



Wearing Black in the Shia Culture

Raising Doubts

1. Shias' disobedience from Aemma 's orders (AS)
2. The sanctity of wearing black clothes
3. The contradiction of the narratives with Aemma 's (AS) deeds

Evaluation and Analysis

Section one: Reasons of wearing black in mourning ceremonies

General answer

1. Wearing black is a sign of expressing condolence to Ahl al-Bayt.
2. The tradition of wearing black stems from the tradition of the Aemma.
3. The prohibitive narratives are reasoned and in case no reasons were given for an action, it would not be prohibited.

Detailed Answer

The first answer: Expressing affection and sympathy to Ahl al-Bayt (AS)

The second answer: Following the footsteps of Ahl al-Bayt in mourning rituals

A: Wearing black clothes to mourn for the losses of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his companions

1. Women's wearing black clothes after the martyrdom of Hazrat Hamza
2. The Prophet's (PBUH) recommendation for donning black after Jafar Tayyar's martyrdom
3. Hazrat Fatima's (AS) wearing black following the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

B. Donning Black to mourn for Ahl al-Bayt

1. Imam Hassan's black wearing on the occasion of Amir al-Momenin's (AS) martyrdom
2. Black-clad for Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom
3. Umm Salama's wearing black clothes for the mourning of Imam Hussein (AS)

The third answer: The tradition of wearing black in harmony with mourning mood

Section two: Shia jurists' Fatwa (decrees)

Part one: Shia jurists have issued decrees recommending the act of putting on black clothes in mourning services

1. The author of Hadaiq
2. Allame Sayyid Mohammad Jafar Tabatabai Hairi
3. Allame Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Kazemeini, known as Muhaqiq Kazemi
4. Mirza Hussein Nuri, the writer of Mustadrak al-Wasail
5. Ayatollah al-Uzma Sistani
6. Ayatollah al-Uzma Jawad Tabrizi
7. Ayatollah al-Uzma Mar 'ashi Najafi 's last will

Conclusion:

Part two: Shia jurists have prohibited wearing black clothes while performing prayers

Categorizing the narratives

The first category: the narratives showing the prohibition of wearing black in prayers only

The second category: the narratives showing the prohibition of wearing black clothes in general

The jurists' inference from the narratives: prohibition of wearing black clothes in prayers

1. Sheikh Tusi
2. Muhaqiq Helli
3. Shahid Avval (the First Martyr)
4. Sayyid Ali Tabatabai
5. Aqa Reza Hamedani
6. The author of Jawahir
7. Mirza Jawad Tabrizi

Conclusion

Section three: Reasons for the prohibition of wearing black, contradictions and exceptions

Part one: The jurists ' justification for issuing decrees to recommend donning black during mourning rituals

The inspection of the authenticity of the narratives

1. Al-Hassan Ibn Zarif
2. Zarif Ibn Nasih
3. Hussein Ibn Zayd
4. Omar Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hasan

Part two: Contradictions in narratives

- A. Narratives forbidding the wearing of black clothes
- B. Narratives proving the acceptability of black wearing

Contradictions between two categories of narratives

Response to contradictions

The first answer: conditions of contradictions where not met in narratives

The second answer: Precautionary dissimulation in wearing black

Black clothes, the symbol of the Abbasid

Part three: exceptions in black clothes (not for mourning purposes)

The Holy Prophet 's (PBUH) black turban

Amir al-Momenin Ali 's (AS) black turban

Imam Hassan Mojtaba 's (AS) black turban

Imam Sajjad 's black turban

Black shoes and cloaks are also exceptional.

Final conclusion

Wearing black clothes in the Shia culture

The Raised Doubts

One of the faults that Wahhabis find with Shias is their wearing black. They claim that according to numerous narratives in Shia sources wearing black clothes had been rejected. They say such clothes look like the clothes of the people stuck in the Hell, the supporters of the Pharaoh and the Abbasids (Ahl al-Bayt 's enemies). But the fact is that the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as

well as Amir al-Momenin (AS) used to wear white clothes and recommend that their followers follow suit.

Today in a Shia-dominated society, black clothes are being worn especially in mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein (AS) as part of a Shia culture in defiance to the recommendation of the Prophet and Aimma.

The above-mentioned doubt is being posted on different Wahhabi websites. Although the main doubt that they raise is what put forward earlier, the following points can be derived from it and need a second thought.

1. Shias' disobedience from Aimma 's orders (AS)

In defiance to the Prophet's recommendation for wearing black clothes, Shias are used to donning black in religious ceremonies such as those held in the month of Muharram and Ashura.

On the other hand, according to the narratives cited in Shia sources concerning the prohibition of wearing black clothes, Shia must avoid carrying out whatsoever Aimma have prohibited and instead implement whatsoever they have commanded. However with wearing black, Shias carry out the prohibited act while refusing to implement the commanded one.

2. The sanctity of wearing black clothes

In Shia sources, black clothes are generally considered as the clothes of people stuck in the Hell, the supporters of the Pharaoh and the Abbasids. People are recommended not to wear clothes in such a color. Therefore, putting on black clothes is unlawful and forbidden.

3. The contradiction of the narratives with Aimma 's (AS) deeds

On the one hand, there are many narratives cited from Aimma concerning the prohibition of wearing black clothes and on the other hand a number of narratives can be found showing that the Imams themselves refused to wear black. Hence, there is a contradiction between the narratives in the Aimma 's action.

If the Aimma 's actions are to be taken into consideration what can we do with the narratives then? And if we take the narratives into account how can we justify the Aimma 's actions?

Evaluation

The doubts mentioned earlier can be evaluated in different sections.

Section one: Reasons of wearing black in mourning ceremonies

General Answer:

1. Wearing black is a sign of expressing condolence to Ahl al-Bayt.

Shias' tradition of donning black during mourning services is a sign of showing affection to all Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be Upon Them) and expressing condolence to the bereaved mourner, Hazrat Hujjat Ibn al-Hassan al-Mahdi (May our lives and souls be sacrificed for him).

2. The practice of wearing black stems from the tradition of the Aemma.

Shias follow in the footsteps of Aemma in wearing such kind of clothes. With a short glance at the history, one can find historical examples to substantiate the claim. Women went black-clad in the mourning of two senior commanders of Islam, i.e. Hazrat Hamza and Jafar Tayyar. Hazrat Zahra did alike following the demise of his father. Imam Hassan (AS) also wore black to mourn the martyrdom of Amir al-Momenin (AS). The Prophet's household in Damascus along with the women of Medina put on black clothes after Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom.

The important point is that all the historical cases took place with the awareness of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and Imams. Even some of them such as Hazrat Zahra's black-wearing in mourning of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Imam Hassan's after his father's martyrdom and Imam Sajjad's in Medina were carried out by the infallible ones.

Accordingly, the Holy Prophet's and Imams' general statements in prohibition of black clothes have nothing to do with wearing black only on mourning occasions. The Shia culture of wearing black has been formed based on the practices of the Ahl al-Bayt. It is not innovative or structured based on other people's patterns.

3. The prohibitive narratives are reasoned and in case no reasons were given for an action, it would not be prohibited.

The reason why the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Imam Ali (AS) and Imam Sadiq (AS) prohibited wearing black clothes through their narratives is that they did not like anyone to look like the tyrants such as the Pharaohs of Egypt or the Abbasid rulers. In order to stabilize their government and depict that they are Ahl al-Bayt's advocates, the Abbasid wore black in mourning of the martyred members of the Prophet's family. But shortly afterwards, the rulers declared compulsory the wearing of black uniforms for the government staff as well as the ordinary people. They even chose black color for their flag as a symbol of their government.

But it did not take long that the so-called supporters of Ahl al-Bayt shifted their policy and behaved even much more harshly and ruthlessly than the Umayyad. They put the infallible Imams to jail, and murdered them in dungeons.

That is why in narratives, Imam Sadiq (AS) called on his followers at that specific juncture to avoid wearing black which was the symbol of tyrants of the history. He likened the black clothes to the clothes of the people in the Hell, those of Pharaohs and God's

enemies.

Detailed Answer:

One of the main doubts that Wahhabis raise against Shias is their wearing black especially in mourning rituals despite the fact that it was the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) as well as Aemma's recommendation for the wearing of white clothes. They claim that Shias get in black as part of a culture in defiance to the recommendation of the Prophet (PBUH) and Aemma.

Before analyzing and responding to the doubt, We had better mention a point here. The narratives which have prohibited the wearing of black clothes need to be discussed in depth. They will come on the spotlight in the third section.

Several responses can be made to the claims above.

The first response: Showing affection and expressing sympathy to Ahl al-Bayt

The primary answer is that the narratives banning the black clothes are not absolute. They are prohibited under certain circumstances. In other words, wearing black is not generally forbidden by itself. If it were so, there would not be exceptions. For instance, the Prophet's turban should not have been black. If wearing black were absolutely forbidden, Imam Sadiq (AS) would have never exempted black turban, cloak and shoes. According to a number of narratives which are to be brought up in the following section and as reported by the Sunnis, the Prophet (PBUH) was wearing a black turban at the time of the conquest of Mecca.

The reason why wearing black clothes was declared undesirable is because the clothing with this color resembles what God's enemies used to wear. They picked up the black color as their clothing and symbol. Therefore, the main reason behind the prohibition of black clothes was only to prevent people from looking like the enemies.

It by and large hinges on the intention of a person. If he chooses black only due to going after them, it is undesirable but in case he wears black to mourn for Sayyid al-Shohada (AS), for example, it is absolutely commendable. On the whole, Aemma deemed mourning rituals as preferable.

Allame Majlisi has provided nearly 20 narratives in Bahar al-Anwar about the favorability of weeping for Imam Hussein (AS). A number of the narratives are as follows,

يَا ابْنَ شَيْبِ بْنِ سَرْكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مَعَنَا فِي الدَّرَجَاتِ الْعُلَى مِنَ الْجَنَاتِ فَاخْرَنْ لِحُزْنِنَا وَافْرَحْ لِفَرَحِنَا وَعَلَيْكَ بِوَلَايَتِنَا فَلَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا أَحَبَّ حَجْرًا
لِحَشْرَةِ اللَّهِ مَعَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Rayyan Ibn Suayb has said, "It was the first day of Muharram when I went to meet the Eighth Imam, [Imam Reza] (AS). He told me, **'O son of Shuayb! If you want to associate with us in the high levels of the Heaven, you ought to be happy when we feel glad but be sad when we feel upset. I recommend you to stick to our wilayat and friendship. If someone in this**

world is attached to even a pebble, he will associate with it in the Hereafter.'"

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 14, p. 503; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, edition: al-Thaniyat al-Mushafa, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

The expression of happiness and sadness at the time of their joy and grief is as a matter of fact meant to commemorate and honor them.

قَالَ الرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ مُصَابِنَا وَبَكَى لِمَا ارْتَكَبَ مِنَّا كَانَ مَعَنَا فِي دَرَجَاتِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ ذَكَرَ بِمُصَابِنَا فَبَكَى وَأَبَكَى لَمْ تَبْكْ عَيْنُهُ يَوْمَ تَبْكِي الْعُيُونُ وَمَنْ جَلَسَ مَجْلِسًا يُحْيَا فِيهِ أَمْرًا لَمْ يَمُتْ قَلْبُهُ يَوْمَ تَمُوتُ الْقُلُوبُ

Imam Reza (AS) has stated, "Anyone who remembers our sufferings and calamities and sheds tear in grief will accompany us on the Day of Judgment. Anyone who weeps for our sufferings and makes others to cry his eyes will never shed tears at a time when all eyes are tearful. And the one who takes part at a gathering where we are being honored and remembered his heart will never die when all hearts are dead."

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 44, p. 279; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, edition: al-Thaniyat al-Mushafa, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ الصَّغَارِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنْ بَكْرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْأَزْدِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ تَجْلِسُونَ وَتَتَحَدَّثُونَ قَالَ قُلْتُ جُعِلَتْ فِدَاكَ نَعَمْ قَالَ إِنْ نِلَّكَ الْمَجَالِسَ أَحْبَبَهَا فَأَحْيُوا أَمْرَنَا إِنَّهُ مَنْ ذَكَرَنَا وَذَكَرْنَا عِنْدَهُ فَخَرَجَ مِنْ عَيْنِهِ مِثْلُ جَنَاحِ الدُّبَابَةِ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ ذُنُوبَهُ وَلَوْ كَانَتْ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ رَبْدِ الْبَحْرِ.

Bekr Ibn Mohammad Azodi has said, "Imam Sadiq (AS) asked me, 'Do you ever come together to remember us?', I replied, 'Definitely, may my soul be sacrificed for you!' The Hazrat stated, 'Indeed, I feel like such gatherings. You had better remember us all the time. While remembering us, if one sheds tears even as little as the feather of a fly, God will clear way all his sins even if they are as many as the drops of the sea. '"

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Alin Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH.), Thawab al-A 'mal wa 'Iqab al-A 'mal, p. 187; publication: Dar-al-Radi, Qom, first edition, 14069 AH.

As shown in the narrative, holding mourning ceremonies, weeping in grief of the master of martyrs is approved and recommended by Imam.

Being associated with Ahl al-Bayt and the forgiveness of the sins are the rewards pointed out in the narrative.

Beyond any doubt, mourning ceremonies are rooted from the divine bond established by God between Ahl al-Bayt and Shias as a shown in the following narrative.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى أَطَّلَعَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَاخْتَارَنَا وَاخْتَارَ لَنَا شِيعَةً يَنْصُرُونَنَا وَفَرَحُونَ لِفَرَحِنَا وَيَحْزَنُونَ لِحُزْنِنَا وَيَبْذُلُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَأَنْفُسَهُمْ فِيْنَا أَوْلِيَّكَ مِنَّا وَإِلَيْنَا .

God Almighty has paid a special attention to the earth by appointing us and choosing followers for us to give assistance to us; those who are happy at the time of our happiness and are sad at the time of our sadness; those who donate their property and sacrifice their souls in our path. They are from us.

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 10, p. 114; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, edition: al-Thaniyat al-Mushafa, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

Holding mourning ceremonies is specifically meant for the revival of the memories of Ahl al-Bayt. By taking part in such ceremonies, Shias intend to express their grief for the calamities and suffering of Ahl al-Bayt. They also mean to show sympathy to them with their hearts filled with sorrow and by wearing black clothes. The message every Shia wants to convey in mourning of Sayyid al-Shohada (AS) is as follows,

يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

I wish that I were with them and could gain the assurance of salvation.

Al-Hurr al-'Alami, Mohammad Ibn al-Hasan (died in 1104 AH.), Tafsil Wasail al-Shi'a Ila Tahsil Masail al-Shari'at, vol. 14, p. 418; Publication: Muassisat Al al-Bayt Alayim al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath, second edition, 1414 AH.

The second response: Following the footsteps of Ahl al-Bayt in mourning

By wearing black clothes, Shias do not balk at the recommendations of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) or the Imams. Instead, they are following what they used to practice themselves.

In order to prove this fact, I have surveyed the Islamic history and rummaged through Sunni sources. Here are some parts of evidence.

The tradition of wearing black by Ahl al-Bayt can be discussed through two sensitive historical events.

A. Wearing black clothes for the loss of the Holy Prophet and his companions

Prior to Sayyid Shohada's (AS) martyrdom, the Prophet (PBUH) and his household (Peace Be Upon Them) witnessed a number of tragic incidents. In accordance with the historical accounts, the Prophet's (PBUH) family all were black-clad in grief of the martyrs. Here are some examples,

1. Women's wearing black in the loss of Hazrat Hamza

The Battle of Ohod was the most tragic of all battles taking place at the advent of Islam. Approximately, 70 people including Hazrat Hamza, the Prophet's (PBUH) uncle, lost their lives in that war. After the Prophet (PBUH), who had sustained injuries in the battle, returned to Medina, women of the city began mourning for the loss of their beloved ones by weeping and reciting elegies for them. By the order of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) women of Medina all wore black and wept in grief for the loss of Islam's commander, Hamza.

Azhari, who is one of the well-known lexiconists, has reported the black wearing of Umm Salama's daughter.

وفي الحديث: (أَنَّ بِنْتَ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ تَسَلَّيَتْ عَلَى حَمْزَةَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ، فَدَعَاها رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَمَرَهَا أَنْ تَنْصِيَ وَتَكْتَحِلَ).

Zeinab, Abi Salama's daughter, cried in the loss of Hamza for as long as three days. She also wore black dress. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) called her in and told her to comb her hair and line her eyes with kohl.

Al-Azhari, Abu Mansur Mohammad Ibn Ahmad al-Wafa (died in 370 AH), Tathhib al-Lughat, vol. 12, p. 171, researched by Mohammad 'Awad Mur'ab, Publication, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, the first edition, 2001 AD.

The meaning of the word سلاب in Sunni books

In the narrative above, the word تسلبت means a special black dress which women used to wear in mourning occasions in the past.

According to Ibn Salam Hirawi's Gharib al-Hadith,

سلاب، يريد الثياب السود التي تلبسها النساء في المأتم.

سلب and سلاب were black dresses which women wore while mourning for someone's death.

Al-Mursi, Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Ismail Ibn Sayyida (died in 458 AH), al-Muhkam wa al-Muhit al-A'zam, vol. 8, p. 505; researched by 'Abd al-Hamid Hindawi; publication, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, the first edition, 2000 AD.

Zamakhshari as the notable interpreter and scholar of the fifth and sixth centuries has cited the narrative above with a subtle difference.

بكت بنت أم سلمة على حمزة (رضى الله عنهما) ثلاثة أيام وتسلبت، فدعاها رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) فأمرها أن تنصّي وتكتحل.

And then he has continued,

تَسَلَّبَتْ: لبست السلاب و هو سوادُ المُجِدِّ. وقيل: خرقة سوداء كانت تُغَطِّي رأسَهَا بها.

is a kind of black clothes which a bereaved woman puts on. And in other words, it is a piece of black cloth used for covering the head.

Al-Zamakhshari al-Kharazmi, Abu al-Qasim Mahmud Ibn 'Amr Ibn Ahmad Jar Allah (died in 538), al-Faiq Fi Gharib al-Hadith; researched by Ali Mohammad Bjaqi and Mohammad Abul Fadl Ibrahim; publication, Dar al-Fikr Lil Taba'a wa al-Nashr wa al-Towzi', the third edition, 1399 AH, 1979 AD.

In Lisan al-'Arab, Ibn Manzur has defined the word سلاب as black dress. He has pointed to the narrative about the black wearing of Asma Bint 'Amis in mourning for the loss of Jafar Ibn Abi Talib. The narrative will be brought up later on. What Umm Salama has reported about the martyrdom of Hazrat Sayyid al-Shohada (AS) is as follows,

السلاب السلب ثياب سود تلبسها النساء في المأتم واحدتها سلبة سلبت المرأة وهي مسلب إذا كانت محدا تلبس الثياب السود للحداد تسلبت لبست السلاب وهي ثياب المأتم السود.

وفي الحديث عن أسماء بنت عميس أنها قالت لما أصيب جعفر أمرني رسول الله فقال تسلمي ثلاثا ثم اصنعي بعد ما شئت. وفي حديث أم سلمة أنها بكت على حمزة ثلاثة أيام وتسلبت.

وقال اللحياني المسلب السلوب التي يموت زوجها أو حميمها فتسلب عليه تسلبت المرأة.

سلاب and سلب were black clothes which women wear in mourning ceremonies. The feminine singular form of the word is سلبة . The phrase of سلبت المرأة describes a woman who wears black clothes to mourn for the loss of a loved one. تسلبت لبست is in fact the mourning black clothes.

In a narrative, Asma Bint 'Amis has been quoted as saying, "When Jafar Tayyar was martyred, the Prophet (PBUH) told me to put on black clothes for three days. He said that I could go ahead with my normal life after three days of mourning."

Concerning Umm Salama, it has been quoted that she shed tears and wore black clothes in grief for Hazrat Hamza's martyrdom for three consecutive days.

According to Lahyani, the words سلوب and مسلب، سليب all refer to a woman whose husband or supporter is dead, so she dons black to mourn for his loss.

Al-Afriqi al-Misri, Mohammad Ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzur (died in 711 AH.), Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 1, pp. 472-473; publication, Dar Sadir, Beirut, the first edition.

2. The Prophet's (PBUH) order for women's wearing black in mourning for Jafar Tayyar

Jafar who was also one of the close companions of the Prophet (PBUH) was martyred in the battle of Muthah. The loss impressed the Holy Prophet (PBUH) very much. Therefore, he went to Jafar's house to express condolence to his family. He told Asma Bint 'Amis to wear black clothes as sign of grief.

This historical event has been quoted in two different connotations in reliable Sunni sources.

The first connotation: البسي ثوب الحداد

Ahmad Hanbal has said in his Masnad,

عن أسماء بنت عميس قالت لما اصاب جعفر أتنا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال أمي البسي ثوب الحداد ثلاثاً ثم اصنعي ما شئت.

Asma Bint 'Amis has reported, "When Jafar was martyred, the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) told me, 'O my mother! Put on black dress for three days. And after that you are free to wear whatever you want.

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal Abu 'Abdullah al-Sheibani, (died in 241 AH.), Masnad, vol. 6, p. 438, H. 27508; publication, Muassissat Qurtaba, Egypt.

The meaning of حداد:

Lexically, the word حداد signifies giving up making up and putting on perfume and wearing black clothes. حدت المرأة على زوجها represents a woman whose husband has died so she gives up making up in grief. Instead she wears black clothes.

Ibn Manzur has cited,

والحداد: ثياب المآتم السود. والحاد والمجد من النساء: التي تترك الزينة و الطيب؛ وقال ابن دريد: هي المرأة التي تترك الزينة والطيب بعد زوجها للعدة. حدت تحد وتحداً وحاداً، وهو تسليها على زوجها.

حداد is a mourning black dress and حاد و محد refer to the women who stop using cosmetics and perfume. Ibn Darid has said حاد و محد stands for a woman who relinquishes wearing on make-up as well as perfume because of her husband's death. The words حداد و تحد، حدت all refer to the black clearing of a woman in the loss of her husband.

Ibn Manzur al-Afriqi al-Mesri, Mohammad Ibn Mukarram (died in 711 AH.), Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 3, p. 143, Dar al-Nashr, Dar Dadir, Beirut, the first edition.

'Ankari Baghdadi, who is well-known Arab lexiconist, has said in his book,

والحداد ثياب سود تلبس عند الحزن ومنه قوله عليه الصلاة والسلام لا يحل لامرأة تؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر أن تحد على أحد فوق ثلاث ليال إلا المرأة تحد على زوجها.

حداد is a kind of black clothing which is worn during morning services. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) has stated that it is by no means acceptable for a woman who believes in God and the Day Of Justice to be in black in grief for someone's loss more than three day except that the dead person was her husband.

Al-'Ankari al-Baghdadi, Abu al-Baqa Muhib al-Din Abdullah Ibn al-Hussein Ibn 'Abdullah (died in 616 AH.), Diwan al-Matnabi, vol. 1, p. 353, researched by Mustafa al-Saqa, Ibrahim al-Abyari and 'Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi; publication, Dar al-Ma'rifat, Beirut.

Elsewhere he has said,

ربات الحداد لابسات الحداد وهي ثياب سود يلبسها النساء ربات الحزن وهن اللواتي ماتت أزواجهن للحديث الصحيح حديث زينب ربيبة رسول الله بنت أم سلمة عن أمها وأم حبيبة عنه لا يحل لامرأة أن تحد على ميت فوق ثلاث ليال إلا على زوج أربعة أشهر وعشرا .

حداد refers to the women who wear **حداد**. And **حداد** is a kind of black dress which women wear. And the phrase **ربات الحزن** stands for women will have lost their husbands. Zeinab bint Umm Salama, the Prophet's foster daughter has quoted the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) as telling her mother as well as Umm Habiba, "It is not acceptable for a woman to wear black clothes in grief for someone's death more than three days unless the dead person was her husband. In this case, her mourning period can last for four months and 10 day."

Al-'Ankari al-Baghdadi, Abu al-Baqa Muhib al-Din Abdullah Ibn al-Hussein Ibn 'Abdullah (died in 616 AH.), Diwan al-Matnabi, vol. 4, p. 296, researched by Mustafa al-Saqa, Ibrahim al-Abyari and 'Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi; publication, Dar al-Ma'rifat, Beirut.

And here is what Ibn Athir has to say in this regard.

الحداد: ترك الزينة. ومنه الحديث الحداد للمرأة المتوفى عنها زوجها. ومنه حدت المرأة على زوجها تحد حدادا بالكسر، فهي حاد بغير هاء: إذا حزنت عليه ولبست ثياب الحزن وتركت الزينة.

حداد means giving up cosmetics. **حدت المرأة على زوجها تحد حدادا بالكسر** refers to the woman whose husband is dead, so she wears mourning clothes and relinquishes the make-up.

Al-Jazri, Abu al-Sa'adat al-Mubarak Ibn Mohammad (died in 606 AH.), al-Nihayat fi Gharib al-Hadith wa al-Athar, vol. 1, p. 352; researched by Tahir Ahmad al-Zawari and Mahmoud Mohammad al-Tanahi; publication, al-Maktabat al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1399 AH. (1979 AD).

And Fiyumi has made a similar statement in Misbah al-Munir,

حَدَّتِ: الْمَرْأَةُ عَلَى زَوْجِهَا (تَحَدُّ) وَ(تَحَدُّ) (حَدَادًا) بِالْكَسْرِ فَهِيَ (حَادٌ) بِغَيْرِ هَاءٍ وَ(أَحَدَّتْ إِحْدَادًا) فَهِيَ (مُحَدَّةٌ) وَ(مُحَدَّةٌ) إِذَا تَرَكَتِ الزَّيْنَةَ لِمَوْتِهِ.

Al-Fiyumi, Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali al-Maqri (died in 770 AH.), al-Misbah al-Munir fi Gharib al-Sharh al-Kabir Lil Rafi'I, p. 125, publication, Maktabat al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut.

The second connotation: تسليبي ثلاثا ثم أصنعي ما شئت

Ibn Ja'd who was the senior Sunni scholar has written in his book,

حدثنا محمد بن بكار بن الريان نا محمد بن طلحة عن الحكم بن عتيبة عن عبد الله بن شداد بن الهاد عن أسماء بنت عميس أنها قالت
لما أصيب جعفر أمرني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال تسليبي ثلاثا ثم أصنعي ما شئت

Asma Bint `Amis has reported, "When Jafar Tayyar was martyred, the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) told me, to put on black dress for three days. He said that I could go ahead with my normal life after three days of mourning.

Al-Jowhari al-Baghdadi, Ali Ibn al-Ja'd Ibn `Abid Abu al-Hasan (died in 230 AH), vol. 1, p. 398, no. 2714; researched by `Amir Ahmad Heidar; publication, Muassissat Nadir,Beirut, the first edition, 1410 AH, 1990 AD.

This narrative has been cited in many Sunni books with the same sense.

Al-Ansari al-Qurtabi, Abu `Abdullah Mohammad Ibn Ahmad (died in 671 AH), al-Jami' Li Ahkam al-Qur'an, vol. 3, p. 181, publication, Dar al-Sha'b, Cairo.

Ibn Kathir al-Damishqi, Isma'il Ibn `Omar Abu al-Fida al-Qarashi, (died in 774), al-Bidayat wa al-Nihayat, Beirut, vol. 7, p. 97, publication, Maktabat al-Ma'arif.

Al-Showkani, Mohammad Ibn Ali (died in 1255 AH.), Neil al-Awtar min Ahadith Sayyyid al-Akhyar Sharh Muntaqi al-Akhbar, vol. 7, p. 97, publication, Dar al-Jayl, Beirut,1973.

As we showed earlier, سلاب is mourning black clothes. Sunni scholars have straightforwardly defined تسليبي as wearing black clothes in the narrative.

Just after citing this narrative, Ibn Manzur has said,

تسليبي أي البسي ثياب الحداد السود وهي السلاب تسليت المرأة إذا لبسته وهو ثوب أسود تغطي به المجد رأسها.

تسليبي means 'Put on mourning black clothes'. And سلابي is a black dress which bereaved women wear or cover their heads with.

Al-Afriqi al-Mesri, Mohammad Ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzur (died in 711 AH), Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 1, p. 472, publication, Dar Sadir, Beirut, the first edition.

In both of the narratives above, the words تسليبي and الحداد stand for black clothes which Asma wore by the order of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and relinquished a make-up in mourning for the loss of Jafar Tayyar.

3. The black-wearing of Hazrat Zahra (AS) in mourning for the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

The demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was the saddest day in the advent of Islam. His wives and revered daughter all wore black in grief. Hazrat Zahra (AS) was not grief-stricken only during the first days after his father's demise. She kept shedding tears and lamenting for his loss to the end of her life. The narrative below demonstrates the extent of her sorrow.

Fidda has recounted, "It was the eighth day after the demise of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) when Hazrat Sidiqa Tahira (AS) was by the grave of his father along with the Hashemite women. Filled with grief and agony, she called upon her fathers as,

ثُمَّ نَادَتْ يَا أَبَتَاهُ انْقَطَعَتْ بِكَ الدُّنْيَا بِأَنْوَارِهَا وَزَوَتْ زَهْرَتُهَا وَكَانَتْ بِيَهْجَتِكَ زَاهِرَةً فَقَدِ اسْوَدَّ نَهَارُهَا فَصَارَ يَحْكِي حَتَادِيسَهَا رَطْبَهَا وَيَابِسَهَا... وَالتَّكْلُ شَامِلُنَا وَالْبُكَاءُ قَاتِلُنَا وَالْأَسَى لَارِئِمُنَا .
ثُمَّ زَفَرَتْ زَفْرَةً وَأَنْتَ أَنَّهُ كَادَتْ رُوحَهَا أَنْ تَخْرُجَ

O my dear father! The world took away all its lightness from us and deprived us from all its blessings and joy upon your departure. The lightness and brightness of the world all belonged to you. But now with your departure, a light day has turned dark and misery and grief has engulfed us." Then she groaned and sobbed in a way that she was about to breathe her last.

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 43, pp. 174-180; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

Based on a number of reliable narratives, Hazrat Zahra (AS) palmed a handful of soil from his father's grave and put it over her eyes, saying,

ذا على من شمّ تربة احمد ان لا يشمّ مدى الزّمان غواليا
صبت على مصائب لو انّها صبت على الأيام صرن لياليا.

It is really preferable for one to smell the sacred soil of Ahmad's grave rather than smell any other pleasant odor to the end of his life. The misery that inflicted on me is in an extent to which it could turn a bright day into a dark night.

Ibn Shahr Ashub (died in 588), Manaqib Al Abi Talib, vol. 1, p. 208; researched by Li Janat Min Asatitha al-Najaf al-Ashraf; publication, al-Maktabat al-Heidariya, al-Najaf al-Ashraf, 1376 AH., 1956 AD.

The decease of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) affected her very much and she was extremely sad and grief - stricken and wept her heart out crying all the time until she fell sick and feeble.

وَرُويَ أَنَّهَا مَا زَالَتْ بَعْدَ أَبِيهَا مُعَصَّبَةَ الرَّأْسِ نَاحِلَةً الْجِسْمِ مُنْهَدَّةَ الرُّكْنِ بَاكِئَةً الْعَيْنِ مُحْتَرِقَةً الْقَلْبِ يُعْشَى عَلَيْهَا سَاعَةً بَعْدَ سَاعَةٍ وَتَقُولُ لِوَلَدَيْهَا أَيْنَ أَبُوكُمْ الَّذِي كَانَ يَكْرِمُكُمْ وَيَحْمِلُكُمْ مَرَّةً بَعْدَ مَرَّةٍ أَيْنَ أَبُوكُمْ الَّذِي كَانَ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ شَفَقَةً عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَا يَدْعُكُمْ تَمْشِيَانِ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَرَاهُ يَفْتَحُ هَذَا الْبَابَ أَبَدًا وَلَا يَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَى عَاتِقِهِ كَمَا لَمْ يَزَلْ يَفْعَلُ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ مَرِضَتْ وَمَكَّتْ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً.

After her father's demise, she was always seen with a kerchief tied around her head, ailing, bending at the waist, with tearful eyes and grieved heart. She fell unconscious around the clock. She told her two sons, Imam Hasan and Imam Hussein (Peace be upon them both), "Where has gone your grandfather who always revered you and embraced you? Where is the one who was the kindest of all with you? The one who embraced you and did not allow you walk on the ground? It is a pity that your grandfather will never knock on my door to come and embrace you as the way he used to do! Soon afterwards, Hazrat Zahar Athar (AS) fell so ill that she spent forty days in bed.

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 43, p. 182; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

In the narrative above, the phrase مُعَصَّبَةَ الرَّأْسِ was used. عصب is the stem of معصبه. عصابه has two meanings. One of them means a host of people and the second signifies a turban or something that is used to fasten around the head like cloth or a kerchief. Here the second meaning was intended.

Raghib Isfahani has said,

وَالْعِصَابَةُ: مَا يُعَصَّبُ بِهِ الرَّأْسُ وَالْعِمَامَةُ

Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, Abu al-Qasim al-Hussein Ibn Mohammad (died in 502 AH), al-Mufradat Fi Gharib al-Qur'an, p. 569; researched by Mohammad Sayyid Kilani; publication, Dar al-Ma'rifat, Lebanon.

Fiyumii has cited in al-Misbah al-Munir,

وَالْعِصَابَةُ (الْعِمَامَةُ أَيْضًا وَالْجَمَاعَةُ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْخَيْلِ وَالطَّيْرِ وَالْعِصَابَةُ) مَعْرُوفَةٌ وَالْجَمْعُ (عَصَائِبُ) وَ(تَعْصَبُ) وَ(عَصَّبَ) رَأْسَهُ بِالْعِصَابَةِ أَيْ شَدَّهَا.

عصابه stands for turban as well as a host of people, a herd of horses or a flock of birds. عصاب is the plural form of عصابه. تعصب and عصب mean tying a piece of cloth, i.e. a turban, around the head.

Al-Fiyumi, Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali al-Maqri (died in 770 AH.), al-Misbah al-Munir fi Gharib al-Sharh al-Kabir Lil Rafi'I, p. 413, publication, Maktabat al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut.

Covering the head in this way was definitely different than the usual covering of the hair and observing Hijab (Islamic veil) which is obligatory for all women. It was a custom which was practiced after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). In case Hazrat Fatima (AS) practiced it in the period before his decease, the citation of such a narrative seemed nonsense then.

What does it mean however? In order to make the meaning clear, here again I refer to what Ibn Manzur had said in definition of سلب .

It was a tradition among Arab women to cover their heads with a piece of black cloth as sign of grief for the loss of a beloved one.

تسليبي أي البسي ثياب الحداد السود وهي السلاب تسلبت المرأة إذا لبسته وهو ثوب أسود تغطي به المجد رأسها.

The meaning of تسليبي is "Put on mourning black clothes." And سلابي is the black clothes which women wear or fasten around their heads.

Al-Afriqi al-Misri, Mohammad Ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzur (died in 711 AH.), Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 1, pp. 472-473; publication, Dar Sadir, Beirut, the first edition.

Following the same tradition, Hazrat Zahra (AS) used to cover her head with a piece of black cloth. It was the way how she went black-clad after her father's demise.

The narrative below confirms the same matter.

When Omar along with his supporters went to Amir al-Momenin's (AS) house to drag him to the mosque by force to make him pay allegiance to Abubakr, the first caliph, Hazrat Fatima (AS) was sitting behind the door, sick and feeble with عصابه tied around her head still in grief for the loss of her father, the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَ [عمر] حَتَّى انْتَهَى إِلَى بَابِ عَلِيٍّ وَفَاطِمَةَ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا وَفَاطِمَةَ قَاعِدَةً خَلْفَ الْبَابِ قَدْ عَصَبَتْ رَأْسَهَا وَنَجَلَ جِسْمَهَا فِي وَفَاةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

فَأَقْبَلَ عُمَرُ حَتَّى ضَرَبَ الْبَابَ ثُمَّ نَادَى يَا ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ افْتَحِ الْبَابَ فَقَالَ فَاطِمَةُ يَا عُمَرُ مَا لَنَا وَكَ لَّا تَدْعُنَا وَمَا نَحْنُ فِيهِ قَالَ افْتَحِي الْبَابَ وَإِلَّا أَحْرَقْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ...

When Omar went to Ali's house, he smashed the door, shouting, "O son of Abu Talib! Open the door right away!" Hazrat' Zahra Athar told him, "Leave us alone, why don't you let us carry on our mourning?" Omar told Hazrat Fatima, "Open the door without delay, or I will set your house together with all inside on fire!"

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 43, p. 198; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

B. Wearing black in mourning for Ahl al-Bayt

A number of cases of black wearing have been cited in mourning for Islam's commanders as well as the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him). But here we point to some other examples showing the black wearing of Ahl al-Bayt in grief for the loss of Imams. We intend to show that wearing black clothes was a long-standing tradition among the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be upon Him) household.

1. **Imam Hassan's (AS) wearing black after the martyrdom of Amir al-Momenin Ali (AS)**

Imam Ali (AS) was struck by Ibn Muljam Moradi 's *poison-coated sword* while prostrating in Morning Prayer in the mosque on the 19th of the holy month of Ramadan in 40 AH. He succumbed to his wounds on the 23rd of the month. His children along with other Shias became sorrowful and began mourning for his loss.

Imam Hassan (AS) donned black mourning clothes and made a sermon addressing the people.

In regard with the black wearing of Imam Hassan (AS), Ibn Ali al-Hadid has quoted Abu al-Hassan Ali Ibn Mohammad, who was a well-known historian in the second and third centuries and lived concurrent with Imam Sadiq (AS) until the time of Imam Hadi (AS), as saying,

قال المدائني ولما توفي علي عليه السلام- خرج عبد الله بن العباس بن عبد المطلب إلى الناس- فقال إن أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام توفي وقد ترك خلفا- فإن أحببتم خرج إليكم- وإن كرهتم فلا أحد على أحد- فبكى الناس وقالوا بل يخرج إلينا- فخرج الحسن عليه السلام فخطبهم- فقال أيها الناس اتقوا الله فإننا أمراؤكم وأولياؤكم- وإنا أهل البيت الذين قال الله تعالى فينا- إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ- وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً- فبايعه الناس- . وكان خرج إليهم وعليه ثياب سود.

After Amir al-Momenin (AS) passed away Abdullah Ibn Abbas came out and informed the crowd of Amir al-Momenin's martyrdom. He told them that Amir al-Momenin left a successor to himself. "In case you are going to approve of him he will come out, if not there is no compulsion." People burst into tears and said, "Tell him to come out." Once Imam Hassan (AS) showed up he made a sermon saying, "O people! Fear from God and be pious. We are your authorities from the same generation about which God revealed the verse of Tathir (purification)". The crowd paid allegiance to him right away. Imam appeared among the crowd while he was black-clad.

Ibn Abi al-Hadid al-Madaini al-Mu'tazili, Abu Hamid 'Iz al-Din Ibn Hibat Allah Ibn Mohammad Ibn Mohammad (died in 655 AH.), Sharh Nahj al-Balagha; researched by Mohammad Abdul Karim al-Namari, vol. 16, P. 22; publication, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, the first edition, 1418 AH, 1998 AD.

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal has quoted Abi Razin in Fadail al-Sahaba as saying that following the martyrdom of his father, Imam Hassan (AS) had a black turban on his head making the following sermon to the people.

حدثنا عبد الله قال حدثني أبي نا وكيع عن شريك عن عاصم عن أبي رزين قال خطبنا الحسن بن علي بعد وفاة علي وعليه عمامة سوداء فقال لقد فارقكم رجل لم يسبقه الأولون بعلم ولا يدركه الآخرون.

Abi Zarin has said, "After Ali passed away, his son, Hassan, addressed us in a speech while he had a black turban on. He said that the man who departed from among you was ahead of anyone else from the scientific viewpoints except the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him). No one like him will be born again.

Al-Sheibani, Abu Abdullah Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (died in 241 AH.), Fadail al-Sahaba, vol. 2, p. 600; researched by Wasi Allah Mohammad Abbas; publication, Muassissat al-Risala, Beirut, the first edition, 1403 AH., 1983 AD.

Thahabi has cited the same narrative from Abi Razin twice without making a mention of Amir al-Momenin (AS). He has also said that Imam Hassan (AS) wore black clothes with a black turban on his head.

شريك عن عاصم عن أبي رزين قال خطبنا الحسن بن علي وعليه ثياب سود وعمامة سوداء

It was quoted from Abi Razin that Hassan Ibn Ali made a sermon to them while he was wearing black clothes with a black turban on his head.

Sayr A'lam al-Nubala, vol. 3, pp. 267, 272; Mohammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Othman Ibn Qaimaz al-Thahabi Abiu 'Abdullah (died in 748); publication, Muassissat al-Risalat, Beirut, 1413, the ninth edition; researched by Sh'ayb al-Arnawut, Mohammad Na'im al-'Arqasusi.

The unanimity of the narrators as well as the meaning of the narrative proves the authenticity of the incidents and the black wearing of that Hazrat in grief for the loss of his father, Amir al-Momenin Ali (AS).

2. Wearing black for the martyrdom of Imam Hassan Mujtaba (AS)

Two senior Sunni figures, Ibn 'Asakir and Hakim, have quoted 'Ayisha, Sa'd's daughter, in their books, Tarikh Damishq and Mustadrak respectively, as saying the Hashemite women lamented for Imam Hassan Mujtaba (AS) for as long as one year by giving up a make-up and wearing black clothes.

Hakim Neishaburi has said,

قال بن عمر وحدثنا عبيدة بنت نائل عن عائشة بنت سعد قالت حد نساء، الحسن بن علي سنة.

Women stayed black-clad for the loss of Hassan Ibn Ali for a year.

Al-Hakim al-Neishaburi, Mohammad Ibn Abdullah (died in 405 AH, al-Mustadrak Ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 3, P. 189, researched by Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir; publication, dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, the first edition, 1411 AH., 1990 AD.

A narrative with a similar content was quoted in Tarikh Madina Damishq,

عن عائشة بنت سعد قالت: حدث نساء بني هاشم على الحسن بن علي سنة.

The Hashemite women wore black for Hassan Ibn Ali for one year.

Al-Shafi'i, Abi al-Qasim Ali Ibn al-Hassan Ibn Hibat Allah Ibn Abdullah (died in 571); Tarikh Madina Damishq, vol. 13, P. 295, researched by Muhib al-Din Abi Saeed 'Amr Ibn Ghurama al-'Imari; publication, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1995.

Ibn Athir has also written in al-Asad al-Ghabat,

ولما مات الحسن أقام نساء بني هاشم عليه النواح شهراً، ولبسوا الحداد سنة.

When Hassan Ibn Ali passed away, the Hashemite women mourned for him for as long as one month and wore black for one year.

Al-Jizri, 'Iz al-Din Ibn al-Athir Abi al-Hassan Ali Ibn Mohammad (died in 630 AH.); Asad al-Ghabat Fi Ma'rifa al-Sahaba, vol. 2, P. 22; researched by 'Adil Ahmad al-Rafa'i, publication, Dar Ihya al-Turab al-'Arabi; Beirut, Lebanon; the first edition, 1417 AH, 1996 AD.

In this narrative, the words حد, حدث and الحداد have been used. The lexiconists have defined them as relinquishing cosmetics and wearing black in mourning clothes instead.

3. Wearing black in mourning for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS)

The issue of black wearing of the family of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in mourning for Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom has been extremely considerable in the Islamic history. The historians and the narrators have put forward the following cases as evidence,

A. The black wearing of women and Imam Sajjad (AS) in Damascus

After Imam Sajjad (AS) made his historic and crushing sermon in a Damascus mosque, Minhal got up and asked him, "O son of the Holy Prophet! How did you spend the night?" Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (AS) replied,

كيف حال من اصبح وقد قتل ابوه وقلّ ناصره وينظر الى حرم من حوله اسارى فقد فقدوا الستر والغطاء وقد اعدموا الكافل والحمى،
فما ترانى الا اسيراً ذليلاً قد عدمت الناصر والكفيل قد كسيت انا واهل بيتى ثياب الأسى وقد حرمت علينا جديد العرى.

How could one feel when his father is murdered, his supporters are just a handful, his family is held captive with no supporter and no clothes? You don't see me but a humiliated captive (stuck in enemy's hand) who has lost his patron and supporter. Indeed my family and I have worn mourning clothes as new clothes are not any more commendable for us.

Al-Hairi, Jafar Abbas; Balaghat al-Imam Ali Ibn al-Hussein (AS); p. 93; publication, Dar al-Hadith Lil Taba'a wa al-Nashr; Iran, Qom al-Muqaddasa; the first edition, 1425 AH., 1383.

Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 4, p. 19, chapter 2,

النصوص على الخصوص على إمامته و الوصية إليه و أنه دفع إليه الكتب و السلاح و غيرها و فيه بعض الدلائل و النكت

p. 17.

The word *الاسي* literally means grief and sorrow. Therefore, *ثياب الاسي* stands for wearing mourning clothes. As discussed earlier, *حدا* referred to black mourning clothes which was common at that time. This narrative indicates that Imam Sajjad (AS) and other members of Ahl al-Bayt had black clothing on in Damascus.

Khalil Ibn Ahmad as one of the lexiconists has written,

أسي: الأسي، مقصور: الحزن على الشيء ..

The word *الأسى* is derived from *أسي* as its stem. It means grief for something.

Al-Farahidi, al-Khalil Ibn Ahmad (died in 175 AH); *Kitab al-'Ayn*; vol. 7, P. 332; researched by Mahdi al-Makhzumi and Ibrahim al-Samirai; publication: Maktabat al-Hilal.

According to another narrative, the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) lamented for the Master of Martyrs (Imam Hussein) for seven days in Damascus and they also wore black clothes.

فَلَمَّا فَلَمَّا أَصْبَحَ اسْتَدْعَى بِحَرَمِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ - فَقَالَ لَهُنَّ أَيُّمَا أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُنَّ - الْمَقَامُ عِنْدِي أَوْ الرَّجُوعُ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ - وَلَكُمْ الْجَائِزَةُ السَّنِيَّةُ قَالُوا نُحِبُّ أَوْلًا - أَنْ نَنُوحَ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ قَالَ افْعَلُوا مَا بَدَا لَكُمْ - ثُمَّ أَخْلَيْتَ لَهُنَّ الْحَجَرَ وَالْبَيْوتَ فِي دِمَشْقَ - وَلَمْ تَبْقَ هَاشِمِيَّةٌ وَلَا فُرَشِيَّةٌ - إِلَّا وَلَيْسَتْ السَّوَادَ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ - وَتَدَبَّوهُ عَلَى مَا نُقِلَ سَبْعَةَ أَيَّامٍ.

As early as morning, Yazid called in the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be Upon Him) Ahl Al-Bayt, asking them, "Do you like to stay here with me or return to Medina? I will give you numerous rewards." They answered, "First of all we feel like to mourn for Imam Hussein and recite elegies for him." Yazid said, "Do whatever you want." A number of rooms were evacuated for them in Damascus so that they could lament enough. Every single woman from the Hashemite and the Quraysh donned black clothes, wept and mourned for seven days.

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), *Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar*, vol. 14, p. 503; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

Al-Burhani, al-Sheikh Abdullah (died in 1130 AH.), *al-'Awam, al-Imam al-Hussein (AS)*, P. 422; researched by, Madrasat al-Imam al-Mahdi (AS); publication, Madrasat al-Imam al-Mahdi, Qom; the first edition *al-Muhaqqa*, 1407 AH, 1365.

Al-Nuri, al-Mirza Hussein (died in 1320 AH); *Mustadrak al-Wasail*, vol. 3, P. 327; researched by Muassissat Al al-Bayt Alayhum al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath; publication, Muassissat Al al-Bayt Alayhum al-Salam Li Ihya al- Turath, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1408-1988.

B. The black wearing of the Hashemite women in Medina

After the family of Imam Hussein (AS) returned to Medina from Damascus and Kufa, old Hashemite women wore black mourning clothes in grief.

The following narrative illustrates the incident.

عن الحسن بن ظريف بن ناصح، عن أبيه، عن الحسين بن زيد، عن عمر بن علي بن الحسين، قال: لما قتل الحسين بن علي عليهما السلام لبسن نساء بني هاشم السواد والمسوح وكن لا يشتكين من حر ولا برد وكان علي بن الحسين عليهما السلام يعمل لهن الطعام للمأتم

Abu Hafas Amr, Imam Sajjad's son and Imam Baqir's step-brother has said, "When Hussein Ibn Ali was martyred, the Hashemite women who donned black and rough clothes with no complaints of the freezing or hot weather. And my father, Ali Ibn al-Hussein was the one who prepared food for the mourners."

Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Khalid al-Barqi (died in 274); al-Mahasin, vol. 2, p. 420; researched by, al-Sayyid Jalal al-Din al-Husseini; publication, Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiya, Tehran, the first edition, 1330 solar year.

The chain of transmission of this narrative is reliable and its meaning is quite clear.

4. The black wearing of Umm Salama the mourning for Imam Hussein (AS)

Umm Salama was a revered woman for The Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him). She was the one who was present at a time when the verse of Tathir (purification) was revealed to the five people of the cloak. This woman was very loyal and loved and respected so much the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be upon Him) grandchildren especially Imam Hussein (AS) that Imam Hussein called her as mother.

At the evening of Ashura, Umm Salama, had a dream about the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) while his hair and beard were dusty. When she asked him for the reason, the Holy Prophet replied, "Hussein was just murdered".

وأخرج الترمذي أن أم سلمة رأت النبي صلى الله عليه وآله باكيا وبرأسه ولحيته التراب فسألته فقال: (قتل الحسين أنفا)

Al-Heithami, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn Hajar (died in 973 AH.), al-Sawaiq al-Muhraqa Ala Ahl al-Rafad wa al-Dalal wa al-Zindiqa, vol. 2, P. 567; researched by, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abdullah al-Turki; publication, Muassissat al-Risalat, Lebanon, 1417 AH.-1997 AD, the first edition.

After Imam Hussein's (AS) martyrdom, this lady erected a black tent in the Prophet's mosque and wore black mourning clothes.

عن ابي نعيم باسناده عن ام سلمه رضوان الله عليها انها لما بلغها مقتل الامام الحسين بن علي (عليهما السلام) اضربت قبة سوداء فى مسجد رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) ولبست السواد

As quoted by Abu Na'im Isfahani, as soon as Umm Salama was informed of Imam Hussein's martyrdom, she erected a black tent in the prophet's mosque and put on black clothes.

Idris Qarashi, 'Imad al-Din, 'Uyun al-Akhbar wa Fonun al-Athar, P. 109, published in Beirut.

Many more cases of wearing black clothes in mourning for some individuals' martyrdoms or deaths can be seen in the history. With a short glance at the history, numerous cases of black wearing which took place during the lifetime of the Imam and the concealment of the Imam of the time can be detected. This tradition has been in practice so far among the Shias and the Ahl al-Bayt's followers.

Therefore, the tradition of black wearing by Shias along the history has been initiated by Ahl al-Bayt.

The third response: Black clothes in harmony with the mourning mood

In addition to the fact that the black color has a special influence and elegance, it is in harmony with the expression of grief and sorrow in a mourning period. That is because the mourner is in deep sorrow for the loss of his beloved one, therefore no joy can replace it.

It is for the same reason that the grieved people wear clothes in black in all spots of the world. They even wear black to express sympathy to their bereaved friends. As a matter of fact, the black color is sorrowful by itself.

The reflection of sorrow is one of the specifications of the black color. It is what Imam Sadiq (AS) told Hannan Ibn Sudayr.

عَنْ حَنَّانِ بْنِ سَدِيرٍ قَالَ دَخَلْتُ عَلَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَفِي رِجْلَيْ نَعْلٍ سَوْدَاءٍ فَقَالَ يَا حَنَّانُ مَا لَكَ وَلِلْسَوْدَاءِ أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّ فِيهَا ثَلَاثَ خِصَالٍ تُضْعِفُ الْبَصَرَ وَتُرْخِي الذِّكْرَ وَتُورِثُ الْهَمَّ وَمَعَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ لِبَاسِ الْجَبَّارِينَ قَالَ فَقُلْتُ فَمَا أَلْبَسُ مِنَ النَّعَالِ قَالَ عَلَيكَ بِالصُّفْرَاءِ فَإِنَّ فِيهَا ثَلَاثَ خِصَالٍ تَجْلُو الْبَصَرَ وَتَشُدُّ الذِّكْرَ وَتَدْرَأُ الْهَمَّ وَهِيَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ لِبَاسِ النَّبِيِّينَ.

Hannan Ibn Sudayr has said that he went to meet Imam Sadiq (AS) while he was wearing black shoes. "He asked me why I was wearing black shoes." He said, "Don't you know that the black color makes your eyesight poor, weakens the sexual desire and it is the symbol of sorrow? In addition, it is the color of the clothes of the tyrants." "I asked the Imam what color should my shoes be?" He answered, "Yellow. Because it strengthens the eyesight and the sexual desire and wards off depression."

Al-Kuleini al-Razi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq (died in 328 AH.); al-Usul Min al-Kafi; vol. 6, p. 466; publication, Islamiya, Tehran, the second edition, 1362.

In a separate narrative, Imam Sadiq (AS) told Zurara that the earth and the sun mourned and wept for Sayyid al-Shuhada (AS) for forty mornings.

قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَا زُرَّارَةُ إِنَّ السَّمَاءَ بَكَتْ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحًا بِالْأَرْضِ بَكَتْ أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحًا بِالسَّوَادِ وَإِنَّ الشَّمْسَ بَكَتْ أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحًا بِالْكُشُوفِ وَالْحُمْرَةَ وَإِنَّ الْجِبَالَ تَقَطَّعَتْ وَانْتَثَرَتْ وَإِنَّ الْبِحَارَ تَفَجَّرَتْ وَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ بَكَتْ أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحًا عَلَى

الْحُسَيْنِ وَمَا اخْتَضَبَتْ مِنَّا امْرَأَةٌ وَلَا اِدْهَنْتْ وَلَا اِكْتَحَلَتْ وَلَا رَجَلَتْ حَتَّى اَنَا رَأْسُ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ.

Imam Sadiq (AS) told Zurara, "O Zurara, the sky wept blood over Hussein's murder for 40 days, the earth wept by darkness for 40 days, and the sun wept for 40 days by eclipse and redness. The mountains cracked and its parts scattered, the seas exploded, and the angels cried over Hussein (AS) for 40 mornings. No women of us had dyed her hair nor had a woman put Kohl on her eyes till the head of Obaydallah Ibns Ziad was brought to us.

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 45, p. 207; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

In the third narrative, Imam Sadiq (AS) advised the women who had lost their husbands to don black and avoid putting on colorful clothes.

وَعَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ وَلَا تَلْبَسُ الْحَادُّ ثِيَابًا مُصَبَّغَةً وَلَا تَكْتَجِلُ وَلَا تَطَيَّبُ وَلَا تَتَزَيَّنُ حَتَّى تَنْقَضِيَ عِدَّتُهَا وَلَا بَأْسَ أَنْ تَلْبَسَ ثَوْبًا مَصْبُوعًا بِسَوَادٍ.

Imam Sadiq has stated, "Women whose husbands are dead should avoid wearing colorful clothes until the mandatory waiting period of Idda [4 months and 10 days] is over. They should also relinquish lining Kohl on their eyes, nor wearing perfume and cosmetics. Instead no matter if they put on black clothes".

Al-Nuri, al-Mirza Hussein (died in 1320 AH); Mustadrak al-Wasail; vol. 15, p. 361; researched by Muassissat Al al-Bayt Alayhum al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath; publication, Muassissat Al al-Bayt Alayhum al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1408 AH, 1988 AD.

In the narrative above, the word حاد stands for a widow who has given up using cosmetics and perfume in order to observe the waiting Idda period.

الحادُّ والمُحِدُّ من النساء: التي تترك الزينة و الطيب؛ و قال ابن دريد: هي المرأة التي تترك الزينة والطيب بعد زوجها للعدة.

Al-Afriqi al-Misri, Mohammad Ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzur (died in 711 AH.), Lisan al-'Arab, vol. 3, p. 43; publication: Dar Sadir, Beirut, the first edition.

Both narratives indicate that the black color is in good harmony with mourning and sorrow.

A separate narrative also shows that this color is not in harmony with happiness and celebration at all. According to some narratives the beginning of the Wilayat of the Imam of the Time as well as the Day of Ghadir, for example, are the days on which black clothes must be taken off.

Hathifa has quoted Amir al-Momenin as stating, "The day on which the Imam of the time ascended the throne is being referred to by 72 names." I asked him to tell me what those names were. The following is what Hazrat enumerated,

هَذَا يَوْمُ الْإِسْتِرَاحَةِ، وَيَوْمُ تَنْفِيسِ الْكُرْبَةِ، وَيَوْمُ الْغَدِيرِ الثَّانِي....

He continued until he reached to the day on which black clothes should be taken off.

وَيَوْمُ نَزْعِ السَّوَادِ،.... .

Al-Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir (died in 1111 AH.), Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami'a Li Durr Akhbar al-Aimma al-Athar, vol. 3, p. 127; researched by Mohammad al-Baqir al-Behbudi; Publication: Muassisat al-Wafa, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1403 AH (1983 AD).

The second narrative is referring to the day of Ghadir as يوم نزع السواد (the day on which black clothes should be taken off).

رواه عن الرضا عليه السلام قال إذا كان يوم القيامة زفت أربعة أيام إلى الله كما تزف العروس إلى خدرها قيل ما هذه الأيام قال يوم الأضحى ويوم الفطر ويوم الجمعة ويوم الغدير وإن يوم الغدير بين الأضحى و الفطر والجمعة كالقمر بين الكواكب وهو اليوم الذي نجا فيه إبراهيم الخليل من النار فصامه شكرا لله وهو اليوم الذي أكمل الله به الدين في إقامة النبي عليه السلام عليا أمير المؤمنين علما وأبان فضيلته ووصاءته فصام ذلك اليوم. ...

ويوم لبس الثياب ونزع السواد ويوم الشرط المشروط ويوم نفي الغموم [الهموم] ويوم الصفح عن مذنبى شيعة أمير المؤمنين وهو يوم السبقة ويوم إكثار الصلاة على محمد وآل محمد ويوم الرضا ويوم عيد أهل بيت محمد

Hazrat Imam Reza (AS) has stated, "When the Day of Justice comes up, four days would be decorated and beautified just like a bride." When he was asked about those four days, he replied, "Eid al-Atha (the day of sacrifice), the day of Fitr (end of the holy month of Ramadan), Friday and the day of Ghadir Khom (when the holy prophet appointed Ali as his successor). But the day of Ghadir is the most important day like the moon among the stars. It is the day on which Abraham (AS) remained unhurt, having survived the fire of persecution. He fasted on that day in gratitude.

The day of Ghadir is the day on which God completed the religion and the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) designated Ali (AS) as his successor.

The day of Ghadir is the day on which the best clothes should be worn and black clothes should be off. It is the day on which depression and misery are kept away from mankind and the Shias' sins would be forgiven.

The day of Ghadir is the day when people should overtake one another in doing good. It is a day on which salutation and blessing should be sent to Mohammad and his family.

The day of Ghadir is the celebration day for Mohammad's household because when God completed Islam and favored it.

Al-Sayyid Ibn Tawus (died in 664 AH); Iqbal al-A'mal, P. 464; researched by Jawad al-Qayyumi al-Isfahani; publication: Maktab al-I'lam al-Islami, 1414 AH.

According to this narrative, there is a natural link between the black color and the mourning mood. Specifically, the ninth of Rabi' al-Awwal (the anniversary of the beginning of the Imam Mahdi's Imamah) is precedent for the long mourning period in two months of Muharram and Safar. In case there had been no harmony between the colors and these special days, the Imam (AS) would have never said so.

Psychologically, the black color relieves the grief and makes the miserable and bereaved person tranquil.

Hujjati, Mohammad Amin, Ma'asir, psychology and the educational effects of colors from the viewpoint of Islam, pp. 9, 58-59.

Part two: The Shia jurists' decrees

In the previous section, the reasons for the black wearing of the Shias in mourning ceremonies were fully discussed. However the issue needs to be brought into the spotlight from the viewpoint of Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). And the scholars' views should be analyzed as well. We take the issue into consideration in two separate sections.

Section one: Shia jurists' decrees for the desirability of wearing black for mourning purposes

Availing themselves of numerous narratives, Shia jurists have recommended wearing black clothes in grief for Sayyid al-Shuhada (AS) as commendable and lawful. This recommendation has been made through either their decrees, their last wills or their own actions.

Before demonstrating the desirability of this action in the eyes of the jurists, it merits a mention that its desirability has been inferred through the inspection of the prohibitive narratives concerning wearing black. That is why while discussing the issue, **من هذه الاخبار** used.

With taking the above-mentioned point into account here we point to some figures' ideas.

1. Late writer of Hadaiq

Shortly after explaining why using this color is prohibited while doing prayers, this prominent jurist has said,

ثم أقول: لا يبعد استثناء لبس السواد في مأتم الحسين (عليه السلام) من هذه الأخبار لما استفاضت به الأخبار من الأمر باظهار شعائر الأحزان.

It is most probable that wearing black for mourning Imam Hussein (AS) is believed to be acceptable by inferring from a number of narratives which called for the expression of grief.

Al-Buhrani, al-Sheikh Yusuf Ibn Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim (died in 118 AH); al-Hadaiq al-Nadira fi Ahkam al-'Itrat al-Tahira, vol. 7, p. 116; researched by Mohammad Taqi al-Irawani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami Li Jama'at al-Modarresin, Qom.

At the end of his discussion, he has put forward some narratives to substantiate his comments.

In all books written in the domain of Islamic jurisprudence, late Burhani's comments are referred to.

When Ayatollah al-'Uzma Mirza Jawad Tabrizi was asked about the view of late Burhani concerning wearing black clothes in mourning for Imam Hussein (AS), he not only approved it but also considered the black clothes as the symbol of expressing sorrow about the sufferings of Sayyid al-Shuhada in particular and Aamma in general. In his opinion, thanks to some narratives, the expression of grief for those individuals' miseries is recommended religiously.

هل ترون ما ذهب إليه صاحب الحدائق من أن لبس السواد في عزاء سيد الشهداء وبقية الأئمة عليهم السلام، راجح شرعاً؟
جواب: ما ذهب إليه صاحب الحدائق قدس سره صحيح، فإن لبس السواد من مظاهر الحزن على ما أصاب سيد الشهداء وأهل بيته وأصحابه، وكذا سائر الأئمة عليهم السلام، وإظهار الحزن في مصائبهم مندوب شرعاً، للنصوص الكثيرة وفيها الصحيح، والله العالم.

Question: Is there any religious justification for wearing black clothes in mourning for Imam Hussein or other members of the Aamma in your opinion? It is what the writer of Hadaiq is belief of.

Answer: His view is well approved because black clothes are generally the symbol of sadness over the calamities of Sayyid al-Shuhada, Ahl al-Bayt and their followers. Therefore, the expression of sorrow for those individuals' miseries is religiously recommended, according to a number of reliable narratives.

Al-'Amili; al-Intisar, vol. 9, p. 247; publication, Dar al-Sirat, Beirut, Lebanon, the first edition, 1422.

2. Allame Sayyid Mohammad Jafar Tabatabai Hairi

In addition to voicing his opinion about the desirability of wearing black in mourning ceremonies for the master of martyrs, this top figure has offered two reasons to justify his idea through narratives.

A. Silence and approval of Imam Ali Ibn al-Hussein (peace be upon them both)

The Hashemite women turned black-clad in grief for the loss of Sayyid al-Shuhada (AS) at the presence of Imam Sajjad (AS). The Imam kept silent as a sign of approval. If the action had looked wrong, the Hazrat would have definitely forbidden it. And in case he had forbidden it, obeying him would have been obligatory. Hence, his silence and approval is evidence for the acceptability of the action. Hazrat Zeinab (AS) was among the Hashemite women wearing black clothes. She enjoyed the topmost status after the infallible Aamma.

B. Mourning as the recommended and favored action

Since practicing mourning for Imam Hussein (AS) is considered a religious ritual which precedes awards, wearing black clothes as a symbol of grief and motto of mourning is also deemed as a recommended deed. Donning black has been always a symbol of sorrow

for the loss of a beloved one all over the world.

وجه الدلالة على الاستحباب هو لبسهن ذلك بمحضه عليه السلام وعدم منعهن عن لبسه وأمرهن بغيره من مراسم العزاء وخصوصاً بعد وجود مثل الصديقة الصغرى زينب الكبرى عليها السلام الذى لا يقصر فعلها عن فعل المعصوم لكونها تالية له في المقامات العالية والدرجات السامية.

كما يدل له انه شعار الحزن والعزاء على المفقود العزيز الجليل من قديم الزمان وسالف العصر والاولان: وكما هو المرسوم اليوم في جميع نقاط العالم.

Al-Tabatabai al-Hairi, al-Sayyid Mirza Jafar Hafid Sahib al-Riyad Qadamaha (died in 1312 AH),

ارشاد العباد إلى استحباب لبس السواد على سيد الشهداء والأئمة الأمجاد عليهم السلام

p. 28, edited by al-Sayyid Mohammad Reza al-Husseini al-A'riji al-Fuham.

Elsewhere, he has described the belief and the deed of his father, Haj Mirza Allame Sayyid Ali Naqi Tabatabai as a senior jurist in Karabala, as follows,

“My father wore black clothes and lamented for Imam Hussein (AS) to the end of his life.”

وكان والدي العلامة أعلى الله مقامه في أواخر أمره وعمره يرى حسن التلبس بهذا اللباس في أيام مأتم مولانا الحسين (ع) المعودة وندبته فتوى وعملا إلى أن انتقل إلى رحمة الله.

Al-Tabatabai al-Hairi, al-Sayyid Mirza jafar Hafid Sahib al-Riyad Qadamaha (died in 1312 AH),

ارشاد العباد إلى استحباب لبس السواد على سيد الشهداء والأئمة الأمجاد عليهم السلام

p. 54, edited by al-Sayyid Mohammad Reza al-Husseini al-A'riji al-Fuham.

3. Allame Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Kazemeini, known as Muhaqiq Kazimi

Here is what he has written,

وفى استثناء لبسه فى مأتم الحسين (عليه السلام) ونحوه وجهٌ غير بعيد كما فى حدائق لما دلّ على اظهار شعائر الحزن عليه (عليه السلام) ولما روى من لبس نساء بنى هاشم السواد ولم يغيّرنها فى حرّ او برد وكان زين العابدين (عليه السلام) يصنع لهن الطعام فى المأتم ولم ينكره (عليه السلام) عليهن.

Wearing black in mourning for Imam Hussein (AS) is exceptional and it is unlikely to be prohibited. The exceptionality of the issue has been cited in Hadaiq. According to the narratives, there are two reasons for its exceptionality. One of them is the expression of sorrow for Imam Hussein (AS) and the other is the narrative about the Hashemite women who wore black in grief for that Imam. They didn't even take off the black clothes in extreme heat and cold. Imam Zein al-'Abedin (AS) was the one who prepared food for the mourners and never prevented them from doing so.

Kazemeini, Mohammad Hussein (died in 1308 AH), Hidayat al-Anam fi Sharh Sharayi' al-Islam, p. 454, published in Najaf, 1330 AH.

4. Mirza Hussein Nuri, the author of Mustadrak al-Wasail

After citing a number of narratives about the prohibition of wearing black clothes and quoting Mahasin Barqi, Mirza Hussein Nuri has discussed the desirability of such an action as follows,

قلت: وفي هذه الأخبار، والقصص، إشارة أو دلالة على عدم كراهة لبس السواد، أو رجحانه حزنا على أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام)، كما عليه سيرة كثير في أيام حزنه ومأتمه.

These narratives and stories indicate the lack of prohibition of wearing black clothes in grief of Hazrat Aba Abdallah al-Hussein (AS). Wearing such a kind of clothes has been a tradition practiced by many distinguished figures during the mourning periods for the Imam.

Al-Nuri, al-Mirza Hussein (died in 1320), al-Mustadrak al-Wasail, vol. 3, p. 328; researched and published by, Muassisat Al al-Bayt Alayim al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath, Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1408 AH-1988 AD.

5. Ayatollah al-Uzma Sistani

The following question has been posed in Ayatollah al-Uzma Sistani's Istiftaat (Replies to Inquiries about the Practical Laws of Islam),

السؤال:

ما هو رأيكم في لبس السواد في عزاء خامس أصحاب الكساء؟ الجواب: لبس السواد في عزاء سيد الشهداء [روحي فداه] أمر مطلوب.

Question:

What is your opinion about wearing black clothes in mourning for Imam Hussein (AS)?

Answer: Wearing black clothes in mourning for Sayyid al-Shohada (AS) is a commendable act.

Istiftaat (jurists' decrees), al-Sayyid al-Sistani, p. 192.

6. Ayatollah al-Uzma Mirza Jawad Tabrizi

سؤال:

برجى من سماحتكم بيان رأيكم في هذه المسألة التي أخذت منحى خطيرا في الكويت بعد مسألة مظلومية الزهراء عليه السلام والتي لا تخفى عليكم، والمسألة هي: ما هو رأيكم المبارك في لبس السواد، واللطم على الصدور أثناء إحياء مراسيم العزاء لسيد الشهداء عليه السلام في شهر محرم الحرام، ولباقي الأئمة الأطهار عليهم السلام؟

Question: Would you please voice your view concerning an issue which has been brought into the spotlight in Kuwait after the issue of Hazrat Zahra (AS)? The issue is black-wearing and chest-beating in mourning ceremonies held for Sayyid al-Ashohada (AS) in the month of Muharram and for other Imams.

جواب:

لا إشكال ولا ريب ولا خلاف بين الشيعة الإمامية في أن اللطم ولبس السواد من شعائر أهل البيت عليهم السلام، ومن المصاديق الجليلة للآية: ذلك ومن يعظم شعائر الله فإنها من تقوى القلوب. كما أنها من مظاهر الجزع الذي دلت النصوص الكثيرة على رجحانه في مصائب أهل البيت ومآتمهم. ومن يحاول تضعيف هذه الشعائر أو التقليل من أهميتها بين شباب الشيعة، فهو من الآثمين في حق أهل البيت عليهم السلام، ومن المسؤولين يوم القيامة عما اقترفه في تضليل الناس عن مظالم الأئمة عليهم السلام. ثبت الله المؤمنين على الإيمان والولاية. والله الهادي إلى سواء السبيل.

Answer:

beyond any doubt, there is no clash of ideas among the Shias about the fact that the rituals of wearing black clothes as well as beating chests is in line with the tradition of Ahl al-Bayt. They are in accordance with the Quranic verse which states, "Respecting the divine rites is a sign of piety."

Such rituals are the manifestations of mourning and grief for Ahl al-Bayt with a large number of narratives having approved them. Those who are trying to weaken and play down the importance of such rituals among Shia youths are, as a matter of fact, seeking to deal a blow to the Ahl al-Bayt. They would be definitely held responsible on the Day of Justice for misleading people about those who oppressed Ahl al-Bayt. This is God who keeps the believers firm over their faith and Ahl al-Bayt's friendship. And He is the One who lead the people to the right path.

Al-Sheikh al-Kurani al-'Ameli, al-Intisar, vol. 9, p. 247; publication, Dar al-Sirat, Beirut, Lebanon, the first edition, 1422.

7. Ayatollah al-Uzma Mar'ashi Najafi's will

Here is what he has written in his last will,

I want him [my son] to bury with me the black clothes which I used to wear in the months of Muharram and Safar in grief for the sufferings of the Holy Prophet's household (peace be upon them).

Rafi'I, Ali, "Ala Marwdashti", Shahab Shariat, A Look at Hazrat Ayatolla al-Uzma Mar'ashi Najafi's Biography, p. 366, published in the general library of Hazrat Ayatolla al-Uzma Mar'ashi Najafi, Qom, 1373.

A number of other jurists have also issued decrees for the desirability of the rite as follows,

Late Fadil Darbandi, *Asrar al-Shahadat*, p. 60, published in Tehran, in 126; Sayyid Ismail Aqili Nuri, *Wasilat al-Ma'ad fi Sharh Nijat al-'Ibad*, vol. 2, p. 170; Sheikh Zayn al-'Abidin, Mazandarani (died in 1309), *Thakhirat al-Ma'ad*, p. 620, published in Mumbai, in 1298; Allame Sayyid Hassan Sadr, *Tabyin al-Rishad fi Labas al-Sawad Ala al-Aimmat al-Amjad* and Sheikh Abu al-Fadl Tehran, *Shafa al-Sadr*, p. 324, Mumbai, in 1309.

On the other hand, senior contemporary scholars also wear black clothes during the mourning period for the Master of Martyrs (AS) as well as the martyrdom of other Imams

Conclusion:

With regard to the prominent jurists' views, the legitimacy and acceptability of the following rituals during the month of Muharram including the day of Ashura are substantiated.

The desirability of wearing black

The desirability of holding mourning ceremonies

The desirability of feeding mourners

The desirability of serving mourners in mourning ceremonies in general

Chapter Two: Jurists' decrees for detestability of wearing black while praying

One of the doubts which Wahhabis raise about the issue of wearing black clothes refers to a number of narratives in Shia sources banning such conduct. Late Sheikh Saduq has pointed out these narratives in *'Ilal al-Sharai'*, chapter 56. Wahhabis claim that such a color is Haram (unlawful) from the Shia perspective by taking these narratives into account.

In order to respond to this claim, we need to analyze the jurists' decrees.

In the Shia school of thought, the desirability, prohibition, lawfulness and unlawfulness of an action fully depends on the views and inference of jurists who are specialist on inferring Islamic rules. Therefore, if a jurist infers the rule based on justified reasons and issues a decree, it is necessary for his followers to abide by it.

With regard to the narratives surrounding the topic in discussion, jurists have all consensus on the desirability of wearing black clothes (except turban, shoes and cloak) while performing prayers not on its unlawfulness as claimed by Wahhabis.

In order to clear up the jurists' ideas, we had better classify the narratives which they have availed themselves of.

Classification of narratives:

Narratives which have deemed wearing black in prayers as undesirable and detestable are of two groups.

The first category: Narratives about the detestability of wearing black clothes in prayers

1.

وَرُويَ لَا تُصَلِّ فِي ثَوْبٍ أَسْوَدَ فَأَمَّا الخُفُّ أَوْ الكِيسَاءُ أَوْ العِمَامَةُ فَلَا بَأْسَ

Do not wear black while praying. But black shoes, turban and cloak are exceptional.

Al-Koleini, al-Razi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq (died in 328 AH), al-Kafi, vol. 3, p. 403; publication, Islamiyya, Tehran, the second edition, 1362 solar year.

2.

عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَمَّنْ ذَكَرَهُ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَهُ أَصَلِّي فِي الْقَلَنْسُوءِ السُّودَاءِ فَقَالَ لَا تُصَلِّ فِيهَا فَإِنَّهَا لِبَاسُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ.

The narrator has said, "I asked Imam Sadiq whether I can wear a black hat while praying". The Imam replied, "Do not wear such clothes while praying because it is the clothes of people stuck in the Hell".

Al-Koleini, al-Razi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq (died in 328 AH), al-Kafi, vol. 3, p. 403; publication: Islamiyya, Tehran, the second edition, 1362 solar year.

Al-Tusi, al-Sheikh Abu Jafar, Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hassan (died in 460 AH), Tathhib al-Ahkam, vol. 2, p. 213; researched by al-Sayyid Hassan al-Mousawi al-Khorsan; publication: Dar al-Kurub al-Islamiyya, Tehran, the fourth edition, 1365 solar year.

3.

أَبِي رَجِمَةَ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى الْعَطَّارُ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سَلِيمَانَ عَنْ رَجُلٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَهُ أَصَلِّي فِي قَلَنْسُوءِ السُّودَاءِ قَالَ لَا تُصَلِّ فِيهَا فَإِنَّهَا لِبَاسُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ.

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

From the perspective of chain of transmission, these narratives are Marfu'(traced back directly to the Prophet) and Mursal (lacking the first transmitter), so they are by no means dependable.

The second category: Narratives about the absolute prohibition of wearing black clothes

1.

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَيْسَى الْبِقَطِينِيِّ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ جَدِّهِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ رَاشِدٍ عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عَنْ جَدِّي عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ فِيمَا عَلَّمَ أَصْحَابَهُ لَا تَلْبَسُوا السَّوَادَ فَإِنَّهُ لِيَأْسُ فِرْعَوْنَ

As quoted by Imam Sadiq (AS), Hazrat Amir al-Momenin (AS) advised his companions not to wear black at all because it was considered the clothes of Pharaoh.

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

Somewhere else this narrative has been cited with a note chain of transmission.

وَ قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِيمَا عَلَّمَ أَصْحَابَهُ لَا تَلْبَسُوا السَّوَادَ فَإِنَّهُ لِيَأْسُ فِرْعَوْنَ

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein Ibn Babuye al-Qomi (died in 381 AH), Min La Yahdarho al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 251, edited by Ali Akbar al-Ghaffari; publication: Jama'at al-Mudarresin Fi al-Howza al-'Ilmiyya Qom, the second edition.

2.

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَعْقُوبَ عَنْ عِدَّةٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ رَفَعَهُ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ يُكْرَهُ السَّوَادُ إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثَةٍ الْخُفِّ وَالْعِمَامَةِ وَالْكِسَاءِ

Imam Sadiq (AS) has stated, "Black clothes are undesirable except turban, shoes and cloaks".

Al-Tusi, al-Sheikh Abu Jafar, Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hassan (died in 460 AH), Tathhib al-Ahkam, vol. 2, p. 213; researched by al-Sayyid Hassan al-Mousawi al-Khorsan; publication: Dar al-Kurub al-Islamiyya, Tehran, the fourth edition, 1365 solar year.

3.

عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ بَعْضِ أَصْحَابِهِ رَفَعَهُ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يُكْرَهُ السَّوَادَ إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثٍ الْخُفِّ وَالْعِمَامَةِ وَالْكِسَاءِ

Al-Koleini, al-Razi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq (died in 328 AH), al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 449; publication: Islamiyya, Tehran, the second edition, 1362 solar year.

In this category, the first narrative is sound and reliable with no problem with its chain of transmission but the second and the third ones are Marfu' and unreliable.

There is another narrative as follows,

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ الصَّفَّارُ عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ مَعْرُوفٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ النَّوْفَلِيِّ عَنِ السَّكُونِيِّ عَنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: أَوْحَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْبِيَائِهِ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا تَلْبَسُوا لِبَاسَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَطْعَمُوا طَعَامَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَسْلُكُوا مَسَالِكَ أَعْدَائِي فَتَكُونُوا أَعْدَائِي كَمَا هُمْ أَعْدَائِي.

Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan quoting from Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan al-Saffar quoting from Abbas Ibn Ma'ruf, from Hussein Ibn Yazid Nufili, from Sokuni quoting from Hazrat Abi Abdellah (AS) as stating,

"God Almighty has asked one of his prophets to advise believers, 'Do not wear the clothes of my enemies, do not eat my enemies' food and do not follow the footsteps of my enemies. If you do so, you will be among my enemies.'"

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

Nevertheless, the contemporary jurist, Ayatollah al-Uzma Mirza Jawad Tabrizi believes that the narrative has a different connotation.

ونحن نلتزم بمضمون هذه الروايات فنقول: إن اللباس إذا اختص به أعداء الدين فلا يجوز لبسه، مثل القبة التي يختص بلبسها اليهود. ولكن لباس السواد لم يثبت اختصاص لبسه بأعداء الدين، نعم يمكن ثبوت الإختصاص بخصوص (اللبادة السوداء) فإن لبسها من مختصات علماء اليهود والنصارى، وإذا ثبت ذلك فيها فلبسها حرام .

According to this narrative, it is not commendable to wear a kind of clothes which belongs specifically to God's enemies; like a hat which belongs to the Jews. However, it is not proven whether black clothes do belong to God's enemies. Accordingly, wearing any kind of clothes which belongs to specifically to God's enemies such as black quilted cloak is Haram (unlawful).

Al-'Amili; al-Intisar, vol. 9, p. 253; publication: Dar al-Sirat, Beirut, Lebanon, the first addition, 1422.

By the same token, this very narrative cannot be included in the second category as the one from which the prohibition of donning black clothes can be inferred. In this grouping, the first narrative is the only considerable one.

The jurists' deduction from the narratives: the undesirability of wearing black clothes while praying

In a brief examination, it can be found out that a large number of jurists have, in their books on Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), referred to the undesirable conducts while praying by making use of the narratives above. One of those contacts is wearing black clothes.

1. Sheikh Tusi

In his book, Al-Khilaf, issue number 247, late Sheikh Tusi has referred to consensus and cautiousness as the reason for its undesirability without making any mention of a narrative.

تكره الصلاة في الثياب السود. وخالف جميع الفقهاء في ذلك. دليلنا: إجماع الفرقة وطريقة الاحتياط.

Praying in black clothes is Makruh (detestable). All scholars are at odds with it. Hence, our reason for its detestability is consensus and cautiousness.

Al-Tusi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan (died in 460 AH), vol. 1, p. 506; researched by Jama'at Min al-Muhaqiqin; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami al-Tabi'at Li Jama'at al-Mudarrisin, Qom, 1407 AH.

2. Muhaqiq Helli

وتكره الصلاة في الثياب السود خلا العمامة، والخف قاله الأصحاب: روي عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله أنه قال: (البسوا من ثيابكم البياض فإنها من خير ثيابكم) وأمره عليه السلام بهذا اللون يدل على اختصاصه بالمصلحة الراجحة فيكون ما يصاده غير مشارك في المصلحة، وأشد الألوان مضادة للبياض السواد.

ويؤيد ذلك من طريق الأصحاب، ما رواه أحمد بن محمد بن رافع عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يَكْرَهُ السَّوَادَ إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثَةِ الْعِمَامَةِ وَالْخُفِّ وَالْكِسَاءِ.

Praying in black clothes except black turban and shoes is Makruh. This was what Imamiyya companions have quoted. The Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) has been quoted as saying, "Put on white clothes because it is the best of the clothes". The Holy Prophet's recommendation for wearing white hints its preference. As a result, the recommended color's opposite, namely black can not be preferable.

This quotation, thus, confirms the narrative which Ahmad Ibn Mohammad quoted from Imam Sadiq (AS). He had stated, "The Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) did never like black clothes except black turban, shoes and cloak.

Al-Muhaqiq al-Helli, Abu al-Qasim Najm al-Din Jafar Ibn al-Hassan (died in 676 AH), al-Mu'tabar, vol. 2, p. 94; researched and edited by 'Iddat Min al-Afdal; supervised by Nasir Makarim Shirazi; publication: Muassissat Sayyid al-Shuhada (AS). Qom.

3. The First Martyr

الثالثة: تكره الصلاة في الثياب السود، لما رواه الكليني عن رافع إلى أبي عبد الله عليه السلام: «يكره السواد الا في ثلاثة: الخف، والعمامة، والكساء». وفي مرفوع آخر إليه عليه السلام في القلنسوة السوداء: لا تصل فيها، فإنها لباس أهل النار. وروي عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله: «البسوا من ثيابكم البياض، فإنها من خير ثيابكم» وفيه دلالة على أفضلية البيض للمصلحة، فالمضاد لا يشاركها في المصلحة.

The third problem is that praying in black clothes is Makruh due to what late Koleini quoted from Imam Sadiq (AS). According to him the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) did never like black clothes except black turban, shoes and cloaks. In a separate narrative and in response to a question about wearing a black hat while praying, Imam Sadiq

(AS) stated, "Do not put that on while praying because it is the clothes of those stuck in the Hell.

The Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) has stated, "Put on white clothes because it is the best of the clothing. This narrative hints the preference of the white color and implies the undesirability of its opposite color.

Al-'Amili al-Juzeini, Mohammad Ibn Jamal al-Din Makki known as the First Martyr (died in 734-786 AH), Thikri al-Shi'at fi Ahkam al-Shari'at, vol. 3, p. 55; researched by Muassissat Al al-Bayt 'Alayhum al-Salam Li Ihya al-Turath, the first edition, 1419 AH.

4. Sayyid Ali Tabatabai

The clearest explanations about the narratives in discussion have been provided by Sayyid Ali Tabatabai.

(وتكره) الصلاة (في الثياب السود ما عدا العمامة والخف) والكساء، لاطلاق المستفیضة بکراهة لبسها، عدا المستثنیات الثلاثة، مع تصريح جملة من النصوص بکراهة الصلاة في خصوص القلنسوة، معللة بأنها لباس أهل النار، والتعليل عام لا يخص المورد كما يستفاد من النصوص. مضافا إلى عموم المرسل: لا تصل في ثوب أسود، فأما الخف والكساء والعمامة فلا بأس.

Praying in black clothes other than a black turban, shoes and cloak is Makruh. This can be justified through a number of narratives. Some citations have referred to the prohibition of wearing a black hat while praying because it looks like the garments of the people in the Hell. Despite its specific reference, it stands for a general concept, namely black clothes on the whole. There are some other narratives which advise, "Do not wear black clothes while performing prayers. But black shoes, cloak and turban are exceptional.

Al-Tabatabai, al-Sayyid Ali (died in 1231 AH), Riyadh al-Masail, vol. 3, p. 201; researched and published by Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami al-Tabi'at Li Jama'at al-Mudarresin, Qom, the first edition, 1414 AH.

5. Aqa Reza Hamedani

نعم يمكن الاستدلال لکراهة الصلاة في الثياب السود بمفهوم التعليل الوارد في القلنسوة فيما رواه في الکافي عن الحسن بن أحمد عن ذکره عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال قلت له أصلي في القلنسوة السوداء فقال لا تصل فيها فإنها لباس أهل النار فإنه يدل على کراهة كلما هو من لباس أهل النار ومن حملته الثياب السود.

كما يشهد له رواية حذيفة بن منصور قال كنت عند أبي عبد الله عليه السلام بالحيرة فاتاه رسول أبي العباس الخليفة يدعوه فدعى بممطر أحد وجهيه اسود والآخر ابيض فلبسه فقال أبو عبد الله عليه السلام اما اني ألبسه وانا اعلم أنه لباس أهل النار إذ الظاهر أن ذلك من حيث السواد لا خصوصية الممطر..

وكيف كان فلا تأمل في الحكم خصوصا بعد ما حكى عن بعض من دعوى الاجماع عليه.

The justification for considering wearing black clothes as undesirable has been the narrative from Imam Sadiq (AS) when in response to a question about wearing a black hat while praying he said, "Do not put that on while praying

because it is the clothes of those stuck in the Hell. And this justification can be generalized to all kinds of clothes which are worn by the people in the Hell. And black clothes are among them.

As yet another piece of evidence is a narrative quoted from Imam Sadiq (AS) by Hathifa Ibn Mansur. He had likened a raincoat one side of which was black to the clothes of the people of the Hell. The comparison was apparently for its black color not for another reason. Hence, there is no doubt about its undesirability especially because of the existence of general consensus on it.

Al-Hamedani, Aqa Reza (died in 1322 AH), Misbah al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 162; publication: Intisharat Maktabat al-Nijah, Tehran, Tab'at Hujriyya.

6. The writer of Jawahir

The writer of Jawahir has initially pointed to the views expressed by Muhaqiq Helli,

الثامنة تكره الصلاة في ثياب السود ما عد العمامة والخف

The eighth item which is deemed Makruh in prayers is wearing black clothes. Black turbans and shoes are exceptional.

Then he continued as below,

بلا خلاف اجده في المستثني منه، بل ربما ظهر من بعضهم الاجماع عليه. بل عن الخلاف ذلك صريحا وهو الحجة. مضافاً الي استفاضة النصوص في النهي عن لبسه الذي ربما قيل باستفادة الكراهة في خصوص الصلاة منه. إما لدعوى اتحاد الكونين كما سمعته في المغصوب، أولأن إطلاق الكراهة يقتضي شمول خصوص الصلاة، ولا ينافيه شمول غيرها، إذ ليس المراد اختصاص الصلاة بذلك من بين الأفراد، بل المراد الكراهة فيها بالخصوص وإن كان غيرها من الأفراد كذلك، وقد سمعت نظيره في استحباب خصوص بعض الأذكار في الصلاة،

Not only is there no difference of ideas among scholars concerning the detestability of having black clothes on while praying, but also there is a general consensus among them about its undesirability. This consensus has been evidently reflected in Sheikh Tusi's Khilaf. So it is absolutely dependable. Moreover, there are numerous narratives at hand proving the fact. It is applicable to the state of prayers in particular.

The reason behind the consensus on its undesirability might be because of اتحاد كونين (performing prayers is commanded while wearing black clothes is prohibited). Or it might be due to the narratives which declare black clothes, including the state of praying, as absolutely Makruh. It is also applicable to for example Iharam clothing (special garment worn by Muslims during Hajj Pilgrimage) and the clothing for shrouding the deceased Muslims. Wearing black clothes is specially Makruh while praying. It looks similar to

commendable Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) which are recommended to be recited while praying as well.

After giving the two reasons, he said that he did not need to justify it specially the latter one because the two following narratives might prove the contrary.

لا تصل في ثوب أسود، فأما الكساء والخف والعمامة فلا بأس.
إني أصلي في القلنسوة السوداء قال : لا تصل فيه فإنها لباس أهل النار

According to him these narratives were specifically cited about Salat (prayer) and should not be generalized to other cases.

Then what follows is what he added,

ولا ريب في ظهور التعليل فيه بکراهة الصلاة في كل ما كان كذلك

Later he explained that in the narratives which categorically ban wearing black clothes by describing them as the clothes of Pharaoh, the Abbasid and the people stuck in the Hell, the prohibition is only because of the color not any other reason.

بل من المعلوم كون ذلك من حيث السواد لا خصوصية الممطر، كما أن من المعلوم كون لبسه للتقية، فيتجه حينئذ كراهة الصلاة فيه للتعليل المزبور

Al-Najafi, al-Sheikh Mohammad Hassan (died in 1266 AH), Jawahir al-Kalam fi Sharh Sharai' al-Islam, vol. 8, p. 230; researched by al-Sheikh Abbas al-Quchani; publication: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, Tehran, the second edition, 1367 solar year.

8. Mirza Jawad Tabrizi

سؤال: ألا يكره للمصلي لبس السواد؟ كيف نجمع بين هذا الحكم الشرعي وبين استحباب لبس السواد عزاء على الحسين عليه السلام؟

جواب: لم يثبت كراهية لبس السواد لا في الصلاة ولا في غيرها، نعم ورد في بعض الروايات ما يستفاد منها كراهية لبس السواد، ولكنها ضعيفة السند، ومع الإغماض عن ضعفها، فالكراهية في الصلاة بمعنى أقل ثواباً، ولبس السواد في عزاء الحسين والأئمة عليهم السلام لأجل إظهار الحزن وإقامة شعائر المذهب مستحب نفسي، وثوابه أكثر من نقص الثواب في الصلاة، والله العالم.

Question:

Isn't wearing black while praying Makruh? On the other hand, donning black is commendable during the mourning period for Imam Hussein (AS). What is the justification for the contradiction between these two points?

Answer:

The undesirability of wearing black clothes in the state of praying or in other situations is not proven as an absolute fact. It is only derived from a number of narratives the chains of transmission of which are unreliable and weak.

Regardless of their unreliability, wearing black clothes while praying will lessen its spiritual reward. But putting on black clothes in grief for Imam Hussein (AS) is a religious rite and commendable.

Al-'Amili; al-Intisar, vol. 9, p. 247; publication, Dar al-Sirat, Beirut, Lebanon, the first edition, 1422.

Following the analysis of jurists' ideas it was finally revealed that wearing black in prayers is Makruh.

Another question which may come into the readers' minds is whether praying in black clothes for black-clad mourners during the month of Muharram or ceremonies held for the martyrdoms of the A'imma is Makruh as well.

The question has been answered by Haj Aqa Mirza Jawad Tabrizi.

سؤال: ما حكم اللباس الأسود في الصلاة أيام وفيات الأئمة عليهم السلام، هل هو مكروه ؟ جواب : إذا كان اللبس بداع إظهار الحزن وتعظيم الشعائر فليس بمكروه، والله العالم.

It is not Makruh if the motivation behind the clothing is the expression of grief.

Al-'Amili; al-Intisar, vol. 9, p. 247; publication: Dar al-Sirat, Beirut, Lebanon, the first edition, 1422.

Conclusion:

The conclusions below can be drawn from the thorough analysis of prominent figures' quotations.

1. The reasons behind the decree for the prohibition of wearing black garments in prayers is either the general consensus or the two categories of narratives or sometimes the narratives cited about the acceptability of the white color.
2. The jurists' decrees are for the act's undesirability not unlawfulness.
3. The decrees signify only the detestability of donning black while praying not in all situations as clarified by the writer of Jawar

ربما قبل باستفادة الكراهة في خصوص الصلاة منه

This decree is based on a special religious rule. It means that the first group of narratives specifically bans black clothes in prayers while the second category generally forbids the black garments in all situations. It can be concluded that wearing black clothes is specifically Makruh while praying not in other circumstances.

4. The considerable point in jurists' decrees is bad this kind the prohibition implies that wearing black while praying will only diminish its spiritual rewards. In other words, donning black while praying does not nullify the prayer. It only decreases its rewards. So, wearing garments in other colors is recommended for the state of praying.
5. There are some black clothing such as turbans and cloaks which are exceptional. Wearing them at the time of prayers is not unacceptable. By taking all above-mentioned points and decrees into consideration, no doubt should be remained about whether getting black-clad during the mourning period in the month of Moharram, especially in Ashura or in ceremonies for

other members of the Aimmah is Makruh (undesirable) or Haram (unlawful). Scholars have declared it Makruh and unfavorable only in the state of prayers. Wearing black clothes in grief in the month of Muharram is Mustahab (commendable), however.

The Third Section: The reasons for the recommendation for wearing black clothes; critique of the contradictions and analysis of exceptional cases

In this section, we are going to discuss the jurists' decrees for the desirability of wearing black for mourning purposes as well as the narratives which ban donning black.

Part one: Reasons for jurists' decrees in favor of wearing black for mourning purposes

As discussed earlier, Shia scholars have declared wearing black in mourning periods exceptional. A number of reliable narratives quoted from the Aimmah (Peace Be upon Them) can justify the exception. Here first we refer to the following narrative and then we inspect its chain of transmission.

الْحَسَنُ بْنُ ظَرِيفٍ بْنِ نَاصِحٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنِ الْخُسَيْنِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ الْخُسَيْنِ قَالَ لَمَّا قُتِلَ الْخُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ صَلَّى صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ لَيْسَ نِسَاءُ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ السَّوَادَ وَالْمُسُوحَ وَكُنَّ لَا يَشْتَكِينَ مِنْ حَرٍّ وَلَا بَرْدٍ وَكَانَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْخُسَيْنِ يَعْمَلُ لَهُنَّ الطَّعَامَ لِلْمَأْتَمِ.

Imam Sajjad's son and Imam Baqir's step-brother, Aby Hafs Omar, has said, "When Hussein Ibn Ali was martyred, the Hashemite women who donned black and rough clothes with no complaints of the freezing or hot weather. And my father, Ali Ibn al-Hussein was the one who prepared food for the mourners".

Ahmad Ibn Mohammad Ibn Khalid al-Barqi (died in 274); al-Mahasin, vol. 2, p. 420; researched by, al-Sayyid Jalal al-Din al-Husseini; publication: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiya, Tehran, the first edition, 1330 solar year.

The analysis of the narrative's chain of transmission

Al-Hassan Ibn Zarif:

Here is what Najashi has said about him,

الحسن بن ظريف بن ناصح كوفي يكنى أبا محمد ثقة.

Hassan Ibn Zarif was from Kufa. His nickname was Aba Mohammad. And he was an honest and trustable person.

Al-Najashi al-Asadi al-Kufi, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn al-Abbas (died in 450 AH), Fihrist Asma Musnafa al-Shi'a al-Mushtahir Bi Rijal al-Najashi, p. 61, No. 140, researched by al-Sayyid Mousa al-Shubeiri al-Zanjani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami, Qom, the fifth edition, 1416 AH.

Zarif Ibn Nasih:

Najashi has described him as follows,

ظريف بن ناصح أصله كوفي، نشأ ببغداد، وكان ثقة في حديثه، صدوقاً. له كتب

Zarif Ibn Nasih was born in Kufa brought up in Baghdad. He is an honest and reliable person concerning narratives. He is the writer of a number of books.

Al-Najashi al-Asadi al-Kufi, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn al-Abbas (died in 450 AH), Fihrist Asma Musnafa al-Shi'a al-Mushtahir Bi Rijal al-Najashi, p. 209, No. 553, researched by al-Sayyid Mousa al-Shubeiri al-Zanjani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami, Qom, the fifth edition, 1416 AH.

Hussein Ibn Zayd:

According to Najashi, he has been a companion to Imam Sadiq and Imam Kazim (Peace Be upon Them Two).

الحسين بن زيد بن علي بن الحسين عليهما السلام أبو عبد الله يلقب ذا الدمعة. كان أبو عبد الله عليه السلام تبناه ورباه وزوجه بنت (بنت) الأرقط، روى عن أبي عبد الله وأبي الحسن عليهما السلام.

Hussein, son of Zayd is son of Ali Ibn al-Hussein whose nickname is Abdullah and his familiar name is Thal Dam'a. Imam Sadiq (AS) had adopted and brought him up. He was married to Arqat's daughter. He used to cite narratives from Imam Sadiq (AS) and Imam Kazim (AS).

Al-Najashi al-Asadi al-Kufi, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Ahmad Ibn al-Abbas (died in 450 AH), Fihrist Asma Musnafa al-Shi'a al-Mushtahir Bi Rijal al-Najashi, p. 52, No. 115, researched by al-Sayyid Mousa al-Shubeiri al-Zanjani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami, Qom, the fifth edition, 1416 AH.

In Tanqih al-Maqal, late Mamqani has described him as the best and most reliable person.

فهو من اعلي الحسنان.

Mamqani, Abdullah, Tanqih al-Maqal Fi Ilm al-Rijal, vol. 1, p. 329, No. 9025, publication: al-Maktabat al-Murtadawiyya, Najaf Ashraf, 1350 AH.

Some Shia scholars including late Sayyid Bahr al-'Ulum believe that late Sheikh Tusi and Najashi both tried to only cite the narratives which are directly from Imams. They highlighted the narratives which were non-Shia. Therefore a narrative quoted by one of these two senior figures is considered authentic.

The following is what he has said in al-Fawaid al-Rijaliyya.

فائدة: الظاهر أن جميع من ذكر الشيخ في (الفهرست) من الشيعة الإمامية إلا من نص فيه على خلاف ذلك من الرجال: الزيدية، والقطبية، والواقفية وغيرهم، كما يدل عليه وضع هذا الكتاب، فإنه في فهرست كتب الأصحاب ومصنفاتهم، دون غيرهم من الفرق . وكذا (كتاب النجاشي). فكل من ذكر له ترجمة في الكتابين، فهو صحيح المذهب ممدوح بمدح عام يقتضيه الوضع لذكر المصنفين العلماء والاعتناء بشأنهم وشان كتبهم، وذكر الطريق إليهم، وذكر من روى عنهم ومن روى عنه .

Bahr al-'Ulum al-Tabatabai, al-Sayyid Mohammad al-Mahdi (died in 1212 AH), al-Fawaid al-Rijaliyya, vol. 4, pp. 111-116; researched by Mohammad Sadiq Bahr al-'Ulum and Hussein Bahr al-'Ulum; publication: Maktabat al-Sadiq, Tehran, 1363 solar year.

Therefore, Hassan Ibn Zayd is a reliable person.

Omar Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hassan:

According to Sheikh Tusi, the man is Imam Baqir's step-brother and his nickname is Abu Hafs Ashraf.

عمر بن علي بن الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام، أبو حفص الأشرف، أخوه عليه السلام

Al-Tusi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan (died in 460 AH), Rijal al-Tusi, p. 139, No. 1467; researched by Jawad al-Qayyumi al-Isfahani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami al-Tabi'at Li Jama'at al-Mudarrisin, Qom, the first edition, 1415 AH.

Elsewhere, Sheikh Tusi has said that he was born in Medina and he was one of the Tabi'a (the follower of companions).

عمر بن علي بن الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب عليهم السلام، مدني تابعي، روى عن أبي امامه بن سهل بن حنيف، مات وله خمس وستون سنة، وقيل: ابن سبعين سنة.

Al-Tusi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan (died in 460 AH), Rijal al-Tusi, p. 252, No. 449; researched by Jawad al-Qayyumi al-Isfahani; publication: Muassissat al-Nashr al-Islami al-Tabi'at Li Jama'at al-Mudarrisin, Qom, the first edition, 1415 AH.

Sheikh Mufid has described him as follows,

وكان عمر بن علي بن الحسين فاضلا جليلا، وولي صدقات النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وصدقات أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام وكان ورعا سخيا. وقد روى داود بن القاسم قال: حدثنا الحسين بن زيد قال: رأيت عمر بن علي بن الحسين يشرط على من ابتاع صدقات علي عليه السلام أن يثلم في الحائط كذا وكذا ثلثة، ولا يمنع من دخله يأكل منه

Omar Ibn Ali was a respectable scholar who used to take care of charity affairs at the time of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) and Amir al-Momenin (AS). He was pious and generous person. Dawud Ibn Qasim has quoted Hussein Ibn Zayd as saying, "I saw my uncle, Omar Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein who was trying to convince a group of dealers of a garden to leave a crack or a hole on the garden's wall so that people can go into the garden through the wall to have some fruit whenever they wanted.

Al-Sheikh al-Mufid, Mohammad Ibn Mohammad Ibn al-Nu'man Ibn al-Mu'allim Abi Abdullah al-'Akbari, al-Baghdadi (died in 413 AH), al-Irshad fi Ma'rifat Hujaj Allah Alaal-'Ibad, vol. 2, p. 171; researched by Muassissat Al al-Bayt Alayhum al-Salam Li Tahqiq al-Turath; publication: Dar al-Mufid Lil Taba'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Towzi', Beirut, Lebanon, the second edition, 1414 AH-1993 AD.

By the same token, there is being found no problem with the narrators. And the narrative definitely confirms the black wearing because it was impossible for individuals like Sayyid al-Shohada's (AS) sister, wife and daughters as well as Imam Ali's (AS) wife, Umm al-Banin, to carry out something which violated the Sharia law.

The second part: Critique of contradictions in narratives

It was discussed in previous sections that a number of narratives obtained from Shia sources forbid wearing black clothes. On the other hand, some narratives indicate that the Aemma themselves used to wear black clothes. In the section, the two groups of narratives along with the existing contradictions will be examined.

A. Narratives prohibiting wearing black clothes:

Late Sheikh Saduq has cited a number of narratives about the prohibition of wearing black while praying in the second volume of his book, 'Ilal al-Sharai'. The narratives have become a playing tool into the hand of those who are seeking to raise doubts about Shia rituals. Here are three narratives,

1.

أَبِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى الْعَطَّارُ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ عَنْ رَجُلٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَهُ أَصَلِّي فِي قَلَنْسُوءِ السَّوْدَاءِ قَالَ لَا تُصَلِّ فِيهَا فَإِنَّهَا لِبَاسُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ.

A man asked Hazrat Imam Sadiq (AS) if he could wear black skull cap while performing his prayer. The Imam replied, "Do not put that on because it is the clothes of the people in the Hell".

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

The narrative is a Mursal one since it contains the phrase of **عن رجل**.

2.

وَ بِهَذَا الْإِسْنَادِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَيْسَى الْبِقَطِينِيِّ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنِ جَدِّهِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ رَاشِدٍ عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عَنْ جَدِّي عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ فِيمَا عَلَّمَ أَصْحَابَهُ لَا تَلْبَسُوا السَّوَادَ فَإِنَّهُ لِبَاسٌ فِرْعَوْنَ.

Abu Basir has quoted Hazrat Imam Sadiq (AS) as stating, "my father quoted from my grandfather and he quoted from his father who had initially quoted from Amir al-Momenin (AS) as saying, 'Do not wear black clothes because it is the clothes of Pharaoh.'"

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

3.

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ الصَّغَارِيُّ عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ مَعْرُوفٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ يَزِيدِ التُّوفَلِيِّ عَنِ السَّكُونِيِّ عَنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: أَوْحَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَى نَبِيٍِّّ مِنْ أَنْبِيَائِهِ قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا تَلْبَسُوا لِبَاسَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَطْعَمُوا طَعَامَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَسْلُكُوا مَسَالِكَ أَعْدَائِي فَتَكُونُوا أَعْدَائِي كَمَا هُمْ أَعْدَائِي

Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan has quoted from Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan al-Saffar quoting from Abbas Ibn Ma'ruf, from Hussein Ibn Yazid Nufili, from Sokuni quoting from Hazrat Abi Abdallah (AS) as stating,

"God Almighty has asked one of his prophets to advise believers, 'Do not wear the clothes of my enemies, do not eat my enemies' food and do not follow the footsteps of my enemies. If you do so, you will be among my enemies.'"

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

Based on the quotation above, the narrative is absolutely reliable. But according to 'the book of Uyun, it is not authentic enough. That is why Sheikh Saduq has cited it with another chain of transmission as follows,

حدثنا تميم بن عبد الله بن تميم الغرشي عن أبيه عن أحمد بن علي الأنصاري عن عبد السلام بن صالح الهروي قال سمعت أبا الحسن علي بن موسى الرضا عليه السلام يقول أول من اتخذ له الفقاع في الإسلام بالشام يزيد بن معاوية لعنه الله و لقد حدثني أبي عن أبيه عن أبيه عن علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله لا تلبسوا لباس أعدائي ولا تطعموا طعام أعدائي ولا تسلكوا مسالك أعدائي فتكونوا أعدائي كما هم أعدائي.

Sheikh Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Reza (AS), vol. 2, p. 23; publication: Intisharat Jahan, 1378 AH.

B. Narratives proving the tradition of black wearing

A narrative has been cited in 'Ilal al-Sharai' that indicates Imam Sadiq (AS) wearing black clothes.

1.

وَبِهَذَا الْإِسْنَادِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ اللَّوْثِيِّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ عَنْ خَدِيفَةَ بْنِ مَنْصُورٍ قَالَ كُنْتُ عِنْدَ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بِالْحِيرَةِ فَأَتَاهُ رَسُولُ أَبِي الْعَبَّاسِ الْخَلِيفَةَ يَدْعُوهُ فَدَعَا بِمِمْطَرَةٍ لَهُ أَحَدٌ وَجْهَيْهِ أَسْوَدٌ وَالْآخَرُ أَبْيَضٌ فَلَبِسَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَمَا إِنِّي أَلْبَسُهُ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ مِنْ لِبَاسِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ.

Hathifat Ibn Mansur has recounted, "I was with Hazrat Abi Abdallah (AS) in Heira when an envoy from the caliph Abi al-Abbas arrived and invited the Hazrat for a meeting. The Imam chose a raincoat to wear. One side of the coat was black and the other was white. He put it on and said, "Notice that I am wearing this black garment while I know that it is the clothes of the people in the Hell."

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication, Dawari: Qom, the first edition.

However, late Koleini has presented the narrative in a different way,

2.

أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ عَنْ بَعْضِ أَصْحَابِهِ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ عَنْ خَدِيفَةَ بْنِ مَنْصُورٍ قَالَ كُنْتُ عِنْدَ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِالْحِيرَةِ فَأَتَاهُ رَسُولُ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ الْخَلِيفَةَ يَدْعُوهُ فَدَعَا بِمِمْطَرٍ أَحَدٌ وَجْهَيْهِ أَسْوَدٌ وَالْآخَرُ أَبْيَضٌ فَلَبِسَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَمَا إِنِّي أَلْبَسُهُ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لِبَاسُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ

Al-Koleini, al-Razi, Abi Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq (died in 328 AH), al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 449; publication: Islamiyya, Tehran, the second edition, 1362 solar year.

3.

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى الْعَطَّارُ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْجَعْفَرِيِّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْفَضْلِ عَنْ دَاوُدَ الرَّقِّيِّ قَالَ كَانَتْ الشَّيْعَةُ تَسْأَلُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ لُبْسِ السَّوَادِ قَالَ فَوَجَدْنَاهُ قَاعِدًا عَلَيْهِ حَبَّةٌ سَوْدَاءُ وَقَلْنَسُوهُ

سَوْدَاءٌ وَخُفَّ أَسْوَدٌ مُبْطِنٌ بِسَوَادٍ قَالَ ثُمَّ فَتَقَ نَاجِيَةً مِنْهُ وَقَالَ أَمَا إِنَّ فُطْنَهُ أَسْوَدٌ وَأَخْرَجَ مِنْهُ فُطْنَ أَسْوَدٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ بَيْضُ قَلْبِكَ وَالْبَيْسُ مَا شِئْتَ.

Mohammad Ibn al-Hassan has quoted Mohammad Ibn Yahya 'Attar, quoting from Mohammad Ibn Ahmad, quoting from Ali Ibn Ibrahim Ja'fari, quoting from Mohammad Ibn Fadl, quoting from Dawud Riqqi as saying, "A Shia asked Hazrat Abi Abdellah (AS) about wearing black clothes. It was when the Hazrat was sitting while he had a black robe on with a black skull cap on his head. He was also wearing a pair of black shoes the inner covering of which was made of black cotton." The narrator added, "The Hazrat tore off a small part of the shoe and took out a piece of black cotton saying, 'Whiten and illuminate your hearts through our Wilayat and then wear whatever you like.'"

Contradiction between the two narratives

In the first category, one narrative prohibits praying while having black skull cap on. And two others generally ban wearing black clothes, describing them as the clothes of the enemies of the AImma.

In the second category, Imam Sadiq (AS) was depicted as wearing a black raincoat before going to meet an Abbasid caliph. He was also illustrated wearing a black skull cap, a black robe and black pair of shoes.

Hence, the contradiction surfaces between the prohibition of wearing black clothes on the one hand and the Imam's action on the other. The question is how this contradiction should be dealt with?

Response to the contradiction

The first answer: Contradictory conditions not found in the narratives

The narratives prohibiting wearing black clothes are not reliable because from the viewpoint of chain of transmission, the first narrative is Mursal because of containing *عن رجل*. And the third narrative, as shown by Sheikh Saduq in 'Uyun al-Akhbar, is weak because Abdullah and his father are unknown as the reporters of the narrative. Only the second narrative does remain seemingly reliable. Therefore, the jurists have explained these prohibitive narratives as indicating that wearing black clothes is Makruh (undesirable). And its undesirability is specifically for the state of praying.

In the second category of narratives prove the black wearing of Imam Sadiq (AS), the first part of the narratives is Marfu' according to late Koleini. It has been announced reliable, however, according to Sheikh Saduq.

The conclusion is that the two categories of the narratives are not contradictory at all. That is because the matter of discussion in the first group is the undesirability of wearing black clothes in the state of praying. And in the second, Imam Sadiq (AS) was not wearing those black garments while praying. Contradiction will appear at a time when one thing contradicts another. Here the two categories of the narratives are quite separate.

The second answer: Precautionary concealment in wearing black

In the first category of the narratives, what the Aimmah (peace be upon them) intended was to forbid people from making themselves similar to God's enemies as it has been witnessed in many cases throughout the history. In one historical juncture, Pharaoh was deemed as a God foe. And the Abbassid rulers were considered so at a different time. However black clothes were chosen as their symbols. That is why the Aimmah recommend that their followers avoid looking like them. But nowadays wearing black clothes is no longer their symbols. The black color is, instead, the symbol of grief, sorrow and mourning all around the world.

And in the second category of narratives, the Imam's decision to wear black was a precautionary dissimulation. This act is considerable in Islamic jurisprudence and is approved by both Shias and Sunnis.

The following comment is what late Sheikh Saduq has made after citing the fifth narrative,

فعل ذلك كله تقية والدليل على ذلك قوله في الحديث الذي قبل هذا أما إني ألبسه و أنا أعلم أنه من لباس أهل النار و أي غرض كان له عليه السلام في أن صبغ القطن بالسواد إلا لأنه كان منتهما عند الأعداء أنه لا يرى لبس السواد فأحب أن يتقي بأجهد ما يمكنه لتزول التهمة عن قلوبهم فيأمن شرهم.

The Imam put on the black garments only to practice the precautionary concealment. What the Imam stated in the previous hadith is the reason for this claim. He is stated, "Notice that I wearing this black garment while I know that it is the clothes of the people in the Hell."

There was no intention behind the black color of the cotton inside the Imam's shoes. But it can be true if we believe that the Imam did so trying to fully practice the precautionary dissimulation because he was accused of balking at wearing black. He might have done so to free himself from the endless slanderers and allegations of his enemies.

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

Black clothes, the Abbasid symbol

The Abbasid wore black in two different stages.

1. Before coming into power:

In this stage, the Abbasid and their followers chose to wear black in order to show their objection to the crimes committed by the Umayyad and express grief for the sufferings of Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be upon Them) especially Hazrat Sayyid al-Shohada (AS). Seeking revenge for the martyrs of Ahl al-Bayt was the slogan of their uprising.

2. After coming into power:

At this stage, after gaining victory and taking their revenge on the Umayyad rulers, no reason remained for the Abbasid to go along with their black wearing except in mourning ceremonies. Not only wasn't it ended, but it took a new shape, absolutely dissimilar to the Shia traditions. Long cone black hats and front open robes printed with Quranic verses were declared compulsory uniform by the Abbasid. Their uniform was considered a sign of people's approval of the new regime.

In this regard, Siyuti has said,

وفي سنة ثلاث وخمسين أُلزم المنصور رعيته بلبس القلانس الطوال فكانوا يعلمونها بالقصب والورق ويلبسونها السواد.

It was in 53 AH when Mansur Abbasi forced his followers to wear long black hats. This color was obligatory everywhere.

Al-Siyuti, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abi Bakr (died in 911 AH), vol. 1, p. 262; researched by Mohammad Muhy al-Din 'Abd al-Hamid; publication: Matba'at al-Sa'adat, Egypt, 1371 AH, 1952 AD, the first edition.

Tabari who is a well-known Sunni historian has described the tenure of Mansur Dawaniqi as follows,

أبو الحسن الحذاء قال: أخذ أبو جعفر الناس بالسواد فكانت أراهم يصغون ثيابهم بالمداد.

علي بن الجعد قال: رأيت أهل الكوفة أيامئذ أخذوا بلبس الثياب السود حتى البقالين إن أحدهم ليصبغ الثوب بالأنفاس ثم يلبسه.

Abu al-Hassan Hatha has said, "Mansur Dawaniqi used to force people to wear black clothes. I saw crowds of people blacking their garments with black ink."

Ali Ibn Ja'd has said, "I remember the days when residents of Kufa were forced to wear black clothes. Even grocers blacked their garments with black ink before wearing them."

Al-Tabari, Abi Ja'far Mohammad Ibn Jarir (died in 310 AH), Tarikh Tabari, vol. 4, p. 466; publication: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut.

After coming into power, the Abbasid's tradition of wearing black mourning clothes in grief for Ahl al-Bayt was totally abolished. Other motivations such as a power showoff and intimidation of opponents especially the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) household replaced the former tradition.

With the consolidation of their power, the Abbasid rulers spared no efforts to imprison, murder and exile the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) offspring. They even overtook the Umayyad in their wicked intentions and motivations. Mamoun's confession in a letter to Bani Abbas is historical evidence supporting the claim.

ثم نحن وهم يد واحدة [كما زعمتم] حتى قضى الله تعالى بالأمر إلينا، فأخفناهم. وضيقتنا عليهم، وقتلناهم أكثر من قتل بني أمية إياهم . ويحكم، إن بني أمية إنما قتلوا من سل منهم سيفاً، وإنا معشر بني العباس قتلناهم جملاً، فلتسألن أعظم الهاشمية بأي ذنب قتلت، ولتسألن نفوس ألقيت في دجلة والفرات، ونفوس دفنت بغداد والكوفة أحياء.

We and Ali's family both, as you know, were united until the divine pre-ordinance handed in the power to us. Not only did we intimidate them and tighten the noose around them, but we also killed them even more than the Umayyad. Woe betide you! The Umayyad only murdered the one who drew a sword against them. But we, the Abbasid, slaughtered them in groups. Indeed, on the Day of Justice, you would be asked about the Hashemite's bones and the reason why the owners of those bones were killed. You would be asked about the people who were buried in the rivers of Dijla and Furat and about those who were buried alive in Baghdad and Kufa.

Al-'Amili, Jafar Mutida, Hayat al-Imam al-Reza (AS), p. 456; publication: Dar al-Tabligh Islami, Qom, 1398 AH.

In response to his uncle, 'Abd al-Samad Ibn Ali, who blamed him for his hasty decision to punish the opponents and ignore forgiveness, Mansur said,

إن بني مروان لم تبل رممهم، وآل أبي طالب لم تغمد سيوفهم - ونحن بين قوم رأونا بالأمس سوقة، واليوم خلفاء، فليس تتمهد هيبتنا إلا بنسيان العفو، واستعمال العقوبة.

The Bani Marwan's bones have not decayed yet and the swords of Abu Talib's family have not yet gone back into their scabbard. We are living among crowds of people who used to see us as ordinary and unknown individuals. But they are today seeing us as their caliphs. Thus, we will not be able to get access to might and power without resorting to punishment and closing our eyes to forgiveness and mercy.

Al-Thahabi, Shams al-Din Mohammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Othman (died in 748 AH), Tarikh al-Islam wa Wafiyat al-Mashahir wa al-'lam, vol. 9, p. 470; researched by Omar 'Abd al-Salam Tarmadi; publication: Dar al-Kutub al-'Arabi, Beirut, Lebanon, 1407 AH, 1987 AD, the first edition.

Al-Siyuti, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Abi Bakr (died in 911 AH), vol. 1, p. 267; researched by Mohammad Muhy al-Din 'Abd al-Hamid; publication: Matba'at al-Sa'adat, Egypt, 1371 AH, 1952 AD, the first edition.

It was Mansur who told Imam Sadiq (AS),

لأقتلنك، ولأقتلن أهلك، حتى لا أبقى على الأرض منكم قامة سوط

I will definitely kill you and your family. I will even cherish the one whose height is as long as the whip.

Ibn Shahr Ashub (died in 588 AH), Manaqib Al Abi Talib, vol. 3, p. 357; researched by Li Jannat Min Asatithat al-Najaf al-Ashraf; publication: Matba'at al-Heidariya, Najaf al-Ashraf, 1376 AH-1956 AD.

The historical accounts unveil the ill and wicked intention of the Abbasid after coming into power. They murdered the religious figures and the Holy Prophet's (Peace Be upon Him) offspring. Through these atrocities, they proved their animosity towards God because enmity with the Imams is as a matter of fact enmity with God. Therefore, the murderers of such revered individuals are God's foes indeed. That's why in a narrative attributed to the Imam Sadiq (AS) becoming similar to God's enemies in clothing, eating and lifestyle has been prohibited.

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: أَوْحَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَيَّ نَبِيٍّ مِنْ أَنْبِيَائِهِ قُلٌّ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا تَلْبَسُوا لِبَاسَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَطْعَمُوا طَعَامَ أَعْدَائِي وَلَا تَسْلُكُوا مَسَالِكَ أَعْدَائِي فَتَكُونُوا أَعْدَائِي كَمَا هُمْ أَعْدَائِي.

Al-Saduq, Abu Jafar Mohammad Ibn Ali Ibn al-Hussein (died in 381 AH), 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. 2, p. 348; publication: Dawari, Qom, the first edition.

The following is what Sheikh Saduq has said in explanation of the narrative.

لباس الأعداء هو السواد، ومطاعم الأعداء هو النبيذ والمسكر والفقاع والطين والجري من السمك والمارماهي والزمير و الطافي وكل ما لم يكن له فلوس من السمك و لحم الضب والأرنب و الثعلب وما لم يدف من الطير وما استوى طرفاه من البيض والديبى من الجراد وهو الذي لا يستقل بالطيران و الطحال ومسالك الأعداء مواضع التهمة ومجالس شرب الخمر والمجالس التي فيها الملاهي ومجالس الذين لا يقضون بالحق والمجالس التي تعاب فيها الأئمة والمؤمنون ومجالس أهل المعاصي والظلم والفساد .

The enemies' garments are black clothes. Their food is intoxicant grapes juice, wine, soil and different kinds of fishes such as, Jari (a kind of fish similar to the metamorphosed people of former nations); conger eel; Zamir (a kind of fish with big backbone which lives in rivers); Tafi (dead fish floating on the surface of water); all kinds of fish covered with scales; the flesh of alligators, foxes and jackals. They eat the meat of some kinds of birds whose wings touch each other while flying such as vulture and hawk as well as the eggs whose two sides are equal (i.e. the top and the bottom of which are not recognizable). The newborn grasshoppers eaten before learning how to jump and spleen (black flat body) are both among what God's enemies eat as their food. What is meant by the enemies' habits and lifestyles is to attend special meetings in which Haram (unlawful) drinks like wine are served or participants insult the Aimma (Peace Be Upon Him) and believers.

Sheikh Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Reza (AS), vol. 2, p. 24; publication: Intisharat Jahan, 1378 AH.

In the second part of the narratives, Imam Sadegh (AS) put on black clothes because of Taqiyah (not to tell the truth or doing right because of a special reason) and the fear of killing him by these Allah's enemies and one of the application of Taqiyah is the Taqiyah against the violent and tyrant king and there are not any differences whether this king is an Islamic or unbeliever king.

According to this issue, Imam Sadegh (AS) was living with Abbasid Khalifehs (religious king) simultaneously. They agreed and liked Islam and Muslims apparently, but they behaved so badly towards Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) children and family who were propagator of Islam among all people that we shame to retell it. And they reached the point where Imams could not come out of their house and have a relationship with their friends and followers and act according to their believes freely. Therefore, they were forced for Taqiyah to save their own lives and their shias'.

In this situation, we can see that all Imams and mainly Imam Sadegh (AS) use this secondary decree. Hence, according to Islam, Taqiyah, in the case of fear for oneself and the others' is necessary and obligatory.

An important issue in Taqiyah and generally in those juristic decrees which are entitled as a secondary decree is that if an issue gets a secondary decree, the primary decree will no longer be useful and the secondary decree will be applied independently.

The primary decree about our issue according to the narratives is detestability but when it comes to Taqiyah matter, the detestability decree is generally eliminated and Taqiyah with its obligatory decree will be replaced. So Imam's action was not in contradiction with narratives.

Chapter three: excepted cases in wearing black (besides mourning)

In a lot of cases, in Sunni and Shia's books, some issues are narrated that Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and Imams (AS) were wearing black turban or excepted some issues (besides mourning) in wearing black to which we are to mention:

Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) black turban

. حدثنا علي أخبرني حماد بن سلمة عن أبي الزبير عن جابر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دخل يوم الفتح مكة وعليه عمامة سوداء.

Jaber said: Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in conquering day of Mecca entered Mecca while he was wearing black turban. [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]

Imam Ali's (AS) black turban

أخبرنا الفضل بن دكين قال أخبرنا شريك عن جابر عن مولى لجعفر فقال له هرمز قال رأيت عليا عليه عمامة سوداء قد أرخاها من بين يديه.

Jaber said: Hormoz, Jafar's slave, said: I saw Imam Ali (AS) while he was wearing a black turban and put one of its ends on his shoulder.[6], [7]

According to Abu Hatam Tamimy's narration, Imam Ali's (AS) wearing black was in Basra.[8]

زيد بن عبد الله بن أبي إسحاق يروي عن أبيه عن جده قال رأيت عليا بالبصرة وعليه عمامة سوداء من خز.

Imam Hassan's black turban

This part of history was narrated by Ahmed Hanbal:

حدثنا عبد الله قال حدثني أبي نا وكيع عن شريك عن عاصم عن أبي رزين قال خطبنا الحسن بن علي بعد وفاة علي وعليه عمامة سوداء فقال لقد فارقكم رجل لم يسبقه الأولون بعلم ولا يدركه الآخرون.

Abi zarrin said: After Imam Ali's (AS) death, [Imam] Hassan (his son) preached for us while he was wearing black turban and he said: a man died among you. No one (except Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him)) was as knowledgeable as him and no one will be the same as him in the future.[9]

Nesai in his two books and Doolabi in another way narrated this story:

أخبرنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم ابن راهويه قال أخبرنا النضر بن شميل قال حدثنا يونس عن أبي إسحاق عن هبيرة بن يريم قال خرج إلينا الحسن بن علي وعليه عمامة سوداء فقال لقد كان فيكم بالأمس رجل ما سبقه الأولون ولا يدركه الآخرون وإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لأعطين الراية غدا رجل يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله فقاتل جبريل عن يمينه وميكائيل عن يساره ثم لا ترد يعني رأيته حتى يفتح الله عليه ما ترك ديناراً ولا درهما إلا سبعمائة درهم أخذها من عطائه كان أراد أن يبتاع بها خادماً لأهله.

Hobeyyeh Ibn Yarim said: Hassan Ibn Ali came toward us while he was wearing a black turban and said: yesterday there was a man among you that no one was as knowledgeable as him in the past and no one can take his position in the future.

Truly, Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) (in Kheybar war) said about him: Tomorrow I will give my flag to someone who likes Allah and His prophet, and also Allah and His prophet would like him. Then Gabriel in his right part and Michael in his left part were fighting and finally he came back as a winner. There was no money after him except seven hundred Dirhams (a unit of currency in the past) which was the rest of his wage and he wanted to hire a servant for his family with it. [10], [11], [12]

Imam Sajjad's (AS) black turban

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرِ الرَّزَّازِ عَنِ أَيُّوبَ بْنِ نُوحٍ وَأَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ عَنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْجَبَّارِ عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ حَرِيْزِ بْنِ حِمْرَةَ بْنِ حُمْرَانَ عَنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سَلِيمَانَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ كُنْتُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَدَخَلَ عَلَيَّ بَنُ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَلَمْ أَتَيْتَهُ وَعَلَيْهِ عِمَامَةٌ سَوْدَاءُ قَدْ أُرْسِلَ طَرَفَيْهَا بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْهِ...

Abdullah Ibn Soleyman narrated from his father: my father and I were in a mosque and then Imam Sajjad, Ali Ibn Al-Hussein, (AS) entered while he was wearing a black turban which its both sides were on his shoulder. I have not seen him yet.[13]

Black shoes and cloak exceptions

. وَ رُوِيَ لَا تُصَلِّ فِي تَوْبِ أَسْوَدَ قَامًا أَوْ الْخُفِّ أَوْ الْكِسَاءِ أَوْ الْعِمَامَةِ فَلَا بَأْسَ

Do not say prayer in black but there is no matter in wearing black boots, cloak, and turban.[14]

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَعْقُوبَ عَنْ عِدَّةٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ رَفَعَهُ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ يُكْرَهُ السَّوَادُ إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثَةٍ الْخُفِّ وَالْعِمَامَةِ وَالْكِسَاءِ.

Imam Sadeqh (AS) said: wearing black clothes is detestable three ones: turban, boots, and cloak.[15]

عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ بَعْضِ أَصْحَابِهِ رَفَعَهُ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ يُكْرَهُ السَّوَادَ إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثٍ الْخُفِّ وَالْعِمَامَةِ وَالْكِسَاءِ.[16]

Surely, it was said before that these narrative proving the exceptions are not documented well.

General conclusion

We can conclude these results from the mentioned three parts:

In addition to mourning, the Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) households themselves put on black clothes in the tragedies that they faced with during the history. A lot of those situations were mentioned. In some of those situations, innocent Imams did it (put on black clothes) and it is the greatest reason for legitimation and being Mustahabb of mourning and showing its aspects. Therefore, the narratives about the disapproval of wearing black are in contradiction with Imams' (AS) actions.

Consequently we can understand that:

First: wearing black in Shia's culture is following the behavior of Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) household.

Second: it is a kind of sympathy and showing love toward the Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) household specially the last Imam, Imam Mahdi (AS).

Third: wearing black while a tragedy happens or in the mourning time psychologically reduces the pains of that tragedy and relieves the anxiety.

Fourth: these narratives which are about the disapproval and injunction of wearing black do not say that black itself is detestable but its detestability is suspended. It means that if the people wear black to be the same as the tyrants of the history like pharaoh and Abbasid kings, it is prohibited and if they wear black for mourning of the tragedy of Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) household and their followers, it is Mustahabb.

Jurists according to the prohibition narratives believe that using this color is detestable in praying only and made it excepted from detestability to wear black for Imam Hussein's (AS) mourning. According to narrative which is documented well and mentioned in Mahasen Barghi, the jurists believe that it is Mustahabb to wear black for Imam Hussein's (AS) mourning. Because this narrative explains the Hashemite women's wearing black which was in the presence of Imam Sajjad (AS). He did not prohibit them from that but he also supported their action with his silence and feeding them. It is a reason that not only wearing black but also holding mourning sessions, feeding mourners, giving service to them and every action for supporting these sessions are dominating.

On the other hand, there are a lot of narratives related to the recommendation of showing mourning. One of those recommendations is wearing black in the time of mourning for Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) household.

There are two answers for the contradiction between the narratives which deny wearing black and the narratives which support wearing black (that was the Imams' (AS) actions):

First: there is no contradiction between these two groups of narratives. As one of the conditions of contradiction is that they happen in the same issue. It means that denying and supporting both happen for the same issue while in our case; narratives that deny wearing black are about saying a prayer (and jurists believe that it is detestable for saying a prayer) and narratives that support wearing black are about something except saying a prayer. And there won't be any contradictions in the absence of one condition.

Second: Imam's (AS) action was because of Taqiyah and in Islam it is necessary and obligatory for the Muslims to do Taqiyah if they feel the danger or there is a loss for themselves or the other Muslims. As Imam Sadegh (AS) was living in the Abbasid era and they did their best to annoy and harass the Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) household and family, Imam Sadegh (AS), in some cases, wore black clothes for Taqiyah and warned his followers too to do so.

An important issue about the Taqiyah is that Taqiyah removes the primary decree and therefore in this case, if wearing black is detestable; in the case of Taqiyah the primary decree (detestability) will be removed.

Those cases for wearing black turban of Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him), Imam Ali (AS), and Imam Sajjad (AS) which were mentioned in the Sunni and Shia resources are exceptions and there is no detestability about them and these cases cannot reject our answer for solving the contradiction between the narratives.

Good luck

Answering to the doubts group

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