Al-Furqān
the bi-weekly newsletter from the office of
Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi

In the name of Allâh, the Beneficent, the Merciful
O Allah, bless Muhammad & his Progeny

“Today I have perfected for you your religion,
completed upon you My blessing, and I am pleased with Islam as religion for you.”
(The Qur’an 5:3)

This was the verse sent down by Almighty God at the conclusion of the event of Ghadir Khumm in which the last and best of all the Messengers of Allah, Muhammad al-Mustafa, declared ‘Ali bin Abi Talib as his successor and the wali of all the Muslims after him.

The Shi’as celebrate this event as an eid — Eid al-Ghadir. Is this “eid” cultural or religious? It is only an expression of devotion by the Shi’as towards their first Imam or is there a religious basis for this celebration?

Eid al-Ghadir is an eid on religious basis. Whenever the circumstances allowed, the Imams of Ahlul Bayt used to celebrate it in a grand scale. Shaykh at-Tusi (385-466 AH) narrates from al-Fayyaz bin Muhammad bin ‘Umar at-Tarsusi that he visited Imam ‘Ali ar-Riza (a.s.) on the day of Ghadir and saw that the Imam had organized a major feast for the iftar on that day in which he also distributed money and gifts among his servants and followers. In that gathering, Imam ‘Ali ar-Riza (a.s.) narrated (through his father and fore-fathers) the following event from Imam Husayn (a.s.):

Once, during the caliphate of Imam ‘Ali (a.s.), the anniversary of Ghadir occurred on a Friday. Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) ascended the mimbar for the Friday khutba, and after praising Almighty Allah and the Blessed Prophet, he said,

“Almighty Allah has combined, O the Believers, on this day two great and major eids... He has made the Juma’ (Friday: literally it means the gathering) double...”

Then Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) briefly described the event of Ghadir and said,

“Therefore, a person’s [belief in] God’s tawhid will not be accepted unless he/she affirms the nubuwwat of the Prophet (s.a.w.), and the religion will not be accepted unless he/she affirms the wilayat of one whose wilayat has been ordered...”

After the khutba and the Friday prayer, Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) went with his family members to the house of Imam Hasan bin ‘Ali who had arranged a major feast for the whole family and the companions —rich and poor alike— for that special occasion. (See Shaykh Muhammad bin Hasan at-Tusi, Misbah al-Mutahajjid [Beirut: Mu’assasa Fiqhis Shi’a: 1411 AH] p. 752-754)

This shows that the day of Ghadir is indeed a religious eid declared and celebrated by our Imams.

Eid al-Ghadir is celebration of Islam’s perfection; with the wilayat (leadership) of ‘Ali, Almighty Allah completed His most important blessing on us—guidance; and through that wilayat Islam became the preferred religion.

Eid al-Ghadir is an annual renewal of our commitment and loyalty to Islam as a religion. We pledge to follow Islam as taught by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and as preserved by the Imams of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

Al-hamdu lil-lahi lazi ja’alni minal mutamassikin bi wilayati ‘Ali bin Abi Talib
All praise be to Allah who made me among those who hold on to wilayat of ‘Ali bin Abi Talib.
EXCERPTS FROM ZIYĀRAT OF AMIRUL MU’MININ ‘ALI BIN ABI TĀLIB

Salaam upon you, O Chief of the believers, Leader of the heirs [of the Prophet], Heir of the wisdom of the prophets, Friend of the Lord of the universe, my Master and Master of the believers, & may Allāh’s mercy & blessings be upon you...

Salaam upon you, O the upright religion of Allāh and His straight path.

Salaams upon you, O the great news about whom they disputed and about whom they will be questioned [on the day of judgement].

Salaams upon you, O Chief of the believers, you believed in Allāh while the others were still idol-worshippers, you testified to the truth while others were still denying it, you struggled [in jihad] while others were retreating [from jihad], and leader of the Muslims, chief of the believers, and guide of the pious.

I bear witness, O Chief of believers, that the person who doubts about you has not believed in the trustworthy Messenger. And the one who equates you to others has strayed from the upright religion that the Lord of the Universe has chosen for us and that He has perfected through your wilāyat on the day of Ghadir.

I bear witness, a true witnessing, and I swear by Allāh a true oath that: Muhammad and his Family are leaders of the people; and that you [‘Ali] are my Master and Master of the believers; and you are the servant of Allāh and His friend; and that [you are] the Prophet’s brother, his successor, and heir.

And the Prophet said about you: “I swear by the God who sent me with the truth that a person who rejects you has not truly believed in me, and one who rejects you has not truly accepted Allāh.”

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Was Shi’a Islam political in nature or religious?

Chp. 2. Self-Censorship in Muslim History:
A Case Study of Da’wat Dhu ’l-‘Ashira.
How Muslim historians of early as well as modern eras exercised self-censorship, and how events related to Shi’ism were suppressed in order to appease the rulers.

Chp. 3. Ghadir Khumm & the Orientalists.
How the Orientalists have dealt with the event of Ghadir Khumm. What is the literal and contextual meaning of the term “mawla” which has great bearing on the issue of imamat of Imam ‘Ali.

Chp. 4. Appointment of ‘Ali: Explicit or Implicit?
Was the appointment of Imam ‘Ali explicit or implicit?

Chp. 5. The Concept of Ahlul Bayt: Islamic or Tribal?
The concept of Ahlul Bayt in the Qur’an and the sunnah.

The wilayat, the position and authority of the Imams. The scope of wilayat from the Qur’anic point of view.

Chp. 7. Knowledge of the Ahlul Bayt.
The esoteric knowledge that the Prophet and the Imams possess and its relevance to their personal life.