In the Path of Islamic Unity

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Abstract: *In the present article, the meaning of Sahabi and issues concerning it which is very important in Islam has been mentioned in the form of question and answer to help their understanding easier.*

What is the opinion of Shia towards Sahabeh (companions of Prophet)?

From Shia's point of view, those who visited the holy Prophet of Islam are classified into several groups. But before explaining this, it is appropriate to define Sahabi in brief.

There are various definitions regarding Sahabis. Here we mention some of them.

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1. Sa'id ibn Musayib said, "Sahabi was the one who spended his time accompanying Prophet for a year or two and attended one or two battle along with Prophet."[1]

2. Waqidi said, "scholars believe that anyone who saw Prophet and converted to Islam, contemplated on Islam and was content with it, is regarded as a Sahabi of Prophet in our opinion even if all this took just an hour of a day."[2]

3. Muhammad ibn Isma'il Bukhari said, "Anyone of muslims who spent his time with Prophet or just had seen him is counted of his companions."[3]

4. Ahmad ibn Hanbal said, "Anyone who spent time with Prophet for a month or a day or an hour or just had seen him is regarded as his companion."[4]

On the other hand, among Sunnite scholars, "Sahabi Justice" is accepted as a certain principle, which means anyone who perceived companionship of Prophet is Just."[5]

Now, in the light of Quranic verses, we are going to review these definitions and explained Shia opinion which roots in vahi (revelation of God).

In history, names of more than 12000 individuals has been recorded as companions of Prophet, among them we can find different persons. There is no doubt that companionship with holy Prophet was a great honor which was given to some. Islamic nation always respects them because they were the pioneers of Islam whom put up the honorable flag of dignity for islam for the first time.

The holy Quran admired these pioneers of Islam and said,

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتَلَ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَقَاتَلُوا وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

And why is it that you do not spend in the Way of Allah, when the inheritance of the heavens and earth belong to Allah alone? Those who spent before the victory and took part in the fighting are mightier in rank and are not equal to those who spent and fought thereafter. Yet, Allah has promised each a fine reward, and Allah is Aware of what you do.

At the same time, it should be confessed that companionship of Prophet was a miracle which could change the identity

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of people at once, guarantee their guidance and salvation for all their life time and put them among just people. To clarify this issue more, it is proper to refer to Quran before anything else as Quran is common point of all muslims.

Sahabeh from Quranic point of view

In the opinion of Revelation, those who were present at the court of holy Prophet and accompanied him for a while are classified into two groups

First group

The first group are those whom Quran admires them and names them as the stablishers of the palace of Islam dignity and magnificence. Here we mention some verses of holy Quran in this topic.

1. First pioneers

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

As for the first outstrippers among the migrants and supporters and those who followed them in doing good, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens underneath which rivers flow, where they shall live for ever. That is the greatest winning.(9:100)

2. Those who take alligence “under the tree”.

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

Allah was pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you under the tree and He knew what was in their hearts. Therefore, He sent down tranquility upon them and rewarded them with a victory close by.(48:18)

3. Migrants

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

A share of the spoils shall also be given) to the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their possessions, who seek the Favor and Pleasure of Allah, and help Allah and His Messenger. These are they that are truthful.(59: 8)

4. Companion of Fath

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Those who are with him are harsh

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against the unbelievers but merciful to one another. You see them bow and prostrate themselves seeking the bounty and pleasure of Allah. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah and their likeness in the Gospel, as the seed which puts forth its shoot and strengthens it, so that it grows stout and rises straight upon its stalk, delighting the sowers, and through them He enrages the unbelievers. Allah has promised those of them who believe and do good deeds, forgiveness and a great wage.(48:29)

Second group

Another group which experienced companionship of the Prophet were hypocrites or in another term sick-hearted. Quran revealed their true Personality and warn Prophet of them. there are some examples in the following:

1. **Introduced hypocrites**
2. **Non-introduced hypocrites**

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

Some of the Bedouin Arabs around you are hypocrites, and so are some of the people of Madinah who are well versed in hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We do. Twice We will punish them then they shall return to a mighty punishment. (9:101)

3. **Sick-hearted ones**

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا

The hypocrites and those in whose hearts there is a disease said: 'Allah and His Messenger promised nothing but delusion. (33:12)

4. **Sinful people**

وَآخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَآخَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

There are others who have confessed their sins; they intermixed good deeds with another evil. It may be that Allah will turn towards them in mercy. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (9:102)

In addition to these holy verses of Quran, there are various traditions issued by Prophet in blaming some Sahabeh; here we include two examples.

1. Abu Hazim narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'ad from Prophet:

" I sent you to the pool, Anyone who approaches it will drink of its water and anyone who drinks will not be thirsty for good. The groups will approach me that I know them and they know me as well, then we will be separated from each other." Abu Hazim said while I was reciting this tradition Numan ibn Abi

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Ayash heard it, then he said, is this what you heard from Sahl? I replied, yes. He said, I was witness that Abu Saeed Khudri added to this tradition this from Prophet who said,

انهم منی فیقال انک لا تدری ما أحدثوا بعدک فاقول سحقا سحقا لمن بدل بعدی

"They are from me. It is said you do not know what they did to me after me. I tell you be far away from Mercy of God anyone who changes Ahkam after me." From this sentence I know them and they know me. And "after me, they change…" it becomes clear that them, they refer to his companions who were accompanying him for a while. (This tradition is also narrated by Bukhari and Moslem.)

2. Bukhari and Muslem narrated from Prophet who said,

یرد علی یوم القیامة رهط من اصحابی – او قال من اُمتی – فیحلؤن عن الحوض فاقول یا رب اصحابی فیقول انه لاعلم لک بما أحدثوا بعدک انهم ارتدوا علی أدبارهم القهقری.

"On the Resurrection day, a group of my companions or he said my nation- will come close to you, then they will go away from the pool (they are not allowed to get closer to the pool). Then I say oh, God! They are my companions. God said, you are not aware of what they did after you, you are not aware they returned to their previous state (time of ignorance.)

Conclusion

It becomes clear from the verses of Quran and sunnah of Prophet that the people who accompanied Prophet are not in the same level but a group of them were pious people in the zenith of humanity which their services to Islam caused blossom of islam. There were other group whom from the first were hypocrites, double-faced, sick-hearted and sinful.

In this way, the opinion of Shia regarding Sahabah of Prophet which is the opinion of holy book of God and Sunnah becomes clear.

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[1] 'Usdul Ghabah, vol.1.pp.11-12.Egypt Pub.
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid
[4] ibid
[5] Istiab fi Asma Al-Ashab, vol.1, p.2

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