

A LECTURE ON

NAHJU 'L-  
BALĀGHAH

ALLAMAH SAYYID SAEED AKHTAR RIZVI

عَلَوْنَ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ

A LECTURE ON

# NAHJU 'L-BALĀGHAH

BY:

ALLAMAH SAYYID SAEED AKHTAR RIZVI

Published by:  
Al-Ma'ārif Publications  
Toronto, Canada

First Published by:  
Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania

First Edition (Dar es Salaam) 2001  
**Second Edition (Toronto) 2021**

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ISBN : 978-0-920675-84-7

*Published by*



**Al-Ma'arif Publications**  
Toronto, Canada

[www.al-m.ca](http://www.al-m.ca) | [publications@al-m.ca](mailto:publications@al-m.ca) | (+1-416) 624-7861

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾ مَلِكِ  
يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾  
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ  
عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى  
سَيِّدِ رُسُلِكَ وَخَاتَمِ أَنْبِيَائِكَ  
مُحَمَّدٍ وَإِلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ  
وَ صَلِّ عَلَى جَمِيعِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ

*In the Name of Allāh,  
The All-compassionate, The All-merciful*

*Praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of all being,  
the All-compassionate; the All-merciful;  
the Master of the Day of Judgement;  
Thee only, we serve, and to Thee alone we pray for succour;  
Guide us in the straight path;  
the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,  
not of those against whom Thou art wrathful,  
nor of those who are astray.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*O Allāh! send your blessings to the head of  
your messengers and the last of your prophets,  
Muḥammad and his pure and cleansed progeny.  
Also send your blessings to all your  
prophets and envoys.*

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## PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الحمد لله رب العالمين و الصلوة والسلام على  
أشرف المرسلين وخاتم النبيين أحمد المجتبي أبي  
القاسم محمد المصطفى وآله الطيبين الطاهرين

This is a lecture on *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, which also clarifies some misunderstandings which some people had shown about this august book.

In the end I have given two miraculous sermons of Imām Ali (a.s.) which the Imām (a.s.) had delivered on two different occasions: the First, without dot and the Second without the letter *alif*.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

15/5/1422

4/8/2001

Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

Dar-es-Salaam

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ عَلَى خَاتَمِ  
 الْمُرْسَلِينَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ الْغُرِّ الْمَيَامِينِ

*Nahju 'l-balāghah* is a collection of the sermons, lectures, letters and sayings of Amīru'l-mu'minīn 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (a.s.). This collection was made by as-Sayyid Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusain ar-Raḍi Al-Mūsawi, who is commonly referred to as ash-Sharif ar-Raḍi. He was born in 359 A.H. in Baghdad in a family which was well-known for its knowledge as well as wordly prestige and distinction. He died at the prime age of 47 years on 25 Jumada I, 406 A.H. In his teen age he started a book which he named *Khaṣā'iṣa 'l-A'imma* but could only write first chapter about Amīru'l-mu'minīn 'Ali (a.s.). This chapter which contains the lectures, letter and sayings of Amīru'l-mu'minīn 'Ali (a.s.) is divided in three parts: The first chapter contains his sermons and lectures, the second one, his letters and the third one his maxims and short saying. When he was compiling it, he had left blank spaces at the end of every section. It was done in order that if any piece of that lecture etc. was not available at that time and came to hand at a later date, it could be inserted therein. This book became a huge success from the day one, because the writings and lectures of Amīru 'l-mu'minīn were held in high esteem from the beginning of the Islam era; and people used to collect them, learn them and memorize them. Even in Sayyid Raḍi's own time, a scholar, 'Ali ibn an-Nasir, wrote a short commentary on it which he called *A'lām Nahju 'l-balāghah*. Its manuscript was preserved in the library of Mumtazu 'l-'ulamā' Sayyid Muhammad Taqi in Lucknow. Then a detailed *Sharḥ* was



written by Sa'īd ibn Hibatullah ibn al-Hasan ar-Rāwandi. However the most well-known and popular *Sharḥ* was written by 'Izzuddin 'Abdu 'l-Ḥamīd ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazili al-Madā'ini. He started writing it on 1<sup>st</sup> Rajab, 644 A.H. and completed it in the month of Safar 649 A.H. and sent it as present it to Mu'ayyiduddin al-Asadi al-'Alqami, who was the Minister of al-Musta'ṣim billah, the last Abbasid caliph. Before Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd, many well known Sunni scholars had written commentaries on *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, e.g. Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Ali ibn Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Bayhaqi (d. 565), al-Imām Fakhruddin ar-Rāzi (606), Sa'du 'd-Din Taftāzāni. In this way we see that upto 150 years after the compilation of *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, no serious doubt was expressed about the authenticity of the material collected in that book. The first man who tried to create some doubt about it was Ibn khallikān who died in 681 A.H., who was not in Iraq or Egypt nor in the centre of Islamic learning, but in Qairawan and Cordova under the Umayyad kingdom of Spain. He wrote while writing about as-Sayyid Murtaḍa, the elder brother of ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍi: "People are of different views about the book, *Nahju 'l-balāghah* which is a collection of the talks of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, whether it was compiled by him, i.e. Sayyid Murtaḍa or his brother, Sayyid Raḍi. It is said that this is not from the speeches of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, but it was compiled by the man who forged it; and Allāh knows better."

This short remark shows that Ibn Khallikān was even unaware of who was the compiler of *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, and then he has used the word, "It is said", but does not mention who had said it that it was not the speech of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib; and then he ends at the phrase, and Allāh knows better. So in this way he for the first time sowed the seed of suspicion and doubt about this book. Also he does not say that the scholars or

‘Ulamā’ have different views; he just says that “people” have different views. Now one century after Ibn khallikān came adh-Dhahabi whose prejudice against the Shi‘as is well-known and he went even further. He writes in the life-history of Sayyid Murtaḍa: “Whoever would see this book, *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, will understand surely that it is spurious and forged in the name of Amīru'l-mu'minīn, because in this book is open denunciation of the two Sheikhs, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar.”

Is it not strange that for two hundred and fifty years there was no controversy about *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. Ibn Khallikān, sitting in al-Maghhrib, said that the people had different views that whether it was compiled by Sayyid Murtaḍa or Sayyid Raḍi, and then said that “it is said” that it was not the speeches and writings of ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib. Then one hundred years after that came adh-Dhahabi who tried to cast doubt and suspicion on the ground that the book contained open denunciation of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar.

Before commenting on this view, a few things should be mentioned before hand. *First*: It is not that Sayyid Raḍi was the first man to compile the lectures, sermons and letters of ‘Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (a.s.). al-Mas‘ūdi (who died in 340 A.H. long before the birth of Sayyid Raḍi, and who was a contemporary of not only Shaykh Mufid, but even of Shaykh Ṣadūq) writes: The people had memorized his (i.e. ‘Ali’s) lectures and sermons and different epistles, and their number reaches more than 480 lectures; they were delivered extempore, but people memorized them and continued to narrate them and teach them.”<sup>1</sup> Now if these more than 480 lectures could be found, they would have made a bigger volume than *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. There was ‘Abdu 'l-Ḥamid al-Kātib ibn Yaḥyā, who died in 132 A.H., and

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1 *Marūju 'dh-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 33, Egypt ed.

Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadid quotes him in his Commentary that he said: I memorized 70 lectures from the lectures of 'Ali, and its benefits continued to grow and grow. Ibn al-Muqaffa', who died in 142 A.H., used to say: "I drank from the sermons and lectures of 'Ali and its pleasing benefits grew and grew." That is why 'Allama Ḥasan al-Nadubi writes in his footnotes of *al-Bayān wa't-tabyin* of al-Jāhiz: Obviously he learned and acquired his rhetorics from the lectures of Imam 'Ali. Ibn Nubātah, who died in 374 A.H., said: I memorized 100 pieces of sermons of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, and it was a treasure of rhetorics which the more it is spent the more it increases. Zayd ibn 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn (a.s.), the grandson of Imam Ḥusayn, known as Zayd ash-Shahīd, (martyred in 120 A.H.) used to listen to the sermons of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib. Abu 's-Ṣalāḥ al-Kinani has said: Zayd used to hear from the lectures of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (a.s.).<sup>2</sup> Even before him Zayn ibn Wahb al-Juhni who died in cir. 90 A.H., who was one of the narrators of Amīru'l-mu'minīn (a.s.)'s traditions, had compiled 'Ali's lectures and sermons. There were other persons who had collected the lectures and sermons of 'Ali (a.s.), a short list of which is given here:

1. Hishām ibn Muḥammad ibn Sā'ib al-Kalbi (d. 186 A.H.).<sup>3</sup>
2. Ibrāhīm ibn Zāhīr; He had compiled *Kitabu Khutub-i-'Ali (a.s.)* i.e. the Book of the Sermons of 'Ali (a.s.).<sup>4</sup>
3. Abu Muhammad Mas'adah ibn Ṣadaqah had also collected the sermons of 'Ali (a.s.).<sup>5</sup>
4. Abu al-Qasim 'Abdu 'l-'Aẓīm ibn 'Abdullah Hasani, who was a companion of Imam 'Ali an-Naqi (a.s.) had

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<sup>2</sup> *Rijāl al-Kashshi*.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn an-Nadīm, *al-Firhrist*, vol. 7, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> aṭ-Ṭūsi, *al-Fihrist*; an-Nijashi, *Rijāl*.

<sup>5</sup> *an-Nijāshi, al-Rijāl*.

- compiled *Kitabu Khutub-i Amīri 'l-mu'mineen* (a.s.).<sup>6</sup>
5. Abu 'l-Khayr Sa'd ibn Abi Ḥammād ar-Rāzi, a contemporary of the above-mentioned 'Abdu 'l-'Azīm. He had also collected a similar book.<sup>7</sup>
  6. 'Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullah Madā'ini (d. 335 A.H.) He had also compiled lectures and letters of 'Ali (a.s.).<sup>8</sup>
  7. Abu Muḥammad 'Abdu 'l-'Azīz al-Jalūdi (d. 330 A.H.). He had compiled several books separately on lectures of 'Ali, Letters of 'Ali, Sermons of 'Ali etc.<sup>9</sup>
  8. Abu Muḥammad Ḥasan ibn 'Ali ibn Shu'bah al-Ḥalabi (d. 320 A.H.) He had narrated some sayings, maxims and lectures of 'Ali (a.s.) in his well-known book, *Tuḥafu 'l-'Uqūl*. He writes at the end: If we were to write here all the sermons and sayings of 'Ali which he spoke on only one subject, *Tawḥeed*, (leave aside all other subjects), it would be equal in volume to this book of ours.

Also there are many books written before ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī, in which many speeches and talks of 'Ali (a.s.) have been quoted on various occasions. For example, al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255 A.H.): *al-Bayān wa 't-tabyīn*; Ibn Qutaybah Dīnawari (d. 276 A.H.): *Uyunu 'l-Akḥbār wa Gharibu 'l-Hadith*; Ibn Wāḍiḥ Yā'qūbi (d. 278): *Tārīkh Yā'qūbi*; *Kitab al-Mubarrad* of Abu 'l-'Abbās al-Mubarrad (d. 286): *Kitab al-Kāmil*; the Historian, Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabari (d. 310): *Tārīkh Ṭabari*; Ibn Durayd (d. 321): *Kitāb al-Mujtanā*; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, (d. 328): *al-Iqd al-Farīd*; al-Kulayni (d. 329): *al-Kāfi*; al-Mas'ūdi (d. 346): *Maruju 'dh-dhahab*; Abu 'l-Faraj Isfahāni (d. 356): *Kitab al-Aghāni*;

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Mu'jamu 'l-udabā' of Yaḳūb al-Ḥamawi*, vol. 5, p. 313.

9 aṭ-Ṭūsī, *al-Fihrist*; an-Nijashi, *Rijāl*.

Abu 'Ali al-Qāri (d. 356): *Kitab an-Nawādir*; ash-Shaykh aṣ-Ṣadūq (d. 381) *Kitāb at-Tawhīd* and his many other collections of traditions; as-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 416): *Kitāb al-Irshād* and *Kitāb al-Jamal*.

If the lectures and sermons of 'Ali (a.s.) quoted in the above-mentioned books are compared with those collected in *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, they appear to be the same — or almost the same, with minor verbal differences.

Not only those who preceded ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍi, but even his contemporaries or those who came soon after him, had collected and committed many sermons and speeches of 'Ali (a.s.) to memory, and some of them have mentioned them in their books. For example, Ibn Miskawayh (d. 421): *Tajāribu 'l-umam*; Ḥāfiẓ Abu Nu'aym Iṣfahāni (d. 430): *Ḥilyatu 'l-Awliyā'*; ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭūsi (d. 460) *at-Tahdhīb* and *al-Amāli*; 'Abdu 'l-Wāḥid ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abdu 'l-Wāḥid al-Āmidi (who was a contemporary of ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭūsi) collected short maxims and sayings of 'Ali (a.s.), in a book which he named *Ghuraru 'l-ḥikam wa Duraru 'l-Kilam* printed in Egypt, Lebanon and India, and which has also been translated in Urdu; Abu Sa'īd Manṣūr ibn Husayn al-Ābi al-Wazīr, (d. 422): *Nuzhatu 'l-adab wa nathru 'd-durar*; and Qāḍi Abu 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Salāmah ash-Shafī'i (d. 453): his well-known book on this very subject, *Dasturu ma'ālimi 'l-ḥikam*, has been printed in Egypt. All these authors were almost contemporary to Sayyid Raḍi, and except the book of Abu Sa'īd, all other books are printed and well-known in the Muslim world. Whatever is collected in those books, is the same or has the same style as found in *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. After that period, we come to those who appeared centuries later, like Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd (d. 655), Sibṭ Ibn Jauzi (d. 606) and many others who tried to collect the sayings

and sermons of ‘Ali (a.s.) for completing what was left out by ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī in *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī’s main emphasis was on rhetorics, and therefore he named the book “The Path of Eloquence”. That is why he had not given whole sermons and lectures, but only those pieces which he considered of the top standard in rhetorics and eloquence. There was another factor which compelled ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī to leave out many sermons and saying: It was either because of unavailability of reference books, or because the copies in his hand were damaged or illegible. That is why he could not write completely even many of those sermons which are included in his book. That is why we see in many places that he gives a part of a sermon and then adds — “*wa minhā*” (and the following also is a part of that sermon). This prompted the later scholars to write *al-Mustadrak* and *al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Mustadrak* of *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, to complete what was omitted or left out by ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī. That is why we find in the *Sharḥ of Nahju 'l-balāghah* (by Ibn Abi ‘l-Ḥadīd) that wherever possible he writes complete sermons and lectures, and gives also the occasion and background of that lecture. These attempts to complete the collection had continued upto the last century, when ‘Allamah Shaykh Hādi Kāshifu ‘l-ghīṭā’ wrote *Mustadraku Nahji 'l-balāghah*, which was printed in Najaf.

We also find that the contemporaries of as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī had paid attention to *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, and the late-comers, most of them Sunnis like Imam Fakhru ‘d-Din ar-Rāzi, Ibn Abi ‘l-Ḥadīd and others, wrote its Commentaries. We know how the scholars usually attempt to attack or belittle the books of their contemporaries; yet none of them ever said that those lectures, sermons or sayings of ‘Ali (a.s.) were forged by as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī which he had wrongly attributed to ‘Ali

(a.s.). Also no one ever said that, because the lectures and writings attributed to 'Ali (a.s.) in *Nahju 'l-balāghah* were spurious, therefore we are collecting his genuine and authentic lectures, sermons, and letters in order to remove the misunderstandings created by as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī.

Also ninety percent of the sermons etc. of *Nahju 'l-balāghah* are found in earlier books which are extant. 'Allamah Shaykh Hādi Kāshifu 'l-ghitā' wrote *Madariku Nahji 'l-balāghah*, i.e. Sources of *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. Then 'Allamah Sayyid Sibṭu 'l-Ḥasan Hanswi of India wrote *Minhaj Nahji 'l-balāghah* in Urdu. In this book the learned scholar also dealt with all the objections levelled against *Nahju 'l-balāghah* by Khalūṣi. Then Mr. Imtiaz 'Ali 'Arshi, the librarian of the Raza Library, Rampur, (India), a reputed Sunni scholar, wrote *Istinādu Nahji 'l-balāghah*, in which he quoted most of the material of *Nahju 'l-balāghah* and their references from earlier books. Latest attempt in this field was made by 'Allamah 'Abdu 'z-Zahrā' al-Ka'bi, who wrote *Maṣādiru Nahji 'l-balāghah* in three volumes. All these books are printed and are easily available. In this way, we find that the objections of some misguided people against this noble book have no leg to stand upon.

The fact remains that the main reason of this attempt to discredit *Nahju 'l-balāghah* lies in the third sermon, known as *ash-Shiqshiqiyah* in which 'Ali (a.s.) has scathingly criticised his three predecessors and showed defects of them and their methods. Just to show what is involved in this lecture, I quote here a few lines from it. He begins:

“Well, by Allah! the son of Abu Qaḥāfah (i.e. Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (i.e. the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill.”

Then after commenting on the first caliphate, he turns to the second. He says:

“It is strange that during his lifetime he [i.e. Abu Bakr] wished to be released from the caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty and the touch was rough. Mistakes were in plenty and so also the excuses therefore.”

Thus commenting on that era, he comes to the third caliphate. He says:

“Nevertheless, I remained patient despite length of period and stiffness of trial, till when he went his way (of death) he put the matter (of caliphate) in a group and regarded me to be one of them. But good Heavens! what had I to do with this “consultation”? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones? But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship and this thing and that thing, till the third man of these people stood up with heaving breasts between his dung and fodder. With him the children of his grand-father, (Umayyah) also stood up swallowing up Allāh’s wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, till his rope broke down, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down prostrate.”

So actually this is the reason of all these attacks against the book, as adh-Dhahabi has let the cat out of the bag. He thinks that *Nahju 'l-balāghah* is spurious because there are in it scathing remarks against Abu Bakr and ‘Umar.



However, let us see whether this sermon was really forged by ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī. I think I can do no better than to quote here views of some Sunni scholars of old days:

Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi comments on this tendency of the Sunnis in his famous book, *at-Taḥfīmāt al-Ilāhiyah*: He says: “There are many people who claim that there was no difference among the Ṣaḥābah and that all of them were friends to each other. This thinking is against the historical facts and against the reality. Of course, they had quarrelled with each other, fought with each other and disparaged each other. But we should not say any thing against them, because what they did was not based on bad intentions; it was rather in good faith.”

Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd al-Mu'tazili has written at length about this sermon in his *Sharḥ*. He writes that his Master, Abu 'l-Khayr Muṣaddiq ibn Shabīb al-Wāsiṭi (d. 605) stated that he heard this sermon from his Shaykh Abu Muḥammad 'Abdullah ibn Aḥmad al-Baghdādi (d. 567), known as Ibn al-Khashshāb; and when he reached the place where Ibn 'Abbas expresses his sorrow on this sermon remaining incomplete, Ibn al-Khashshāb said to him: If I had heard this expression of sorrow from Ibn 'Abbas, I would have certainly asked him, if there had remained with his cousin any further unsatisfied desire at all, because excepting the Prophet he had spared neither predecessors nor the followers and had uttered all that he wished to utter. Why should therefore be any sorrow that he could not say what he wished. Muṣaddiq says that Ibn al-Khashshāb was a man of jolly nature and decent taste. I enquired from him whether he too regarded this sermon to be a fabrication. He replied: “By Allah! I believe it to be Amīru'l-mu'minīn's words, as I believe you to be Muṣaddiq ibn Shabīb. I said. Some people regard it as a fabrication of as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī. He replied:

How can ar-Raḍī have such touch and such style of writing? I have seen as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī's writing and know his style of composition. Nowhere is his writing like this one; and I have seen it in the books written 200 years before the birth of as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī; and I have seen it in familiar hand writings about which I know by which scholar or which man of letter they were compiled; at that time not only ar-Raḍī, but even his father, Abu Aḥmad an-Naḳīb was not born."

Thereafter, Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd writes: I saw this sermon in the compilation of my Master, Abu 'l-Qāsim 'Abdullah ibn Aḥmad al-Balkhi (d. 317); he was the Imam of the Mu'tazilites in the reign of al-Muqtadir Billāh [295-320 A.H.], which was much earlier than the birth of as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī.

He further writes: I saw this sermon in Abu Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Abdu 'r-Raḥmān ibn Qibah's book, *al-Inṣāf*. He was a student of Abul Qāsim al-Balkhi and a theologian of Imamah sect.<sup>10</sup>

Ibn Maytham al-Baḥrani (d. 679) writes in his *Sharḥ* that he had seen one copy of this sermon which bore the handwriting of Al-Muqtadir Billah's minister, Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Furāt (d. 312).<sup>11</sup>

ash-Shaykh Qutbu 'd-Dīn ar-Rāwandi (whose Commentary of *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, named *Minhāju 'l-barā'ah*, is earlier than that of Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd), gives his chain of narrators of this sermon. He narrates it from ash-Shaykh Abu Naṣr al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, from Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu 'l-Wafā' Muḥammad ibn al-Badi', al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Baḍi'

10 *Sharḥ Nahju 'l-balāghah* of Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd, vol. 1, pp. 205-206.

11 *Sharḥ Nahju 'l-balāghah* of Ibn Maytham, vol. 1, pp. 252-253.

and al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdu 'r-Raḥmān, and also from al-Ḥāj Abu Bakr Aḥmad ibn Musa ibn Marduwayh al-Iṣfahāni (d. 416), from Al-Ḥāfiz Abu 'l-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭabarāni (d. 360), from Aḥmad ibn 'Ali al-'Abbās, from al-Ḥāfiz Sa'id Abu Salāmah ad-Dimashqi, from Junayd ibn Tha'lab, from 'Atā' ibn Abi Rabāḥ, from Ibn 'Abbas. This chain of narrators has been quoted by al-Majlisi in *Biḥāru 'l-anwār* vol. 8, pp. 160-161. 'Allamah Majlisi also writes that this sermon is also found in the compilations of Abu 'Ali Muḥammad ibn 'Abdu 'l-Wahhāb al-Jubbā'i (d. 303). Also he says:

al-Qāḍi 'Abdu 'l-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad Asadābādi (d. 415), a staunch Mu'tazilite, has tried to re-interpret some expressions of this sermon in his book, *al-Mughni*, but he does not deny its being of 'Ali's composition (Ibid, p.161). ash-Shaykh aṣ-Ṣadūq gives his own chain of narrators of this sermon: Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ishāq aṭ-Ṭāliqāni, from 'Abdu 'l-'Azīz ibn Yaḥyā al-Jalūdi (d. 332), from Abu 'Abdillah Aḥmad ibn 'Ammār ibn Khālid, from Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥamīd al-Ḥimmāni (d. 228), from 'Isā ibn Rāshid, from 'Ali ibn Ḥudhayfah, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn 'Abbas.<sup>12</sup>

as-Sayyid Ni'matullāh al-Jazā'iri writes: The author of *Kitāb al-Ghārāt*, Abu Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ath-Thaqafi al-Kūfi (d. 283) has related this sermon through his own chain of narrators. The date of completion of writing this book is Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> Shawwāl, 255 A.H., and it is the same year when as-Sayyid Murtaḍa al-Mūsawi (the elder brother of as-Sayyid ar-Raḍi) was born.<sup>13</sup>

12 *Ilalu 'sh-Shara'ye'*, vol. 1, ch. 122, p. 144; *Ma'āni 'l-akhbār*, ch. 22, pp. 330-361. He also gives another chain of narrators in the same book on p. 146 & 361, respectively.

13 *al-Anwār an-Nu'māniyah*, p. 37.

Likewise, Abu 'Uthmān 'Amr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ has recorded the following words of 'Ali (a.s.) in his book, which are no less witty than the criticism of the sermon of *ash-Shiqshiqiyah*. He quotes:

“Those two basterdized and the third one rose like a crow whose courage is confined to the bit. It would have been better if his wings had been cut and his head severed.”

Leaving aside many other authorities and scholars of the Sunni faith, we come to our own times and meet ash-Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, recognizing it as 'Ali's composition and writing its Commentary. Professor Muḥammad Muḥyi 'd-Dīn 'Abdu 'l-Ḥamīd of al-Azhar University (Cairo) has added notations on the Explanations of *Nahju 'l-balāghah* written by Muḥammad 'Abduh; adding a Foreword in the beginning, where he recognizes all such sermons which contain disparaging remarks against the previous caliphs and companions, as being the composition of 'Ali (a.s.).

In the light of all these references, is it not absurd to claim that this Sermon was forged by as-Sayyid Raḍi, when it is found in the books written centuries before the birth of as-Sayyid Raḍi?

Now we come to a new objection levelled against *Nahju 'l-balāghah* by al-Khalūṣi. His main objection is that the Sermons and talks contain *saj'*, i.e. rhymed prose. He thinks that the ancient Arabs did not speak in hymed prose; it was a style developed in later days. This claim is really astonishing; and one has a right to ask whether Mr. Khalūṣi had ever read the Qur'ān!! Did not he know that all the chapters revealed at Mecca are in rhymed prose? In fact, even the Medinite chapters end on rhymed prose, although they seem less pronounced

because the Medinite verses are lengthier. In fact, in the words of Rodwel, Arabic is a language in which it is difficult not to speak in rhyme. And 'Ali (a.s.) was brought up in the lap of the Prophet from his early childhood, and he drank from the springhead of the Qur'ān from before his teen age; because the Qur'ān was revealed in his presence and he went on memorizing it. Would it be very surprising if his way of speech were so saturated with *saj'*; and is it really surprising that we find *saj'*, rhymed prose, in his sermons, when every one who was in contact with him — whether friend or foe — knew that it was his style of talking. When 'Ali's daughter, Zaynab, was brought into the court of 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyād in Kufa, and she replied to some disparaging remarks of Ibn Ziyād against Imam Husayn and his family, she refuted his comments in such a forceful way that Ibn Ziyād had to say:

She speaks in hymed prose and her father too spoke in rhymed prose.

Then Mr. Khalūṣi says: There are some words used in the sermons of *Nahju 'l-balāghah* which were not used in ancient Arabic; and he has given a list of such words, which according to him prove late origin of these sermon. Sayyid Sibṭul Hasan Hanswi has clearly shown in his book, *Minhaj Nahju 'l-balāghah*, from the quotations of Islamic literature that those words were in common use in old Arabic language.

Mr. Khalūṣi's third objection: Some of these sermons contain terminologies of philosophy; while the philosophical terms did not enter Arabia before the Umayyad period. But why should we look at those words as philosophical terms? Why could not we take them in their literal sense? If we find the word 'atom' in a writing of the nineteenth century, can we say that the word, 'atom bomb', was not known before the second world

war, therefore that writing must be a forgery? If Mr. Khalūṣī had taken the trouble to treat those words as common Arabic ones, and then he had found himself unable to interpret them in normal way, then his objection could have been sustained. Even if those words are taken to mean what the dictionaries say, the sermons would be as meaningful and as forceful as before.

This much was necessary to mention about *Nahju 'l-balāghah*, because we find nowadays some people labouring under the impression that it was a spurious book. However, the facts speak for themselves.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ



Now we propose to adorn this booklet with two miraculous sermons of ‘Ali (a.s.) not found in *Nahju 'l-balāghah*. First is his sermon which is free from diacritical point — the whole sermon does not contain a single letter with dot. It is narrated in *al-Manāqib* from Ibn Shahr Āshūb, al-Kalbi and Ibn Babuwayh, through his chains from Imam ‘Ali ar-Riḍā (a.s.) that he narrated this eternal miracle of his forefather, Amīru’l-mu’minīn (a.s.), i.e. the blessed sermon, free from dot.

It has been narrated by Abu Hāshim al-Jubbā’i from his father Abu ‘Ali, from Abu Ya‘qūb ash-Shaḥḥām, from Abu ‘l-Hudhayl al-‘Allāf, from Abu ‘Uthmān aṭ-Ṭawīl, from Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’, from Abu Hāshim ‘Abdullah ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Ali, from his father, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah, from ‘Ali (a.s.).

It is also given by ash-Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ḥakīmi in his book, *Salūni Qabla an Tafqīdūni*, vol. 2, pp. 442-443.

The second is his sermon which is free from the letter *alif*. Some people had gathered around him, and were discussing writing method. They all agreed that no letter is more prevalent in speech than *alif*, and that it is very difficult to speak without using it. At this juncture ‘Ali (a.s) delivered this sermon extempore, without any preparation, and it is totally free of *alif*.

It is given by al-Kaf'ami, ash-Shaykh Taqīyu 'd-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-‘Āmili in his *al-Miṣbāḥ*, vol. 2, pp. 849-852 (which was written in 895 A.H.) .

Also it is narrated from other sources by al-Majlisi (d. 1110 A.H.) in *Biḥāru 'l-anwār* (new ed.) vol. 74, p. 242.

We have copied it from *Biḥār*; there are minor variations in wordings in *al-Miṣbāḥ* which have been given here in brackets.

It should be recorded here that my teacher, Ayatullah Sayyid Zafru 'l-Ḥasan Rizvi (Jawadia, Benaras) had translated it in Urdu, in the same style, i.e. without *alif*.

والسلام على عباد الله الصالحين



THE SERMON OF IMĀM 'ALI (A.S.)  
WITHOUT DOT

الخطبة العارفة عن النقطة للإمام علي (ع)

## الخطبة العارية عن النقطة للإمام علي (ع)

في المناقب عن ابن شهر آشوب والكلبي وابن بابويه بإسناده عن الرضا (ع) انه حدّث أصحابه معاجز جده الإمام أمير المؤمنين (ع) حتى نقل لهم هذه المعجزة الخالدة ألا وهي الخطبة المباركة العارية عن النقطة [١] فقل [٢]:

الحمد لله الملك المحمود، المالك الودود، مصور كل مولود، ومالك كل مطرود، ساطح المهاد، وموظل الأطواد، ومرسل الأمطاء، عالم الأسرار ومدركها، ومدمر الأملاك ومهلكها، ومكور الدهور ومكررها، ومورد الأمور ومصدرها، عمّ سماحه وكمل ركامه، وهمل، وطاع السؤال كما وحدّ ألا وهو الله لا إله إلا لله للامم سواه، ولا صارع لما عدل سواه، أرسل محمداً علماً للإسلام، وإماماً للأحكام، مسدد الرعام، ومعطل أحكام ود وسواع أعلم وحلم وحكم وحقّم وأصل الاصول، ومهدّ، والد الوعود وأوعد اوصل الله له الإكرام، وأودع روحه السلام، ورحمه الله وأهله الكرام، ما لمع دال، وطلع هلال، وسمع أهلال، اعملوا رعاكم الله لأصلح الاعمال، واسلكوا مسالك الحلال، واطرحوا الحرام ورعوه، واسمعوا أمر الله ووعوه وصلوا الأرحام وراعوها، وعاصوا الأهواء واردعوها، وصاهروا أهل الصلاح والورع، وصارحوا رهط اللهو والطمع، ومصاهركم أظهر الاحرار مولداً،

واسراهم سؤدداً، وأحلامهم مورداً، وها هو أمكم وحل حرمكم مملكاً  
عروسكم المكرمة وماهرها كما مهر رسول الله أم سلمة، وهو أكرم صهر  
وأودع الاولاد وملك ما أدئى دوماستها ولا وكس ملاحمه ولا صم اسأل الله  
لكم أحماد وصاله، ودوام إسعاده وألهم كلاً إصلاح حاله، والإعداد لماله  
ومعاده، وله الحمد السرمد، والمدح لرسوله أحمد.

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[١] نقلناها عن كتاب سلوني قبل أن تفقدوني للشيخ محمد رضا الحكيمي،  
ج ٢، ص ٤٤٢-٤٤٣.

[٢] ابي هاشم الجبائي عن ابيه ابي علي عن ابي يعقوب الشحام عن ابي الهذيل  
العلاف عن ابي عثمان الطويل عن واصل بن عطاء عن ابي هاشم عبد الله  
بن محمد بن علي عن ابيه محمد بن الحنفية عن علي (ع)

THE SERMON OF IMĀM 'ALĪ (A.S.)  
WITHOUT ALIF

الخطبة المونقة للإمام علي بن أبي طالب (ع)  
بدون حرف الألف!

## الخطبة المونقة للإمام علي بن أبي طالب (ع) بدون حرف الألف!

ونقل أن جماعة حضروا لديه وتذاكروا فضل الخط و ما فيه، فقالوا : ليس في الكلام أكثر من الألف ويتعذر النطق بدونها. فقال لهم في الحال هذه الخطبة من غير سابق فكرة ولا تقدم روية، و سردها و ليس فيها ألف :

حمدت من عظمت منته، وسبغت نعمته، وتمت كلمته، ونفذت مشيئته، وبلغت حجته، وعدلت قضيته، وسبقت غضبه رحمته. حمدته حمد مقرر بربوبيته متخضع لعبوديته، متنصل من خطيئته، معترف بتوحيده، مستعبد من وعيده مؤمل من ربه مغفرة تنجيه، يوم يشغل كل عن فصيلته وبنيه، ونستعينه ونسترشده ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه. وشهدتُ له شهود عبد (له بضمير) مخلص موقن، وفردته تفريد مؤمن متيقن، ووحدته توحيد عبد مدعن، ليس له شريك في ملكه، ولم يكن له ولي في صنعه، جل عن مشير ووزير وعون ومعين (ووزير وتزعه عن مثل) ونظير، علم فستر، وبطن فخير، وملك فقهر، وعصي فغفر، وعبد فشكر، وحكم فعدل، وتكرم وتفضل، لن يزول، ولم يزل، ليس كمثل شئ، وهو قبل كل شئ، وبعد كل شئ، رب متفرد بعزته متمكن (متملك) بقوته، متقدس بعلوه، متكبر بسموه، ليس يدركه بصر، ولم يحط به نظر، قوي منيع بصير سميع رؤوف [علي حكيم] رحيم، عجز عن وصفه من وصفه (عزيز عليم عجز في وصفه من يصفه)،

وضل عن (في) نعته من عرفه (يعرفه)، قرب فبعد، وبعد فقرب، يجيب دعوة من يدعوه ويرزقه (يدعوه ويرزق عبده) ويحبوه، ذو لطف خفي، وبطش قوي، ورحمة موسعة، وعقوبة موجعة، رحمته جنة عريضة مونقة، وعقوبته جحيم ممدودة (مؤصدة) موبقة، وشهدت ببعث محمد عبده ورسوله ونبيه وصفيه وحببيه وخليله، بعثه في خير عصر وحين (عصر وفي حين) فترة وكفر، رحمة لعبيده ومنة لمزيدة، ختم به نبوته، ووضحت به حجته (وقوى به حجته)، فوعظ ونصح وبلغ وكدح، رؤوف بكل مؤمن، رحيم سخي رضي ولي زكي، عليه رحمة وتسليم، وبركة وتعظيم وتكريم، من رب غفور رحيم، قريب مجيب حلیم. وصيتكم معشر من حضر بوصية (معشر من حضري بتقوى) ربكم وذكرتكم سنة (بسنة) نبيكم، فعليكم برهبة تسكن قلوبكم، وخشية تدري (تذري) دموعكم، وتقية تنجيكم قبل يوم يذهلكم ويبتليكم (وتبليكم). يوم يفوز فيه من ثقل وزن حسنته، وخف وزن سيئته، وعليكم بمسألة (ولتكن مسألتكم مسألة) ذل وخضوع، وتملق (وشكر) وخشوع، وتوبة ونزوع وليغنم كل منكم (وتوبة ونزوع وندم ورجوع وليغتنم كل مغتنم منكم) صحته قبل سقمه وشيئته قبل هرمه (هربه)، وسعته قبل فقره وفرغته قبل شغله (وسعته قبل عدمه وخلوته قبل شغله)، وحضره قبل سفره، وحياته قبل موته، قبل يهن ويهرم (قبل هو يكبر ويهرم)، ويمرض ويسقم، ويمله طبيبه، ويعرض عنه حببيه، وينقطع عمره، ويتغير عقله. ثم قيل: هو موعوك وجسمه منهوك، ثم (قد) جد في نزع شديد، وحضره كل قريب وبعيد، فشخص ببصره، وطمح بنظره، ورشح جبينه وخطفت عرينه (ورشح جبينه وسكن حينه)، وجدبت (وجدبت) نفسه وبكت (ونكبت) عرسه، وحضر (وحضر) رسمه، ويتم

منه (عنه) ولده، وتفرق عنه عدده، وفصم (وقسم) جمعه، وذهب بصره وسمعته (وسمعه وكفن ومدد ووجه)، وجرّد وغسل، وعري ونشف، وسجى، وبسط له وهبى، ونشر عليه كفنه وشد منه ذقنه (ذقنه وقمص وعمم ولف وودع وسلم)، وحمل فوق سرير، وصلى عليه بتكبير بغير سجود و تعفير ونقل من دور مزخرفة (بتكبير ونقل من دور مزخرفة)، وقصور مشيدة (مشيدة وحجر منضده)، وفرش (وحجر) منجدة فجعل في ضريح ملحد ضيق مرصود (مرصوص)، بلبن منضود، مسقف بجمود، وهيل عليه عفره (حفره)، وحشى (وحشى عليه) مدره، وتحقق (فتحقق) حذره، ونسي خبره، ورجع عنه وليه ونديمه ونسيبه وحميمه، وتبدل به قرينه وحببيه (وحببيه وصفيه ونديمه)، فهو حشو قبر، ورهين حشر (قفر)، يدب (يسعى) في جسمه دود قبره، ويسيل صديده من منخره، وتسحق تربته (ويسحق ثوبه و لحمه، وينشف دمه، ويرم (ويرق) عظمه، حتى يوم حشره فينشره (فينشر) من قبره، وينفخ في صور، ويدعى لحشر ونشور، فثم بعثت قبور، وحصلت سريرة في صدور (وحصلت صدور). وجرى بكل نبي وصديق وشهيد ومنطيق (وشهيد منطيق)، وقعد لفصل حكمه (وتولى لفضل حكمه رب) قدير، بعبده (بعبيده) خبير بصير، فكم حسرة تضنيه (فكم من زفره تضنيه وحسره تضنيه) في موقف مهيل (مهول عظيم)، ومشهد جليل (جليل جسيم)، بين يدي ملك عظيم (ملك كريم) بكل صغيرة وكبيرة عليم (وعليم)، فحينئذ (حينئذ) يلجمه عرقه، ويخفره (ويخفره) قلقه، فعبرته غير مرحومة وصرخته غير مسموعة (مسموعة وحجته غير مقبولة) وبرزت (وتثول) صحيفته، وتبينت جريرته (وتبين جريرته)، فنظر في سوء عمله وشهدت (ونطق كل عضو منه بسوء عمله فشهدت) عينه بنظره،

ويده ببطشه، ورجله بخطوه، وجلده بلمسه (بمسه)، وفرجه بمسه (بلمسه)، ويهدده منكر ونكير، وكشف له حيث يصير (وكشف عنه بصير)، فسلسل جيده، وغلت يده، فسيق (وسيق) يسحب وحده. فورد جهنم بكره (بكره) شديد، وظل يعذب في جحيم، ويسقى شربة من حميم، تشوي وجهه وتسليخ جلده (جلده يضربه زيبنته بمقمع من حديد، يعود جلده بعد نضجه بجلد جديد) يستغيث فيعرض عنه خزنة جهنم، ويستصرخ فيلبث حقه بندم، نعوذ برب قدير من شر كل مصير، ونسأله عفو من رضي عنه، ومغفرة من قبل منه وهو (فهو) ولي مسألتي، ومنجح طلبتي، فمن زحزح عن تعذيب ربه جعل (ربه سكن) في جنته بقربه وخلد في قصور (مشيده) ونعمه، وملك بحور (ومكن من حور) عين وحفدة (وحفدة وطيف عليه بكؤوس وسكن حضيره فردوس)، وتقلب في نعيم وسقي من تسنيم مختوم بمسك وعنبر يشرب من خمر معذوب شره، ليس ينزف لبه (تسنيم وشرب من عين سلسبيل ممزوجة بزنجبيل محتومة بمسك وعبير مستديم للحبور مستشعر للسرور يشرب من خمور في روض مشرق مغدق ليس يصدع من شره وليس ينزف). هذه منزلة من خشية ربه وحذر نفسه، وتلك عقوبة من عصي منشئه، وسولت له نفسه معصية مبدئه (مبديه)، لهم ذلك قول فصل، وحكم عدل، خير قصص فص، ووعظ به ونص، تنزيل من حكيم حميد (حميد نزل به روح قدس مبين على نبي مهتد مكين، صلت عليه رسل سفرة مكرمون بررة، عذت برب رحيم من شر كل رجيم فليتضرع متضرعكم وليبتهل مبتهلکم فنستغفر رب كل مربوب لي ولكم).

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[١] بحار الأنوار - العلامة المجلسي، ج ٧٤، ص ٣٤٠، روايه ٢٨، باب ١٤.



[٢] مصباح الكفعمي - الشيخ تقي الدين إبراهيم بن علي العاملي الكفعمي،  
ج ١، ص ٨٤٩ - ٨٥٢.  
(اختلاف مصباح الكفعمي بين قوسين - تحقيق شعلان الأستريادي)

*Published by*



**Al-Ma'arif Publications**  
Toronto, Canada

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