

A Semantic Analysis of Hadiths from Both Sects (Shia and Sunni) Regarding the Pool of Kawthar and Its Characteristics

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Introduction

One of the important issues in examining eschatology and its dimensions is the matter of the stations of resurrection at which human beings undergo reckoning. In the hadith sources of both sects, numerous hadiths exist regarding approximately fifty stations on the Day of Resurrection, some of which are merely mentioned by name without detailed information. However, one station about which numerous hadiths describing its attributes and characteristics have been reported in detail is the station of the "Pool of Kawthar." According to these hadiths, the Noble Prophet (pbuh) will be stationed on the Day of Resurrection beside the Pool of Kawthar alongside the Quran and the Ahl al-Bayt (pbuh), and the believers and inhabitants of paradise will enter and drink from the water of this pool, which is one of the important divine blessings. Both Shia and Sunni traditions have acknowledged the Pool of Kawthar as one of the important stations of resurrection, and various materials exist in the books of both sects regarding the reality and characteristics of this pool, the examination and analysis of which is of considerable importance.

Materials and Methods

This research has employed a descriptive-analytical method with a comparative approach to examine the hadiths of both sects regarding the "Pool of Kawthar." In the first step, verses and traditions related to the "Pool of Kawthar" were collected from primary hadith sources of Shia and Sunni traditions. From Shia sources, books such as al-Kāfī by al-Kulainī, Bihār al-Anwār by al-Majlisī, al-I'tiqādāt by al-Ṣadūq, Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt by al-Ṣaffār, and Tafsīr al-Qummī were examined. From Sunni sources, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and other first-tier Sunni hadith books were studied. In these sources, hadiths related to the fundamental existence of the "Pool of Kawthar" and its characteristics were identified and extracted. Subsequently, these hadiths were examined in terms of chain authenticity based on the opinions of hadith scholars from both sects. In the

next stage, the content of the hadiths was analyzed from a semantic perspective, and their common and distinctive themes were extracted. To establish the semantic *tawātur* of the Pool of Kawthar, reference was made to the views and opinions of prominent hadith scholars and scholars from both Shia and Sunni traditions. In examining the characteristics of the Pool of Kawthar, topics such as the pool's location, its water-bearer, its expanse and dimensions, the number of cups, and the quality of its water were analyzed comparatively. Finally, the findings were explained coherently, and conclusions were drawn.

Results and Findings

The findings of this research demonstrate that the fundamental existence of the "Pool of Kawthar" possesses semantic *tawātur* in the hadith sources of both sects. In Shia sources, the *Ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn*, whose authenticity is agreed upon by Shia scholars, explicitly refers to the existence of the Pool of Kawthar. In Sunni sources as well, numerous hadiths from more than sixty companions have been narrated regarding the "Pool of Kawthar," which have been compiled in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and other first-tier hadith books. Prominent Sunni scholars such as Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, al-Nawawī, Abū al-'Abbās al-Qurṭubī, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Ibn Kathīr, and others have considered the existence of the Pool of Kawthar to be *mutawātir* and have deemed belief in it obligatory for every accountable person. Regarding the location of the Pool of Kawthar, most Sunni scholars believe that this pool is situated after the *Ṣirāṭ* and cite hadiths in which the Noble Prophet mentioned the meeting place with the companions first at the station of the *Ṣirāṭ*, then the scale, and then the pool. Furthermore, considering that the pool's source originates from the rivers of paradise and the *Ṣirāṭ* is positioned over the fire of hell, the pool must be after the *Ṣirāṭ* so that the rivers of paradise can flow into it. According to hadiths present in the sources of both sects, the water-bearer of the Pool of Kawthar is the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī (as). In Shia sources, hadiths have been narrated from Imam al-Riḍā (as) and Imam 'Alī (as) that the Noble Prophet (pbuh) requested from God that Imam 'Alī (as) quench the community from the pool. In Sunni sources as well, similar hadiths have been narrated that introduce Imam 'Alī (as) as the water-bearer of the Pool of Kawthar, and there also exist hadiths indicating that Imam 'Alī (as) drives away hypocrites and disbelievers from the pool. Regarding the expanse of the Pool of Kawthar, numerous hadiths exist in the sources of both sects that describe the pool's length and width as equivalent to the distance between various cities such as *Ṣan'ā'* and *Aylah*, Mecca and Jerusalem, *Ummān* and *Aylah*, and the like. Despite apparent differences in these hadiths, scholars of both sects believe that the purpose of mentioning these distances is to approximate the immense expanse of the Pool of Kawthar to the minds of the audience, not to determine its precise dimensions. Additionally, the hadiths state that the pool's length and width are equal to each other; that is, the pool is square in shape.

Conclusion

From the totality of the examinations conducted, it can be concluded that the Pool of Kawthar, from the perspective of both Shia and Sunni traditions, possesses semantic *tawātur* and is located after the *Ṣirāṭ* on the Day of Resurrection. Its cupbearer is

Imam 'Alī (as). This pool possesses an extremely vast expanse and countless cups numbering as many as the stars of the sky exist around it, so that the very large number of individuals who enter to drink from the pool's water may be quenched, which indicates the extremely great success of the Noble Prophet (pbuh) in guiding humanity. The findings of this research indicate that the station of the Pool of Kawthar on the Day of Resurrection is in fact the manifestation and epiphany of receiving guidance in the world, and those who have followed the path of divine guidance in the world and have followed the Prophet (pbuh), the Quran, and the Ahl al-Bayt (as) will enter the Pool of Kawthar and attain the elevated degrees of monotheism.

Keywords: Kawthar, Pool of Kawthar (Ḥawḍ al-Kawthar), Doomsday (Qiyāmah), resurrection, Sunni, Shia.