

## An Examination of the Authenticity and Sharia Status of the Third Segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra' al- Mashhūra

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### Preamble

The Qur'ān conveyed its moral and theological teachings by utilising a simple and succinct common-sense approach of questioning the beliefs and practices held by its immediate audience. Examples include questions it posed to its addressees such as, "Say, indeed Allah does not ordain indecency; do you say concerning Allah what you do not know?", and statements such as, "Allah has not taken a son, nor is there any god with Him; for [if that was the case] then each god would definitely have claimed what he has created, and indeed some of them would predominate above others".<sup>1</sup> Such questions and statements were meant to awaken what was already intuitively understood by the audience and/or to initiate the process of basic reasoning within their minds whereby the truth of what was being pointed at could be assented to with relative ease.

The Qur'ān also made use of basic logical arguments premised on the assumptions of claims held by its audience. An instance of this is the case of the Christian delegation from Najrān whose claim of the divinity of Jesus appears to be premised on his immaculate conception, that is, Jesus was divine because he was conceived without the agency of a human father.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān states, "Indeed, the likeness of Jesus, in God's sight, is as Adam's likeness; He created him of dust, and then He said to him, 'Be', and he was".<sup>3</sup> This succinct verse is directed at the assumption of its addressees and seeks to evoke the following in their minds: if the claim of Jesus being the son of God is based on the lack of parental agency of a human father, then Adam was created without the agency of both a father and a mother; hence such claimants must admit that either Adam has a greater claim to being the son of God, or that Jesus' creation without the agency of a human father is not an adequate reason for proclaiming his divinity. In other words, their rationale for asserting the divinity of Jesus applies more so to Adam; hence, to negate divinity from the latter and restrict its application to the former is inconsistent.

The Qur'ān employs these simple and yet effective methods of reasoning, after which it often rebukes those minds that fail to reflect upon its verses, an effect of which must have been naturally to elicit the serious consideration of its verses in such minds. Examples include verses usually ending with phrases such as, "Do they not understand?",<sup>4</sup> and verses posing questions like the following, "Do they not ponder [the content of] the Qur'ān or are there locks upon the hearts?"<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Qur'ān 7:28 and 23:91.

<sup>2</sup> For details of the event, see M. Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society), 326.

<sup>3</sup> See Qur'ān 3:59.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, see Qur'ān 36:68.

<sup>5</sup> See Qur'ān 47:24.

The Qur'ān is also meticulous in addressing and condemning humans attributing something to God that they do not know substantively. Consider the verse criticising those Jews claiming the Fire of Hell would not touch them save for a few days: “Say have you taken a covenant with God, for [indeed] God will not break His covenant? Or do you state concerning God what you know not?”<sup>6</sup> The Qur'ān is stern in its refutation of unverified claims especially within the domain of theology. Another example is the crucifixion of Jesus which was a claim made by certain individuals on the one hand and the source of the theology of redemptive suffering of the Christians on the other. The Qur'ān responds, “They did not slay him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them as such. Indeed, those who differ concerning him are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge about him save the pursuit of conjecture. They did not kill him definitely.”<sup>7</sup> In several places, the Qur'ān reiterates the epistemic inferiority and deficiency of conjecture, thereby warning of the danger of conflating it with the truth, for instance, “Indeed, conjecture does not avail against the truth at all.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, according to the Qur'ān it is not permissible to attribute to God or commit to religion anything that is not ascertained, and to do so is a violation of the instruction of the Qur'ān.

The exception to this are Sharia-ordained evidences yielding conjecture especially within the domain of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) wherein the attribution (*isnād*) of regulations to the Sharia is not restricted to instances of certitude but extends to instances in which credible evidence exists of the regulation having been issued from the Lawgiver.<sup>9</sup> However, ascribing a regulation to the Sharia without credible evidence is a form of legislating in the name of the Sharia (*tashrī'*) unlawfully as per the Qur'ān; hence, it is a sin by Sharia normative standards.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Qur'ān 2:80.

<sup>7</sup> Qur'ān 4:157.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, see Qur'ān 53:28.

<sup>9</sup> Here, the term ‘regulations’ refers to normative regulations (*aḥkām talkīfiyya*), that is, those regulations that have the designations of obligation (*wujūb*), prohibition (*ḥurma*), encouragement (*istiḥbāb*), discouragement (*karāha*), and permissibility (*ibāḥa*).

<sup>10</sup> For information on *isnād*, see: (a) section entitled *Tashrī'* in Muḥammad Ṣanqūr 'Alī, *Al-Mu'jam al-Uṣūlī* (Qum: Dar al-Mujtaba, 2001), 402-5; and (b) Muḥammad Bāqir aadr, *Durūs fi 'Ilm al-Uṣūl* (Qum: Markaz al-Abḥāth wa al-Dirāsāt al-Takhaṣṣuṣiyya li-l-Shahīd Al-Ṣadr, 2005), 2: 69-70.

Qur'ān 10:59 addresses the issue of attributing unverified regulations to the Sharia. It employs a conjugate of the verb ‘to fabricate’ when rhetorically questioning the phenomenon.

## Introduction

Since time immemorial, humans have fabricated information in all domains of life: secular, religious, academic, political, and aesthetical. Fabrications are detrimental to the existential growth of the individual and collectivity, or in other words, rational, moral, and spiritual growth are premised on the acquisition of truth.<sup>11</sup> Every collectivity irrespective of whether it is religious or secular is faced with the issue of the authenticity of information regarding its worldview and praxis. In the Muslim tradition, the ḥadīth literature of its two major sects has been particularly susceptible to the phenomenon of fabrications.

This article is an analysis of the authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. The recitation of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra as a whole is considered a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act (*mustahabb*) by a large cohort of the faithful among the Shī‘a.<sup>12</sup> This means it has been instated by one of the blessed Imāms. The second segment begins with the sentence, “O Lord, curse the first person who has oppressed the right of Muḥammad and his family...”, and the instruction within the Ziyāra at this point is to repeat this part a hundred times.<sup>13</sup> The third segment includes the cursing of ‘the first’, ‘the second’, ‘the third’, ‘the fourth’ and ‘Yazīd as the fifth’.<sup>14</sup> Scholars differ as to who these designations refer to. The predominant view among both scholars and the faithful among the Shī‘a is that they refer to the first three caliphs (*khulafā’*) – Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān – and Mu‘āwiya. Multiple other rare views are listed in a few books: one of them is that they refer to Qābīl (the son of Prophet Ādam), the killer of the camel of Prophet Ṣāliḥ, the killer of Prophet Yaḥyā and the killer of Imām ‘Alī, and another is that they refer to Qābīl, Namrūd, the killer of the camel of Prophet Ṣāliḥ and the Pharaoh.<sup>15</sup> Based on the fact that there are these other views, some scholars maintain that the referents are unknown. The connotation of such an assertion is that those faithful who have been brought up to recite Ziyāra ‘Āshūra regularly do not know who are being referred to when they are reciting these curses.

In any case, Sunni scholars generally and a significant number of well-informed Sunni non-scholars feel that the referents of these designations, both in the minds of those reciting the Ziyāra and in the Ziyāra itself, are the first three caliphs and Mu‘āwiya – a sentiment that would be assented to by the majority of the Shī‘a faithful undoubtedly if asked.<sup>16</sup> Such ritual cursing is understood by certain Shī‘a scholars to be a contributing factor to the periodic but frequent

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<sup>11</sup> For information on the notions of existential growth and collectivity, see the forward and Lectures 8 and 9 in Arif Abdul Hussain, *Islam and God-centricity: Plurality and Mutability of Religion*, Book 4, (Birmingham, UK: Sajjadiyya Press, 2022); and see the author’s paper entitled, ‘The Conflict between the Actual and Apparent Regulations – Part 2: The Solution of “The Existential Framework”’, pages 7-13, in his personal website: <http://www.shaykharif.com/the-conflict-between-the-actual-and-apparent-regulations>.

<sup>12</sup> See reports in ‘Alī ibn Mūsā Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zā‘ir* (Qum: Mu‘assasa Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyā’ al-Turāth, 1996), 261-3; and ‘Abbas al-Qummī, *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān* (Beirut: Dār al-Awḍā’, 2014), 469-70.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 471.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 472.

<sup>15</sup> See Ḥusayn al-Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān* (Beirut: Dar al-Maḥajja al-Baydā’, 2008), 26-29 and 131-2; Mīrzā Abī al-Faḍl al-Ṭahrānī, *Shifā’ al-Ṣudūr fī Sharḥ Ziyāra al-‘Āshūr* (Qum: Intishārāt al-Maktaba al-Ḥaydariyya, 2005), 2: 379-80; and <https://www.yahosein.com/vb/node/166714>.

<sup>16</sup> See: (a) <https://www.siasat.com/anti-shiite-protest-rattles-karachi-1974038/>

(b) <https://nayadaur.tv/2020/09/several-shia-speakers-arrested-on-blasphemy-charges-after-ashura/>.

torrents of public abuse directed at Imām ‘Alī, declarations that Shī‘as are unbelievers (*kuffār*), and episodes of extreme violence towards Shī‘as in Muslim majority countries (an example of which was observed in Pakistan over a year ago).<sup>17</sup> Based on the fact that the blessed Imāms were against division and discord of the Muslim Umma as per the Qur’ān and conduct of the blessed Prophet, it is inconceivable that they would ordain a Sharia ritual to their followers (the Shī‘as) that would cause sectarian tension and endanger the lives of their followers and others.<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, this article presents the analysis of the authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra using a variety of different approaches, and it concludes with the Sharia status of the third segment.

The article has four sections, the aim of each of which is the following:

- 1- To demonstrate the problematic nature of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra on the basis of accepted premises and a theological assumption.
- 2- To ascertain whether the authenticity of this segment is verifiable in accordance with ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’.
- 3- To ascertain whether the authenticity of this segment is verifiable in accordance with ‘the content-reliability criterion’.
- 4- To conclude with the Sharia status of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.

### **Section One – Rationale for the Problematic Nature of the Third Segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra**

This section has two parts and a conclusion:

Part one: There is disagreement amongst scholars as to what constitutes the original form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra based on either manuscript analysis of the earliest extant versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra or otherwise:<sup>19</sup>

- There is a consensus that the first segment is part of the original form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.
- There is possible disagreement as to whether the second segment (comprising the hundred recitals) is part of the original form.
- There is disagreement as to whether the third segment (comprising the cursing of the four unknown individuals) is part of the original form.
- There is a general agreement that the fourth segment (consisting of the prayer to be performed during prostration) is part of the original form.

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<sup>17</sup> See *ibid* (links).

Many factors have resulted in (a) such abuse being directed at Imām ‘Alī, (b) acts of violence against Shī‘as, and (c) the designation of Shī‘as as unbelievers, however the ritual of ceremonially cursing the caliphs and the wives of the blessed Prophet is undeniably a contributory factor; in other words, the ritual of cursing is a contributory factor to historical and existing sectarian tensions. See twitter posts in <https://dailytimes.com.pk/665868/anti-shiite-protest-rattles-karachi/> referencing crowds throwing stones at the names of Imām ‘Alī and Ahl al-Bayt after a live broadcast of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra, which includes the third segment. The designation *nāṣibī* refers to people who have enmity towards Imām ‘Alī and curse him; it is a widespread phenomenon.

<sup>18</sup> Bāqir Sharīf al-Qarshī, *Sīra al-Rasūl wa Ahl Baytihi al-Athār* (Beirut: Dār al-Mahajja al-Baydā’, 2013), 1: 6-7.

<sup>19</sup> See different versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra presented in Rādī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 109 onwards.

Part two: The theological and rational assumption is that an Imām from the household of the blessed Prophet can never ordain a divisive practice.

Conclusion: This section concludes with the following question – is it not better to avoid reciting the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, wherein the four unknown individuals, who are presumed to be the three caliphs and Mu‘āwiya by a significant cohort of well-informed Sunnis, are cursed?

### **Part One: Disagreement Regarding the Constitution of the Original Form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra<sup>20</sup>**

The version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra being analysed in this article is the popular version known as ‘Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra’ and not the less popular version known as ‘Ziyāra ‘Āshūra ghayr al-Mashhūra’. Generally, it is believed that the popular version has been issued from the fifth blessed Imām.<sup>21</sup> Scholarly disagreement regarding the authenticity of the second and third segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra are due to differences between manuscript copies of the earliest extant sources of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.<sup>22</sup>

The Ziyāra is found in two sources:

i- Kāmil al-Ziyārāt compiled by Ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummī.<sup>23</sup>

In the printed version of this work, Ziyāra ‘Āshūra consists of the first, second and fourth segments of the popular version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. It does not include the third segment (wherein the four unnamed individuals are cursed).<sup>24</sup>

ii- Mişbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid (also known as Mişbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr) compiled by Shaykh al-Ṭūsī.<sup>25</sup>

Ibn Ṭāwūs<sup>26</sup> claimed to have recourse to the original manuscript of Mişbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr from which he copied Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.<sup>27</sup> He states that the two parts of the second segment, which are to be recited a hundred times each, were not present in the book, and that

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<sup>20</sup> To reiterate, this article seeks to discern the authenticity and Sharia status of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra by (a) manuscript analysis of the different versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra recorded in the earliest extant works and (b) content analysis. It is not addressing the issue of whether the original form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra is authentic and Sharia-ordained.

<sup>21</sup> Both the popular (*al-mashhūra*) and less popular (*ghayr al-mashhūra*) versions are in Mafātīḥ al-Jinān. The less popular version has been attributed to Imām Ṣādiq; it does not include the third segment cursing the four unknown individuals. (Qummī, *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān*, 469-80.)

<sup>22</sup> Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 109 onwards. It should be noted that scholarly disagreement regarding the third segment is due to other reasons too.

<sup>23</sup> His full name is Shaykh Abū al-Qāsim Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far ibn Mūsā ibn Masrūr ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummī. He died in 367 AH / 978-979 CE.

<sup>24</sup> Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad ibn Qawlawayh al-Qummī, *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt* (Qum: Mu‘assasa Nashr al-Faqāha, 1996), 328-332.

<sup>25</sup> His full name is Shaykh Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī. He died in 460 AH / 1067 CE.

<sup>26</sup> His full name is Sayyid Rāḍī al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Mūsā ibn Ja‘far ibn Ṭāwūs. He died in 664 AH / 1266 CE.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Ṭūsī was his maternal grandfather. For references of Ibn Ṭāwūs’ claim, See Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zā‘ir*, 278; and Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 25.

he found and copied them from Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr (also known as *Mukhtaṣar Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid*).<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that there is ambiguity in the phraseology employed by Ibn Ṭāwūs; hence, the referent of ‘the two additional parts which are to be recited a hundred times each’ could be: (a) the two parts of the second segment, (b) the two parts, which includes the third segment, or (c) the two parts, which includes the third and fourth segments.<sup>29</sup>

Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr is an abridged version of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr compiled by al-Ṭūsī himself for the ease of the faithful among the Shī‘a.<sup>30</sup> It should be noted that Ibn Ṭāwūs claimed to have recourse to an original copy of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr only; he does not assert the same about al-Ṭūsī’s Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr.

The following highlights discrepancies vis-à-vis the segments in some versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in the earliest extant manuscripts of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr:<sup>31</sup>

- a- There are versions in which all four segments are part of the main body of the text.
- b- There are versions in which the second and third segments are not part of the main body of the text but are written in the margins of the book instead.
- c- There are versions in which the second and third segments are not part of the main body of the text, nor are they in the margins.
- d- There are versions in which the second segment and the sentence, “Oh God, individuate the first with a curse from me and commence with him. Oh God, curse Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiya...” are part of the main body of the text, and the third segment consisting of cursing the four unknown individuals is written in the margins.
- e- There are versions like the aforementioned in which the curses of the third segment are neither part of the main body, nor are they written in the margins.

Similarly, the following highlights discrepancies vis-à-vis the segments in some versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra<sup>32</sup> in various manuscripts of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr:

- a- There are versions in which all four segments are part of the main body of the text.
- b- There are versions in which the second segment and the sentence, “Oh God, curse Yazīd and ‘Ubayd Allāh...” are part of the main body of the text, and the third segment is absent.
- c- There is a version in which the second segment and the sentence, “Oh God, individuate the first with a curse from me and commence with him, and curse ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād...”, are part of the main body of the text, and the writing in the margin may be the third segment consisting of cursing the four unknown individuals, however it is not legible.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid (both references).

<sup>29</sup> Hubb al-Husayn, *Al-Mudākhalāt al-Kāmila fī Radd Muda‘ā al-Tazwīr ‘alā Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mutadāwala* (Beirut: Mu‘assasa al-Tārīkh al-‘Arabī, 2008), 34-5.

<sup>30</sup> Rādī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 113-4.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 141-458.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 461-534.

- d- There is a version in which some parts of the Ziyāra after the sentence, “Oh God, individuate the first with a curse from me...” seem to have been erased manually and intentionally.

It should be noted that the Ziyāra has been recorded in other earlier works of devotions as well, however they have been copied from either Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr or al-Saghīr. Obviously, versions that don't include the third segment may have been copied from Kāmil al-Ziyārāt.<sup>33</sup>

Based on the aforementioned statements of Ibn Ṭāwūs, it is clear that the second segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra was not the original copy of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr that he had recourse to, and the version of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr from which he copied it from is not claimed to have been al-Ṭūsī's original manuscript. Of course, it is possible that the second segment was in the main body of the text of the version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in al-Ṭūsī's original manuscript of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr, just as it is possible for the third segment comprising of cursing the four unknown individuals to have been part of the main body of the text of the version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in al-Ṭūsī's original manuscript of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr;<sup>34</sup> however, these are conjectures in need of substantiation. This issue will be dealt with in section two of this article.

The fact that such discrepancies ensue upon analysis of the original manuscripts in relation to the second and third segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra could be among the reasons why high-ranking scholars have questioned whether the third segment was part of the original Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.<sup>35</sup> Thus, scholars are not in agreement regarding the authenticity of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra: they are divided between those claiming the whole of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is the original and those claiming the third segment is not a part of the original. As stated, the justification for the position of the latter camp could be based on the discrepancies within the manuscripts and/or other factors.

Another point of disagreement among scholars is the identities of the four cursed unknown individuals. It is obvious that the first three caliphs and Mu‘āwiya are being referred to, however it is not uncommon for public speakers to mention other individuals as being their referents, some of whom are mentioned above. These alternative referents can be found in works of a few Shī‘a scholars.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 549-571.

<sup>34</sup> This cautious remark is prompted by Ḥusayn's critique (in *Al-Mudākhalāt al-Kāmila fī Radd Muda‘ā al-Tazwīr ‘alā Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mutadāwala*, 34-5) of Rādī's analysis (in *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 129-30), in which he observes correctly that Ibn Ṭāwūs's statement (that the two parts of the second segment, which are to be recited a hundred times each, were not present in al-Ṭūsī's original work) cannot be said to mean or imply definitively that the cursing of the four unknown individuals was also not present.

<sup>35</sup> See Rādī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 90-1. Other scholars include:

(a) Sayyid Kamāl Ḥaydarī (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMsEG4u7Qw8>).

(b) Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlallāh (see <https://shiareformist.wordpress.com/2016/02/29/part1-analysis-of-ziyarat-ashura/> and [http://english.bayynat.org.lb/Editorials/Miscellaneous\\_Debunking\\_distortions.htm-.YrB9Qi8w3BA](http://english.bayynat.org.lb/Editorials/Miscellaneous_Debunking_distortions.htm-.YrB9Qi8w3BA)).

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 15 for references. It is recorded that al-Ṭūsī mentioned these alternative referents, which is discussed on page 22 of this article.

## Part Two: The Theological Assumption

The theological assumption is that an Imām, being the successor of the blessed Prophet, would of necessity emulate the Prophet; hence he would not institute, regulate, endorse, or promote that which the Prophet would not institute, regulate, endorse, or promote.<sup>37</sup> This norm of the Imāms was declared by Imām ‘Alī in response to being offered the caliphate with the proviso that he follow the conduct of the first two caliphs in addition to the Qur’ān and Sunna of the Prophet; his response was that he would rule in accordance with the Qur’ān and Sunna of the Prophet only.<sup>38</sup> As per the Qur’ān, the Prophet was vehement in emphasising the necessity of Muslim unity, and he displayed disdain towards all forms and means of disunity.<sup>39</sup> Imām ‘Alī followed this conduct of the Prophet. In fact, his choice to fight errant groups of Muslims was motivated by the Qur’ān’s instruction to restore peace and brotherhood among the Muslims.<sup>40</sup>

Therefore, it is inconceivable for an Imām occupying the position of the vicegerency of the blessed Prophet, and possessing wisdom, foresight, and the popularly asserted foreknowledge of future events, to institutionalise ceremonies fostering discord and bloodshed within the Muslim community. This point will be elaborated upon in Section Three of this article.

## Part Three: Conclusion

Based on Parts One and Two above, the following can be concluded:

- a- The faithful among the Shī‘a community do not have definitive knowledge vis-à-vis the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra being part of the original Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.
- b- The faithful among the Shī‘a community do not have certainty as to who the referents of the four individuals are in the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra that are being cursed.
- c- The blessed Imāms would not institutionalise a practice that fosters discord and results in bloodshed and corruption.

Therefore, is it not better to omit the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra consisting of cursing the four unknown individuals whom a significant cohort of the faithful among educated Sunnis believe refer to the three caliphs and Mu‘āwiya?

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<sup>37</sup> This is a rational deduction based on the meaning of the notion of ‘vicegerency’. It is indicated to in Qarshī, *Sīra al-Rasūl wa Ahl Baytihi al-Aṭhār*, 1: 6-7; and Aḥmad Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, *Al-Maṣābiḥ fī Ithbāt al-Imāma* (Beirut: Mu’assasa al-Nūr li-l-Maṭbū‘āt, 2008), 99-100. It is also conveyed by reports of the Imāms instructing their followers to contrast statements attributed to them with the Qur’ān and certitude-based Sunna (*sunna qat’iyya*). See [http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/117\\_الكاتب/1122\\_الكافي-الشيخ-الكليني-ج-1/الصفحة](http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/117_الكاتب/1122_الكافي-الشيخ-الكليني-ج-1/الصفحة) for examples of such reports.

<sup>38</sup> See <http://kingoflinks.net/ImamAli/14Yrfodh.htm>.

<sup>39</sup> For instance, see Qur’ān 49:9.

<sup>40</sup> See Qur’ān 49:10.

## Section Two – Verification of the Third Segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in Accordance with ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’<sup>41</sup>

One may question the theological assumption thus: Why is it not possible for the Imāms to teach ceremonial practices of cursing and/or divisive theologies? Would such teachings be irreconcilable with the Qur’ān?

There are numerous statements attributed to the Imāms in the ḥadīth literature prescribing cursing and promoting exclusivist theologies, which begs the following question:<sup>42</sup> if such practices and theologies are inconsistent with the Qur’ān and conduct of the blessed Prophet, or are patently irrational, then why would an Imām commit themselves to teach such divisive practices and theologies? In fact, the numerosity of such statements attributed to the Imāms may lead one to think that such statements must be congruent with the Qur’ān.<sup>43</sup> Hence on the one hand, it is clear that such prescriptions of cursing and promotion of divisive theologies are inconsistent with the Qur’ān and conduct of the blessed Prophet as per the theological assumption, and as such cannot be attributed to an Imām (since it would constitute deviating from the Qur’ān and conduct of the blessed Prophet); and yet on the other, the numerosity of such statements attributed to the Imāms seems to indicate that the Imāms did prescribe cursing and promote exclusivist theologies, which means they must be reconcilable with the Qur’ān and conduct of the Prophet.

Before addressing this fundamental question (of whether it is even possible for an Imām to prescribe the ceremonial cursing of the first three caliphs), the issue of ascertaining whether the Imāms actually issued the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra in either the Ziyāra directly or their other statements will be dealt with first as per the traditional standards of verifying statements attributed to them. The justification for verifying the issuance of such statements first (that is, prior to addressing the fundamental question) is the predominance of the jurisprudential mindset amongst scholars, which is generally inclined to consider statements attributed to the Imāms conflicting with reason and the Qur’ān as valid so long as they have sound chains of transmission or are sourced reliably. The basis of this jurisprudential

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<sup>41</sup> The choice to employ the terms ‘transmission’ and ‘content’ in relation to ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ in this article is based on the two sciences that constitute the Sciences of Reports (*ulūm al-ḥadīth*), namely the Science of Transmission (*‘ilm al-riwāya*) and the Science of the Content (*‘ilm al-dirāya*). They are used in this article to refer to two modes of ascertaining ‘reliability’ vis-à-vis reports: ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, which deals with issues of reliability pertaining to the transmission of reports, and ‘the content-reliability criterion’, which deals with issues of reliability pertaining to the content of reports.

<sup>42</sup> See [https://www.fnoor.com/main/articles.aspx?article\\_no=12279#.YrCXpS8w3BB](https://www.fnoor.com/main/articles.aspx?article_no=12279#.YrCXpS8w3BB). There are ‘divisive’ reports prescribing cursing and ‘exclusivist’ reports confining the truth and salvation to the Shī’a sect and its adherents. For more information on exclusivity, read Lecture 2, 3 and 4 in Arf Abdul Hussain, *Islam and God-centricity*, Book 4, 16-72.

It should be noted that there are reports attributed to the Imāms in which (a) they curse specific extremist individuals (*ghulāt*) masquerading as their followers and propagating aberrant theologies, and (b) reports attributed to the Imāms in which they prescribe cursing. (For examples of (a) the former, see <https://alhiikmeh.org/yanabeemag/?p=3410>, and (b) see link in previous paragraph.) The subject-matter of this article is the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra, which is akin to reports institutionalising cursing; it is not reports cursing specific extremist individuals claiming to be followers of the Imāms.

<sup>43</sup> The fact that Sayyid al-Khū’ī no less accepts reports prescribing the act of cursing and swearing at the opponents of the family of the Prophet is indicative of this. See <http://shiaonlineibrary.com/مصباح-الفقاهة-السيد-الكتاب/533-الخوني-ج-1-الصفحة-499>.

mindset is the belief of the jurist's epistemic inability to comprehend the nature of the reconciliation between such conflicting statements and the Qur'ān and reason.<sup>44</sup>

In order to ascertain the validity of such statements attributed to the Imāms, the following question needs addressing: Are there any criteria by which the veracity of statements attributed to the Imāms can be ascertained? The singular factor in determining the veracity and authenticity<sup>45</sup> of statements attributed to an Imām is 'reliability'.<sup>46</sup> The notion of reliability is defined as the principal verificatory factor vis-à-vis the reports of statements attributed to the blessed Prophet and Imāms. The notion is justified as such by reason (*al-'aql*), certain verses of the Qur'ān and some reports in the ḥadīth literature.<sup>47</sup> For instance, the following verse of the Qur'ān is often cited as an evidence for 'reliability' being the criterion for the veracity / authenticity of the Imāms' reports: "O you who have faith, if an untrustworthy person comes to you with a report, then verify [its content], lest you accuse a people in ignorance...".<sup>48</sup> The implication of this verse is that if a *trustworthy* person narrates a report, then it can be relied upon as true information and knowledge by Sharia standards.<sup>49</sup> Jurisprudentially, this verse is regarded as an evidence corroborating the fact that the notion of reliability has probativity (*hujjiya*) in itself, and that it supplies probativity to reports deemed to be 'reliable'.<sup>50</sup> The probativity of a given 'reliable' report makes its content effectual (*munajjiz*), meaning it makes the duty within the content of a given report legally binding.<sup>51</sup> Thus, such probativity of 'reliable' reports makes the duty-bound (*mukallaf*) simultaneously responsible for discharging their respective duties (*tanjīz*) and confers absolution (*ta'dhīr*) to the duty-bound should the reports be false or inaccurate in actuality (*al-wāqi*).<sup>52</sup> The notion of reliability does not confer

<sup>44</sup> To reiterate, this is true of legists (*fuqahā*) generally. Some legists do not regard sound reports (that is, reports with sound chains of transmission) conflicting with reason and the Qur'ān as valid irrespective of whether they believe in the epistemic inferiority of reason or not. For instance, al-Sīstānī rejects reports ordaining the act of falsely accusing the people of innovation. See [https://hobbollah.com/araa/الآخرين-ول-على-الافتراء-والالبيهان/](https://hobbollah.com/araa/الآخرين-ول-على-الافتراء-والالبيهان).

<sup>45</sup> The application of the notion of authenticity to a report signifies the report's probativity by Sharia standards. The following are the categories of grading of reports: *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic), *muwaththaq* (reliable), *ḥasan* (commendable), and *ḍa'īf* (weak). See 'Ādil Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijālīyya: Maslak al-Withāqa wa Maslak al-Wuthūq* (Najaf), 20-1.

It is possible for legists to strengthen (*injabār*) reports classified as having lower degrees of grading depending on which version of 'the transmission-reliability criterion' they adopt. This is discussed in forthcoming sections of this article.

<sup>46</sup> The centrality of the notion of 'reliability' vis-à-vis authenticity is based on (a) verses of the Qur'ān, (b) reports in the ḥadīth literature, (c) the conduct of the adherents of the Sharia (*sīra al-mutasharri'a*), and (d) rational convention (*sīra al-uqalā*). See Ṣadr, *Durūs fi 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, 2: 167-86.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> See Qur'ān 49:6.

<sup>49</sup> There are discussions in the Science of the Principles of Jurisprudence (*'ilm uṣūl al-fiqh*) as to whether this implication can be drawn from this particular verse of the Qur'ān. The point here is to provide an example of the many justifications offered regarding the centrality of the notion of 'reliability'. See Ṣadr, *Durūs fi 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, 2: 168-72.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 168-9.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 1: 186-90.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

certitude<sup>53</sup> (*qat*) to the veracity and authenticity of reports deemed to be ‘reliable’; however the fact that the Sharia has ordained it as a marker of the veracity and authenticity of such reports means that certain forms of probable knowledge are valid as means of acquiring religious knowledge and attributing it to the Sharia.<sup>54</sup>

Jurisprudentially, the applicability of the criterion of ‘reliability’ to a report is contingent upon a twofold process: (a) the scrutinization of the *transmission* of statements attributed to the blessed Prophet and Imāms and (b) the examination of the *content* of statements attributed to them.<sup>55</sup> For the purpose of this article, the criterion of ‘reliability’ vis-à-vis the transmission of reports is termed ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, and the criterion of ‘reliability’ vis-à-vis the content of reports is termed ‘the content-reliability criterion’. In terms of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, ‘the trustworthiness of a reporter’ is regarded by some scholars to be the subject (*al-mawdū*) of the reliability of reports (and hence the subject of their probativity), and by others it is considered to be one of many considerations in ascertaining ‘personal satisfaction’ vis-à-vis the reliability of reports; that is, according to the ‘personal satisfaction’ camp, a scholar must consider several issues, of which the ascertainment of the trustworthiness of reporters is just one consideration, prior to having assurance or being ‘personally satisfied’ of the reliability of the report and ascribing probativity to it.<sup>56</sup> In both cases (that is, in both ‘the trustworthiness of the reporter’ version and ‘the personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’), the notion of ‘reliability’ is defined as per the conventional standards of rational agents.<sup>57</sup>

The remaining sub-sections of this section analyse the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra in accordance with each of the two versions of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ to ascertain whether its attribution to the fifth blessed Imām is verifiable.

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<sup>53</sup> Jurisprudentially, certitude (*qat* /*yaqīn*) refers to a state of mind in which there is absolute disclosure of the Sharia regulation, and hence there is no possibility of error. Any state less than certitude carries with it the possibility of error. See *ibid*.

<sup>54</sup> See *ibid*, 2: 167-86.

<sup>55</sup> The bases for the principle of verifying the source of the report are verses of the Qur’ān, and the bases for the principle of the necessity of congruence between the content of the report and the Qur’ān are numerous instructions of the blessed Prophet and Imāms. For examples of the latter, see *ibid*, 567-72.

<sup>56</sup> Muḥammad Ṣanqūr ‘Alī al-Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl min al-Halaqa al-Thāniya* (Qum: Dār al-Mujtabā, 2003), 1: 410-4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*. There are scholars who do not belong to either of the two camps exclusively, such as ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī. See Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 71; and Muḥammad al-Sanad, *Buḥūth fī Mabānī ‘Ilm al-Rijāl* (Qum: Maktaba Fadak, 2008), 57.

## The Reliability of Statements Attributed to the Imāms as per the Two Versions of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’

- a- ‘The trustworthiness of the reporter’ version (in which the trustworthiness of the reporter is considered by scholars to be the subject of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ and the probativity of reports).<sup>58</sup>

Based on evidences granting probativity to the solitary report, scholars subscribing to this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ regard the trustworthiness of each reporter in the chain of transmission of a report as the sole criterion for attributing probativity to a report.<sup>59</sup> Thus, if all reporters in a chain of transmission can be verified empirically<sup>60</sup> as belonging to the faith and either having a just character and sound memory, or having the ability to transmit reports accurately and with integrity despite the lack of testimonials vouching for their faith status and just character,<sup>61</sup> then a report is to be deemed as veracious and authentic. The *prima facie* implications of this are:

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<sup>58</sup>This method, known as *maslak al-withāqa*, was initiated by al-Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Ṭāwūs and Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī. (Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 20-1.) Ibn Ṭāwūs and ‘Allāma al-Ḥillī introduced the quadruple division of the degrees of ‘authenticity’ of reports discussed in footnote 45. (Muḥyi al-Dīn Mūsawī al-Ghurayfī, *Qawā’id al-Ḥadīth* (Qum: al-Mu’assasa al-Islāmiyya li-l-Buḥūth wa al-Ma’lūmāt, 2008), 1: 17-19.)

It would be interesting to know the reasons prompting them to adopt and promulgate this method despite the other method – ‘the personal satisfaction’ version – being prevalent prior to their scholarly contributions: Was it prompted solely by their understanding of the evidences granting probativity to the solitary report (*khabr al-wāḥid*), as in the case of al-Khūṭī and Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, or were there other factors? See Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 24; and Ṣadr, *Durūs fi ‘Ilm al-Usūl*, 2: 167-86.

According to Shahīd al-Thānī, earlier scholars did not need to grade reports on account of the existence of contextual indicators (*qarā’in*) affirming the reliability of transmissions; however, due to the destruction of many sources and loss of many contextual indicators, later scholars were compelled to distinguish between suspicious and sound reports; hence they devised the aforementioned system of grading reports. (Ghurayfī, *Qawā’id al-Ḥadīth* 18-9.)

<sup>59</sup> See Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 28-31.

<sup>60</sup> In other words, the verification of reporters must be based on empirical (*hissī*) evidence or sources in order to limit if not remove the influence of the legist’s subjectivity in the verification process (*hadsī*). (Ḥaydar Ḥubullāh, *Mantiq al-Naqd al-Sanadī* (Beirut: Mu’assasa al-Intishār al-‘Arabī, 2017), 101.) This view is nuanced; for instance, regarding the probativity of the statements of experts (*ahl-khibra*), Sanad states that the probable knowledge of experts is probative for non-experts qua epistemic sources. (See Sanad, *Buḥūth fi Mabānī ‘Ilm al-Rijāl*, 89-94.) However, the issue of the probativity of the statements of experts is not central to the objective of this article, which is to ascertain whether the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is veracious / authentic based on manuscript analysis of its extant versions, and not whether the sources from which Ibn Qawlawayh and al-Ṭūsī collated it are veracious / authentic.

<sup>61</sup> In other words, such reporters transmit reports with integrity despite not being verified as possessing praiseworthy characters. (See Bahrānī, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl min al-Ḥalaqa al-Thāniya*, 1: 410-4; and Ghurayfī, *Qawā’id al-Ḥadīth*, 1: 33-4.)

Al-Ṣadr’s states that if the aforementioned verse of the Qur’ān (49:6) is regarded as the evidence of probativity (*dalīl al-ḥujjiyya*) for the solitary report, then the reporter must be ‘just’ in addition to being trustworthy, and so the quality of ‘trustworthiness’ is not sufficient in conferring probativity to the report of a reporter who has an excellent memory but whose piety is unverifiable; however if the sources of probativity for the solitary report are deemed to be other evidences, such as reports and/or rational convention, then the quality of ‘trustworthiness’ is sufficient in conferring probativity to the report of a reporter who has an excellent memory and whose piety is unverifiable. (Ṣadr, *Durūs fi ‘Ilm al-Usūl*, 2: 168-72 and 187-9.)

- i- The reports of trustworthy reporters are to be accepted even if their content does not yield personal satisfaction that they are from their claimed sources.<sup>62</sup>
- ii- The reports of untrustworthy reporters are to be rejected even if their content has been accepted by the majority of scholars (*mashhūr*) as sound and hence originating from their claimed sources in all probability.<sup>63</sup>

According to this version (in which ‘the trustworthiness of the reporter’ is the subject of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ of a report, and hence its probativity), the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra cannot be verified or authenticated as having been issued from the Imāms; that is, it is not possible to ascribe the notions of veracity and authenticity to the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. To elaborate, since ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ relies upon the trustworthiness of reporters narrating reports from the Imāms, the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra depends upon the existence of concrete claims of trustworthy reporters that the third segment was a part of the original form of the Ziyāra as taught by the fifth blessed Imām. As mentioned above, there are two works with reports attributing Ziyāra ‘Āshūra to the Imām: one from Ibn Qawlawayh recorded in his *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, and the other from al-Ṭūsī recorded in his *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr* and its condensed version, *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr*. *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt* does not contain the third segment in any of its available editions,<sup>64</sup> and according to Ibn Ṭāwūs, the second segment (by which he could have meant the third and/or fourth segments as well) was not included in the original of al-Ṭūsī’s *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr*. The version of *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr* from which Ibn Ṭāwūs copied the second segment is not claimed by him to have been al-Ṭūsī’s original work. Manuscript analyses of the earliest copies of both *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr* and *al-Saghīr* reveal that some versions included the third segment and others excluded it.

Therefore, the third segment cannot be sourced from *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, however it can be speculated that it may have existed in both versions of *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid*.<sup>65</sup> Regarding the versions of the latter works that include the third segment in the main body of the text of the Ziyāra, some claim to be copies of the original manuscript and others provide chains of transmission beginning with reporters who belong to the contemporary era.<sup>66</sup> These contemporary reporters claim to have received the whole of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra, including its third segment, from their own teachers, who in turn received it from their teachers,

<sup>62</sup> Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 6 and 20. This is with the proviso that no inconsistency exists between the content of the report and the Qur’ān (as previously discussed), and certitude of its erroneous nature is not ascertained by any other means. This is discussed in forthcoming sections of this article.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 20. Legists who are not strict adherents of this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ may be able to rectify the weaknesses in the chain of transmission by recourse to other considerations; for instance, if the trustworthiness of the reporters in the chain of transmission of a report is not established, and yet the report has contextual indicators (*qarā’in*) verifying its content as being issued from a Sharia source, then such a report will be probative as per ‘the principle of the probativity of personal satisfaction’. However, legists who do adhere to the stringent standards of “the trustworthiness” version will not be able to rely upon such a report alone to attribute a regulation derived from it to the Sharia. (Ibid, 6-7.)

<sup>64</sup> Despite it being extremely probable that the version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in the original non-extant manuscript of *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt* did not include the third segment, it is not possible to assert this definitively due to the very slight possibility of the contrary.

<sup>65</sup> See Ḥusayn, *Al-Mudākhalāt al-Kāmila fī Radd Muda’ā al-Tazwīr ‘alā Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mutadāwala*, 33-8.

<sup>66</sup> Ṭahrānī, *Shifā’ al-Ṣudūr fī Sharḥ Ziyāra al-‘Āshūr*, 1: 33-42.

and so on, until al-Ṭūsī and his original work, which is a point of dispute as discussed above.<sup>67</sup> All such assertions claiming that the popular (*mashhūr*) version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra must have been in several direct copies of the original manuscripts of both versions of al-Ṭūsī’s Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid have not fulfilled the criterion of ‘the trustworthiness of the reporters’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ due to their speculative nature, given that the original copy of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid al-Kabir may not have contained the third segment as per the results of the manuscript analysis detailed above; hence the third segment cannot be deemed to be ‘reliable’ and ‘probative’ in the absence of concrete evidence.

It should be noted that strict adherents of ‘the trustworthiness of the reporter’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ would reject the veracity / authenticity of the *whole* of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra based on the value they place on the testimonials of biographers and the seriousness of the responsibility of ascribing reports to the Imāms.<sup>68</sup>

- b- ‘The personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ (in which the trustworthiness of the reporter is just one consideration among others in the process of scholars being ‘personally satisfied’ about the reliability and probativity of reports).<sup>69</sup>

Scholars subscribing to this version assert that the actualisation of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ of reports, and hence their probativity, depends upon the following: “the personal satisfaction of the scholar” which is based on empirical data conferring reliability to the report in question. It must be emphasised that such empirical data must be acceptable as such to rational agents.<sup>70</sup> Examples of such empirical data include the frequency with which earlier scholars have accepted a given report from unverified reporters and the transmission of content similar to the report in question in other reports without necessarily undermining the worth of the consideration of the trustworthiness of reporters in the chain of transmission.<sup>71</sup> Here, “the personal satisfaction of the scholar” (which is based on sources or means that confer reliability

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> See <https://hobbollah.com/questions/ما-هي-قيمة-سند-زيارة-عاشوراء-وفقاً-لمبيان/> for analysis of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra as per Khūṭb’s standards of ḥadīth criticism.

<sup>69</sup> This method, known as *maslak al-wuthūq wa al-ṣudūr*, has had many more adherents than *maslak al-withāqa* historically and continues to do so. (See Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 9-19.)

It is important to note that ‘personal satisfaction’ is not personal satisfaction of the reliability of the content per se, rather it is personal satisfaction of the reliability of the content by virtue of a legist’s ‘personal satisfaction’ of the reliability of the report as a whole. (Ibid, 51-55.) Thus, the subject of probativity in both schools – *maslak al-wuthūq wa al-ṣudūr* and *maslak al-withāqa* – is ‘the report’; the difference between them is that the reliability and probativity of a report in the latter are contingent upon the trustworthiness of the reporters in a chain of transmission, whereas in the former, reliability and probativity are attained by considering several sources or means that collectively confer reliability as per rational agents. This means that although ‘personal satisfaction’ is the source of probativity in *maslak al-wuthūq wa al-ṣudūr*, it is contingent upon the consideration of several sources or means that collectively confer reliability to the report. Hence, it may be asked, ‘why the phrase ‘personal satisfaction’ features in its title?’ The reason is that a legist must be satisfied vis-à-vis the reliability of a report after examining the sources or means of reliability as defined by rational agents. (See ibid, 51-61; and Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl min al-Ḥalaqa al-Thāniya*, 1: 412-3 for a tripartite division of the methodologies of reliability: *maslak al-withāqa*, *maslak al-wuthūq*, and their combination.)

The notion of ‘personal satisfaction’ is akin to the notions of ‘certitude’ and ‘knowledge’ vis-à-vis probativity. Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 55.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 51-61.

<sup>71</sup> See Ghurayfī, *Qawā’id al-Ḥadīth*, 17-24.

to the report or reporter in addition to consideration of ‘the trustworthiness of reporters’) is thought to compensate for the lack of veracity / authenticity of a report resulting from the consideration of the trustworthiness of reporters in the chain of transmission alone.<sup>72</sup> Thus, according to this version a report is to be deemed admissible when a scholar is ‘personally satisfied’ of its issuance from its attributed source based on considerations including the following: empirical data pertaining to the reliability of reporters, the existence of other reliable transmissions, the content of which are either similar or related to the content of the report in question, and the concurrence of the report’s content with the Qur’ān.<sup>73</sup> The implications of applying this version to reports are:

- i- A report that includes one or more untrustworthy reporters in its chain of transmission (or in other words a ‘weak’ report) may be accepted as veracious / authentic so long as sufficient empirical data exists pertaining to the reliability of the report’s reporters or its content, thereby lending support to the probability of its issuance from an Imām.<sup>74</sup>
- ii- A report in which all the reporters in its chain of transmission are trustworthy (or in other words a ‘strong’ report) may be rejected as inauthentic / not being veracious because earlier scholars abandoned it based on the existence of empirical data they had access to signifying the weakness of its reporters or the existence of other reports transmitting contrary or contradictory content to the report’s content.<sup>75</sup>

The ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ may convince its adherents of the veracity / authenticity of the first and second segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, however ‘personal satisfaction’ regarding the third segment cannot be said to ensue on the basis of considering empirical data conferring reliability to the content of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra; this is because a scholar’s ‘personal satisfaction’ of the content having been issued from the Imām is established by a variety of sources or means assuring reliability that are acceptable as such to rational agents, which include the frequency of the same content of the report from disparate sources and the fact that it is recorded in earlier works and enjoys popularity among earlier generations of scholars and devotees;<sup>76</sup> and with respect to the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, no clear verifiable reports from disparate sources exist, nor is it known to have been recorded by earlier scholars pre-*ghayba*, and nor is it known to have enjoyed popularity among earlier scholars and devotees pre-*ghayba*.<sup>77</sup> The claim that vast numbers of scholars post-*ghayba* have had faith in the existence of the third segment within the original version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, and hence their combined belief in this yields ‘reliability’ and grants ‘personal satisfaction’ because the calculus of the cumulative probability of combining each scholar’s personal belief

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<sup>72</sup> Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 6 and 7.

<sup>73</sup> For information on empirical data pertaining to the reliability of reporters, see Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ al-Uṣūl min al-Ḥalaqa al-Thāniya*, 1: 412-4; and for information on the remainder, see Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 11 and 16-9.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, 11, 16-19 and 37.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 25 and 31.

<sup>76</sup> Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 88-90.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*.

together leaves little possibility of error, does not amount to much.<sup>78</sup> This is because the totality of their combined beliefs in the existence of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra stems either directly or indirectly from a singular source – Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr, which is a point of contention in any case. In other words, the claims of all scholars post-*ghayba* of the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra are contingent upon one text only and no other – the original text of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr; hence, the claims of such scholars post-*ghayba* cannot be taken as independent probabilities in the calculus of the cumulative probability without further evidence.<sup>79</sup>

It is claimed that the manuscript of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra (mentioned above in the listing of the discrepancies between manuscripts) which has the second and third segments included as part of the main body of the text was copied from an earlier manuscript, which was a copy of another one earlier than it, which in turn was a direct copy of the original version of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr.<sup>80</sup> It is also claimed (as indicated earlier) that individuals, such as Kalantari, cite the whole of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra (which includes the third segment) with chains of transmission ending with al-Ṭūsī’s Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr as the source. However, all such claims are countered by the testimony of Ibn Ṭāwūs in which he states that he contrasted his copy of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra with the author’s original work, and it did not contain the second segment.<sup>81</sup> Some scholars have concluded that the inclusion of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra in the main body of the text of several of the earliest manuscript copies of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr is indicative of its inclusion in the original form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. However, for ‘personal satisfaction’ to ensue and be acceptable and justified, the conclusion must be based on empirical data and sources or means conferring reliability to reports and texts that are acceptable as such to rational agents. Unfortunately, the ‘personal satisfaction’ of scholars who maintain that the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra was included in the original form of the Ziyāra would not be acceptable to rational agents. This is because not all the earliest manuscripts had the third segment as part of the main body of the text; hence, the conclusion of its inclusion in the original form of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra is unjustified. Moreover, the conclusion entails the highly improbable position that al-Ṭūsī ordered copies of his original that were not exact replicas; such a position further undermines the ‘personal satisfaction’ of the existence of the third segment as per rational agents.

In summary, for adherents of this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ to claim they have ‘personal satisfaction’ that the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra was part of the main body of the text of the original work, they need to provide concrete empirical data from sources

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<sup>78</sup> Technically, Ṣadr was the first scholar to utilise the notion of the calculus of cumulative probability as a justification for preferring certain theoretical positions over others and certain regulative norms over others. For instance, see Ṣadr, *Durūs fi ‘Ilm al-Usūl*, 2: 34-5. Thereafter, legists commonly employ it in their rationale for particular regulative norms. Cumulative probabilities signify a high probability that a statement or norm was issued by the Lawgiver and a low probability that it was not, or vice versa.

For information on utilising the cumulative probability of the issuance of the same or similar content in multiple reports attributed to an Imām as a means of reliability, see Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 62-7.

<sup>79</sup> For information on the *shuhra* (popular opinion) of post-*Ghayba* scholars, see Rādī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 84.

<sup>80</sup> Ḥusayn, *Al-Mudākhalāt al-Kāmila*, 545-6.

<sup>81</sup> See Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Miṣbāḥ al-Zā‘ir*, 278; and Rādī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 25.

other than the contested versions of the Ziyāra recorded in the earliest manuscripts of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr. Should sound empirical data be found, then their ‘personal satisfaction’ would be justified, otherwise it is not. Of course, it is not beyond the realm of possibility – albeit highly improbable – for al-Ṭūsī to have ordered the production of several copies of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid, each with different versions or segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, however such conjecture does not yield ‘personal satisfaction’ at all, let alone the level required by this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ to confer reliability. In fact, adherents of the ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, such as al-Sayyid ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Sīstānī, state that the process of verifying the issuance of a report attributed to an Imām must take the discrepancies in the content of a report recorded in different works into consideration.<sup>82</sup> In view of the discrepancies in the content of the various manuscript versions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, the verification of the third segment is untenable without further debate.

It should be noted that it is not possible to apply the maxims of ‘the lack of addition’ (*‘adam al-ziyāda*) and ‘the lack of omission’ (*‘adam al-nāqisa*) in this analysis of the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra.<sup>83</sup> This is because the functionality of these maxims is restricted to cases of conflicting reports or content within works of earlier scholars.<sup>84</sup> To extend the application of these maxims to al-Ṭūsī’s assumed original manuscripts, including the one witnessed by Ibn Ṭāwūs, or to copies of the assumed original manuscripts which have discrepancies between them, requires further argumentation.

### **Further Deliberations of the Third Segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in Light of the Two Versions of ‘the Transmission-Reliability Criterion’?**

#### **a- The ‘trustworthiness’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’**

According to this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, a single report in which all the reporters in the chain of transmission are trustworthy is deemed ‘reliable’ and ‘probative’ provided it is unopposed by any other ‘reliable’ report<sup>85</sup>. There are ‘reliable’ reports, as per this method of ascertaining ‘reliability’, permitting the cursing and imprecation of the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet, including the declaration of their disbelief; hence, the view of the acceptability of such reports is not uncommon among scholars.<sup>86</sup> Undoubtedly, this is an important issue that needs addressing, however the subject matter of this article is the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra specifically, which consists of cursing the four unknown

<sup>82</sup> ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Sīstānī, *Ta’āruḍ al-Adilla wa Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth* (in *Taqrīrāt al-Imām al-Sīstānī*), 406-7.

Discrepancies include those highlighted by forensic examination of the handwriting in extant manuscripts. Portions of the text that have such discrepancies are indicative of the possibility of the occurrence of interpolation. Hence such portions cannot be deemed to be part of the original. This applies to the handwritten discrepancies of the third segment in extant manuscripts of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra discussed in earlier sections of this article.

<sup>83</sup> See <http://www.eshia.ir/feqh/archive/text/iravani/osool/35/360502/>.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Such opposition results in nullification of both reports provided the conflict is irreconcilable. Of course, this is assuming that both have been contrasted with the Qur’ān and neither is more or less congruent with it irrespective of contextual indicators (*qarā’in*). This is discussed in detail on page 31.

<sup>86</sup> For instance, Khūṭī accepts reports prescribing the act of cursing and swearing at the opponents of the family of the Prophet. See <http://shiaonlineibrary.com/499-الكتاب/533-مصباح-الفاخرة-السيد-الخوني-ج-1/الصفحة>.

individuals, and whether this third segment can be verified as having been issued from the Imām.

In order for the recitation of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra to be designated as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ ritual, there must be a text / report clearly and specifically designating it as such, otherwise its recitation cannot be designated as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ ritual and hence ascribed to the Sharia.<sup>87</sup> This is because all regulations designated as ‘Sharia’ regulations, including encouraged acts (*mustahabbāt*), have to be evinced from the sources of the Sharia in order for them to be ascribed to the Sharia.<sup>88</sup> Therefore, it is not permissible to utilise ‘reliable’ reports permitting the act of cursing the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet generally to substantiate the designation of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act. Such generic reports do not count as evidence for its ‘Sharia-ordainment’, and hence further substantiation is necessary, otherwise its ascription to the Sharia as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act is an unlawful attribution to the Sharia.

#### **b- The ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’**

In this version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, ‘reliability’ is conferred upon a report by virtue of a scholar being ‘personally satisfied’ that the report is ‘reliable’. A scholar’s ‘personal satisfaction’ is based on scholarly endeavour and rigour vis-à-vis the empirical data pertaining to reporters in the chain of transmission and/or other reports expressing similar or related content to the report. Although ‘the trustworthiness of reporters in the chain of transmission’ is a consideration in a scholar’s deliberations, it is neither a necessary nor a sufficient criterion for ‘reliability’.<sup>89</sup> According to this method of ‘reliability’, the numerosity of reports together with other considerations can evoke ‘personal satisfaction’ with regard to an Imām expressing the generic sentiment or theme in a set of multiple reports attributed to him. For instance, based on the numerosity of reports, it is common for scholars to be ‘personally satisfied’ about the following: (a) that the Imāms taught their followers how to curse the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet, and (b) that the Imāms encouraged them to engage in such cursing ceremonially both as individuals and collectivities.

Utilising al-Ṣadr’s rationale, al-Sīstānī asserts regarding reports generally that the cumulative probability of the consensus of scholars, the numerosity of different reports conveying a similar or related sentiment/theme, and the popularity of the sentiment/theme contained in all such reports amongst the public, increases the probability of its issuance from the Imāms.<sup>90</sup> This means that even if a single, clear and reliable report is not available in a particular genre of

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<sup>87</sup> For information on *isnād*, see: (a) section entitled *Tashrī‘* in Ṣanqūr ‘Alī, *Al-Mu‘jam al-Uṣūlī*, 402-5; and (b) Ṣadr, *Durūs fī ‘Ilm al-Uṣūl*, 2: 69-70.

Qur’ān 10:59 addresses the issue of attributing unverified regulations to the Sharia. It employs a conjugate of the verb ‘to fabricate’ when rhetorically questioning the phenomenon.

<sup>88</sup> See previous footnote.

<sup>89</sup> Ghurayfī, *Qawā‘id al-Ḥadīth*, 15-9.

<sup>90</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEoDOmi2bQA&t=5515s> for al-Sayyid Munīr al-Khabbāz’s lecture at the World Federation conference on *Shia Theology: Beliefs and Methodology*, and Munīr al-Khabbāz, *Al-Ḥaqīqa al-Mahdawiya* (Najaf: Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Takhaṣṣuṣiyya, 2009), 70.

reports as per the ‘trustworthiness’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’, it is possible for a scholar to be ‘personally satisfied’ that the general sentiment/theme of multiple precarious reports has been expressed by the Imām to whom the reports are attributed to. However, the mere assertion or even existence of ambiguous knowledge (*‘ilm al-ijmālī*) of the expression of such generic sentiments/themes extrapolated from multiple precarious reports is insufficient as evidence to substantiate a specific formulation in any particular report as ‘Sharia-ordained’, such as the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, for the same reasons as above.

To reiterate, it is possible according to this method to be ‘personally satisfied’ that the general act of cursing the opponents of the family of the Prophet was endorsed by the Imāms based on the cumulative probability of the numerosity of disparate reports discussing it. However, this is insufficient as proof that the Imāms issued the third segment as part of the original Ziyāra ‘Āshūra specifically or that its recitation is a ‘Sharia-ordained’ act. Of course, it is possible that the Imāms did issue the third segment as part of the original Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, and that its recitation is ‘Sharia-ordained’, however there is insufficient evidence to conclude this with the degree of satisfaction required by this version to be able to confer ‘reliability’ upon it.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, according to this method or version of conferring ‘reliability’, scholars are justified in their being ‘personally satisfied’ that the act of cursing the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet was issued from the Imāms; however, ‘personal satisfaction’ is unjustified vis-à-vis the third segment being part of the original Ziyāra ‘Āshūra and the act of its recitation being a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act. This means that (a) the attribution of the issuance of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra to the Imām, and (b) the designation of it as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act, are instances of unlawful attribution to the Imām and unlawful ascription to the Sharia respectively by Sharia standards, and as such must not be done without further argumentation and evidences.

An important critique on (a) the notion of the numerosity of reports as a consideration for ‘reliability’ generally, and (b) the numerosity of reports on the theme of cursing the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet specifically, is that reports are often repetitions or they are narrated by the same groups of people.<sup>92</sup> Hence, the connotations of ‘multitude’ and ‘the innate justifying ability’ conveyed by the notion of “the numerosity of reports” are somewhat deceptive. In fact, many scholars tend to regard the phenomenon of numerous reports on a specific theme in a genre such as this, and the phenomenon of numerous reports on a specific theme from the same groups of people, with suspicion.<sup>93</sup> This is because of the possibility that the motivation behind the proliferation of such reports was political, sectarian and/or the personal agendas of one or more of the reporters in the chains of transmissions, rather than the mere conveyance of the *bona fide* religious instructions of the Imāms.<sup>94</sup> The likelihood of such an occurrence in the genre of cursing generally is fairly high, thus decreasing the possibility of

<sup>91</sup> See footnote 99 for percentages of ‘personal satisfaction’.

<sup>92</sup> See Nāṣir Makārim al-Shīrāzī, *Mutakhab al-Āthār min Biḥār al-Anwār* (Qum: Dār al-Nashr al-Imām ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib, 2012), 9; and Andrew J. Newman, *The Formative Period of Twelver Shī‘ism: Ḥadīth as Discourse between Qum and Baghdad* (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), 52-9 and 67-9.

<sup>93</sup> For an iteration of the same sentiment, see Ja‘far al-Subḥānī, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth wa Ahkāmihī fī ‘Ilm al-Dirāya* (Beirut: Dār Jawād al-A‘imma, 2012), 25-6.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

their issuance from the Imāms, thereby reducing the cumulative probability substantially. Generally, there is a need for a yardstick whereby one can determine what type of content is admissible and to what extent, and what is not admissible.<sup>95</sup> The corpus of Shī'ī ḥadīth literature is replete with reports claiming the Qur'ān has been adulterated, that is, some of its original content has been changed and/or omitted. There are vast numbers of such reports, which classify as “continuous” (*mutawātir*) reports,<sup>96</sup> and yet the majority of scholars, irrespective of which camp of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ they belong to, reject them absolutely, unequivocally and without hesitation.<sup>97</sup> Some scholars do question the ordering of the content of a few of its verses or the recitation of some words on account of the phenomenon of differing recitations (*qirā'āt*); however, such concerns are generally understood to be superfluous in

<sup>95</sup> There is a need to delineate specific criteria of reliability and admissibility for each of the different genres of reports. In the genre of eschatological reports, there are accurate reports with weak chains of transmission. For instance, there is a report prophesying several futuristic technologies, such as humans being able to see each other in the palms of their hands. Some have been realised and others have not as yet, such as teleportation (motion by thought). The accuracy of the report regarding some of them lends confidence regarding the accuracy of the remainder. Thus, in certain genres of reports, ‘the empirical verification of part of the content of a report’ is a more significant consideration in relation to ascribing such reports to a loftier source than say the consideration of ‘the numerosity of reports’.

<sup>96</sup> For examples of reports, see <http://www.khettal.com/alrad/tahrif/5.htm>.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. There are numerous reports within al-Kāfi and other ḥadīth works stating that the Qur'ān is adulterated. (For examples, see <http://holyquran.net/books/tahreef/6.html>.) Al-Kulaynī maintained that all the reports in his work (al-Kāfi) are reliable. (See Ghurayfī, *Qawā'id al-Ḥadīth*, 24.) Scholars deem all such reports to be false because they conflict with verses of the Qur'ān. (Abū al-Qāsim al-Mūsawī al-Khū'ī, *The Prolegomena to the Qur'ān* (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, 2000), 137-47.) For instance, al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṣadūq (the latter's full name is Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin 'Alī bin al-Ḥusayn bin Mūsā al-Qummī and he died in 991-1 CE) declare the Qur'ān to be uncorruptible. (Ibid, 137.) Thus on several issues, scholars forgo the rationale that the numerosity of reports results in ambiguous knowledge vis-à-vis the general theme / sentiment of the reports (which in this instance is the adulteration of the Qur'ān).

Other examples include (i) numerous reports attributing hundreds of miracles to the Prophet and Imāms, thereby contravening the Qur'ān (for instance, see Qur'ān 17:93), and (ii) numerous reports stating that Shī'as and the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet are created from the clay of Paradise and Hell respectively, and because the two clays have mixed to a certain extent, it is possible for the latter to commit adultery and the former to commit good deeds; however, the sins of Shī'as will be transferred to the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet, and the good deeds of the latter will be transferred to the former, on the Day of Resurrection. (For examples, see <http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/437> الكافي-الشيخ-الكليني-ج-١-الصفحة 1122/الكتب/top.)

The ‘Shī'a-clay’ example is an instance of the plethora of exclusivist theologies attributed to the Imāms. It is irrational and conflicts with the Qur'ānic ethos of ‘none bearing the burden of another’ (Qur'ān 35:18). This is not to deny the notion of God choosing a group of people on the basis of merit; however, appropriating ‘chosenness’ and ‘specialness’ to a group of people on the basis of their persuasion or ethnicity conflicts with the Qur'ān. The notion of groups of people being *chosen* in and for particular existential contexts is asserted by the Qur'ān (45:16) and hence is rational, that is, it does not compromise the notion of justice.

Such examples demonstrate that the phenomenon of the numerosity of reports is not an evidence in itself in the domain of theology. In jurisprudence, it is considered to be a significant indication of the issuance of the content of such reports, or the generic sentiment / theme therein, from the Imāms, provided nothing conflicts with the Qur'ān or reason. Therefore, it is necessary to (a) distinguish between different genres of reports, such as theological, philosophical, eschatological, ethical, and legal, and (b) realise that the notion of the numerosity of reports is not a significant indication of the reliability of the content, or generic sentiment / theme, of reports in every genre. Every genre of reports must have different criteria of reliability.

Finally, it is not unreasonable to assert that the Imāms would have felt discontentment vis-à-vis the actions of the three caliphs near the time of the demise of the blessed Prophet and after.

light of the fact that the Imāms read, lived by and revered the Qur'ān, and attested to its completion, infallibility, and its being divinely protected.<sup>98</sup>

The amorphousness of the notion of 'personal satisfaction' is obvious to scholars familiar with the 'personal satisfaction' version of 'the transmission-reliability criterion'. The following questions are pertinent: What exactly constitutes 'satisfaction'?<sup>99</sup> What are the exact means yielding 'satisfaction' to rational agents generally? Are the same criteria yielding 'satisfaction' for the legist vis-à-vis normative reports sufficient to validate reports of all other genres? In other words, are the criteria defined as necessary for a jurist to be 'personally satisfied' in relation to a report establishing a regulation – for instance, of personal hygiene – uniform and hence sufficient for all other genres of reports? Are such criteria appropriate for the 'personal satisfaction' of a scholar with respect to a report claiming the Imām instituted a ceremonial practice of cursing the opponents of the family of the Prophet in view of its potential for discord and bloodshed?<sup>100</sup>

A common justification cited regarding the cursing of the three caliphs is that the Imāms taught such ceremonies to certain individuals only. This would mean the remit of all such reports is restricted to the individuals being addressed and hence cannot be used as evidences to extend the practice of cursing the opponents of the family of the Prophet beyond the individuals being addressed, that is, to other individuals or collectivities. There are also claims that the Imāms recommended the performance of cursing the opponents of the family of the Prophet, which include the three caliphs, on particular occasions, such as the day of 'Āshūra. All such reports and claims need to be verified, otherwise they tantamount to instances of unlawfully ascribing regulations to the Sharia. However, both claims – that the Imāms instructed specific individuals to curse the caliphs and instated the performance of such cursing on specific occasions – are implausible and will be addressed in the next section of this article.

As regards advising the faithful among the Shī'a to recite the third segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra al-Mashhūra with the intention of adopting a position of 'neutrality' or 'suspending judgment' (*tawaqquf*) about whether the third segment was part of the original Ziyāra 'Āshūra, such advice is a concession to the fact that it is not possible to verify whether the third segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra al-Mashhūra was issued from the Imām. This means it cannot qualify as a

<sup>98</sup> Khū'ī, *The Prolegomena to the Qur'ān*, 137-47.

<sup>99</sup> According to some scholars, a scholar qualifies as being 'personally satisfied' if he/she has between 85% to 97% surety that a given report is reliable. Ḥāshim, *Mukhtārāt Rijāliyya*, 61-2.

<sup>100</sup> There are ongoing discussions as to what the exact empirical sources or means of reliability are that grant 'personal satisfaction' vis-à-vis the reliability of reporters and reports. The context of such discussions is the possibility for a scholar to not be 'personally satisfied' about the reliability of a reporter or report that another scholar was 'personally satisfied' about, which is tantamount to the former's rejection of the latter's empirical sources or means of reliability. (See *ibid*, 53-4.)

For instance, both al-Kulaynī and al-Ṣadūq maintain that all the reports in their works are reliable, and yet scholars from the same school of thought, such as al-Ṭūsī, reject parts of their collections because they consider their sources or means of reliability to be defective. (See <https://hawzah.net/ar/Question/View/62219>-*فهل-ان-جميع-روايات-الكافي-صحيحة*) As mentioned in footnote 97, al-Kulaynī includes several reports in his work (*al-Kāfī*) alleging that the Qur'ān is adulterated, and yet al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṣadūq reject them despite belonging to the same school of thought. This demonstrates that (a) the consideration of the numerosity of reports was not significant for them in and of itself, that is, independently of the content of the reports, and (b) the 'personal satisfaction' version of 'the transmission-reliability criterion' is ambiguous.

‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act, and its recitation has no significance jurisprudentially. Some scholars may appeal to ‘the maxim of leniency’ (*qā’ida tasāmuh fī adilla al-sunan*) to justify the continuation of the practice of reciting the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra.<sup>101</sup> It should be noted that even if the criticisms of the maxim’s problematic nature are ignored and it is assumed for argument’s sake that the maxim is sound, the maxim’s functionality is restricted to unsubstantiated claims or practices attributed to the Prophet or Imām that are unopposed by other reports or considerations. Thus, the maxim cannot be applied to claims and practices in reports that are opposed by other reports and considerations without further argumentation.

A final point prior to concluding this section: Al-Ṭūsī is recorded as having stated that the four unknown cursed individuals refer to Qābīl (the son of Prophet Ādam), the killer of the camel of Prophet Ṣāliḥ, the killer of Prophet Yaḥyā and the killer of Imām ‘Alī.<sup>102</sup> Based on this, it can be surmised that the practice of cursing the four unknown individuals was being performed by Shi‘as of that time. Al-Ṭūsī is said to have offered this response to the Abbasid caliph upon being questioned about the identities of the four persons in the *du‘ā* of ‘Āshūra (and not the Ziyāra) in light of the fact that the three caliphs were not directly related to the killing of al-Imām al-Ḥusayn.<sup>103</sup> This means the second and third segments, which includes the cursing of the four unknown individuals, were part of a supplication performed after Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. No reference is made to their inclusion or relation to the Ziyāra itself, lending support to the view that it was not part of the original form of the Ziyāra. In any case, the fact that the cursing of the four unknown individuals is not included in the version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in Kāmil al-Ziyārāt and cannot be sourced with assurance from the original manuscripts of both versions of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid means that the level of ‘satisfaction’ required to justifiably declare its inclusion in the original form of the Ziyāra is lacking.<sup>104</sup>

The following are the conclusions of the manuscript and ḥadīth analysis delineated above:

1. The attribution of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra to the original form of the Ziyāra, and hence to the Imām, cannot be verified as it stands.
2. One can be confident that the first and fourth segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra were part of the original form of the Ziyāra based on both versions of al-Ṭūsī’s Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid.
3. One can be fairly confident that the second segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra was part of the original form of the Ziyāra based on Ibn Qawlawayh’s Kāmil al-Ziyārāt.

<sup>101</sup> See Ṣadr, *Durūs fī ‘Ilm al-Uṣūl*, 2: 190-3. The maxim implies that leniency should be applied to a report signifying a recommended regulation that has a defective chain of transmission. The evidences for the maxim are reports stating that a person who performs an action on the basis of being informed of its reward and goodness will receive that reward in the Hereafter, even if the blessed Prophet or Imāms never stated it. The maxim has been rejected by both al-Khū‘ī and al-Sīstānī. (See Abū Qāsim al-Khū‘ī, *Mawsū‘āt al-Imām al-Khū‘ī: Miṣbāḥ al-Uṣūl*, 50 vols. (Qum: Mu’assasa al-Khū‘ī al-Islāmī, 2009) 47:369; and ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Sīstānī, *Minḥāj al-Ṣāliḥīn*, 3 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Mu‘arrikh al-‘Arabī, 2013) 1:15.)

<sup>102</sup> See Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 26-29 and 131-2; Ṭahrānī, *Shifā’ al-Ṣudūr fī Sharḥ Ziyāra al-‘Āshūr*, 2: 379-80; and <http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/6/الكتب/2934/الفهرست-الشيخ-الطوسي/الصفحة> - top.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Also, its absence in the early works of ḥadīth, such as al-Kāfī, indicates that early scholars did not have any such ‘personal satisfaction’. Rāḍī, *Ziyāra ‘Āshūra fī al-Mizān*, 109-14.

4. Should the original manuscripts of al-Ṭūsī's Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Saghīr and/or other manuscript copies of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid al-Kabīr be found that include the third segment as part of the main body of the text of the original Ziyāra 'Āshūra, then one can be confident that it was a part of the original Ziyāra.
5. Should other manuscript copies of Ibn Qawlawayh's Kāmil al-Ziyārāt be found that include the third segment as part of the main body of the text of the original Ziyāra 'Āshūra, then one can be confident that it was a part of the original Ziyāra.

It should be noted that even if the third segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra al-Mashhūra were to be found in as yet undiscovered original manuscripts of both versions of Miṣbāḥ al-Mutaḥajjid and/or Kāmil al-Ziyārāt, and even if its attribution and/or the attribution of other similar texts to the Imāms was justified by either or both versions of 'the transmission-reliability criterion', the question remains as to whether it is possible for an Imām *qua* Imām to issue such instructions. The reliability of reports cannot be assessed and concluded independently of their content – a case in point being the numerous reports asserting the occurrence of the phenomenon of the adulteration of the Qur'ān by omission of its verses.<sup>105</sup>

The next section discusses whether an Imām would prescribe the ceremonial cursing of the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet.

### **Section Three – Verification of the Third Segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra in Accordance with 'the Content-Reliability Criterion'**

The content of any given report must be scrutinised in two ways: firstly by reason and secondly in accordance with Sharia stipulated guidance. The third segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra al-Mashhūra is subjected to both forms of scrutiny in the following two sub-sections:

#### **Rational Analysis of the Content of the Third Segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra**

Reason dictates that an Imām *qua* 'a successor of the blessed Prophet' must be an expositor of the teachings of the Qur'ān and the conduct of the Prophet, and as such his worldview, ethics and praxis must be informed by the Qur'ān and the conduct of the Prophet wholly. Hence, an Imām's worldview, ethics and praxis cannot contravene the ethos of the Qur'ān and Prophet.<sup>106</sup> Among the ethics of the Qur'ān and blessed Prophet are the dictums of uniting or establishing harmony between individuals, families, communities, and societies, and the preservation of life unless absolutely necessary. These are conveyed in Imām 'Alī's will to his children and the Hashimites, "Let me not find you partaking in the blood of Muslims, chanting the slogan, 'the

<sup>105</sup> See Khū'ī, *The Prolegomena to the Qur'ān*, 137-47.

<sup>106</sup> See footnote 37. When God informed the angels that He would make a steward on earth, they protested stating that he would cause corruption and bloodshed, which are incompatible with the stewardship of God. (Qur'ān 2:30) The blessed Prophet and Imāms, who are exemplars of God's stewardship, were mindful of the human propensity to cause corruption and bloodshed and hence were tasked with curtailing it (and not exacerbating it). In fact, the Prophetic message appealed to its initial audience precisely because it called for an ending of past grievances, feuds, and vendettas. It brought hearts and minds together and directed them as a united community resulting in the emergence of a nation and civilisation.

commander of the faithful has been murdered!” and his final admonition, “For the sake of Allah, arrange your affairs and reconcile between yourselves, for that is better than lengthy acts of devotion.”<sup>107</sup>

Thus, an Imām can never be the cause of discord and bloodshed. To claim the Imāms taught the ceremonial cursing of the three caliphs is inconsistent with their role *qua* Imāms, which is to maintain Muslim unity and ensure peace and harmony. During his caliphate, Imām ‘Alī enacted the following Qur’ānic guidance when confronted with civil strife: “And if two parties among the believers fight, then make peace between them. And if one of them transgresses upon the other, then fight the one transgressing until it returns to the rule of Allah. And if it returns [to the rule of Allah], then make peace between them in all fairness and be just...”.<sup>108</sup> Accordingly, he resisted engaging in battle initially, and when he had to engage, he did so to the extent required to re-establish peace and unity.

To maintain that the Imāms taught the ceremonial cursing of the three caliphs undermines the characteristics of wisdom and foresight of the Imām. The blessed Imāms would have known (based on their foresight and wisdom) that such teachings, even if they be private, would become public and widespread, creating a whole culture in which cursing the caliphs ceremonially would become the norm, and hence contributing to discord and bloodshed.<sup>109</sup> Obviously the Imāms would have realised that such teachings would also result in the expression of hatred towards Imām ‘Alī and the cursing of him publicly.<sup>110</sup> If it is claimed the Imāms did not possess knowledge of the unseen, then undoubtedly the wisdom and ethics of the Imāms would have prevailed whereby they would have curtailed themselves from issuing such detrimental practices. Furthermore, it is obvious that to teach and institute practices that lead to the fragmentation of a community would result in a reversion to the tribalistic mindset prevalent in pagan Arabia.<sup>111</sup>

It is inaccurate to claim (i) that since rational judgements fluctuate with time and place, the faculty of reason cannot be utilised to discount divisive texts and exclusivist theologies, or (ii) that rational values prompting the issuance of such statements are incomprehensible. This is because the faculty of reason is endowed with the innate ability to perceive simultaneously (a) the general meaning of justice, which is to give everything its rightful place and due, irrespective of context, and (b) how to appropriate rights in accordance with the specific existential aptitudes of individuals and collectivities in any given context.<sup>112</sup> Thus, as human

<sup>107</sup> See <https://research.rafed.net/الإمام-علي-بن-أبيطالب-عليهما-السلام/3040-وصايا-الخالدة-لأمير-المؤمنين-عليه-السلام>.

The occurrence of civil wars amongst Muslims after the murder of caliph ‘Uthmān prompted Imām ‘Alī to emphasise the principle of unity and societal harmony in formulations such as these. The pretext of the battles of ‘the camel’ (*al-jamal*) and *Ṣiffīn* was the claim of dissenting groups to avenge the unlawful and unjust killing of caliph ‘Uthmān.

<sup>108</sup> See Qur’ān 49:9.

<sup>109</sup> Refer to footnotes 16 and 17.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 16-20.

<sup>112</sup> For more information on the notions of ‘existential aptitudes’, ‘collectivities’ and the faculties of reason and intuition, see the forward and Lectures 8 and 9 in Abdul Hussain, *Islam and God-Centricity*, Book 4; and see the author’s paper entitled, ‘The Conflict between the Actual and Apparent Regulations – Part 2: The Solution of “The Existential Framework”’, pages 14-17, in his personal website: <http://www.shaykharif.com/the-conflict->

nobility becomes refined and the faculty of the intellect (*al-‘aql* – which signifies the faculties of intuition and reason operating in tandem) actualises its potential (for it is the nature of all things within the evolutionary ontological aspect of existence to actualise their potential), the existential aptitudes increase and hence the sense of rights change.<sup>113</sup> This is why slavery, which was an acceptable societal custom throughout pre-modern human history, is understood to be an instance of injustice and oppression in the modern period. Similarly, it was an acceptable societal custom in pre-modern societies for women to not be accorded the right to divorce, but in the majority of contemporary societies it is viewed as an infringement of women’s rights and hence unjust.<sup>114</sup>

With regard to any given collectivity (which includes the family unit, community, society, nation state, bloc, or humanity as a whole) irrespective of the existential context (that is, regardless of time, place and existential aptitudes of the people of that time and place), the faculty of reason always judges discord and bloodshed within any given collectivity as unproductive and inconsistent with human growth, all things being equal; hence, it could never endorse individual and/or collective practices that have the potential to cause discord and bloodshed in any given collectivity, and it can never accept that the Divine has ordained the institutionalisation of such practices, all things being equal.<sup>115</sup>

Thus, there is a need to distinguish between (a) the faculty of reason with its innate ability and function to recognise instances of injustice and reformulate judgements and norms that are not unjust, and (b) past judgements and norms that may or may not be reasonable in any given situation. This will assist scholars and legists to overcome the complexity of dealing with texts the faculty of reason deems to be problematic in different existential contexts. It should be noted that the refutation of a notion, theme, or sentiment by the faculty of reason does not necessitate an in-depth study of all the material pertaining to that notion, theme, or sentiment; and neither is such a refutation by reason undermined by the fact that great numbers of scholars subscribe to that notion, theme, or sentiment. For instance, Muslim scholars have not studied trinitarian theology and its defence in all the literature that is written, and yet the faculty of reason refutes it and can justify its refutation of it, and this judgement of reason is not undermined by the fact that tens of thousands of Christian scholars subscribe to it. Thus, it is possible for the faculty of reason to detect and refute errors in areas of one’s own and the “other’s” ideology, theology, reports (and their genres), history, and jurisprudence without surveying all the literature pertaining to those areas.

Finally, for an Imām to preach an exclusivist theology and/or teach his followers how to swear at and curse the three caliphs (even if it is to be done covertly) is unethical in any given situation

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[between-the-actual-and-apparent-regulations](#). The discussions in the former (the author’s book) root the faculties of intuition and reason within an evolutionary ontology of existence. The functions of the reason include verifying, proving, and justifying the insights of intuition.

<sup>113</sup> See Abdul Hussain, *Islam and God-Centricity*, Book 4, 138-46.

<sup>114</sup> See S. Mohammad Ghari S. Fatemi, ‘Autonomy and Equal Right to Divorce with Specific Reference to Shi’i Fiqh and the Iranian Legal System.’ *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 17, no. 3 (2006): 281-4.

<sup>115</sup> See references in footnotes 112.

and hence irrational in itself especially when the practices have the potential for creating societal discord and bloodshed.

### **Content-Analysis of the Third Segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra in Accordance with the Sharia Stipulated Guidance: The Golden Principle – Contrasting Ḥadīth with the Qur’ān**

The maxim of ‘contrasting and verifying reports (ḥadīth) with the Qur’ān’ is derived from the following statement attributed to the blessed Prophet: “Compare whatever is attributed to me (ḥadīth) with the Qur’ān. If it concurs with the Qur’ān, then accept it, otherwise throw it against the wall.”<sup>116</sup> The maxim has been reiterated by several Imāms in the context of a plethora of spurious reports being attributed to them.<sup>117</sup> The maxim can also be extrapolated from the following famous statement of the Prophet: “I leave behind two weighty things: the Book of God and my progeny. You will not be misled as long as you hold onto both, and they will not separate from each other...”.<sup>118</sup> The phrase “... they will not separate from each other...” signifies that the Qur’ān and statements and actions of the progeny of the Prophet will always be congruent and will never conflict with each other. Thus, if reports conflict with the Qur’ān and are irreconcilable with it, then such reports cannot have issued from the progeny of the Prophet and hence must be rejected. This is because reports are predominantly speculative vis-à-vis their attribution to the Imāms, whereas verses of the Qur’ān enjoy certitude vis-à-vis their attribution to God.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, the Qur’ān is to be given precedence over reports in every sense.<sup>120</sup> Accordingly, the Qur’ān enjoys epistemic superiority over reports; in fact, it is because of this superiority that the Imāms evinced their own jurisprudential maxims and judgements from the Qur’ān.<sup>121</sup> To reiterate, the Qur’ān was the source and basis of the jurisprudential maxims and judgements of the blessed Imāms, and this is why they emphasised repeatedly that at the level of conflict between their reports, the preferential factor is to accept the report that is in conformity with the Qur’ān.<sup>122</sup>

It is on the basis of this golden principle that al-Sīstānī (who subscribes to the ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’) rejects a report stating that interacting Kurdish people is prohibited because they are a species of Jinn from who the veil has been removed. He reasons that the report conflicts with the spirit of the Qur’ān.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>116</sup> This report and its other iterations can be found in <http://shiaonlineibrary.com/الکتاب-1122-الكافي-الشيخ-الكليبي-ج-1/الصفحة-117>.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> A slightly different version of this report is in Muḥammad bin Ya‘qūb al-Kulaynī, *Uṣūl al-Kāfī* (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Fajr, 2007), 1: 177.

<sup>119</sup> See Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muzaffār, *Uṣūl al-fiqh* (Qum: Intishārāt Ismā‘īliyāt, 2004), 3: 45 and 59-61.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, 203-4.

<sup>121</sup> Frequently, the Imāms would state a maxim and then cite the verse of the Qur’ān from which it can be extrapolated. For examples of this, see the jurisprudential discourse on consumables (*al-aṭ‘ima wa al-ashriba*). One such example is the precept of permissibility (*aṣl al-ḥill*), and it can be found in Bāqir al-Īrwānī, *Durūs Tamhīdiyya fī al-Fiqh al-istidlālī ‘alā al-Maḍhab al-Ja‘farī* (Qum: Mu‘assasa al-Fiqh li-l-Ṭibā‘a wa al-Nashr, 2001), 3: 118.

<sup>122</sup> Muzaffār, *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, 3: 203-4.

<sup>123</sup> Sīstānī, *Ta‘arūḍ al-Adilla wa Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth*, 380.

Similarly, he rejects reports ordaining the act of falsely accusing the people of innovation because they conflict with the spirit of the Qur'ān and the established conduct of the family of the blessed Prophet,<sup>124</sup> despite al-Khū'ī's acceptance of such reports in accordance with the "trustworthiness of the reporter" version of 'the transmission-reliability criterion'.<sup>125</sup> Undoubtedly, al-Khū'ī accepts such reports because he considers them to be congruent with the Quran. This difference (between the two scholars) emphasises the ambiguity in the methodology of determining contents of reports that are reconcilable with the Qur'ān and those that are not. This point cannot be overstated.

The relationship between reports (*aḥādīth*) and the Qur'ān requires lengthy discussions, however the following points are necessary to delineate here: The Qur'ān categorises its verses into 'clear' and 'ambiguous'.<sup>126</sup> The role of reports is to explain both the ambiguous and clear verses; they often provide details vis-à-vis the latter.<sup>127</sup> With respect to the theology, ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān, reports are simply expository, whereas with regards to the regulations of the Qur'ān, reports are expository, stipulative and contextualising.<sup>128</sup> This is because the theology, ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān are its essential teachings and as such are merely to be explained; whereas, in addition to exposition, the regulations of the Qur'ān are in need of being formulated according to differing existential contexts due to their being minimalistic, general, and more 'essential' in tone.<sup>129</sup> Such contextual formulations ensure regulations remain optimal in assisting people of differing existential contexts to attain the essence of regulations.<sup>130</sup> Regulative reports can specify (*takhsīs*), qualify (*taqyīd*) and authoritatively modify (*hukūma*) generic regulative verses of the Qur'ān, and in theory abrogate (*naskh*) the regulative 'forms' in its verses with other more optimal 'forms', thereby securing the 'essences' of the Qur'ān's regulative 'forms'.<sup>131</sup> With respect to the theology, ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān, the expository role of reports merely facilitates their establishment in the soul of the individual and collectivity. In cases of conflict between the theology of the Qur'ān and the theology propounded in reports,

<sup>124</sup> See <https://hobbollah.com/araa/ول-الأخرين-على-الافتراء-والبهتان>.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. Also see <http://shiaonlinelibrary.com/499/الصفحة-ج-1-الصفحة-533/مصباح-الفقاهة-السيد-الخوئي> for al-Khū'ī's acceptance of reports ordaining acts of cursing and swearing at the opponents of the family of the blessed Prophet. It is not clear whether al-Sīstānī rejects these reports, however based on his rejection of reports ordaining the act of falsely accusing the people of innovation, it is likely that he does. (See link in previous footnote.)

<sup>126</sup> See Qur'ān 3:7.

<sup>127</sup> Muẓaffar, *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, 1: 143.

<sup>128</sup> For information on their role vis-à-vis regulations, see 'Abd al-Hādī al-Faḍlī, *Introduction to Ḥadīth* (London: ICAS Press, 2002), 50-4.

<sup>129</sup> See Arif Abdul Hussain, 'The Existential Perspective on the Meaning and Implication of Impure Substances within Shī'ī Jurisprudential Discourse', *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> AMI Contemporary Fiqhī Issues Workshop 2*, 2022, 84-5.

<sup>130</sup> See author's paper entitled, 'The Conflict between the Actual and Apparent Regulations – Part 2: The Solution of "The Existential Framework"', pages 8-9, 17 and 21-7, in his personal website: <http://www.shaykharif.com/the-conflict-between-the-actual-and-apparent-regulations>; and Abdul Hussain, *Islam and God-Centricity*, Book 4, 47, 56, 62, 71, 78, 85, 87-8, 92, 109-10, 122, 126-9, 131, 139, 142-4, 148, 153 and 165-9.

<sup>131</sup> See Muẓaffar, *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, 1: 30-3, 121-48 and 149-71, and 3: 46-52 and 176-80.

it may be possible to reconcile some of them by offering esoteric interpretations with the caveat that such interpretations do not undermine the apparent meaning of the Qur'ān.<sup>132</sup>

The following are some principles that constitute the theology and ethos of the holy Qur'ān:<sup>133</sup>

- The unity of God.
- The fact of accountability on the Day of Reckoning to God.
- The exclusivity of devotion to God.
- The sacredness of human life.
- The actualisation of human nobility.
- Seeking proximity to God by means of God-consciousness.
- The establishment of the principle of justice.
- The lack of coercion.
- Continually endeavouring to create and maintain the harmony and virtuousness of the collectivity.<sup>134</sup>

The blessed Prophet was charged with the task of establishing the ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān with his speech, body, and mind from the age of forty until his death. Subsequently, the Imāms were assigned the same task by virtue of being his successors.

Consider the following verses of the Qur'ān demonstrating (a) the connection between godliness and a cohesive society, (b) the imperative to be united, and (c) the reprehensibility of societal discord: (i) “He brought your hearts together, thus you became brothers by His grace,” and (ii) “hold fast to the rope of God all together and be not divided.”<sup>135</sup> (The following are examples of verses of the Qur'ān confirming and evoking the blessed Prophet's antipathy towards societal divisions and discord:) (iii) “Indeed those who divided their religion and became sects, you [O Prophet] are nothing to do with them”, (iv) “Say, He is able to send punishment upon you from above you or from beneath your feet, or to confuse you in sects and make you taste the violence of one another.”, and (v) “... be not of the polytheists, those who divided their religion and became sects, each party happy with what is theirs.”<sup>136</sup> The former

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<sup>132</sup> This principle is espoused in Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Mu'assasa al-U'lāmī li-l-Maṭbū'āt, 1997), 10 and 16.

Obviously, the notion of the apparent meaning covers both the conventionally understood real and/or metaphorical meaning of the sentence.

The following is a rationally based empirical argument for this principle: had the Imāms expressed theological interpretations contravening the apparent meaning of the Qur'ān, then they would have been (a) inundated with questions about them and (b) charged with departing from the Qur'ān; however, such charges are not to be found.

<sup>133</sup> See ‘hermeneutical keys’ in Farid Esack, *Qur'ān, Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002), 83 and 86-110.

<sup>134</sup> For instance, see Qur'ān (a) 2:143 – Thus We have appointed you a middle nation..., (b) 3:104 – And let there be a group among you who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong..., (c) 3:110 – You are the best community brought forth to humankind enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong..., (d) 3:134 – [you are] those who control their wrath and are forgiving toward humankind..., (e) 3:159 – It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them [O Muḥammad], for if thou had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs..., and (f) 21:92 – Surely this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord; so serve Me.

<sup>135</sup> See Qur'ān 3:103.

<sup>136</sup> See Qur'ān 6:159, 6:65 and 30:32.

set of verses focus on the importance of uniting and bringing about harmony among Muslims, while the latter discuss the ills and harmful effects of discord and instruct the Prophet and Muslims not to do the same. Such verses corroborate the ethos and spirit of unity and assist in establishing and enshrining it in Muslim consciousness as that which cannot be undermined. As exemplars of the blessed Prophet, the Imāms are expected to epitomise this ethos and spirit of unity in the Qur'ān throughout their lives.<sup>137</sup>

Moreover, when Muslims experienced discord amongst themselves, the Qur'ān instructed neutral parties to reconcile between them or to assist the oppressed group against the aggressors until the latter returned to the rule of God.<sup>138</sup> The Qur'ān instructed the same vis-à-vis the disbelievers of Mecca – it ordained fighting only to the extent needed.<sup>139</sup> The Qur'ān detests bloodshed and disharmony in itself.<sup>140</sup>

Therefore, to accept reports attributed to the Imāms prescribing views, rituals and behaviours compromising the peace and unity of the Muslim community is untenable, and to try to reconcile such divisive teachings with the spirit of the Qur'ān, or to claim that such a reconciliation is possible, necessitates eisegesis and hence is unjustifiable. Given its potential for causing discord and bloodshed, the Imāms would not and could not have taught the ceremonial cursing of the three caliphs.<sup>141</sup> This is supported by the fact that al-Ṭūsī was very careful about disclosing the identities of the four unnamed individuals referred to in the *du'ā'* of 'Āshūra when asked publicly.<sup>142</sup> Similarly, the claim that the Imāms taught such practices to some of their followers only is equally indefensible. Both claims bring the 'wisdom' and 'foresight' of the Imāms into question for two reasons: firstly, the consequences of such practices on Muslim unity have been catastrophic throughout Muslim history, and secondly, the implication is that they taught private practices to undiscerning followers who made them public. Thus, an Imām with foresight of events that are to transpire would never teach such practices to even a select group of people. Moreover, beyond all such considerations, it is clear that the dignity and nobility of their office, station and personage could never permit them to condone such practices.<sup>143</sup>

To claim that the act of teaching and prescribing the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs can be justified by verses of the Qur'ān in which the enemies of God and people who

<sup>137</sup> The unity of Muslims is impeded by the notion of the "chosen" sect (or group of people). Every Muslim sect propounds an exclusivist theology based on numerous reports that conflict with other reports and verses of the Qur'ān, such as 49:13: "... indeed the noblest among you [O humankind] in the sight of God is the most god-conscious of you." (For examples of reports, see <http://shiaonlineibrary.com/-ج-الكافي-الشيخ-الكليبي-1122/الكتب/437-الصفحة-top>.) The exclusivist claims of the Medinan Jews and Christians, which were based on their respective religious texts, were challenged and refuted by the Qur'ān. (For instance, see Qur'ān 2:80-2 and 111-3.) The mindset of *the superiority of 'my' sect over others* continues its discrimination within each sect by setting up hierarchies amongst its adherents based on superiority. This is evident in every sect today.

<sup>138</sup> See Qur'ān 49:9.

<sup>139</sup> See Qur'ān 9:1-8.

<sup>140</sup> This can be extrapolated from many verses of the Qur'ān, such as 2:30 for instance.

<sup>141</sup> See footnotes 16 and 17.

<sup>142</sup> See page 22.

<sup>143</sup> For an accurate portrayal of the dignity and nobility of the Imām's office, station, and personage, read the supplication entitled 'His Supplication on Noble Moral Traits and Acts Pleasing to God' in Imam Zayn al-'Abidin 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, *The Psalms of Islam* (London: Muhammadi Trust, 1988), 67-76.

deliberately conceal the truth are cursed, is untenable.<sup>144</sup> This is because the objective of all such verses is to establish the ethos and principles of the Qur'ān mentioned above, whereas to teach and prescribe the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs is to nullify the ethos and principles those verses presuppose and seek to establish; for to enact such teachings and prescriptions is to cause disharmony and potential violence and bloodshed within Muslim collectivities. Hence, none of the verses prescribe a ritual of ceremonial cursing.

Thus, all arguments utilising verses of the Qur'ān to justify the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs are instances of equivocation and fallacious analogy resulting from conflating the meaning and objective of cursing as mentioned in the Qur'ān with the ritual of communal cursing, the former being a display of abhorrence towards, and a distancing from, actions and traits that are inconsistent with the authority of God and the truth.<sup>145</sup> In order to successfully justify the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs by appealing to verses of the Qur'ān, arguments would need to cite verses in which cursing the enemies of God, his prophets and the believers was institutionalised or being exhorted to as a communal practice. It should be noted that the Qur'ān does not even institutionalise the cursing of Iblīs, who is a confirmed enemy of God and a sworn enemy of humanity. Similarly, the ritual of ceremonially cursing has not been institutionalised vis-à-vis the pharaoh or even the enemies of the blessed Prophet, such as Abū Lahab, the hypocrites of Medina, or his adversaries amongst the Meccans, including Abū Sufyān.

Therefore, even if the third segment of Ziyāra 'Āshūra al-Mashhūra could be verified as veracious / authentic by either or both versions of 'the transmission-reliability criterion', it

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<sup>144</sup> For instance, see Qur'ān 3:87. Such verses condemning the disbelievers of Mecca (who were sworn enemies of Allah) are usually cited to justify the ceremonial cursing of the three caliphs. Scholars against the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs appeal to Qur'ān 6:108. The counter given by pro-cursing scholars is that the verse prohibits the act of swearing and not cursing. However, it is clear that the spirit / meaning / principle of the verse is 'to expect similar reactions to be directed at one's own revered figures when engaging in acts insulting and cursing the revered figures of others'.

It should be noted that verse 2:159 of the Qur'ān makes reference to "cursers cursing them". One may argue that "the cursers" are a group of people tasked with cursing. The specific context the verse is responding to (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) is people concealing what Allah has revealed, and hence the referent of "them" is such people. Both Shī'a and Sunnī exegeses concur that the referents of 'the cursers' are all instances of existence. Thus, the verse means that everything in existence is cursing such people, that is, each thing curses them at the level of its existential state. Certain Shī'a reports state that the referents of 'the cursers' are the Imāms. Assuming this latter interpretation is valid for argument's sake, then the act and obligation of cursing the opponents of the family of the Prophet is confined to the Imāms, for if it were to be generalised beyond them, then (a) the ethos, ethics and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān, (b) the Sunna of Prophet, and (c) the praxis of Imam Ali, will be contravened. (See <http://shiaonlineibrary.com/390-الكتب/2406-تفسير-الميزان-السيد-الطباطبائي-ج-1/الصفحة> - top and the next few pages.)

Similarly, the supplication of Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn entitled "His Supplication on the Day of Sacrifice and Fridays" has a verse (refer to verse 10) imprecating the enemies of God's representatives. Aside from the issue of not knowing how many and which supplications in his work al-Ṣaḥīfa al-Sajjādiyya are authentic, veracious, and found in earlier sources, should such verses be found to be authentic, then the prerogative of such cursing would be the Imām's alone for the same reasons stated in the previous paragraph. (See Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn, *The Psalms of Islam*, 190.)

Additionally, the Arabic phraseology of the next verse (refer to verse 11 – "And hasten for them relief, ease, assistance and strengthening...") needs to be examined to ascertain whether such phraseology was employed by Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn (See *ibid.*)

<sup>145</sup> For examples, see Qur'ān 2:159-62 and 4:51-2. These and all other verses of the Qur'ān in which God curses certain groups of people are not institutionalising ceremonial cursing.

cannot be verified as per ‘the content-reliability criterion’. Generally, (a) the act of ceremonially cursing the caliphs, (b) the belief in divisive theologies, and/or (c) the promotion of soteriological exclusivism, conflict with the Qur’ān and the conduct of the blessed Prophet and the first Imām. Thus, the numerosity of reports condoning discord and promoting soteriological exclusivism is irrelevant as a consideration of reliability so long as it contravenes the theology, ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur’ān.<sup>146</sup>

Finally, if one were to concede to the claim for argument’s sake that it is possible to substantiate the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra by verses of the Qur’ān as per ‘the content-reliability criterion’, then the issue of the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra would fall under the remit of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) as one of conflict between the reports of the Imāms. This is because there are reports attributed to the Imāms conveying their aversion towards followers who slander, curse, and swear at sinners, criminals and/or tyrants. For instance, Imām ‘Alī is attributed to have stated, “I hate for you [my followers] to be slanderers, cursers, swearing, and repudiating, but if you describe the evils of their actions and mention their situation and story, it would be factual...”.<sup>147</sup> According to the Principles of Jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), in cases of conflict between reports, the legist (*faqīh*) must contrast conflicting reports with the Qur’ān and accept the report that is more congruent with it and reject the less congruent report. The report may be more congruent than the other with the aid of contextual indicators (*qarā’in*) or without them. In cases where one of the reports is congruent with the Qur’ān with the aid of the contextual indicators and the other is congruent without any such aid, then the latter (that is, the report that is congruent with the Qur’ān without the aid of contextual indicators) will be preferred. In principle, the more congruent report is to be accepted and the other rejected. If neither report is more or less congruent with the Qur’ān than the other, with or without the aid contextual indicators, then the legist must contrast them with reports in Sunnī ḥadīth literature and accept the contrary or less congruent report on account of the likelihood of dissimulation (*taqiyya*) on the part of the Imām. If the possibility of dissimulation is ruled out or not applicable, then both reports must be rejected, and hence neither are probative. Obviously, if one of the conflicting reports, or even a single report for that matter, contradicts the Qur’ān, then it is to be rejected outright.<sup>148</sup> Therefore, in the case of conflict between (a) reports conveying aversion towards those who slander, curse and swear, and (b) reports teaching and prescribing the ritual of ceremonially cursing the three caliphs, such as the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra, it will be concluded after contrasting them with the Qur’ān (as per the aforementioned principles of jurisprudence) that neither of the two sets of reports are more or less congruent with the Qur’ān than the other, and hence both sets are to be rejected, and so neither are probative. Consequently, the only recourse for the legist will be (i) the

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<sup>146</sup> The exclusivist theological claim of the ‘specialness’ or ‘chosen-ness’ of the Shī’a sect and its adherents will be dealt with in a forthcoming paper God-willing.

<sup>147</sup> See <http://al-milani.com/qa/qa.php?cat=10043&itemid=745>.

<sup>148</sup> Ṣadr, *Durūs fi ‘Ilm al-Uṣūl*, 1: 448-53.

theology, ethos, ethics, and spiritual virtues of the Qur'ān, (ii) the Sunna of the blessed Prophet, and (iii) the faculties of intuition and reason, as discussed previously.<sup>149</sup>

### The Sharia Status of Ziyāra 'Āshūra

The word 'ziyāra' is used to refer to the act of visiting the shrines of the Prophet, the members of his family, and other revered figures.<sup>150</sup> It can also be used to refer to the act of visiting the graves of deceased loved ones generally. The word 'ziyāra' is equally used to refer to the ceremonial ritual of sending salutations to the blessed personages at their shrines or from afar.<sup>151</sup> There are multiple formulations of the act of sending salutations.<sup>152</sup> Individuals are free to offer their own personal salutations, or they can choose to recite one or some of the pre-existing formulations of salutations from the corpus of salutatory literature as per jurisprudence (*fiqh*), with the proviso that the content of the formulation being recited does not conflict with the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sharia as stated previously.<sup>153</sup> A significant number of the pre-existing formulations of salutations in the salutatory (*ziyāra*) literature are the result of the faithful requesting the Imāms to dictate the most-befitting forms of salutations.<sup>154</sup> Accordingly, the phrase 'ziyāra 'āshūra' can refer to either (a) the act of visiting the shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn on the day of 'Āshūra or (b) the famous / popular version of Ziyāra 'Āshūra to be recited at the shrine or from afar.

It should be noted that the content of certain reports in Kāmil al-Ziyārāt encouraging visitation to the shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn is questionable, and hence their veracity is doubtful. For instance, the sixth Imām is attributed with stating, "Visiting Imām al-Ḥusayn is like visiting Allah at the Throne."<sup>155</sup> It seems highly implausible that the blessed Imāms would declare such statements on account of (a) their being inaccurate ontologically and (b) the emphasis of the Qur'ān and reports attributed to the first Imām of the unrivalled status of God; and if one were to conjecture that the Imāms could have expressed such statements with the intention of conveying the metaphorical meanings alone, even then it is certain – in light of the ethos of the Qur'ān and the teachings of the Prophet and Imām 'Alī in relation to God – that they would not make such statements given (a) that they are very susceptible to anthropomorphic misunderstandings in the minds of many followers, and (b) the likelihood that people will make comparisons between Imām al-Ḥusayn and God, as is currently the case amongst certain

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<sup>149</sup> Note: if one argues that both sets of reports are congruent with the Qur'ān, and hence after contrasting them with Sunnī reports, the reports advocating cursing must be accepted because they oppose the Sunnī reports, then the implication would be that Imām 'Alī was in *taqiyya* despite being the caliph, which is obviously untenable. Moreover, if one were to concede that neither sets of reports are incongruent with the Qur'ān for argument's sake, then there is no escape from the fact that the reports of cursing ceremonially conflict with the spirit and ethos of the Qur'ān. In this respect, consider al-Sīstānī's rejection of the report declaring Kurdish people to be a species of Jinn on the basis of its incongruence with the spirit of the Qur'ān and not due to its incongruence with any one particular verse of the Qur'ān. (See Sīstānī, *Ta'arūḍ al-Adilla wa Ikhtilāf al-Hadīth*, 380.)

<sup>150</sup> Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary* (United States: Spoken Languages Services, 1994), 448.

<sup>151</sup> For instance, see contents of Qummī, *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān*, 751-60.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> See section entitled 'Aṣālat al-Ibāḥa' in Ṣanqūr 'Alī, *Al-Mu'jam al-Uṣūlī*, 8-10.

<sup>154</sup> See Qummī, *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, 325-28.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 324-5.

groups. Similarly, it is reported in the prelude of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra that the fifth Imām personally guaranteed the reward of two million ḥajj, two million ‘umra, and two million expeditions performed alongside the blessed Prophet and Imāms, to be awarded to the person who visits the shrine of Imām al-Ḥusayn on the day of ‘Āshūra.<sup>156</sup> In the same tradition, the fifth Imām taught the following formulation of condolence to be recited on the day of ‘Ashura, “may Allah magnify our recompense at our tribulation vis-à-vis al-Ḥusayn and designate us and you amongst those who seek to avenge him beside his successor Imām al-Mahdī [who is] from the progeny of Muhammad.”<sup>157</sup> Undoubtedly, such pronouncements trivialise the ḥajj pilgrimage and risk followers forsaking it altogether. Furthermore, if the notion of Imām al-Mahdī being the twelfth Shī‘a Imam was prevalent during the era of the fifth Imām, then one may ask as to why the community underwent the protracted period of confusion after the demise of the eleventh Imām, for the faithful would surely have been primed regarding his personage, office, and role.<sup>158</sup> Such problematic reports and their implications, together with other questionable features of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra, such as certain captions within the first segment and the repetition of reciting curses and salutations a hundred times each in the second segment, are in need of critical examination, after which the veracity of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra as a whole should be determined.<sup>159</sup>

In any case, the subject of this article is whether the claim of the veracity / authenticity of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is justified. Surprisingly, its focal point is not the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn on the day of ‘Āshūra per se, for it consists of cursing the four unnamed individuals, at least three of whom were unconnected with the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn (irrespective of which interpretation of their identities one accepts).<sup>160</sup> By contrast, the focal point of the other segments of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra is the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn on the day of ‘Āshūra, for the killers of the Imām are named and cursed together with some of their ancestors, such as ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyād, ‘Umar ibn Sa’d, Shimr, Yazīd, and Yazīd’s father and grandfather; the clan of Banū Umayya is also cursed due to the marked animosity of its members towards the Imāms of the household of the blessed Prophet since the era of the caliphate of Imām ‘Alī.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 325-6.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 326.

<sup>158</sup> Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shi‘ite Islam* (USA: The Darwin Press, 1993), 70-105.

<sup>159</sup> Other questionable features include the phraseology, frequent repetitions, attributions of verses of the Qur’ān to the Imāms vis-à-vis the functions of God and the angels, and the theory of return (*al-raj‘a*). Scholars argue that every sentence of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra and other *ziyārāt* (such as Ziyāra Jāmi‘a) can be verified separately as ‘reliable’ by ‘the personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’. However, as alluded to earlier, ascribing reliability to individual sentences of any *ziyāra* by such means does not justify the attribution of the *ziyāra* as a whole to the Sharia without further argumentation.

<sup>160</sup> See Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra in Qummī, *Mafātīḥ al-Jinān*, 469-72.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

## Concluding Remarks

The conclusion of this article is that the attribution of the third segment to the original version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra and hence to the fifth Imām is unjustified without further argumentation. Therefore, neither is it permissible to attribute it to the Imāms, nor does it qualify as a ‘Sharia-ordained’ encouraged act. In fact, the opposite may be the case – one is justified in asserting the Sharia obligation of permanently omitting the third segment from current and future editions of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra.<sup>162</sup> To simply advocate its omission on grounds of expediency is to accept the authenticity of the third segment in and of itself, and hence its legal status, which is a hypocritical position essentially – for it is tantamount to a mere display of respecting the three caliphs; in other words, such argumentation carries the implication that in reality to curse them covertly is fine and perhaps even rewardable. Inevitably, the position one takes on the issue of ‘whether the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is attributable to the Imāms’ has an impact on how Sunnī brothers and sisters view the ethics and worldview of the Imāms of the household of the blessed Prophet.

This article also demonstrates that the ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ is ambiguous and imprecise as a methodology aiming to confer reliability to reports. This ambiguity permits scholars to subjectively define what constitutes the sources or means of ‘personal satisfaction’, contravening the claim that they are based on the reasoning of rational agents. For instance, certain reports deemed to be reliable by al-Kulaynī are not regarded as such by al-Ṣadūq and al-Ṭūsī, and al-Sīstānī rejects reports deemed to be reliable by past masters in accordance with the same ‘personal satisfaction’ version of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’.<sup>163</sup> The article also highlights the ambiguity in both versions of ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ as to what the markers of congruence and incongruence with the Qur’ān are; for there are reports deemed reliable by al-Khū’ī that al-Sīstānī does not accept as reliable. Finally, it should be noted that failing to produce satisfactory knowledge of the issuance of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra from Sharia sources is sufficient reason to assert its non-Sharia status. In other words, the assertion of its non-Sharia status is contingent upon the non-existence of satisfactory knowledge of the issuance of its third segment from Sharia sources; it is not contingent upon proving its fabricated nature. In contrast to this, the assertion of a regulation’s Sharia status is contingent upon proving its reliability by providing sufficient evidence, which in the case of the third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is lacking according to the analysis presented in this article.

Therefore, in conclusion there is insufficient evidence to claim that the third segment was part of the original version of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra. It cannot be deemed to be reliable as per the standards set out in either ‘the transmission-reliability criterion’ (that is, both its versions – ‘the trustworthiness of the reporter’ and ‘the personal satisfaction’ versions) or ‘the content-reliability criterion’.

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<sup>162</sup> This is because the veracity / authenticity of the third segment is unverifiable.

<sup>163</sup> Al-Ṣadūq’s full name is Abū Ja’far Muḥammad bin ‘Alī bin al-Ḥusayn bin Mūsā al-Qummī, and he died in 991-1 CE. For reference to al-Sīstānī’s rejection of reports deemed by past masters to be reliable, see Sīstānī, *Ta’āruḍ al-Adilla wa Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth*, 375.

## Afterword

A cursory review of the Ziyāra literature reveals that the mode of *ziyāra* has been utilised frequently to promote aberrant theologies and the supposed historical events underpinning them.<sup>164</sup> Unfortunately, the genre of Ziyāra literature as a whole has been presented as ‘Sharia-ordained’, and hence the undiscerning faithful recite such *ziyāra* (with aberrant theologies) frequently and with regularity.<sup>165</sup> The result has been the proliferation of aberrant theological beliefs among the faithful and their gradual inclusion within mainstream Shī‘a theology despite such theologies and historical events not having been concurred upon by scholars.<sup>166</sup> To reiterate, the mode of *ziyāra* recitation has been an effective means to proliferate aberrant theologies and spurious histories among the masses, and it has been successful – today many aberrant theologies and spurious histories have become an indisputable part of faith.<sup>167</sup> The third segment of Ziyāra ‘Āshūra al-Mashhūra is a case in point – many among the faithful assume that cursing the caliphs is an ordained part of the faith, and hence they will defend it at the expense of societal unity and cohesion, and even their own lives.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Dima Ahmad El-Mouallem, ‘For the Sake of the Infant Imām: the Development of the Errant Angel Traditions’, *Shii Studies Review* 4, no. 1-2 (2020): 108-134.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> The contents of other *ziyārāt* promoting aberrant theologies and the supposed historical events underpinning them will be dealt with in forthcoming papers God-willing.