

## Kitab Saleem Ibn Qays Al-Hilali

Analysis of the first book authored in Shiasm

Adapted from Tahdhir ul Muslimeen an Kayd Al-Kadhibeem

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According to the Shia, this book is very important due to a number of reasons.

1. The narrator of it claims to be a student of Sayyiduna Ali radhiyallahu anhu
2. This is the first book in Shia literature
3. All the Shia Hadith and Fiqh scholars accept it as proof in the principle matters of religion.

Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to have comprehensive knowledge of this book.

History:

Fihrist Ibn Nadeem p.321 states the following with regards to Saleem Ibn Qays,

‘He fled out of fear of Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf. He sought refuge by Abaan Ibn Abi Ayyaash and remained in hiding for the rest of his life. On his deathbed, he gave this book to Abaan. The sole narrator and transmitter of this book is Abaan. The entire religion of the Shia is based on the narration of Abaan.’

Kitab Saleem Ibn Qays Al-Hilali states in the introduction,

‘Saleem Ibn Qays was among the companions of Sayyiduna Ali radhiyallahu anhu. Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf wanted to kill him, so he fled and sought refuge with Abaan Ibn Abi Ayyaash. When the time of his death drew near, he said to Abaan, “My nephew, my death is close. I have a right upon me; these are laws from Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wa sallam,” he then gave a book to Abaan. This book became famously known as Kitab Saleem Ibn Qays Al-Hilali. The sole narrator of it is Abaan. Without him, there is no narration. The first book that appeared for the Shia is this book of Saleem.’

The historical standing of this book is clarified by Saleem taking benefit directly from Sayyiduna Ali radhiyallahu anhu. As far as the religious standing of this book is concerned, the first point that draws attention is that the sole narrator of this book is Abaan, as clarified by Ibn Nadeem.

Similarly, Sayyed Ali Ibn Ahmad Aqeeqi and other Shia scholars have supported this view that the sole narrator of this book is Abaan.

Page 6 of the introduction to Kitab Saleem Ibn Qays Al-Hilali states, ‘Kitab Saleem is narrated through a number of chains. Most of them end at Abaan. This was the very same book that Saleem gave to Abaan close to his demise and made a bequest regarding it.’

Page 4 of the introduction states, ‘Saleem lived in hiding during the time of Hajjaj.’

Imam Badr ud Deen Subki writes in *Mahasin al-Wasa'il fi Ma'rifa al-Awa'il*, ‘The first book authored for the Shia was *Kitab Saleem*. Saleem says, ‘The time of my death drew near, so I intended to burn this book, but by doing so, I would be sinful. Therefore, I made a pledge to Allah that as long as I live, I shall not inform about this book, and after my death, no one will explain anything from it.’

From this explanation, we learn a number of important things:

1. This was the first book authored in the Shia religion
2. Without the author, no one would have come to know of it
3. Close to the demise of the author, he intended to burn it. It is clear that whatever is useless and of no benefit is burnt
4. He then thought that by doing so, he will be sinful, i.e. he was confused about the standing of the book and with regards to being of use
5. The author made a pledge to Allah that he will not inform anyone of it for as long as he lives. One reason for this could be that it should not reach Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf, for he will be hunted down and killed. The second reason could be that when the book comes out, it would be scrutinised, and the people who met Sayyiduna Ali radhiyallahu anhu were still living. The secret should not be leaked that the words are his, but he takes the name of Sayyiduna Ali radhiyallahu anhu
6. He also made a pledge to Allah that after him, nothing of this book should be brought out in the open. So, what was the problem in burning it? A book which is of no use during the life of the author and of no benefit after his death, and he made a pledge to Allah regarding it, so its remaining behind has no meaning, i.e. according to the author, the religious standing this book is that it is not worthy of being brought out into the open and in terms of principle, the status of it is that the author prepared it secretly and gave it to Abaan close to his demise. He also emphasized upon Abaan to keep it hidden and secret because he made a pledge to Allah. Abaan broke his promise and narrated the book. The sole narrator is Abaan. It is as though the entire Shia religion is built on a *khobar waahid*, i.e. narration from one person only. Therefore, it is necessary to find out the reliability of such a great narrator from whose mouth the Shia religion was built. There was no witness to what he said, nor was there any need for testimony!?

In *Meezaan Al-I'tidaal*, Dhahabi rahimahullah says with regards to Abaan Ibn Abi Ayyaash, ‘He was the worst liar.’ Also, Shu'bah says, ‘I can tolerate drinking the urine of a donkey, but I cannot tolerate narrating from Abaan Ibn Abi Ayyaash.’

According to the Hadith scholars, the life of Abaan shows that he was the worst liar; his statements are worse than the urine of a donkey. In terms of the science of transmitter criticism, the reality of the first Shia book, Kitab Saleem Ibn Qays Al-Hilali has been clarified.