

Meaning and references on Thaqalayn

The holy prophet has been narrated at several occasions to have repeatedly stated the importance of the two heavy (i.e. important) things (Thaqalayn) that must be followed after his death in order not to stray away from the truth. This short document provides the occasions and the sources.

Note that the narrations are 'Tawatur', meaning that they have been stated by different narrators, adding to the weight of its authenticity. Also, the chains of narrators are considered as 'Thiqah', or confirmed of their trustworthiness and reliability.

The listed sources include works of revered personalities in the Sunni school of thought.

At 'Arafat

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي حِجَّتِهِ يَوْمَ عَرَفَةَ وَهُوَ عَلَى نَاقَتِهِ الْقَصْوَاءِ يَخْطُبُ فَسَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ مَا إِنْ أَخَذْتُمْ بِهِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا: كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِترتي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي».

....Jabir ibn `Abd Allah said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah - upon whom be God's peace and benedictions - in the course of his *hajj* pilgrimage on the day of `Arafah. The Prophet (S) was seated on his camel, al-Qaswa', and was delivering a sermon. I heard him say: 'O people, I am leaving among you that which if you hold on to you shall never go astray: the Book of Allah and my kindred, my household.'" - *AlTirmidhi in his Sunan* (v, 662, no. 3786)

Other sources:

1. alHafiz Ibn Abi Shaybah, as in *Kanz al`ummal* (1st ed.), i, 48;
2. al`Uqayli in *alDu`afa' alKabir*, ii, 250;
3. alHakim alTirmidhi, *Nawadir al-usul*, 68, 50th *asl*;
4. alTabarani, *alMu`jam alkabir*, iii, 63, no. 2679;
5. alKhatib, *alMuttafiq wa almuftariq*, cf. *Kanz al`ummal*, i, 48 and *Majma' alzawa'id*, v, 195; ix, 163, x, 363, 268;
6. alBaghawi, *al-Masabih*, ii, 206;

7. Ibn al'Athir, *Jami` al'usul*, i, 277, no. 65;
8. al-Rafi`i, *alTadwin*, ii, 264 (in the biographical account of Ahmad ibn Mihran alQattan; this hadith has been deleted in the Indian print, but is present in the manuscripts of the book !);
9. alMizzi, *Tahdhib alkamal*, x, 51, and *Tuhfat al'ashraf*, ii, 278, no. 2615;
10. alQadi alBaydawi, *Tuhfat al'ashraf*;
11. alKhwarazmi, *Maqatal alHusayn (A)*, i, 144;
12. alKhatib alTabrizi, *Mishkat almasabih*, iii, 258;
13. Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir* (Bulaq edition, on the margin of *Fath albayan*), ix, 115;
14. al-Zarandi, *Nazm aldurar alsimtayn*, 232;
15. alMaqrizi, *Ma`rifat ma yajib li Al alBayt alNabawi*, 38.

At Ghadir Khumm

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ حَمَّادٍ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عُوَانَةَ ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا حَبِيبُ بْنُ أَبِي ثَابِتٍ ، عَنْ أَبِي الطَّفِيلِ ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَرْقَمَ ، قَالَ : لَمَّا رَجَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ حِجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ وَنَزَلَ غَدِيرَ خُمٍّ أَمْرِبَدَوْحَاتٍ فَقَمَمَنَ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ : كَأَنِّي دُعِيتُ فَأَجِبْتُ ، وَإِنِّي قَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ، أَحَدُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْآخِرِ : كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِترتي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي ، فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ تُخَلَّفُونِي فِيهَا ؟ فَإِنَّهَا لَنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ . ثُمَّ قَالَ : إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَايَ وَأَنَا وَلِيُّ كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ بِيَدِ عَلِيٍّ فَقَالَ : مَنْ كُنْتُ وَلِيًّا فَهَذَا وَلِيٌّ ، اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ . فَقُلْتُ لِيَزِيدَ : سَمِعْتَهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ؟! فَقَالَ : مَا كَانَ فِي الدَّوْحَاتِ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا رَأَاهُ بِعَيْنَيْهِ وَسَمِعَهُ بِأُذُنَيْهِ .

AlNasa'i narrates from Muhammad ibn alMuthanna, he from Yahya ibn Hammad, from Abu 'Uwwanah, from Sulayman, from Habib ibn Abi Thabit, from Abu alTufayl, from Zayd ibn Arqam, who said, "When the Messenger of Allah (A) returned from the last hajj and came down at Ghadir Khumm....

"Then he declared: 'I am about to answer the call (of death). Verily, I have left two precious things (*thaqalayn*) among you, one of which is greater than the other: the Book of God and my *Itrah*, my *Ahl alBayt*. So watch out how you treat them after me. For, indeed, they will never separate until they return to me by the side of the Pond.' Then he said, 'Verily, God is my master (*mawlaya*) and I am the

wali of every believer.' **Then he took `Ali's hand and declared, 'To whomever I am his *wali*, this one is also his *wali*.** My God, befriend whoever befriends him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him.'" Abu alTufayl says: "I said to Zayd, 'Did you hear it from the Prophet(S)?' He replied, 'There was no one in the caravan who did not see it with his eyes and hear it with his ears,'" - *AlNasa'i in his alSunan al-kubra*, 96, No. 79

Other Sources

1. Al-Bukhari, *alTa'rikh alkabir*, iii, 96;
2. Muslim, *Sahih*, *bab fada'il `Ali*, no. 2408;
3. Ahmad, *Musnad*, iii, 17, iv, 366;
4. `Abd ibn Humayd, *Musnad*, no. 265;
5. Ibn Sa`d, and
6. Abu Ya`la from Abu Sa`id, as mentioned in *Jam` aljawami`* and *Kanz al`ummal*;
7. Ishaq ibn Rahwayh, in his *Sahih.*, as mentioned by Ibn Hajar in *alMatalib al`aliyah*, iv, 65, no. 1873, where he states that its *isnad is sahih*, and also by al-Busayri in *Ithaf alsadah* (MS in Topcopi Library, vol. 3, F.55b) who, too, considers the *isnad* as *sahih*;
8. Ibn Khuzaymah, *Sahih*, MS in Topcopi Library, F.240;
9. alDarimi, *Sunan*, ii, 310, no. 2319;
10. Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, as mentioned in Sibt ibn alJawzi, *Tadhkirat khawass al'ummah*, 322;
11. Abu 'Uwwanah, *Musnad*, as mentioned in alShaykhani, *alSirat alsawi*;
12. alBazzaz, from Umm Hani, as mentioned in *Wasilat alma'al*;
13. Ibn Abi 'Asim, *Kitab alSunnah*, 629, no. 1551, 630, no. 1555, 629, no. 1551;
14. alYa`qubi, *Ta'rikh*, ii, 112;
15. alBaladhuri, *Ansab al'ashraf*, 110, no. 48, the biographical account of `Ali (A);
16. alHafiz alHasan ibn Sufyan alNasawi, the author of *Musnad*, from Hudhayfah ibn Usayd, as mentioned by Abu Nu`aym, *alHilyah*, i, 355,
17. alFasawi, *alMa`rifah wa alta'rikh*, i, 536;
18. Ibn Jarir alTabari, from Hudhayfah ibn Usayd, Zayd ibn Arqam (with alNasa'i's wording as well as with the wording of Muslim), Abu Sa`id alKhudri, as cited in *Jam` aljawami`*, ii, 357, 395, *Kanz al-*

ʿummal, 12911, xiii, 36441, 36340, 37620, 37621, 36341, *Jami` al-'ahadith*, vii, 14523, 15112, 15122, 15113, iv, 7773, 8072, 8073;

19. alDulabi, *alDhurriyyat altahirah*, no. 228;
20. alHafiz alTahawi, *Mushkil al 'athar*, ii, 307, iv, 368;
21. alHakim alTirmidhi, *Nawadir al-'usul*, from Hudhayfah ibn Usayd;
22. alTabarani, *alMu`jam alkabir*, iii, 2679, 2681, 2683, 3052, v, 4969, 4970, 4971, 4986, 5026, 5028;
23. alHakim, *alMustadrak `ala alSahihayn*, iii, 109, 110 where he expressly states, as mentioned above, that the tradition is *sahih* in accordance with the criteria of alBukhari and Muslim; al-Dhahabi has confirmed his judgement;
24. Abu Nu`aym, *Hilyat al'awliya'*, i, 355, ix, 64;
25. alBayhaqi, *alSunan alkuبرا*, ii, 148, vii, 30, x, 114;
26. alKhatib, *Ta'rikh Baghdad*, viii, 442;
27. Ibn alMaghazili, *Manaqib Amir alMu'minin (A)*, 23;
28. Ibn `Asakir, *Ta'rikh Dimashq*, ii, 45, no. 547, the biographical account of `Ali (A), and v, 436 of Badran's edition in the biographical account of Zayd ibn Arqam;
29. alBaghawi, *Masabih alSunnah*, ii, 205 and *Sharh alSunnah* (MS in Topcopi Library, vol. 2, F. 718), *bab Manaqib Ahl alBayt*;
30. Ibn al'Athir, *Usd alghabah*, iii, 92 in the biographical account of 'Amir ibn Layla, no. 2727;
31. Ibn Hajar, *al'Isabah* in the biographical account of 'Amir;
32. al-Mizzi, *Tuhafat al'ashraf*, iii, 203, no. 3688 from Muslim and alNasa'i;
33. alDiya' alMuqaddisi, *alMukhtarah*, as cited by alSamhudi and alSakhawi;
34. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhaj alSunnah*, iv, 85;
35. al-Dhahabi, *Talkhis alMustadrak*, iii, 109;
36. Ibn Kathir, *alBidayah wa alnihayah*, v, 209, vi, 199, from alNasa'i, where he quotes alNasa'i's statement that this narration is *sahih*;
37. alKhazin, *Tafsir* under verses 42:23 and 3:103;
38. alMulla, *Wasilat almuta`abbidin*, v, 199;
39. al-Haythami, *Majma` alzawa'id*, ix, 163 from Zayd, 164 from Hudhayfah.

In the Mosque of Madina

وَرُوِيَ عَنْهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي آخِرِ خُطْبَةٍ خَطَبَهَا وَهُوَ مَرِيضٌ : أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ، إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ، إِنَّهُ لَنْ تَعْمَى أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَنْ تَضِلَّ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَلَنْ تَزِلَّ أقدامُكُمْ وَلَنْ تَقْصُرَ أَيْدِيكُمْ : كِتَابَ اللَّهِ سَبَبَ بَيْنِكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ ، ظَرْفَهُ بِيَدِهِ وَظَرْفَهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ ، فَأَعْمَلُوا بِمُحْكَمِهِ وَآمِنُوا بِمُتَشَابِهِهِ وَأَجْلُوا حَلَالَهُ وَحَرِّمُوا حَرَامَهُ ، أَلَا وَعِترتي وَأَهْلُ بَيْتِي هُوَ الثَّقَلُ الْآخِرُ ، فَلَا تَسْبِقُوهُمْ فَتَهْلِكُوا .

...It is narrated that he (i.e. the Prophet) - upon whom be peace - said in the last sermon that he delivered during his illness: "O people, I leave behind two precious things (thaqalayn) amongst you...: the Book of God - which is a rope between Him and you, whose one end is in His hand and whose other end is in your hands so act according to its muhkamat and believe in its mutashabihat; consider as lawful that which it regards as lawful and consider as forbidden that which it regards as unlawful - and my `ltrah and my Ahl alBayt, who are the second thaql. So don't outstrip them (fa la tasbiqhum), for then you shall perish." - Ibn `Atiyah in the introduction of his tafsir, alMuharrar alwajiz, i, 34

Other Sources

1. Abu Hayyan in his tafsir, alBahr almuhit, i, 12 (with identical wording, except that in a published version of it there is fa la tasubbuhum, i.e. so don't curse them, instead of fa la tasbiqhum);
2. Ibn Hajar, alSawa`iq almuhrriqah, 75, 136;
3. Yahya ibn alHasan, Akhbar alMadinah with his isnad from Jabir, as cited in Yanabi` almasawaddah, 40.

In the Prophet's chamber before his Death

أَخْرَجَ الْحَافِظُ ابْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ فِي مَرَضِهِ قَوْلَهُ ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ، يَوْسُفُ أَنْ أَتَمَّضَ قَبْضًا سَرِيعًا فَيَنْطَلِقُ بِي ، وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ الْقَوْلَ مَعْدِرَةً إِلَيْكُمْ ، أَلَا

The Messenger of Allah (S) said during his last illness: "Soon I am going to pass away and I have extended to you my plea of excuse. Lo, verily I leave behind amongst you two precious things: the Book of Allah , the Almighty and the Glorious, and my kindred (*`Itrah*)." Then he took `Ali's hand and raised it, saying, "This `Ali is with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with `Ali. The two will not separate until they return to me by the Pond. Then I will ask the two as to how they were treated after me." - *Ibn Abi Shaybah, as cited by Al`Isami in Simt alnujum al'awali, ii, 502, no. 136*

Other Sources

1. *alBazzaz, Musnad, as mentioned in Kashf al'astar, iii, 221, no. 2612;*
2. *Muhammad ibn Ja`far alRazzaz, from Umm Salamah (where she is explicit that the Prophet [S] made this pronouncement in his chamber which was filled by the Companions), as cited in Wasilat alma'al;*
3. *Al'Azhari, Tahdhib allughah, ix, 78;*
4. *alKhatib alKhwarazmi, Maqtal alHusayn (A), i, 164, from Ibn `Abbas;*
5. *Ibn Hajar, alSawa`iq almuhriqah, 89, from Umm Salamah.*

Note: The narration of Ghadir Khumm is one of the principal reasons given by the Shia Ithna Asheri school of thought on their basis of belief in Ali Ibn Abu Talib (A.S) as the immediate successor of leadership of the Muslim Community after the death of the Holy Prophet.