

“The Door of Fatima: The Controversy over the Violation of the House of Sayyida Fatima by Companions, after the Death of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)”

By Muhammad Umar ibn Ramadhan

Firstly, I would like to thank my beloved learned brother Dr. Mohammad Khalid, Director of **The Centre for Intra-Muslim Studies (CIMS)** for his leadership, activism, and wisdom in responding to the challenges we face as an Ummah in a modern world. The work of CIMS is unparalleled, which endeavours to bring together leading scholars & experts from across different schools of thought to academically critique, analyse and discuss some of the most contentious theological differences between Sunni and Shi'i schools. Only through dialogue and mutual sharing can we put forth relevant frameworks for the mapping of Muslim unity; I wholeheartedly believe that CIMS have clearly set the standards for this noble endeavour, which in years to come will be the setting of academic discussion of analysing how Muslims came together to deal with differences which may well be argued was the underpinning reason why the Ummah was held at ransom for over a thousand years.

One of the assertions of researching any part of history is having the capability to filter facts from fiction to truly understand the circumstances of the occurrences that took place. It is the responsibility of the researcher to write in a manner which enables him to be impartial and equally as critical in order to employ biographical reassessment alongside a full historical synopsis without prejudice allowing the reader to form their view. One of the plausible certainties we usually find in the study of any part of history is how it is transcribed. The norm preceding (al-Tabari, Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Asakir etc) was where experts and scholars had a tendency of portraying historical occurrences either with biasness or a false depiction which falsified and tainted historical accuracy to such an extent that historical figures were often seen as myth. Many academics highlight that usually history is written by royal biographers with a certain agenda of appeasement rather than being a dissident.

Within the various sectarian schools of thought, one of the most contentious disputes that arise due to a number of incidents that take place during the aftermath of the appointment of Abu Bakr as Siddiq رضي الله عنه as the political successor to the Prophet صلى الله عليه واله وسلم is what some refer to the incident of the Door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا. It is evident from various literature that arguments commonly put forth by our friends to defend various stances are habitually logical, coherent and adherent to the norms of traditional and modern academic critiquing. However, scholars view this contentious issue of the violation of the sanctity of the house of Lady Fatimah سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا apparently resulted in her miscarriage. According to some scholars, her eventual death, not only lacks common sense but is extremely flawed and, certainly, projects the family of the Prophet as being weak, fearful and lacking the courage of speaking the truth in the midst of totalitarianism. This skewed stance, then, contradicts the actions of Imam Hussain عليه السلام at the plains of Karbala in 60AH. The scholarly community are absolutely clear that one of the many great qualities possessed by The Family of the Prophet was the ability of speaking the truth in any setting let alone the rulers court. Whether this was at Ali ibn Abi Talib عليه السلام rectification of judicial decrees, to Imam Hasan's عليه السلام forbearance and truthfulness in facing the tribulations of Muawiyah to eventually Imam Hussain عليه السلام refusing to be silent in the midst of tyranny and reigns of terror and openly challenging the extraordinary fighting force of Syria under the leadership of Yazid. I will endeavour by highlighting the inconsistencies, flawed logical arguments and lack of scholarly analysis regarding what I would call an attack on the Prophet himself if it really occurred.

If the aforementioned incident was something that actually did transpire, it would be grounds for the condemnation and further refutation of Umar رضي الله عنه. Furthermore, it would be legitimate justifications for the utilisation of the incident to rightly defame Umar's character, virtues and morals. Further observation made regarding the character assassination of Umar ibn al Khattab رضي الله عنه by some would fundamentally require irrefutable evidence against Umar رضي الله عنه to support their claim: Providing anything divergent to the highly placed benchmark would ultimately be as I often refer to **“intellectual dishonesty”** and a clear transgression against one of the most

prominent individuals in the history of human beings. To such an extent, that even non-Muslim intellectuals often speak highly regarding his character and political endeavours, this was mentioned by the prominent 19th century American author, Washington Irving, described Umar رضي الله عنه as a man of **“great powers of mind, inflexible integrity and rigid justice”** (Hasan, 2000). Another crucial observation is any incident being cited by a number of scholars doesn't in any form or way authenticate or give legitimacy to the stated issue. If being quoted by scholars is a precedence for authenticity, then, one may argue for the case of Yazid The Tyrant. What is required is filtering through all the available evidences to trace the earliest sources which are attributed to have mentioned the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا, furthermore in-depth scholarly analysis in order to scrutinise the evidences and present findings to the reader without any biasness, naturally we as humans are susceptible to being biased in one way or another, however what is required is an academic approach to the stated issue, presenting one's findings without attempting to influence the outcome, the findings themselves should be sufficient enough for the facts.

The incident regarding the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا has been cited by a number of scholars, further in-depth examination clearly unveils that all the narrations are singular and not mass transmitted (Mutawatir). Scholars like Sa'd al-Din al-Taftazani (d. 793AH), a great authority in Sunni Islam, asserts that singular narrations can be termed Mutawatir but in **“meaning only”**, however the underlining condition is that the stated narration must be authentic. When these singular authentic transmissions become widespread they can be termed as al-Tawatur bil-ma'na. The former equates this example to the role of Yazid in the killing of Imam al Hussain عليه السلام. The narrations are innumerable (singular), widespread and authentic hence reach the position of Tawatur in its meaning (al-Taftazani, 2010). In my research I failed to discover any authentic narration which substantiated the narrative that such an unimaginable incident took place moments after the passing of The Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه واله وسلم. Instead, conflicting narrations, broken chains of transmission and unreasoned arguments were heavily relied on to present a biased perspective and point of view.

The earliest source which mentions the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا is found in Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī authored by Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī (d.76AH). The former was from amongst the early Muslims, born near Kufa and migrated to Madina during the Caliphate of Umar رضي الله عنه (Al-Hilali, 2009), al-Shaykh al-Mufid alludes that he was amongst the disciples of Imam Ali عليه السلام (d.40AH) and after his martyrdom served his two sons; Imam Hasan عليه السلام (d.50AH) & Imam Hussain عليه السلام (d.61AH) then Imam Ali ibn Husayn Zayn al-Abidin عليه السلام (d.95AH) and Imam Muhammad al-Baqir عليه السلام (d.117AH) (al-Mufid, 1968). Its amongst the earliest Shi'i Hadith reports compiled even before Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Al-Kāfī. The cited book mentions in detail the events that took place after the death of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه واله وسلم with the rejection of the outcome of the nomination of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه as the political successor of the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه واله وسلم at Saqifah, al-Hilālī meticulously mentions how Umar رضي الله عنه physically attacks the house of Imam Ali عليه السلام with Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا positioned behind the door. This resulted in Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا physically being injured, beaten and verbally abused during the attack which also resulted in her miscarriage. Below is the full version of the narration found in Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī,

“When Ali saw how people betrayed him and were reluctant to support him, agreeing with Abu Bakr, paying homage to him and respecting him, he remained at home. “Umar said to Abu Bakr, ‘What stops you from calling on him to swear the oath of allegiance to you since nobody else remains to do so except him and these four men?’ Abu Bakr was more soft-hearted than “Umar and more intelligent, as well as more far-sighted, whereas the other (“Umar) was the most rough, rude and crude. Abu Bakr said, ‘Who should we send to him?’ “Umar said, ‘Let us send Qunfath to him, for he is a rough and tough man and a taleeq, one of the Banu ‘Adiyy ibn Ka’b.’ He sent him together with helpers to Ali. He sought Ali’s permission to enter, but Ali refused to let him in. Those in Qunfath’s company returned to Abu Bakr and “Umar, who were sitting at the Mosque surrounded by

people, and told them that they were not granted permission to enter. "Umar said, 'Go back. If he permits you, enter, but if he does not, enter without his permission!'"

They returned and again sought permission to enter. Fatima said to them, "I shall expose you to embarrassment if you enter my house without permission." They returned whereas the accursed Qunfath remained. They narrated what Fatima had told them, adding, "We felt too embarrassed to enter without permission."

"Umar then was angry and said, "Why should we pay attention to women?!" Then he ordered some men to carry firewood, and Umar, too, carried firewood with them, placing it around the house where Ali and Fatima and both their sons lived. Then Umar called out so Ali and Fatima could hear him saying: "By Allah! You shall have to come out, O Ali, and you shall have to swear the oath of allegiance to the successor of the Messenger of Allah or else I shall set your house ablaze!"

Fatima said, "O Umar! What feud is there between us and you?" He said, "Open the door or else I shall burn your house!" She said, "O Umar! Do you not fear Allah, so you want to enter my house by force?" He refused to leave; Umar now ordered fire to be lit at the door. Then he pushed the door and forced himself inside. He found himself face-to-face with Fatima who called out: "O father! O Messenger of Allah!" Umar raised his sword which was still inside its scabbard, hitting her side with it. She screamed: "O father!" Umar raised his whip and hit her arm. She called out: "O Messenger of Allah! How badly have Abu Bakr and Umar succeeded you!" Ali leaped and pulled Umar's clothes, then he pulled him and wrestled him to the ground, fracturing his nose and neck and was about to kill him. Then he remembered what the Messenger of Allah had told him and how he admonished him to deal with those folks. Ali, therefore, said to Umar, "I swear by the One Who honoured Muhammed with the Prophetic Mission, O son of Sakh, that had it not been for a Book from Allah and a covenant entrusted to me by the Messenger of Allah, you would have come to know that you are not such who would enter my house!" Umar cried out for help. People came and entered the house. Ali (as) took to his sword, so Qunfath returned to Abu Bakr fearing that Ali (as) would kill him, knowing his might and prowess.

Abu Bakr said to Qunfath, "Go back. If he comes out, that is alright; otherwise, enter his house by force. If he refuses to come out, set their house to fire." The accursed Qunfath set out. He and those in his company entered Ali's house by force and without permission. Fatima intercepted them at the door. The cursed Qunfath hit her with the sword. When she died, her wrist had a mark looking like a bracelet because of being whipped by that damned slave. Ali was taken by force and brought to Abu Bakr. Umar was standing next to Abu Bakr with his sword unsheathed. Khalid ibn al-Walid, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah, Salim (slave of Abu Huthayfah), Mu'ath ibn Jabal, al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, Aseed ibn Hassin, Bashar ibn Sa'd and other people were all sitting around Abu Bakr, all armed.

I said to Salman, "Did they really enter the house of Fatima without permission?!" He said, "Yes, by Allah, and she did not have a veil, so she cried out, 'O Father! O Messenger of Allah! O how badly you have been succeeded by Abu Bakr and Umar while your eyes can still see though you are in your grave!' She called that out as loudly as she could. I saw Abu Bakr and those around him weeping (as they heard her say those words). They all wept except Umar, Khalid ibn al-Walid and al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah. Umar kept saying, 'We have nothing to do with what women say.' They took Ali to Abu Bakr as he was saying, 'O by Allah! Had I had my sword in my hand, you would surely know that you would not be able to do what you are doing at all. By Allah! I do not blame myself if I fight you.'

Other narrations have stated,

“When Abu Bakr and Umar heard the news that a party of the Ansar and the Muhajireen have gathered with ‘Ali at the house of the daughter of the Prophet, they went with a group of people and attacked the house”.

It is also mentioned that when,

Umar Ibn al-Khattab came to the house of Ali. Talhah and Zubayr and some of the immigrants were also in the house. Umar cried out: "By God, either you come out to render the oath of allegiance, or I will set the house on fire." al-Zubair came out with his sword drawn. As he stumbled (upon something), the sword fell from his hand, so they jumped over him and seized him."

Another variation states,

“Although the timing of the events is not clear, it seems that ‘Ali and his group came to know about the Saqifah after what had happened there. At this point, his supporters gathered in Fatima’s house. Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, fully aware of ‘Ali’s claims and fearing a serious threat from his supporters, summoned him to the mosque to swear the oath of allegiance. ‘Ali refused, and so the house was surrounded by an armed band led by Abu Bakr and Umar, who threatened to set it on fire if ‘Ali and his supporters refused to come out and swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. The scene grew violent and Fatima was furious.”

When scrutinising the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا it’s evident that the origin of the narrations are predominantly traceable to al-Hilālī’s Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays, an interesting observation was rendered by Dr. Robert Gleave of Exeter University who states that the book is extremely controversial due to authenticity and is heavily debated amongst Shi’i scholars regarding the permissibility of deriving theological dogma (Gleave, 2015). Ibn al-Ghaḍā’irī (d. 411AH) a renowned scholar, in his book Kitāb al-rijāl rejects the authenticity of the book based on conflicting narrations which according to him opposes the general principles of the Shi’i belief. The leading Muslim Jurist Hossein Modarressi argues that the only authentic fact regarding the book is that *“it’s early”*, however he refuses to accept that it can be traceable to Ali عليه السلام but puts it to a period before the death of Abān (138AH) and suggest that “perhaps” he is responsible for the content of the book, Modarressi goes even further and implies that Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilālī was a fictional character *“invented to give the anti-Umayyad critique an early provenance”* (Modarressi, 2003). Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413AH) a renowned classical scholar in his famous book Taṣḥīḥ al-i’tiqādāt al-Imāmīyya (تصحيح الاعتقادات الإمامية) is of the opinion that the book is a fabrication and can’t be fully relied upon, he further states that due to its authenticity, it is not permissible to ground ones actions on it (al-Mufid, 1968). Allamah Al-Hilli (d. 1325AH) the grand Marja’ in his book Kitāb al-rijāl asserts authorship is attributed to Sulaym ibn Qays however its full of conflicting narrations and in his view the book is a fabrication. Equally there are many other experts who would disagree with these scholars and state that the book is authentic, these include Moḥammad-Bāqer Majlesi (d. 1111AH), Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Nadīm (d. 995/98AH), Muhammad Bāqir al-Anṣārī al-Zanjānī and Ayatallāh Shihāb al-Dīnal-Mar’ashī (d. 1410AH), nevertheless as there is clearly a dispute regarding the authenticity, the question that surfaces is how any person could utilise its contents as a bases to defame the character of Umar رضي الله عنه, not only defame his character but accuse him of physically abusing the daughter of the Prophet صلى الله عليه واله وسلم, the argument is self-evident that the event did not take place.

Another source that is usually mentioned when referring to the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا is from Tarikh al-Ṭabarī (تاريخ الطبري) (al-Ṭabarī, 2010) by the renowned and classical scholar Abū Ja’far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazid al-Ṭabarī (d. 310AH). Imam al-Ṭabarī is regarded as one of the pioneers in Islamic literature, my beloved teacher Sayyed Dr. Abdul Qadir Jillani (may Allah prolong his life) stated to me that al-Ṭabarī’s position in Tafsīr is similar to Imam al-Bukhārī’s (d. 256AH) position in Hadith. It is also mentioned that his Tarikh wasn’t authored for the benefit of the general public but for the scholars of Hadith specifically, the rationale behind this is

that Imam al-Ṭabarī's work is unprecedented in the sense that he provides a full overview of all narrations without distinguishing between the authentic, weak and fabricated.

Al-Ṭabarī quotes the following narration regarding the incident,

Umar Ibn al-Khattab came to the house of Ali. Talha and Zubair and some of the immigrants were also in the house. Umar cried out: "By God, either you come out to render the oath of allegiance, or I will set the house on fire." al-Zubair came out with his sword drawn. As he stumbled (upon something), the sword fell from his hand so they jumped over him and seized him.

When reviewing the narration, there seems to be a few objections regarding the chain of transmission, the chain is as following,



Ibn Humayd, also known as, Muhammad ibn Humayd, is a controversial narrator who the scholars of Hadith have harshly criticised due to his weakness, being a liar and not being trustworthy. The great Hadith master Abu Hatim Muhammad bin Idris ar-Razi (d.277AH) said regarding ibn Humayd **“He had a habit of mixing the Matn (text) and Asnad (chains) of narrations”**, Imam al-Nasā’ī (d. 303AH) said **“he was not trustworthy”**, Asadi further condemned him with harsher word, **“I haven’t seen a genuine liar, except for two individuals: Sulaymân ash-Shâdhakûnî and Muhammad ibn Humayd ar-Razi”**, al-Hafidh al-'Iraqi describes him **“he was amongst the liars”**, (adh-Dhahabī, 2015).

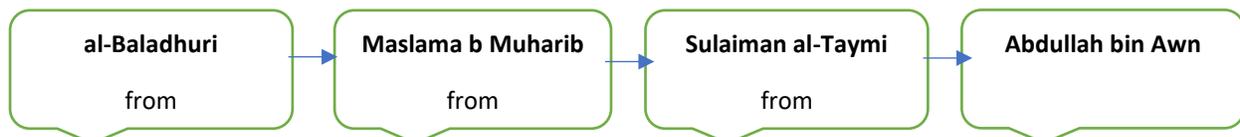
The second narrator in the chain of al-Ṭabarī's quotation is a person called Jarir ibn Hazim who the famous Hadith master Imam Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852AH) mentions in his famous Taqrib al-Tahdhib (تقريب التهذيب) **“Jarir was Thiqa, however towards the end of his life he became confused and made errors, this is why Abdur Rahman ibn Mahdi said no one would narrate from him during this time period”** (al-'Asqalānī, 2015). As for Mughira ibn Muqsim, Imam al-Nasā’ī (d. 303AH) described him **“as a person who made Tadlis (concealing something)”**, interestingly the narration Mughira quotes in al-Ṭabarī is termed Mu’an’an (معنعن) by the scholars of Hadith.

The final narrator in the chain is Ziyad ibn Kulaib Abu Muashar al-Kufi who Imam Jamāl al-Dīn al-Mizzī (d. 742AH) describes in his magnum opus Tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā’ al-rijāl as Thiqa (trustworthy) and someone from whom Hadith can be narrated from, however the concerning issue is regarding his death, al-Mizzī provides two different dates 110/119AH (al-Mizzī, 2010), and hence the narration is extremely weak and disconnected as it was impossible for him to have witnessed the incident of the door of Lady Fatima **سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا** many years prior to him.

From amongst another early source which is heavily relied by those who are adamant that the incident of the door of Lady Fatima **سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا** did take place is taken from the 9th century historian 'Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī's (d. 279AH) Kitāb ansāb al-ashrāf (أنساب الأشراف), the narration is as following,

“Abu Bakr asked Ali to support him, but Ali refused, then Umar went toward Ali's house with a burning torch. At the door he met Fatima who said to him: "Do you intend to burn the door of my house?" Umar said: "Yes!" (al-Balādhurī, 2010)

When further examining the chain of transmission of the narration it proves to be problematic for a number of reasons, the full chain is as following,



Firstly, the narrator Maslama bin Muharib is Majhool (unknown) and there is no biographical data available regarding his background and due to this reason Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī reject his narrations. On the same point Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī is critical of even the author of the book al-Baladhuri, due to being relatively unknown, no praise or criticism of him by his contemporaries, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī places him amongst the weak narrators in his famous Kitāb lisān al-mizān. As nothing can be substantiated from the first narrator (bin Muharib) it becomes apparent that al-Baladhuri did not meet Sulaiman al-Taymi (d. 143AH) nor narrated from him, as he passed away in 143AH and al-Baladhuri died in 279AH. The final narrator Abdullah bin Awn apparently narrates this incident directly from Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه however he was born in 66AH and died in 150AH and it was impossible for him to have met let alone narrate this incident from Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, the time difference being around 50 years after the passing of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه (al-'Asqalānī, 2010).

A further analysis made by proponents of this narration, is that Mursal Hadith is accepted as a proof (Hujjah) by the majority of scholars, this is according to the school of Imam Abu Hanifah, whereas the rest of the schools and scholars reject its authenticity, Abu Hanifah on the other hand accepted it with a number of conditions like the narration must be narrated by a Tabi'i, however it's clear that Ibn Awa is from the Atba'a al-tabi'een and hence this exemption of accepting Mursal Hadith is not applicable to him. What's ironic is that the same author of Ansab al-Ashraf quotes another narration which is disconnected in one place in the chain of transmission but more reliable than the stated narration, its regarding the incident which demonstrates the good nature of both Abu Bakr and Zubair رضي الله عنهما and how Ali عليه السلام accepts the outcome of Saqifah, yet the question to ask is why is this narration not used and emphasis only given to an extremely flawed narration on all levels.

We also find a frequently quoted narration found in al-Iqd al-Fareed by Ibn Abd Rabbih al-Andalusi (d. 940AH), the author was a controversial individual, some accused him of being a Nasibi (someone who has hatred for the Ahlul Bayt) and also being from the Mu'tazilah sect, his narration is regarding those who did not make allegiance to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, the narration is as following,

"They are Ali, al-Abbas, Zubair and Sa'd ibn Ubaydah. As for Ali, Abbas and Zubair, they stayed in the house of Fatima until Abu Bakr sent Umar to get them out of Fatima's house and told him: 'if they refuse, fight them'. He took a torch to burn the house and Fatima met him and told him: 'O' son of Khattab are you here to burn our house?' He said: 'yes, or you enter what the Ummah has entered in' [i.e. swear allegiance to Abu Bakr]"

The crucial matter with this narration is that the author fails to demonstrate from whom or which chain of transmission did he narrate regarding the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا and hence why his narration are rejected on that footing e.g. the chain of transmission is broken and the book was authored in the fourth century of Islam making it impossible for him to have witnessed the incident in first century of Islam.

There is also another narration found in Murūj al-dhahab wa ma'ādin al-jawhar (مُرُوجُ الدَّهَبِ وَمَعَادِنُ الْجَوْهَرِ) written by Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Mas'ūdī (d. 346AH), the narration is as following,

"When Abu Bakr was on the verge of death, he said: "I have done three things I wish I had never done, one of those three things is that I wish I had never violated the respect of Fatimah's home" and he said many things in this respect!" (al-Mas'ūdī, 2010)

This narration is weak as the narrator Ibn Ayesha her father is Majhool (unknown) and no biographical data is available regarding either praise or criticism of his contemporaries, the author himself according to Ibn Hajar remains questionable as neither his contemporaries or adversaries mention anything regarding him, hence why Ibn Hajar mentions caution should be taken when any narration is transmitted by such individuals (al-'Asqalānī, 2010).

Allamah Muhammad Baqir Majlisi a well-recognized and prominent scholar, after narrating the incident of the door says,

Lady Fatima (s.a.) screamed at Abu Bakr: How soon have you attacked the house of Ahle Bayt of the Messenger By Allah, I will not speak to you till I meet my Lord. When Ali and Zubair paid allegiance and this mischief ended, Abu Bakr came and sought the intercession of Umar with her and she became pleased with him. (Majlesi, 2018)

The above narration puts forth a number of interesting observations, firstly that the incident of the physical attack on Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ is questionable according to Majlisi's narrative, two conclusion can be drawn from this, firstly that the physical attack did take place and Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ after the intervention of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه on behalf of Umar رضي الله عنه forgive him or secondly no physical attack took place and Lady Fatima forgave Umar رضي الله عنه. Another observation is that according to Majlisi's own words this was a mischief (tribulation) which only ended with the allegiance of both Ali and Zubair رضي الله عنهما to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, if this conclusion is manifested then it ends the 1400 year debate about the political successor to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم, however the next sentence is where Majlisi quotes contradictory narrations which further states that Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ was infuriated with both Umar and Abu Bakr رضي الله عنهما. Another ambiguous issue is the narrative regarding the miscarriage of Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ, I couldn't find a single authentic narration which mentions her pregnancy for six months with a boy called Mohsin (died due to miscarriage), on the contrary there is an authentic narration found in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241AH) which contradicts the aforesaid narrative that Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ miscarried, the narration is as following,

Hani bin Hani narrate directly from Ali bin Abi Talib with authentic chain,

Ali bin Abi Talib said when al Hassan was born the Prophet came and said: Show me my boy, what have you named him? I said: I called him Harb, he said: No, He is Hassan, when al Hussein was born the Prophet said show me my boy, what have you named him? I said: Harb, he said: No, he is Hussein, and when the third was born the Prophet came then said: Show me my boy, what have you named him? I said: Harb, He said: No, he is Muhassan, then He said: I have named them after the names of the children of Haroun they are Shibr, Shubeir, Mushabbar (Hanbal, 2015)

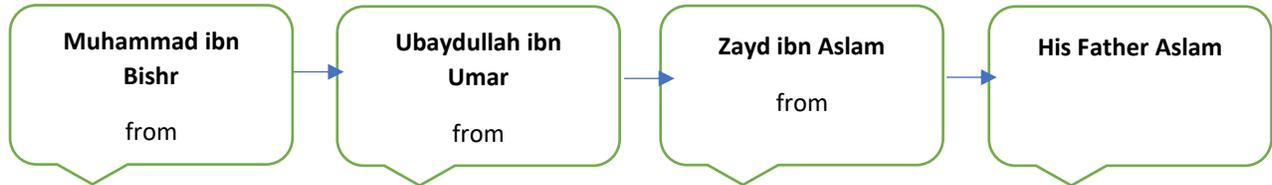
With so many conflicting narrations one begs to ponder which are correct or perhaps due to conflicting narrations we may be able to deploy the legal Usuli principle which the great Usuli scholar Shams al-A'imma Imam Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Abi Sahl Abu Bakr al-Sarakhsi (d.490AH) mentions in his famous book Kitāb al-Mabsūṭ fī al-fiqh al-Ḥanafī, ***“when there is the possibility of ihtimal (uncertainty) then the Al Istidlal (justification) is annulled”*** (al-Sarakhsi, 2010).

The proponents who are adamant that the incident of the door of Lady Fatima عَلَيْهَا سَلَامُ اللَّهِ did take place bring forth a narration found in authentic Sunni Hadith literature, the narration cited is taken from the Musannaf of the great Hadith master Imam Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235AH), he was famously referred to as the teacher of the four, Bukhari (d. 256AH), Muslim (d. 261AH), Abū Dā'ūd (d. 275AH) and Ibn Mājah (d. 273AH) (al-'Asqalānī, 2015). The narration is as following,

Muhammad ibn Bishr from Ubaydullah ibn Umar from Zayd ibn Aslam from his father Aslam When Abu Bakr received the pledges of allegiance after the Messenger of Allah, Ali and al-Zubayr used to enter the presence of Fatima the daughter of the Messenger of Allah and consult with her and hesitate in their allegiance. When news of this reached Umar ibn al-Khattab, he came out until he entered Fatima's presence and said: “Daughter of the Messenger of Allah, none in all creation was more dearly beloved to me than your father, and none is more beloved to us after him than you. However, by Allah, this shall not prevent me, if that group gathers in your

house, to order that their house be set afire!” When Umar went out, they came and she said: “Do you know that Umar came to me and swore by Allah that if you were to come back, he shall surely burn the door with you inside! By Allah, he shall certainly fulfill what he swore, so go away in peace, flee from your opinion, and do not come back to see me.” They left her and did not return to see her until they pledged their allegiance to Abu Bakr.”

The chain of the Hadith is as following,



There are number of issues with this narration, starting with the chain, the narration is by Muhammad ibn Bishr who is also known as Abd Al-Mun'im bin Basheer, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852AH) in his Kitāb lisān al-mīzān (لسان الميزان) weakens this narrator as he was caught fabricating Hadith by Imam Yahyā ibn Ma'īn (d. 233AH) (al-'Asqalānī, 2010). It also seems that the narration is Mursal (interrupted), the definition of Mursal is where the tābi'i (generation after the Sahabah) fails to mention from whom he narrated the Hadith from, he removes the name of the companion or that he narrates an incident which clearly contradicts the factual reality e.g. impossible for him to have witness such a thing (As-Suyuti, 2010). Zayd narrates the incident from his father Aslam who was the slave of Umar رضي الله عنه, Abu Nu`aym al-Isfahani (d. 1038AH) in his Ma`rifat al-Sahāba wa Fadā'ilihim - كتاب معرفة الصحابة - الأصبهاني - narrates via an authentic chain from Ibn Ishaq who narrated from Nafi' from Ibn Umar رضي الله عنهما that Umar purchased Aslam after the death of the Prophet during the Hajj (11AH) (al-Isfahani, 2002), the purchasing of Aslam during the Hajj in 11AH is also confirmed by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852AH) in al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah (الإصابة في تمييز الصحابة) (al-'Asqalānī, 2001) and hence it was impossible for Aslam to have witnessed the incident as he was bought into the presence of Umar in 11AH after the incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا. The narration also fails to substantiate that Umar رضي الله عنه burned the house of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا and cannot be used as a bases to attempt to defame Umar's character.

Conclusion:

What is clear from the various sources that I've researched is that there doesn't seem to be a single narration which is authentic and demonstrates that such inconceivable event took place, the bases of my conclusion was not taken lightly but in-depth analyses based on historical, biographical and Ahadith literature. I also make this conclusion based on the observation of the words of one of the most senior scholars of his time Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Mohammad Hussain Fadlullah (d. 1432AH). Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Fadlullah in speech given on Mother Day in Beirut (1999) was highly critical of the incident regarding the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا, he alludes that even though the narrative is popular within the public arena, he strongly rejects that such an unimaginable incident could every take place, he draws this conclusion primarily based on common sense and stresses that logic refuses to allow him to accept that this incident took place with the entire family and supporters present with her سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا, he also mentions his refusal to accept the narrations due to being unreliable and that the incident itself demands a negative interpretation of shame being attributed to Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا and even Ali عليه السلام for not defending her honour (Clarify Shia, 2018).

The incident of the door of Lady Fatima سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا is extremely controversial, as it ignites hatred, sectarianism and violence, we've seen this sadly in the Middle East and other places. There seems to be a hidden agenda, to legitimise sectarianism where a certain group (a minority) will endeavour to use whatever information to legitimise differences and the continual disunity of the Muslims, this minority is also found within Ahlus Sunnah, they whole survival is based on the narrative that we are different and the need to condemn others. I strongly belief that it's the duty of religious establishments like CIMS etc to further explore different avenues for Muslim unity, we need

to press hard for further dialogue, discussion and interaction in order to remove the myths and misrepresentations we have of each other, we need to focus on joint ventures, community led initiatives which will Inshallah bring the Muslims together, not uniformity but have a vision where we adhere to the high standards of morals that our traditions demand of us.

The End

Muhammad Umar ibn Ramadhan

Tuesday, 15 Dhul Qadah, 1441/ 7th July, 2020

Rochdale, UK

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