

# The Authenticity of Ziyārat ‘Āshūrā’

*The following is a translation of Sayyid Musa al-Shubayrī al-Zanjānī’s response to a question regarding the authenticity of the widely-recited Ziyārat ‘Āshūrā’. The version of the ziyārat that Sayyid al-Zanjānī speaks to, and that is found in by Shaykh ‘Abbās al-Qummī’s Mafātīh al-Jinān, is originally cited in Shaykh al-Ṭūsī’s compilation of prayers, entitled Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid. This response is particularly noteworthy for the expertise and nuance brought to bear on questions of authenticity, which simultaneously establishes a place for spiritual validity. The translation was provided by Shaykh Haziq Sheikh, and has been emended for clarity.*

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In His Name, The Exalted

Setting aside the spiritual evidence derived from reliable sources that supports the reliability of Ziyārah ‘Āshūrā’, the chain of transmission mentioned in Shaykh al-Ṭūsī’s Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid following the Ziyārah is sound (*sanad<sup>un</sup> ṣaḥīḥ<sup>un</sup>*).

To explain further, after transmitting the Ziyārah of Sayyid al-Shuhadā’ (‘a) from ‘Alqamah, the following is mentioned in Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid:

Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī narrated from Sayf b. ‘Amīrah, who said: I traveled to al-Gharī ((al-Gharī is an alternative name for the city of Najaf, Iraq)) with Ṣafwān b. Mihrān al-Jammāl and a group of our companions. When we finished our ziyārah ((This first ziyārah would be of the first Imam, Imam ‘Ali, in Najaf)), Ṣafwān turned and faced toward the direction of Imam Husayn (‘a). He told us, “You are to perform the ziyārah of Husayn (‘a) from this place, near the head of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (‘a). It was from this very place that, while I was accompanying him, Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) pointed towards the Imam (Husayn).”

Then Ṣafwān performed the *ziyārah* that ‘Alqamah b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī narrated from Imam al-Baqir (‘a) on the Day of ‘Ashura’... ((al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid* (Beirut: Mu’assassat al-A‘lamī, 1998) pg. 539-40))

It is understood from this excerpt that Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) pointed towards the Prince of Martyrs (Sayyid al-Shuhadā’, ‘a) and performed the very same *ziyārah* that ‘Alqamah narrated from Imam al-Baqir (‘a).

As for the chain of transmission, there is no dispute in the reliability of Sayf b. ‘Amīrah and Ṣafwān b. Mihrān. Only two issues remain: the first is the chain of transmission to Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī, and the second is in regard to the reliability of Muḥammad b. Khālīd himself. As for the chain to al-Ṭayālīsī, there are two ways to establish its reliability:

The first method: the expression “Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī narrated” instead of “it is narrated from Muḥammad b. Khālīd” evidently indicates that Shaykh al-Ṭūsī had personally verified the attribution of this narration to Muḥammad b. Khālīd. This suffices in confirming the reliability of this aspect of the chain.

The second method: this hadith was taken from the book of Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī, to whom Shaykh al-Ṭūsī has attributed a book in his bibliographical index *al-Fihrist*. He narrates the book from: Ḥusayn b. ‘Ubaydallāh al-Ghaḍā’irī—from Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-‘Aṭṭār—from his father—from Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Maḥbūb—from Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī. These narrators are all major scholars of the Imami Shi‘is, and reliable authorities. As for Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-‘Aṭṭār, he is from the *shuyūkh al-ijāzah*, scholars regarding whom it is established—through considerable research—that their trustworthiness does not depend on a testimony to their reliability (*al-tawthīq*).

What remains is the trustworthiness of Muḥammad b. Khalid al-Ṭayālīsī himself. A number of factors attest to this:

First: Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Maḥbūb, one of the pillars of the community, narrates al-Ṭayālīsī’s books. This indicates his reliance upon [al-Ṭayālīsī].

Second: al-Ṭayālīsī is the narrator for certain esteemed and trustworthy scholars and is their source to the books of particular individuals, among which are (the books of) Sayf b. ‘Amīrah and Muḥammad b. Ma‘rūf. Muḥammad b. Ja‘far al-Razzāz, one of the most well-regarded teachers of the sect, narrates both books (of Sayf and Muḥammad) from al-Ṭayālīsī. This indicates that al-Razzāz relied upon (and trusted) al-Ṭayālīsī.

Included in this group (of books is that of) Ruzayq b. al-Zubayr. ‘Abdullāh b. Ja‘far al-Himyarī narrates from Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī from Ruzayq. Also Ḥumayd b. Ziyād—who both Shaykh al-Ṭūsī and al-Najāshī have deemed trustworthy despite his being *wāqifī*—narrates many primary *aḥādīth* from Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī.

Third: a number of esteemed trustworthy narrators transmitted from him. In addition to those already mentioned are the following individuals: Sa‘d b. ‘Abdullāh; Salmah b. al-Khaṭṭāb (who is certainly trustworthy); [al-Ṭayālīsī’s] own son, ‘Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī; ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm [al-Qummī]; ‘Alī b. Sulaymān al-Zurārī; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abū al-Khaṭṭāb; and Mu‘āwiyah b. Ḥukaym.

These are some of the strongest indicators supporting Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī’s trustworthiness. He has also not been disparaged by anyone, not even by Ibn al-Ghaḍā’irī, from whom there are reports wherein he incorrectly disparages many trustworthy narrators. Therefore, Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Ṭayālīsī’s trustworthiness should not be doubted.

From the preceding evidence, we can conclude this chain of transmission for *Ziyārat ‘Āshūrā’* is sound.