Does the Hadith of Thaqalayn refer to Hazrat Mahdi (AS)?

The Group of Mahdavism
The inquirer: Ma'sume Mohammadi

Response:

The existence of the Imam of the Time (AS) can be easily proved through Quranic verses, narratives quoted from the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and his household as well as logical reasons. In the present article, we are trying to discuss the Hazrat's existence specifically through the Hadith of Thaqalayn which both Sunnis and Shias approve as an authentic and Mutawatir (widely transmitted) narrative. It will be, God willing, examined based on verses and logical reasons in a separate article.

In order to shed light on the issue, first we quote the whole narrative from the most reliable Sunni books. Then, we intend to bring into spotlight the Sunni scholars' views regarding the narrative. Finally, its implication of the Imam of the Time (AS) is to be scrutinized.

The Hadith of Thaqalayn:

In Sunni sources, the Hadith of Thaqalayn has been quoted with different wordage and contents. We try to provide readers with the same words and contents here.

In his Masnad and Fadail al-Sahaba, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal has cited the narrative with two different forms and wordage.

1. **تارك فيكم الثقلين، لن يفترقا**

The form he has quoted from Abi Sa'eed Khidiri and Zayd Ibn Arqam is as follows,

حدثنا عبد اللَّهِ حدثني أبي حدثنا أسْوَدُ بن عَامِرٍ أخبرنا أبو إِسْرَائِيلَ يعني إِسْمَاعِيلَ بن أبي إِسْحَاقَ الملائي عن عَطِيةَ عن أبي سَعِيدٍ قال : قال رسول اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم : اني تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الآخَرِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلى الأَرْضِ وعترتي أَهْلُ بيتي وانهما لَنْ يفْتَرِقا حتى يردَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ

Abu Sa'eed Khidiri has quoted the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as stating, "I am leaving behind two precious things among you, one of which is greater. One of them is the Book of God which is like a rope extending from heaven to earth and the other is my Ahl al-Bayt (household). The two will never separate until they come back to me by the Pond (of al-Kawthar on the Day of Judgment)."

Al-Sheibani, Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH), Masnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, p. 14, H. 11119, p. 371; published by Muassissat Qurtaba, Egypt.

Al-Sheibani, Abu 'Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH), Fadail al-Sahaba, vol. 2, p. 779; researched by D. Wasi Allah Mohammad 'Abbas; published by Muassissat al-Risalat, Beirut, the first edition, 1403 AH-1983 AD.

2. **تارك فيكم خليفتين، لن يتفرقا**

The narrative above has been cited from Zayd Ibn Thabit in Masnad and Fadail al-Sahaba in a different form.

حدثنا عبد اللَّهِ حدثني أبي ثنا الأسْوَدُ بن عَامِرٍ ثنا شَرِيكٌ عَنِ الرُّكَينِ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بن حَسَّانَ عن زَيدِ بن ثَابتٍ قال: قال رسول اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: انى تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ خَلِيفَتَينِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ ما بين السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أو ما بين السَّمَاءِ إِلى الأَرْضِ وعترتي أَهْلُ بيتي وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يتَفَرَّقا حتى يردَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

Zayd Ibn Thabit has quoted the Holy Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) as stating, “I am leaving behind two things as my successors among you. One of them is the Book of God which is like a rope extending from heaven to earth and the other is my Ahl al-Bayt (household). The two will never separate until they come back to me by the Pond (of al-Kawthar on the Day of Judgment).”

Al-Sheibani, Abu ‘Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH), Masnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. 5, p. 181, H. 21618; published by Muassissat Qurtaba, Egypt.

Al-Sheibani, Abu ‘Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH), Fadail al-Sahaba, vol. 2, p. 603; researched by D. Wasi Allah Mohammad ‘Abbas; published by Muassissat al-Risalat, Beirut, the first edition, 1403 AH-1983 AD.

3. **تركت فيكم ما ان اخذتم به... الثقلين**

حدثنا عبد اللَّهِ حدثني أبي ثنا بن نُمَيرٍ ثنا عبد الْ مَلِكِ بن أبي سُلَيمَانَ عن عَطِية العوفي عن أبي سَعِيدٍ الخدري قال قال رسول اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم اني قد تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ ما ان أَخَذْتُمْ بِهِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بعدي الثَّقَلَين أَحَدُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الآخَرِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إلى الأَرْضِ وعترتي أَهْلُ بيتي الا وانهما لَنْ يفْتَرقا حتى يردَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ

Abi Sa’eed Khidirihas quoted the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as stating, “I am leaving behind two precious things among you, one of which is greater. The one who holds it fast would be on right guidance…

Al-Sheibani, Abu ‘Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH), Masnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, p. 59, H. 11578; published by Muassissat Qurtaba, Egypt.

Tarmathi and Tabarani have copied the narrative with the same form in Sunan and Mu’jam al-Kabir respectively.

Al-Tarmathi al-Sulmi, Mohammad Ibn ‘Isa Abu ‘Isa (died in 279 AH), Sunan al-Tarmathi, vol. 5, p. 663; researched by Ahmad Mohammad Shakir wa Akharun; published by Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi, Beirut.

Al-Tabarani, Abu al-Qasim Sulayman Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ayyub (died in 360 AH), al-Mu’jam al-Kabir, vol. 5, p. 153; researched by Hamdi Ibn ‘Abd al-Majid al-Salafi; published by Maktabat al-Zahra, Mosul, the second edition, 1404 AH-1983 AD.

In some quotations, the phrase of **ما ان اخذتم به** is replaced by **ما ان تمسكتم.**

4. لن ينقضيا حتي يردا علي الحوض

In Mu’jam al-Kabir, Tabarani has brought up the narrative as follows,

حدثنا محمد بن الْفَضْلِ السَّقَطِي ثنا سَعِيدُ بن سُلَيمَانَ ح وَحَدَّثَنَا محمد بن عبد اللَّهِ الْحَضْرَمِي وَزَكَرِيا بن يحيى السَّاجِي قالا ثنا نَصْرُ بن عبد الرحمن الْوَشَّاءُ ثنا زَيدُ بن الْحَسَنِ الأَنْمَاطِي ثنا مَعْرُوفُ بن خَرَّبُوذَ عن أبي الطُّفَيلِ عن حُذَيفَةَ بن أَسَيدٍ الْغِفَارِي أنّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى اللَّهُ عليه وسلم قال أيهَا الناس إني فَرَ طٌ لَكُمْ وَارِدُونَ عَلَي الْحَوْضَ حَوْضٌ أَعْرَضُ ما بين صَنْعَاءَ وَبُصْرَى فيه عَدَدُ النُّجُومِ قِدْحانٌ من فِضَّةٍ وَإِنِّي سَائِلُكُمْ حين تَرِدُونَ عَلَي عَنِ الثَّقَلَينِ فَانْظُرُوا كَيفَ تَخْلُفُونِي فِيهِمَا السَّبَبُ الأَكْبَرُ كِتَابُ اللَّ هِ عز وجل سَبَبٌ طَرَفُهُ بيدِ اللَّهِ وَطَرَفُهُ بأيدِيكُمْ فاسْتَمْسِكُوا بِهِ وَلا تَضِلُّوا وَلا تُبَدِّلُوا وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلُ بَيتِي فإنه قد نَبَّأَنِي اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ أَنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَنْقَضِيا حتى ي ردَا عَلَي الْحَوْضَ

Hathifat Ibn Asid Ghaffari has quoted the Holy Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) as stating, “O people! I …..”

Al-Tabarani, Abu al-Qasim Sulayman Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ayyub (died in 360 AH), al-Mu’jam al-Kabir, vol. 3, p. 67; researched by Hamdi Ibn ‘Abd al-Majid al-Salafi; published by Maktabat al-Zahra, Mosul, the second edition, 1404 AH-1983 AD.

The other chain of transmission that Tabarani has provided is,

حدثنا محمد بن عبد الله الحضرمي وَزَكَريا بن يحيى السَّاجي قالا ثنا نَصْرُ بن عبد الرحمن الْوَشَّاءُ؛ وَحَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بن الْقَاسِمِ بن مُسَاوِرٍ الْجَوْهَري ثنا سَعِيدُ بن سُلَيمَانَ الْوَاسِطِي قالا ثنا زَيدُ بن الْحَسَنِ الأَنْمَاطِي ثنا مَعْرُوفُ بن خَرَّبُوذٌ عن أبي الطُّفَيلِ عن حُذَيفَةَ بن أَسَيدٍ الْغِفَاري قال...:

Al-Tabarani, Abu al-Qasim Sulayman Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ayyub (died in 360 AH), al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, vol. 3, p. 67; researched by Hamdi Ibn 'Abd al-Majid al-Salafi; published by Maktabat al-Zahra, Mosul, the second edition, 1404 AH-1983 AD.

The credibility of Hadith of Thaqalayn from the Sunni perspective:

The majority of Sunni scholars put their weight behind this narrative as a reliable hadith.

1. Mohammad Ibn 'Isa Tarmathi:

Tarmathi has quoted this narrative from Zayd Ibn Thabit, describing it as below.

هذا حديث حسن غريب

Al-Tarmathi al-Sulmi, Mohammad Ibn 'Isa Abu 'Isa (died in 279 AH), Sunan al-Tarmathi, vol. 5, p. 663; researched by Ahmad Mohammad Shakir wa Akharun; published by Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut.

2. Hakim Neishaburi:

In follow-up to the citation of the Hadith of Thaqalayn from Zayd Ibn Arqam in his Mustadrak, Hakim Neishaburi has approved it.

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين و لم يخرجاه

In accordance with criteria mentioned by both Muslim and Bukhari, this hadith is considered authentic although they have not cited it.

Al-Hakim al-Neishaburi, Mohammad Ibn 'Abdullah Abu 'Abdullah (died in 405 AH), al-Mustadrak Ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 3, p. 160; researched by

Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata; published by Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyat, Beirut, the first edition, 1411 AH-1990 AD.

3. Ibn Kathir Damishqi:

Here is what Ibn Kathir Salafi has said in his Tafsir.

وقد ثبت في الصحيح م 2408 أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال في خطبة بغدير خم إن تارك فيكم الثقلين كتاب الله وعترتي وإنهما لم يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض

It is recorded in Sahih Muslim, No. 2408 that the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) made a speech in Ghadir Khom, saying, “I am leaving two precious things among you…”

Ibn Kathir al-Damishqi, Abu al-Fida Isma’il Ibn ‘Umar al-Qarashi (died in 774 AH), Tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘Azim, vol. 4, p. 114; published by Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1401 AH.

4. Abu al-Hassan Heithami:

In Majma’ al-Zawaid, Hithami has insisted on the reliability of the chain of transmission of the narrative including the word **خليفتين .**

رواه أحمد وسنده جيد

Ahmadi Ibn hanbal has cited this hadith in his Masnad as a narrative with a sound chain of transmission.

Al-Heithami, Abu al-Hassan ‘Ali Ibn Abi Bakr (died in 807 AH), majma’ al-Zawaid wa Manba’ al-Fawaid, vol. 9, p. 163; published by Dar al-Riyan Lil Turath, Dar al-Kitab al-‘Arabi, Cairo, Beirut, 1407 AH.

And elsewhere he has said,

ورجاله ثقات

The narrators of the Hadith of Thaqalayn are all reliable.

Al-Heithami, Abu al-Hassan ‘Ali Ibn Abi Bakr (died in 807 AH), majma’ al-Zawaid wa Manba’ al-Fawaid, vol. 1, p. 170; published by Dar al-Riyan Lil Turath, Dar al-Kitab al-‘Arabi, Cairo, Beirut, 1407 AH.

5. Siyuti and Mohammad Ibn Yusuf Salihi Shami:

These two individuals have also confirmed what Hakim and Tarmathi had said about the Hadith of Thaqalayn saying,

وأخرج الترمذي وحسنه والحاكم وصححه عن زيد بن أرقم أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال (إني تارك فيكم الثقلين كتاب الله وأهل بيتي)

Al-Siyuti, Jalal al-Din ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abibakr (died in 911 AH), al-Khasais al-Kubra, vol. 2, p. 466; published by Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1405 AH-1985 AD.

Al-Salihi al-Shami, Mohammad Ibn Yusuf (died in 942 AH), Sabal al-Huda wa al-Rishad fi Sirat Khayr al-‘Ibad, vol. 11, p. 6; researched by ‘Adil Ahmad ‘Abd al-Mowjud wa ‘Ali Mohammad Ma’wad; published by Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, Beirut, the first edition, 1414 AH.

6. Hassan Ibn ‘Ali Shaqqaf:

ورواه الترمذي (5 / 663 برقم 3788) بسند صحيح بلفظ: «إني تارك فيكم ما إن تمسكتم به لن تضلوا بعدي، أحدهما أعظم من الآخر : كتاب الله حبل ممدود من السماء إلى الأرض، وعترتي أهل بيتي، ولن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض، فانظروا كيف تخلفوني فيهما .»

Tarmathi has cited this hadith with an authentic chain of transmission as follows, “I am leaving behind two things as my successors among you. One of them is the Book of God which is like a rope extending from heaven to earth and the other is my Ahl al-Bayt (household). The two will never separate until they come back to me by the Pond (of al-Kawthar on the Day of Judgment). So watch out how you are behaving toward them after me!”

Al-Saqqaf al-Qarashi al-Hashimi, Hassan Ibn ‘Ali (Ma’asir), Sahih Sharh al-‘Aqidat al-Tahawiyya aw al-Minhaj al-Sahih fi Fahm ‘Aqidat Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama’at Ma’a al-Tanqih, 654; published by Dar al-Imam al-Nawi, Amman/Jordan, the first edition, 1416 AH-1996 AD.

7. Al-Bani, a Sunni Mufti:

Wahhabi Al-Bani (died in 1420 AH) known as **امير المؤمنين فى الحديث** (Amir al-Momenin in narratives) and Contemporary Bukhari has edited this narrative in Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir, H. 2457.

What we have provided so far were examples of Sunni scholars' views about this narrative.

Implication of the Imam of the Time (AS) in this narrative:

Many delicate points can be inferred from this narrative. The survival of the Imam of the Time (AS) and the continuation of Imamat until the Day of Judgment can be proved through the Hadith of Thaqalayn.

Shia scholars' reasoning:

Grand Ayatollah al-'Uzma Wahid Khorasani, one of the Shia jurists, have elaborated it as below.

ومن الأدلة النقلية على ضرورة وجوده حديث الثقلين، فإن هذا الحديث المتفق على صحته عند الفريقين يدل على وجود إمام في كل زمان من أهل بيت النبوة (عليهم السلام) إلى يوم القيامة، لا يفترق عن القرآن، ولا يفترق القرآن عنه (لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض.)

One of the proofs which manifests the necessity of the existence of the Master of the Time (AS) is the Hadith of Thaqalayn. The narrative, on the reliability of which both Shias and Sunnis have general consensus, clearly insists on the existence of an Imam from the Holy Prophet's household who will never detach from the Qur'an until the Day of Justice.

Al-Khorasani, al-Sheikh Wahid (ma'asir), Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 1, p. 472.

And Grand Ayatollah al-'Uzma Safi Golpayegani as another Shia jurist has explained it as below

The Hadith of Thaqalayn conveys six important messages:

1. The necessity of resorting to the Qur'an and 'Itrat (the Prophet's household)
2. Resorting to the Qur'an and 'Itrat, the only way of salvation
3. Salvation is possible through resorting to both not only one of them.
4. The infallibility of Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be Upon Them)
5. Ahl al-Bayt or 'Itrat are the most prudent people after the Holy Prophet (PBUH)
6. The earth will never be empty of Hujjat of God

(السادس) بقاء العترة الهادية إلى يوم القيامة، وعدم خلو الزمان من عالم من أهل البيت تكون أقواله حجة كالكتاب المجيد

The sixth message out of the Hadith of Thaqalayn is the survival of a guider from 'Itrat until the Day of Judgment. It indicates that the world will never be without someone from the Ahl al-Bayt whose instructions are as binding and evidential as those of the Holy Qur'an.

In order to justify the sixth point, he went on saying,

ويدل على ذلك أمور:

- 1قوله صلى الله عليه وآله «انى تارك فيكم الثقلين» وقوله «انى مخلف فيكم» وقوله «انى تارك فيكم خليفتين» وقوله «انى قد تركت فيكم» وقوله «انى قد خلفت فيكم الثقلين» فإنها تدل على أنه صلى الله عليه وآله ترك في أمته من يكون مرجعا في أمورهم وخليفته عليهم، وهو القرآن والعترة. ومن المعلوم ان احتياج الأمة اليهما ليس مختصا بزمان دون زمان، فلو لم يبق ما ترك في الأمة مدى الدهر لا يصدق عليه أنه ترك فيهم من يكون كذلك، وعليه فلا يصح صدور هذه التعابير والتصريحات منه. والفرق واضح بين أن يكون تاركا ومخلفا في الجميع ما ان تمسكوا به لن يضلوا أو في البعض، وهذه العبارات كلها صريحة في الأول دون الثاني.

- 2قوله صلى الله عليه وآله «ما ان تمسكتم به لن تضلوا» وقوله «ان تمسكتم بهما لن تضلوا» فان نفى الضلال على سبيل التأبيد ان تمسكوا بالثقلين لا يصح الا إذا كان ما يتمسك به باقيا متأبدا.

- 3قوله صلى الله عليه وآله «لن يفترقا حتى يردا علي الحوض» فإنه لو لم يكن في زمن من الأزمنة من هو عدل الكتاب وقرينه لزم افتراق كل منهما عن الاخر، وهذا ينافي ما هو صريح الحديث من كونهما عدلين وعدم افتراقهما ابدا.

- 4قوله صلى الله عليه وآله «لن ينقضيا حتى يردا علي الحوض» فإنه يدل على دوامهما وعدم انقضائهما ابدا.

From various aspects, this narrative is referring to Hazrat Mahdi (AS).

1. The sentences of

«انى تارك فيكم الثقلين»، «انى مخلف فيكم»، «انى تارك فيكم خليفتين»، «انى قد تركت فيكم» و «انى قد خلفت فيكم الثقلين»

indicate that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) left behind some individuals as his successors among people. It is crystal-clear that an Umma's need for such individuals is not limited to one specific period of time. In case a member of such people had not been alive at a certain point in time, the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) utterance would not have been true and valid then.

There is a clear distinction between two forms of sentences when saying, "I leave behind something among you as a successor and a reference in all of your affairs. If you resort to it, you will never be misled" or "I leave behind something among you as a successor and a reference in only some of your affairs." What is meant in the Hadith of Thaqalayn is the first not the second form.

2. The negative verb of **لن تضلوا** manipulated by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) suggests that if one resorted to the Thaqalayn, he would not get misled at all. The negative sense of the verb stands for 'forever' and it does work only when the thing one resorted to has the capacity of remaining for good.

3. According to the sentence of **.. لن يفترقا حتي,** the Qur'an and 'Itrat will never separate from each other. In case 'Itrat, which is equal to the Qur'an, were detached from the Holy Book, separation would take place, as a result.

So it could no longer be considered as equal to the Qur'an and as a consequence, the content of the hadith would come into question.

4. Likewise, the sentence of **لن ينقضيا حتى يردا ...** implies the eternity of the Holy Qur'an together with 'Itrat (the Prophet's household).

Al-Safi, al-Sheikh Lutf Allah (Ma'asir), Aman al-Umma Min al-Dalal wa al-Ikhtilaf, p. 140, published by al-'Ilmiyya, Qom, the first edition, 1397.

And here is what Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Milani has said in this regard.

إن حديث الثقلين كما يدل على إمامة الأئمة الاثني عشر من أ هل البيت عليهم السلام وإمامة علي عليه السلام بلا فصل بعد رسول الله، كذلك يدل على وجود الإمام الثاني عشر الحجة المنتظر وبقائه عجل الله تعالى ظهوره. وذلك لأن هذا الحديث يدل على عدم افتراق الكتاب والعترة إلى يوم القيامة وحتى الورود على الحوض، فكما أن القرآن ب اق إلى يوم القيامة فكذلك يجب وجود من يكون أهلا للتمسك والاقتداء به، وإماما للزمان وحجة للوقت من العترة الطاهرة إلى يوم القيامة.

The Hadith of Thaqalayn not only refers to the Imamat (leadership) of the twelve Imams (Peace be Upon them) as well as the immediate successorship of Amir al-Momenin Ali (AS) after the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) demise, but also reveals the existence and the survival of the twelfth Imam, Hazrat Hujjat (AS). Based on this narrative, the Qur'an and 'Itrat will never separate until they come back to the Prophet (PBUH) by the Pond of al-Kawthar on the Day of Judgment. Accordingly, when the Qur'an remains until the Day of Judgment, Itrat; in other words, the Imam of the Time (AS) needs to remain until that day alike.

Al-Milani, al-Sayyid Ali (Ma'asir), Nafahat al-Azhar fi Khulasat 'Aqabat al-Anwar, vol. 2, p. 262; published by Mihr, the first edition, 1414 AH.

Sunni scholars' reasoning:

A number of Sunni scholars have also inferred the existence of Imam of the Time (AS) from this narrative. Here are some examples.

Regarding the Hadith of Thaqalayn, Munawi, a Sunni scholar, has quoted Allame Samhuri from Jawahir al-‘Aqdayn as saying,

إنَّ ذلك يفهم وجود من يكون أهلاً للتمسك من أهل البيت والعترة الطاهرة في كلِّ زمان وجدوا فيه إلى قيام الساعة حتّى يتوجَّه الحثُّ المذكور إلى التمسك به، كما أنَّ الكتاب العزيز كذلك، ولهذا كانوا كما سيأتي أمانًا لأهل الأرض، فإذا ذهبوا ذهب أهل الأرض

As inferred from the narrative, there should always be someone from the infallible and pure Ahl al-Bayt among people who really deserves to be resorted to. The word of resort emphasized in the narrative would be meaningful on the condition that he continues to exist until the Day of Judgment just similar to the Holy Book which would remain till that specific day. According to narratives which are to be shown later, if Ahl al-Bayt left the earth, all habitants of the planet would cherish instantly as a consequence.

Al-Manawi, Mohammad ‘Abd al-Rauf Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Zayn al-‘Abidin (died in 1031 AH), Fayd al-Qadir Sharh al-Jami’ al-Saghir, vol. 3, p. 15; published by al-Maktabat al-Tijarat, Egypt, the first edition, 1356 AH.

And Ibn Hajar Heithami, a Sunni hadith reporter, has pointed to the implication of the survival of a member of Ahl al-Bayt in the Hadith of Thaqalayn, saying

والحاصل ان الحث وقع على التمسك بالكتاب والسنة وبالعلماء بهما من أهل البيت ويستفاد من مجموع ذلك بقاء الأمور الثلثة إلى قيام الساعة

All people have been encouraged by this narrative to resort to the Qur’an, Sunna (the Prophet’s tradition) and individuals from Ahl al-Bayt who are proficient in both of them. The narrative reveals that they (the Qur’an and Sunna as well as individuals from Ahl al-Bayt) ought to necessarily remain until the Day of Judgment.

Al-Heithami, Abu ‘Abbas Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn ‘Ali Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Hajar (died in 973 AH), al-Sawa’iq al-Muhraqa ‘Ala Ahl al-Rafd wa al-Dalal wa al-Zandaqiyya, vol. 2, p. 439; researched by ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibn ‘Abdullah al-turki, Kamil Mohammad al-Kharrat; published by Muassissat al-Risalat, Lebanon, the first edition, 1417 AH-1997 AD.

Afterwards, he cited another narrative about resorting to AHla al-Bayt, adding,

وفي أحاديث الحث على التمسك بأهل البيت إشارةٌ إلى عدم انقطاع متأهل منهم للتمسك به إلى يوم القيامة، كما أنَّ الكتاب العزيز كذلك، ولهذا كانوا أم انا لأهل الأرض كما يأتي، ويشهد لذلك الخبر السابق: في كل خلَفٍ من أمتي عدول من أهل بيتي

In hadiths related to Ahl al-Bayt, there is a central point demonstrating that the earth would never be empty of someone from Ahl al-Bayt who is capable of leading until the Day of Judgment. It is exactly like the Holy Book. Therefore, Ahl al-Bayt is considered as a safe haven for all habitants of the earth. As it was shown in the former narrative, “There would be one individual from my household among every single tribe or group of my Umma.”

Al-Heithami, Abu ‘Abbas Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn ‘Ali Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Hajar (died in 973 AH), al-Sawa’iq al-Muhraqa ‘Ala Ahl al-Rafd wa al-Dalal wa al-Zandaqiyya, vol. 2, p. 442; researched by ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibn ‘Abdullah al-turki, Kamil Mohammad al-Kharrat; published by Muassissat al-Risalat, Lebanon, the first edition, 1417 AH-1997 AD.

In his Jami’ Ahadith Shi’a, Ayatullah Brujirdi (God Bless Him) has quoted ‘Ajili, the author of Thakhirat al-Mal, as saying,

وقال العجيلي: وهم الحافظون للكتاب الله وسنة رسوله لا يفارقونهما إلى يوم القيمة لأنه لا بد من قيام الله بحجة منهم ووراثة نبوته وخلافة رسوله فمنهم الظاهر ومنهم المختفى حتى يكون خاتمهم

في الوراثة المهدى ولهذا يتقدم على عيسى بن مريم وتقدم ان قطب الأولياء الذي به صلاح العالم لا يكون الا منهم

They (the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) household) are the guardians of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's (PBUH) Sunna. They will never separate from each other until the Day of Judgment. It is God's responsibility to appoint for people a Hujjat from the Ahl al-Bayt as an heir to Nabuwwat (Prophethood) and a successor to the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Some of them are evident but some others are hidden. The last heir would be Hazrat Mahdi (AS). That is why he would be a leader to Jesus, son of Mary. No one except from Ahl al-Bayt can make reforms in the universe.

Al-Brujirdi, Haj Hussein Tabatabai (died in 1383 AH), Jami' Ahadith al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p. 75; Published by al-Matba'at al-'Ilmiyya, Qom, 1399 AH.

Conclusion:

Firstly, prominent Sunni figures such as Muslim Neishaburi, Ahmad Hanbal, Tabarani, Heithami and so on and so forth have cited the Hadith of Thaqalayn in their books. And according to the majority of their notable narrators, the chains of transmission of this narrative have been authentic and their reporters have been reliable as well. This narrative is Mutawatir among Muslims, as a conclusion.

Secondly, both Shia and Sunni scholars have asserted that Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be Upon Them) are equal to the Holy Qur'an. They believe that like the Qur'an which will remain until the Day of Judgment, someone from the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) household must survive until that day in order to give a sign of approval to the Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) utterance.

Good Luck

The Group Responsible for Answers to Doubts

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