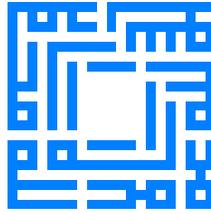




Ahadith on the Existence of Awliya



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Pertaining to the exact number of Awliya (Saints, Friends of God) the following Ahadith provide some indication to their rank and status with some numbers:

1. Imam Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani relates a Hadith in his Magnum Opus "Hilyat-ul-Awliya":

On the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be well pleased with him, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Allah Almighty has created three hundred people, whose hearts are like that of Adam, and He created forty people whose hearts are like Moses. He also created seven people whose hearts are like that of Abraham, and he created five people with a heart like that of Gabriel, and three people with a heart like that of Mika'il and only one person with a heart like that of Rafa'il (Raphael). When such a person dies, Allah Almighty will replace him with one of the three. When one of such three dies, Allah Almighty will replace him with one of the five. When one of the seven dies, Allah Almighty will replace him with one of the forty, and when one of the forty dies, He will replace him with one of the three hundred and when one of the three hundred elite dies, Allah Almighty will replace him with someone He chooses from among the pious masses. Such a person will live among the people, and through his prayers (dua), by Allah Almighty's permission, life and death, rain and prosperity will come and calamity will be averted."

2. Imam Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani relates another Hadith on similar lines in "Hilyat-ul-Awliya":

On the authority of Sayyidina Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be well pleased with him, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"Forty men from amongst my Ummah are such whose hearts are like that of Sayyidina Ibrahim's heart. By virtue of them, Allah Almighty protects His creation from calamities; it is they who are known as Abdaal." (Rest of Hadith same as above mentioned to the end).

3. Imam at-Tabaraani reports a Hadith in his "Al-Aswat" which again is on similar lines to Imam Abu Nu'aym's Hadith:

On the authority of Sayyidina Anas ibn Malik, may He be well pleased with him, the Messenger of Allah, may he be greeted with peace, said:

"The earth shall never be without forty men, whose hearts shall be upon Sayyidina Ibrahim, upon whom be peace. By virtue of them, the earth is in existence and by virtue of them (Allah Almighty) provides rain to you. From among them none dies but Allah Almighty replaces him with another."

4. Imam Abu Nu'aym al-Asbahani relates another Hadith in "Hilyat-ul-Awliya":

On the authority of Sayyidina Abdullah ibn Amr, the Messenger of Allah may he be greeted with peace, said:

"The Akhyaar amongst my Ummah in every century are five hundred, and the Abdaal are forty and their number does not increase. Neither the five hundred nor forty diminish in number. When one among the forty Abdaal dies, Allah Almighty replaces him with one of the five hundred."

This last Ahadith has been mentioned by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, may the mercy of Allah be upon him, in "Musnad-e-Ahmad" and Imam Waliddin al-Khatib at-Tabrizi in his "Mishkaat al-Masaabih" where both are major and important compilations of Hadith used by both students and Hadith Scholars of all the greatest ages till today. This hadith is the version reported by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal in "Musnad-e-Ahmad".

5. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal relates in "Musnad-e-Ahmad":

On the authority of Sayyidina Shurayh ibn Ubaid, may He be well pleased with him, that:

"When the people of Syria were mentioned in Imam Ali's presence, someone said: " O! Prince of the Believers, curse them!" Imam Ali, peace be upon him, replied: "No! I heard Allah Almighty's Messenger saying: 'Abdaal will be in Syria. They are forty men; whenever one dies Allah Almighty replaces him with another man. By virtue of them (Allah Almighty) provides rain and by virtue of them (Allah Almighty) provides help against the enemies. By virtue of them (Allah Almighty's) punishment is averted from the Syrians.'" (Musnad-e-Ahmad)

