musnad Ahmad and Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd who narrated:

"In the Battle of Siffin, when the head of Ammar Yasir (ra) was cut off and taken to Muawiyah, two people were arguing over it, each one claimed that he had killed Ammar."

Sunni references:

- Musnad Ahmad (Pub. in Dar al-Maarif, Egypt 1952), Tradition #6538, #6929

- Tabaqat, by Ibn Sa'd, v3, p253

Also it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"Paradise longs for three men, 'Ali, Ammar and Salman."

Sunni reference: Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v5, p332, Tradition #3884

Moreover al-Tirmidhi narrated:

When the Messenger of God heard that Ammar and his parents were tortured in Mecca, he (S) said: "Members of Yasir's family, be patient. Your destination is paradise."

Sunni Reference: Sahih al-Tirmidhi, v5, p233,

Thus, Ammar and his parents were the first people declared by the Prophet to be dwellers of paradise.

Here we should say: When a Muslim knows that the Prophet has commended these two important companions (Abu Dharr & Ammar Ibn Yasir) so highly, and if he is a believer in the truthfulness of Muhammad, he does not allow himself to insult these two companions. Such an insult discredits the Prophet.

As we just saw, the above authentic traditions in the six Sunni collections claim that Prophet said he has only four or fourteen righteous companions, out of his 1400 companions. Interestingly enough that Abu Dharr and Ammar Ibn Yasir were mentioned among those very few individuals.

We find that the hostility of Sayf Ibn Umar al-Tamimi, who lived during the second century after the Prophet, and the hostility of his students towards the Shi'ites, motivated them to spread such cheap propaganda.

Sayf knew that attributing the revolt against Uthman to the work of Ibn Saba contradicts known historical facts which show that the two companions, Abu Dhar and Ammar, were opposed to Uthman's ever coming to power. Because Sayf knew of their opposition to Uthman, he tried to smear their reputations by adding the names of the two prominent companions to the list of students of that fictitious Jew.

If Ibn Saba ever existed, he had declared his Islam after Uthman was killed. Now let us suppose we accept what Sayf alleged concerning that Abdullah Ibn Saba declared his faith after Uthman came to power.

Abu Dharr and Ammar Ibn Yasir, on the other hand, had been opposed to Uthman's caliphate before he came to power. The two companions were followers of the Imam 'Ali (as), and they firmly believed that 'Ali was appointed by the Prophet to be his successor. Since this was their belief before the appearance of Ibn Saba, the story of Sayf about their being influenced by Ibn Saba, is unfounded and untrue.

Thus, in order to clear the third caliph from all accusations pertaining to his ill-management of the Islamic treasury, Sayf accused the revolt being the students of Ibn Saba. He then completed his story by adding the two companions to the class of Ibn Saba's students, intentionally overlooking the fact that the two companions belong to the first successful class of the school of the Prophet Muhammad (S). They were among the important companions who were honored by the Prophet. In fact, Sayf was led by his untrue story to reject the testimony of the Prophet. By this, Sayf had disproved his whole tale.