

Khatam-e-Nabuwwat

ختم نبوت

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It's the central notion opponents of the Jama.at use to label us as Kufaar. This month, we'll explore what we actually believe, how the view of other Muslims contradicts their other tenants, and the views of some past scholars and saints.

What is Khatam-e-Nabuwwat?

Put simply, it's the concept that the Holy Prophet (saw) is the seal of the prophets. It comes from the following verse:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah has full knowledge of all things." (33:41)

Context

- The enemies of Islam began taunting the Holy Prophet (saw) because he didn't have a son.
 - Their thought was that Islam would die out after the Holy Prophet's (saw) death without his children to lead it.
- After the revelation of Surah-Kauthar, wherein Allah states that it is the enemies who will be without male children, some Muslims believed that he would have children to succeed him, but this verse puts an end to that notion.
- God states that though he will have no male children, the Holy Prophet (saw) was the Seal of the Prophets
 - Through this he is the spiritual father of all Muslims.

The Claim of Many Other Muslims

- Other Muslims today claim that this verse means that no prophet can ever come after the Holy Prophet (saw).
- The word Khatam, according to them, means a seal that completely closes something. For example, sealing a door shut, or sealing a vault. Thus, the phrase “Seal of the Prophets” means the prophet who closed the door to further prophethood.

Our View

- The word Khatam means the type of seal that is required to continue something. For example, a seal of approval. The Five Volume Commentary of the Holy Quran by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) says the following:
 - A prophet can appear as long as he is a Muslim and gains his prophethood due to obedience to the Holy Prophet (saw)
 - In other words, a prophet bearing a new law cannot appear.
 - The title of Khatam has been historically used to mean high, eminent or the best without being considered the last. For example, Hazrat Ali was given the title Khatamul Auliya, Abu Ayyub was called Khatamus Shuara, Imam Suyuti was called Khatamul Muhadatheen

خاتم النبيين (Seal of the Prophets). خاتم (Khatam) is derived from ختم. They say ختم الشيء عليه او ختم عليه i.e. he sealed, stamped, impressed or imprinted the thing or he put the seal on it. This is the primary signification of this word. Or the primary signification of ختم (khatmun) is the act of covering over the thing. It also signifies the protecting of what is in a writing by marking or stamping a piece of clay upon it, or by means of a seal of any kind. ختم الشيء also means, he reached the end of the thing. ختم القرآن means, he recited the whole of the Qur'an. This is the secondary meaning of the word. Thus خاتم (khatam) means, a signet-ring; a seal or stamp and a mark; the end or last part or portion and result or issue of a thing; the hollow of the back of the neck. The words ختم (khatmun) and خاتم (khatim and khatam) are almost synonymous and mean a signet. خاتم (khatam) also signifies, embellishment or ornament, the best and most perfect (Lane, Aqrab, Mufradāt, Fath & Zurqāni). So the expression خاتم النبيين would mean, the Seal of the Prophets; the best and most perfect of the Prophets; the embellishment and ornament

A Contradiction

- Many Muslims believe that Prophet Isa (as) will return from heaven in his physical body.
 - He will retain his prophethood from Prophet Musa (as), but will pray behind the Imam Mahdi, who will be Muslim.
- They argue that this doesn't nullify "Seal of the Prophets" because Prophet Isa (as) was a prophet before Prophet Muhammad (saw), so there's no new prophet after him.

Counterpoint

- We must look at what it means to be a prophet.
- There are essentially two categories
 - Law Bearing Prophets
 - Non-Law bearing, or Subordinate Prophets
 - These prophets are sent to reform the people of a law bearing prophet after they have gone astray.
- Prophet Isa (as) was a prophet under the law of Prophet Musa (as)
 - His prophethood was a result of obedience to Mosaic Law, and his qualities were derived from Prophet Musa (as).
- To pray behind an Imam means to accept his beliefs. If Isa (as) was to pray behind the Imam Mahdi, he would have to be Muslim. If he becomes Muslim, he no longer remains a prophet of the Mosaic dispensation, and he can't be a prophet of the Muslims because he never derived his prophetic qualities from the Holy Prophet (saw).

Support of Our View in The Holy Quran

- There are many verses in the Holy Quran that support our interpretation
- Muslims recite the Surah Fatiha close to 50 times every day. What is “the straight path”? & what is the reward of those who follow it? This is explained in Surah Al-Nisa

وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ۖ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ ۗ وَالصَّالِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ۖ

And We would surely have guided them in the right path. And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of *His* shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these. (4:69-70)

- The above verses clearly states that one of the reward for those who follow the Sirat-e-Mustqaeem by obeying Allah & the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is prophethood.
- If they say that the prophethood has stopped then we will also have to admit that there can no longer be a truthful person (صَادِق) or a martyr (شَهِيد) or even a righteous soul (صَالِح)

Support of Our View in The Traditions

- Similarly there are many traditions in the book of Ahadith that support our view
- When Prophet's (ﷺ) son Ibrahim passed away, he is reported to have said

وَلَوْ عَاشَ لَكَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا

Had he (Ibrahim) lived, he would have been a Siddiq (truthful) and a Prophet (Sunan Ibn Majah)

- The verse about Khatam al-Nabiyyin was revealed in 5th year of Hijra but this statement was made in the 9th year.
- This means that while aware of his status as Khatam al-Nabiyyin, Prophet (ﷺ) did not consider the possibility of another prophet against it
- Once Hazrat Aisha (ra) heard a man declare in the streets “لا نبي بعدى” which can be interpreted as that there is no more prophets to come. She is reported to have said

“Certainly, do say, he [the Holy Prophet] is the Seal of all Prophets, but do not say, there is no prophet after him”
(Takmila Majma-ul Bahar, p.5)

A Few Views of Other Scholars & Saints

- Our view isn't a new one, other venerable scholars and saints have also held it.
- Hazrat Mohitudeen ibn al-Arabi (rh)
 - 'From the study and contemplation of the Durood we have arrived at the definite conclusion that there shall, from among the Muslims, certainly be persons whose status, in the matter of prophethood, shall advance to the level of prophets, if Allah pleases. But they shall not be given any book of law.' (Fatuhah-e-Makiyyah: Vol 1. pg 545)
- Hazrat Imam Abdul Wahhab She'raani (rh)
 - ...prophethood has not been abolished and it is only law-bearing prophethood that is abolished. (Al Yawaaqeetu Wal Jawaahir: Vol. 3 pg. 35)
- Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah (rh)
 - 'The meaning of the Holy Prophet being the Khataman Nabiyeen is that there shall not now appear a person whom God may appoint with a new Law for mankind, that is to say, there shall be no prophet who shall come with a new Law.' (Tafheemati Ilahiyyah pg. 53)