12103 - Did the Prophet appoint ‘Ali as khaleefah?

the question

What is the ruling on people who claim that the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) appointed ‘Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him) as khaleefah, and say that the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) conspired against him?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This opinion is not known among any of the Muslim groups apart from the Shi’ah, and it is a false view which has no basis in the ahaadeeth that have been proven from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). On the contrary, a great deal of evidence shows that the khaleefah after the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq (may Allaah be pleased with him and with all the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)). But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did not state that clearly and he did not appoint him in any definitive sense; rather he gave commands which indicated that, when he told him to lead the people in prayer when he (the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)) was sick, and when he told him about the leadership of the Muslim community after his death, saying, “Allaah and the believers will only accept Abu Bakr.” Hence the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) gave their allegiance (bay’ah) to Abu Bakr and they were unanimously agreed that Abu Bakr was the best among them. It was reported in the hadeeth of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) used to say during the Prophet’s life: “The best of this ummah after its Prophet is Abu Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmaan,” and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) approved of their saying that. Mutawaatir reports from ‘Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him) show that he used to say, “The best of this ummah after its Prophet is Abu Bakr then ‘Umar.” And he (may Allaah be pleased with him) used to say, “No one is brought to me who prefers me over them, but I will whip him with the hadd punishment for telling lies.” He never

claimed that he was the best of this ummah, or that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had appointed him as khaleefah. He never said that the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) had wronged him and taken away his rights. When Faatimah (may Allaah be pleased with her) died he gave a second pledge of allegiance (bay'ah) to Abu Bakr, as confirmation of his first pledge and to demonstrate to the people that he was with the jamaa'ah (the main group of Muslims) and that he had no reservations in his heart against giving his allegiance to Abu Bakr (may Allaah be pleased with them all). When 'Umar was stabbed, he appointed six of those whom the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) had testified were guaranteed Paradise, for them to appoint one of their number as 'Umar's successor; among these six was 'Ali, who never denounced 'Umar, either whilst he was still alive or after his death. 'Ali did not say that he was more entitled than any of them to be khaleefah, so how can anyone have the right to tell lies about the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and say that he appointed 'Ali as khaleefah? 'Ali himself never made any such claim, and none of the Sahaabah claimed that for him. Rather they were unanimously agreed that the caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan was valid; 'Ali acknowledged that and he cooperated with all of them in jihad, shoora (consultation), etc. Moreover, the Muslims after the Sahaabah were agreed upon that which the Sahaabah had been agreed on. After all this, it is not permissible for anyone or for any group, Shi'ah or others, to claim that 'Ali was the appointed successor, or that the caliphate before him was false. Similarly, no one has the right to say that the Sahaabah wronged 'Ali and took away his rights. Rather this is the falsest of falsehoods, and it is thinking badly of the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), including 'Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him and with them all).

Allaah has protected the ummah of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and kept it from agreeing on misguidance. It was narrated in a saheeh report in many ahaadeeth that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "A group of my ummah will continue to adhere to the truth and to prevail." It is impossible that the noblest generation of this ummah could agree on falsehood, supposedly the caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmaan. No one says this who believes in Allaah and the Last Day, and no one says this who has the slightest insight into the rulings of Islam.