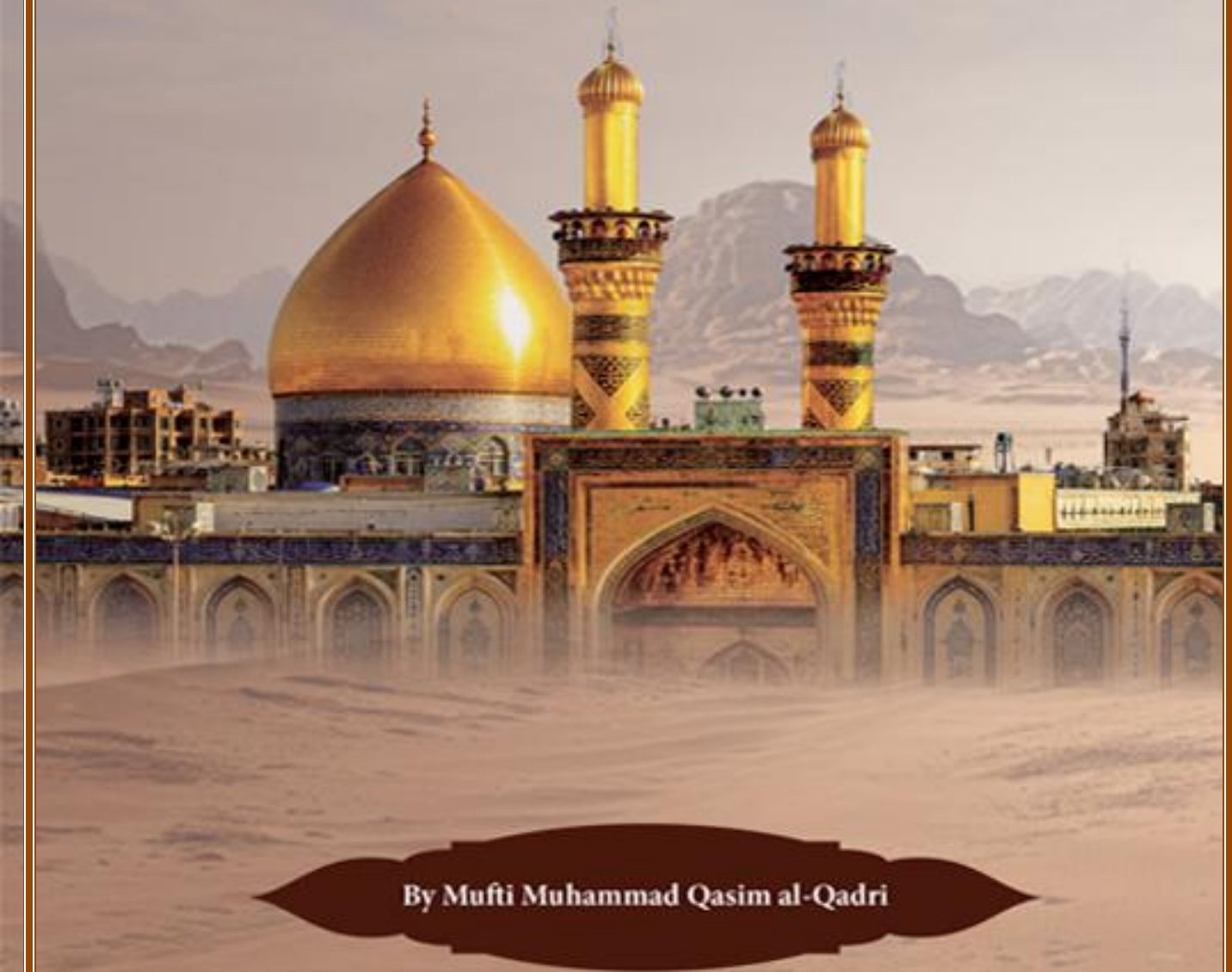


The Eminent Grandeur of the Ahl al-Bayt



By Mufti Muhammad Qasim al-Qadri

الحمد لله على نعمه و صلى الله على حبيبه وعلى آله و عترته امر بعد فاعوز بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

*Allah only wants to remove every impurity from you, O family of the Prophet, and to purify you completely.*¹

In this verse, the term *Ahl al-Bayt* primarily refers to the pure wives of the holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as the preceding and succeeding discourse pertains entirely to them. However, the inclusion of other sanctified souls—namely, the Lady of Paradise, Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’; Sayyidunā ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā; and the noble Ḥasanayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا²—within the *Ahl al-Bayt* is established through evidentiary proofs and is a reality accepted by the entire Ummah.

The erudite scholar of the Quran, Mufti Na‘īm al-Dīn al-Murādābādī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ, in his work *Sawāneḥ Karbalā*, cited this verse and recorded the *aḥādīth* and the statements of the Quranic exegetes as a proof for the *Ahl al-Bayt*. He subsequently observes:

In summary, the residents of the sacred household (the pure wives) are included in this verse because they are the direct addressees. Furthermore, since the inclusion of the *Ahl al-Bayt* by lineage (those related by blood) was less apparent, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, through his blessed action—wherein he gathered the “Pure Five” (*Panjtan Pāk*) beneath a cloak and supplicated for them—clarified that the term *Ahl al-Bayt* is general in its application. It encompasses both the “People of the House,” such as the honourable wives, and the “People of Lineage,” such as the Banū Hāshim and Banū Muṭṭalib.³

Imam ‘Abdullah b. Aḥmad al-Nasafī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ remarks:

In these verses, (this verse and the subsequent one), the *Ahl al-Bayt* of the holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ are exhorted so that they may shun sins and remain steadfast in piety and righteousness. Here, sins are likened to impurity and righteousness to purity, because a perpetrator of sin becomes as sullied by them as a body is defiled by physical impurities. The

¹ Al-Quran, 33:33.

² Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا (TN).

³ *Sawāneḥ Karbalā*, p. 82.

objective of this mode of discourse is to instil an aversion to sin in rational minds and to encourage the pursuit of piety (*taqwā*) and righteousness.¹

At this juncture, it is essential to remember the reality that while the pure wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ are certainly included among the members of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, this particular article intends to discuss specific personages; therefore, the phrasing of this discourse is situated within that specific context.

In the luminous history of Islam, there exist certain personalities whose status is not merely that of historical figures, but who serve as the living and eternal motifs of the religion itself. Mention of them does not merely evoke devotion; it revitalises faith, illuminates the heart, and provides life with a sense of purpose. The pure *Ahl al-Bayt* are those sublime personages of this blessed lineage whom Allah graced with a connection to the household of His beloved Prophet ﷺ. These are the sanctified souls in whose presence the radiance of revelation (*wahy*) descended, whose eyes witnessed the daily life of the Prophet ﷺ from the closest proximity, and whose hearts were illuminated by Prophetic grace—lineally, intellectually, and spiritually. Through their character, knowledge, piety, and sacrifices, they established luminous towers of guidance for the Ummah.

Many families have attained fame in the world, and many lineages have acquired honour and renown; however, the status of the *Ahl al-Bayt* remains unique. This is because their connection is to that august being who is the Leader of all Prophets, the most excellent of all creation, and the most beloved servant of Allah Almighty. This association has bestowed upon them a sublimity for which no parallel can be found in the entirety of Islamic history.

پارہائے صحفِ غنچہ ہائے قدس اہل بیتِ نبوت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Portions of sacred scrolls, buds of the celestial realm
Upon the Prophetic Household, millions of salutations*

آبِ تطہیر سے جس میں پودے جے اُس ریاضِ نجابت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*In which the saplings flourished with the water of purification
Upon that garden of nobility, millions of salutations*

¹ Madārik al-Tanzīl, pp. 940-1.

خونِ نیرِ الرُّسُل سے ہے جن کا خمیر اُن کی بے لوث طینت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Whose essence is formed from the blood of the Best of Messengers
Upon their selfless nature, millions of salutations*

The *Ahl al-Bayt* constitutes the household whose mention the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeatedly made to his Ummah. He drew believers' attention to their rights and commanded them to remain mindful of their station, rank and association to him. Therefore, the holy Prophet ﷺ said: "No one can become an accomplished believer until I am dearer to him than his own soul, and my progeny is dearer to him than his own children."¹

This same principle was articulated by Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in an exceedingly elegant manner:

أَرْقُبُوا مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ

"Seek the 'pleasure of the' Prophet ﷺ through 'the love and service to' his *Ahl al-Bayt*."²

This implies that one should express profound love and respect towards them, and take great care of them. Devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt* is not a secondary or optional matter of personal preference; rather, it is among the fundamental themes of the religion that have been reiterated to the Ummah to ensure that, until the Day of Judgment, Muslims never lose sight of their status.

In reality, love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* is an essential requisite of love for the beloved Prophet ﷺ. It is a natural principle of affection that an individual loves everything associated with their beloved. When the noble Messenger ﷺ is dearer to a Muslim than his own life, wealth, children, and every worldly possession, then the Prophet's family must inherently hold a singular place in his heart. This is the reason why devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt* has been 'inextricably' linked to faith, and a spiritual connection with them has been declared a means of spiritual felicity.

Love of the *Ahl al-Bayt* reminds one of the beloved Prophet ﷺ, for love is defined as the inclination of the heart. The supreme distinction of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is that they were nurtured within the household of Prophethood. They witnessed the practical manifestation of the religion and the

¹ Shu'ab al-Īmān: 1505.

² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 3713.

Quran in their own home through the person of the holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Their upbringing occurred directly under the supervision of the noble Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They observed his character, acts of worship, dealings, and his way of life from the closest proximity. Through the blessings of both their genealogical affinity and outward companionship, they internalised that required state of religious excellence and luminosity within their own beings. Consequently, the *Ahl al-Bayt* serve as both the guardians of Islamic teachings and living role models of their implementors; this is why they are included among the fountainheads of guidance for the Ummah.

Their Prophetic association is not restricted to lineage alone, but extends to the domain of sacred knowledge as well. They possessed a profound understanding of the religion, were acquainted with the mysteries of the Quran, and were the trustees of Prophetic teachings. Their statements, actions, achievements, worship, spiritual striving, steadfastness, patience, reliance upon Allah, and their practical examples of submission to the divine will continue to provide strength to the hearts of the believers even today.

Another vital aspect of the greatness of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is that their mention is incorporated into the acts of worship. In their daily prayers, while invoking blessings (*ṣalawāt*) upon the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Muslims also supplicate for mercy and blessings upon his progeny. This is an honour that no other family in the Ummah possesses. This demonstrates that the status of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is an integral part of the daily worship of Muslims.

Note: Regarding the commentary on the term “Āl” in *Ṣalawāt Ibrāhīmī*, other scholarly interpretations also exist alongside that of ‘it referring to’ the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

A prominent feature of the lives of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is their ‘quintessential’ purity and sanctity. In these pure-natured beings, spiritual cleanliness, moral loftiness, and sublimity of character are vividly apparent. Their hearts were inhabited by the remembrance of Allah, their tongues were adorned with speaking the truth, and their lives were replete with worship and obedience. Their character was devoid of worldliness, selfishness, or the lust for power; instead, it was marked by the pursuit of divine pleasure and a sincere desire for the welfare of the Ummah. And how could it be otherwise, when Allah Himself declared their glory ‘in the following words’:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

*Allah only wants to remove every impurity from you, O family of the Prophet, and to purify you completely.*¹

¹ Al-Quran, 33:33.

تیری نسل پاک میں ہے بچہ بچہ نور کا تو ہے عین نور تیرا سب گھرانہ نور کا

In your pure lineage, every child is a beacon of light

You are the essence of light, and your entire household is light

Every name among the illustrious personages of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is profoundly sublime. The true friend, helper, and beloved of the believers—namely the *mawlā* of the Muslims, Sayyidunā ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ—is among those radiant stars of the Prophetic household whose essence represents a beautiful synthesis of knowledge, wisdom, valour, bravery, worship and asceticism. His bravery on the battlefield is unparalleled, and his insight is acknowledged as superior and pre-eminent over other Companions in the intellectual sphere. Similarly, his station in worship and asceticism is exceedingly high. By offering sincere practical assistance to each of the true successors and Rightly Guided Caliphs¹—Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, Sayyidunā ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, and Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ—and by providing profoundly statesmanlike counsel through his wisdom and discernment, he played a pivotal role in strengthening the Islamic state and ensuring the ascendancy of Islam throughout the world.

مر تفضی شیر حق اشبح الاشجعیس
ساقی شیر و شربت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Upon al-Murtaḍā, the Lion of Truth, the bravest of the brave
The cupbearer of spiritual draughts, be millions of salutations*

اصل نسل صفا و جہ وصل خدا
باب فصل ولایت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*The root of the progeny of purity, the means of connection with Allah
The gateway to the realm of Sainthood, be millions of salutations*

Among the names of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, one is faith-refreshing, soul-stirring, and life-invigorating: that of the most beloved princess of the holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. The Prophet’s صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ love for her is well known to every Muslim, and at the mention of the grandeur of her name, even the most eminent of saints incline their heads in profound veneration.

¹ Al-Khulafā’ al-Rāshidūn.

As the leader of the women of the world and the leader of the women of Paradise, Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا is the supreme archetype of purity, modesty, patience, contentment, and worship for all women. Her life was devoid of outward worldly luxuries, yet replete with the treasures of spiritual opulence.

اُس بتولِ جگر پارہ مصطفیٰ تجلہ آرائے عفت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Upon that Batūl, the cherished part of the heart of Mustafā
The one who adorned the chamber of chastity, be millions of salutations*

جس کا آپنل نہ دیکھامہ و مہرنے اُس ردائے نزاہت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Whose veil was never glimpsed by the moon or the sun
Upon that mantle of quintessential purity, be millions of salutations*

سیدہ زاہرہ طیبہ طاہرہ جان احمد کی راحت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*The lady of radiance, the immaculate, the pure
The source of comfort for the soul of Aḥmad, be millions of salutations*

The life of Sayyidunā Imam Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ encapsulates an immense lesson in the unity and peace of the Ummah. To prevent bloodshed among Muslims, he relinquished his right 'to the Caliphate', establishing an example that history shall forever remember. He demonstrated that supreme bravery does not always lie in engaging in conflict, but rather in preserving the integrity of the Ummah.

حَسَنِ مجتبیٰ سیدِ الاسخیا راکبِ دوشِ عزت پہ لاکھوں سلام

*Ḥasan al-Mujtabā, the Master of the most generous
Who rode upon the shoulders of honour, be millions of salutations*

The persona of Imam Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ stands as an enduring emblem of truth and veracity. His sacrifice in Karbala is not merely a historical event; it is a perennial message that when truth and falsehood contend, the faithful must align themselves with the truth, regardless of whether the cost of this is the sacrifice of life, wealth, or family. The perseverance of Imam Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ elucidated the very meaning of steadfastness for all generations to come. His sacrifice presented the world with

a model of the highest degree of sacrifice, and his conduct of total submission and contentment to Allah Almighty opened an expansive chapter in the discourse of *submission to Allah* for the masters of Sufism and spiritual gnosis.

رنگِ روئے شہادت پہ لاکھوں سلام دُرِّ دُرِّجِ نجف مہرِ بُرْجِ شَرَفِ

*The pearl of the casket of Najaf, the sun of the constellation of honour
Upon the radiance of the countenance of martyrdom, be millions of salutations*

بے کسِ دشتِ غربت پہ لاکھوں سلام اُس شہیدِ بلاشاہِ گلگوں قبا

*The martyr of the great trial, the king in the rose-coloured mantle
Upon the solitary one of the wilderness of exile, be millions of salutations*

Devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt* is a vessel of salvation, and there are glad tidings of martyrdom for the one whose life concludes in such love. Affection for the *Ahl al-Bayt* serves as a conduit to the love of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which in turn leads to the love of Allah, the Most High. This love is the fountainhead of every goodness, the foundation of every virtue, and the ladder to the attainment of every 'spiritual' rank. Within the Ummah, the station of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is akin to the radiant stars in the sky; just as a traveller finds his way through the stars on a dark night, the believers derive guidance from the hallowed lives of the *Ahl al-Bayt*. Their lives demonstrate that the survival of the faith and the protection and propagation of Islam are more vital than political power, that piety is more precious than wealth, and that divine pleasure is more significant than worldly success.

The requirements of love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* extend beyond merely mentioning them with reverence; they necessitate the fulfilment of their rights. This includes honouring them, respecting their descendants, treating those associated with them with kindness, and being mindful of their needs. Love remains incomplete until it translates into practical action.

The *Ahl al-Bayt* are the focal point of the Ummah's devotion. Every Muslim who recites the *kalimah*, loves the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and accepts Islam as their religion, considers love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* an integral component of their faith. This is the reason why Muslims across diverse geographical regions and linguistic backgrounds bow their heads in reverence the moment they hear the names of the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

Furthermore, love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* necessitates emulating the manner in which they lived in harmony and affection with the honourable Companions of the holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They achieved tremendous feats for Islam under the banners of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and never permitted personal interests to hinder the propagation of the Prophetic religion; rather, they sacrificed their interests and even their lives for its sake. Thus, in accordance with the Sunnah of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, one must maintain a strong bond of devotion and love for all the noble Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ.

Devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt* in no way implies diminishing the eminence of other Companions. Islam does not turn devotion into mutual clash. Both the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the honourable Companions are the sublime pillars of Islam. The Companions conveyed the message of Islam to the world, and the *Ahl al-Bayt* likewise served that same message and sacrificed their lives for it. This is why the path of the *Ahl al-Sunnah* is the path of moderation; they love the *Ahl al-Bayt* and revere all the Companions as well.

A crucial requirement of devotion to the *Ahl al-Bayt* is to adopt their morals, spirit of forgiveness, generosity, valour, and their profound love for the Hereafter. If an individual professes love verbally, yet their life remains steeped in falsehood, oppression, envy, arrogance, and dishonesty—with no trace of Quranic recitation, prayer, generosity, or worship—then their claim of love is exceedingly tenuous. True and robust love is that which fundamentally transforms a person's character.

For the Muslim Ummah, the *sīrah* of the *Ahl al-Bayt* offers an excellent model. In times of internal dispute, the conduct of Imam Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ provides a lesson of unity. In the face of the promotion of matters contrary to the Shariah, or when confronted by tyranny, the sacrifice of Imam Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ teaches the proclamation of truth, the confrontation of falsehood, and steadfastness in the faith. When knowledge is sought, the wisdom of Mawlā 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ provides 'essential' guidance. In the sphere of domestic life, the example of Sayyidah Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا sheds light. Indeed, every facet of the lives of the *Ahl al-Bayt* is like an exquisite diamond, where every angle radiates light.

کیا بات رضائے چہستانِ کرم کی زہراء ہیں کلی جس میں حسین اور حسن پھول

*How wondrous, O Razā, is that garden of benevolence
Wherein Zahrā' is the bud, and Ḥusayn and Ḥasan are the flowers*

To mention the *Ahl al-Bayt* is, in essence, to mention the light of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ household. They are the lamps that have illuminated the path of the Ummah for centuries. Their *sīrah* teaches patience, their love revitalises faith, their veneration generates light within the heart,

and their footsteps guide an individual to the path of divine pleasure. The faith of every Muslim warrants them to recognise the eminence of the pure *Ahl al-Bayt*, recount their virtues, make devotion to them 'an integral' part of their faith, fulfil their rights, seek guidance from their teachings, and strive to mould their lives according to their ethics and character. This is the mandate of love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and this is the moderate path of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*.

May Allah allow us to possess sincere love for the pure *Ahl al-Bayt*, to afford them due veneration, to fulfil their rights, to walk in their footsteps, and to implement their teachings within our lives.


اٰمِيْنُ بِجَاهِ خَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّنَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ



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