

Mawla:
Vriend of leider?

Voorwoord

In de naam van Allah, de Barmhartige, de Genadevolle

It is the scorching midday heat of the Arabian desert. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is returning from his final pilgrimage—the Farewell Hajj—knowing his time on Earth is drawing to a close. But due to a divine command, the entire caravan of over a hundred thousand Muslims is ordered to a halt at a barren crossroads called Ghadir Khumm.

The Prophet instructs those who had already traveled ahead to turn back, and waits for those trailing behind to catch up.

Under the blazing sun, while the companions wait, a makeshift pulpit is built out of camel saddles.

Once everyone is gathered, the Prophet delivers what would become the longest lecture of his entire life. He speaks for hours, preparing the community for his departure. He explicitly tells the thousands present to carry his words back to their families and to pass the message down to those who weren't there. The sheer urgency, the grand scale of the gathering, and the absolute physical hardship everyone endured made one thing undeniably clear: whatever the Prophet was about to say next was of the utmost, monumental importance to the future of Islam.

Then, he raises the hand of his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, so high that the whiteness of their underarms is visible to the entire crowd.

But while the historical reality of this massive gathering is agreed upon by all, the exact meaning of that moment sparked

a conversation that continues to this day.

That is exactly why this book exists.

At the center of this huge theological debate is one Arabic word used by the Prophet during that historic speech: Mawla.

When the Prophet stood before the masses and declared, "Whomever I am his Mawla, Ali is his Mawla," what was he communicating? Was he simply using his final major public gathering to declare that Imam Ali is a beloved friend and spiritual ally to all Muslims? Or was he making a monumental, official announcement that Ali was the chosen leader and successor to the Islamic nation?

This book does a fantastic job of exploring that exact question. This isn't just an argument over vocabulary—it has massive theological weight. The way you understand Ghadir Khumm completely changes how you view the foundation of Islam after the Prophet passed away:

- Did God appoint a specific, divinely guided leader to keep the spiritual and political legacy of the religion perfectly on track?
- Or was the community meant to choose its own rulers through consultation and consensus, viewing the Prophet's words as a statement of love rather than governance?

The way you answer that question shapes the core differences between Shia and Sunni perspectives today.

Ghadir Khumm is the story of a defining moment and a single word that shaped the history of the Muslim world. Turn the page, and enjoy the journey into what it truly means.

— Sheikh Mustafa Akhound

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