

AWLIYA ALLAH SERIES

AWLIYA ALLAH



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AWLIYA ALLAH

(أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ)

Written By

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SAWAD AL-AZAM (سواد الاعظم)

Some people translate Arabic term 'Sawad al-Azam' (سواد الاعظم) as 'largest Group, or the group of large number of Muslims. This translation has contributed a lot of confusion in Muslim Ummah. Every Muslim sect claims that they are 'Ahle Sunnah wal Jama'a' and Sawad al-Azam and Naji Group (those who will get salvation on the Day of Judgement). Even the Kharijis, Salafis, Ahle Hadith and their like minded groups claim that they are Ahle Sunnah and are the largest group and are on the right path of Islam.

It is in Hadith - Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) will never let my Ummah agree upon misguidance and the hand of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is over the group (Awliya Allah), so follow **Sawad al-Azam'** (سواد الاعظم) (the Pious Great Group of Believers - Awliya Allah) and whoever dissents from them departs to Hell". (Tirmidhi 4/2167; Hakim 1/116 - Dhahabi agreed with him)

The Arabic word 'Azam' (اعظم) is generally used to describe '**the greatness / importance of a person or group**' rather than 'the large number of people in a Group. Like we say **Imam al-Azam** (امام الاعظم) or **Ghawth al-Azam** (غوث الاعظم), or **Wazir al-Azam** (وزير الاعظم). In this context, when we look at the wordings of the Hadith, it says '**Sawad al-Azam'** (سواد الاعظم); meaning the most important or prominent group, which need not be the largest group.

As all individuals of the largest group may not necessary be pious believers, then how can we follow a group which is a mix of (i) Absolute wrongdoers (*fasiqeen*), (ii) Average wrongdoers and (iii) believers, and (iv) Deviants?

For following a Group, all members of the group should be pious. Therefore, in '**Sawad al-Azam'** category only Awliya Allah qualify to be followed, because they are on the right path of Islam.

We are not talking here about 'fake Sufi babas' and 'illiterate peers' who hunt needy people and run their 'spiritual shops' to make a fast buck.

Some people may argue that some very famous Scholars of Islam have translated the Arabic term '**Sawad al-Azam'** (سواد الاعظم) as Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'a.

Indeed, the scholars and Imams were right in translating the term that way because the real Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'a are only the Awliya Allah. By following their foot steps others can also try to become true Ahle Sunnah.

Thus 'Sawad al-Azam' are only Awliya Allah / Sufi Shuyookh of Ihsan, and those who follow their foot steps sincerely.

Sufi Shuyookh walk on the **path of Ihsan**. Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) provides them vision and understanding with which they can see the facts of things. They are pious and knowledgeable. They help in purification of minds of the people (*tazkia nafs*), correct people's notions, educate them about the inner values and significance of Islam and draw their attention towards Divine signs and secrets in the cosmos. They follow Prophet Mohammad's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) foot steps in propagation of Islamic teachings.

It is in Hadith - Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : He who deviates from 'Sawad al-Azam' (سواد الاعظم), even as much as a hand span, has himself cut off his connection with Islam". (Abu Dawood)

It is in Hadith - Abdullah ibn Masood (رضي الله تعالى عنه) reported that once Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) drew a line in the dust with his hand and said, "This is the straight path of Allah." Then he drew a series of lines to the right of it and to the left and said, "Each of these paths has a devil at its head inviting people to it." He then recited - وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ - وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ (Al-An'aam - 153). [Verily this is my straight path so follow it and do not follow the (twisted) paths, for you will be separated from His (Allah's) way." (Ahmad, Nasai, Darimi, Mishkat, etc.)

CATEGORIES OF AWLIYA ALLAH

There are certain big categories of Sufi Shuyookh / Awliya Allah who are known as **al-Aqtaab** and **al-Abdaal**. The biggest among them is known as **al-Ghawth**.

Look at the following Ahadith that confirm the existence of Sufi Shuyookh in the World all the time, till Qiyamah.

(i) **It is in Hadith - Tabarani wrote in his *Mu'jam al-Awsat* -** that Anas (رضي الله تعالى عنه) said that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "**The earth will never lack** forty men similar to the Friend of the Merciful (Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام) and through them people receive rain and are given help. None of them dies except Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) substitutes (**Abdaal**) another in his place."

The above Hadith confirms the existence of **Abdaal** (and of course other categories of Awliya Allah) all the time in the world, till Qiyamah.

Commenting on the above Hadith, **Qatada said** : "We do not doubt that **Al-Hasan al-Basri** is one of them (**abdaal**)."

Ibn Hibban also narrated this Hadith in *al-Tarikh* through Abu Huraira (رضي الله تعالى عنه) as : "**The earth will never lack** forty men similar to Ibrahim (عليه السلام) the Friend of the Merciful (ابراهيم خليل الله), and through whom you are helped, receive your sustenance, and receive rain."

(ii) **It is in Hadith -** It is reported that Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) once said after the Salah : 'O' people! Listen to this, understand it and know it. Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has servants who are neither prophets nor martyrs and whom they prophets and martyrs yearn to be like, due to their seat and proximity in relation to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). One of the Bedouin Arabs who came from among the most isolated of people twisted his hand towards the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and said: O'Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)! People from humankind who are neither prophets nor martyrs and yet the prophets and martyrs yearn to be like them due to their seat and proximity in relation to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)! Describe them for us!"

'The Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) face showed delight at the Bedouin's question and he said:'. "They are of the strangers from this and that place."

They frequent this or that tribe without belonging to them. They do not have family connections among themselves. They love one another for Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) sake. They are of pure intent towards one another. On the Day of Resurrection Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) will place for them pedestals of light upon which He will make them sit and He will turn their faces and clothes into light. On the Day of Resurrection, the people will be terrified but not those. They are Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) friends (Awliya), upon whom fear comes not, nor do they grieve".

References - The above Hadith is related through several chains by (a) **Abu Dawood**, (b) **Ahmad**, (c) **Baghawi** in *Sharh al-Sunna*, (d) **Hakim** in the *Mustadrak*, (e) **Ibn 'Asakir**, (f) **Ibn Abi al-Dunya** in *Kitab al-Ikhwan*, (g) **Ibn Jarir al-Tabari**, (h) **Ibn Abi Hatim**, (i) **Ibn Mardawayh**, and others. (j) **Haythami** in *Majma' al-Zawa'id* says: '**Ahmad** relates it, and (k) **Tabrani** relates something similar, and the men in its chain of transmission have been declared trustworthy".

(iii) **It is in Hadith** - Imam Ahmad narrated a Hadith in his **Musnad (5:322)** through Ibn Ata (رضي الله تعالى عنه) : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله) said : "The Substitutes (**Abdaal**) in this Community are thirty like Ibrahim (عليه السلام) the Friend of the Merciful (ابراهيم خليل الله). Every time one of them dies, Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) substitutes another one in his place."

References - **Tirmidhi** cites the above Hadith in **Nawadir al-Usul** and Imam Ahmad's student, **Al-Khallal** has mentioned this Hadith in his book *Karamat al-Awliya'*.

(iv) **It is in Hadith** - narrated by Anas (رضي الله تعالى عنه). The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله) said : "The similitude of my Community (**Ummah**) is as the rain, it is not known whether its greater good lies in its beginning or in its ending".

References - The above Hadith is in *Sunan* (book of Amthal), **Ibn Hibban** in his *Sahih* from `Ammar ibn Yasir (#2307), **Ahmad** in his *Musnad* in several places (3:143, 4:319), **Baghawi** in *Sharh al-Sunna* (1:405), **Tabarani** in his *Kabir*, **Ibn Kathir** in his *Tafsir* (7:493), **al-Khatib** in *Tarikh Baghdad* (11:114), **Abu Ya'la**, **al-Daraqutni**, **al-Bazzar**, and **Ibn `Abd al-Barr**".

(v) **It is in Hadith** - Narrated by Abu Hurayra (رضي الله تعالى عنه) "The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) came to the graveyard and said : "Peace be upon you, O' abode of a people of believers! We shall certainly join you, if Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) wills. **How I long to see my brothers!**" They said : "O' Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), are we not your brothers?" He replied : "You are my Companions! As for my brothers, they are those who have not yet appeared." They said : "How will you recognize those of your Community who had not yet appeared (in your time) O' Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)?" He replied : "Suppose a man had horses with shiny white marks on their foreheads and legs: would he not recognize them among other horses which are all black?" They said : "Yes O' Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)!" He continued : "Verily, they (my brothers) shall be coming with shiny bright foreheads and limbs in view of their ablutions, and I shall precede them to my Pond (Kauthar)." (**Muslim, Nasa'i, Malik, and Ahmad**).

(vi) **It is in Hadith** - Narrated Abu Hurayra (رضي الله تعالى عنه) : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said - ان الله يبعث لهذه الامة على رأس كل مائة سنة من يجدد لها دينها - [Surely, Allah will send for this Ummah at the advent of every one hundred years a person who will revive its religion." (**Abu Dawood, Vol 4, Hadith # 4291**)

The above Hadith is mentioned by **Hakim** in his Mustadrak; **Bayhaqi** in Al-Ma'rifah and Al-Mudkhal; **Suyuti** in al-Jame' al-Sagheer; **Hasan bin Sufyan and Bazarboth** in their Musnads, **Tabarani** in al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, **Ibn 'Adee** in his Kamil and **Abu-Nu'aym** in his al-Hil'ya.)

The Quranic verses and Ahadith confirm the following facts.

(i) Sufi Shuyookh / Awliya Allah will be there in the world all the time till Qiyamah. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) also indicated that some of the latter day Sufi Shuyookh may also achieve higher ranks.

(b) The Ahadith emphasize that Awliya Allah are 'Living' after their death. Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) has conveyed '**Salaam**' on them and his love and affection for them as he calls them 'his brothers', testifies their "Living status after their death."

(c) When there is no Wali Allah/Sufi Shaikh in the world, Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) may call it a day and **Yومul Qiyama** (the end of this world) will happen. Because it is in Hadith (mentioned above) that people of the world are getting sustenance because of Awliya Allah's presence in the world.

It is in Quran - الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ - لَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ مَا يَرْضَوْنَ [Behold the friends of Allah! On them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve. These are they, who have believed in Allah and are mindful of Him (the feeling of closeness of Allah) and (have consequently abstained from everything evil). To them tidings come (from Allah) of a happy life both in this world and in Hereafter. The word of Allah is never revoked. This in itself is a great felicity] (**Younus - 62-64**).

Awliya Allah are chosen people. They inherit their knowledge, stations, and states from Prophets.

It is in Hadith - "Whoever takes a **Wali of Mine** an enemy, I will wage war on him; and My slave will not perform any act with which he draws closer to Me, more beloved to Me than when he fulfills what I have ordained on him; and My slave will keep drawing closer to Me by performing the Nawafil (voluntary acts of worship) until I love him, and when I love him, I will be his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hands with which he strikes, and his legs with which he walks; and if he asks Me, I will give him; and if he seeks refuge with Me, I will grant him refuge" (**Bukhari**).

The emphasis on "**Wali of mine**" in the above Hadith shows that this human being is the chosen one.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORLD OF SIMILITUDE (عالم مِثال)

Our Physical world is known as the World of Manifestation (عالم شهاده). We all know how our world is being governed. The World is divided into continents, countries and regions. We have about 200 big and small countries in the world which are Governed by Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, State Governors, etc.

Similarly, **Aalam-e-Mithal** (the world of similitude) has a system of Governance. Since that world is not seen by physical eyes, people know very little about it. However, those who are awarded with spiritual vision are aware of that world.

There are two types of Awliya Allah in the world. **(1)** those who are connected with the Governance of **Aalam-e-Mithal**, and **(2)** those who are **not involved** in the Governance of **Aalam-e-Mithal**.

Awliya Allah who are not connected to the Governance of **Aalam-e-Mithal** are broadly categorized as follows.

- Majzoob** (مجنوب) - (Absorbed in Aalam-e-Mithal)
- Muhib** (محب) - (Affectionate of Allah - (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ))
- Mahboob** (محبوب) - (Beloved of Allah - (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ))
- Fard** (فرد) - Supreme individual - (the highest ranking Wali Allah) - Among them, some are known as '**Habeeb** (حبيب)'

Awliya Allah who are connected with Governance of **Aalm-e-Mithal**, consists of the following.

Qutub (قطب) - (Governor) - There is a Qutub for every city and country as per his rank and seniority.

Abdaal (ابدال) - (Regional In-Charge) - **Aalm-e-Mithal** is divided into 40 Regions and an Abdaal (Substitute) is In-charge of that Region.

Autaad (اوتاد) - (Zonal In-charge) - There are 7 major zones of Aalm-e-Mithal and an Autaad is made In-charge of that zone.

Imam (امام) - (Supreme Deputy) - **Aalam-e-Mithal** is primarily divided into two Main Divisions and each Division is looked after by an Imam.

Ghawth (غوث) - He is the Head of administration of **Aalm-e-Mithal**.

Governance of Aalam-e-Mithal has been explained to us by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) as has been described in Quranic verses and Ahadith mentioned in this book.

Some people do not know or understand about the Status of Awliya Allah. They are not aware of special beneficence of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) upon them. Muslim sects, particularly Salafis and their like minded groups, deny the above status of Awliya Allah and make fun of these titles. What can we say about these people except that they would like to remain ignorant from Quran and Sunnah. They do not realize that these titles were given to them by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

It is in Hadith - Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal narrates in his *Musnad* (1:112). The people of Syria were mentioned in front of Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (رضي الله تعالى عنه) when he was in Iraq, and they said : "Curse them, O' Commander of the Believers." He replied : "No, I heard the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) saying - Abdaal (the big spiritual rank of Awliya Allah translated into English as 'Substitutes') are in Syria and they are forty men. Every time one of them dies, Allah substitutes another in his place. By means of them, Allah brings down the rain, gives (Muslims) victory over their enemies and averts punishment from the people of Syria."

Al-Haythami said : "The men (narrators) in this Hadith's chains are all those of the *Sahih* including Sharih ibn 'Ubayd, and he is (indeed) trustworthy (Thiqa)."

Nawawi in his book *Bustan al-'arifin* (1985 ed. p. 31) has mentioned that Muhaddith Hammad ibn Salama ibn Dinar (d. 167) was considered to be one of the *abdaal*.

Sakhawi in his narrations of the *abdaal* in his *Maqasid* (p. 33 #8) has stated as follows:

QUOTE - What makes this Hadith (narrated by Hazrat Ali Ibne Abi Talib (رضي الله تعالى عنه) stronger and indicates its currency among the Imams is the statement of **Imam, al-Shafi'i**, concerning a certain person : "We considered him one of the *abdaal*'."

Also, Bukhari's statement concerning another person : "They did not doubt that he was one of the *abdaal*'."

And other than these two (among the highly acclaimed Imams), **Qatada and Wahb** also used to refer to certain people - stating that they were from the *abdaal*. UNQUOTE

The above Hadith confirms the titles of Awliya Allah, their status among Muslims and confirms that because of them Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) brings down the rain, gives Muslims victory over their enemies". This shows that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) loves his Awliya Allah and because of them many things are given to people.

It is in Hadith - Tabarani said in his Mu'jam al-Awsat - that Anas (رضي الله تعالى عنه) said that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "The earth will never lack forty men (**Abdaal**) similar to the Friend of the Merciful (Prophet Ibrahim - عليه السلام) and through them people receive rain and are given help. None of them dies except Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) substitutes another in his place."

Commenting on the above Hadith, **Qatada said: "We do not doubt that Hasan al-Basri is one of them (abdaal)."**

Ibn Hibban also narrates this Hadith in al-Tarikh through Abu Huraira (رضي الله تعالى عنه) a s: "The earth will never lack forty men (abdaal) similar to Ibrahim (عليه السلام) the Friend of the Merciful, and through whom you are helped, receive your sustenance, and receive rain."

Imam Ahmad narrated another Hadith in his Musnad (5:322) through Ibn Ata : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "The Substitutes (**Abdaal**) in this Community are thirty like Ibrahim (عليه السلام) the Friend of the Merciful. Every time one of them dies, Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) substitutes another one in his place."

Tirmidhi cites the above Hadith in Nawadir al-Usul. Imam Ahmad's student, Al-Khallal, has mentioned this Hadith in his book Karamat al-Awliya'.

Abu Dawood has mentioned the following Hadith through three different authentic chains in his book "*Sunan*" Chapter - "Book of the Mahdi" (English # 4273). **Imam Ahmad** has mentioned this Hadith in his *Musnad* (6:316), and **Ibn Abi Shayba** has mentioned this Hadith in his *Musannaf*.

It is in Hadith - Abu Ya'la, al-Hakim, and Bayhaqi narrated that Ummul Momineen, Umm Salama (رضي الله تعالى عنها) related that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "Disagreement will occur at the death of a Caliph and a

person from the people of Madina will come forth **flying to Makka**. Some of the people of Makka will come to him, bring him out against his will, and swear allegiance to him between the Corner and the *Maqaam* (of *Khana-e-Ka'aba*). An expeditionary force will then be sent against him from Syria but will be swallowed up in the desert between Makka and Madina; and when the people see that, the Substitutes (**abdaal**) of Syria and the best people of Iraq will come to him and swear allegiance (bay'a on his hands) to him between the *rukhn* and the *maqaam*..." (of *Khana-e-Kaaba*).

This Hadith establishes 'Karamat-e-Awliya Allah", that they can travel flying long distances within seconds and can communicate with people located at far off places.

Who is the person (came flying from Madinah to Makka) the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is referring in the Hadith? Some Ulema have pointed out that this Hadith is related to Imam Mahdi (عليه السلام).

It is in Hadith - Imam Ahmad mentioned this Hadith in *Kitab al-zuhd*, also **Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Abu Nu'aym, Bayhaqi, and Ibn 'Asakir narrated it** - Wahb ibn Munabbih said: I saw the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) in my sleep, so I said: "**Ya Rasulallah** (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), where are the Substitutes (**abdaal**) of your Community?" So he gestured with his hand towards Syria. I said: "**Ya Rasulallah** (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), aren't there any in Iraq?" He said: "Yes, Muhammad ibn Wasi`, Hassan ibn Abi Sinan, and Malik ibn Dinar, who walk among the people similarly to Abu Dharr in his time."

The above Hadith confirms the following.

(i) Calling Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) as **Ya Rasulallah** (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) even after his death is the tradition Sahabah. It is an important because the great Imams of Fiqh and Ahadith (**Imam Ahmad, Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Abu Nu'aym, Bayhaqi, Ibn Asakir, etc.**) have mentioned this in their books and all their books were written after the death of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم).

Calling Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) as 'Ya Rasulallah, Ya Habeeballah, Ya Mohammad, Ya Habeebana, Ya Mustafa (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) (after his death) is also confirmed by **Tirmizi, Nasa'i, Ibn Huzeema, Hakim and Baihaqi**.

The following supplication (Dua) is mentioned in the books of most of the Hadith scholars.

اللهم إني أسألك وأتوجه إليك بحبيبك المصطفى عندك - يا حبيبنا يا محمد - انّ نتوسلُ بك الى ربّك -
فشفع لنا عند المولى العظيم - يا نعم الرسول الطاهر - اللهم شفّعه فينا بجاهه عندك

(O'Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) I implore, I beg to you with the mediation (waseelah) of your revered beloved (Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) who is chosen by you. O' Beloved of the Al-mighty, O' Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) we implore to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) with your mediation (Waseelah). Kindly mediate (shafa'a) for us with the Exalted Almighty Allah. O' Sacred Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), O' Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), kindly accept the intercession (Shafa'a) of our Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) for us in view of the "**honor and grace (bi jaahih indaka)**" he has with you.

[References - Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ahmed, Bukhari (in Tarikh al Kabir), Ibn Maja, Tabrani, Ibn Khuzeema, Hakim, Baihaqi, etc., and Salafi Scholar Al-Bani]

This Dua confirms the fact that we must supplicate by taking the Waseelah of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). As a matter of fact our Dua will not be accepted by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) if we do not send Du'ood on Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) before and after the Dua and seek Allah's favor by the mediation (Waseelah) of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

(ii) Existence of great Awliya Allah in the world has also been confirmed by Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) in this Hadith.

(iii) Awliya Allah and all their related issues remain hidden from general people. Those of us who have been bestowed with Islamic intrinsic vision (kashf /unveiling) can recognize these Awliya Allah. The Hadith also indicates that an efficient hidden Administration of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is in operation which is known to the select few Awliya Allah.