

# THE LION OF ALLAH HAZRAT ALI-UL-MURTAZA

Written By

Syed Afsar Ali Shah

# الكتاب

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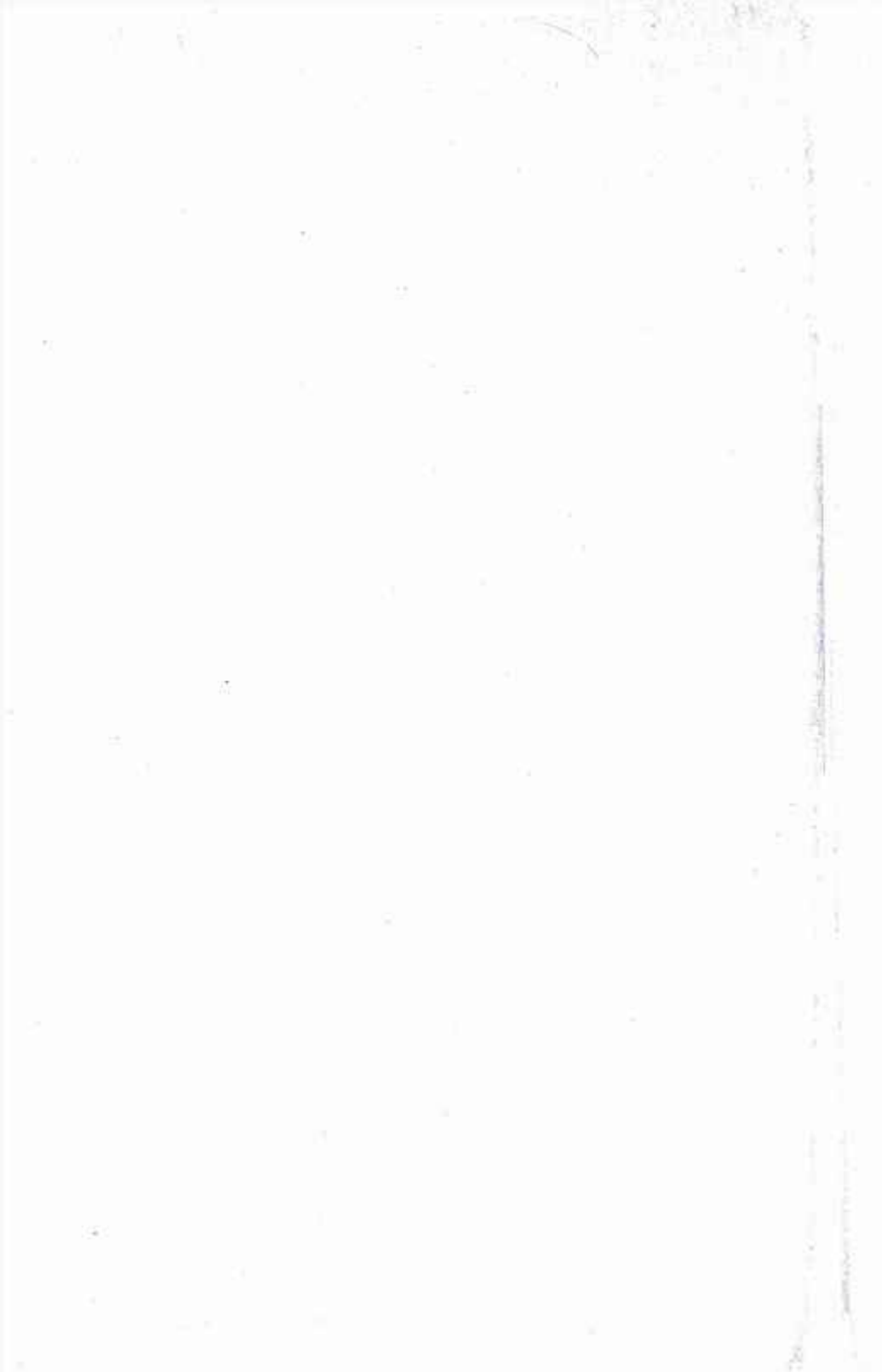
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# THE LION OF ALLAH HAZRAT ALI- UL MURTAZA

VOL. II  
(2001.A.D)

خانہ فرهنگ جمهوری اسلامی ایران - کراچی

شماره دینیوی: .....  
شماره ثبت: ۹۵۷۸۷۲۰۴۱.....  
تاریخ ثبت: ۱۳۳۷/۸/۲۵.....

By

S.AFSAR ALI SHAH

# THE LION OF ALLAH HAZRAT ALI- UL MURTAZA

## VOL II

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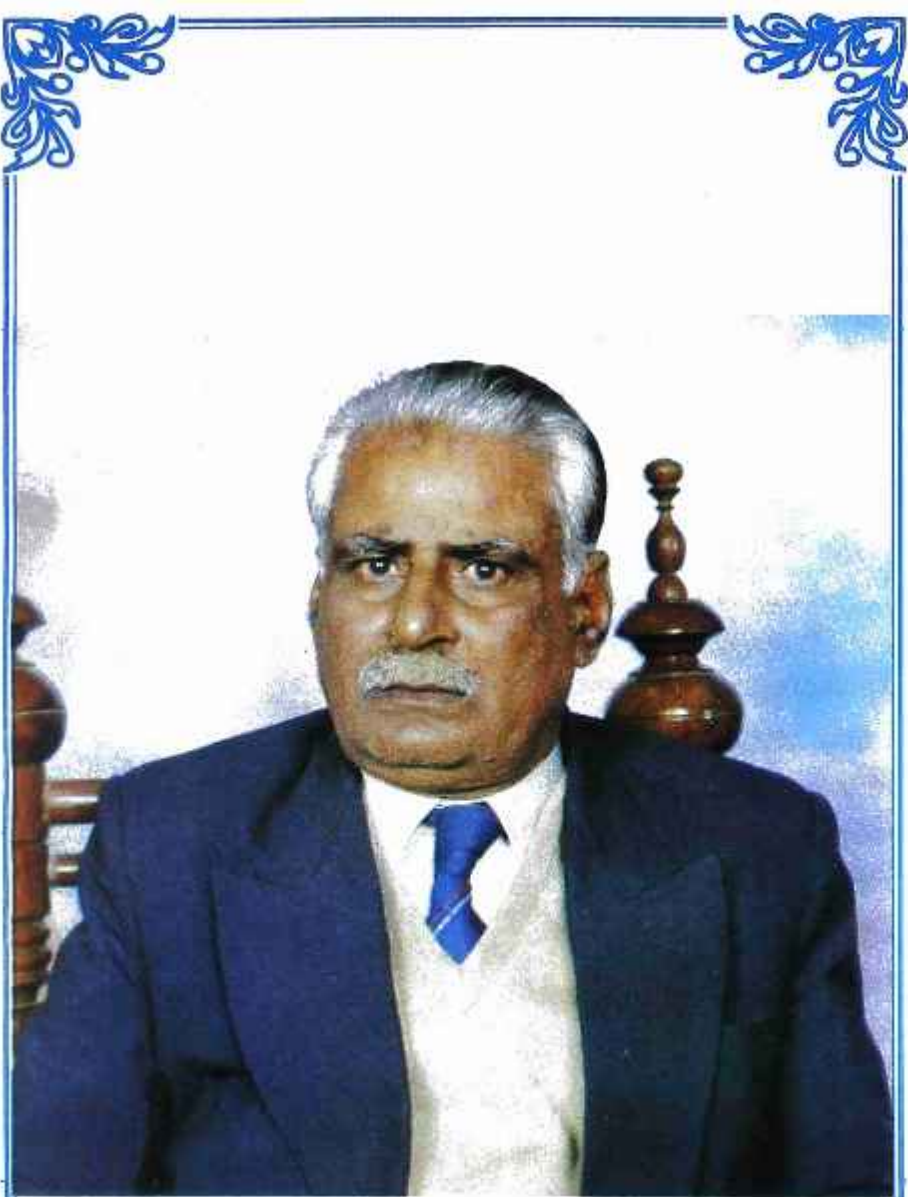
C/o Persian Research Centre,  
H, No. 3, St, 8, Kohistan Road,  
F-8/3, Islamabad

**Price**

Rs. 350/-

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Rawalpindi  
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# بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Introduction

The present volume is in continuation of the first volume of the "Lion of Allah—Hazrat Ali-ul-Mutaza. It has been delayed due to various causes, the foremost of which was my ill-health. I have been suffering from unstable Angina. During compiling second volume, I was hospitalised due to severe heart attack. But by the grace of God I survived and succeeded in compilation of this book.

The first volume was published in 1999 and this second volume, which contains the events after the war of Siffin including the Martyrdom of Hazrat Ali-ul-Murtaza, the conspiracies against his Government, his will in the name of Imam Hassan, His distinctions and qualities, "Ali and Sufism", "Ali and Shiaism" and lastly his Sayings with explanation, is being presented to the readers in this new Millennium. So it is the most valuable gift of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In this volume attempt has been made to narrate the events immediate before the Martyrdom of Amirul Momineen and thereafter, Ali is considered indeed the most interesting and the most venerable personality in the Muslim annals. He is my ideal:

هر کس به کسی نازد  
من هم به علی نازم

Though his personality has been controversial in all times, yet in this survey and research I have tried to elucidate his true place in history and it is hoped that for all the Muslims it may prove of assistance in the understanding and exposition of the various convictions of the various sects that arose at the time. Ali, the warrior, and saint of Islam, spent his entire life in fighting the battles of God, the detail of these battles has been given in the first volume but it is worth saying that inspite of his multifarious activities he lit that torch of knowledge which gave unprecedented impetus to learning – a marvel of the Middle Ages. The greatness and grandeur of his personality whether it attracts or dominates, has made him a hero of heroes.

Sectarian feelings, even recognising his great services which he rendered for the uplifting of humanity had ascribed him from sentimental reasons super natural powers which had been mis-understood and led to sectarian bigotry. Full care has been taken to confine the narrative within the scope of strict historical background and in strict chronological order. It must be borne in mind that it was, Ali who affected by the political intellectual and religious views of the period gave Islam a distinct outlook and culture.

Undoubtedly, Ali's contributions to Islam have the deepest admiration. So much so that even the sectarian minded men are realising that it is futile to enforce sectarian views into bigotry and that by tolerance and magnanimity of mind the human will turn into humane. The life of Ali stands out as a beacon, radiating its light into the darkness of this



world; A world torn asunder by strife, struggle and wars, a world in which the value of human life is regarded as next to nothing. He considered the entire humanity as one family where there should be tolerance for all, irrespective of race creed and colour and irrespective of wealth or adversity.

Nowhere was his humane attitude more apparent than when he was dispensing justice. He had the strictest ideas of duty and responsibility and even the poorest and most insignificant of suitors always found him ready to give his case a fair and prompt hearing. He was quick to forgive an offender as he was slow to resent an injury, a humane attitude which too many of his contemporaries were prone to interpret wrongly as a weakness; it was this humane attitude which above all stamped Ali as the ideal man.

In his attempts to establish God's kingdom on earth, he was constantly beset by enemies who wanted to extinguish the torch of Islam, and whose activities were the more resented as they were carried out in the name of God and religion pitched as he was against envy, hatred and malice, he never permitted himself to falter or to stray from the path of right even though this singleness of purpose was to cost him his life.

I here present the second volume of the book in English language for the English knowing readers. The purpose of writing this book in English has been mentioned in the introduction of the first volume. However, my main object in writing the book, under-reference was to collect the details of the actions and words of Amirul Momineen – Hazrat Ali-ul-Murtaza

from all possible sources and to ponder over them very carefully and then to present them in such a way that it may be possible to see a glimpse of the Imam as he was. This is what has been done in this book.

It is also my pleasant duty to acknowledge the debt of gratitude to my various friends who helped me in the publication of this work. My deepest gratitude is due to Syed Etrat Hussain Rizvi, Syed Munir Hussain Shah Bukhari, Syed Riaz Hussain Naqvi, Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi and Ehsan Kibriya & H.R. Zaidi (The Proof Reader of the book) who supported me for which I am grateful.

Lastly I must thank Qurban Ali Bangash who extended his whole hearted co-operation in composing this volume. He gave me valuable suggestions in the compilation of this work.

All these sweet and unique personalities are like the precious boon for the people of Pakistan. They assisted me in the compilation of valuable material which has shown light to many a way farer, which otherwise would have gone astray.

“This book has been dedicated to late Mr. Ghulam Ali Shabbir The Founder of Ali Trading Co. Pvt. Ltd., Sialkot, a true follower of Hazrat Ali a.s.”

**SYED AFSAR ALI SHAH**  
*Retired Principal and*  
*Visiting Prof. (Islamiyat)*  
*Arid Agricultural University*  
*Rawalpindi (Pakistan)*

**TORDHER (SWABI)**  
**Pakistan**  
**August, 2000**

## Preface

Hazrat Ali (A.S.) was illustrious personality of Islam. Besides the cousin brother and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet of Islam he was an immaculate philosopher, poet, orator, saint and warrior. Nahjul Balagha is the collection of his letters and sermons. This book portrays him as a great genius of all times. Ibn Abil al Hadid, a great scholar and outstanding historian has regarded this unparalleled work as a compendium of literary beauty and intellectual sublimate. The Holy Prophet addressed Ali, saying, "You are the great master of Religion" – once the Holy Prophet said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its door". Ali is with truth and truth is with Ali", is also the saying of Holy Prophet.

In the words of Gibbon, "The birth, the alliance, the character of Ali which exalted him above the rest of his countrymen, might justify his claim to the vacant throne of Arabia. The son of Abu Talib was in his own right, the chief of Bani Hashim and the hereditary prince or guardian of the city and temple of Mecca. Hazrat Ali has the qualification of a poet, a soldier and a saint; his wisdom still breathes in a collection of moral and religious sayings; and every antagonist, in combats of the tongue or of the sword was subdued by his eloquence and valour. From the first hour of his mission to the last rites of his funeral, the Apostle Muhammad was never forsaken by a generous friend, whom he delighted to name his brother, his vicegerent, and a faithful Aaron of a second Moses."



S. Afsar Ali Shah by writing a comprehensive book on Hazrat Ali has rendered a marvellous religious and scholarly service. He is a Sunni writer but his attachment and affection with the personality and thought of Hazrat Ali has excelled many Shia votaries. In this book he has shed light on many important aspects and dimensions of the life and deeds of Hazrat Ali.

**Syed Maqsood Jaffri**

Former Adviser to the Prime Minister of  
Azad Jammu & Kashmir



**Dr. Mohammad Hussain Tasbihi, an Iranian Scholar  
about the book "The Lion of Allah, Hazrat Ali-ul-  
Murtaza says as under:-**

**بمناسبت چاپ و نشر کتاب شیر خدا. اسد الله "The Lion of Allah" تالیف دانشمند و ادیب گرامی جناب آقائی سید افسر علیشاه ساکن تورڈھیر (صوابی) پاکستان :**

کوشش افسر علی در ترجمہ نیکو شد  
 در و راه خدا گردیده این افسر علی  
 سر به سر باغ محبت را شده باغ بهشت  
 پنج تن آل علی در کار نو آمد ز دین  
 شیر الله آمده هر دم به قلب مومنان  
 آسمان معرفت روشن شده از روی او  
 خاک پائی مصطفی ﷺ شد سر مه چشمان ما  
 آمده این Lion of Allah ما نور خدا  
 در زبان انگلسی جمله تحقیقات او  
 مهربان افسر علی شد سید نیکو خصال  
 سیرت پاک نبی ﷺ شد جلوه افکار او  
 سایه لطف خدا گسترده گشته بر سرش  
 در کتاب و دفتر و فکر و کلام افسر علی  
 یا الهی کن نصیبم در گه شاه نجف  
 گوهر فید علی آمد به دنیا این زمان  
 ای مبارک بلاتان جشن تولد بر شما  
 عمر صد ساله بگیرد از خدا فهد علی  
 سر به سر حرف زها باشد علی المرتضیٰ

گلشن عشق علی بھر او خوشبو شده  
 سوره انسان قرآن را گل شب بو شده  
 در کتاب او نگر پیوند دانشجو شده  
 روشنی بخش محبت های خلق و خو شده  
 از محمد مصطفی ﷺ بوی خوش گیسو شده  
 گنبد خضرا زبان و ورد الله هو شده  
 صبرا او ﷺ باب علوم شهر او ﷺ شده  
 کشف معجوب حقیقت را کمان آبرو شده  
 زینت قلب و دل هر مومن نیکو شده  
 معتكف در خانه اش مشغول جست و جو شده  
 شرح محراب علی را عطر رنگ و بو شده  
 آل یسین ، آل طه، بهراز یا هو شده  
 سنی و شیعه مثال نعره حق گو شده  
 یارمن افسر علی مشغول گفت و گو شده  
 خانه روشن از این فرزند شان گلرو شده  
 این پدر باشد شفیق و مظهر نیرو شده  
 خوش بود آن مادرش چون این پسر از او شده  
 کوثر و تسنیم جنت رابه دل خوشبو شده

**دکتر محمد حسین تسبیحی رہا**

السلام عليك ايها الوصي البر التقى السلام  
عليك ايها النبا العظيم السلام عليك ايها  
الصديق الرشيد السلام عليك ايها البر الزكي  
السلام عليك يا وصي رسول رب العلمين  
السلام عليك يا خيرة الله على الخلق اجمعين  
اشهد انك حبيب الله و خاصة الله و خالسته  
السلام عليك يا ولي الله و موضع سره و عيبة  
علمه و خازن وحيه بابي انت و امي يا امير  
المؤمنين بابي انت و امي يا حجة الله على الانام  
بابي انت و امي يا باب المومنين بابي انت و امي يا نور  
الله التام اشهد انك قد بلغت عن الله و عن  
رسوله صلى الله عليه و اله ما حملت و رعيت  
ماستحفظت و حفظت ما استودعت و حلت حلال  
الله و حرمت حرام الله و اتممت احكام الله و لم  
تتعد حدود الله عبدت الله مخلصاً حيي اتاك  
اليقين و صلى الله عليك و على الائمة من بعدك

## CHAPTER I

### THE KHARIJITES

The truce having been concluded on 13<sup>th</sup> Safar, 37 A.H. at Siffin, when Ali was returning home with his army, a body of 12,000 men had separated themselves from the ranks and marched at some little distance in the same direction as the main body towards Kufa. They murmured at the compromises agreed upon, and were even loud in their reproaches to one another for having abandoned the cause of the Faith to the ungodly compromise. These were the Kharijities (Kharijite means one who rebels against the established tenets of a religion, a votary or schismatic or secedes), who had refused fighting at battlefields after the trick played by the enemy, and had pressed the Caliph to accept the arbitration and the particular arbitrator. Approaching Kufa, these seceders encamped at a village named Harora in the vicinity of Kufa. Their religious notions were developed into fantastic zeal that the Believers were all of equal standard and nobody should exercise authority over another. They formulated their creed with the phrase 'La hukm illa lillah,' i.e. no judgement but Lord's alone; consequently there should be no Caliph, nor an oath of allegiance sworn to any human being.<sup>1</sup> They blamed Ali as having sinned in consenting to refer to human judgement that which belonged to God alone, and demanded of him repentance for his apostasy.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Andrew - History of Arabia. P. 307



They said that Ali ought not to have given quarter to the enemy, who could be pursued and put to the sword. Proceeding to their camp, the Caliph firmly remonstrated with them, that they had given wrong interpretation to the phrase 'La hukm illa lillah' and that in accepting the arbitration he had followed the provisions contained in the Qur'an; and that he had committed no sin to repent of. He pointed out that the sin lay at their own door, because with their persistent obstinacy they refused to continue fighting with the enemy and that with their revolting attitude they forced him to call back Malik-al-Ashtar, who was beating the enemy back to their camp and was at the point of gaining a complete victory; and that they pressed him to accept the arbitration and the particular arbitrator. He further added that he however accepted arbitrators were to be fully bound by the terms of the truce to deliver their judgement righteously in accordance with the Quran; and that if the judgement turned out to be in disregard of righteousness, he would at once reject it and would again set out against the enemy. Concluding, he said that it was wrong of them if they desired him to break the truce, which they themselves had driven him to arrange. To all this reasoning they simply answered, 'we do admit of our sin, but we have repented of our apostasy, and thou must repent of it likewise'. To this Ali replied that he being a true believer he would not belie himself by admitting his apostasy.

### **Their revolt 37 A.H.**

The Kharijites were not satisfied and they resolved on rebellion; but awaiting the issue of the

umpire's decision, they for the present postponed any overt action. Soon after the judgement of the arbitrators, they determined to raise the standard of revolt and prevailed on Abdallah b. Wahab, one of their chiefs, to accept (contrary to the principles of their creed) the command, as a temporary expedient, to meet the emergency. Fixing their headquarters at Nahrwan, a few miles from Baghdad, in the month following the arbitration, they secretly began to leave and to meet at the rendezvous, either singly or small batches for fear of raising an alarm. Some five hundred malcontents from Busra also joined the insurgents at Nahrwan.<sup>2</sup> In the meantime, Ali, having received intelligence of the deceitful arbitration at Duma, took little notice of these fanatic zealots, his thoughts being more occupied with the affairs of Moawiya and raising levies for Syria for the renewal of hostilities. Hearing about the Kharijite insurgents, Ali wrote to them that as he was preparing to march against Muawiya, it was high time for them to join his standard. To this they sent an insulting reply that they had cast him off as an ungodly heretic unless he acknowledged his apostasy and repented thereof, in which case they would see whether anything could be arranged between them.

### **The battle of Nahrwan.**

Ali had commenced his march on Syria when he received tidings that the Kharijites had attempted a raid on Madaen but were beaten back to their camp; that they were committing horrible outrages in the country all around their camp; condemning as impious

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<sup>2</sup> History of Arabia - Dr. Andrew.



all those who did not fall in with their sentiments; that they had put to death a traveller who refused to accept their creed, and ripped up his wife who was with child. The followers of the Caliph, whose families were left behind unprotected at Kufa, apprehending danger from these barbarous fanatics desired that before proceeding to Syria these outlaws should be dealt with first. The messenger was sent to make enquires but he too was put to death by them. Seeing the attitude of the insurgents, Ali thought that immediate measures to check them were necessary; he therefore changed his course eastward, crossed the Tigris and approaching Nahrwan sent a messenger to demand of them the surrender of the murderers. They replied that no particular person was responsible; and they all deserved equal merits for the blood of the apostates slain by them. Still Ali, avoiding bloodshed,<sup>3</sup> tried to win over these misguided fanatics by gentle means. He had, therefore, a standard planted outside his camp and a proclamation made that the malcontents rallying round it or those who retired to their homes would be safe. The rebels began to disperse, deserting their camp, till Abdullah b. Wahab was left with only 1800 adherents, who resolved to fight against the Caliph at any cost. Ali said that those men were the true Kharijites, who would go forth against Islam as quick as an arrow from the bow. At last, headed by their leader, Abdullah b. Wahab, they desperately rushed upon Ali's army and met their fate. All of them were slain except only nine, who escaped to serve as firebrands to rekindle the future fire. On Ali's side only seven men were killed. The zealots, who had escaped,

<sup>3</sup> Masudi (Murooj-uz-Zahal Vol. II)

promulgated their creed and cause in secret at Busra and Kufa and appeared in the following year in bands of fanatic insurgents but were easily put to flight or cut to pieces.

### **Syrian expedition frustrated**

The Kharijites having been disposed of at Nahrwan, Ali retraced his steps towards the Tigris which he recrossed with his army to march upon Syria, but the Chiefs of his followers urged him to give the army some rest preparatory to the long journey and to enable them to refit their armour for war against the well equipped enemy. Ali consented to the proposal. They marched back towards Kufa and encamped at Nokheila in the vicinity of the town. A proclamation was made that any one who had any business in the town may leave the Camp for one day returning on the next. In a short time the Camp was almost empty of its soldiers, who all went one after the other to the town. None returning the next day, Ali became impatient and at length himself entering the town harangued the people to go forth with him to the Syrian expedition, but no response was forthcoming and nobody came forward. The Caliph was disappointed and at last the project from the expedition had to be abandoned, never to be resumed.

<sup>4</sup>The period of Ali's Caliphate was one of continued struggles. He was never left to live in peace. The revolt of Ayesha, Talha and Zubeir; the rebellion and teacherous outrages of Muawiya and Amr b. Aas;

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<sup>4</sup> The Spirit of Islam by syed Amir Ali



the rising of the Kharijies fanatics; the Luke warmness and apathy of his own people; the unfaithfulness of his cousin Abdullah b. Abbas, and last of all, the defection of his own brother Aqil affected his spirits a great deal. These troubles crowding rapidly one upon another entirely disturbed his mind.

From the day of his forced ascension to the Caliphate to the last day of his life, Hazrat Ali did not get a day's rest and peace. It is a wonder how against heavy odds he could get time to introduce reforms in the government, to lay down fundamentals of grammar for the Arabic language, to deliver sermons on theology, on rhetorics, on philosophy of religion, on wonders of creation and nature, and on duties of man to God and man, to advise people in the most persuasive manner to suppress the tendencies for innovation and schism which had crept in the minds of the Muslims, or to introduce and to bring effect principles of a benign government.

### **The death of Malik Ashtar and Mohammad Abubakr**

After dealing with the revolt of the Kharijites, Hazrat Ali had to face the problem of consolidating his control over Egypt. He had sent Qais-Ibne-Saad as Governor of Egypt but had to call him back and to send Mohammad Ibne-Abubakr in his stead. Unfortunately, Mohammad thought brave and sincere was no match for Muawiya and Omar-Ibne-Aas. He was forced by Muawiya into battle. He wrote to Hazrat Ali who sent Malik-al-Ashtar for his help. But Malik



could not reach Egypt; he was poisoned on the way by a henchman of Muawiya and he died. (Tabari, Vol IV, page 521), Mohammad was informed of his death. That young man faced Omar Ibne-Aas alone, was defeated in the encounter, and killed, and by the orders of Muawiya his dead body was burnt and his ashes were strewn (Tabari, Vol IV, page 592), Hazrat Ali's words at the news of death of Mohammad showed how he loved the young man and how the youth loved him. After him Hazrat Ali had to send some experienced officer to Egypt. He was busy with that problem when Muawiya organised bands of guerrillas with orders for loot, murder, arson and rape. These bands were to attack, like surging waves, the provinces of Hijaz, Busra, Raay, Mosul and Heart. Hazrat Ali organised defences of these provinces, defeated these bands and freed the country from their harassment.<sup>5</sup>

It was very easy for Hazrat Ali to channelize the minds of the masses towards foreign invasion. It had always been done by rulers and is even today considered the best form of diverting the energies of a rising nation, as well as the easiest way to extend one's territory and to propagate religion. But Hazrat Ali hated bloodshed, did not believe in imperialism, and had no faith in propagation of religion with the sword in one hand and the Quran in the other. **He believed Islam to be a message of Peace and Love and wanted mankind to be ruled on the basis of equity and justice.** Therefore, after strengthening one province after another and fortifying their defences, he got busy in introducing reforms to create a benign

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<sup>5</sup> Tabari, Vol. IV. P. 592.

temporal state and never seriously thought of expanding his domain. Syed Hussain Muhammad Jafri regarding the opponents of Hazrat Ali in chapter "Kufa stage of Shi activities" in his book "The Origins and Early Development of shia Islam illustrates that; "Leaders such as Al-Ashtar, Hujr and Adi, together with their followers, especially from the newcomers of their tribes, formed the back bone of Ali's supporters and were the nucleus of the Shias of Kufa. On the other hand, the strongest clan leaders, who had built themselves upon the strength of their tribes, did not show much interest in Ali. The sharp contrast between these two groups is clearly illustrated by the fact that since Ali's arrival in Kufa, Al-Ashtar, Hujr, Adi and other Shian-i-Ali consistently urged Ali to attack Muawiya without delay and without entering into correspondence with him, while most of the strong tribal leaders advised him not to take any early action. (Tabari, Vol I page 3256) When however, the armies of Ali and Muawiya came to meet at Siffin, these tribal leaders of Kufa saw their position as precarious. They could not remain completely aloof from Ali and had to appear with him on the battlefield; yet they remained half hearted and lukewarm. In fact, they saw their interest best served by a dead lock between Ali and Muawiya. They were in a dilemma, in that Ali's success would mean a loss of their tribal power, but on the other hand, Muawiya's victory would mean the loss of the Iraqi independence upon which their power depended. In short, "from the time of Ali's arrival in Kufa, through the time of the confrontation at Siffin and subsequent developments in Iraq, and until the time of his death the position of these to alignments



remained consistent. Ali's supporters urged Ali to fight Muawiya, they were opposed to the arbitration proposal, and they pledged themselves to Ali unconditionally. Most of the clan leaders, on the other hand, showed no inclination to fight Muawiya went to Siffin in a spirit of indifference, and accepted with alacrity the peace offered by the arbitration proposal. (Hind, op. Cit. P. 363)

It is generally suggested that the qurra forced Ali to submit to arbitration, but it seems that the tribal leaders and their followers were in fact responsible for they had nothing to gain from fighting and much to gain from a statement similarly it is also stated that it was the quarra group which compelled Ali to accept Abu Musa Ashari as his arbitrator, though Abu Musa's record indicated that he had been in favour of the Meccans and of over all domination by Quraish, and therefore, must have been the choice of the tribal leaders.

The word qurra as used in the accounts of Siffin must be approached with some caution. The early qurra of Kufa who led the revolt against Osman had as their leaders such men as Malik, Hujr and Adi and were the die-hand supporters of Ali.

Besides these original qurra of Kufa, at Siffin we meet a great number of people who are described by the sources, rather conveniently, as qurra. Some of them came from Basra, other from far-off outposts of both territories. They must have been, therefore, tribesmen who were trying to advance their claims

through Islamic priority. And these were the people who, misled by the tribal leaders, at first supported arbitration and then revolted against it. They became KHAWARIJ, and in the events that followed Siffin they further weakened Ali's position both at home and against Muawiya.

The main reasons for the resentful attitude of the "ashraf al qubail" of Kufa was perhaps Ali's egalitarian policy. In the first place, in the distribution of stipends he abolished the destination made between early and late comers to Kufa and instead made his criterion not only Islamic priority, but also adherence to Islamic values and standard. This is so very clear from the numerous addresses he delivered in this period, as preserved in the *Nahjul Balagha*. Some of them are annexed at the end of this chapter. When Ali came to Kufa, there was an other influx of new comers to the city, those who came with Ali himself and he treated them with equality irrespective of their early domicile. This was a serious threat to the tribal leaders who had been enjoying a larger share of Kufan treasury, which had already been shrinking its resources due to the lull in the conquests.

### SERMON 26

Allah sent Muhammad (S.A.) as a warner (against vice) for all the world and a trustee of His revelation, while you people of Arabia were following the worse religion and you resided among rough stones and venomous serpent. You drank dirty water and ate filthy food. You shed blood of each other and cared



not for relationship. Idols are fixed among you and sins are clinging to you.

### **Part of the same Sermon**

I liked and found that there is no supporter for me except my family, so I refrained from thrusting them unto to death. I kept my eyes closed despite motes in them. I drank despite choking of throat. I exercised patience despite trouble in breathing and despite having to take sour colocynth as food.

### **Part of the same Sermon**

He did not swear allegiance till he got him agree that he would pay him its prize. The hand of this purchaser (of allegiance) may not be successful and the contract of the seller may face disgrace. Now you should take up arms for war and arrange equipment for it. Its flame have grown high and its brightness has increased. Clothe yourself with patience for it is the best means to victory.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ameerul Momineen had delivered a sermon before sitting off for Nehrwan. These are three parts from it. In the first part he was described the condition of Arabia before Proclamation (of Prophethood); in the second he has referred to circumstances which forced him to keep quiet and in the third he has described the conversation and settlement between Muawiyah and Amr bin A'as. The position of this mutual settlement was that when Ameerul Momineen sent Jareer bin Abdullah Bajali to Muawiyah to secure his allegiance he detained Jareer under the excuse of giving a reply, and in the mean time he began exploring how far the people of Syria would support him. When he succeeded in making them his

**SERMON 36****Warning the people of Nahrwan <sup>7</sup> of their fate**

I am warning you that you will be killed on the bend of this canal and on the level ground of this low

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supporters by rousing them to avenge Osman's blood he consulted his brother At'ba bin Abi Sufian. He suggested that "if in this matter A'mr bin A'as was associated he would solve most of the difficulties through his sagacity, but he would not be easily prepared to stabilise your authority unless he got the price he desired for it. If you are ready for this he would prove the best counsellor and helper". Muawiyah liked this suggestion, sent for A'mr bin A'as and discussed with him, and eventually it was settled that he would avenge Osman's blood by holding Ameerul Momineen liable for it exchange for the governorship of Egypt, and by whatever means possible would not let Muawiyah's authority in Syria suffer. Consequently both of them fulfilled the agreement and kept their words fully.

<sup>7</sup> The cause of the battle of Nahrwan was that when after Arbitration Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) was returning to Kufa, the people who were foremost in the pleading acceptance of Arbitration began to say that appointment of any one other than Allah as arbitrator is heresy, and that, Allah forbid, by accepting the Arbitration Ameerul Momineen turned heretic. Consequently by distorting the meaning of "There is no authority save with Allah" they made simple Muslims share their views and separating from Ameerul Momineen encamped at Haroorah near Kufa. When Ameerul Momineen learned of these plotting he sent Sasaa bin Sauhan and Zaid bin Nazr Harisi in the company of Ibne Abbas towards them and afterward himself went to the place of their stay dispersed them after discussion.



area while you will have no clear excuse before Allah nor any

When these people reached Kufa they began to spread the news that Ameerul Momineen had broken the agreement of Arbitration and that he is again ready to fight against the Syrians. When Ameerul Momineen learned this he contradicted it whereupon these people stood up in rebellion and encamped twelve miles from Baghdad in the low area of canal called Nahrwan.

On the other side, after hearing the verdict of Arbitration Ameerul Momineen rose for fighting the army of Syrian and wrote to the Kharijites that the verdict passed by the two arbitrators in pursuance of their heart's wishes instead of Quran and Sunnah was not acceptable to him, that he had therefore decided to fight with them and they should support him for crushing the enemy. But Kharijites gave him this reply "When you had agreed to Arbitration in our view you had turned heretic. Now if you admit you heresy in offer repentance we will think over this matter and decide what we should do". Ameerul Momineen understood from their reply that their disobedience and mis-guidance had become very serious. To entertain any kind of hope from them now was futile. Consequently, ignoring them to encamped in valley of Nakheela with a view of marching towards Syria. When the army had been arrayed he came to know that the men desired to deal with people of Nahrwan first, and to move towards Syria afterwards. Ameerul Momineen, however, said that they should be left as they were, that they themselves should first move

towards to Syria while the people of Nahrwan could be dealt with afterwards. People said that they were prepare to obey every order of this with all their might whether he moved this way or that way. The army had not moved when news about the rebellion of Kharijites began to reach, and it was learnt that they had butchered the governor of Nahrwan namely Abdullah bin Khabab and his slave maid with the child in her womb, and have killed three women of Bani Tay and Umme Sinan Saidavia. Ameerul Momineen sent Haris bin Murrah for investigation but he too was killed by them. When their rebellion reached this stage it was necessary to deal with them. Consequently the army turned towards Nahrwan. On reaching there Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) sent them word that those who had killed Abdullah Khabab and innocent women should be handed over to him for avenging blood. Those people replied that they had killed these persons jointly and that they considered it lawful to shed the blood all the people on his side. Even at this Ameerul Momineen did not take the initiative for the battle, but sent Abu Ayyub Ansari with a message of peace. So spoke to them aloud, "Whoever comes under this banner or separates from that party and goes to Kufa or Madaen would get amnesty and he would not be questioned. As a result of this Farwa bin Naufil Ashja'i said that he did not know why they were at war with Ameerul Momineen. Saying this he separated along with five hundred men. Similarly group after group began to separate and some of them joint Ameerul Momineen. Those who remained numbered four thousand, and according to Tabari's account they numbered two thousand eight hundred. These people



were not in any way prepare to listen to the voice of truth, and were ready to kill or be killed. Ameerul Momineen had stopped his men to take this initiative but the Kharijites put arrows in their bows and broke and threw away the sheathes of their swords. Even at this juncture Ameerul Momineen warned them of the dire consequences of war. But they were so brimming with enthusiasm that they leapt on Ameerul Momineen's force all of a sudden. This onslaught was so severe that the footmen lost ground but they soon fixed themselves so firmly that the attack of arrows and spears could not dislodge them from their position and they soon so cleared away Kharijites that except for nine persons who fled away to save their lives not a single person was left alive. From Ameerul Momineen's army only eight persons fell as martyrs. The battle took place on 9<sup>th</sup> Suffar, 38 A.H.

### SERMON 40

**When Ameerul Momineen (A.H.) heard the cry of Kharijites that "Verdict is only that of Allah" he said:**

The sentence is right but what (they think) it means it wrong. It is true that verdict lies but with Allah, but these people say that (the function of) governance is only for Allah. The fact is that there no escape for men from ruler good or bad. The faithful persons perform (good) acts in his rule while the unfaithful enjoys (wordily) benefits in it. During the rule Allah would carry everything to end. Through the ruler tax is collected, enemy is fought, road ways are

protected and the right of the weak is taken from the strong till the virtuous enjoys peace and allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked.

As for good government the pious man performs good acts in it, while in a bad government the wicked person enjoys till his time is over and death overtakes him.

### SERMON 58

**Addressing the Kharijites Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) said:-**

Storm may overtake you while there may be none to prick you (for reforms). Shall I be witness to my becoming heretic after acceptance of Faith and fighting in the company of the Prophet (S.A.) In that case I shall be misguided and I shall not be on the right path. So you should return to your evil places, and get back on the traces of your heals. Certainly you will meet, after me, overwhelming disgrace and sharp sword and tradition that will be adopted by the oppressors as a norm towards you.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> History corroborates that after Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) the Kharijites had to face all sorts of ignominy and disgrace and wherever they raised their hands for creating trouble they were met with swords and spears. Thus Zaid bin Abee, Ubaidullah bin Zaid, Musa'b bin Zubair, Hajjaj bin Yousaf and Mohlib bin Abu Sufra left no stones unturned in annihilating them from the surface of the globe. Particularly Mohlib chased them for nineteen years, routed them thoroughly and rested only after completing their destruction.

**SERMON 59**

When<sup>9</sup> Ameerul Momineen showed his intention to fight the Kharijites he was told that they

<sup>9</sup> This prophecy can not be attributed to wit and far sightedness, because far sighted eyes may forecast victory or defeat and preconceive the outcome of war but to tell about the correct figures of the killed on either side is beyond their capacity. This can be done only by one who can unveil the unknown future and see the coming the scene with his eyes and who sees the sketches yet to appear on the page of the future with the help of light of knowledge possessed by him as Imam. Consequently events occurred just according to what this inheritor of Prophet's knowledge had said, and from among the Kharijites all except nine persons were killed. Two of them fled away to Amman, two Sajistan, two to Kirman and two to Jazeera while one escaped to Talle Maroon in Yemen. Of Ameerul Momineen's party only eight men fell as martyrs.

**Their names are:**

Ruba bin Wabir Bajali, Saeed bin Khalid, Sabiee, Abdullah bin Hammad, Ajani, Fayyaz bin Khallel Asdi, Kaisoom bin Salma Jehni, Abeer bin Abeer Khoolani, Jami bin Ja'tham Kindi, and Habib bin A'asim Asadi.

This prophesy of Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) also proved true word by word. Every chief of Kharijites who rose was put to sword. A few of their chiefs who were badly put to death are mentioned here.

**Nafe bin Azraq:** The largest group of the Kharijities named Azarepa is named after him. He was killed by Salma Bahelee during encounter with the army of Muslim bin Abeer.

**Najda bin A'amir:** The Najdat sect of Kharijities is named after him. Abu Fadeek Kharijee got him killed.



had crossed the bridge of Nahrwan and gone over to the other side. Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) said:-

**Abdullah bin Ibaz:** The sect Ibazia' is named after him. He was killed during encounter with Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Atija.

**Abu Baihas Haseem Bin Jabir:** The sect Baihasia is named after him. Osman bin Jabban the governor of Medina first got his hands and feet severed and then killed him.

**Urwa bin Udaiya:** Ziad killed him during the reign of Muawiyah.

**Qutri bin Faja-ah.** When he encountered the army of Abu Sufian bin Abrad in Tabristan then Soara bin Abajar Daremee killed him.

**Shoozab Khariji:** Was killed during encounter with Saced bin A'mr Harshi.

**Hoothara bin Wida Asadi:** Was killed at the hands of a man of Bani Tay.

**Mustaurid bin Urfa:** Was killed by Maqil bin Qais in the reign of Muawiyah.

**Shabeed bin Yazeed Khariji:** died by being drowned in river.

**Imran bin Harb Sarasibi:** Was killed in the battle of Doolab.

**Zahhaf bin Taace:** Was killed in encounter with Bani Tahia.

**Zubair bin Ali Salecti:** Was killed in encounter with Etab bin Warqa.

**Ali bin Basheer:** Haijjaj got him killed.

**Ubaidullah bin Hone Basheer:** Was killed in encounter with Mohlib Abu Safara.

**Abdullah bin Al-Mahuz:** Was killed in the battle of Doolab.

**Ubaidullah bin Al-Mahuz:** Was killed in encounter with Etab bin Warqa.

**Abul Waze:** A man in the graveyard of Bani Yashkar fell wall on him and killed him.

**Ubaidullah bin Yahya Kindi:** Was killed by Mohammad bin Atiya in the reign of Marwan bin Mohammad.



Their falling place is on this side of river. By Allah, not even ten of them will survive while from your side not even ten will be killed.

Syed Razi says: in this sermon "Nutfa" implies the river Euphrates, and for water this is the nicest expression even though water may be much.

When the Kharijities had been killed Ameerul Momineen was told that they had been totally killed Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) said:

No, not yet. They still exist in the lions of men and wombs of women. Whenever a chief would appear from among them he would be cut down till the last of them would turn thieves and robbers.

Ameerul Momineen also said:

Do not kill Kharijites after me, because one who seeks right but does not find it is not like one who seeks wrong and finds it (meaning Muawiyah and his men).

The reason for stopping people from killing the Kharijites was that Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) was clearly perceiving that after him authority and power would devolve on who would be ignorant of the proper occasion of Jihad, and who will make use of sword only to maintain their sway. And there were those who excelled even Kharijities in holding and calling Ameerul Momineen bad. So those who are themselves

in the wrong have no right to fight others in the wrong. Again, who are wilfully in the wrong can be allowed to fight those who are in the wrong by error. Thus, Ameerul Momineen's words make this fact clear that the misguidance of Kharijites was not wilful but under Satan's influence. They mistook wrongs right and stuck to it. On the other hand the position of misguidance of Muawiyah and his party was that they rejected right realising it as right and appropriated wrong as the code of their conduct fully knowing that it was wrong. Their audacity in the matter of religion reached the stage that it neither be regarded as a result of misunderstanding nor can it be covered under the garb of error of judgement, because they openly transgressed the limits of religion and paid no heed to the Prophet's injunction in comparison with their own view.

Thus Ibne Abil Hadeed has written that when the Prophet's companion Abu Darda saw utensils of gold and silver being used by Muawiyah he said he had heard the Prophet saying, "One who drinks in vessels of gold and silver will feel flames of the fire of Hell in his stomach" whereupon Muawiyah said, "As for me, I do not find any harm in it." Similarly, creating Zaid's blood relationship with himself by his own opinion in total disregard of the Prophet's injunction, abusing the descendants of the Prophet over the pulpit, transgressing the limits of Shariat, shedding blood of innocent persons and placing over Muslims (as so called Khalifa) a vicious individual and thus opening the way to misbelief and atheism are



events that to attribute them to any misunderstanding is like wilfully closing eyes to facts.

### SERMON 91

So now, O' people, I have put out the eye of revolt. No one except me advanced towards it when its gloom was swelling and its madness was intense. Ask me before you miss me<sup>2</sup>, because, by Allah, who has my life in His hands, if you ask me anything between now and the Day of judgement or about the group who would guide a hundred people and also misguide a hundred people I would tell you who is announcing its march, who is driving it in the front and who is driving it at the rear, the stages where its riding animals would stop for rest and the final place of stay, and who among them would begin and who would die natural death when I am dead hard circumstances and distressing events would befall you, many persons in the position of asking question would remain silent with cast down eye, while those in the position of replying would lose courage. This would be at a time when wars would descend upon you with all hardship, and days would be so hard on you that you would feel them prolonged because of hardship till Allah would give victory those remaining virtuous among you. When mischiefs come they confuse (right with wrong) and when they clear away they leave a warning. They cannot be known at the time of approach but are recognised at the time of return. They blow like the blowing of winds, striking some cities and missing others. Beware that the worst mischief for you in my view in the mischief of Bani Umayyah, because it is

blind and also creates darkness. Its sway is general but its ill effect are for particular people. He who remains clear sighted in it would be affected by distress, and he who remains blind in it would avoid the distress. By Allah, you will find Bani Umayyah after me worst people for yourselves, like the old unruly she camel who bites with its mouth, beats with its fore-legs, kicks with its hind legs and refuses to be milked. They would remain over you till they would leave among you only those who benefit them or those who do not harm them. Their calamity would continue till your seeking help from them would become like the seeking of help by the slave from his master or of the follower from the leader. Their mischief would come to you like evil eyed fear and pre-Islamic fragments, wherein there would be no minaret of guidance nor any sign (of salvation) to be seen. We Ahlul Bait (the people of Prophet's family) are free from this mischief and we are not among those who would engender it. Thereafter Allah would dispel it from you like the removal of the skin (from fresh) through him who would humble them, drag them by necks, make them drink full cups (of hardships), not extend them anything but sword and not clothe them save with fear. At that time Quraish would wish at the cost of the world and all its contents to find me even only once and just for the duration of the slaughter of a camel in order that it may accept from them (the whole of) that of which at present I am asking them only a part but they are not giving me.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ameerul Momineen delivered this sermon after the battle of Nahrwan. In it mischief imply the battles fought in Basra, Siffin and Nahrwan because their nature was different from



the battles of the Prophet (S.A.) There the opposite party were the unbelievers while here the confrontation was with those who had veils of Islam on their faces. So people were hesitant to fight against Muslims, and said why they should fight with those who recited the call to the prayers and offered the prayers. Thus Khazaima bin Salit Ansari did not take part in the Battle of Siffin till the falling of Ammar Yasir as martyr did not prove that the opposite party was rebellious. Similarly the presence of companions like Talha and Zubair who were included in the "Foretold Ten" of the side of Ummul Momineen Ayesha in Basra, and the prayer signs on foreheads of the Kharijites in Nahrwan and their prayers and worships were creating confusion in the minds. In these circumstances only those could have the courage to rise against them who were aware of the secrets of their hearts and the reality of their faith. It was the peculiar perception of Ameerul Momineen and his spiritual courage that he rose to oppose them, and testified the saying of Prophet (S.A.):

*"You will fight after me with the breakers of allegiance (people of Jamal.) oppressors (people of Syria) and deviators (the Kharijites)".*

2. After the Prophet (S.A.) no one save Ameerul Momineen (A.S.) could utter the challenge "Ask whatever you want to", Ibne Hajar has written in *Sawaq Mohriqa* that "None among the companions ever said 'ask me whatever you want to' except Ali Bin Abi Talib. However, among other than the companions a few names do appear in history who did utter such a challenge, such as Ibrahim bin Hasham, Muqatil bin Sulaiman, Qatada, Sibte Ibne Jauzi and Mohammad bin Idress Shafei etc. But every one of them had to face disgrace and was forced to take back his challenge. This challenge can be urged only by him who knows the realities of the Universe and is ever of the happenings of the future. Ameerul Momineen the opener of the door of Prophet's knowledge as he was, was the only person who was never seen being unable to answer any question on any

### SERMON 123

We did not name people the arbitrators but we named Quran the arbitrator. The Quran is a book between two flaps and it does not speak. It should therefore have necessarily have an interpreter. Men alone can be such interpreters. When these people invited us to name Quran as the arbitrator between ourselves we could not be the party turning away from the Book of Allah, since Allah has said,

*And then if ye quarrel about anything refer it to God and it to the Prophet. 4.59.*

Reference to Allah means that we decided according to Quran while reference to the Prophet (S.A.) means that we follow his Sunna. Now therefore if arbitration is truly done through Quran we would be the most rightful of all people for the Caliphate or if it is done by the Sunna we would be most preferable of them. As regard your point why I allowed a time lag between myself and them with regard to the

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occasion, so much so that even Caliph Umar had to say that "I seek Allah's protection from the difficulty for the solution of which Ali would not be available". Similarly the prophesies of Ammerul Momineen made about the future proved true word by word and served as an index to his vast knowledge, whether they be about the devastation's of Bani Umayyah, or the rising of the Kharijites, the war and destruction by the Tatars or the attacks of the English, the floods of Basra or the ruination of Kufa. In short when these events are historical there is no reason why the challenge of Ameerul Momineen should be wondered at.

Arbitration. I did so in order that the ignorant may find out (the truth) and one who already knows may hold with it firmly. Possibly Allah may, as a result of this peace, improve the condition of these people, and they should not be caught by throats and shout not, before indication of the right, fall into rebellion as before. Certainly the best man before Allah is he who loves most to act according to right, even though it causes him hardship and grief rather than according to wrong even though it gives him benefit and increase. So, where are you being misled and from where have you been brought (to this level)? Be prepared to march to the people who had deviated from the right and do not see it, have been entangled in wrong-doing and do not get corrected. They are away from the book and deviated from the (right) path. You are very bad in kindling the fire of fighting. Woe to you! I had to bear lot of worries from you. Some day, call you (to Jihad) and some day I speak to you in confidence you are neither true free men at the time of call, nor trustworthy brothers at the time of speaking in confidence.

## SERMON 125

### *About Kharijites*

If you do not stop believing that I have gone wrong and been misled, why do you consider that the common men among the follower of Prophet Mohammad (S.A.) have gone astray like me, and accuse them with my wrong, and hold them unbeliever, on account of my sin. You are holding



your swords on your shoulder and using them right and wrong. You are confusing those who have committed sins with those who have not. You know that the Prophet (S.A.) stoned the adulterer with a chaste woman, then he also said his burial prayer and allowed his successors to inherit, he amputated the thief hand shipped the adulterer with unchaste woman, but thereafter allowed their shares from the booty, and they married Muslim women. Thus the Prophet (S.A.) took them to task for their sins and also abided by Allah's commands about them, but did not disallow them their rights created by Islam, nor removed their names from its followers. Certainly you are the most evil of all persons and are those whom Satan has put on his lines and thrown out into his wayless land. With regard to me two categories of people will be ruined, namely he who loves me too much and the love takes him away from rightfulness and he who hates me too much and the hatred takes him away from rightfulness. The best man with regard to me is he who is on the middle course. So you be with him and be with the great majority because Allah's hand (of protection) is on keeping unity. You should beware of division because the isolator from the group is (a prey) for Satan just as the isolator from the flock of sheep is (a prey) for the wolf. Beware, however calls in this course kill him even though he may be under this headband of mine. Certainly the two arbitrators were appointed to revive what Quran revives and to destroy what Quran destroys. Revival means to unite on it (in a matter) and destruction means to divide on a matter. If Quran drives us to them we should follow them, and if it drives them to us they should follow up, woe to you,



I did not cause you and misfortune, nor have I deceived you in any matter, nor created any confusion. Your own group had unanimously suggested in favour of these two men and we bound them that they would not exceed the Quran but they deviated from it and abandoned the right although both of them were conversant with it. This wrong-doing was the dictate of their hearts and so they treated upon it, although we had stipulated that in arbitration with justice and sticking to rightfulness they would avoid the evil of their own views and the mischief of their own verdict (But since this has happened the award would not be acceptable to us).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE DECLINE OF ALI AND THE LOSS OF EGYPT**

#### **Ali puts a New Heart <sup>1</sup>**

Perhaps the most important result of the victory over the Kharajites was that it put new heart into Ali. The defection of the Iraqis after Siffin must have struck a grievous blow at his self-confidence, but now Nahrwan gave him new heart. He began to feel that Muawiya might still be forced into submission and resolved to push on into Syria immediately, while his troops were still elated by victory. Once again his hopes were to be betrayed.

#### **Failure of the Syrian Campaign**

Before continuing the march into Syria, Ali's troops demanded a period of rest and refreshment. To this Ali readily consented. They marched back to Kufa, pitching camp at Nakileh and here, by proclamation Ali told his soldiers they could all have one day's leave of absence so that they put their personal affairs in order. The troops began dispersing in small parties, but failed to return. With the camp almost empty, Ali was forced to return to Kufa and exhort the people from the pulpit to re-enlist. This plea fell on deaf ears for, by this time, the Kufans, who had

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Dr. Ata Mohyuddin "Ali The Super Man"

never been enthusiastic about a Syrian campaign, had become so accustomed to hearing his exhortations and reproaches that they took no notice of them. In spite of the victory at Nahrwan, Ali's personal prestige seems never to have been lower and the Kufans did not lift a finger to help him. Once again Ali was balked of victory over Muawiya when it had seemed to be certainty and the scheme for a Syrian expedition had to be abandoned.

These were days of deep distress for Ali, who felt he could no longer count on the support of any of his former adherents. Only Ashtar, in camp at Nisibis on the Mesopotamian border, remained unswervingly loyal to him.

### **Rebellion in Egypt**

Even if Ali had been able to muster enough troops for a Syrian expedition, it is doubtful that they would ever have marched to the Syrian border, for Muawiya had already planned a strong diversionary measure. News now reached Ali that Amr bin As was moving into Egypt at the head of 6,000 horse.

According to Abu Miknaf, Muawiya had already had his eyes on Egypt at the time of the Decision of the Umpires. Other sources refer to his having talked at an even date, of conquering Egypt, promising it to Amr bin As at the time when Amr had first publicly acknowledged Muawiya as Caliph; and again when the stratagem of the Quran on the lances was proposed. Now as Amr set off for Egypt Muawiya



is alleged to have said to his wily friend, "O Amr! You were the first to conquer Egypt in the reign of Umar the Great, and now you should be the first to redeem it by your second conquest.

### **The Ali's Administration of Egypt**

We have seen in last Chapter how Muawiya by his assiduous propaganda had succeeded in stirring up discord between Ali and his newly appointed governor Qais bin Sa'd in Egypt. Ali had instructed Qais to follow an aggressive policy against the Egyptian malcontents, but Qais realising how impolitic the adoption of such a course was which was sure to jeopardise the peace of the country refused to abide by the Caliph's order. This had resulted in the dismissal of Qais and when he left Egypt, it appeared that all moderation, statesmanship, and wisdom went away with him. Ali then appointed Muhammad bin Abu Bakr as the governor of Egypt. Muhammad who was the son of late Caliph Abu Bakr was a rash youngman, who implemented an aggressive policy towards the Egyptian rebels.

### **Muawiya's propaganda in Egypt**

The ground in Egypt had certainly been prepared well in advance by Muawiya's propaganda. Ever since the murder of Osman, Muawiya's agents had been unceasing in their propaganda and Ali's own governor Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, with his ill-advised policy of "Blood and Iron", had played into the hands of his enemy by alienating the sympathies of

even the most staunch supporters of the Alid cause. No sooner had Amr bin As set foot on Egyptian soil than all the malcontents gathered round him.

The head of the Osman's party at this time was Muawiya bin Hudaij as-Sakuni, with whom Muawiya of Syria had long been in secret correspondence. Amr bin As could also count on the support of Maslama bin Mukhallad with whom his master had also concluded an offensive and defensive alliance.

Realising, too late, how ill his cause had been served by Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, Ali now sent hasty orders to Ashtar,<sup>2</sup> in Mesopotamia, appointing him the new governor and urging him to move down into Egypt immediately, in the hope that he might undo the harm wrought by his hot-headed predecessor.

### **Ashtar is poisoned**

Ashtar, who had been a ring-leader of the regicides in the murder of Osman, was one of the best generals of his time who had made quite a name in Kufa and had brought Muawiya and Amr bin As to the verge of defeat at Siffin. Muawiya knew full well what Ashtar's appointment meant and was in no way

<sup>2</sup> According to Kabi, Ashtar was sent to Egypt after the fall of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr in the final battle that the later fought against the Egyptians – an account which could hardly be relied upon. With the fall of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr the fate of Egypt was sealed for Ali, and events forebode that Ali affected Ashtar's appointment to make the last bid to save the Caliphate.

anxious to meet up with him again. Muawiya consequently bribed the Chief of Qulzum in whose house Ashtar would almost certainly stay on the way to Egypt, to poison the general. So Ali lost the last and most staunch of all his supporters. Ashtar the most able of his soldiers died, not on the battlefield, but at the table of a man whose loyalty had been bought by Muawiya and who had poisoned the honey which he offered his guest.

### **The Defeat and Death of Muhammad, son of Abu Bakr**

Accounts differ in detail about Ali's conduct of the Egyptian campaign but the most widely accepted version is that Ali now had no alternative but to ask Muhammad bin Abu Bakr to continue in the office and to hang on as best he could. Some chroniclers say that Ali was able to send 2,000 crack troops, under the command of the notorious Tujibite Kinana, thought by many to have been the actual murderer of the Caliph Osman, by way of reinforcement. Other authorities maintain that once again, the Kufans would do nothing to help Ali and that, after fifty days of haranguing them from the pulpit, Ali still had managed to muster only 2,00 volunteers. These he is said to have sent to Egypt but the long delay had already proved fatal. Hardly had they left Kufa when the news came of the total defeat of Muhammad's forces and his ugly death. Having fled from the battlefield, Muhammad took shelter in some near-by ruins where he was discovered by Muawiya bin Hudajj, dragged out and slain. His corpse was wrapped in an ass's skin and burned.



The ignominious end of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr sealed the fate of Egypt for Ali. Muawiya appointed Amr bin As as his lieutenant to rule it in his name and the newly-conquered country, with its immense rich resources became incorporated in the Syrian Empire.

### **The effect of the loss of Egypt on Ali**

Far more damaging to Ali than even the loss of his Egyptian resources, was the blow which had been struck at his prestige. In one of his sermons to the Kufans he summed up the loss in these words:-

O ye people! In the hour of need you have kept aloof from me, like a restive camel when it casts its burden. Lo and behold! The son of Abu Bakr falls, and with him --- Egypt too". The harangue fell on deaf ears for Ali, who had long since lost the affection of the Kufans, could now no longer count on their loyalty. His soldiers were deserting in large numbers, while the ordinary people, who had lost relatives in Ali's wars and who had borne the brunt of the heavy casualties which his armies had suffered, were seething with bitterness and discontent. Anarchy was rife and it seemed that the slightest flare-up of fighting, in such an inflammable situation, might well provide the flame which would blow up the whole edifice of the Caliphate.

Day after day Ali ascended his pulpit and poured out quotations from the Quran and the Sunnah

in a last eloquent attempt to re-ignite the enthusiasm of the people. But the people were too overwhelmed by the calamities that beset them on all sides to pay much heed to the word of God, still less to listen to the words of the pathetic, broken-down figure whom they loved little. Ali now lost heart completely; despair overwhelmed him, crippling his energies and paralysing all initiative. He completely lost faith in human nature and withdrew to a life of retirement. He no longer had any control over the army or over the people and presented the sad spectacle of a beaten man.

### **Muawiya's Star in the Ascendant**

As Ali's star set, Muawiya began to rise in the Islamic firmament. Ali's pitiable plight after the loss of Egypt left Muawiya virtually a free hand. In the words of Wellhausen<sup>3</sup> "This left Muawiya's hand free. He at once made himself secure from the Romans by purchasing a truce from Constantine at the price of a yearly tribute. Arab traditions only mention this incidentally. We learn from Theophanes that it took place in A.M. 6150 (sel. 969-A.H. 38-39). But Muawiya did not risk an organised attack upon Ali. He contented himself with harassing him here and there....."

By the end of the year 658 A.D. and the beginning of 659, we find Muawiya well-established at

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<sup>3</sup> J. Wellhausen. *The Arab kingdom and its fall*. Translation by Miss Weir. P. 99 University of Calcutta, 1927.

Syria with a disputable but a plausible title, growing strong in the affection of his subjects, and augmenting his resource whereas Ali, whose power was waning everyday, was losing the affection of his subjects and the fidelity of his soldiers.”

### **Trouble in Busra**

Alarmed by the news of Ali's depressive state of mind, his cousin Abdullah ibn Abbas, the governor of Busra, set out for Kufa, hoping to rally Ali's spirit or at least to make sure that he did not attempt to abdicate or commit any rash act. Muawiya immediately took advantage of Ibn Abbas's absence from Busra to send an expedition of 2,000 horse, under the command of Ibn Hadrami, to take that city by surprise.<sup>4</sup> The Deputy-Governor of Busra Ziyad bin Abihi, found himself unable to oppose the invader and took to flight, seeking refuge with the neighbouring

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<sup>4</sup> Another Basarite account says that Muawiya sent his emissaries with letter to the Basarites in which he asked them to rise against Ali; Muawiya's envoys were received with open arms by the citizens of Busra and Ali's Deputy governor Ziyad ibn Abihi, finding himself in a perilous situation, fled from Busra and sought refuge with the Banu Azd. From here Ziyad solicited for help from Ali, who sent an army and Ziyad then marched against the Syrians and set fire to the castle in which they had taken refuge. Thus Muawiya's emissaries along with their 70 followers perished in the flames. Little credence can be placed on this version as it was improbable that the arrival of the Syrian emissaries could overawe Ziyad to an extent that he should take to flight. It must have been the arrival of the Syrian army that forced Ziyad to leave Busra and then seek reinforcement.



tribe of Banu Azd. From here he wrote to Ali asking for aid. Ali sent such troops as he could collect and with this reinforcement, Ziyad was able to give battle to the Syrians, near Busra, where he succeeded in routing the enemy. Hadrami was slain in the battle.

Busra was thus reclaimed for Ali, who re-appointed Ibn Abbas as governor, but Ali's hold over the city remained precarious. The populace, who had hailed Muawiya's emissaries with open arms, remained dissatisfied and seditious and Ibn Abbas was hard put to it to subdue the continued outbreaks of discontent.

The expedition to Busra was Muawiya's first attempt at invading Ali's territory and although the defeat inflicted on Syrian forces was decisive the victory for Ali was to prove only a temporary one.

### **The Rebellion of Khirrit bin Rashid 659 A.D.**

In the same year as the rebellion of the Kharajites against Ali came another rebellion, this time led by Khirrit bin Rashid, of the tribe of Banu Najiya. Though differing in dogma from the Kharajites, this rebellion was motivated by similar political aims and it was all the more bitter for Ali because its leader, Khirrit bin Rashid, was an old friend and ally of his who had fought shoulder to shoulder with him at the Battle of the Camel, had defended his cause valiantly at Siffin and had still been fighting with him as recently as Naharwan.

It was nevertheless the Decision of the Umpires which had caused Khirrit to leave Ali's side. Khirrit felt Ali ought to have bowed down to their judgement and that he should have referred the decision of the Caliphate to a Council of Elders as they had suggested. Ali attempted to appease Khirrit by inviting him to come and discuss matters with him but Khirrit and his followers left the town in disgust before the appointed hour and fled to Ahwaz.

Here Khirrit incited the Persians, the Kurds and the Christian who lived in the mountainous territory around Ahwaz, to withhold payment of taxes to Ali's government. Other disgruntled warriors soon joined him and in a short time he had raised a considerable army which invaded and occupied Fars, defeating the Alid governor who sought safety in flight.

Ali now sent his Kufite general Mu'quil bin Qais al-Tamimi against Khirrit, who was badly defeated at Ramhurmuz. Khirrit however succeeded in escaping to Bahrain, his native place, where he assiduously carried an extensive propaganda against Ali and where he continued to incite the people to withhold payment of taxes. Khirrit wanted the "Sadaqa" to be collected for the benefit of the poor of his own land instead of it being sent to the central treasury and hoarded for imperialistic purposes. Many of the people living in the area where Khirrit was so active went so far as to abandon Islam altogether in favour of Christianity.

In all, Ali was forced to send Maqil against Khirrit twice more. In the third and last encounter Khirrit and the 170 soldiers, who made up his personal force, were wiped out to a man.

Those Muslims who had supported Khirrit and had been captured in the campaign were now set at liberty on the condition that they swore allegiance to Ali. Things went less well for the Christian prisoners, who it was decided, were to be sold into captivity. The weeping and wailing of the Christian women and children as their menfolk prepared to leave them for ever, was so piteous that the hearts of the Muslim soldiers were deeply touched. One of Ali's Captains, Maskala, who was so moved by their plight that he offered himself to purchase the liberty of the Christians, promising to pay their ransom to the Caliph. The sum demanded in ransom was one thousand pieces for each captive. Quite unable to pay, the exorbitant sum Maskala was obliged to desert Ali and flee for safety to Damascus. He subsequently joined Muawiya who received him joyously.

As at Busra, the rebellion in Fars appeared to have been stamped out by the Alid soldiers, but although southern Persia had been reclaimed for the Caliph, the people still spoke of Ali disparagingly, no longer looking upon him as their leader and guide, but a mere pawn in the hands of his army.



## **Ziyad Appointed governor of Fars**

The governor who was now appointed to rule over Fars was Ziyad, the Deputy-Governor of Busra and a man who commanded great respect. His administrative ability, his tact and his diplomacy did much for the Alid cause and by cunningly setting one rebellious chief against another he managed so to weaken them all that they were glad to swear allegiance to Ali. Some of the princes Ziyad won over with promises of lucrative appointments and others he bought by granting them fiefs. In a short time he had restored peace and order in the province, making of it one of the few places in Ali's empire, at this time, where the people could go contentedly about their daily business.

Ziyad made his headquarters at Istakhar, (Persepolis) and from there the fame of his judgement spread far and wide. In the opinion of the Persian chroniclers his judicious and wise policy recalled the ancient days of an-Nausherwan, the Just, the famous ruler of the Sassanian dynasty of Persia. Certainly his presence in Fars did more for the cause of Ali than any other factor since the ill-fated Battle of Siffin, but not even Ziyad could do anything to re-establish the prestige of Ali the man.

## **Muawiya Invades Iraq 659 A.D.**

Grown fat on the spoils of Egypt, the Syrians now began to cast covetous eyes on Iraq. Muawiya accordingly deputed Nu'man bin Bashir to ravage Ayn

Tamr, Sufyan bin Auf to attack Hit and Anbar, Abdullah bin Mas'ada al-Fazari to invade Taima and Dahhak bin Qais to subdue Qutqutana. According to the chroniclers Yakubi and Waqidi, Muawiya himself came out with these troops to lead them towards Iraq, going as far as Tigris, before returning to Syria. Apparently these were plundering expeditions, their ostensible aim being to harass Ali, and to tax his energy and resources. "Their object", says Sir William Muir,<sup>5</sup> was various --- now to ravage a province or surprise a citadel now to exact the tithe from the Bedouine tribes, or secure allegiance to himself. Such inroads, though not always successful, inspired a sense of insecurity; and worse, betrayed the luke warmness of the people in the cause of Ali. These would stir neither hand nor foot to repel the Syrians invading villagers close even at their door. To show his displeasure at their listlessness and disobedience, Ali went forth himself into the field almost unattended. On this the men of Kufa, partly from shame, partly lured by promise of increased stipends, marched to the defence of their frontier. In the year 39 A.H. (659 A.D.) there were nearly a dozen inroads of this kind. Though eventually repelled, it was not always without loss of prisoners, plunder and prestige. One of Ali's commanders, with a flying column, pursued the raiders back into the heart of Syria as far as Baalbek; escaped by Ar-Rakka again into Al-Iraq. On the other hand, Muawiya to show his contempt for the power of Ali, made an incursion right across Mesopotamia, and for

<sup>5</sup> Sir William Muir. *The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall* p. 282.

some days remained encamped on the banks of Tigris. After leisurely inspecting al-Musil, which he had never seen before, he made his way back to Damascus unmolested."

### **Muawiya Sends an Expedition to the Hijaz, 660 A.D.**

In the beginning<sup>6</sup> of 660 A.D., near the time of the annual pilgrimage, Muawiya sent an expedition of 3,000 horses, under the command of Busr bin Artat, to ravage the Hijaz. The chief objective of this enterprise was to seize the important cities of Mecca and Medina and so prepare the way for penetration into the Yemen (Arabia Felix). In addition, it was hoped that the capture of Hijaz would ring the death-knell of Ali's empire. Busr proved to be a cruel tyrant and his atrocities during this campaign earned him ever-lasting notoriety.

"The conquest of the Hijaz by the Syrians" says the Abbe De Marigny,"<sup>7</sup> was so rapid, that it had rather the appearance of a journey than a military expedition.

<sup>6</sup> Waqidi places this expedition in 42 A.H. (662 A.D.) after Ali's death. Bakkai places it at the end of Ali's reign. As the entire Caliphate passed to Muawiya after the death of Ali, Waqidi's version could not be taken as true, for there was no necessity for Muawiya to conquer those parts which he had already incorporated in his empire. In all probability the expedition was led in 660 A.D.

<sup>7</sup> Abbe De Marigny--- History of the Arabian Caliphs. P. 67, Publisher T. Payne London. Ed. 1758.



The Arabians, who had had ample time to put their tents in a proper defensive position and prepare an army, had neither taken care of the one nor provided the other; so much so, that on the first approach of the Syrians the governor of the chief places abandoned their posts."

Medina at this juncture, was governed by Ali's deputy, Abu Ayub Ansari, who at the approach of the Syrian invaders, either could not or would not, offer any resistance. He is said to have been so much terrified that he fled from the capital. Busr, having thus entered the city without striking a blow, repaired to the Prophet's mosque, ascended the pulpit and calling out the names of the servants of the Caliph Osman, asked them to explain what they had done to their master. The Medinites, were quick to appreciate his true meaning and, fearing greatly for the future, began to shed tears of repentance for the past. Busr, unmoved by their lamentations continued to lash them with scorn, "To what cause", he demanded, "am I to ascribe this sorrow in the murderers of a lawful sovereign? Where has that grey bearded, aged man gone, to whom I swore allegiance at this very spot, as it were yesterday? Verily, but for my promise to Muawiya who ordered me to sheathe the sword, I would not have left one of you alive. Now clearly understand that whosoever declines to swear allegiance to Muawiya will taste the wrath of my sword."

After this the entire city swore allegiance to Muawiya. Leaving Abu Hurreriah to govern Medina, Busr now advanced on Mecca. Mecca was at this time

governed by Ali's cousin Ibn Abbas, a man it might have been thought, who could have been relied on to stand up for Ali's cause; but Ibn Abbas did precisely what the Deputy-Governor of Medina had done. He fled from the city, the inhabitants offered no resistance, Busr entered the Mosque, and the same scene, so dramatically played at Medina, was re-enacted. The Meccans like the Medinites, swore allegiance to Muawiya in a body.

It is indeed depressing to note how little the provincial governors did in the way of opposing the invader. In all probability they knew themselves to be hopelessly handicapped by the disaffection that prevailed in almost every corner of Ali's empire. Then too, there was the awe and terror in which the people held Busr. So appalling was the news of the atrocities he had inflicted that the people fled from their homes and took refuge in the desert rather than risk staying to face his reign of terror. No provincial governor could have hoped to rally an army against such overwhelming odds and for a cause as unpopular as Ali's.

### **Abu Musa Swears Allegiance to Muawiya**

Amongst those who fled from Mecca was Abu Musa, the Umpire who had been appointed to speak for Ali. Even though he had given his decision against Ali, Abu Musa was not prepared to stay and face Muawiya's general, for he had also arbitrated against Muawiya. He was captured by the Syrians while attempting to escape and when asked by Busr why he

was going to abscond he replied simply, "I fled for my life." Then said Busr, Know ye well Muawiya's orders. His instructions are not to kill the followers of the Holy Prophet but to extract homage for him from them. Abu Musa for fear of his life, then took the oath of allegiance to Muawiya and without any further molestation retired to his home.

### **The Syrians Ravage the Yemen**

From the Hijaz, Busr went on through the southern parts of the Arabian peninsula until he reached the borders of the Yemen. Another cousin of Ali, Ubaydullah ibn Abbas, attempted to defend the province on Ali's behalf, but the small, ill-equipped army which was all that he had been able to raise, was completely routed. According to Mirkhond, at the approach of Busr Ibn Abbas made a precipitate retreat, leaving the hazard of repelling the invasion to his deputy Abdullah Harithi, who fought a pitched battle with Busr. As a result of the ensuing encounter Abdullah was defeated and killed, and the subsequent atrocities of Busr on the Yemenites were more or less retaliatory. Ibn Abbas himself fled from the battlefield, escaping to Kufa, where he sought refuge with Ali.

Meanwhile back in the Yemen, Busr put both Ibn Abbas's children to the sword. That Second Nero had also butchered the children of Kothem ibn Abbas together with their Bedvi governess, who had protested against the deed.



When Ali heard of the fate of his cousin's children, his mortification was so great that he cursed him, imploring god to deprive him of reason. Busr did in fact become insane. We further read that during one of his fits of insanity, Busr called for his sword. His servants brought him one made of wood and supplied him with a skin that had been blown on which to exercise his fury. He is said to have used so much violence on it that he died of the exertion.

To oppose Busr in the Yemen Ali mustered a force of 4,000 men under the command of Jariah ibn Kedaumah and Wauhib ibn Massaoud the Thaqifite from Kufa. On the way to the Yemen the Alid Commander passed through the territory of Nejran, the inhabitants of which belonged to the Ummayyad party and supported Osman. They were ruthlessly put to the sword.

It was now the turn of Busr to flee for his life. Scarcely had the Alid army reached the borders of the Yemen when Busr made good his escape to Syria.

On the way back from the Yemen, the relieving army forced the Medinites and the Meccans -- again at the point of the sword to recant their allegiance to Muawiya. The peninsula thus suffered bitterly, both from the ravages of the Syrian troops and from the relieving army of Ali. Their distress added greatly to the burdens already overwhelming Ali.

### **Ali Negotiates for Peace**

Uptil now, Ali's forces had managed to regain all the ground that had been lost to Muawiya, but

although the extreme gravity of the situation had led the people to make some belated attempts at defending their homes, Ali knew that they were in no way with him in spirit. Dejected and broken-hearted, he decided to sue for peace. At least, he felt, he could save them from a recurrence of the atrocities which had been committed by Busr in Muawiya name.

Some<sup>8</sup> authorities maintain that it was Muawiya, not Ali, who opened negotiations for peace. According to Tabari, a truce was effected in 400 A.H. (660 A.D.) By it hostilities were to cease and the Caliphate was to be partitioned. Ali was to recognise Muawiya as the ruler of Egypt and Syria, while Muawiya was to acknowledge him as the ruler of the rest of the Islamic Commonwealth.

### **Muawiya Declares Himself Caliph at Jerusalem**

If such a truce really took place, it may well have been another ruse of Muawiya to give to Ali a false sense of security. At any rate this hollow peace did not last long. By July 660 A.D., so our chroniclers say, Muawiya was already in Jerusalem proclaiming himself Caliph of all the Islamic Empire and receiving the homage of the Syrians.

Many chroniclers assert that Ali was so staggered by Muawiya's assumption of full sovereign<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ata Mohyud-Din – Ali The Superman.

<sup>9</sup> Those historians who say that Muawiya did not assume the role of Caliph till after Ali's death cannot be relied upon,

powers that he began to make huge preparations for an attack on Syria.

### **Abdullah ibn Abbas Defaults**

At this period of Ali's life the sympathetic reader may begin to detect some stirring of the old energy that had once been characteristic, of the "Lion of god". But if some traces of returning vigour appeared at one time or another they were superficial and short-lived. One further betrayed was to cast him back again into the depths of despair and perhaps that was the last straw which broke the proverbial back of the camel.

Ali had appointed his cousins, the four sons of Al-Abbas, to the four different governorship: to one of them had been assigned the government of Yemen, another held the government of Mecca, the third ruled Medina, while Abdullah, the fourth, and eldest, held the government of Busra. Abdullah who has stood by Ali most loyally through thick and thin, is said to have misappropriated government money. When called to account by Ali he disobeyed the summons and escaped to Mecca with the State treasury. This broke Ali's heart.

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because traditions unanimously hold that Ali before his death had collected an army of 40,000 strong to lead an expedition to Syria. Ali could have collected such heavy odds only if Muawiya had assumed sovereign powers.



## CHAPTER III

### ALI'S MARTYRDOM

#### **The Disaffection of the Kharajities**

The prospect of a truce between Ali and Muawiya did not please the Kharajites. For one thing, a strong and stable government would put an end to the plundering raids on which so many of them depended for enormous wealth and booty. At the same time the fanatically pious amongst them longed fervently for the restoration of God's kingdom on earth and believed that this could never be accomplished while Ali and Muawiya remained alive. To the Kharajites, they were both ambitious tyrants who had usurped power and established ungodly kingdoms in defiance of the will of God.

#### **A Concerted Plot**

Many of the Kharajites, after the battle of Nahrawan, had gone to Mecca, to find sanctuary, in Kab'ah, the house of God. Here they had frequent religio-political meetings in the holy sanctuary, devising plans to avenge their relatives who had fallen at Nahrawan. Here, too, they planned the assassination of Ali and Muawiya, adding a third name to the list of the ungodly Amr bin As. They feared that Amr bin As, the wily Umpire, might lay claim to the Caliphate for himself in the event of the death of Muawiya.

The three boldest of these Meccan Kharajites, Abdur Rahman ibn Muljam al-Sarimi, Burk ibn Abdullah, and Amr bin Bakr volunteered to rid the world of the tyrants. Abdur Rahman agreed to kill Ali, Burk to dispatch Muawiya and Amr to murder Amr bin As now governor of Egypt. The morning of Friday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of Ramdan was fixed for the execution. The three assassins then poisoned their swords and swore to kill their enemies or perish in the holy deed. Then they separated, Abdur Rahman taking the road to Kufa, Burk that to Damascus and Amr that to Egypt.

### **Abdur Rahman's Proposal of Marriage**

Abdur Rahman arrived in Kufa and began making secret plans. Help came to him from an unexpected quarter, for he fell passionately in love with a lady who had a great hatred for Ali. This was the beautiful Qutaum, whose father and brother, according to one account and, whose uncle and husband, according to another, had been slain by Ali at the Battle of Nahrawan. Qutaum was outstandingly beautiful and was described by an Arab chronicler as possessing, "a face which would be the just reward of the Virtuous" and of "jet black tresses which fell on her cheek and resembled the ignominious record of a villain's guilt". Abdur Rahman was quite unable to resist such attractions and when he proposed a match, Qutaum declared herself willing to marry him on three conditions. He was to give her three thousand dirhems in cash, a male and a female slaves and the head of Caliph Ali. Abdur Rahman had come to Kufa with the express purpose of killing Ali and he therefore found

no difficulty in agreeing to her terms. Qutaum told him that he must attack Ali when he was least expecting it. "Should you escape alive", she continued, "you will have my hand and a happy domestic life with me; but should you perish in the assault, you will enjoy a better life in Heaven above than you would have done on earth with a poor soul like me."

In order to help her suitor, Qutaum asked a man of her tribe, Werdan, to join the conspiracy, and it was also through her persuasion that Shub'ib bin Bijrah of the tribe of Ashjah agreed to join in the plot. The three conspirators now anxiously waited for the arrival of the 17<sup>th</sup> of Ramdan – the day fixed for the ghastly murder.

### **Muawiya Escapes With a Wound**

The chosen day arrived and Burk ibn Abdullah, in Damascus, attacked Muawiya while he was conducting divine service in the Mosque, wounding him in the loins. Burk was caught red-handed and when brought before Muawiya boasted that his associate Abdur Rahman, would by that time, have killed Ali in Kufa. To this Muawiya replied, "Ali may have escaped in the same way as I." Muawiya then ordered his men to cut off the feet of his would be assassin and take out his tongue. Burk was then dragged out of his presence to be further tortured and put to a cruel and ignominious death.



Muawiya's wound did not prove fatal.<sup>1</sup> His physician gave him two alternatives, one being cauterization and the other to drink a draught which would render him impotent. Muawiya chose the second, saying, "My two sons, Abdullah and Yezid, are enough for me and I do not require more". It was characteristic that after his recovery, he took elaborate precautions for his future safety. Part of the Mosque was railed off and it was further guarded by soldiers with drawn swords, ever ready to defend him in emergency. Muawiya was far too much in love with life ever again to run the risk of losing it. How different his attitude was from that of Ali will be seen later in this chapter.

### **Amr bin As Escapes Death**

In Egypt, Amr bin Bakr went to the Mosque on the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ramdan to assassinate Amr bin As. As always luck favoured Amr bin As, who was prevented by an attack of colic from leading divine service on that fatal day. In his stead his deputy, Kharja bin Huzafa was officiating. Amr bin Bakr, who had never seen either of them before and was unaware of the change slew Kharja with one stroke of his sword. When asked later by Amr bin As what his motive for the murder had been, he replied, "O thou sinner, the stroke was not intended for any other than thyself". "But God", said the wily governor, "intended it for another". Amr bin Bakr was forthwith put to a cruel death.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ata Mohyud-Din "Ali the Superman".

### **Ali's Nightly vigils in the Mosque at Kufa**

Of the three assassins, it was Abdur Rahman who had the easiest task for Ali. He had long been accustomed to spend night after night alone in the mosque, in prayer and meditation. It was not unusual for him to kneel on his prayer mat at sunset and there pass the whole night long in prayer until the dawn of the next day. This habit of his had occasioned alarm among the few followers still sincerely devoted to him. "Is it not sheer folly," they said, "to attend the Mosque at night, un-accompanied and without escort, in the midst of so many enemies. We who are loyal to him take those precautions for his safety which he himself neglects." A small group took it in turns to guard Ali, unknown to the Caliph himself. When eventually he was apprised of the existence of this volunteer guard he said to them, "Are you here to defend me from the decrees of heaven or against the hostilities of my enemies." "Lord", they replied, "how can we defend you against the decrees of heaven. We guard you against the evil plans of your enemies and their treacherous designs. We are only here to see that no one injures or assails you." "Then" said Ali, "You must remember that the fate of even the most insignificant creature on this earth is controlled and supervised by God". With this, he dismissed the guard and forbade their nightly vigils.

Thus it was that Ali, came to be entirely alone on the fateful 17<sup>th</sup> Ramdan, waiting for the doom which he expected.

## **Ali is Forewarned of his Doom**

Shi'ite Traditions abound in confirming that the Caliph was forewarned of his doom and that he had been visited by several presages of his death. He is said to have seen the Holy Prophet in a dream and to have complained to him about the hostile conduct of his Muslim subjects, asking the Holy Prophet to invoke divine justice against the sinners. Ali is then said to have prayed to God thus, "O Lord, in view of my piety and sincere love to you, grant me the company of far superior beings than those against whom I complain, and send over these unruly subjects a far worse being than myself". Ali's prayers were soon to be granted.

Another tradition says that a short time before his assassination Ali asked his sons Hasan and Hussain what date it was and on being told the fifteenth, the Caliph said, "I will continue to be your guest for five more days". On the preceding Monday morning, when one of the female attendants of Ali was pouring water over his hands, Ali rubbed his beard, and prophesied "Alas for this silver hair which by Friday evening, will be crimsoned with my own blood."

Similarly we are told that on Friday morning, the seventeenth of Ramdan, when Ali set out for the mosque, a flock of domestic birds, started at his appearance, raised a loud outcry as he passed through the yard. One of the attendants threw a stick at them but was at once told by Ali to stop. "Let them alone",



said the Caliph, "for their cries are only lamentations foreboding my death."

### **Ali is Mortally wounded**

On the Fateful Friday morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Ramadan, Abdur Rahman, Shaubib bin Bijrah and Werdun went to the Central Mosque at Kufa just before the break of dawn. There they took up their positions in the narrow passage leading to the mosque and waited for Ali to enter. The moment the Caliph set foot in<sup>2</sup> the mosque, while it was still dark, Werdun attacked but missed his aim. With more accuracy, Abdur Rahman then struck Ali on the forehead, the point of his poisoned sword penetrating through the scar of an old wound to the brain. The assassins then fled.

Shortly afterwards the congregation began to assemble in the Mosque for the dawn prayers. There they found Ali lying wounded on his prayer mat. They asked him who the miscreant had been, receiving as reply that God would soon overtake him.

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<sup>2</sup> Conflicting accounts regarding the martyrdom of Ali have come down to us. Some hold that the Caliph was assaulted while entering the Mosque, whereas others maintain that Abdur Rahman gave him a fatal blow while conducting prayers when he lay in the position of prostration on the mat. The Shi'ite legends emphatically urge that it was well-nigh impossible to kill Ali in a state of consciousness for the Caliph's body was like that of steel when awake and like that of wax when prostrated in prayers before God. So according to these legends, Abdur Rahman killed Ali while he was prostrating on the mat in prayers.

Werdun is said to have fled to his house, where he was soon after put to death by his own relatives, who were horrified to learn what he had done. Shaubib appears to have made good his escape but Abdur Rahman was arrested and brought before Ali. "What could be the motive of your assault"? asked Ali, "have I not loaded you and your clan with benefits". To this Abdur Rahman replied, "For forty days I have whitened my sword with poison and prayed to Almighty God to ask him to help me to put an end to the most sinful and wicked of human beings". "That", said Ali, "must be none other than yourself," and he delivered Abdur Rahman to the custody of his guards. Then, sending for his son, Hasan, the Caliph said, "Should I die, the life of this assassin is forfeit. Kill him with a single stroke and see that you neither mutilate him, nor let him suffer a lingering death from hunger and thirst, for it is forbidden by the Holy Prophet."

Ali's daughter, Um Kulthum, lacked her father's charity. On the day following the assault she is said to have visited the prisoner and to have cursed him, saying that it was a perfidious deed and that its perpetrator would go straight to hell. She then began to weep, saying :O thou enemy of God, perchance my father will still survive..." "Then" said the assassin, "Why those tears in your eyes? But the sword with which I attacked the Caliph cost me a thousand silver coins, and a thousand more it cost me to impregnate it with poison. None can escape the assault of this sabre."

No antidote could be found for the poison and Ali's condition rapidly deteriorated. When they saw that his condition had become critical, his courtiers, led by Jundib ibn Abdullah, asked him whether in the event of his death they should raise his son, Hasan, to the Caliphate. True to the principles of democracy, the dying Caliph said, "I have neither any authority to command it, nor do I forbid you to do it. See to it yourself." He then asked his sons Hasan and Hussain to come near him so that he might give them his last testament.

### **Ali's Last Testament**

To his sons Ali spoke thus: "Remain steadfast in piety and resign yourself to the will of God. Never aspire to anything which is beyond your reach. Always be truthful and merciful towards the orphans. Help the poor and needy, and try to live in the world in a way which may help it to become better. Stop the tyrant from his oppressions. Assist the afflicted and act upon the commandments of God; and do not be put off by any obstacles. Lastly, I ask you to bury me in some place which is unknown to the public. No less than 10,000 persons have I killed by my own hands on different occasions, and I do not wish their relatives to violate the sanctuary of my repose, and expose my corpse to indignity."

After this interview with Hasan and Hussain, the Caliph addressed his third son, Muhammad ibn Hanfia, and said, "You have heard what I have told



your other two brothers. I also enjoin you to act upon these behests. In particular, I command you to respect and obey your elder brothers. They have a right to claim your fealty. Do whatever they command you, without delay." Then, addressing the other members of his family, he continued, "O thou Hashimites! After I am gone, do not spill Muslim blood, and do not kill any one except my murderer."

Right until the end, Ali continued to think of the good of the Muslim community, to fulfil the commands embodied in the Holy Qura'an and to submit to the will of God. Repeatedly calling upon the name of God and constantly re-affirming the belief in the Unity of God and in the divine mission of the Holy Prophet, Ali was to survive the mortal wound for three days.<sup>3</sup> Speech was finally silenced by the approach of death on the third day.

### **The Death of Ali**

At the time of his tragic death, according to one account, Ali was 58 years old, and according to the reckoning of his son, Hasan, he was 63. He had reigned for four years and nine months. Such was the

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<sup>3</sup> We cannot determine with precision the date of Ali's death. He obtained martyrdom in the middle of Ramdan in 40 A.H. and varying dates are given ranging from 19<sup>th</sup> Ramdan to 21<sup>st</sup> Ramdan. Waqidi in Tabri gives 24<sup>th</sup> January 661 A.D., whereas Masudi gives 21<sup>st</sup> January 661 A.D., and Mirkhound (author of Rousa-tu-Safa) gives 26<sup>th</sup> January, A.D. But the widely accepted dates is the 21<sup>st</sup> January, which seems more probable because this day was nearer to the 22<sup>nd</sup> which was Friday.

simplicity of Ali's life that after his death only seven silver coins were found in his possession, for he had always spent what came in to the imperial treasury on the poor and needy. This insignificant patrimony is startling, considering that the revenues that came to Ali's government exceeded millions of pounds, but entirely consistent with what is known of his character, Ali's prayers had been answered after all. He had attained martyrdom and would henceforth sit with the blessed on high, among companions "far superior" to those against whose treachery he had complained during his nightly vigils in the Mosque at Kufa.

### **The Interment of Ali's Remains**

In obedience to Ali's last will, his corpse was buried in secret by his sons, in a spot concealed from the sight of all but his own family. During the reign of the Ummayyad rulers (661-750 A.D.) Ali's descendants did not disclose the identity of Ali's place of interment, fearing lest these rulers should disgrace his dead body by opening the grave. It is for this reason that the exact place of Ali's burial lay concealed for centuries. Some said that Ali's grave was near Baghdad, some at Kufa and still others at Mizar Sharif, situated on the border of Afghanistan, and it was not until the reign of the Abbasid ruler as-Safah (750 - 54 A.D.) that Ali's grave was located, and a tomb stone erected.

## **Najaf Sharif and the tomb**

The famous Abbasid Caliph Harun-al-Rashid (785-809 A.D.) is said to have enlarged the tomb and entrusted its management to a chief of the tribe of the Banu Asad. It is generally held that Ali's remain, were laid at Najf, situated in the vicinity of Kufa, lying close by the dike which protects the city against the inundations of the Euphrates, which developed into the modern town of Mushhad Ali, to which million of Muslim pilgrims now throng on pilgrimage to the holy sanctuary.

The Shi'ite legends dwell at length on how the Abbaside Caliph Harun-al-Rashid went deer-hunting near Kufa, and how a deer ran to Ali's grave and the hounds would not touch it, standing instead at the foot of the grave while the Caliph realised it was Ali's place of burial. Since then all those who took shelter at it are immune from all dangers. The miracle of the unharmed deer led to Ali's tomb becoming a holy place and a sanctuary. The Caliph Harun-al-Rashid is said to have enlarged the tomb and the Shi'ite ministers, Muiz-ad-Dowla and Azi'd-ad-Dowla had it further beautified. Its detail is given on next page.

In 1399 A.D. when Timur, the scourge of humanity returned successfully from his Indian campaign, he further enlarged the building but the work of later beautification and completion was left to Nadir Shah, who after his conquest of India in 1739 A.D. spent a good deal of money on the decoration of



the tomb. The tomb is called "Najf Sharif" (the holy Najf) and to the Shias it is second only to Mecca.

**TRAVELS OF IBN JUBAYR, WRIGHT'S  
TEXT GIBB MEMORIAL VOL. V. SAYS  
ABOUT "NAJAF ASHRAF"**

**The visit of Prophet Abraham and Isaac and  
Abraham's prediction and desire to buy the Valley  
of Peace.**

Those who have visited Najaf will remember vividly that to the north and east of the town there are acres of graves and myriads of domes of various colours and in various stages of disrepair. Whoever goes to Najaf will follow a road that approaches the town by a winding course through this vast cemetery. The Prophet Abraham had come to this place along with Isaac; there had been many earthquakes in the vicinity, but while Abraham remained there, there were no tremors. On the night, however, when Abraham and Isaac went to a different village, and sure enough Najaf was visited with another earthquake. When they returned, the people were most eager for them to make Najaf their permanent dwelling-place. Abraham agreed to do so on condition that they would sell him the valley behind the village for cultivation. Isaac protested and said that this land was neither fit for farming nor grazing, but Abraham insisted and assured him that the time would come when there would be a tomb there with a shrine, at which seventy thousand people would gain absolutely

undisputed entrance to Paradise, and be able also to intercede for many others.<sup>4</sup>

The valley that Abraham wanted to buy is called the Valley of Peace (Wadiu's-Salaam), and it is related on the authority of the fourth Imam, that Ali once said that this Valley of Peace is part of Heaven and that there is not a single one of the believers in the world, whether he dies in the east or west, but his soul will come to this Paradise to rest.<sup>5</sup> "As there is nothing hidden in this world from my eyes," Ali went on to say, "I see all the believers seated here in groups and talking with one another".

How Najaf was given its name is explained in the tradition. At first there was a mountain there, and when one of the sons of Noah refused to enter the Ark, he said that he would sit on this mountain until he would see where the water would come. A revelation came therefore to the mountain, "Do you undertake to protect this son of mine from punishment?" And all at once the mountain fell to pieces and the son of Noah was drowned. In place of the mountain a large river appeared, but after a few years the river dried up, and the place was called Nay-Jaff, meaning, "the dried river."<sup>6</sup>

And so as per the prediction of Abraham, Hazrat Ali was buried here.

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<sup>4</sup> Majlisi op. Cit. Page 108.

<sup>5</sup> Majlisi op. Cit. Page 111.

<sup>6</sup> Majlisi op. Cit. Page 111.

Ali is absent today from our midst only physically. His soul even to this day is the greatest spiritual resort for everyone who seeks the help of God through his medium.

### **The Mausoleum**

“The Mausoleum itself of Hazrat Ali at Najaf, is breathtaking. There is one large central dome which stands out of a square-shaped ornate structure at the two sides of which are two minarets. The predominant colour of the exterior is gold, bright shining gold and the entire exterior of the mausoleum is inlaid with a mosaic pattern of light powder blue, white marble, gold again with an occasional splash of Middle East rust. “So says D.F. Karaka<sup>7</sup> after his visit to Najaf, and further adds, “I have sat and wondered at the marbled splendour of our Taj Mahal, the tomb which Shah Jahan built for his Empress Mumtaz Mahal, but despite its beauty, the Taj appears insipid in comparison with this splash of colour at Najaf. The tomb surpassed anything I have seen in gorgeous splendour. All the great kings of the world put together could not have a tomb as magnificent as this, for this is the tribute which kings and peasants have built together to enshrine the mortal remains of the great Ali.”

Countless number of people from all over the world flock to his tomb day after day to pay their respects and to offer salutations and to pray to Allah seeking his intercession. And those who cannot afford to go there personally, are constantly praying to Allah

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<sup>7</sup> D.F. Karaka.



to help them to visit the shrine of their Maula Ali, and when somebody goes on a pilgrimage to Najaf, they request him to offer salutations on their behalf, and to pray to God --- for some particular favour --- and to seek Hazrat Ali's intercession.

May God in His infinite Mercy help us to follow the teachings of one regarding whom the Holy Prophet has said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate."

Thus ended the last chapter of the history of a life which from the beginning to its end was replete with noble deeds, pious thoughts and sublime words, and every hour of which was a crowded hour of glorious life.

The Holy Quran says: "And do not speak of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead: nay, they are alive, but you do not perceive." (Chapter II - Verse 154).

### **The deer hunting incident of Harun-ar-Rashid.**

"During the reigns of the Umayyad Caliphs his blessed resting-place could not be disclosed, and so it was also under the Abbasids until the reign of Harun-ar-Rashid. But in the year 175 A.H. (791 A.D.), Harun happened to go hunting in these parts, and the deer he was chasing took refuge on a small piece of raised ground. However much he asked his hunting dogs to capture the quarry, they refused to go near this spot. He urged his horse to this place, and the horse too

refused to budge; and on this, awe took possession of the Caliph's heart, and he immediately started to make inquiries of the people of the neighbourhood, and they acquainted him with the fact that this was the grave of Hazrat Ali ibn Abu Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet. Harun ordered a tomb to be erected over the grave, and people soon began to settle down in its vicinity."<sup>8</sup>

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE TOMB OF ALI

This is based on traditions from the other Imams. There is a saying attributed to the Imam Jafar-as-Sadiq, "whoever visits this tomb of his own free will and believing in the right of Ali --- that he was the Imam to whom obedience was required and the true Caliph --- for such a pilgrim the Most High will register very great merit." And when a visitor came in person to visit Imam Jafar-as-Sadiq and remarked that he had neglected to go to the tomb of Ali, the Imam rebuked him: "You have done badly, surely if it were not that you are one of our community. I would certainly not look towards you: Do you neglect to make the pilgrimage to the grave of one whom God and the angels visit, whom the prophets visit, and the believers visit?"

The pilgrim replied, "I did not know." The Imam continued, "Understand that the Amair-ul-Momineen is in the sight of God better than all the

<sup>8</sup> The Shrine of Ali at Najaf from "The Shsi'ite Religion by Dwight M. Donaldson.

Imams, and to him belong the merit of the works of all the Imams, in addition to which he has the merit of his own works.<sup>9</sup>

### Salutations to Hazrat Ali Alaihis Salaam - 1

Before making the visit to the Shrine, according to Imam Jafar-as-Sadiq, the pilgrim should first bathe and put on clean clothing and afterwards anoin himself with perfume. The formal prayer of salutation that is given by al-Kulaini,<sup>10</sup> and which is very similar to that given by Ibn Babawaihi,<sup>11</sup> begins as follows:

Peace be unto thee, O Friend of God;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Proof of God;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Caliph of God;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Support of Religion;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Heir of the Prophets;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Guardian of the fire and Paradise;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Master of the Cudgel and the brand-iron;  
 Peace be unto thee, O Prince of the Believers.

I TESTIFY that thou art the Word of Piety, the Door of Guidance, the Firm Root, the Solid Mountain, and the Right Road,

I TESTIFY that thou art the Proof of God to His Creation. His witness to His Servants, His Trustee for His Knowledge, a Repository of His Secrets, the place

<sup>9</sup> Majlisi, *Tofatu'z-Za' Irin*, p. 50.

<sup>10</sup> Kulaini, *Kafi*, Vol. II, p. 321.

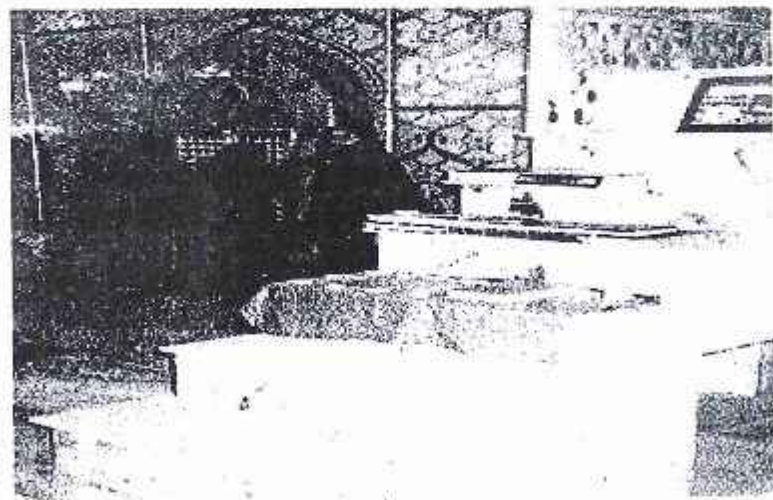
<sup>11</sup> Ibn Babawaihi, *Man la yahduru hu'T'Fakih* p. 226.



of His wisdom, and a Brother of His Apostle and I TESTIFY that thou were the First Choice of the Holy Prophet. May the favour of God be upon thee, O Prince of Believers, upon thy spirit, and upon thy body.

In his Manual for Pilgrims, Majlisi gives eight long prayers that are appropriate at the time of the pilgrimage to Najf.<sup>12</sup> And most of these prayers are attributed to different Imams and have been handed down for centuries, and have been used over and over again by hundreds of thousands of trustful pilgrims who go to the Shrine of Ali at Najaf.

Another Salutation to Hazrat Ali Alaihis Salaam is given on the next page in Arabic.



<sup>12</sup> Majlisi, op. Cit. P. 58-92.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الرَّحِيصُ الْبُرِّ التَّقِيُّ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ  
 أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقُ الرَّسِيدُ  
 السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا الْبُرِّ الزَّكِيُّ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ  
 يَا وَصِيَّ رَسُولِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا خَيْرَةَ  
 اللَّهِ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ أَجْمَعِينَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ حَبِيبُ اللَّهِ وَ  
 خَاصَّةُ اللَّهِ وَخَالِصَتُهُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ اللَّهِ  
 وَمَوْضِعَ سِرِّهِ وَعَيْبَةَ عِلْمِهِ وَحَنَازِنَ  
 وَحِيهِ يَا بِيَّ أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَا بِيَّ  
 أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي يَا حُجَّةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْآلَامِ يَا بِيَّ أَنْتَ  
 وَأُمِّي يَا بَابَ الْمَقَامِ يَا بِيَّ أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي يَا نُورَ اللَّهِ  
 السَّامِرِ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَعَنْ  
 رَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ مَا حَمَلْتَ  
 وَرَعَيْتَ مَا سُوِّحِفِظْتَ وَحَفِظْتَ مَا اسْتُودِعْتَ  
 وَحَلَلْتَ حَلَالَ اللَّهِ وَحَرَّمْتَ حَرَامَ اللَّهِ  
 وَأَتَمَمْتَ أَحْكَامَ اللَّهِ وَلَمْ تَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ  
 عَبَدْتَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا حَتَّى آتَاكَ الْيَقِينُ وَ  
 صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى الْأَيْمَةِ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ

## Salutations to Hazrat Ali Alaihis Salaam – 2

As-Salaamo alaika aiyyo-hal wasee-yul barrut taqee.

As-Salaamo alaika aiyyo-han naba-ul-azeem.

As-Salaamo alaika aiyyo-has siddee-kur rasheed.

As-Salaamo alaika aiyyo-hal barrooz-zakee.

As-Salaamo alaika yaa khay-a-ratalalahey alal khalqey ajma-een.

Ash-hado annaka habenbullahey was khas-satullakey was khaley-satuh.

As-Salaamo alaika yaa walee-Allahey wa mauzey-aaseerreyhee wa aibata illmeyhee wa haazeyna wah-ee-hee bey abee anta wa oommee yaa Amir-al-Momeeneena bey abee anta was oommee yaa Hujjatallahey alal anaaamey bey abee anta wa oommee yaa baabal maqaamey bey abee anta wa oommee.

Yaa noorallahith-taammey.

Ash-hado annaka qad ballagta anillahey wa an Rasoolleyhee sallallaaho alaihey wa aaleyhee maa hoommilita wa ra-aita mastohfizta wa hafizta mastoo deyta was hallaa-lallahey wa harramta haraamallahey wa atmamta ahkamallahey wa lam tata-adda hoodoodallahey abdatallaha mookhleysan hatta atakal yaqeen wa sallallaaho alaika wa alal aa immatey min baadeyka.

Salutations be unto thee, O Successor of the Prophet and O One Holy and Selected.

Salutations be unto thee, O Support of Religion.

Salutations be unto thee, O Heir of the Prophets and the Repository of His Knowledge.

Salutations be unto thee, O Pious and Purified.

Salutations be unto thee, O Successor of the Prophet of Allah – the Creator of all the worlds.



Salutations be unto thee, O Proof of Allah for all His creation.

I bear witness that thou art the Chosen of Allah and one very near to Him.

Salutations be unto thee, O Saint of Allah, and O one who understands the Secrets of Allah, the Knower of His Commands, and the Treasurer of His Divine Knowledge.

My parents be sacrificed upon thee, O commander of the faithful,

My parents be sacrificed upon thee, O Trustee of Allah for His creatures.

My parents be sacrificed upon thee, O Gateway to Paradise,

My parents be sacrificed upon thee, O Light of Allah.

I bear witness that thou didst preach the Code of Allah and His Prophet (the Blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny), and thou didst shoulder the responsibility to guide the people to safeguard the Faith and to propagate His Religion, and thou didst summon men to goodness and thou didst forbid what was evil, and thou didst conduct for Allah, the kind of steadfastness that needs to be maintained, and thou didst never transgress the limits of Allah, and thou didst pray to Allah with a firm sincerity and wonderful Faith, and may Allah shower His blessings upon thee and the Imams after thee.<sup>13</sup>

### Salutation to any of the Imams (Ziarat-E-Jamia)

A prayer for the use of pilgrims to the shrines of any of the Imams is attributed by Ibn Babawaihi to the

<sup>13</sup> Ali – The Magnificent.

Imam Ali an-Naqi. Someone asked him, "O Descendant of the Prophet of Allah, teach me the good and perfect word, that I may repeat it whenever I visit the tomb of any of the Imams." He replied, "When you enter the court of one of these tombs, stand and say:

"I bear witness that there is no god but the one Allah, and He has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad, blessing be upon him and his descendants, is the servant of Allah and was sent by Him."

The Imam then added these instructions, "It is necessary that you should have bathed, and when you enter the court and see the tomb, stand and repeat thirty times, 'Allah is great.' Proceed, then pause and repeat again thirty times, 'Allah is great.' Afterwards you may go close to the tomb and repeat forty times, 'Allah is great.' When the one hundredth time will have been completed then pray as follows:

"Peace be upon thee, O ye of the Household of the Prophet, of the place of the Prophet, the place frequented by the angels, where revelation was given, where mercy was shown, where learning is kept and wisdom is complete; the place of guidance and where forgiveness is perfect. You are the Lords of all Bountry, the elements of all goodness, the Pillars of Virtue, the Governors of the Servants of God, the Supporters of the Cities, the Doors of the Faith, the Trusted of Allah, the Progeny of the Prophets, the Choicest of those sent, the Descendants of the Best of



Allah's Creation --- may the mercy and blessing of Allah be upon you." <sup>14</sup>

"Peace be upon the true Imams, upon the Lights in Darkness, upon the Manifestations of Piety, the Possessors of Reason, the Masters of Sagacity, the Caves of Refuge, the Heirs of the Prophets, the Exalted Examples (from Allah) those who summon men to goodness, who are the Proofs of Allah upon the Earth, at the beginning and at the end --- may and blessing of Allah be upon you."

"I testify that there is no god but the one Allah, and He has no partner. He has given witness to Himself, and so have the angels and the learned of those whom He has created borne witness to Him. There is no god except Allah who is mighty and wise, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his servant, the Chosen servant, and the Apostle who has pleased Him, and whom He sent with the true Faith, that he should make it prevail over all religions (Surah xlvi 28), notwithstanding the opposition of those who associate partners with Allah."

I bear witness that you are indeed the Imams, who indicate the true way, the ones who have found Guidance, who are Sinless, the Noble, the Near to Allah, the Pious, the Upright, the Elect, the Obedient to Allah, who are firm adherents TO His commands. You are those who fulfil His will, and who are saved by His goodness, for god chose to impart His learning to you, chose you to understand what is not revealed

<sup>14</sup> Majlisi, op. Cit. P. 93.



and to know His secrets, and God has appointed you to exercise His authority, and has made you victorious by His guidance. He has given you His own Proof, His Light, and has helped you with His Spirit. He has designated you to be His Representatives, His Caliphs and the guardians of His mysteries; the Repositories of His learning; the Trusted with His wisdom; the Interpreters of His revelation; the Standards for His servants; the Minarets for His cities; and the Proofs of His way. Allah has kept you from pollution and impurity (Surah xxxiii 33). Therefore you have exalted Allah's glory and have dignified His name and praised His goodness. You have constantly thought of Him and have kept His covenant. In your obedience to Him you have received counsel in your outer and inner lives. Thus you have summoned men to Allah by wisdom and good preaching (Surah xvi 126). You have given your lives to please Him and have endured what has happened to you for His sake. You have established the Prayers and the Alms, have commanded the good and forbidden the evil, and you have conducted for Allah the kind of Holy War that needs to be carried on."

When the pilgrim has finished his prayers at the appointed places in the shrine of an Imam and is ready to say "Farewell", he should pray as follows:-<sup>15</sup>

"Peace be upon thee, the peace invoked by those who say farewell, Not wishing you evil, not deprecating you, and not with envy; may the mercy and blessing of Allah be upon thee, O Household of

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<sup>15</sup> Majlisi, *op. Cit.* P. 95.

the Prophet, for He is the Glorious and the Accepted. Peace be upon thee, the peace of the friend who does not try to offer anything to thee, and who does not approach thee indirectly, and who does not come reluctantly. May Allah not let this visit to thee be my last, this coming to the place of your martyrdom, the place of your burial. Peace be unto thee, and may Allah include me among your adherents and cause me to arrive at the Hauz-i-Kausar (the "Pond of abundance" in Paradise), and appoint me among your followers. May you cause Allah to be pleased with me and give me a place in your bounty. Let me live at the time of your returning and have part in your government. Accept my efforts on your behalf, and may my sins be forgiven because of your intercession. Overlook my faults by your friendship and grant me progress by your favour. Let me attain nobility through obedience to thee, and become dear to Allah through your guidance. Appoint me among those whose hearts are changed and saved. Grant that I may prosper, and may be forgiven and favoured, having found grace in Allah's goodness, having been fortunate in receiving the best of things that are attained by pilgrims who are your friends and followers. Grant that I may have something worthwhile to bring.<sup>16</sup>

May Allah grant me the opportunity to make the pilgrimage again, and the opportunity to return to eternal life by true purposes --- by faith, by discipline, by humility. And may Allah grant that I may have daily food that is plentiful and permitted and clean."

<sup>16</sup> Ali - The Magnificent.



“O Allah do not decree that this is to be my last pilgrimage. But wilt Thou keep the Imams reminded of me, and send blessing upon them, and make necessary the forgiveness of my sins! And I may enjoy that mercy and goodness and blessing, self control, salvation, light, faith and high favour --- such as Thou hast appointed for those who are their friends, those of whom Thou hast required obedience to the Imams, those who are eager to make pilgrimages to their tombs, and those who are near to Thee and to them.”

And then, as he prays directly for the Imams, the pilgrim becomes himself an intercessor on behalf of the several members of the Prophet's family:

“My father, my mother, my life and all that I have are dedicated to thee. Keep me in your regard and cherish me among your followers. Let me profit by your intercession and mention me before your Preserver. O Allah, grant Thy blessing to Muhammad and his family, and cause my greeting to reach their spirits and their bodies. Peace be upon thee and upon all the Imams, with Allah's blessing and mercy. And may the mercy of Allah be upon the Prophet and his family, peace and great mercy, for surely Allah is enough, and what a sufficiency!”

After giving this prayer, Majlisi adds as a personal observation that “this is the best of the general prayers of pilgrimage, both in its text and its authority, and it should be read at every feast of mourning and on every visit to a sacred tomb.”



### **A Shorter Salutation to any of the Imams<sup>17</sup>**

A shorter form of Salutation for the use of pilgrims to the shrines of any of the Imams is attributed by Majlisi to Imam Ali Reza. Majlisi quotes "By this salutation which is appropriate for each and every Imam, their help sought, needs may be made known to them, and blessings may be solicited."<sup>18</sup>

"Peace be to the friends of the chosen ones of Allah;  
 Peace be to the Trusted and Favoured of Allah;  
 Peace be to the Helpers and Representatives of Allah;  
 Peace be to the places where Allah has been made known;  
 Peace be to the places where Allah is remembered;  
 Peace be to those who have revealed Allah's commands;  
 Peace be to those who call upon Allah;  
 Peace be to those who obey what Allah has approved;  
 Peace be to the tested followers of Allah's will;  
 Peace be to those who are Proofs for Allah (the Imams);  
 Peace be upon their friends, for they are the friends of Allah;  
 As likewise their enemies are the enemies of Allah;  
 Those who have known them have surely known Allah;  
 And those ignorant of them are ignorant of Allah;

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<sup>17</sup> Ali – The Magnificent.

<sup>18</sup> Ali – The Magnificent.

Those who take them by the hand, and commit themselves to them,

Have given their hands to Allah;

But those who abandon them have truly abandoned Allah,

I bear witness before Allah that I am loyal to whoever is loyal to thee, and I am ready to fight those who are not loyal to thee."

### PILGRIMAGE BY PROXY

Definite instructions for the pilgrimage by proxy are given by Shaikh Tusi as follows:-<sup>19</sup>

"Anyone who goes on a pilgrimage as a proxy for a believing brother should say (after he has performed his ablutions and attended to the necessary requirements of the pilgrimage), 'O Allah, keep me from weariness or illness or disorder or weakness, and reward\* ..... the son of\*\* ..... for this pilgrimage, and reward me for completing it.' And after he has made the pilgrimage, at the end he should say, 'Peace be on thee, O my master, from\* ..... the son of\*\* ..... I have come to thee as a pilgrim on his account, so intercede for him with Allah."

Then he may offer Salutations on his account, or he may offer any of the set Salutations that are written to meet this situation.

\* Here name the person.

\*\* Here name the father of the person.

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<sup>19</sup> Shaikh Tusi.

**THE HOLY QURAN AND AMAIRUL-  
MOMINEEN ALI IBNE ABI TALEB**

The Holy Prophet has declared:

“Innal quran onzila ala sab’atu ahrofin ma  
minha

Harfon illa walahu zaahiron was batanon

Wa inna ali Ibne Abi Taleb,

Indahu minho zaahiro wal batin.”

“Verily the Holy Quran has been revealed on Seven\* Letters of which there is no letter\* which has not a manifest and a latent meaning --- And verily Ali ibne Abi Taleb, with him is the manifest and the latent (of it).”

Sahih Bokhari

Suyti's Itqaan

(\*Seven phases, or aspects)

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THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (may the Peace of Allah be upon him and his Progeny) has said:

“He who dies in the love of my Progeny will be taken to Heaven just as a bride is taken to the bridegroom's house; he who dies in the love of my Progeny, Allah will open two doors of Paradise in his grave; he who dies in the love of my Progeny, Allah will make his grave a visiting place for the angels of mercy.”



"If you want to see knowledge of Adam, the piety of Noah, the devotion of Abraham, the awe of Moses and the service and abstinence of Jesus, look at the bright face of Ali."<sup>20</sup>

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### **Qualities of a true Muslim.**

May God bless the man who has heard His orders and remembered them; who was called by Him and obeyed the commands; who has affiliated himself to His Messenger and has thus secured his salvation; who has faithfully obeyed the commands and interdictions of his Preserver and Protector and fears the consequences of his sins; who has been sincere in doing such good deeds as will get him rewards in Heaven; who has always acted sinlessly, righteously and honourably; who has tried to earn His blessings and avoided vices and sin; who has discarded false pomp and glory of this world and concentrated in achieving an exalted position in the world to come; who has completely checked and restrained his desires and longings and kept his fancies and cravings under control; who has decided that patience on suffering is the best way to reach Heaven and abstinence from sin as the best mode of securing salvation; who has adopted the best of religions (Islam) as his creed and followed the bright path of truth And justice; who has correctly decided that the span of his life is a period of grace allotted to him to do good before his end and

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<sup>20</sup> Ali - The Magnificent.

having provided himself for the next world is eager to welcome death.<sup>21</sup>

Sermons of Hazrat Ali from Nahjul Balagha.

(Sermon 79)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

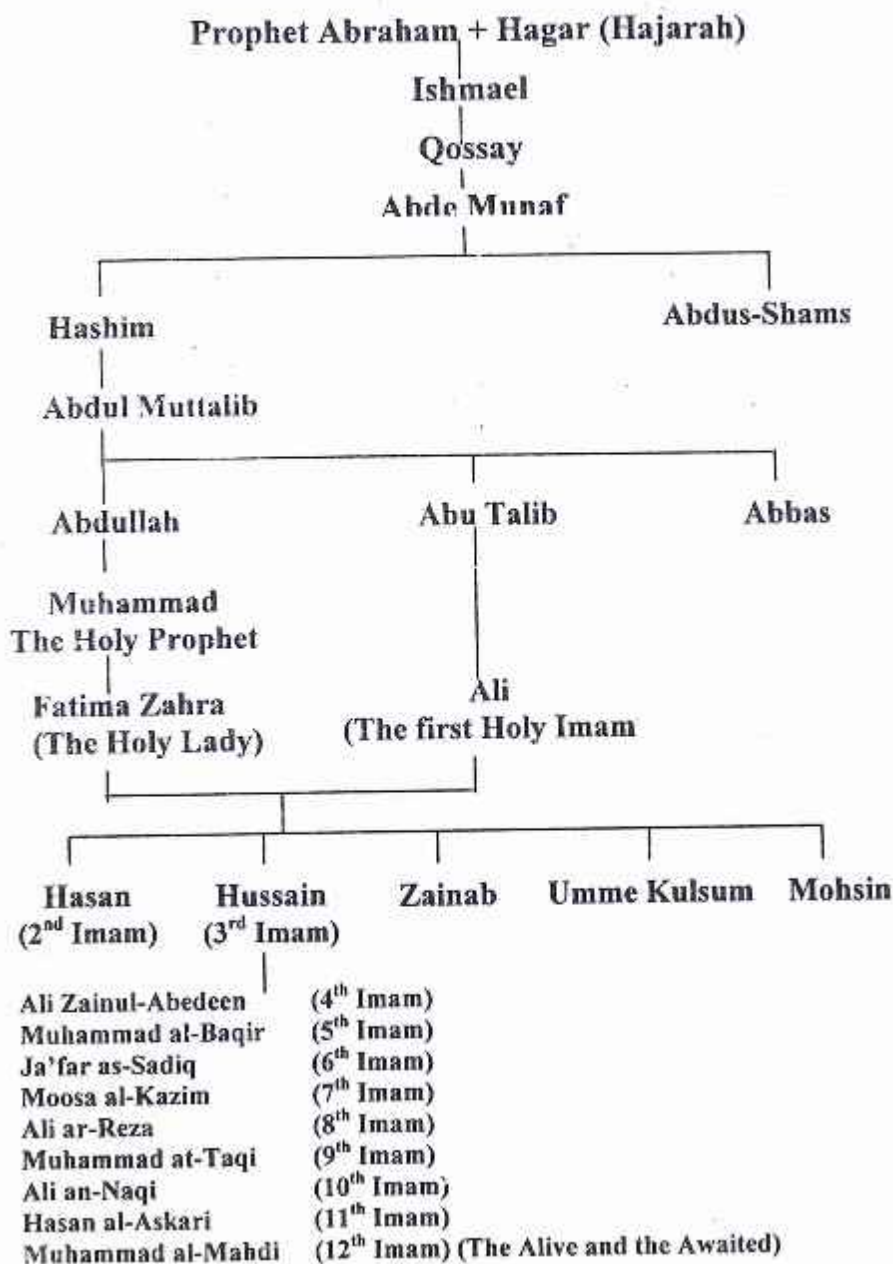
Those who have faith and do righteous deeds,  
They are the best of creatures, (Khair-ul-Bareeyya)  
The Holy Quran Sura xcvi : 7.

ان الذین امنوا و عملوا الصالحات

اولئک هم خیر البریة

<sup>21</sup> Ali – The Magnificent.

## FAMILY TREE

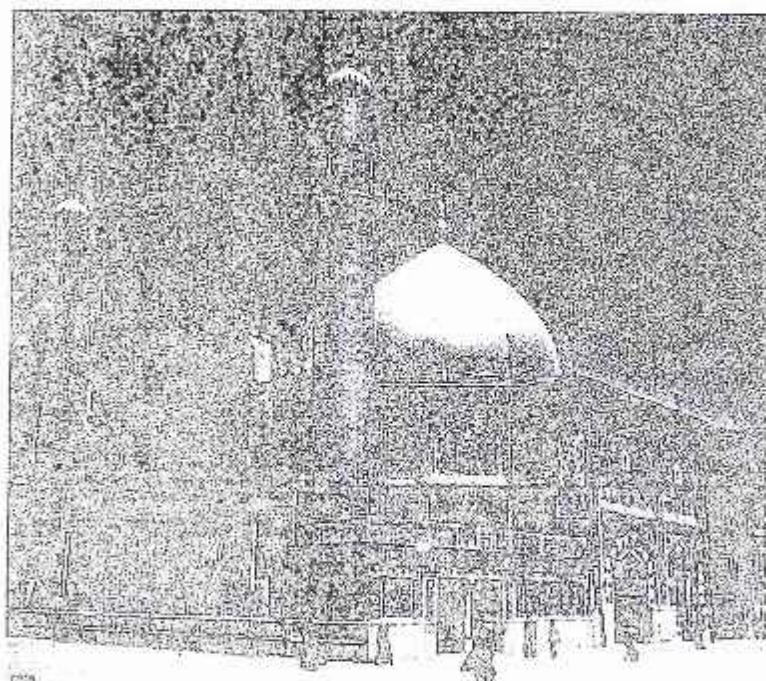




The Holy Prophet has said:

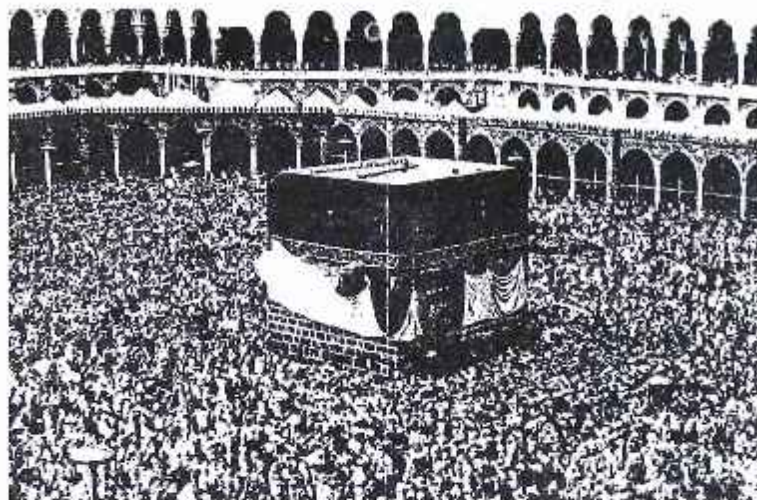
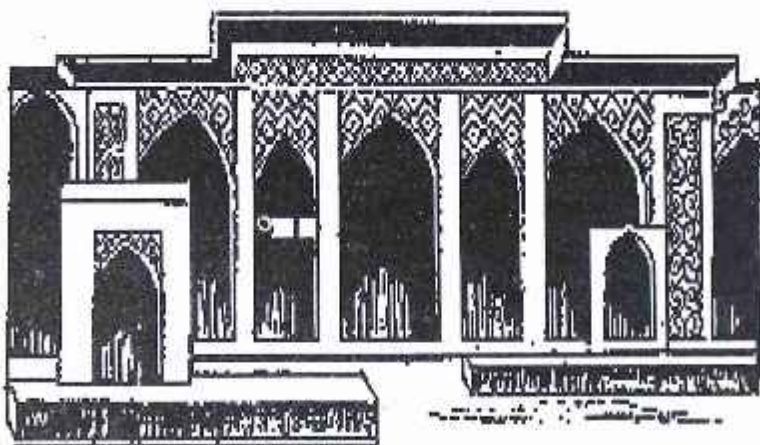
انا مدينة العلم و علي بابها

I am the city of learning, Ali is its gate.



81

The Mausoleum of  
HAZRAT ALI (ALAIHIS SALAAM)  
At Najaf (Iraq)

**KAABA****The Place of his Birth****KUFA****The Place of his Martyrdom**

### **Sword, Horse, flag and the Signet ring, the reminiscence of divinely-Inspired Gifts.**

The Shi'ite traditions maintain that Ali was presented by the Holy Prophet with four divinely inspired gifts --- a sword, a horse, a flag, and a signet ring. God is said to have sent a sword from heaven named "Dhulfaqr" to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who made a present of the same to Ali. It was with this sword that Ali fought all the battles of Islam and killed thousands of his enemies. The sword is said to have passed in legacy to Hasan and then Hussain and on to their descendants, the Imams. The Great Imam Mehdi, the twelfth Imam of the Shias (who will appear at the end of this world) will fight the battles of Islam with this very sword and purge the world of all its evils.

Similarly the Holy Prophet is said to have made a present of his white horse called "Dul Dul" to Ali who rode and fought his battles on it. In the battle of Hunain, Ali was victorious while riding this horse and if the Shi'ite legends are to be credited the animal at the command of his master, crouched so near the ground that Ali was able to pick up a handful of pebbles and throw them at the enemy, a manoeuvre which led to its utter rout. The Shias, every year, at the time of taking out the Taziyas (passion plays) in Muharrum, lead their procession by a horse which is symbolic of Ali's "Dul Dul" --- an animal with which Hussain fought at the battlefield of Kerbala and fell fighting.



The Holy Prophet in a similar way bestowed a flag on Ali which he carried in all his wars against the enemies of Islam. This is believed to have been passed on to the last Imam, who will fight the battle of Islam with "Dhulfaqr" under this flag at the end of the world.

In a similar fashion, the angel Gabriel is said to have presented two rings, one to the Holy Prophet, and the order to Ali which he (Gabriel) said should be worn on the finger of the right hand. It is held that Ali's ring was endowed with miraculous powers. The Ummayyad rulers changed this tradition and began to wear rings on the left hand. Ali's ring is held to have been passed on to his descendants, the Imams, who worked miracles with it.

### **Comments on Ali's Assassination by Various Western Writers.**

"The murderous assault upon A;l" says Wellhausen,<sup>22</sup> "took place on Friday, the 15<sup>th</sup> Ramdan 40; A.H. in the Mosque at Kufa. He died on the following Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 661, A.D. These dates of Waqidi in *Taba Tabari* 13,469; 2, 18, are confirmed by the specified days of the week, and the varying ones refuted. The murderer, Ibn Muljim, of Murad, or more precisely of Tajub (kamil, 553, 17) was a Kharajite. The Khawaraj proudly call him in *Tab*, 2, 18, "Our brother of Murad". Verses of his tribal companion, Ibn

<sup>22</sup> Wellhausen. J. *The Arab kingdom and its fall*, p. 103, Translation by Margaret Graham. Publishers University of Calcutta. Ed. 1927.

Maiyas in Tab, 13,466, testify that he was incited to the murder by a woman Qautaum, who made it the condition of his winning her as his bride that he should take vengeance upon Ali for Nahrawan. This rules out the account which can only artificially be made to harmonise viz., that he was one of those Kharajites who had committed the murder under the oath taken in Mecca to rid the congregation of Muhammad in one day of the three tyrants, Ali, Muawiya and Amr. A private oath taken thus by three persons is not in keeping with the usages of the oldest Khawarij, as Ibn Athir has already remarked. Abu'l Aswad's insinuation that Muawiya fired the murderer has never found the slightest credence even with his owes, though undoubtedly the murder was to his advantage, for by that alone he won the kingdom. In Tab: 2,3, Hasan bin Ali reproaches the Kufites with having killed his father, and the Caliph Mansur expresses himself similarly in Tabrai 3,431. From this it appears that Ibn Muljim and Qautaum were at home in Kufa. Of Tab, 13,456 ff; 3,465 ff, Yaqubi 2,251 f; Kamil 546 off; 583."

### **Abdur Rahman ibn Muljim's fate**

Conflicting accounts have also come down to us about the subsequent fate of Abdur Rahman ibn Muljim. Some say that after the performance of the funeral rites of Ali, his son Hasan summoned Abdur Rahman in his presence, and after a summary trial, ordered him to be executed by a single stoke, in accordance with Ali's dying behest. Others allege that Abdur Rahman was as fearless as a lion when ushered

into the presence of Hasan, and said to him, "I made a convenient with Almighty god, in the sacred house of Allah at Kab'ah, that I would slay both Ali and Muawiya. I have accomplished one objective. Now should you allow me I will go forward and accomplish the other, or perish in the attempt. Should I succeed in my endeavour I will return to you and swear allegiance to you." "Not so," replied Hasan, "Not before you have tasted of fire". Then Ib Muljim was put to death and the corpse was put in a sack and committed to the flames. Still others say that after the burial of Ali, his nephew Abdullah bin Jafar commanded the murderer's eyes to be seared with red hot irons and his hands and feet to be cut off. Abdur Rahman, is said to have borne his affections with magnificent fortitude, uttering no cry, but when an order was given for his tongue to be torn out, he broke out into wild lamentations; Abdullah ibn Jafar is reported to have asked Abdur Rahman the reason for such an outburst, and to have received the reply, "I am not afraid of the pain but what grieves me most is the reflection that with the loss of my tongue, in the last moments of my life, I shall be deprived of the consolation of repeating the name of God, which is the greatest solace to me at this hour."

There seems little doubt that, in the eyes of the Kharajites, and in his own mind, Abdur Rahman was a martyr, confident of the rewards in paradise which Quataum had told him would await his death.



## **The Close of the Patriarchal Age**

With the death of Ali the "Khalifat-I-Rashida" or the Orthodox Caliphate, came to an end. It has been an illustrious chapter in the history of Islam, an age of patriarchy and of an ideal theocracy when the sovereigns lived only for the propagation of the faith, for the service of God and His human beings. The orthodox Caliphs had abstained from pomp and secular gaiety, resigning themselves to the will of the Almighty. They set a personal example of piety and virtue and, in their missionary zeal, they concerned themselves with the betterment of their subject races. Above all, they loved death better than this life on earth and longed for the day when they should be reunited in paradise with the Holy Prophet. Abu Bakr, Umar the Great, Utham and Ali are considered, in the annals of Islam, to be the noblest, the finest, best and worthiest of the Holy Prophet's successors.

In spiritual and temporal knowledge Ali excelled all three of his predecessors. Unfortunately he lacked that acute wordily sense of statesmanship which along could have achieved an efficient administration at the time of his unwilling accession. They were troubled times in Islam when Ali became Caliph. Had his people given to him, as their Caliph, the support, loyalty and admiration that they had given him in his youth, his reign would have become a golden Age indeed. No one wished more than he to put into practice the principles of Muslim jurisprudence, ethics, metaphysics, political science --- and of the simple daily conduct --- which he had so brilliantly

expounded at the height of his popularity. Ali, the young military commander and "Lion of God" appears to have been an uncomplicated character and one that his followers could understand. In his maturity, his ability to see both sides of a question and his more complicated and intellectual approach to leadership resulted in his being often at variance with his fellow Muslims; indeed in many ways he was far in advance of his time, particularly in his desire for peace through negotiation.

What the people needed after the assassination of Osman was leadership, superb, simple, straightforward and clear-cut. They did not know themselves what it was that they sought, and their abortive attempts at democracy deteriorated into riots and anarchy and civil wars for want of a firm hand, and an administration with an efficient and easily understood policy. Instead of establishing peace at home, expansion abroad and equity of justice throughout Islam, Ali found himself wavering, hesitating, deferring, procrastinating --- a helpless victim in the hands of unscrupulous men who had insisted on his assuming so-called sovereign powers. It seems that he either could not or would not make the bold decisions which alone might have suppressed the riots and saved Islam from civil wars.

What happened to Ali, the bold, the decisive, confident young man? The military



leader who had never been known to give in, however hopeless the outcome of the battle might have appeared to be, the commander who had so often turned certain defeat into jubilant victory, the zealous Muslim who had inspired his fellow Muslims to seek martyrdom rather than compromise. Perhaps it is a question that only a psychologist can answer. Betrayed on all sides Ali as Caliph seems to have found the burden of government too great to bear and to have retreated into a private world of depression, solitude and grief. His final days were spent almost entirely in prayer and meditation, deeply troubled by the fate of his beloved Islam and conscious that he was quite powerless to avert the catastrophes which he, in his wisdom; knew were yet to come. His was the tragedy of a man who had discovered the eternal varieties, who knew what was right but who could not persuade or inspire the men of his age to yield to his wishes, share his beliefs or follow his example.





## CHAPTER IV

### **THE CAUSES OF ALI'S FAILURE AND SOME OPINIONS ABOUT HIM**

#### **Bitter opposition of the Quraish**

Before we may close this book, let us examine the reasons why Ali failed. He had hoped to establish a world-Islamic Empire, a kingdom of God on earth, where peace was to reign supreme and mankind would move steadily towards perfection. That he failed so completely is one of the enigmas of Islamic history. The student is perplexed, and indeed despondent, when he discovers that the entire tribe of the Quraish gave whole-hearted support to the first two Caliphs, Abu Bakr, who belonged to the tribe of the Banu Taim, and Umar the Great, who belonged to the tribe of the Banu Adi, but not to their two successors, who also belonged to the Quraish tribe. It is baffling indeed that they obeyed Abu Bakr and Umar blindly, but deserted Osman and Ali, whom they bitterly opposed and finally murdered. From the moment that Ali came to power, he was resisted and obstructed by the Quraishites, in spite of the fact that the aristocratic Quraish knew that Ali had noble blood in his veins, blood which had flowed in the veins of the Holy Prophet, and that in addition he had those personal traits of character which made him unique amongst all the persons of his age. Ali's knowledge, piety, bravery, generalship, services for the propagation of Islam, and his achievements on the battlefield for the defence of

Islam, made him superior to the first two Caliphs;<sup>1</sup> he was superbly equipped to fill the office of the Caliph, yet the entire race seems to have taken up arms against him. In spite of his qualities of mind and spirit he seems to have been sacrificed to the prevailing tribal spirit of his countrymen.

Perhaps it was his superiority, more than anything else, which led to his downfall. He knew himself to be superior to his contemporaries and he hated the petty tribal chiefs of the Quraish who were interested only in their own self-aggrandisement. What is more, he let them know his contempt for them, seldom bothering with the formalities of consulting them and frequently acting independently of them, in defiance of established custom.

### **The Causes of his Failure**

The reasons of his failure may therefore be as follows:-

(a) **The Superiority Complex**

His feelings of superiority were perhaps the main cause of the rupture between him and his countrymen. At the outset of his reign Talha and Zubair proffered him allegiance but later on both of them complained to Ali that he treated them as nobodies, and hardly consulted them in matters of state policy

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<sup>1</sup> Ali, The Superman – Dr. Ata Mohyud Din.

or any other important affairs. Ali replied, "Your complaint is groundless. Can you tell me of a single instance in which I have usurped your rights or that of any Muslim at any time or acted contrary to the commandments of God? I swear by God, I had not the least desire to become a Caliph, but when power has been thrust upon me, I must enforce divine injunctions on all of you. I do not need the advice of any individual. The advice of the Qur'an is sufficient for me." The manner in which he dismissed their grievances, so alienated the sympathies of Talha and Zubair that they both took up arms against him. The high-handed dismissal of Osman's provincial governors was another step in which Ali's overbearing attitude could not be justified. Even when he was in the right, his refusal to listen courteously to the advice of his counsellors often made him appear to be thoroughly imperious. He loathed the men with little minds who crowded round him, the time-servers, the jobmongers, the self-seekers and scorned to compete with them. He knew that, in intellectual ability and in the power of original thinking, he towered head and shoulders above his contemporaries and he saw no reason to submit himself to their criticism. They were obtuse and mediocre, their morality easily swayed



by caprice and greed and he wanted none of them.

The assumption of superiority became, as he grew older, more and more pronounced. His adversaries described his temperament as haughty and unbearable. Undoubtedly his early failures to become Caliph must have affected his self-confidence and he seems, more and more to have erected barriers between himself and the people. In spite of his gifted eloquence he could not sway the crowd. He appealed only to small circles of scholars with kindred minds and his cold intellectualism chilled the warm-hearted populace.

(b) His unwavering Adherence to Principles

Another factor which was sure to create enemies was his refusal to deviate a hair's breadth from any principle in which he believed. His strong sense of justice led him to enforce the Qura'anic laws on the chieftains of the Quraish without any distinction of ranks or merit and the virulence with which he humbled many of the big magnates converted many a potential friend into a life-long foe. Osman had bestowed fiefs on his kinsmen in the manner and custom of the day. These, Ali summararily confiscated,

thereby provoking the chiefs to rebellion. Even his own brother, Aqil, went over to Muawiya because Ali would not increase his allowance. Ali felt, and rightly so, that the State exchequer was a trust which should not be wasted on extravagances but he would not attempt to offer any explanation for his refusal. He never at any time, seems to have considered it necessary to implement new ideas and new measures with tact. Tact was something he felt he could do without, but his lack of it contributed largely to the failure of his noble ideals, ideals which presented with more humility and persuasion, might yet have succeeded.

- (c) Magnanimity      Mis-interpreted      as  
Weakness

Ali believed in freedom of speech and action and had therefore granted these to his subjects. Interference in an individual's personal liberty was a heinous offence in the eyes of Ali. It is, however, doubtful whether the fickle and illiterate Arab multitude was as yet ready for such freedoms. They needed a strong ruler to check their seditions and they took undue advantage of Ali's magnanimity on many occasions, considering it to be a form of weakness.

After rebelling against Caliph Osman and raising Ali to the Caliphate they became fully aware of their own power, expecting Ali to be a grateful puppet in their hands. That Ali was too proud and stiff-necked to submit to their wishes increased their insolent defiance and their appointment of arbiters after the battle of Siffin demonstrates how loose was the hold that Ali had over them.<sup>2</sup>

(d) Lax Discipline in Ali's Army

The underlying fundamental cause of the success of the early Muslims was the strict discipline that prevailed in their ranks. Under Ali, this discipline disintegrated. Not only were the ranks full of disgruntled soldiers, constantly brawling, bickering and openly disobeying orders, but there was also a breach of faith between the high-ranking officers who instead of setting an example of loyalty to their men, showed themselves to be equally dissatisfied with Ali's leadership. The audacity with which they intercepted Ali's letter on the battlefield at Siffin shows how deplorably lax the discipline had become.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Philip K. Hitti. *History of the Arabs*.

<sup>3</sup> Syed Ameer Ali. *Spirit of Islam*.



Ali's enemies, on the other hand, were led by distinguished generals who enforced the strictest discipline in their army. In the Syrian troops the orders of the senior officers were obeyed blindly by their juniors and the men showed an unswerving, personal loyalty towards Muawiya. Criticism of Muawiya's orders was unheard of and no one would have dared to do anything seditious.

- (e) Ali's Parsimony compared with Muawiya's munificence

Ali's scrupulous handling of state revenues neither pleased his friends nor won over any of his enemies. Ever mindful of rendering an account to God, he kept track of every penny that came to the Royal Treasury. Not even his brother and cousins were spared the duty of accounting for every farthing, a demand which finally led to their deserting Ali for Muawiya who gave them more munificent treatment.

Nor would Ali pardon even the slightest mistakes on the part of his subordinates, while misappropriation or embezzlement called down the heaviest punishment. Muawiya, on the other hand, spent money like water. With his lavishness he could and did buy Ali's

staunchest supporters, earning their loyalty by bestowing fiefs and rewards in cash on them. How winsome Muawiya's munificence was, may be seen from the fact that his court at Damascus<sup>4</sup> became a rendezvous for all those disaffected chiefs who had deserted Ali. They drew handsome pensions from the Syrian treasury and Muawiya had no scruples as to where the money came from, or how it was spent.

(f) Ali's Hatred of Foppish Display

As a boy in the household of Muhammad (may peace be upon him) Ali had learnt the value of prayer and meditation. In later life, after the death of the Holy Prophet, he turned more and more to prayer for solace and support, living the life of a recluse. This alienated him still further from the chiefs and magnates who revelled in the empty amusements and coarse wit that Ali abhorred.

It was inevitable that the secular interests of his pleasure-loving subjects

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<sup>4</sup> Damascus was the one and only centre of Muawiya's realm, while Ali had to control several capitals. Of them he preferred Medina, to the continual annoyance of the people of Kufa and Basra, who frequently instigated rebellions either from Jealously or malice.

should clash with the spiritual wishes of Ali, whereas at the court of Muawiya the chiefs could escape from austerity to a world of luxury and sensuous pleasure.

(g) Ali's Honesty

Ali's attempts scrupulously to follow the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an resulted in his refusing to employ any diplomatic wiles in his negotiations with Muawiya or to disseminate any kind of lying propaganda in his attempts to win over the provinces to his cause. His straightforward tactics and his belief that the unvarnished truth ought to be enough for anybody were ill-suited to the needs of his people who were more willing to respect the devious and wily strategy of Muawiya.

Ali's treatment of his enemies was particularly magnanimous but his forbearance was misinterpreted as weakness. Whereas Ali went by the Qur'anic laws, Muawiya poisoned, mutilated and tortured his enemies thereby winning respect through fear.

One of the defects of Ali's character was that he was not content to be merely honest, he had to ram his honesty down other people's throats. All



his defects were, as it were, defects of his virtues but they served to isolate him still further from his fellows. They found him almost too perfect.<sup>5</sup>

(h) Ali's Ideas Ahead of his Time

Ali's intellectual powers were far ahead of his time. The concepts which he had grasped are still staggeringly new to many people in the world today and it is therefore small wonder that the illiterate masses of Arabia, in the seventh century, could not even begin to understand the lofty ideals which he expounded. Ali, accustomed as a military leader to rapid victories, and impatient and intolerant by temperament, did not realise how slowly the human mind advances. Militating against the success of his ideals was also the fact that he had succeeded to the Caliphate during a time of disillusionment, degeneration and dissipation. For the gloomy, frustrated people over whom he ruled, the time was not yet ripe for a spiritual revival. After the heavy casualties of the civil war they wanted only to be left alone to lick their wounds and to try and restore the better standard of living to which they had become accustomed during the days of the early Islamic victories. What did they

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<sup>5</sup> Edward Gibbon.

care about pan-Islamic idles and world States and the kingdom of God on earth? Ali's voice called to them to the light but they turned a deaf ear to his pleas, preferring to remain in the spiritual darkness which finally overwhelmed them.

### SOME OPINIONS ABOUT ALI

The character of Ali is one which has exercised a peculiar fascination over many distinguished scholars, some of whose assessments are given below:-

#### **John. J. Pool on Ali** <sup>6</sup>

John. J. Pool laments the death of Ali as follows:-

“The fact is he (Ali) was too mild a man for the stirring times in which he lived. He was too slow in resolve, and too undecided in action. At any time he preferred compromise and delay to energy and promptness, and with fatal results....”

“The death of Ali was an epoch-making event. We come now to the parting of ways. Henceforward the Commanders of the Faithful ceased to be elected by the votes of the people of Medina or Mecca. Arabia was no longer to be the seat of temporal power. For the future, in Islam might was to take the place of right. And the spiritual power also underwent a change.”

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<sup>6</sup> John. J. Pool. *Studies in Mohammadanism*. P. 61-62.

**Gibbon<sup>7</sup> on Ali**

Gibbon sees Ali's main defect as one of rashness, rather than of caution.

"A tumultuous anarchy of five days (after the martyrdom of Osman) was appeased by the inauguration of Ali, his refusal would have provoked a general massacre. In this painful situation he supported the becoming pride of the chief of the Hashimites; declared that he had rather serve than reign, rebuked the presumption of the strangers, and required the formal, if not the voluntary, assent of the chiefs of the nation.

He has never been accused of promoting the assassination of Osman; though Persia indiscreetly celebrates the festivals of that holy martyr. The quarrel between Osman and his subjects was assuaged by the early mediation of Ali, and Hasan, the eldest of his sons, was insulted and wounded in the defence of the Caliph...."

"A life of prayer and contemplation had not chilled the martial activity of Ali, but in a mature age, after a long experience of mankind, he still betrayed in his conduct the rashness and indiscretion of youth."

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<sup>7</sup> Edward Gibbon. *Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III. P. 521. Publishers Frederick Warne & Co. London.



### **Impatience the Chief Trait of Ali's Character**

It will be thus clear that impatience, rather than caution, is more frequently attributed to Ali, along with an almost pathological inability to make decisions when he was in a state of depression. Indecision and impatience are not mutually exclusive although caution and rashness would appear to be contradictory elements and unlikely to be found in the same person. It is also important for the reader to distinguish between Ali, the hot-headed boy in the household of the holy Prophet and Ali the mature recluse.

#### **Hitti on Ali**<sup>8</sup>

Philip Hitti draws attention to the tremendous influence exerted by Ali after his death, in contrast with his somewhat ineffectual reign.

“Valiant in battle, wise in counsel, eloquent in speech, true to his friends, magnanimous to his foes, Ali became both the paragon of Muslim nobility and chivalry (*futuwah*) and the Solomon of Arabic tradition, around whose name poems, proverbs, sermonettes and anecdotes innumerable have clustered. He had a swarthy complexion, large black eyes, bald head, thick and long white beard, and was corpulent and of medium stature. His sabre “*Dhul Faqar*” (the cleaver of vertebrae), wielded by the Prophet on the memorable battle-field of Badr, has been immortalised in the words of the verse found

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<sup>8</sup> Philip. K. Hitti. *History of the Arabs*. P. 183. Publishers Macmillian & Co. Edition 1949.

engraved on many medieval Arab swords: "La sayfa illa Dhul-al-Faqar, wa la fata illa Ali". "No sword can match Dhul-al-Faqar, and no young warrior can compare with Ali." The later fityan movement which developed ceremonies and insignia savouring of medieval European Chivalry and the modern scout movements, took Ali for its Fata and model. Regarded as wise and brave by all the Islamic world, as idealistic and exemplary by many Fityan and dervish fraternities, as sinless and infallible by his partisans, and ever held to be the incarnation of the deity by the Ghulah (extremists) among them, he whose worldly career was practically a failure, has continued to exert a posthumous influence second only to what of the Holy Prophet himself. The throngs of pilgrims that still stream to his Mashhad at Najf and to that of his son al-Hussain, the Shia arch-saint and martyr at nearby Karbala, and the passion play enacted annually on the tenth of Muharram throughout the Shia world testify to the possibility that death may avail a Messiah more than life."

### Syed Ameer Ali<sup>9</sup> on Ali

Syed Ameer Ali belonging to the Shi'ite sect, looks on Ali as "the foremost of Muslims":-

"Mild, beneficent, and humane, ready to help the weak and distressed his life had been devoted to the cause of Islam. Had he possessed the sternness of Umar's character he would have been more successful

<sup>9</sup> Syed Ameer Ali. *A short history of the Saracens*. P. 52. Publishers Macmillan & Co. Ed. 1951.

in governing an unruly race like the Arabs. But his forbearance and magnanimity were misunderstood, and his humanity and love of truth was turned by his enemies to their own advantage....”

“Ali is described as a man of ruddy complexion, not very tall but extremely strong, inclined to stoutness, with a flowing beard, soft grey eyes, and a look of treat amiability and kindness. His bravery had won him the title of the “Lion of god”, his learning that of the “Gate of Knowledge.” Chivalrous, humane, and forbearing to the verge of weakness, as a ruler he came by Umar for the welfare of the people were due to his counsel. Ever ready to succour the weak and to redress the wrongs of the injured, the accounts of his valorous deeds are recited with enthusiasm from the bazars of Cairo to those of Delhi. How the mail-clad knight rescued a stranger beset by lions in the desert; how the poor woman, captured by brigands with her wounded and dying husband, wailed for the succour which never failed, and how the “Lion of God” appeared and saved them, such stories bring back to Arab life the chivalry of the Arabs --- personified in their greatest hero. With his dying breath he inculcated lessons of charity, love, humility and self-abnegation to his sons. He expressly ordered that no harshness should be used towards his murderer, who should be executed with one blow. In summing up his worth, Masudi says --- “If the glorious name of being the first of the Muslims, a comrade of the Prophet in exile, his faithful companion in the struggle for the faith, his intimate associate in life, and his kinsman, if a true knowledge of the spirit of his teachings and of the



Book; if self-abnegation and practice of justice; if honesty purity and love of truth; if a knowledge of law and science, constitutes a claim to pre-eminence, then all must regard Ali as the foremost of Muslims. We shall search in vain to find, either among his predecessors (save one) or among his successors, those virtues with which God had endowed him.”

### Sir William<sup>10</sup> Muir on Ali

Sir William Muir was a great admirer of Ali who says:-

“In the character of Ali, there are many things to commend. Mild and beneficent, he treated al-Basra, when prostrate at his feet, with a generous forbearance. Towards theocratic fanatics, who wearied his patience by incessant intrigues and insensate rebellion, he showed no vindictiveness. Excepting Muawiya, the man of all others whom he ought not to have estranged, he carried the policy of conciliating his enemies to a dangerous extreme. In compromise, indeed, and in procrastination lay the failure of his caliphate. With greater vigour, spirit and determination, his might have averted the schism which for a time threatened the existence of Islam, and which has never ceased to weaken it.”

“Ali was wise in counsel, and many an adage and sapient proverb has been attributed to him. But

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<sup>10</sup> Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall* p. 288.

like Solomon, his wisdom was for others than himself."

### **Encyclopaedia Britannica on Ali**

In this immortal work, Ali is described as a bold, noble and generous man, "The last and worthiest of the primitive Muslims, who imbibed his religious enthusiasm from companionship with the Prophet himself, and who followed to the last the simplicity of his example."

### **Charles Mills<sup>11</sup> on Ali**

"As the chief of the family of Hashim, and as the cousin and son-in-law of him whom the Arabians respected almost to idolatry, it is apparently incredible that Ali was not raised to the Caliphate immediately on the death of Muhammad. To the advantage of his birth and marriage, was added the friendship of the Prophet. The son of Abu Talib was one of the first converts to Islam and Muhammad's favourite appellation of him was, the Aaron of a second Moses. His talents as an orator, and his intrepidity as a warrior, commended him to a nation in whose judgement courage was virtue and eloquence was wisdom. But the pride and loftiness of his spirit endured not the caution in-separable from schemes of policy, and continually precipitated him into rashness. His opposition to Abu Bakr would not have ceased, if Fatima had lived; but on her death, six months after that of her father, the companions of Muhammad

<sup>11</sup> Charles Mills. A history of Muhammadanism p. 84.

relaxed in their friendship to his family. In the reigns of Abu Bakr, Umar and Osman, a dignified independence was preserved by Ali. On the invitation of the Caliphs, he assisted in the councils at Medina, but he was principally occupied in the tranquil pursuits of domestic life, and the various duties of his religion. On the murder of Osman, the Egyptians, who were at Medina, offered him the Caliphate. Indignant that the power of nomination should be usurped by the strangers, Ali declared that the suffrages of the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina alone could be available. The public voice soon echoed the opinion of the murderers, and the scruples of Ali were soon removed. In apprehension of the enmity of Ayesha, his relentless foe, and of the whole family of Muawiya he declined to receive in private the proffered allegiance of the chiefs. With his accustomed simplicity, he proceeded to the Mosque clad in a cotton gown, a coarse turban on his head, his slippers were in one hand, and a bow, instead of a staff, occupied the other."

### **Professor Nicholson<sup>12</sup> on the character of Ali**

Professor Nicholson, like Hitti, emphasises the extent of Ali's posthumous influence:-

"He (Ali) was a gallant warrior, a wise counsellor, a true friend and a generous foe. He

<sup>12</sup> Professor R.A. Nicholson. *A literary History of the Arabs*. P. 191. Publishers. The Cambridge University Press. Edition 1953.



excelled in poetry and in eloquence; his verses and sayings are famous throughout the Muhammadan East though few of them can be considered authentic. A fine spirit worthy to be compared with Mantrose and Bayard, he had no talent for the stern realities of Statecraft, and was overmatched by unscrupulous rivals who knew that "War is a game of deceit." Thus his career was in one sense a failure: his authority as Caliph was never admitted, while he lived, by the whole community. On the other hand, he has exerted, down to the present day, a posthumous influence only second to that of Muhammad himself. Within a century of his death he came to be regarded as the Prophet's successor *JURE DIVINO*: as a blessed martyr, sinless and infallible; and by some even as an incarnation of God. The Ali of Shi'ite legend is not an historical figure glorified: rather does he symbolise, in purely mythical fashion the religious aspirations and political aims of a large section of the Muslim world."

### **Dr. Andrew Crichton<sup>13</sup> on Ali**

"This prince united the qualifications of a poet, an orator, and a soldier, for he was the bravest and most eloquent man in his dominions. A monument of his wisdom still remains in a collection of precepts or sentences of which 169 have been translated by Ockley. Many other maxims and poems have been ascribed to him, but some hesitation must be allowed in fixing their authorship. The eulogies of his partisans are fulsome and extravagant; "the king of men, the lion

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Andrew Crichton, *History of Arabia and its people*. P. 307 Publishers Nelsons & sons. London. Ed. 1852.

of God, the distributor of light and graces", are among the epithets which their adoration has conferred on him. During the Caliphate of the house of Ummayyad, the place of his interment was kept concealed. In the fourth age of the Hejira, when the Abbasid ascended the Muslim throne, it was discovered, and a tomb, a temple and a city arose on the spot, known in modern times by the name of Mashid Ali, five or six miles from the ruins of Kufa and 120 to the south of Baghdad. The monarchs of Persia have enriched it with a succession of spoils and thousands of Shias pay their homage."

Dr. Crichton also describes Ali's prowess at the battle of Siffin in the following words:-

"Ninety actions or skirmishes are recorded to have taken place; and in these the humanity of Ali was as conspicuous as his valour. He strictly enjoined his troops invariably to await the first onset of the enemy, to spare the fugitives, and respect the virtues of female captives. Not a day passed in which he displayed not some extraordinary feat of personal strength and skill. The bravest leaders of the Syrian host fell in succession by the single prowess of his resistless arm - "For death itself dwelt on the point of his spear, and perdition in the hilt of the sword." "The hideous and gigantic Kerreib, who could obliterate with his thumb the impression of a silver coin, he cleft at one stroke from the crest to the saddle-bow. Two warriors attacked him in disguise, but with a sweep of his double scimitar he bisected the foremost through the middle with such rapidity and precision that the rider remained fixed on

the saddle; the spectators concluding he had missed his blow, until the motion of the horse threw the body in halves to the ground."

### **Carlyle<sup>14</sup> on Ali**

"As for this young Ali, one cannot but like him. A noble minded creature, as he shows himself, now and always afterwards; full of affection, of fiery daring. Something chivalrous in him, brave as a lion, yet with a grace, a truth and affection worthy of Christian knight-hood. He died by assassination in the Mosque at Kufa, a death occasioned by his own generous fairness, confidence in the fairness of others: he said, If the wound proved not unto death they must pardon the Assassin, but if it did, then must slay him straightway, so that they two in the same hour might appear before God, and see which side of that quarrel was the just one."

### **Dr. Henry Stubbe<sup>15</sup> on Ali**

"Ali was of a brown complexion, a little man with a belly somewhat large, he had a contempt of the world, its glory and pomp, he feared God much, gave many alms, was just in all his actions, humble and affable; of an exceeding quick wit, and of an ingenuity

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas Carlyle. *On Heroes and Hero worship and the Heroic in History*, p. 77.

<sup>15</sup> Dr. Henry Stubbe. *An account of the rise and progress of Mahometanism*. P. 83. Publishers Orientalia, Lahore. Ed. 1954.



that was not common, he was exceedingly learned, not only in those sciences that terminate in speculation, but those which extend to practice."

### Major Price<sup>16</sup> on Ali

"His (Ali's) virtues and extraordinary qualifications have been the subject of voluminous panegyric, and his war-like exploits from his youth upwards have been particularly celebrated in the *Khawer Namah*, a poem well known in the East, and which may, perhaps contend in extravagance with the wildest effusions of European romance. With his acknowledged talents and magnanimity, it is, however, difficult to account for the train of civil mischief and perpetual discontent, which continued to disturb him through the whole of his reign. His gallant spirit was probably incapable of bending to the ordinary shifts of political craft, and it is perhaps true, that the Arabian chiefs were not yet sufficiently disciplined to see the sovereign authority quietly monopolised by any particular family."

### The History of the Arabs<sup>17</sup>

"As to his person, Ali had a very red face, large eyes, a prominent belly, a large beard, a hairy breast,

<sup>16</sup> Major David Price. *Memoirs of the Principal events of Muhammadan History* p. 363, Publishers Hurrt Rec. orme & Brown. London 1811.

<sup>17</sup> The modern part of an universal History. Vol. II Publishers S. Richardson T. Osborne, C. Hitch, A. Miller and John Rimington.

and a very swarthy complexion. He was rather short than middle sized. of a youthful, florid and frequently smiling countenance. Some, however, write that he had hair on his head, which was not very grey but formed into curls. With regard to his disposition, this Caliph, if we will believe the Muslim writers, had the fear of God constantly before his eyes, was extremely charitable, just, humble and a strenuous defender of what they call the true religion. He was also very acute, learned, and extremely well-versed in all useful art and sciences. His bravery never failed him, nor was he more eminent and conspicuous for that, than for his liberality and munificence, as well as that sweetness of temper which so remarkably distinguished him on all occasions."

**Quraish Tribe**

Abd-Manaf

Hashim

Abd-Shams'

Abd-al-Muttalib

Umayyah

Abdullah

Abu Talib

Al-Abbas

Harb

Abu'l As

MUHAMMAD  
The Prophet

Ali

Abu Sufyan

Affan

Hasan

Hussain

Osman  
The Caliph

Imam Zain-al-Abidin

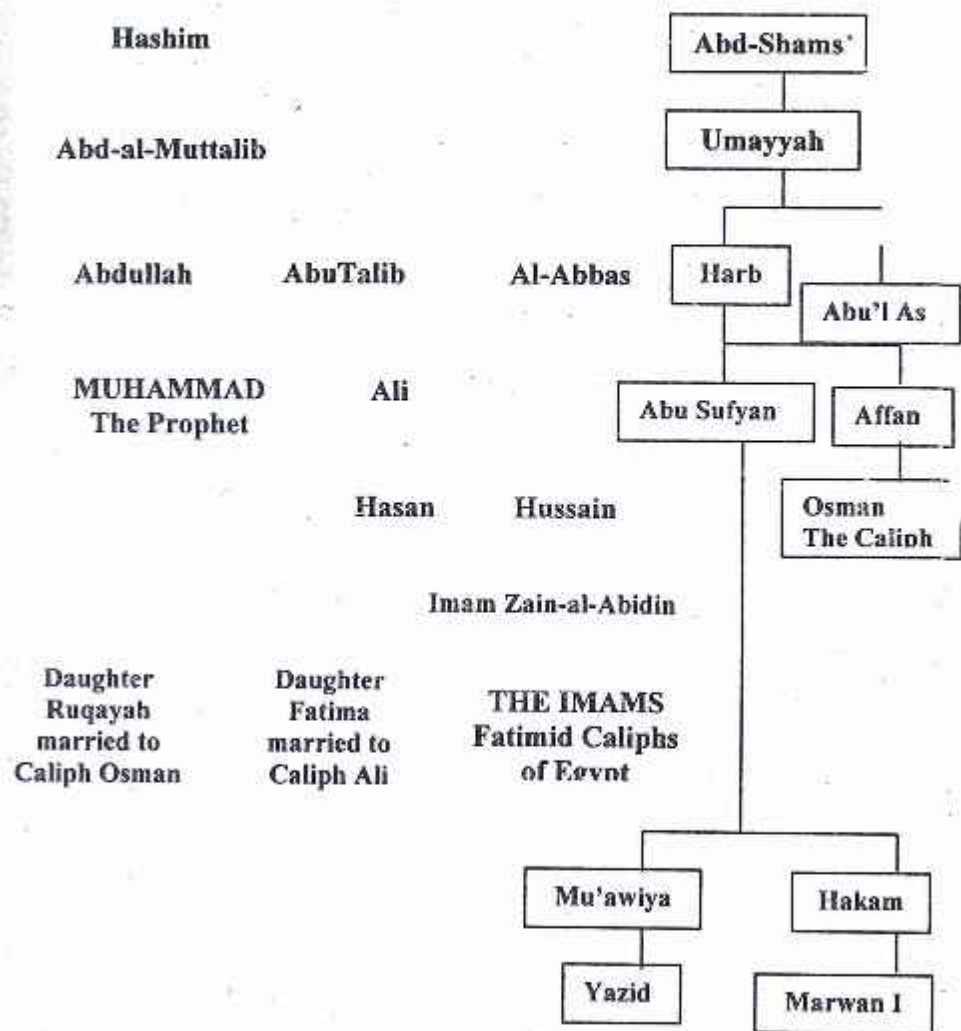
THE IMAMS  
Fatimid Caliphs  
of EgyptDaughter  
Ruqayah  
married to  
Caliph OsmanDaughter  
Fatima  
married to  
Caliph Ali

Mu'awiya

Hakam

Yazid

Marwan I





## CHAPTER V

### **ALI, THE FOUNDER OF SUFISM**

#### **Ali, the Wali Allah**

Ali is unanimously acclaimed by the Sufis as the founder of their sect because he combined mystical intuition with the firmest grasp of Islamic theology. The traditions of the Sufis depict him as "Wali Allah" (friend of God) and ascribe to him esoteric spiritual powers. They maintain that the highest aim of knowledge, as preached by Ali, is the awakening of latent spiritual faculties. They hold that if a person follows certain "Tariqas", or Paths", as laid down by their Saint of Saints, he will be enabled to discover his true and inner self. To this inner self, God will reveal Himself, while the self will disappear in the vision of the All-Absorbing Reality. They quote the personal example of Ali who, amid the multifarious duties of kingship spent wakeful nights in prayer and meditation and thus found peace in the ecstasies of mystic experience. A keen sense of responsibility weighed on Ali's mind and a sudden recollection of a duty unfulfilled would draw a torrent of tears from his eyes, driving him into a fit of melancholy. Often he would sob the whole night through and mortify himself to subdue the temptations of the flesh, then God would reward him with a glimpse of that Inner Vision. Through austerity and prayer, duties which Ali always enjoined on others, Ali was able better to contemplate the Almighty, and through the "Dhikr" or religious exercise that he practised.

## **Ali's Mysticism a Practical One**

Mysticism may be a phase of thought or it may be a phase of feeling. Ali did not enter into the philosophical or speculative aspects of mysticism, confining himself to the more practical aspects, based on his own experience and observation. The experience itself brought him face to face with that supreme, all-pervading, in-dwelling power, in whom all things are merged to become one. Such qur'anic verses as "I (God) want to create my viceroy on earth" (2:29). Again "Whatever is in the earth or in the Heavens has been made subject to man" (13:45); "We are nearer to man than the vein of his neck", and "Wherever you turn, there is the face of God," "A people whom He loveth and who Love him", led Ali to lose himself through contemplation, in divine love. Because this direct intercourse with the Being of Beings had made him a partaker of divine revelations, Ali wanted to show other men how they, too, might know the joy and wonder of communion with Almighty God. The practical side of his mysticism was, therefore, the way in which he urged his fellow-Believers to abandon their selfish pride, to discipline the flesh, to submit to the will of Almighty God. Again and again, he exhorted them not to indulge in the gross licentiousness which had characterised Arab society in the "Days of ignorance", enjoining them to live, instead, in simplicity and piety. Even on the battlefield Ali stressed the need to avoid the temptation of the flesh. With death so near them, he urged his soldiers to bear the fatigue of long marches, and the terrible



thirsts and hungers as a means of self-mortification, the better to behold their God. Setting a personal example he urged upon them acts of renunciation and saw to it that they were humane to the aged, the weak and the sick. All this Ali saw as a preparation for the life everlasting.

“Man” said Ali, “is a wave in the boundless Sea of God.” As long as man’s vision is clouded by ignorance and sensuality, man, Ali maintained, will consider himself a separate entity, different from God. But once let that veil between him and god be removed and he will then know himself for what he really is. The “wave” will merge with the ocean. The enlightenment is needed so that one can first get to know oneself; only then can one get to know God. To this end religious exercises must be practised.

### **Ali, the Prince of Saints**

The Sufis look upon Ali as the founder of that knowledge of “Tasuwuf” which harmonises the mystical, moral and intellectual approaches to Reality. They call the period when he was Caliph, “The sufistic epoch” and speak with intense pride of the way in which his spiritual intuitions re-enforced the doctrine of “Tauheed” (monotheism); and of how, by his personal example, Ali illumined the way in which the struggles of a man in this world can fulfil the covenant between the created and the Creator.

Ali preached that any form of knowledge which failed to show the Infinite Reality to man was useless,



because it could not fill in that vacuum of which the aching soul of every individual was so pathetically conscious. Since virtue purified the soul, its incorporation in one's life paved the way for the spiritual enhancement which the soul craved for. Hence Ali's mysticism, stressing as it did the co-ordination of the mental faculties through the observance of the Shariah or laws of Islam, has made a definite lodgement in Islamic thought. The various sects of Islam unanimously look upon Ali as a saint, second to none in the history of mankind for the austerity of his mortification and the rapture of the divine vision to which he was admitted. They recognise Ali as the king of "Auwliyas" who wore the signet ring of saintship, and it is by his intercession alone that the seeker after God can attain to the degree of "Waliyat" (friendship with God). Hence the doctrine of "Inner Light" can only come by the intercession and affinity with Ali --- the only person in authority who can give supernatural guidance.

### **The Importance of the "Shari'a"**

In the early days of Islam the need to regulate one by the 'Shari'a' 'or' Laws of Islam, was taken for granted. Ali revived that necessity and constantly emphasised how essential it was to observe the Shari'a if one hoped to 'see God'. Nowadays, Sufism has rather different characteristics and, with its clear-cut dogmas and commentaries, appears as a distinct, almost separate, system. At some time during the development of the system, adherence to the laws of the Shari'a ceased to be incumbent upon those "Ahl-i-

Tasuwuf' who had attained the goal of the Sufistic path.

Later Sufis made a clear departure from the practices of Shari'a. For instance, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. we come across the great Sufi, Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 A.D.) who describes his heart as a temple for idols, a Kab'ah for pilgrims, the tablet of the Pentateuch and the Qur'an; for him religion was Love and Love alone.

Ali's Sufism was of a different cast. Again and again he exclaimed with vehemence how necessary it was to follow the injunctions of the Shari'a, maintaining that that was the only way in which the Individual could attain Absolute Truth. Ali's Sufism was in every way true in spirit to the orthodox Islamic faith and its practices.

In his sermons, as collected in the "Najh-tu'l-Bulagha" Ali frequently makes the point that the teachings of mysticism are identical with the contents of revelation and that an equation of both shows the Believer in Faith the true path to God.

For the uninitiated today, it is difficult to assess the role of the Shari'a, for the Sufis keep their mysteries secret and do not practice them publicly. When they do express themselves it is in language which is veiled, allusive and metaphorical.

## **Subjugation of the Emotions**

To Ali, Sufism was meant only to awaken piety in an individual --- an intuitive experience of the yearnings of an aching soul which seeks repose and bliss. Nowhere did Ali preach total renunciation of the world or urge upon others a completely ascetic life. His Sufism taught him that men were in the world and of the world and that they should not give it up. Nevertheless, in this secular life it behoved the individual to discipline his emotions, to devote his spare hours to meditations, to inflict on himself self-mortification, and to denounce the temptations of the world while still living in it. In its essence, Ali's Sufism was the exposition of a "Theology of the emotions"; meditation and prayer possessing the power to bring about a change of emphasis from worldliness to un-worldliness. The process of subjugating the emotions involved abandoning the pleasures of the flesh and getting rid of evil thoughts and base desires so as to purify the mind of everything save God.

The newly-sprung colonies of Busra, and Kufa in Iraq, diversely populated from all kinds of races, proved fertile soil for the seeds which Ali was to sow. The combined mysticism and asceticism of the clerico-political addresses which Ali delivered to his followers at Kufa, the newly made capital of the Caliphate, show that many of his audience were already accustomed to disciplining their emotions in contemplation. This mysticism, which was both practical and psychological in character readily lent itself to the devotional



exercises enjoined by Ali and men thronged from far and wide to hear his sermons.

### **Ali's Mysticism, a Stark Necessity**

Ali's war with Muawiya had brought untold misery upon the people; men's minds had been disquieted by the conflict which has never resulted in a really decisive victory for either side, and by the lack of spiritual consolation which they felt defeat had brought in its train. It was against this unhappy background that Ali promulgated and expounded the doctrines of "Tasuwuf". In those days the Sufis were not a separate sect; indeed men who had taken opposite sides in politics and fought against each other were equally drawn towards Ali to listen, side by side, to his stirring addresses as how to strengthen their intercourse with God. In such circumstances it was only natural that the exposition of "Tasuwuf" should appeal to men's heart and captivate them.

It was Ali's mysticism alone which saved his Muslim subjects from the scepticism into which they had fallen. His addresses were a fountain of spiritual consolation to a parched congregation. His exhortations showed the way to the Believers in Faith, drawing them closer together in bonds of union and love for one another.

### **The Need for Spiritual Director**

The Sufis from time immemorial have recognised the necessity of a "Sheikh" or "Pir" or

“Spiritual director” to whom humanly may be entrusted for guidance and instruction. Blind obedience was to be offered to this director, who was supposed to possess hypnotic spiritual powers and to be well acquainted with all the paths of “Tarequit”. The disciple was required to remain with him for a number of years until he had familiarised himself with ‘mystic’ experiences and could himself graduate as a leader.

Since Ali possessed a noble, religious and philanthropic spirit to the highest degree, the Sufi recognise in him their first spiritual Director; he it was who showed the way to eternal bliss. They hold that if Muhammad (may peace be upon him) was the seal of Prophets, Ali their first leader was, undoubtedly, the seal of saints. Since Ali no one who attains the degree of ‘saintship’ can have done so without the intercession of Ali.

He describes the creation of sky, earth and the birth of Adam in his sermon. Thus he illustrates the link and relation between God and human beings and expresses God’s love towards human being to whom He granted facilities on earth and created sky and earth and all the planets and asked human being to make the best of all these bounties.

Ali in this regard delivers a sermon, and says:-

<sup>1</sup>Praise is due to Allah whose worth can not be described by speakers, whose bounties can not be counted by calculators and whose claim (to obedience) can not be satisfied by those who attempt to do so, whom the height of intellectual courage cannot appreciate, and the divings of understanding cannot reach: He for whose description no limit has been laid down, no eulogy exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds, through His compassion! And made firm the shaking earth with rocks. The foremost in religion is His knowledge, the perfection of His knowledge is to testify Him, the perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His oneness the perfection of believing in His oneness is to regard Him Pure and the perfection of His purity is to deny Him Attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute. Thus whoever attaches attributes to Allah recognises His like, and who recognises His like regards Him two and who regards Him two recognises parts for Him and who recognises parts for Him mistook Him; and who mistook Him pointed at Him and who pointed at Him admitted limitations for Him and who admitted limitations for Him numbered Him. Whoever said in what is He, held that He is contained and whoever said on what is He held He is not on something else. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical

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<sup>1</sup> Sermon No. 1.



separation. He acts but without connotation of movements and instruments. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is only One, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence. He initiated creation most initially and commenced it originally, without undergoing reflection, without making use of any experiment, without innovating any movement and without experiencing any aspiration of mind. He allotted all things their times, put together their variations gave them their properties and determined their features knowing them before creating them realising fully their limits and confines and appreciating their propensities and intricacies. When Almighty created the openings of atmosphere, expanse of firmament and strata of winds, He flowed into it water whose waves were stormy and whose surges leapt one over the other. He loaded it on dashing wind and breaking typhoons, ordered them to shed it back (as rain), gave the wind control over the vigour of the rain, and acquainted it with its limitations. The wind blew under it while water flowed furiously over it. Then Almighty created forth wind and made its movement sterile, perpetuate its position, intensified its motion and spread it far and wide. Then He ordered the wind to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned it like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the firmament throwing its from position on the rear and the stationary on the flowing till its level was raised and the surface was full of foam. Then Almighty raised the foam on to the open wind and vast firmament and made therefrom the seven skies and

made the lower one as a stationary surge and the upper one as protective ceiling and a high edifice without any pole to support it or nail to hold it together. The He decorated them with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and effulgent moon under the revolving sky, moving ceiling and rotating firmament.

Then He created the openings between high skies and filled them with all classes of His angels. Some of them are in prostration and do not kneel up. Others are in kneeling position and do not stand up. Some of them are in array and do not leave their position. Others are extolling Allah and do not get tired. The sleep of the eye or the slip of wit, or languor of the body or the effect of forgetfulness does not effect them. Among them are those who work as trusted bearers of His message, those who serve as speaking tongues for his prophets and these who carry to and from His orders and injunctions. Among them are the protectors of His creatures and guards of the doors of Paradise. Among them are those also whose steps are fixed on earth but their necks are protruding into the skies, their limbs are getting out on all sides, their shoulders are in accord with the columns of the Divine Throne, their eyes are down cast before it, they have spread down their wings under it and they have rendered between themselves and all else curtains of honour and screens of power. They do not think of their Creator through image, do not impute to Him attributed of the created, do not confine Him within abodes and do not point at Him through illustrations.



**(Description of the creation of Adam, A.S.)**

Allah collected from hard, soft, sweet and sour earth, clay which He dripped in water till it got pure, and kneaded it with moister till it became gluey. From it He carved an image with curves joints, limbs and segments. He solidified it till it dried up for a fixed time and a known duration. Then he blew into it out of His Spirit whereupon it took the pattern of a human being with mind that governs him, intelligence which he makes use of, limbs that serve him, organs that change his position, sagacity that differentiates between truth and untruth, and tastes smells, colours and species. He is a mixture of clays of different colours, cohesive materials, divergent contradictories and differing properties like heat, cold, softness and hardness. Then Allah asked the angels to fulfil His promise with them and to accomplish the pledge of His injunction to them by acknowledging Him through prostration to Him and submission to His honoured position. So Allah said, "Be prostrate towards Adam" (A.S.) and they prostrated except Iblees (Satan). Self-importance with-held him and vice overcame him. So that he took pride in his own creation with fire and treated contemptuously the creation of clay. So Allah allowed him time in order to let him fully deserve His wrath, and to complete (man's) test and to fulfil the promise. (He had made to Satan). Thus He said, "Verily you have been allowed time till the known Day." Thereafter Allah inhabited Adam (A.S.) in a house where He made his life pleasant and his stay safe, and He cautioned him of Iblees and his enmity. Then his enemy (Iblees) envied his abiding in Paradise



and his contacts with the virtuous. So he changed his conviction into wavering and determination into weakness. He thus converted his happiness into fear and his prestige into shame. Then Allah offered to Adam (A.S.) the chance to repent, taught him words of His Mercy, promised him return to his Paradise and sent down to the place of trial and procreation of progeny. From his progeny Allah chose prophets and took their pledge for his revelation and for carrying His message as their trust. In course of time many people perverted Allah's trust with them and ignored His position and took idols along with Him. Satan turned them away from knowing Him and kept them aloof from His worship. Then Allah sent His Messengers and series of His prophets towards them to get them fulfil the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and show them the signs of His Omnipotence namely the sky which is raised over them, the earth that is placed beneath them, means of living that sustain them, deaths that make them die, ailments that turn them old and incidents that successively be take them. Allah never allowed His creation to remain without a Prophet deputed by Him, or a book sent down from Him or a binding argument or a standing plea. These Messengers were such that they did not feel little because of smallness of their number or largeness of the number of their falsifiers. Among them was either a predecessor who would name the one to follow or the follower who had been introduced by the predecessor. In this way ages passed by and times rolled on, fathers passed away while sons took their

places till Allah deputed Mohammad (S.A.) as His Prophet (S.A.), in fulfilment of His promise and in completion of His Prophethood. His pledge had been taken from the Prophets, his traits of character were well reputed and his birth was honourable. The people of the earth at this time were divided in different parties, their aims were separate and ways were diverse. They either likened Allah with His creation or twisted His Names or turned to else than Him. Through Mohammad (S.A.) Allah guided them out of wrong and with his efforts took them out of ignorance. Then Allah chose for Mohammad (S.A.), and on his progeny (A.S.), to meet Him, selected him for His own nearness, regarded him too dignified to remain in this world and decided to remove him from this place of trial. So He drew him towards Himself with honour. Allah may shower His blessing on him and his progeny. But the Prophet (S.A.) left among you the same which other Prophets left among their peoples, because Prophets do not leave them in dark without a clear path and a standing ensign, namely the Book of your Creator clarifying its permissions and prohibitions its obligations and discretion its repealing injunctions and the repealed ones, its permissible matters and compulsory ones, its particulars and the general ones, its lessons and illustrations, its long and the short ones, its clear and obscure ones, detailing its abbreviations and clarifying its obscurities. In it there are some verses whose



knowledge<sup>2</sup> is obligatory and others whose ignorance by the people is permissible. It also contains what appears to be obligatory according to the Book but its repeal is signified by the Prophet's action or that which appears compulsory according to the Prophet's (S.A.) action but the Book allows not following it. Or there are those which are obligatory in a given time but not so after that time. Its prohibitions also differ. Some are major regarding which there exists the threat of fire (Hell) and others are minor for which there are prospects of forgiveness. There are also those of which a small portion is also acceptable (to Allah) but they are capable of being expanded.

Allah has made obligatory upon you the pilgrimage to His sacred house which is the

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<sup>2</sup> "The foremost in religion (Deen) is His knowledge". The literal meaning of "Deen" is obedience and its popular sense is code, whether literal sense is taken or the popular one, in either case, if the mind is devoid of any conception of divinity, there would be no question of obedience, nor of following any code, because when there is no aim there is no point in advancing towards it: Where there is no object in view there is no sense in making efforts to achieve it. Nevertheless when the nature and guiding faculty of man bring him in contact with a superior Authority and his taste for obedience and unpulse of submission subjugates him before a Deity, he finds himself bound by certain limitations as against abject freedom of activity. These very limitations are Deen (Religion) whose point of commencement is Knowledge of Allah and acknowledgement of his Being.



turning point for the people who go to it as beasts or pigeons go towards spring water. Allah the glorified made it a sign of their supplication before His Greatness and their acknowledgement of His Dignity. He selected from among His creation those who on listening to His call responded to it and testified His word. They stood in the position of His Prophets and resembled His angels who surround the Divine Throne securing Allah the benefits of performing His worship and hastening towards His promised forgiveness. Allah the glorified made it an emblem for Islam and an object of respect for those who turn to it. He made obligatory its pilgrimage and laid down its claim for which He held you responsible to discharge it. Thus Allah the glorified said :

“And (purely) for God, is incumbent upon mankind, the pilgrimage to the House, for those who can afford to journey thither. And whoever denieth then verily, God is Self-sufficiently in dependants of the worlds.”

CHAPTER VISHIAISM**The "Shia'an-I-Ali" or the followers of Ali**

No book dealing with Ali would be complete with out discussing Shiaism, the cult of his followers. We have seen that the assassination of caliph Osman led to schism in Islam on political and dynastic grounds. In the period of anarchy which followed, the Muslims were divided into four major political parties, (a) "The Traditionalists", or those pious Muslims who regarded the profane secular life of their rulers with disdain, a party which included the "Ashab" (companions) and the "Ansars" (Helpers of the Holy Prophet); (b) "The Kharajites", the Puritan Theocrats of Islam, who consisted of large numbers of dissatisfied rebels who had vowed, not necessarily for religious reasons, to wage war against the undesirable Caliphs; (c) "The Mawalis" (clients) an oppressed races which had accepted Islam and which demanded equality of treatment from their Arab masters; and (d) "The Shi'ites" or the followers of Ali, who, having suffered irreparable wrong at the hands of the ungodly Ummayyads favoured the succession of Ali's descendants to the Caliphate.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reinhart .... Spanish Islam.

## **Shiaism a Spontaneous Growth**

It is a popular fallacy to think of Shiaism as of Persian or Arabian origin. Some scholars maintain that an obscure Arabian sect called Sabaities was the precursor of the Shi'ites, but a closer scrutiny shows that Shiaism was a spontaneous growth taking place in many lands simultaneously. With the spread of Islam to Persia, India, China, Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean countries, it was inevitable that the primitive religion, as preached by Muhammad (may peace be upon him) should be influenced by its contact with Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity, all of these religions containing strong elements of mysticism. Vedantic philosophy of the Hindus with its emphasis on the transmigration of the soul, the stress laid by Zoroaster on the theory of the divine rights of Kings, the vigorous penance and exercise in self-annihilation as expounded by Buddha and the pantheistic monasticism of Christianity, were bound to have an effect on Islam, particularly as new converts to Islam from these religions retained most of their old social and religious customs. Silently and almost imperceptibly, a general fusion of doctrines and dogmas took place, a blending which led to the development of Islamic mysticism. Thus it would be incorrect to assume, as so many people do, that Shiaism was born either on the 17<sup>th</sup> Ramdan 40 A.H. (January 24, 661 A.D.), the date of the assassination of Ali, or on the 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram 61 A.H. (10<sup>th</sup> October 680 A.D.), the date of martyrdom of Ali's younger son Hussain at Karbala. The differences between the



Shi'ites and other Muslims simply became more pronounced as a result of these murders.

### **The Saba'ites**

The earliest exponent of the Shi'ite doctrines was a Jewish convert to Islam called Abdullah ibn Saba, a native of San'a near Yemen. Ibn Saba incorporated many Jewish doctrines into Islam, giving to his cult the name of Shiaism. Ibn Saba, who had accepted Islam in the reign of Osman voluntarily took up the role of a travelling missionary, touring from place to place and propagating his doctrines wherever he went. In the words of Tabari, "Wherever he went, he led the people astray." We read that he visited Hijaz, Busra, Kufa, Syria and finally settled in Egypt. He emphasised the doctrine of "Raj's" or 'Palingenesis'<sup>2</sup>. "Verily it would be a blasphemy" urged he, "to believe in the return of Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah and to repudiate the return of Muhammad which God has announced". In support of his argument, Ibn Saba would quote the Quranic verse, "He who has ordained the Qur'an for thee (Muhammad) will bring thee back to a place of return" (i.e. to Mecca).

Ibn Saba, playing on the ambiguity of the word Mu'ad (which literary means a place of return), believed that it alluded to the return of Muhammad at the end of this world. According to the Sunni writers, his misconstruing the meaning of this and other verses,

<sup>2</sup> R.A. Noolson - A literary of the Arabs.

resulted in the introduction of innovations which brought about many doctrinal changes in Islam.

### The Doctrines of the Saba'ites

One of the many doctrines preached by Ibn Saba, was that everyone of the thousands of Prophets that have come into the world, has always had a "wasi" or "executor"; the executor of Muhammad was Ali. Stretching this point further, he maintained that, as Muhammad was the last of the Prophets, so Ali must be the last of the "executors". As a corollary to this proposition, Abu Bakr, Umar and Osman were usurpers. In the reign of Osman, Ibn Saba is said to have instigated the malcontents to rebel in Ali's favour, and his doctrines received further impetus when Ali's younger son, Hussain, was murdered at Kerbala.

Professor Nicholson<sup>3</sup> speaking of the doctrines of the Saba'ites observes:

"According to Shahrastani, he (Ibn Saba) was banished by Ali for saying ("Anta Anta") "Thou are thou" i.e. "thou art God". This refers to the doctrine taught by Ibn Saba and the extreme Shi'ites (Ghulat) who derive from him, that the Divine Spirit which dwells in every prophet and passes successively from one to another was transfused at Muhammad's death into Ali. And from Ali into his descendants who succeeded him in the Imamate. The Saba'ites also held that the Imam might suffer a temporary occultation

<sup>3</sup> R.A. Noolson --- A literary history of the Arabs, Page 216.

(ghayba), but that one day he would return and fill the earth with justice. They believe the millennium to be near at hand, so that the number of Imams was at first limited to four. Thus the poet Kuthayyir (723 A.D.) says:

“Four complete are the Imams of Quraysh, the Lords of right

*Ali and his three good sons, each of them  
a shining light.*

*One was faithful and devout; Karbala  
hid one from sight;*

*One, until with waving flags his  
horsemen he shall lead to fight;*

*Dwell on Mount Redwa concealed,  
honey he drinks and water bright.”<sup>4</sup>*

The Messianic idea is not peculiar to the Shi'ites, but was brought into Islam at an early period by Jewish and Christian converts and soon established itself as a part of Muhammadan belief. Traditions ascribed to the Prophet began to circulate, declaring that the approach of the Last Judgement would be heralded by a time of tumult and confusion, by the return of Jesus, who would slay the anti Christ (al-Dajjal) and finally by the coming of Mehdi i.e. 'the God-guided one', who would fill the earth with justice even as it was filled then with violence and iniquity. This expectation of a Deliverer descended from the Prophet runs through the whole history of the Shias.”

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Lacy O' Leary.



## Shiaism as a social Revolution<sup>5</sup>

The preaching of the Saba'ites appealed to the "Muwalis" (the clients), the Non-Arab subjects who made up the vast bulk of the population in the provinces, especially in Iraq in the newly sprung-up colonies of Busra and Kufa. These "Muwalis" partly consisting of local inhabitants of the conquered countries who had accepted Islam, and partly consisting of those Non-Arabs who had been taken prisoner in the various wars of Islam, hated their Arab masters. Prior to the Muslim conquest, Iraq had been ruled by the Persians whose culture and language the Mawalis had adopted, indeed most of them were Persians in race.

The Mawalis suffered many social disabilities, not the least of which was that they were heavily taxed. They had had the monopoly of trade and commerce before the coming of their Arab conquerors, and they had also been the chief class from which civil servants had been drawn. Now although they fought shoulder to shoulder with their Arab masters in all the wars they were obliged to content themselves with smaller pay and more trivial booty. Their position was in all ways anomalous. No longer slaves they were still utterly dependent upon their Arab conquerors whose retinue they formed in time of peace and war. They now claimed equal status with their masters, demanded exemption from taxes and tried to free themselves from the Arab yoke.

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<sup>5</sup> Dozy Reinhart --- Spanish Islam.

For the Mawalis, Shiaism furnished an opportunity to revolt against their oppressors, the Ummayyad Caliphs. They were less interested in the restoration of the House of Ali than in the dissolution of the existing order of things and, by introducing all sorts of ancient Babylonian, Persian and Indian beliefs into the body of Islamic thought they brought about a good deal of social agitation which led, in its turn, to the founding of numerous esoteric sects.

### **The Divine Right of Kings**

Those Mawalis of Persian extraction were especially attracted towards Saba'ism because it had absorbed many of the doctrines of Zoroaster. Being of Aryan extraction, the Persians took as a matter of course the division of society into classes and believed in the theory of Divine right of Kings. They had considered their Sassanian rulers (212-641 A.D.) to be the emanations of divinity; they were thus the only legitimate successors of the pre-legendary Kayani dynasty and, as such, were imbued with virtue that justified their claim of the Persian crown. The Persians further held that any one who challenged the authority of these rulers was a godless heretic. Hence any substitution of kingship based on Divine Right in place of the Sassanian kings was more in keeping with the old Persian traditions than the system of democratic elections introduced by the Arabs. The doctrine of Imamate may thus be seen as the logical conclusion to older Persian doctrines regarding kingship.



The idea of electing a "Caliph" or "Successor" to the Holy Prophet was quite foreign to the Persians, though it seemed reasonable to the Saracenic Arabs. The Persians thought that to deny the claims of Ali, who was the next of kin to Muhammad (may peace be upon him) was revolutionary in the extreme. Naturally they had a great hatred for the Caliph Umar, who had conquered Persia and incorporated their country into the Caliphate, to be governed as a province from Medina. Their characteristic love for Ali led them to identify him with their Zoroastrian Deity, Ahura Muzda or "he god of Light" while their hatred for Umar caused them to identify the latter with Ahirman, the Zoroastrian deity of darkness.

Ali's son, Hussain, was believed to have married Shar Banu, a daughter of Yezidgird III, the last of the Sassanian monarchs and hence it was held that the sacred descendants of Hussain were the "Imams" (spiritual leaders) who represented not only the prophetic office but also the virtues of the Sassanian Kings. The question, much disputed elsewhere, as to whether this marriage had actually materialised or not, never troubled the Persians who still revere the memory of Shar Banu as the mother of the Imams, regarding her with respectful awe as the intercessor on behalf of mankind for God's grace.

The Sunni scholars regard such doctrines as a heretical, corrupt innovations introduced into primitive Islam. In the Sunni view, Shiaism was the result of an incoherent social revolution, a hotchpotch resulting from the absorption into Islam of the alien doctrines of



imperfectly instructed neophytes. Nevertheless the new cult proved to be both effective and permanent, evolving as it did a distinct and lasting theology with an appropriate philosophy and separate dogmas, doctrines and rituals.

Dr. Lacy O'leary gives a masterly analysis of these historical processes at work in the following words:

"These early sects which were generally regarded as heretical were, in most cases, reproductions of Pre-Islamic, Persian and Mesopotamian religious systems, with a thin veneer of Muslim doctrines and, in the second century of the Hijra, when they became more prominent, they were strongly tinged with Hellenistic philosophical speculations which had already exercised a potent influence in Mesopotamia and Persia. In theory these sects, (Shian-I-Ali), were legitimist in their adherence to the principle of hereditary descent. Orthodox Islam (Ahl Sunnat-w'l-Jumiat) accepted as a constitutional principle the leadership of an elected "Khalifa" (Caliph) or "successor" a natural development of the tribal chieftainship familiar to the pre-Islamic Arabs. Amongst them the chief was elected in a tribal council, in which great weight was given to the tried warriors and aged men of experience but in which all had a voice, and choice was made on what we should describe as democratic lines, and this remained the practice in the earlier ages of Islam. Such a constitutional theory was no great novelty to those who had lived under the Roman Empire, but was

entirely repugnant to those educated in Persian ideas, and who had learned to regard the kingship as hereditary in the sense that the semi-divine kingly soul passed by transmigration at the death of one sovereign to the body of his divinely appointed successor. This had been the Persian belief with regard to the Sassanid kings and the Persians fully accepted Yazidgird the last of these, as a re-incarnation of the princes of the semi-mythical Kayani dynasty to which they attributed their racial origin and their culture. Yazidgird died in A.H. 31 (A.D. 652) and his death terminated the male line of the Persian royal family, but it was generally believed that his daughter Shahr Banu, was married to Hussain, the son of the fourth Caliph, Ali, so that in the descendants by this Persian princess the claims of Islam and of the ancient Persian defied kings were combined. Historically the evidence of this marriage seems to be questionable but it is commonly accepted as an article of faith by Persian Shi'ites...."<sup>6</sup>

"At a quite early date, the house of Ali began to receive the devoted adherence of the Persian converts. That Ali himself had been prominent as a champion of the rights of alien converts to equality in the brotherhood of Islam, and still more his harsh treatment by Muawiya the founder of the Ummayyad dynasty, caused his name to serve as a rallying point for all those who were disaffected towards the official Caliphate. It is now the general Shi'ite belief that Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, was his chief companion and chosen successor, the three preceding Caliphs being no more than usurpers who had kept him

<sup>6</sup> Muir 'The Caliphate its Rise, Decline and Fall'.



out of his just rights and whose wrong-doing he had borne with exemplary patience. Ali himself does not seem to have taken so pronounced a view, but he certainly regarded himself as injured by his exclusion from the Caliphate. It is not true to say with Muir (*The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall*, Page 301)<sup>7</sup> that the idea of a divine "Imamate" or "Leadership" was entirely the invention of later times, because as early as A.H. 32 in the reign of Osman, the Jewish convert Abdullah bin Sab'a of Yemen --- a district which had been conquered by the Persian king Nusherwan and settled by Persians for nearly a century before the coming of Islam, and so thoroughly impregnated with Persian idea --- preached the divine right of Ali. This view he maintained afterwards when Ali was Caliph in spite of Ali's own disapproval, and at Ali's murder in A.H. 40, he reiterated it in a more pronounced form; the martyred Caliph's soul, he said, was in the cloud, his voice was heard in the thunder, his presence was revealed in the lightning: in due course he would descend to earth again, and meanwhile his spirit, a divine emanation, was passed on by rebirth to the Imams, his successors."

### **The Doctrine of Imamate**

The acceptance of the Divine Right of Kings lent a religious significance to what had begun as a political movement. The Shi'ites rejected the Sunni doctrine of "ijma" or the "consensus" (of the community) substituting in its place the doctrine of an infallible Imam. "Ali", says the Shi'ite tradition,

<sup>7</sup> Muir --- *The Caliphate, its Rise - Decline and Fall* P. 301.



"FOMED A CHURCH, APPOINTED Imams as its ministers, settled its dogmas, gave to it doctrines, ritual ceremonials and guaranteed its fidelity." Thus on Ali, and his descendants, the Imams, devolved the exclusive prerogative of hyperspiritualisation: by virtue of their birth, the Imams were thus the only true successors of the Prophet. The Shias believe that every age produces its own Imam, who acts as a spiritual guide to mankind. It is incumbent on every Shia to believe in all the Imams and especially in the Imam of his own time.

Man, being fallen and weak by nature, could only get salvation, the Shia maintained, through the spiritual guidance of the Imams, while heaven could only become the future home of mankind through the intercession of Imams.

The Sunnis considered their Caliphs to be both the temporal and spiritual head of the state, administering justice through the "Shar'ia" (Muslim law) and holding office by the will of the "Ummah" (nation). The Shias on the other hand believe in divinely appointed rulers of Imams --- the only true successors of the Prophet. They assert with vehemence that the choice of Imamate was not a trivial and ordinary issue which could be left to the will of the masses but one of such sanctity that it was imperative to confine it to the descendant of Ali, who alone among men are qualified to interpret the divine commandments. The Shias thus attribute to their Imams many unique qualities seeing them as quasidivine persons possessed of super natural

qualities, 'incarnation of divine Light' from the progenitor of mankind, Adam. True theological and religious speculation was thus to be confined to the knowledge and recognition of a true Imam. Some of the most fanatic Shia sects added the heretical doctrines of Anthropomorphism and the return of a Redeemer in the shape of an Imam; some even believed in Metempsychosis. All these sects laid the greatest stress on the infallibility of the Imams.. a dogma which was to form the basis of Shiaism. The more esoteric sects of the Shias attributed to their Imams the exclusive prerogative of the occult interpretation and exposition of the Qur'an.

The historian Dozy<sup>8</sup> summarises the Shia doctrine of Imamate as follows:-

"Premising the Caliph's divinity the dominating sect of those days .... Which had been founded by Kaisan, one of Ali's freedman ---- reached the logical and melancholy conclusion that faith, religion, and virtue --- consisted solely in passive submission and unquestioning obedience to the commands of a man-god. This strange and monstrous doctrine, uncongenial to the Arab character, had been hatched in the brains of the ancient disciples of Zoroaster, who --- being accustomed to see in their kings and priests descendants of the gods or of divine and celestial beings --- transferred to the heads of the new religion the veneration which they had previously accorded to their monarchs."

<sup>8</sup> Dozy Reinhart..... Spanish Islam Page 87.

## **The Doctrine of Atonement**

In order to rationalise their theology the Shias expounded the doctrine of Atonement. Their theologians stressed that the martyrdom of both Ali and Ali's son Hussain, was effected in accordance with God's will and with the purpose of saving mankind; and that salvation could only come through their intercession. Thus like the Christian doctrine of atonement the Shias developed and elaborate the tenets of their theology and these latter formed a rigid system. The Christian doctrine of atonement held that Jesus Christ died an ignoble death on the Cross in order, by this sacrifice to secure the redemption of mankind. Not so with the Shias, who believe that an Imam lives in every age, and the last of their Imam Mehdi, also called "Ghaib" (the one who has disappeared), will re-visit this earth at the end of this world. The Shias see in Imam Mehdi the promised Messiah the last redeemer of mankind.

These theological speculations gave rise to many fables and legends which became fused into Shiaism. Popular belief quickly attributed all kinds of miraculous powers to the Imams who were said to have healed the diseases and satisfied the wants of men; certainly the Imams succoured their followers in trouble and distress, fed the hungry, helped the disabled rescued the fallen and above all forgave the erring.



## The Doctrine of Salvation

Coupled with the doctrine of Atonement, and somewhat analogous to it,<sup>9</sup> was the doctrine of Salvation. A belief in the mysterious powers of the Imams, the sanctity attached to the cakes and the drinks offered in "Majlis", a symbolic "Potion" to be taken and the observance of certain ceremonial rites were the usual means of salvation for Shias. It is believed that the Imams visited the "Majlis" of the Shias and produced ecstasy and wonder therein. No matter how righteous a man may be, it is only by the grace of Imam that he can become a recipient of immortality.

## The Organisation of the Shias

With the incorporation of the doctrine of Imamate in the popular belief of the masses, the Shias established an unprecedented organisation for the propagation of their faith. Unlike the Sunnis, who did not believe in any priesthood, the Shias organised a hierarchy of ministers, faith being interpreted as blind obedience to the Imams and their representatives the "Mujtahids", who has the last word on all points of doctrine. In short a Shia ecclesiasticism was established, based on a dogmatic theology. This was later joined by a legal system which further enhanced the already considerable powers of the priesthood. Thus in its essentials, Shiaism was a human-divine organisation which stressed vehemently the quasi-

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<sup>9</sup> Dr. Ata Mohyuddin. "Ali the Superman".

divine nature of Imams. To challenge the infallible authority of these spiritual Directors was to commit an unpardonable offence against God.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century A.D. we read that the Shias have established "Lodges", not unlike those of the Freemasons, from where they carried on extensive propaganda both openly and secretly. Such "Lodges" continued to flourish throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The Results of the Persecution of the House of Ali**

The assassination of Ali, in 661 A.D. by a Kharajite, resulted in the Shi'tes taking up the Alid cause with a new fervour. When Ali's eldest son, Hasan, was compelled to abdicate in Muawiya's favour the Shias were led to adhere still more strongly to Ali's house. According to the Shi'ite legends, Hasan was poisoned by Zaynib, a lady hired by Muawiya for that purpose. Sunni traditionalists, however, challenge the truth of that allegation. Ali's younger son, Hussain then aspired to the Caliphate, only to be murdered in his turn on the field of Kerbala in 680 A.D.

Professor Lacy O'leary sums up the results of the persecution of the Alid house in the following words:-

"Certainly the tragedy of Kerbala, which centred in the pathetic sufferings and death of Ali's son, Hussain, as he was on his way to claim the Caliphate, produced a tremendous wave of pro-Alid feelings: indeed a popular martyr was the one thing

needed to raise devotion to the house of Ali to be level of an emotional religion, though many no doubt, supported the Alid claims simply because they formed the most convenient pretext for opposing the official Caliphate and yet remaining outwardly within the fold of Islam."

Thence forward, the house of Ali could do no wrong, as far as the Shias were concerned. All Ali's descendants were depicted as models of virtue and it became the bounden duty of every Shia to espouse their lost cause. The Shia party, as the result of this new rallying of its forces quickly developed into a formidable opposition to the Sunni Caliphs. By a logical extension of the belief that the Imamate was the inalienable heritage of the House of Ali, the Shias were also required to fight against the Sunni Caliph, so that the Faithful might have a truly spiritual leadership.

The connection of the Shia organisation with the Alid cause gave rise to revival of intellectual activities and the Shia theologians now began to consider many ontological problems arising out of the acceptance of Ali as a quasi-divine figure and the abjuration of Free Will which submission to the Imamate logically entailed.

### **Mukhtar the Moses of Shiaism**<sup>10</sup>

Mukhtar, an upstart, described as an "Unprincipled man of heroic mould, a tiger in wrath, and a fox in craftiness", combined in his person the

<sup>10</sup> Prof. Lacy O' Leary.



qualities of a political adventurer, social reformer, recluse and charlatan. He has been described as the Moses of Shiaism. Unlike the Persian Shias who made it a cardinal point of their doctrine that the Imamate must be confined to the sons of Ali by Fatima, Mukhtar who was of Arab extraction and altogether more democratic, saw no reason why Ali's sons by his second wife, Hanfia, should not succeed to the Caliphate after the tragic deaths of both of Fatima's sons. Accordingly, after the assassination of Hussain at Kerbala, Mukhtar championed the cause of Muhammad Ibn-ul-Hanafiya and collecting numerous Shi'ites, Kharajites and other volunteers under his banner, invaded Iraq. He quickly conquered Kufa, where he tortured and killed Ibn Ziyad, Shimar, and Amr bin Sad, the principal magnates of Yazid who had killed Ali's son Hussain so mercilessly. In this way the tragedy of Kerbala was avenged.

We need not enter into details of the causes, the events, or the results of Mukhtar's rising but we must acquaint ourselves with the character of the movement that he so boldly started and championed. It was Mukhtar who rallied all the Mawalis round him to fight against the Ummayyad rulers, securing their active and loyal co-operation by according them that equal treatment which they had so long desired but had never received from their Arab masters. This changed the whole character of Shiaism. From being an anti-Ummayyad move it now became an anti-Arab movement; hence forward the ranks of the Shia were to be swelled by all those dissatisfied Persians and

foreigners who found in it an outlet for their bitter hatred of their oppressive Arab rulers.

### **The Division of Shiaism into Many sub-sects**

As time went on, doctrinal points of difference divided Shias into many sub-sects. The first big division occurred in 765 A.D. on the death of the sixth Imam, Jafar as-Sadiq. Jafar had nominated his brother, Musa al-Kazmi as his successor, but some of the Shias favoured the claims of Ismail, his eldest son. Those who followed Ismail, held him to be the seventh and last Imam, subsequently repudiating the claims of Musa al-Kazmi and his five successors, the last of which was Mehdi, whose Second Coming at the end of the world is so eagerly awaited. The Ismailis are also called the "Sabiya" or the "Sect of Seven", in contradistinction to the "Ithna Ashriya" or "the Sect of Twelve".

**Each of these two sects has an infinite number of sub-divisions.**

By the eleventh century A.D. the original Shias or "Arab legitimist Shia" had split off from the esoteric Shias of Persia, who held that gnostic Imams could only appear from the offspring of Ali and Fatima. It is these gnostic doctrines which form the basis of Shiaism as it is today, both the "Welvers" and the "Sevensers" agreeing on this fundamental point of doctrine.

Leaving aside the infinite number of subdivisions, Shiaism today falls into Five main denominations:-

- (1) The Zaydia, so-called after the name of the fourth Imam, Zayd--- a sect which still dominates the Yemen and which stands closest to the legitimist Arab Shias. The Zaydis attach no super-natural powers to their Imams, though they believe in the continuity of the Imams. They are the most broad-minded and liberal of all the sects and base the tenets of their creed on rationalism.
- (2) The Imami sect of "Twelvers", which prevails in Persia today, although it is in minority in India, Iraq, Syria and Pakistan. The Imamis believe in the theory of the twelve Imams, the last of whom, called "Mehdi" (the guide) who vanished from the earth, is expected to come back to this earthly abode to redeem mankind at the end of the world.
- (3) The "Ismailians" or 'the sect of Seveners' or 'Batni' (the esoteric sect) or "Ta'limi" (doctrinaire), was a famous sect of the Middle Ages which with march of times acquired revolutionary character. Its supporters were the CARMATHIANS (Qarmatis), the Assassins, the men who by administering "Hashish" slew all those who had incurred the displeasure of the Imams; they were a secret society, a group of fanatics entirely without scruple. The stories of



Hasan bin Sabah, who wrought such havoc on the Sunni Muslims are well known and need no exposition, though little is known about this sect as the Ismailians have always remained a secret society. Those who have been initiated into the mysteries of the Ismailians do not reveal in public what they have professed in secret. One thing seems certain and that is that Ismail is looked upon by his followers as second only to God. The Ismailis also believe in the doctrine of "Tanasukhl Arwah" (the transmigration of the soul) and lay special stress on "Ta'lim" (doctrinairism) which can only be obtained from the Imam of the time. They also emphasise the peculiar miraculous powers of their Imams, about whom, they allege, testimony can be found in the Qur'an and in the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him). According to the belief of the Ismailians "An Imam can do no wrong".

The late Agha Khan who was the head of the Ismailian sect, until his death in the middle of the twentieth century A.D. claimed his descent from Ismail.

- (4) A branch of the Ismailians existing in the Lebanon under the name of "Druzes". The founder of this sub-sect was a man named Darazi, who proclaimed the divinity of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim bi-Amri'llah, who was held to have disappeared from the world in

1021 A.D. Like the Ismailians, the Druzes meet in "Lodges", secretly and behind locked doors.

- (5) The extreme "ghaliya" or "Ghulat" \*Ultras) who carried the veneration of Ali and his offspring to an extreme had passed the bounds of reason and decency. In their excessive zeal, they raised their Imams for above the degree of human beings, believing that God had become incarnate in their persons. These Ghaliyas were further sub-divided into a number of branches, one of which, the sect of the "Nusairi", prefer Ali to the Prophet Muhammad and have tried to prove that the proverb 'to err is human' could easily be replaced by saying 'to err is divine'. In their over-exuberant zeal they assert that when God sent Gabriel to earth with his Revelations, the Angel mistook Muhammad for Ali, deceived by the physical resemblance between the two cousins, whose appearance was almost identical; thus, by a divine error, Muhammad was installed in the Apostleship --- an office which had originally been designed by God for Ali. The 'Nusairi' who are still quite numerous in Persia today, believe Ali to be still alive and they affirm that he will come like Elias in the clouds at the end of the world and fill this earth with justice and piety. The Persians also name the Nusairi sect "Ali-Ilahi".

## The Deification of Ali

The numerous esoteric Shia sects, by deifying Ali, created a corporeal God—a doctrine which the traditionalist Sunni Muslims considered a blasphemy and infamy. By developing this doctrine, the Shias next introduced the doctrine of "I-Holoul" or "the transmigration of sanctity" from one person to another. God being omnipresent and omnipotent can speak with every tongue and appears in the form of man, especially in the shape of the "Imams" or "Prophets in miniature". The sects of Nusairi and the Ishakians promulgated a doctrine which maintains that the spirit may also appear in grosser bodies, offering this as an explanation of angels and devils. They assert that, since Muhammad, there had been no man more excellent than Ali, that Ali's sons excelled all mankind and that God appeared in their form, spoke with their tongue and made use of their hands. In short all the divine attributes were personified in them.

## The Cardinal Points of Difference

The Shia schism was a radical departure from primitive Islam (Sunnism), the faith of those traditionalists who conformed to the authority of the "Sunna" or "sayings of the holy Prophet". With the march of time the differences between the two sects became more pronounced; they still subsist and are maintained with implacable hatred. The Shias style themselves as "Adalya" or 'the followers of Justice', stigmatising the "Sunni" with odious appellations. The cardinal points of divergence are:-



- (1) The Sunnis credit the "Sunna" or "the traditions of the Holy Prophet" as being of canonical authority but the Shia reject the Sunni collections of them as apocryphal and incredible.
- (2) The Shias reject the authority of Abu Bakr, Umar, and Osman, whom they regard as usurpers, whereas the Sunnis regard them as the lawful successors of the Holy Prophet.
- (3) Most of the sects of the Shias assign to Ali an equal rank with the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, and some of them in their extreme veneration for Ali prefer the former over the latter.
- (4) The Sunnis charge the Shias with corrupting the Qur'an, i.e. distorting the meaning of its various passages, while the same charge is repeated and levelled by the Shias against the Sunnis.

Professor Nicholson, when discussing the points of doctrinal difference between the Shias and Sunnis, says:-

"Consequently the Shias assumed a religious and enthusiastic character, and struck out a new path which led it farther and farther from the orthodox creed. The doctrine of "interpretation" (Ta'wil) opened the door to all sorts of extravagant ideas. One of the principal Shia sects, the Hashimiyya, held that "there is an esoteric side to everything external, a spirit to

every similitude in this world, a corresponding reality in the other world; that Ali united in his person the knowledge of all mysteries communicated them to his son Muhammad ibnu'l Hanafiyya, who passed it on to his son Abu Hashim; and that the possessor of this universal knowledge is the true Imam. So without ceasing to be a Muslim in name, the Shi'ites transmuted Islam into whatever shape they pleased by virtue of a mystical interpretation based on the infallible authority of the house of Muhammad, and out of the ruins of a political party there gradually arose a great religious organisation in which men of the most diverse opinions could work together for deliverance from the Umayyad yoke."

**Professor Guillaume<sup>11</sup> makes the following comments:-**

"The most outstanding difference between the Sunni and Shia doctrines of Infallibility and superhuman knowledge is that, with the former Infallibility is not a quality inherent in the prophet by virtue of his being, but a special grace from God. His superhuman knowledge is given to him from time to time by God, whose message he repeats to man. His merit was to be chosen by God to be his mouthpiece. Thus the Sunnis kept much closer to the Qur'anic text, such as verse 47:66 "Say, none in the Heaven and earth knows what is hidden but God." On the other hand, with the Shia a sinless and perfect infallibility is in the Imams and of them. They possess a secret

<sup>11</sup> Guillaume Alfred --- Islam Page 119. Penguin Series. Ed. 1954.

knowledge, inherited from their superhuman forebears, by which they know all that will happen in the world until the Day of Resurrection. Therefore they cannot err. They are the sole and ultimate authority on the interpretation of the Qur'an, the source of all truth, and the only beings with the right to men's obedience. Therefore all doctrines must have their authority. As Goldziher has said, "If we may wish to state concisely the difference between Sunni and Shia Islam, we should say that the former is a church founded on the consent of the community, the latter is an authoritarian church."

### Further Divergences: "Muta" and "Taqiya".

In matters of law, the Shia diverged considerably from the Sunni system. The two cardinal points of difference in Shiaism are (1) "Muta" or permission for temporary marriages, and (2) the doctrine of "Taqiya" or Dissimulation.

In "Muta" a man and a woman agree to marry for a specified period. The sanction for this is derived from verse 4:25 of the Qur'an which says "you are permitted to take wives with your wealth in modest conduct, not in fornication, provided you pay them for the enjoyment you have had of them" which according to the Shias was originally followed by the words "for a specified period." --- words which were later deleted.

Takiya could be defined as a dispensation from the requirement of religion under compulsion or threat of injury. In other words it permits denial of one's



religion to save one's skin under adverse circumstances. The Shias were constrained to incorporate this doctrine in their system of Law because, being a suppressed minority in the Muslim countries, they felt the necessity of disguising themselves and their creed. According to the Shias Ali is said to have performed "Takiya" in paying homage to the first three successors of the Holy Prophet --- the allegiance that he paid to them did not come from the heart but arose out of necessity --- for he was released from the obligation to intercede for the Faith with hand and tongue. According to the Shi'ite legends Ali is said to have quoted the Qur'an as an authority for the justification of his stand:-

"He among you who is most honoured before God is the one who fears Him most". (Qur'an 49:13)

According to Shias, "the one who performs Takiya most". The difference in interpretation of this verse depends on whether one of the revealed words was "Taqwa" (piety) or "Takiya" (dissimulation). The Sunnis who consider that "piety" was the right word do not therefore see eye to eye with the Shia interpretation of the Quranic text.

The Shias allege that the justification of Takiya depends upon one's intentions at the time; a Shia faced with death, imprisonment, flogging or any similar heinous bodily injury may always conceal his identity and this the Qur'an sanctions in the following verse:-

“If any one is compelled and professes unbelief with his tongue while his heart contradicts him to escape his enemies, no blame falls on him because God takes his servants as their hearts believe.”  
(16:108)

The Sunnis disagree with the Shias about the interpretation of this verse also, declaring that the verse was revealed with particular reference to the case of Ammar bin Yasir, who was forcibly compelled to worship idols and abjure his faith in the ministry of the Holy Prophet, and that the verse was not meant for universal application.

Though divine authority set Ammar's mind at rest, the Sunnis believe that steadfast martyrdom for the Believers in Faith is enjoined in the Qur'an and that the concealment of one's faith because of fear is cowardly, profane and degrading to a true Believer. Consequently they look down upon the Shia doctrines of "Muta" and "Takiya" as the legislation of adultery and the condoning of a lie for which no divine sanction exists and which cannot be justified on any grounds.

## CHAPTER VII

### ALI'S DISTINCTIONS, QUALITIES, HIS VIRTUES AND EXCELLENCE.

#### The Lasting Influence Of Ali And His Descendants

The martyrdom of Ali and his son Hussain, and the influence of their personal example, left permanent effects on all the creeds of Islam.<sup>1</sup> Their sublime and magnificent sacrifices and their unique commentaries on the doctrines of Islam left a permanent hold on all Muslims. The Shia theory of Imamate has been accepted practically by all sects and almost every Muslim believes that Imam Mehdi, will appear at the end of the world to redeem mankind. A belief in the supreme piety of Ali and his descendants, particularly the heroic stand of Hussain at Karbala and his martyrdom, and the veneration attached to him, has also become deep-rooted in the minds of the Believers in Faith and no other persons have been so much sanctified as Ali and his descendants. Today, even after a lapse of 1380 years they remain, par excellence, the personification of piety and the most eminent of all Muslims save only the Holy Prophet.

#### Ali's enforcement of Moral Laws

Once having come to the conclusions that moral laws would reform society, Ali made an intelligent and

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ata Mohyuddin --- Ali The Superman.



courageous effort to grapple with the problems of the time. Ali had become convinced that ethical laws must be accepted for their own sakes and that good actions should be performed for the triumph of good only and that no consideration should be paid to any practical or material assets which might incidentally occur. Further, having been drawn from the revelations of God, these laws had the force of an absolute commandment. Only the Qur'anic commandments could be regarded as the touchstone of what was good and what was bad. The only possible course of action was to place implicit faith in these laws and then obey them. Having thus provided the people with definite and positive laws Ali expected them to obey them without thought of self; any infringement made the defaulter liable to deterrent punishment. The greatness and dignity of Ali's personal example, for he practised these laws in his own daily life made it hard for him to realise, perhaps, the difficulties that beset lesser men than himself. For him the laws were the keystone of his whole being, upholding him firm through every stress and strain.<sup>2</sup>

### **Systematisation**

The credit of systematising and organising the Islamic precepts, dogmas and doctrines into a compact body of Islamo-religious structure goes to Ali. Many isolated problems were united into a system of philosophy and Ali's explanations and commentaries illuminated many a thorny and dubious question. It was through Ali's commentaries that the people began

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ata Mohyuddin --- "Ali The Superman".

to understand the truths which lay behind his interpretations and to adopt Islam as a philosophy of life. In short Islamic civilisation and culture evolved from Ali's spiritual interpretations of life.

### **A New Orientation**

The epitome of Ali's sermons was that man's destiny lay in the world of natural instincts and appetites, but far from encouraging men to enjoy an indolent and hedonistic life of sensuous ease, Ali put great emphasis on duty and responsibility. Ali's genius, which displayed so much of both the love of labour and the labour of love, opened up realms of human progress that had been hitherto undreamt of. He threw open the gates of knowledge and extended the frontiers of civilisation. Even after a lapse of 1350 years the Muslim world still recognises the enormous impetus which he gave to those metaphysical explanations that still form the basis of the dogmas and doctrines of Islam. Ali, in fact, had opened up a new path and his pioneer approach to and solution of the theological problems which confronted him has never been bettered by those who were thus enabled to follow in his footsteps. He remains pre-eminent among all Muslim theologians.

### **Ali's Life as Caliph<sup>3</sup>**

Ali, as Caliph, reigning and living in this world was still not of it, his spiritual duties always taking

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<sup>3</sup> Ali The Magnificent.



precedence over the sovereign duties that devolved upon him. In later life he became more and more of a recluse, absorbed almost totally in the life of spirit --- somewhat retiring in solitude. In his early days as Caliph we see him, however, practising to the full the active precepts that he advocated to others. In the humility and lack of ostentation of his life, he was conforming to the code of patriarchal era. Unlike his rival Muawiya, who lived in a splendid palace, Ali chose to live in a simple cottage of sun-dried bricks, there leading the humble life of an ordinary soldier of God. He mended his own shoes, milked his goats and helped his household in the performance of their daily domestic duties. Although great riches passed through his hands into the State treasury, avarice played no part in his life and he kept nothing for himself above what was needed to satisfy his most simple wants. Towards others, however, his liberality was unbounded. Constant in friendship, he retained the attachment of those who became intimately associated with him. Often he would carry the coffins of dead men on his shoulders, mourning with the other mourners for he felt that the observance of such social customs helped to regulate the civic sense of his people. On the other hand, although he advocated the utmost piety on all occasions, he was quick to deprecate any display of pious affectation. If Ali propagated the crowning merit of Good Works, he also stressed the need for their concealment. A man of quick and mighty passions, such was his control of them that, in a later life, he was never known to lose his temper, save on the battlefield when fighting in the cause of God.



Nowhere was his humane attitude more apparent than when he was dispensing justice. He had the strictest ideas of duty and responsibility and even the poorest and most insignificant of suitors always found him ready to give their case a fair and prompt hearing. He was as quick to pardon an offender as he was slow to resent an injury, a humane attitude all too many of his contemporaries were prone, wrongly, to interpret as a weakness. It was this humane attitude which, above all, stamped Ali as the ideal man.

In order to keep his finger on the pulse of the people Ali often disguised himself as a traveller, perambulating the lanes of the city at night and there helping the poor and needy while bringing the delinquents to book. His tremendous physical energy thus found outlet in the performance of many a philanthropic deed, but even so, his sense of responsibility to his people was so great that he was frequently struck with remorse for all that he had left undone. Hence the bitter tears of self-déprecation which he so often shed at his prayers. Nevertheless he did a great deal of practical good. No Caliph ever rendered more active service or offered more material, as well as spiritual help to his subjects.

In short, Ali stood for common justice and common sense: yet, for him, the loveliness of the soul remained paramount. In his sermons he preached consistently of the need to shun the temptations of this world and though, as Caliph, he was obliged to dispense justice in the world, yet he was not quite of it.

## **Liberty and Tolerance his Greatest Contribution**

As Caliph, Ali possessed two sublime qualities.... Tolerance and liberty. Perhaps his greatest contribution to Islam was that he considered tolerance and liberty the birth right of all and he granted unqualified liberty of speech and action to his subjects, even when by so doing he risked the gravest setbacks to his hopes. He regarded it as his responsibility to impart equitable justice to all, irrespective to whether or not the recipients were capable of good use of the freedom which he bestowed upon them or worthy of the trust that he might place in them. Even his worst enemies admitted that he never interfered with the private liberty of any of his subjects and it would be hard to find a single instance in which Ali's government ever meddled with the opinions of individuals.

That entire liberty of speech was granted to his subjects can be gleaned from the fact that men openly criticised their Caliph and his actions while religious freedom was also given to all and sundry, his officials being expressly enjoined to safeguard the interests of the "Dhimmis" or non-Muslim subjects.

### **Ali the First in Many Fields<sup>4</sup>**

Ali, the ideal man, was endowed with many unique virtues that led him, according to the Shi'ite traditions,

<sup>4</sup> Ali The Superman by Dr. Ata Mohyuddin.

to be the first person to be or perform a number of things. According to the Shias he was "Number One" in the following:-

- (1) He was of noblest birth for both his father and mother were Hashimites.
- (2) He was the only man to be born in the Kab'ah (the house of God).
- (3) He was the first to offer homage to the Holy Prophet.
- (4) He was the first to offer prayers after the Holy Prophet.
- (5) He was the first to offer his services for "Jihad" (crusades).
- (6) He was the first to receive religious instructions from the Holy Prophet.
- (7) He was the first to compile and codify the Qur'an.
- (8) He was the first to be styled as "brother" by the Prophet and on every occasion.
- (9) He was pre-eminently loyal, standing firm by the Prophet until his last breath.
- (10) He was the first to give burial to the Prophet, after his death.



- (11) He was the only warrior to stick to his post on the battlefield in all battles and never once turned his back.
- (12) He was the first to offer to sleep in the Prophet's bed on the night of his emigration to Medina.
- (13) He was the first to be appointed commander in all those battles in which the Holy Prophet did not participate personally.
- (14) He was pre-eminent in killing all his adversaries in all his duels.
- (15) The honour of the propagation of the Qur'anic sura "Al-Bara'at" (the Immunity) fell to Ali's lot, thereby raising him supreme above all others.
- (16) He was the only man on whom the Holy Prophet bestowed the title "a Second Aaron".
- (17) The privilege of breaking idols in the Kab'ah, (after the conquest of Mecca) also fell to Ali's good fortune.
- (18) The honour of owning a house which opened into the courtyard of the Prophet's mosque was reserved for Ali alone.

- (19) Ali was the first to have such a unique wife as Fatima, and a unique father-in-law like the Prophet and sons like Hasan and Hussain.
- (20) Ali was the first to have the honour of being nominated by the Holy Prophet as his successor, testator and vice-regent.
- (21) Ali was also honoured by being styled "Moula" (master) of the "Ummah" (nation) by the Holy Prophet.

### **Ali's superiority over Ancient Prophets<sup>5</sup>**

The Shia writers allege that Ali was head and shoulders above the prophets of yore, and that, by wearing the royal robes of a Caliph, he rather exalted the dignity of the office of Caliphate than enhancing his dignity by it. The Believers depended on Ali in all matters whether secular or spiritual and Ali in no way depended on them. Ali excelled in virtue over the ancient prophets on the following counts:-

- (1) God gave Adam the knowledge of His Names, while Ali held the entire knowledge of the Book of Allah (the Qur'an).
- (2) Adam was married with Eve in the garden of Paradise, while God married Ali with Fatima in Heaven.

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<sup>5</sup> Syed Ameer Ali – The Spirit of Islam.

- (3) Adam was guilty of insubordination to God by eating the forbidden fruit, while all actions of Ali were in conformity with the will of God.
- (4) Adam was turned out of the Paradise, while Ali showed the way to it to the Believers.
- (5) God styled Noah as a "Grateful Creature" and he was called the Second Adam, while Ali was styled as "Abu'l Ummah" (the father of the Believers). Ali's epistles served as a Second Ark of Light to redeem mankind.
- (6) God made Abraham the "Imam" or the 'Leader of men' while Ali was the Imam of all creation, men and Jinnis.
- (7) The faith of Abraham chilled the fire into which he was thrown while the light of Ali's faith could freeze the fire of Hell.
- (8) Abraham was afraid of the angels, while they were the household pages of Ali.
- (9) Abraham broke the smaller idols of the temple, while Ali broke both the big and small idols of the Kab'ah.
- (10) Moses was brought up in the house of Pharaoh, but Ali was brought up in the house of the Holy Prophet.



- (11) The waves of the river carried the cradle of Moses to the place of Pharaoh, whereas Ali was carried to Muhammad's house by the pious Fatima (the mother of Ali).
- (12) Moses after his birth saw the light of day in Pharaoh's house, whereas Ali saw the light of day in Kab'ah and was brought up by Muhammad.
- (13) Moses was fed by the milk of his mother and Ali while a babe sucked the tongue of Muhammad (Peace be upon him).
- (14) Moss's name has been mentioned in 230 places in the Qur'an, while Ali has been referred to in 300 places in the Qur'an.
- (15) Moses threw his rod which became a serpent, whereas Ali, while still in the cradle, cleaved the snake into two.
- (16) God created Jesus from His Spirit whereas He created Ali from His Light.
- (17) After delivery, Jesus's mother was turned out of Jerusalem whereas Ali's mother at the time of his delivery was in the sanctuary of the Kab'ah.
- (18) Jesus, after his birth recited a few verses from the Scriptures, whereas Ali repeated all the revealed Books after his birth.

## **Ali's superiority Recognised by the Holy Prophet**

The Holy Prophet recognised the superiority of Ali in many of his sayings. The most important of them are:-

- (1) People are from different trees but I and Ali are from a common branch of a single tree.  
(Sawai'q Muhairqa)
- (2) To look at Ali's face is tantamount to the observance of prayers.  
(Musnid Hakam)
- (3) Whosoever loves Ali, loves me, and the one who loves me loves God and whosoever became hostile towards Ali became hostile to me and whosoever shows hostility towards me shows hostility towards God.  
(Sawai'q Muhari'qa)
- (4) Ali is the "Imam" (leader) of the pious, the Scourge of the wicked and happy will be he who will follow Ali and debased that one who gives up Ali.  
(Musnid Hakam)
- (5) Ali would appear to the indwellers of paradise as a morning star.  
(Sawai'q Muhari'qa)

- (6) Paradise anxiously awaits for three persons, Ali, Umar and Salman.  
(Tirmidhi)
- (7) If (the branches) of all the trees be converted into pens and the water of the Seas made into ink and the Jinnis be deputed for reckoning and the men should become the writers, even then no one can finish the excellences of Ali.  
(Munaqib Khawar zumi)
- (8) Addressing his daughter, Fatima, the Holy Prophet said, "O thou daughter of mine! Of all the creatures in this world, God has selected two persons, one of them is your father and the other is your husband."  
(Izalatu'l Khulfa)
- (9) Whosoever wants to make his life and death like that of mine and is desirous of entering heaven, it behoves him to befriend Ali because he would neither let his friends be ejected from paradise nor allow them to enter there in ignorance.  
(Tarikhu'l Khulfa)
- (10) Addressing his companion Umar, the Holy Prophet said, "O thou Umar! Should you behold that Ali is on one side and the rest of the world on the other, surely it will be incumbent on you that you should follow Ali because he would never lead any one to the path of destruction and will never relinquish the path of right."  
(Jamia-ul-Saghir Sayuti)



- (11) The palace of Ali, in Paradise, will be in the middle, on one side of which will be situated my residential quarters, while on the other will be the quarter of Abraham. How pleasant it will be when one companion will be living amidst two friends.  
(Kunzu'l Umma'l)
- (12) Ali is my brother, my vizier, and the best of mankind after me.  
(Munaqib Khawarizumi)
- (13) One day while conversing with Ayesha, the Holy Prophet said, "Ali is 'Sayyid-ul-Arab' (the chief of the Arabs)" on which she said, "Are not you the chief of the Arabs yourself?" "Nay" replied the Prophet, "I am Sayyid-ul-Alameen" (the chief of the worlds).  
(Sawa'iq Muhariqa)
- (14) Whosoever spoke ill of Ali, spoke ill of me.  
(Musnad Hakam)
- (15) O Ali! Both groups of men will perish, that of your enemies who have impaired your excellence and the other which extolled your position and rank.  
(Sawai'q Muhari'qa)
- (16) The Holy Prophet in one of his Khutbas said, "God has so much exalted my brother Ali that his numerous virtues could not be counted

easily: whosoever from amongst you narrated one of his excellences, God will forgive his past and future sins; and whosoever will record one of his excellences, the angels will bless him as long as his writing remains, whosoever will hear about him affectionately with his ears, the sins of the ear will be forgiven and whosoever will read about his virtues with eyes, the sins of the eye will be forgiven to him. Beware! That man is not steadfast in faith, who does not love Ali and shun his enemies.”

(Sawai'q Muhari'qa)

**HADITH QUOTED BY THE LAST APOSTAL OF GOD HAZRAT MUHAMMAD (PBUH)**

**REGARDING HAZRAT ALI (AS).**

**1. HADITH – MADINA**

- i) (Prophet of Islam) I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gateway.

(Tirmizi)

2. **HADITH – MANZLAT**: Ali has same position and relation with me as had Moses with Aaron. Only difference is that no messenger of God would be hereafter me(Prophet).

3. **HADITH – GHADEER** (According to Shiaa School of thought)

On the occasion of Ghadeer Khom, the last Apostle of God in front of thousands of Muslims quoted this Hadith "As I am the Leader and Guide of the followers, Ali would be the same. All those who give regard and respect Ali. O God, you also give regard and respect them and all those who have enmity with Ali show your indifference to them and all those who help Ali help them also and wherever Ali goes God's Authority and help will be diverted".

In the books of Ahl-Sunnat Tirmizi has quoted this Hadith in "Mishkat" but its source is not sound. It is "Gharib".

4. HADITH – TABLEEGH (According to Shiaa School of thought)

Ali is part of me and so am I and no one can propagate this except me and Ali.

(Sawaiq Muhariqa)

5. HADITH ALDAR YOUME AL ANZAR (According to Shiaa School of thought)

Ali is my brother and is my Wasi (Replacement), and replaces me, so understand my this decree and obey him.

(Sawaiq Muhariqa)

6. HADITH – SAQLAIN (According to Shiaa School of thought)



The last Prophet of God has said, "O" People! After my departure from this world I leave behind two things – if you follow them, you will be never misguided and these are the Holy Quran and my Family who will reach you for the ultimate guidance and another Hadith said that my (AHLE BAIT) is like the arc of Noah. All those followers of Noah who got a chance to get on it, they were saved and other were drowned.

(Kunzu'l Umma'l)

7. HADITH – SARWAR (According to Shiaa School of thought)

All those who want to live like me and die and get a chance to live in Paradise, which is made by my God, it is essential that they follow Ali's path after me and love and admire him and his followers and follow the guidance given by my Family Members (AHLE BAIT) because they are part of me and all knowledge given to me is also trusted to them and my followers if declined to do so means that they had delinked their relation with me and they will not get the blessing of God.

(Kunzu'l Umma'l)

## **The Superiority of Ali Recognised by his Contemporaries**

Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam, at one time said, "It would be difficult indeed for any one to pass through the bridge of "Sirat", on the Day of Judgement without getting a permit from Ali, because this is what I have heard from the Holy Prophet."

(Sawai'q Muhair'qa)

Umar the Great, the second Caliph of Islam, related that once the Holy Prophet said, "If the faith of the inhabitants of the seven Earths be put on one side of the scale, and that of Ali alone on the other side; verily Ali's side will weigh heavier than the other.

(Sawai'q Muhair'qa)

According to Imam Shafi, Ali will judge mankind and allot them paradise and hell. He was the leader of men and Jinnis, a true testator of the Holy Prophet. If the followers of Ali are "Raffidhes" (the heterogeneous sect of Shias) verily I am one of that sect. Ali at the time of the breaking of idols in the Kab'ah put his feet on that shoulder where God had put His hand on the 'Night of Miraj' and verily Ali was that man into whose eyes was shone the light of God."

(Sawai'q Muhair'qa)

Once, Imam Ahmad asked his father, Imam Hanbul, as to who was superior, Muawiya or Ali, to which query Imam Hanbul replied, "Ali had numerous

enemies and all of them tried to find fault with him but they searched in vain and could not find any flaw in him. At long last they joined hands with Muawiya and declared war on Ali. When they failed to defeat him by fair means they took to treacherous and deceitful courses to harm him."

(Kunzul Ummal)

Ibn Athir says, "Ali was the first Caliph both of whose parents were pure Hashmites and who was so judicial minded that he could not put up with the dishonesty of his relations or friends and was so much engrossed in piety that at the time of his marriage with Fatima, he did not possess anything save a camel skin, on which he fed his camels in the day and which he converted into a bed sheet at night. The Prophet in his table talk has not extolled any of his companions as much as he has Ali. Surely Ali never spoke a lie in his life-time."

(Munaqib Khawarizumi)

Some one asked the Ummayyad Caliph, Umar bin Abdul Aziz (171-20 A.D.) as to whom he considered the most pious man in the world, to which query he replied, "Ali excelled mankind in piety. Not only did he practise its virtues but he tried zealously to reform his friends, associates, acquaintances and all those who came in contact with him."

(Musnad Hakam)

Ibn Masaud used to say that throughout Arabia there was no more impartial judge than Ali. Abu Saeed



Khudiri held that he could easily detect a hypocrite by his enmity towards Ali.

(Musnad Hakam)

Abdullah ibn Abbas used to say that should schism seep into Islam, it would be bounden duty of the Believers to take firm hold of Ali (i.e. his teachings) and the Qur'an for I have heard the Prophet say, "Ali was the first to believe in me, he will be the first to meet me in Paradise and will be the greatest discriminator of truth from falsehood, he is the leader of all the Believers, he is the 'Sadiq-I-Akbar' (The great truthful one) and is that door (of faith) the entry into which will lead to Paradise."

(Munaqib ibn Murwaiyia)

### **The Superiority of Ali as Revealed in the Qaur'an**

Since Ali was an ideal man, the one chosen by God to serve as a model to mankind, the Shi'ite traditions hold that some 300 verses of the Qur'an in which God has recognised his virtues, were revealed in Ali's favour.

#### **Some of the verses are:-**

- "59. O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those above you who are in authority; and if ye have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if ye are (in truth) believers in Allah and the Last Day.

That is better and more seemly in the end.”

(4:59)

The Shia commentators, while discussing the identity of those persons, who in this verse are described as “Those in authority above you”, maintain that they could not be any other save Ali and his descendants, the sinless Imams. The Sunnite traditions interpret them as the rulers of that time --- a version which is rejected by the Shias on the ground that obedience to these secular rulers, who were fallible and whose decisions could be faulty, could not be enforced on believers, and subservience to them in wrongful acts being tantamount to the abetment of their impious actions. Hence, argue the Shias, the Sinless Imams, inspired by divine knowledge are the only persons who could enforce Allah’s will and none save these can be the persons in authority.

“33. Allah’s wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you, O Fold of the (Prophet’s) house-hold, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing.”

(33:33)

The Shia commentators, on the authority of Ayesha, say that this verse was

revealed to the Prophet early one morning when the Apostle of God was wrapped in a blanket in which he subsequently wrapped Fatima, Hasan, Hussain and Ali, the Prophet's household as referred to in the above verse.

- "61. And whoso disputeth with the concerning him, after the knowledge which hath come unto thee, say (unto him); Come! We will summon our sons and your sons, and our women and your women and ourselves and yourselves. Then we will pray humbly (to our Lord) and (solemnly) invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie."

(3:61)

This verse alludes to the deputation of the Christians of Najran who went to Medina to hold discussions with the Holy Prophet on the truth of Islam. The Holy Prophet argued the case with them but, when all arguments were exhausted and they were still not convinced, he asked them to pray earnestly to invoke the curse of God on whichever side was lying. This verse refers to the fact that the Holy Prophet was accompanied by Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain (people forming "the Prophet's household") and says that these came out as a party to conduct the "Mubahala" or religious



discussion with the Christians. The Shias argue that this establishes the sanctity of Ali's life otherwise the Prophet would not have called upon his daughter and sons to be witnesses.

- "3. And a proclamation from God and His Apostle to the people on the day of greater pilgrimage that Allah is free from obligation to the idolaters and (so is) His Messenger, So, if ye repent, it will be better for you: but if you are averse, then know ye that ye cannot escape Allah. Give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful doom to those who disbelieve.

(9:3)

This refers to an incident about the end of 631 A.D. when, during the absence of the Holy Prophet on an expedition to Tabuk, the idolatrous tribes, taking advantage of the Prophet's absence, violated their treaties. The Holy Prophet ordered Ali to go on the "Greater pilgrimage" to Mecca and there announce publicly the verses of the Sura of "Immunity" in which God absolved the Muslims from all obligations under the treaties previously entered upon with the idolaters....

- "23. Say (O Muhammad unto mankind). I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for relatives and whoever earns good."  
(42:23)

The Shia traditions say that on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Abbas, at the time of the revelation of this verse, when people asked the Holy Prophet as to who were the relatives alluded to in this verse, the Apostle of God said, "Verily they allude to Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Hussain."

- "7. Thou art only a warner and a guide for every people."  
(13:7)

On the authority of Abdullah Ibn Abbas, when someone, at the revelation of this verse asked the Holy Prophet as to what was the connotation of 'Guide' in this verse, he said, "Verily I am the warner and Ali is the guide."

On another occasion, says a Shi'ite tradition, the Holy Prophet asked for some water to perform his ablutions. He then took Ali's hand and having placed it on his chest said, I am the warner and then placing his own hand on Ali's chest said, "Verily thou are the guide for all peoples. Thou art the inviter of the

nations to truth and a commander of the believers in faith." The Shi'ite traditions further argue that what can be said of Ali could be applied with greater emphasis to Ali's descendants, the Imams, who were specifically initiated in the role of guide and accordingly vested with special authority.

- "21. Nay! Do those who commit evil deeds suppose that we shall treat them like those who believe and do good --- that their life and their death shall be equal? Bad is their judgement."

(45:21)

Ibn Abbas says that the doers of good referred to in this verse are Ali, Humza and Ubaydah bin Harrith.

- "17. Is he (to be counted equal with them) who relieth on a clear proof from his Lord and a witness from Him reciteth it, and before it was the Book of Moses, an example and a mercy? Such believe therein, and whose disbelieveth therein of the clans, the Fire is his appointed place. So be not thou in doubt concerning it. Lo! It is the truth from thy Lord; but most of mankind believe not."

(11:17)



A'd Ibn Abdullah relates how, one day he witnessed Ali ascending the pulpit from where he delivered a sermon in which he said, "hardly is there a man from amongst the Quraish who has not been referred to in the Quran." At this some one rose up and asked Ali as to which was the verse of the Qur'an which alluded specifically to him. Then Ali recited the above verse and said it bore him reference.

- "4. Now if both of you turn upto Allah repentant, it will be better for you, and your hearts are already so inclined. But if you back up each other against him, surely Allah is his Helper and Gabriel and the righteous among the believers; and furthermore, all other angels too are his helpers."

(66:4)

Ibn Abbas states that the Holy Prophet had also said that the righteous men alluded to as Helper in this verse referred to Ali.

- "18. Is he who is a believer like unto him who is an evil-doer? Verily they are not equal."

(32:18)

Ibn Abbas states that this verse contains an allusion to Ali and Walid bin Utba, where the former is mentioned as a believer and the later referred to as a disbeliever.

- “19. Do you hold the giving of drink to the pilgrims, and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque as equal to the works of him who believes in Allah and the Last Day and striveth in the path of Allah? They are not at all equal in the sight of Allah. And Allah guides not the unjust people.”

(9:19)

According to the Shi'ite tradition, the person referred to as “one who believes in God, and the Last Day and the one who fights in the way of God” is Ali.

- “67. O Messenger (of God)! Convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do it not thou haste not conveyed His Message at all. And Allah will protect thee from men. Surely, Allah guides not the disbelieving people.”

(5:67)

According to the Shi'ite commentators, this verse alludes to the proclamation of the Holy Prophet at Ghaidar Khum

where, according to their interpretation, Ali was declared the successor of God's Apostle. Here the Holy Prophet is enjoined to give wide publicity to this divine injunction.

**Other verses alluding to Ali's superiority are:-**

"7. Verily those who believe and do good works--- they are the best of creatures."  
(98:7)

"207. And of men thee is he who would sell himself to seek the pleasure of Allah and Allah is compassionate to His servants."  
(2:207)

"16. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny? 17. The Lord of the two Easts and the Lord of two Wests! 18. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord that ye deny? 19. He has made the two bodies of water flow. They will one day meet. 20. There is now barrier between them; they encroach not one upon the other. 21. Which, is it, of the favours of your Lord that ye deny? 22. There come out from them pearls and coral."  
(55:16-22)

Uns bin Malik in his commentary on these verses says that the "two seas" here referred to allegorically, represent Ali



and Fatima and their pearls and corals are Hasan and Hussain.

- “83. My Lord! Bestow wisdom on me and join me with the righteous.”  
(26:83)

The “righteous” person here is Ali, in contradistinction to the arch-enemy of the Prophet, Abu Jahl, referred to in the next quoted below:-

- “1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, and the Merciful. 2. By the fleeting time. 3. Surely man is in a state of loss. 4. Except those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to accept truth, and enjoin on each other to be steadfast and patient.”  
(103:1-4)

- “1. By the star when it setteth. 2. Your comrade erreth not, nor is deceived. 3. Nor does he speak of his own desire.”  
(53:1-3)

The Shia commentators allege that one day, the Holy Prophet was sitting amidst a circle of several Quraish when all of a sudden a star broke from the sky. At this, the Prophet said that the person in whose house it would fall, would be my “Wassi” (testator). It fell in Ali’s house

and thus according to their interpretation he became the Holy Prophet's testator.

- "51. And He it is who created man from water, and hath appointed for him kindred by blood and kindred by marriage; and thy Lord is All-Powerful."  
(25:54)

The relationship in blood and marriage, say the Shi'ite traditions can only refer to Ali, who was the first cousin and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet.

- "47. And We shall remove whatever rancour may be in their breasts, so that they will become like brothers, seated on thrones, facing one another."  
(15:47)

The Shi'ite traditions say that the Holy Prophet one day told Ali that he with his wife Fatima will rest with him in paradise on the Day of judgement.

- "43. Establish worship, pay the poor rate and bow down your heads with those who bow (in worship)."  
(2:43)

The Si'ite traditions claim that this verse was revealed to exalt the glory of the

Holy Prophet and Ali, who were the first to bow down in prayers.

- “41. And if We take thee away. We shall surely exact retribution from them.”  
(43:41)

On the authority of Jabir ibn Abdullah it is stated that the Holy Prophet said that this revelation referred to Ali who would subsequently prove to be the avenger of wrong-doers after the Prophet's death.

- “36. (This lamp of light) is lit in houses which Allah hath allowed to be exalted and that his name be remembered in them. There in is He glorified in the mornings and evenings.”  
(24:36)

On the authority of Uns ibn Malik the Holy Prophet is stated to have said that the “houses” referred to in this verse included the house of Ali and Fatima.

- “61. Is he, then, to whom We have promised a goodly promise the fulfilment of which he will meet, like the one whom We have provided with the good things of this life and then on the Day of Resurrection he will be of those who will be brought arraigned before God?”  
(28:61)



The Shia commentators hold that this verse was revealed in favour of Ali and Fatima.

- “55. Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and the believers who observe prayer and pay the poor rate and bow down in prayers.”

(5:55)

The Shi'ite traditions maintain that at one time, while Ali and the Holy Prophet were offering prayers in a Mosque, a supplicant came and said, “O God, bear witness that I have asked every one of the congregation to give me something in alms but none has offered anything.” Ali who prostrated on his prayer mat at that time held out his finger, which bore a ring and pointed out towards the beggar, who took it off. It was at this juncture that this verse was revealed. The Prophet is also said to have predicted that, like Moses's brother Aaron, his cousin Ali would find support in his descendants.

- “12. O ye Who believe! When you consult the Messenger in private, give alms before your consultation. That is better and purer for you. But if you do not find (the

wherewithal) then lo! Allah is forgiving and Merciful.”

(58:12)

At the revelation of this verse, the Holy Prophet asked Ali to tell the people to give charity before seeking audience with him. Ali told the Prophet, that the people, being poor, could not give alms. Then the Prophet told Ali to persuade people to give just one “Dinar” (the coin then prevalent in Arabia) in alms. When Ali said that they were unable to give even that much, the Prophet reduced the amount to half a dinar and when this was also objected to, the Prophet reduced the alms still further. It was thus in answer to the pleadings of Ali that the amount of charity was so fixed as to come within the reach of all and sundry.

- “8. And you shall be divided into three groups; 9. First, those on the right hand — how lucky are those on the right hand; 10. Second, those on the left hand --- how unlucky are those on the left hand -- - 11. Third, the foremost; they are the foremost; 12. Those are they who will have achieved nearness to God.”

(56:8-12)

The Shi'ite traditions allege that when Ibn Abbas asked the Holy Prophet the

explanation of these verses, he replied that they alluded to Ali when on the Day of Resurrection the doom of men would be pronounced.

- “58. Verily, those who malign Allah and His Messenger --- Allah has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them man abasing punishment.”

(33:58)

According to Ibn Salman this verse was revealed when the hypocrites of Medina were harassing Ali.

- “181. And of those We have created there are people that guide men with truth and do justice therewith.”

(7:181)

The Shi'ite traditions allege that Ali used to say that the Muslims would be divided into 73 sects, of which 72 sects would be doomed to hell and the right ones (i.e. the followers of Ali alone) would enter the Paradise.

- “29. Those who believe and do right: Joy is for them and bliss their journey's end.”

(13:29)



This verse, according to the Shia commentators, also alludes to Ali and his followers.

- “6. The Prophet is nearer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are as mothers to them. And blood relations are nearer to one another, according to the Book of Allah, than the rest of the believers from among the Helpers as well as the emigrants except that you show kindness to your friends. That also is written down in the Book (of nature).”

On the authority of Ibn Abbas it is related that this verse also, as does the one quoted next, relates to Ali.

- “89. Whose does a good deed shall have a better reward than its worth; and such are safe from terror that day. 90. And those who bring an ill deed shall be thrown down on their faces into the fire: Are you rewarded aught save what ye did?”  
(27:89-90)

- “57. And when the son of Mary (Jesus Christ) is cited as an example, lo! The people jeer thereat.”  
(43:57)

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) is said to have told Ali one day that the latter's

example would be like that of Jesus Christ. A section of people would love him so much that it would willingly perish in hell-fire for him, while the other section who would show hatred to him would be doomed similarly.

- “101. Lo! As for those for whom the promise of a good reward has already gone forth from us, these will be removed far from it”.

(21:101)

- “19. Then, as for him who is given his record in his right hand he will say, “come read my record.”

(69:19)

According to the Shia commentators the one who will handle the record will be Ali.

- “43. And We sent not as Messengers before thee but men to whom We sent revelation, so ask those who possess the Reminder, if ye know not.”

(16:43)

Shia commentators add that the mention of “Zikar” or “Reminder” in this verse applies to learned men, especially to Ali.

- “32. Those who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of Allah and oppose the

Messenger after guidance had become manifest to them, shall not harm Allah in the least; and He will make their work fruitless.”

(47:32)

According to Imam Abu Jafar, this verse refers to those people who disputed with the Holy Prophet about Ali and his title to piety and succession.

- “29. Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the Apostle of God. And those with him are firm against the disbelievers and merciful amongst themselves. Thou (O Muhammad) seest them bowing down and prostrating themselves in prayers, seeking grace from Allah and His pleasure. Their mark is upon their faces, being the traces of prostrations. Such is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is like unto a seed-produce that sends forth its sprout, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and stands on its stem, delighting the sowers --- that He may cause the disbelievers to burn with rage at the sight of them. Allah has promised, unto those of them who believe and do good works, forgiveness and a great reward.”

(48:29)



According to the commentary of Imam Abu Musa, this verse was revealed in Ali's favour..

- “43. And those who disbelieve say, “Thou are not a Messenger” say “Sufficient is Allah as a witness between me and you, and so is he who possesses knowledge of the Book.”

(13:43)

According to the interpretation of Muhammad bin Hanfia the phrase ‘Whosoever has the knowledge of the Book’ alludes to Ali.

- “2. Those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book and the idolaters would not desist from disbelieving until there came to them clear evidence. 3. A Messenger from Allah, reciting unto them the pure scriptures. 4. There in are lasting commandments. 5. And those to whom the Book was given did not become divided until after clear evidence had come to them.

(98:2-5)

The Shia commentators assert that by the phrase “clear-proof” in these verses is meant the Holy Prophet and the phrase “clear evidence” designates Ali and his descendants.

“64. O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for thee and (for such of the believers as follow thee.”

(8:64)

According to Imam Muhammad Baqir, this verse was also revealed in Ali's favour.

“3. (I swear) By the Even and the Odd.”

(89:3)

According to the Shia commentators, “Even” in this verse stands for Hasan and Hussain (sons of Ali) and “Odd” stands for Ali.

“33. But Allah would not chastise them while thou were among them, and Allah would not punish them while they sought forgiveness.”

(8:33)

The Shia commentators interpret “thou were among them” as the descendants of Ali, who are the mainstay and the prop of God's message on this earth.

### **Ali's Ineffaceable Marks on Islamic Theology**

We have seen that Ali was a great philosopher, thinker, theologian and intrepid

warrior of God. He was a born general who took up his sword against the evil forces of the godless rebels who intended to introduce innovations into Islam. Ali's dominant personality has left permanent marks on Islamic theology. Indeed all the sects of Islam accept, in entirety, all Ali's interpretations of the laws, dogmas and doctrines. The expositions of Ali have passed into classical traditions and they have become so mixed with Islamic theology as to be inseparable. These versions have become a part and parcel of Islamic theology and no one can deny the decisive impression that they have left on Islam. Ali, the incarnation of the spirit of piety, extracts homage not only from the Shias but also from the Sunnis and all the non-sectarian creeds of Islam.



## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **THE WILL OF HAZRAT ALI FOR IMAM HASSAN**

#### **Will**

When Amirul Momineen encamped at Hazireen on his way back from Siffin he wrote the following "will for Imam Hassan."

By the father who is (shortly) to die, who<sup>1</sup> acknowledges the hardships of the times, who has turned away from life, who has submitted himself to the (calamities) of time, who realises the evils of the world, who is living in the abodes of the dead and is due to depart from them any day: to the son who yearns for what is not to be achieved, who is treading the path of those, who have died, who is the victim of ailments, who is entangled in the (worries of the) days, who is the target of hardships, who is as slave of the world, who is a trader of its deception, who is a debtor of wishes who is a prisoner of mortality, who is an ally of worries, a neighbour of griefes, a victim of distresses, who has been overpowered by desires and who is a successor of the dead.

Now (you should know that), what I have learnt from the turning away of this world from me, the onslaught of the time over me and the advancing of the

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<sup>1</sup> Abbe de Marginy, author of History of the Arabians under the Caliph Vol II.

next world toward me is enough to prevent me from remembering any one except me and from thinking beyond myself. But only when I confined myself to my own worries leaving the worries of others, my intelligence saved me and protected me from my desires. It clarified to me my affairs and led me to seriousness wherein there was no playtrick and to truth which was not tarnished by falsehood. Here, I found you a part of myself, rather I found you my whole, so much so that if any thing befell you, it was as though it to me. Consequently your affairs meant to me as my own matters would mean for me. So I have written this piece of advice as an instrument of help whereby, my child, I advise you to fear Allah, to abide by His commands to fill your heart with His remembrance and to cling to His rope. No connection is more reliable than the connection between you and Allah provided you take to it. Enliven your heart with preaching, kill it by renunciation, energise it with firm belief, enlighten it with wisdom, humiliate it by recalling death, make it believe in mortality, make it see the misfortunes of this world, make it fear the authority of the time and the severity charge of nights and days, place before it the events of the past people, recall to it what befell those who were before you and have a walk among their cities and remnants then see what they did and from what they have gone away and where they have gone and stayed. You would find that they departed from friends and are staying in loneliness. Shortly you too would be like one of them. Therefore manage for your place of stay and do not sell your next life with this world. Give up discussing what you do not know and speaking about what does



not concern you. Keep off the track where you fear going astray because refraining (from moving) when there is fear of straying is better than moving into dangers. Ask others to do good: you will thus be among the good. Desist others from evil with your action as well as your speech and keep off, to your best ability, from him who commits it. Fight in the way of Allah as you ought to fight, and the reviling of a reviler should not deter you in matters of Allah. Jump in the dangers for the sake of Right wherever it be. Acquire insight into religious law. Habituate yourself to endure hardships since the best trait of character is endurance in matters of Right. In all your affairs resign yourself to Allah, because you will thus be resigning yourself to a secure shelter and a strong protector. You should ask only from Allah because in His hand is all the giving and depriving. Seek good as much as you can Understand my advice and do not turn away from it, because the best saying is that which benefits. Know that there is no good in that knowledge which does not benefit, and if knowledge is not made use of then its acquisition is not justified.

O' my child when I noticed that I have been of good age and noticed that I was increasing in weakness I hastened with my will for you and brought out salient points of it lest death overtakes me before I divulge to you what I have in my heart, or my wit be affected as my body has been affected, or the forces of passions or the mischief of the world overtake you making you like a stubborn camel. Certainly the heart of a young man is like uncultivated land. It accepts whatever is strewn on it. So I hastened to mould you



properly before your heart hardens up and your mind gets occupied, so that you may be ready to accept through your intelligence the results of experiences of others and be saved from going through these experiences yourself. In this way you would avoid the hardship of seeking them and the difficulties of experimenting. Thus you are getting to know what we had experienced and even those things are becoming clear to you which we might have missed.

O' my child even though I have not had the age which those before me had yet I looked into their performance and thought over their events. I walked among their ruins till I was regarded one of them. In fact by virtue of their affairs that have become known to me it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern its dirty from the clean and its benefit from the harm.

I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and collected for you their good points and have kept away from you their useless points. Since I feel for your affairs as a living father should feel and I aim at giving you training, I thought it should be at a time when you are advancing in age and new on the stage of the world, possessing upright intention and clean heart and that I should begin with the teaching of Quran and its interpretation, the laws of Islam and its commands, its lawful matters and unlawful matters and that I should not go beyond these for you. Then I feared that you should not get confused as other people had got confused on account of their passions and (different) views. Therefore inspite of your dislike for

being so warned I thought it better to make this position strong rather than leave you in a position where I do not regard you safe from falling into destruction. I hoped that Allah would help you because of your straight forwardness and guide you because of your resoluteness. Consequently I wrote this piece of my will for you.

Know O' my child that what I love most for you to adopt from my will is to fear Allah, to confine yourself to what Allah has made obligatory on you, and to follow the actions of your preceding forefathers, and the virtuous people of your family because they did not fall short of seeing for themselves what you (would like to) see for yourself, and thought about their affairs as you would like to think (about your affairs). Thereafter their thinking led them to discharge the obligation they came to know of and to desist from what they were not required to do. If your heart does not accept this without acquiring knowledge as they acquired then your search should first be by way of understanding and learning and not of falling into doubts or entangling in quarrels. And before your probe into this you should begin by seeking Allah's help and turning to Him for (affording you) competence and to keep aloof from every thing that throws you into doubt or flings you towards misguidance. When you make sure that your heart is clean and humble and your thoughts have come together and you have only one thought which is about this matter then you see what I have explained to you; but if you have not been able to achieve that peace of observation and imagination which you like to have then know that



you are only stamping the ground like a blind she camel and falling into darkness while a seeker of religion should not grope in the dark or create confusion. It is better to avoid this.

Appreciate my advice, my child, and know that He who is Master of death is also Master of life, that the Creator causes death as well, that He Who destroys is also restorer of life and that He Who inflicts disease is also the curer. This world continues in the way Allah has made it with regard to its pleasures, trials, reward on the day of judgement and all that He wishes and we do not know, if any thing of this advice is not understood by you then attribute it to your ignorance of it, because when you were first born you were born ignorant. Thereafter you acquired knowledge. There are many matters of which you are ignorant and in which your view first wanders and your eye gets astray then after this you see them. Therefore cling to Him who created you, fed you and put you in order. Your worship should be for Him, your eagerness should be towards Him and your fear should be from Him.

Know, my child, that no one received messages from Allah as the Prophet did. (May Allah bless him and his Progeny). Therefore regard him your forerunner and leader towards deliverance. Certainly even if you try you cannot acquire that insight for your welfare as I have for you.

Know, my child, that if there had been a partner with Allah, his messengers too should have come to you and you would have seen signs of his authority



and power and you should have known his deeds and qualities. But Allah is only One as He has describes Himself. No one can dispute his authority. He is from ever and would be for ever. He is before all things without any beginning. He would remain after all things without any end. He is too great to be understood by heart or eye. When you have understood this then you do what should be done by him who is like you by way of his low position, his lack of authority, his increasing incapability, and his great need for Allah for seeking His obedience, fearing His chastisement and apprehending His anger, because He does not command you save for virtue and does not refrain you save from evil.

My child, I have informed you about the world, its condition, its decay and its passing away (from one to another) and I have informed you of the next world and of what has been provided in it for its people. I have recounted to you proverbs about it so that you may draw instruction from them and act upon them. The example of those who have understood the world is like the travellers who being disgusted with drought stricken place set off for a green place and fruitful area. Then they endure difficulties of the way, separation of friends, hardships of journey and unwholesome food in order to reach their area of ampleness and place of stay. Consequently they do not feel any pain in all this and do not regard any expenditure to be waste. Nothing is more loveable to them than what takes them near their goal and carries them closer to their place of stay. (Against this), the example of those who get deceived by this world is

like the people who were in a green area but they get disgusted with it and go to a drought-stricken area. Therefore for them nothing is more detestable or abominable than to leave the place where they were for going to a place where they would reach unexpectedly and to which they are heading.

O' my child make yourself the measure (for dealings) between you and others. Thus you like for others what you like for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others as you like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad in others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you like others to accept from you. Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know be very little. Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.

Know that self admiration is contrary to propriety (of action) and a calamity for the mind. Therefore increase your exertion and do not become the treasurer for (wealth to be inherited by) others. When you have been guided on the right path lower yourself before Allah as much you can. Know that in front of you lies a road of long distance and severe hardship and that you cannot avoid seeking it. Take your requirement of provision keeping the burden light. Do not bear on your back beyond your power lest its weight becomes a mischief for you. Whenever you come across a needy person who can carry for you your provision to hand it back to you on the Day of judgement when you would be needing it then accept



him as a good opportunity and make him to carry it. Put in that provision as much as you are able to for it is likely that (if hereafter) you may need him you may not get hold of him. If a person is willing to borrow from you in the days of your affluence to pay it back to you at the time of your need then make use of this opportunity.

Know that in front of you lies an impassable Valley wherein the light-burdened man would be in a better condition than the heavy-burdened one and the slow-paced would be in worse condition than the swift-paced. Your terminous through this passage would necessarily be either paradise or Hell. Therefore reconnoitre for yourself before alighting and prepare the place before getting down, because after death there can be no preparation nor return to this world. Know that He Who owns the treasures of the skies and the earth has permitted you to pray to Him and has promised you acceptance of the prayer. He has commanded you to beg of Him in order that He may give you and to seek His mercy in order that He may have mercy on you. He has not placed any thing between you and Him that may veil Him from you. He has not required you to get a mediator for you to Him, and if you err, He has not prevented you from repentance. He does not hasten with punishment. He does not taunt you for repenting, nor does He humiliate you when humiliation is more appropriate for you. He has not been harsh in accepting repentance. He does not severely question you about your sins. He does not severely question you about your sins. He does not disappoint you of His mercy.



He does rather regard abstention from sin as a virtue. He counts your one sin as one while He counts one virtue as ten. He has opened for you the door of repentance. Therefore whenever you call Him, He hears your call and whenever you whisper to Him He knows the whisper. You place before Him your needs, unveil before Him yourself, complain to Him of your worries, beseech Him to remove your troubles, seek His help in your affairs and ask from the treasures of His mercy what no one else has power to give namely length of life, health of body and increase of livelihood. Then he has placed the keys of His treasures in your hands in the sense that He has shown you the way to ask Him. Therefore wherever you wish you open the doors of His favour with prayer, and get heavy rains of His mercy fall on you. Delay in acceptance of the prayer should not disappoint you because the grant of prayer is according to the measure of (your) intention. Sometimes acceptance (of prayer) is delayed with a view to be a source of greater reward to the asker and of better grant to the expectant. Sometimes you ask for a thing but it is not given to you, and a better thing is given to you sooner or later, or a thing is taken away from you for some greater good of yours, because sometimes you ask for a thing which contains ruin for your religion if it is given to you. Therefore your request should be for things whose beauty should be lasting and whose burden should remain away from you. As for wealth it won't last for you nor would you live for it.

Know that you have been created for the next world, not for this world, for destruction not for lasting

and for dying not for living. You are in a place which does not belong to you, a house for making preparations and a passage towards the next world. You are being chased by death from which the runner away cannot escape, as it would surely overtake him. So be on guard against it lest it overtakes you at a time when you are in a sinful state and you are thinking of repenting but it creates obstruction between you and repentance. In such a case you would ruin yourself.

O' my child remember very much death and the place where you have to go suddenly and reach after death so that when it comes you are already on your guard against it and have prepared yourself for it, and it does not come to you all of a sudden and surprises you. Beware lest you get deceived by the leanings of the people towards worldly attraction and their rushing upon it. Allah has warned you about it and the world has informed you of its mortal character and unveiled to you its evils. Those after it are like barking dogs or devouring carnivores who hate each other. The stronger among them eat away the weaker and the big among them tramples over the small ones. Some are like tied cattle and some like untied cattle, who have lost their wits and are running on unknown tracks. They are flocks of calamities wandering in rugged valleys. There is no herdsman to detain them nor any tenderer to take them to grazing. The world has put them on the track of blindness and taken away their eyes off the minarets of guidance. They have therefore been perplexed in its bewildering and got sunk in its pleasures. They took it as god so it played with them. They too played with it and forgot what is beyond it.



Darkness is disappearing gently. Now it is as though travellers have got down and the hasteners would soon join. Know that every one who is riding on the carriage of night and day is being carried by them even though he may be stationary and he is covering the distance even though he is staying and resting.

Know with certainty that you cannot achieve your desire and cannot exceed your destined life. You are on the track of those before you. Therefore be humble in seeking and moderate in earning because often seeking leads to deprivation. Every seeker of livelihood does not get it, nor is every one who is moderate in seeking deprived. Keep yourself above every low thing even though it may take you to your desired objects, because you will not get any return for your own respect that you will spend. Do not be slave of others for Allah had made you free. There is no good in good which is achieved through evil and no good in comfort that is achieved through (disgracing) hardship.

Beware that carriers of greed should not carry you and get you descend on the springs of destruction. If you can manage that there be no wealthy person between yourself and Allah, do so, because in any case you will find what is for your and get your share. A little received directly from Allah the Glorified is more dignified than that which is more but is received through (the obligation of) His creatures, although (really) all is from Allah.



It is easier to rectify what you miss by silence than to secure what you lose by speaking. Whatever is in a pot can be retained by closing of the lid. I like you more to retain what is in your hands than to seek what is in other's hands. Bitterness of disappointment is better than seeking from people, Manual labour with chastity is better than riches of vicious life. A man is the best guard of his own secrets. Often a man strives for what harms him. He who speaks much speaks nonsense. Whoever ponders perceives. Associate with people of virtue; you will remain safe from them. Worst food is that which is unlawful. Oppressing the weak is the worst oppression. Where leniency is unsuitable, harshness is lenience. Often cure is illness and illness is cure. Often the ill wisher gives correct advice while the well-wisher cheats. Do not depend upon hopes because hopes are the mainstay of the fools. It is wise to preserve experiences. Your best experience is that which teaches you lesson. Make use of leisure before it changes into (hour of) grief. Every seeker does not achieve. Every departurer does not return. To lose provision and to earn evil for the day of Judgement means ruin. Every matter has a consequence. What is destined for you would shortly come to you. A trader undertakes risk. Often a small quantity is more beneficial than large quantity. There is no good in an ignoble helper, nor in a suspicious friend. Be

compliant with the world so long as it is in your grip. Do not put yourself to risk about anything in expectation for more than that. Beware that feeling of enmity should not overpower you. Bear yourself with reference to your brother in a way that if he disregards the kinship you have regard to it; when he turns away you be kind to him and draw near to him; when he withhold, you spend for him; when he gets apart you approach him; when he is harsh you be lenient; when he commits wrong you think of (his) excuse for it, so much so as though you are a slave and he is the master over you. But take care that this should not be done inappropriately, and that you should not behave so with an undeserving fellow. Do not take the enemy of your friend as a friend because you will thus antagonise your friend. Give true advice to your brother, be it good or bitter. Swallow your anger because I did not find a sweeter thing than it in the end, and nothing more pleasant in consequence. Be lenient to him who is harsh on you for it is likely that he would shortly become lenient to you. Treat your enemy with favours because this is sweeter of the two successes (success of revenge and success of doing favour). If you intend to cut off from a friend leave some scope for him from your side by which he may resume friendship if it so occurs to him some day. If anyone has good idea about you prove it to be true. Do not disregard the interests of your brother



depending upon your terms with him, for he is not your brother. If you disregard his interest. Your people should not be harsh on you. Do not learn towards him who turns away from you. Your brother should not be more firm in his disregard of kinship than you in paying regard to it, and you should exceed in doing good to him than his evil to you. Do not feel much of the oppression of a person who oppresses you, because he is only busy in harming himself and benefiting you. The reward of him who pleases you is not that you displease him.

Know, my child that livelihood is of two kinds --- a livelihood that you seek and a livelihood that seeks you. Which is such that if you do not reach it, it would come to you. How bad it is to bend down at the time of need and to be harsh in riches. You should have from this world only that with which you can adorn your permanent abode. If you cry over what has gone out of your hands then also cry for what has not at all come to you. Infer about what has not yet happened from what has already happened, because occurrences are ever similar. Do not be like those whom preaching gives no benefit unless you inflict pain on them, because the wise take instruction from teaching while the beasts do not learn except by beating. Ward off from yourself the onslaught of worries by firmness of endurance and purity of belief. He



who gives up moderation commits excess. Companion is like a relation. A friend is he whose absence also proves the friendship. Passion is a partner of distress. Often the near ones are remoter than the distant ones, and often the distant ones are nearer than the near ones. A stranger is he who has no friend. He who transgresses right narrows his own passage. He who confines to his position remains constant upon it. The most trustworthy intermediary is that which you adopt between yourself and Allah. He who does not care for your interests is your enemy. When greed leads to ruin deprivation is an achievement. Every defect does not come to view, and every opportunity does not recur. Often a person with eyes misses the track while a blind person secures the correct path. Belate an evil because you would be able to hasten it whenever you desire. The disregard of kinship by the ignorant is equal to the regard of kinship by the wise. Whoever takes the world to be safe it betrays him, whoever regards the world as great, it humiliates him. Every one who shoots does not hit. When authority changes the items change. Consult the friend before adopting a course and the neighbour before taking a house. Beware, you should not mention in your speech what may rouse laughter even though you may be relating it from others. Do not consult women because their view is weak and their determination is unstable. Cover their eyes by

keeping them under veil because strictness of veiling keeps them long. Their coming out is not worse than your allowing an unreliable man to visit them. If you can manage that they should not know anyone other than do so. Do not allow a woman matters other than those about herself because a woman is a flower, not an administrator. Do not pay her regard beyond herself. Do not encourage her to intercede for others. Do not show suspicion out of place, because this leads a correct woman to evil and a chaste woman to deflection. For everyone among your servants fix a work for which you may hold him responsible. In this way they will not fling the work one over the other. Respect your Kinsmen because they are your wings with which you fly, the origin towards which you return and your hands with which you attack. I place at Allah's disposal your religion and your world and beg Him to ordain the best for you in respect of the near and far, this world and the next.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibn Meetham has quoted Jafar bin Bahwalh Qummi to have stated that Amirul Momineen wrote this piece of advice in the name of Mohammad bin Hanafia, while Allama Syed Razzi has written that its addressee is Imam Hassan (A.S.). In any case whoever the addressee may be, this manifesto of Imani is a lesson of guidance by acting on which the way of success and achievement can be opened and straying caravans of mankind can tread on the path of guidance in the matters of this world and the next

## CHAPTER IX

### SAYING OF HAZRAT ALI (EXTRACTS FROM NAHJUL BALAGHA)

#### SELECTIONS FROM WISE SAYINGS AND PREACHING OF AMIRUL MOMINEEN

#### INCLUDING HIS REPLIES TO QUESTIONS AND SHORT UTTERANCES UTTERED FOR DIVERSE PURPOSES

1. Amirul Momineen (A.S.), said: During civil disturbance be like an adolescent camel who has neither back strong enough nor riding for udders for milking.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Laboon means a milk she-camel and 'Ibn-ul-laboon' means its two years old young. In this age the young is neither suitable for riding nor does it have udders which could be milked. It is called "ibnul laboon" because in this period of two years its mother bears another young and begins yielding milk again.

The intention is that during Civil disturbance or trouble a man should behave in such a manner that he may be regarded of no consequence and ignored. No need should be felt for his participation in either party. This is because during mischief only dissociation can save from molestation. Of course when the clash is between right and wrong it is not permissible to keep aloof nor can it be called civil disturbance; but on such occasions it is obligatory to rise up for the support of right and suppression of wrong. For example, during the battles of Jamal and Siffin it was obligatory to support the right and to fight against the wrong.



2. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who adopts greed as a habit devalues himself; he who discloses his hardship agrees to humiliation and he who allows his tongue to overpower his soul debases the soul.
3. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Miserliness is shame, cowardice is a defect, poverty disables an intelligent man from arguing his case, a destitute is a stranger in his home town; incapability is a catastrophe, endurance is bravery, abstinence is riches and self-restraint is a shield (against sin).
4. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The best companion is submission to Allah's will, knowledge is a venerable estate, good manners are new dresses and thinking is clear mirror.
5. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The bosom of the wise is the safe of his secrets cheerfulness is his bond of affectic forbearance is the grave of shortcomings (or he said) and mutual reconciliation is covering for shortcomings.
6. Amirul Momineen (A.S.), said: He who admires himself attracts many opponents against him, charity is an effective cure and the actions of

the people in their present life would be in front of their eyes in the next life.<sup>2</sup>

7. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : How wonderful is man that he speaks with fat, talks with a piece

<sup>2</sup> This saying comprises three phrases. In the first phrase Amirul Momineen has described the consequences and effects resulting from self admiration namely that it creates the feeling of hatred and humiliation against others. Thus the man who manifests his greatness by every pretext in order to make himself conspicuous is never regarded with esteem. People begin to despise him because of his mentality for seeking self conspicuity and are not prepared to accord him the worth which he really has, much less to regard him as he himself thinks to be.

The second sentence relates to charity and Amirul Momineen has described it as an effective cure, because when a man helps the poor and the destitute by alms they pray for his health and recovery from the depth of their hearts and therefore their prayer is granted and begins him cure. In this connection there is the saying of the Prophet that "Cure your sick by charity".

The third sentence relates to disclosure of actions on the day of judgement namely that the good and bad deeds which a person performs in this world cannot be perceived by the human senses because of the veil of material elements but on the day of Judgement when material curtains will be lifted up they would so appear before the eyes that there will be no possibility of denial by anyone. Thus Allah has said:

On that day shall come out people from their graves in scattered groups, to be shown their own deeds. Then he who has done as atom --- weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom --- weight of evil shall see it. (Quran 99:6)

of flesh, hears with a bone and breathes through a hole.

8. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : When this world advances towards anyone (with its favours) it attributes to him other's good; and when it turns away from him it deprives him of his own good.<sup>3</sup>
9. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Meet people in such a manner that if you die they should weep for you and if you live they should long for you.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The intention is that when a man's star is helpful and the world is favourable to him then people describe his performances with exaggeration and give credit to him for others' actions as well, while if a man loses the favour of the world and clouds of ill-luck and misfortune engulf him, they ignore his virtues and do not at all tolerate even to recall his name. They are friends of him whom the world favours and the foes of him whom the world hits.

<sup>4</sup> The person who behaves with others with benignity and mannerliness, people extend their hand of co-operation towards him, honour and respect him and shed tears after his death. Therefore a person should lead such agreeable life that no one should have any complaint against him nor should any harm be caused by him to anyone so that during life he should attract others and after death too he should be remembered in good words.

As a Persian couplet says:

O' Urfi so live with the people that when you die the Muslims should (out of consideration for you) give you



10. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When you gain power over your adversary pardon him by way of thanks for being able to over-power him.<sup>5</sup>
11. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The most helpless of all men is he who cannot find a few brothers during his age, but still more helpless is he who finds such a brother but loses him.<sup>6</sup>

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burial bath with the water of Kaba while the non-Muslims may join in cremating you.

<sup>5</sup> The occasion for pardon and forgiveness is that when there is power to take revenge. But where there is no such power, then pardon is just the result of helplessness, for which there is no credit. However to practice pardon inspite of power and capacity for revenge is the essence of human distinction and an expression of thanks to Allah for bestowing this power, because the feeling of gratefulness necessitates that man should bow before Allah in humbleness and humiliation by which the delicate feelings of pity and kindness would arise in his heart and the rising flames of rage and anger would cool down after which there would be no urge for taking revenge under the effect of which he would use his power and capability to satisfy his anger instead of using it property.

<sup>6</sup> It is not difficult to attract others by good manners and cheerfulness and to befriend them by sweet speech because no physical exertion or mental worry is required for this; and after making friends it is still easier to maintain the friendship and good relations because for making friends some effort or other is needed while for maintaining it no difficulty is to be surmounted. Therefore no one can be more wretched than the man who cannot even retain a thing which could be retained just by keeping away a frown from the face.

12. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When you get (only) small favours do not push them away through lack of gratefulness.
13. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is abandoned by the near ones is endeared by the remote ones.
14. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Every mischief monger cannot even be reproved.<sup>7</sup>
15. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: All matters are subject to destiny, so much so that sometimes death results from effort.
16. Amirul Momineen was asked to explain the saying of the Prophet Ali (S.A.) that "banish your old age (by hair dye) and do not acquire resemblance to the Jews. Amirul Momineen replied "The Prophet, (S.A.) said this at a time

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The intention is that a man should meet everyone with good manners and cheerfulness so that people may like to associate with him and extend a hand of friendship towards him.

<sup>7</sup> Amirul Momineen uttered this sentence when Sa'ad bin abi Vaqqas, Mohammad bin Muslema and Abdullah bin Umar refused to support him against the people of Jamal. He means to say that these people are so against me that neither my words have any effect on them nor does me reproof or rebuke correct them.

when the religion was confined to a few, but now that its expanse has widened and it is firmly settled everyone is free in his action".<sup>8</sup>

17. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said about those who avoided fighting on his side: They abandoned right but did not support wrong.<sup>9</sup>
18. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who gallops with loose rein stumbles with death.
19. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Forgive the shortcomings of considerate people because when they fall into error Allah raises them up.
20. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The consequence of fear is disappointment and of bashfulness frustration. Opportunity passes

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<sup>8</sup> The intention is that since in the beginning of Islam the number of Muslims was limited it was necessary to keep them distinct from the Jews in order to maintain their collective entity. So the Prophet ordered the use of hair-dye which was not in use among the Jews. Besides, it was also the aim that when facing the enemy the people should not appear old in age and weak.

<sup>9</sup> This saying is about those who claimed to be neutrals, such as Abdullah bin Umar, Sad bin Abi Vaqqas, Abu Musa Ashari, Ahnaf bin Qais and Anas bin Malik etc. No doubt these people did not openly support wrong but not to support right is also a kind of support of wrong. Therefore they would be counted among the opponents of right.



away like the cloud. Therefore make use of good opportunities.<sup>10</sup>

21. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: We have a right. If it is allowed to us well and good otherwise we will ride on the hind part of the camel (like lowly people) even though the night journey may be long.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> However bad a thing may be regarded among the people and however it may be looked down upon, if it is not really bad then to feel bashful about it is quite foolish, because it would often cause deprivation from things which are the source of successes and achievements of this as well as next world. For example, if a man fears lest people may regard him ignorant and therefore feels bashful in asking an important and necessary issue than this misplaced bashfulness would result in his deprivation of knowledge. Therefore no sane person would feel bashful in making enquiries. Thus an old man who was learning despite old age was asked whether he did not feel ashamed of learning in old age and he replied: I do not feel shame for ignorance during old age, then how can I feel shame for learning in old age. Of course to feel shame in doing things which are really bad and mischievous is the essence of humanity and nobility; for instance, those immoral acts which are bad according to religion, intelligence and ethics. In any case the first kind of bashfulness is bad and the second one is good. In this connection the Prophet's saying is that:

Bashfulness is of two kinds, bashfulness of intelligence and bashfulness of foolishness. The bashfulness of intelligence is knowledge whereas bashfulness of foolishness is ignorance.

<sup>11</sup> The sense of the interpretation written by Syed Razi is that Amirul Momineen intends to say that if our right that lies on others in our position as the Imam whom it is obligatory to obey is acknowledged and we are given the chance of

Syed Razi's note: This is a very fine and eloquent expression. It means that if we are not allowed our right we would be regarded humble. This sense come out from this expression because on the rear part of the camel only slaves; prisoners or other people of this type used to ride.

22. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He whom his deeds accord back position cannot be given front position by his lineage.
23. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: To render relief to the grief stricken and to provide comfort in hardship means a tonepurment of big sins.

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worldly rule well and good, otherwise we will have to bear all sorts of hardships and ignominies and we shall be compelled to live this life of ignominy and humiliation for a long time.

Some commentators have stated a different meaning than this, namely that if our position is belittled and put aside and others are given precedence over us we shall bear it patiently and agree to remain behind" and this is what is meant by riding on the hind part of the camel, because the person who rides on the hind part is on the rear while the person who sits on the back is in the fore. Some people take it to mean that if we are allowed our right we will accept it but if it is not given we shall not behave like the rider who gives over the rain of his animal in the hands of some other person who is free to take him wherever he likes but we shall stick to our right even though a long time may elapse and not surrender to the usurpers.

24. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: O' son of Adam when you see that Allah is bestowing His favours on you while you are disobeying Him, you should fear Him.<sup>12</sup>
25. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: Whenever a person conceals a thing in his heart it manifests itself through unintentional words

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<sup>12</sup> When a person goes on receiving favours despite sinfulness he develops the misunderstanding that Allah is pleased with him and that this is the result of His pleasure, because increase in favours arises out of gratefulness and in the event of ungratefulness the bestowal of favours stops, as Allah says: And when declared your Lord: If you be grateful will increase (My favours) to you, and if you be ungrateful, Verily my torment is indeed severe. (Quran 14:7)

Nevertheless continuous bestowal of favours, despite disobedience and ungratefulness, can not be the result of Allah's pleasure, nor can it be said that in this way Allah has put him under the misconception that he should regard this exuberance of favours is the result of Allah's pleasure because when he knows that he is a sinner and disobedient and is committing sins and vices knowing them to be sins and vices then there is no ground for the misconception on his part to assume Allah's pleasure and consent. He should rather think that this is a sort of trial and respite so that when his sinfulness and high-handedness reaches its zenith he should be caught all at once. Therefore in such a case he should keep waiting as to when Allah's favours are taken away from his and he is punished with deprivation and discomfiture.



- of his tongue and the expressions of his countenance.<sup>13</sup>
26. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: Keep walling in your sickness till you can.<sup>14</sup>
27. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: The best abstemiousness is to conceal it.
28. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: When you are running away from the world and

<sup>13</sup> The things which a man wants to conceal from others do come out through his tongue some time or other and his effort at concealment is unsuccessful. This is because although the far-sighted mind desires to keep them concealed yet some times it gets entangled in some more important matter and becomes careless on this score when the concealed thing comes out in words through his tongue. When the mind becomes attentive, it is not possible to undo the matter just as an arrow cannot be got back after shooting. Even if this is not the case and mind is fully cautious and attentive, the thing cannot remain concealed because the lines of the face are indicative of mental feelings and reflect the heart's emotions and consequently the redness of face can easily point out to the sense of shame, and its yellowness to fear.

<sup>14</sup> The intention is that so long as sickness does not become serious do not give it importance, because by giving importance the feeling gets affected and the illness increase. Therefore continued activity and regarding oneself well dispels sickness and also prevents the power of resistance from getting weak, and keeps up its psychic power, while the psychic power curbs down small ailments by itself provided it is not forced to give up resistance by surrendering the imagination to the ailment.

death is approaching, there is no question of delay in the encounter.

29. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: Fear! Fear! By Allah, He has hidden your sins so much so as though He has forgiven.
30. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about faith when he said: Faith stands on four supports --- on endurance, conviction, justice and jihad (fighting in the name of Allah). Endurance again has four aspects eagerness, fear, abstention (from world) and anticipation (of death). So whoever is eager for Paradise will ignore the passions, who ever fears Hell will refrain from prohibited acts, whoever abstains from the world takes hardships lightly and whoever anticipation death will hasten towards good deeds. Conviction also has four aspects: prudent perception, intelligent understanding, drawing lessons from instructive things and following the precedents of the past people. So whoever perceives with prudence, wise knowledge would be manifest to him, and to whomever wise knowledge becomes manifest he appreciates instructive objects and whoever appreciates instructive objects he is just like the past people. Justice also has four aspects: understanding, deep knowledge, good power of decision and firm forbearance. Therefore whoever understands comes to acquire depth of knowledge, whoever acquires depth of

knowledge drinks from the spring of judgement, and whoever exercises forbearance never commits evil actions in his affairs and leads paradise worthy life among the people. Jehad also has four aspects: to ask others to do good, to desist others from doing evil, truthfulness on all occasions and detestation of the vicious. So, whoever asks others to do good provides strength to the believers, whoever desists others from evil humiliates the unbelievers, whoever speaks truth on all occasions discharges all his obligations and whoever detests the vicious and becomes angry for the sake of Allah, then Allah is angry for him and would keep him pleased on the Day of Judgement.

31. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Un-belief stands on four supports: hankering after whims, mutual quarrelling, deviation from truth and dissension. So whoever hankers after whims does not incline towards right: whoever quarrels much on account of ignorance remains permanently blind from right; whoever deviates from truth, for him good becomes evil and evil becomes good and he remains intoxicated with misguidance; and whoever dissents his path becomes difficult, his affairs become complicated and his way of escape become narrow. Doubt has also four aspects: unreasonableness, fear, wavering and undue submission to every thing. So he who adopts unreasonableness as his way for him there is no dawn after the night; he who is afraid of what



- befalls him has to run on his heels; he who wavers in doubt Satan's trample him under there feet and he who submits to the destruction of this and the next world succumbs to it.<sup>15</sup>
32. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The doer of good is better than the good and the doer of evil is worse than the evil itself.
33. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Be generous but not extravagant; be spendthrift but not miserly.
34. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The best riches is abandonment of desires.
35. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If someone is quick in saying about people what they dislike, they speak about him what they have no knowledge of.
36. Who ever prolongs his desire ruins his actions.
37. Once Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was proceeding towards Syria when the countrymen of Unbar met him. Seeing him they began to walk on foot and then ran in front of him. He enquired why they were doing so and they replied that this is the way we respect the chiefs. Then he said: By Allah this does not benefit your chiefs. You are

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<sup>15</sup> Syed Ravi's Note: We have left out the remaining portion of this saying for fear of length and for being outside the purpose of this book.

belabouring yourself in this world and earning misery for the next world by it. How harmful is the labour in whose wake there is punishment and how profitable is the ease with which there is deliverance from Hell.

38. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to his son Hasan: O' my son learn four things and (further) four things from me. Nothing will harm you if you practice them. That the richest riches is Intelligence; the biggest destitution is foolishness; the most wild wildness is vanity and the best achievement is courtesy.

O' my son, you should avoid making friends with a fool because he may intend to benefit you but may harm you; you should avoid making friends with a miser because he would run away from you when you would need him most; you should avoid making friends with a sinful person because he would sell you for nought; and you should avoid making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, making you feel remote things near and near thing remote.

39. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Supernumerary prayers cannot bring about nearness to Allah. If they hamper obligatory ones.

40. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The tongue of the wise man is behind his heart and the heart of the fool is behind his tongue.<sup>16</sup>
41. This very sense has been related from Amirul Momineen in a different version as follows: The heart of a fool is in his mouth while the tongue of the wise man is in his heart. The meaning of both the saying is the same.
42. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to a companion during his sickness: Allah may make your illness a means for writing off your sins, because there is no reward for sickness but it erases sins and makes them fall like (dried) leaves: Reward lies in saying by tongue and doing something with hands and feet. Certainly Allah, the Glorified admits into Paradise by virtue of truthfulness of intention and chastity of heart, whomever He wishes from among His people.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Syed Razi's Note: The sentence bears strange and beautiful meaning. It means that the wise man does not speak with his tongue except after consulting his mind and exercising his imagination, but the fool quickly utters whatever comes to his tongue without thinking. In this way the tongue of the wise man follows his heart while the heart of the fool follows his tongue.

<sup>17</sup> Syed Razi's Note: I say Amirul Momineen (A.S.) is true in saying that there is no reward for sickness as such because compensation is admissible in respect of acts of Allah towards His creatures such as grief, illness and the like, whereas reward and recompense becomes admissible against



43. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said about Khabbab bin Aratt: Allah may have mercy on Khabbab bin Aratt since he accepted Islam willingly, migrated (from Mecca) obediently, remained content with what sufficed him, was pleased with Allah and lived the life of a Mujahid (holy soldier).<sup>18</sup>
44. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: Blessed is the person who kept in mind the next life, acted so as to be able to render account” remained content with what sufficed him and remained pleased with Allah.
45. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: Even if I strike the nose of a believer with this my sword for hating me he would not hate me and even if I pile all the wealth of the world

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actions of the creature. This is the difference between the two and Amirul Momineen has clarified it through his lustrous knowledge and sound view.

<sup>18</sup> Khabbab bin Aratt was a distinguished companion of the Prophet and was one of the early Muhajirs (migrants from Mecca) He suffered various sorts of hardships at the hands of the Quraish. He was made to stand in the scorching sun, and to lie on fire but he did not, on any account, abandon the side of the Prophet. He accompanied the Prophet in Badr and other battles. He supported Amirul Momineen in Siffin and Nehrwan. He had left Medina and settled in Kufa. Thus he died here in 39 A.H. at the age of 73, Amirul Momineen led his funeral prayer and he was buried outside Kufa, Amirul Momineen uttered these mercy-invoking words standing on his grave.

before a hypocrite Muslim for loving me he will not love me. This is because it is a verdict pronounced by the tongue of the revered Prophet. Allah may bless him and his descendants, as he said: "O' Ali, a believer will never hate you and a hypocrite Muslim will never love you."

46. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: The sin displeases you is better in the view of Allah than the virtue which makes you proud.<sup>19</sup>
47. Amirul Momineen, peace be upon him, said: The worth of a man is according to his courage, his truthfulness is according to his balance of temper, his valour is according to his self-respect and his chasteness is according to his sense of shame.
48. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Victory is by determination; determinations is by revolving of thoughts and thoughts are formed by guarding secrets.

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<sup>19</sup> The person who feels ashamed and penitent after committing sin and offers repentance before Allah remains safe from the penalty of that sin and deserves reward of repentance, while the person who after doing a virtuous deed begins to feel superiority over others, and being proud of his virtues thinks that he has no apprehension whatever, destroys his virtue and remains deprived of the reward of the virtuous deed. Obviously he who has erased the blot of his sin by repentance would be better than he who has ruined his action by being proud of it, and has not repented either.

49. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Fear attack of a noble when he is hungry and that of an ignoble when he is satiated.<sup>20</sup>
50. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Hearts of the people are like wild beasts. Whoever tames them they would pounce upon him.<sup>21</sup>
51. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: So long as your position is good your defects remain covered.
52. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The most capable of pardoning is he who is the most powerful to punish.

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<sup>20</sup> The meaning is that a man of prestige and esteem never tolerates humiliation or disgrace. If his honour is assailed he would leap like an hungry lion and break away the shackles of humiliation. If a low and narrow minded person is raised beyond his name he would not be able to contain himself but regarding himself very high would assail other's position.

<sup>21</sup> This saying confirms the theory that by nature human hearts love wildness and that the feeling of love and affection in them is an acquired attribute. Consequently when factors and causes of love and affection crop up they get tamed but when these factors disappear or the feelings of hatred are created against them, the people return to wildness, and thereafter they return to the path of love and affection with great difficulty.

“Do not tease the heart because it is a wild bird. If once it flies away from the roof it would come down with great difficulty.”



53. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Generosity is that which is by one's own initiative, because giving on asking is either by way of self-respect or to avoid rebuke.
54. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There is no riches like wisdom, no destitution like ignorance, no inheritance like refinement and no support like consultation.
55. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Patience is of two kinds, patience over what pains you and patience against what you covet.
56. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: With riches a strange land is home land, while with destitution even home land is a strange land.<sup>22</sup>
57. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Contentment is wealth that does not diminish.

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<sup>22</sup> A person who has wealth and riches will get friends and acquaintances wherever he may be and therefore he would not feel strange in a foreign land; but if he is poor and destitute he would have no friends even in his homeland because people do not like to make friends with the poor and the destitute or to extend relations with them. He is therefore a stranger even at home and has no friends or well-wishers.

"He who has no wordly successor remains unknown as a stranger even in his homeland."

Syed Razi says: This saying has also been related from the Prophet, Allah may bless him and his descendants.<sup>23</sup>

58. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Wealth is the fountain head of passions.
59. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever warns you is like one who gives you good tidings.
60. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The tongue is a beast; if it is let loose, it would devour.
61. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: woman is a scorpion whose grip is sweet.
62. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If you are accosted with greeting, give better greetings in return. If a hand of help is extended to you do better favour in return, although the credit would remain with the commencer.

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<sup>23</sup> Contentment means that a man should remain satisfied with what he gets and should not complain if he gets less. If he is not so contented he would try to satisfy his greed by committing social crimes like misappropriation, cheating and deceiving others, because greed compels one to satisfy one's wants by any means whatever. Then the satisfaction of one want opens the way for another want and as a man's wants get satisfied his craving increases and he can never get rid of his needs or of dissatisfaction. This increasing dissatisfaction can be stopped only by contentment which makes a man carefree from all wants except the most essential ones. This is that everlasting wealth that gives satisfaction for good.

63. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The interceder is the wing of the seeker.
64. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The people of the world are like travellers who are being carried while they are asleep.
65. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Paucity of friends means strangeness.
66. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: To miss what one needs in, is easier than to beg from an inappropriate person.<sup>24</sup>
67. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Do not feel ashamed for giving a little, because refusal is more little than that.
68. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Charity is the adornment of destitution while gratefulness (to Allah) is the adornment of riches.

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<sup>24</sup> The shame that is faced in putting a request before an inappropriate person gives more mental pain than the grief for missing its fulfilment. That is why non-fulfilment of a request can be tolerated but the obligation of a low and humble person is intolerable. Every self-respecting person would therefore prefer deprivation to being under obligation of an inappropriate man and will not tolerate placing his request before a low and humble person.



69. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If what you aim at does not come about then do not worry as to what you were.
70. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: You will not find an ignorant person but at one extreme or the other .
71. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: As intelligence increases speech decreases.<sup>25</sup>
72. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Time wears out bodies, renews desires, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever is successful with it encounters grief and whoever misses its favours also undergoes hardships.
73. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever places himself as a leader of the people should commence with educating his own self before educating others; and his teaching should be by his own conduct before teaching by the tongue.

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<sup>25</sup> Talkativeness is the result of diffused thinking while diffusion of thought is the result of the un-ripeness of wisdom. When the wisdom attains perfection and understanding ripens one's mind and thoughts get balanced and wisdom acquires power and control over the tongue, as on other parts of the body, as a result of which the tongue does not act without thinking or outside the dictates of wisdom. Obviously the utterance after thinking would be short and free from extras.

As a man's intelligence increases his speaking decreases and he does not speak save at the opportune moment.

The person who teaches and instructs his own self is more entitled to esteem than he who teaches and instructs others.

74. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The breath of a man is a step towards death.<sup>26</sup>
75. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Every countable thing is to pass away and every expected thing must come about.
76. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If matters get mixed up then the last ones should be appreciated according to the previous one.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> That is just as each step makes way for the other and this exercise by steps is the means of nearing the goal similarly every breath of life serves as death-knell for the other and carries life towards death, as if the breath whose motion is regarded as a sign of life is in fact the sign of passing away of one moment of life and a means of nearing the goal of death, because each breath is death for the other one and life is the name of those very death-carrying breaths.

“Every breath is the dead body of the life that passed by. Life is the name of living by facing successive deaths.”

<sup>27</sup> By looking at a seed a cultivator can say what plant would come out of it, what fruits, flowers or leaves it would have and what would be its expanse. In the same way a guess can be made about the success of a student by looking at his labour and effort or about the failure of some other student by looking at his leisureliness and idleness, because the beginning is indicative of the end and the premises of the conclusion. Therefore if the end of any matter is not visible

77. It is related that when Zerar bin Zamma Zubabi went to Muawiya and Muawiya enquired from him about Amirul Momineen (A.S.), he said, "I stand witness that I have seen him on several occasions that night had spread and he was standing in the niche (of the mosque) holding his beard, groaning like a man bitten by snake and weeping at a grieved man, saying: O' world, O' world. Get away from me. Why do you present yourself to me? Or are you eager for me? You may not get that opportunity to impress me. Deceive some other person. I have no concern with you. I have divorced you thrice where after there is no restitution. Your life is short, your importance is little and your liking is humble. Alas! The provision is little, the way is long, the journey is far, extending and the goal is hard to get to."<sup>28</sup>
78. A man inquired from Amirul Momineen: "Have we to go to fight against the Syrians destined by Allah"? Amirul Momineen gave a detailed

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then its beginning should be looked at. If its beginning is bad the end too would be bad and if the beginning is good the end too would be good.

"An auspicious river begins from the very spring."

<sup>28</sup> The concluding part of this story is that when Muawiya heard this from Zerar his eyes became full of tears and he said, "Allah may have mercy on Abul Hasan. He was really so. Then, turning to Zerar he said, "How do you feel in his absence, O' Zerar." Zerar replied, "My grief is like that of a woman whose only child is butchered in her arms."



reply a selection from which is hereunder: Woe to you. You take it as a final and unavoidable destiny (according to which we are bound to act). If it were so, there would have been no question of reward or chastisement and there would have been no sense in Allah's promises or warnings. (On the other hand) Allah, the glorified, has ordered His people to act by free will and has cautioned them and refrained them (from evil). He has placed easy obligations on them and has not put heavy obligations. He gives them much (reward) in return for little (action). He is disobeyed, not because He is over-powered. He is obeyed but not under force. He did not send Prophets just for fun. He did not send down the Book for the people without purpose. He did not create the skies, the earth and all that is in between them for nothing. And He created not the heavens and the earth in vain. "That is the imagination of those who disbelieve; then woe to those who disbelieve --- because of the fire."<sup>29</sup>

(Quran 38:27)

79. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Take wise points from wherever they may be, because if a wise

<sup>29</sup> The end of this story is that after this the man enquired "what kind of destiny it was by which we had to go" and Amirul Momineen said, "Qaza (destiny) means command of Allah. For example, He has said "Wa qaza Rabuka alla tabudu illa lyyaho". (Quran 17:22). And commanded your Lord has that you shall worship not (any one) but Him. Here "Qaza" stands for commanded.

saying is in the bosom of a hypocrite Muslim it flutters till it comes out and settles with others of its own category in the bosom of the believer.

80. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A wise saying is lost article of the believer. Therefore get wise sayings even though from people of hypocrisy.
81. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The worth of every man is by his attainments.<sup>30</sup>
82. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I impart to you five things in search of which if you drive your camels fast you would find them worth it. No one of you should repose hope save in Allah; no one of you should fear any thing save His sin; no one should feel ashamed of saying 'I do not know' when he is asked to matter which he does not know; no one should feel ashamed of

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<sup>30</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This is a sentence whose value cannot be assessed, with which no wise saying can be weighed and with which no other sentence can be matched.

The real value of a person is his knowledge and (perfection of attainments). His worth and position would be in accordance with the position of knowledge and attainments he holds. Eyes that are conscious of real values do not look at the face, features, tallness of stature, size or worldly pomp and position but look at the attainments of a person and assess his worth according to these attainments. The conclusion is that a man should strive for acquiring distinctions and knowledge.

"The worth of every person is according to the extent of his knowledge".

- learning a thing that he does not know and you should practise endurance, because endurance is for belief what the head is for the body, so that just as there is no good in a body without the head there is no good in belief without endurance.
83. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: about a man who praised him much, although he did not admire him. I am below what you express and above what you feel in your heart.
  84. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The survivors of a battle are large in number and have large progeny.
  85. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever gives up saying "I do not know" meets destruction.
  86. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I love the opinion of an old man more than the determination of a young man; or according to another version, more than the martyrdom of a young man.
  87. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I wonder about the man who loses hope despite possibility of seeking forgiveness.
  88. Imam Abu Jafar Mohammad bin Ali-al-Baqir, peace be upon both of them, has related from Amirul Momineen (A.S.) that he said: There were two sources of deliverance from the



Divine punishment one of which has been raised up, while the other is before you. You should therefore adhere to it. The source of deliverance, which has been raised up is the Prophet of Allah (May He bless him and his descendants), while the source of deliverance that remains is seeking of forgiveness. Allah the glorified has said, And God is not to chastise them while you are among them, nor is God to chastise them while yet they seek forgiveness.<sup>31</sup>

89. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If a man behaves properly in matters between himself and Allah, then Allah keeps proper the matters between him and other people, and if a man keeps proper his affairs of the next life then Allah keeps proper for him the affairs of this world. Whoever is a preacher for himself is protected by Allah.
90. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A perfect jurist of Islam is he who does not let people lose hope from the mercy of Allah, does not make him despondent of Allah's kindness and does not make him feel safe from Allah's punishment.
91. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There hearts get disgusted as the bodies get disgusted; so look for beautiful wise sayings for them.

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<sup>31</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This is one of the most beautiful way of deducing meaning and the most delicate manner of interpretation.

92. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The most humble knowledge is that which remains on the tongue and the most honourable one is that which manifests itself through (action of) limbs and organs of the body.
93. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: None of you should say O' Allah, I seek Your protection from trouble because there is no one who is not involved in trouble, but whoever seeks Allah's protection he should seek it from the misguiding troubles, because Allah says: And know you! That your wealth and your children are a temptation. (Quran 8:28) and its meaning is that He tries you with wealth and progeny in order to distinguish one who is displeased with his livelihood from the one who is happy with what he has been given. Even though Allah knows them more than they know themselves yet He does so to let them perform actions with which they earn reward or punishment because some of them like to have males and dislike to have females, and some like to amass-wealth, and dislike adversity.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Amirul Momineen was asked what is good and he replied: Good is not that your wealth and progeny should be much but good is that your knowledge should be much, your forbearance should be great, and that you should vie with other people in worship of Allah, if you do good deeds you thank Allah but if you commit evil you seek forgiveness of Allah. In this world good is for two persons only; the man

94. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Action accompanied by fear for Allah does not fall short, and how can a thing fall short that has been accepted.
95. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The persons most attached to the prophets are those who know most what the prophets have brought. Then Amirul Momineen recited the verse "Verily, of men the nearest to Abraham, are surely those who followed him and this (Our) Prophet (Mohammad) and those who believe" (Quran 8:6) and said: The friend of Mohammad is he who obeys Allah, even though he may have no blood relationship, and the enemy of Mohammad is he who disobeys Allah even though he may have near kinship.
96. Amirul Momineen heard about a Kharijite that he says mid-night prayer and recites Quran, then he said: Sleeping in the state of firm belief is better than praying in the state of doubtfulness.
97. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When you hear a tradition test it according to the criterion of intelligence not that of mere hearing, because relaters of knowledge are numerous but those who guard it are few.

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who commits sins but rectifies them by repentance and the man who hastens towards good actions.



98. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) heard a man recite Verily we are God's and verily to him shall we return. (Quran 2:156) then he said: our saying "Inna Lillahe" (verily we are God's) is an admission of His Mastery over us and our saying "we inna ilaihi rajoon" (and verily to Him shall we return is an admission of our being mortal.
99. Some people praised Amirul Momineen (A.S.) in his face, then he said: My Allah! You know me better than myself, and I know myself more than they know. My Allah make us better than what they think and forgive us what they do not know.
100. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Fulfilment of (others) needs becomes a lasting virtue in three ways --- regarding it small so that it attains bigness, concealing it so that it may manifest itself and doing it quickly so that it is pleasant.
101. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Shortly a time will come when high positions will be given only to those who defame others, when vicious people will be regarded witty and the just will be regarded weak. People will regard charity as loss, consideration for kinship as obligation and worship a ground for claiming greatness among others. At this time authority will be exercised through the counsel of women, posting of

young boys on high posts and the running of administration by eunuchs.

102. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was seen in worn --- out clothes bearing patches and when it was pointed out to him he said: with it the heart fears, the mind feels humble and the believers emulate it. Certainly this world and the next are two enemies against each other and two paths in different directions. Whoever likes this world and loves it would hate next and be its enemy. These two are like East and West. If the walker between them gets a near one he gets farther from the other. They are like two fellow-wives.

103. It is related by Nauf el-Bikali that "I saw that one night Amirul Momineen (A.S.) came out of his bed and looked at the starts, then he said to me: O' Nauf, are you waking or sleeping. I said: I am waking. Amirul Momineen. Then he said "O' Nauf ! blessed be those who abstain from this world and are eager for the next world. They are the people who regard this earth as a floor, and its dust as their bed-cloth: they recite Quran in low tones and supplicate in high tones and then they have cut away from the world like Jesus Christ."<sup>33</sup>

O' Nauf prophet David (A.S.) rose up at a similar hour one night and said, "This is the

<sup>33</sup> Syed Razi's Note: It is also said that "Artaba" means Tabla (drum) and "Kuba" means "Lute".

hour when whatever a person prays for is granted to him unless he is a tax-collector, an intelligence man, a police officer, a lute player or a drummer.

104. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: "Allah has placed on you some obligations which you should not ignore, has laid down for you limits which you should not transgress, has prohibited you from certain things which you should not violate and has kept quiet about certain things but He has not left them out by mistake, so you should not find them.
105. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If people give up something relating to religion for setting right their worldly affairs Allah would inflict upon them something more harmful than that.
106. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Often the ignorance of a learned man ruins him and the knowledge he had does not avail him.
107. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: In man there is a piece of flesh attached to him with a vein and it is the strangest thing in him. It is the heart. It has store of wisdom and things contrary to wisdom. If it sees a ray of hope, eagerness humiliates it and when eagerness increases greed ruins it. If disappointment overtakes it grief kills it. If anger rises in it serious rage develops. If it is blessed with pleasure it forgets to be cautious. If it gets fear it becomes



heedless. If peace extends all round, it becomes neglectful. If it earns wealth freedom from care puts it on the wrong. If trouble befalls it impatience makes it humble. If it faces starvation, distress overtakes it. If hunger attacks it weakness makes it sit down. If its eating increases heaviness of stomach pains it. Thus every shortness is harmful to it and every excess is injurious to it.

108. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: We (the members of the Prophet's family) are like the pillow in the middle. He who lags behind has to come forward to meet it while he who has exceeded the bounds has to return to it.
109. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: No one can establish the rule of Allah except he who shows no relenting (in the matter of right), who does not behave like wrong doers and who does not run after objects of greed.
110. Sahl bin Hunaif-el-Ansari died at Kufa after his return from the battle of Siffin and he was very much loved by Amirul Momineen (A.S.) On this occasion Amirul Momineen said: Even if a mountain had loved me it would have crumbled down.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Syed Razi's Note: The meaning of this is that since the trial of the man who loves Amirul Momineen would be that severe troubles would leap towards him and this is not the case except with the God-fearing, the virtuous and the

111. Whoever loves us, members of the Prophet's family, should be prepared to face destitution.<sup>35</sup>
112. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: No wealth is more profitable than wisdom, no loneliness is more estranging than vanity, no wisdom is as good as tact, no honour is like fear from Allah, no companion is like courtesy, no inheritance is like civility, no guide is like promptitude, no trade is like virtuous acts, no profit is like divine reward, no self control is like inaction at the time of doubt, no abstention is like one from prohibitions, no knowledge is like thinking, no worship is like discharge of obligation, no belief is like modesty and endurance, no attainment is like humility, no honour is like knowledge and support is more reliable than consultation.
113. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: At a time when virtue is in vogue in the world and among the people if a person entertains evil suspicion

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selected good persons. There is another similar saying of Amirul Momineen, namely:

- <sup>35</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This has been interpreted in a different way as well, but this occasion is not fit to mention that:

Perhaps the other meaning of this saying is that "whoever loves us should not hanker after worldly matters even though in consequence he may have to face destitution and poverty; but he should rather remain content and avoid seeking worldly benefits.

about another person from who nothing evil has ever been seen then he has been unjust. And at a time when vice is in vogue in the world and among the people if a man entertains good idea about another person he has flung himself in peril.

114. It was said to Amirul Momineen (A.S.) "How are you, Amirul Momineen?" and he replied: How can he be whose life is driving towards death, whose state of healthiness can change into sickness any moment and who is to be caught (by death) from his place of safety.
115. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There are many people who are given time (by Allah) through good treatment towards them, and many get into deception because their sinful activities are veiled (by Allah) and many who get enamoured by good talk about themselves. And Allah does not try anyone as seriously as He tries him whom He allows time (to remain sinful).
116. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Two categories of persons will face ruin on account of me – he who loves me with exaggeration and he who hates me intensely.
117. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: To miss an opportunity brings about grief.
118. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The example of the world is like a serpent. It is soft in touch but



its inside is full of venom. An ignorant person who has fallen in deceit is attracted towards it but a wise and intelligent man keeps on guard from it.

119. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was enquired about Quraish, when he replied: As for Bani Makhzoom they are the blossoms of Quraish. It is loveable to talk to their men and to marry their women. As for Bani Abd Shams, they are far-sighted and cautious about all that is hidden from them. As for ourselves (Bani Hashim) we spend away whatever we get and are very generous in offering ourselves to death. Consequently those people are more numerous, more contriving and more ugly while we are more eloquent, well-wishing and handsome.
120. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: What a difference there is between two kinds of actions --- an act whose pleasure passes away but its (ill) consequence remains and the act whose hardship passes away but its reward stays.
121. Amirul Momineen was accompanying a funeral when he heard someone laugh. Then he said: Is it that death has been ordained only for others? Is it that right is obligatory only on others? Is it that those whom we see departing on their journey of death would come back to us? We lay them down in their graves and then enjoy their estate (as if we would live for good after them). We have ignored every preacher, man or

woman, and have exposed ourselves to every catastrophe.

122. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Blessed be he who humbles himself, whose livelihood is pure, whose habits are virtuous, who spends his savings (in the name of Allah), who prevents his tongue from speaking rot, who keeps people safe from his evil, who is pleased with the (Prophet's) Sunnah and who is unconnected with innovation (in religion).<sup>36</sup>
123. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Jealousy of a woman (with co-wives) is heresy, while jealousy of man is part of belief.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Syed Razi's Note: Some people attribute this and the previous saying to the Prophet of Allah (may He bless him and his descendants).

<sup>37</sup> The meaning of this is that since a man is permitted to have upto four wives if a woman does not tolerate her co-wife this would constitute disagreement with what Allah has permitted and in one sense regarding a permissible item as a prohibited one. This would equate with heresy. Again, since it is not permissible for a woman to have more than one husband therefore a man's aversion to sharing a wife with others is because of his sense of dignity as well as because he regards the prohibitions of Allah as a prohibition, and this is just in accordance with the tenets of belief.

This difference has been placed between man and woman so that there is no impediment in procreation and the continuance of the human race, because this purpose can be served best only when man is allowed polygamy since a single man can be get several issues (through numerous

124. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I am defining Islam as no one had defined before me --- Islam is submission, submission is conviction, conviction is affirmation, affirmation is acknowledgement, acknowledgement is

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wives) at the same time, but a woman is unable to do so by being in nuptial relations with several men, because during one pregnancy there is no question of another pregnancy. Besides there are periods when a man has to keep aloof from her, as menstruation or lactation are the periods when the process of procreation is in abeyance. But if there are several wives the process of procreation can continue as some wife or another out of the numerous ones would be free from these obstacles and the purpose of furtherance of human progeny would be achieved, because for man there are no impediments which may hinder procreation. That is why Allah has permitted polygamy for men but has not permitted woman to be in nuptial relations with several men at one time because a woman's having more than one husband is against the feelings of modesty and decency. Besides, in such a case it would not be possible to trace descent, namely to know who is the issue of which man. In this connection, someone asked Imam Riza about the reason why it is that a man can have upto four wives at a time but a woman cannot have more than one husband at a time. The Imam replied: When a man marries more than one woman the progeny in any case would be attributed to him, but if a woman has two or more husbands it would not be possible to know which issue is of which husband. In this way the descent would become confused as the real father would remain undetermined. This state would be against the interests of the child as well, because no one would undertake his bringing up as a father as a result of which the child would remain unacquainted with manners and culture and deprived of education and proper upbringing).



discharge (of obligations) and discharge of obligations is action.

125. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I wonder at the miser who is speeding towards the very destitution from which he wants to run away and misses the very ease of life which he covets. Consequently he passes life in this world like destitute but will have to render account in the next world like the rich. I wonder at the proud man who was just a drop of semen the other day and would turn into a caracass the next day. I wonder at the man who doubts Allah although he sees His creation. I wonder at him who has forgotten death although he sees people dying. I wonder at him who denies the second life although he has been the first life. I wonder at him who inhabits this transient world but ignores the everlasting world.

126. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever falls short of actions gets into grief, and Allah has nothing to do with him who spares nothing from his wealth in the name of Allah.

127. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Guard against cold in its beginning (of the season) and welcome it towards its end because it affects bodies in the same way as it affects the plants.

In the beginning it destroys them but in the end it gives them fresh leaves.<sup>38</sup>

128. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Greatness of the Creator appreciated by you would belittle the creatures in your view.
129. When Amirul Momineen (A.S.) returned from Siffin and noticed the graves outside Kufa, he

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<sup>38</sup> During autumn, protection from cold is necessary because with the change of weather the temper of the body also changes and ailments such as flue, catarrh, cough, etc., occur. This is because the bodies are accustomed to hot weather when suddenly cold comes on as a result of which tissues get contracted and cold dryness increases in the body. Thus, bathing with cold water soon after bathing with hot water is harmful for this very reason that with hot water the tissues expand and so they at once admit the effect of cold water, and in consequence the natural heat of the body is affected. On the other hand, there is no need of protection from cold during spring season nor is it harmful for the health because the body is already accustomed to cold. Thus the temperate cold of the spring is not unpleasant to the body. Rather, with the decline of cold there is an increase of heat and dampness in the body as a result of which growth gets impetus, natural heat rises, body grows, temperament feels pleasant and spirit is joyful.

Similarly there is the same effect on the plant world. Thus during autumn due to prevalence of coldness and dryness the leaves wither, the vegetative power decreases, the freshness of the plants fades and there is death-like effect on the green areas. The spring brings the message of life for them. Then with the blowing of healthy winds blossoms begin to sprout, plants become fresh and healthy and forests and wildernesses acquire green hue.

said: O' residents of houses which give a sense of loneliness, of depopulated areas and gloomy graves? O' people of the dust, O' victims of strangeness, O' people of loneliness and O' people of dissoluteness! You have gone ahead and preceded us while we are following you and will meet you. The houses (you left) have been inhabited by others; the wives (you left) have been married by others; the properties have been distributed (among heirs). This is the news about those around us; what is the news about things around you?

Then Amirul Momineen turned to his companions and said: If they were allowed to speak they would inform you that the best provision is fear of Allah.

130. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) heard a man abusing the world and said : O' you who are abusing the world, O' you who have been deceived by its deceit and cheated by its wrongs. Do you covet the world and then abuse it? Do you accuse it or it should accuse you? When did it bewilder you or deceive you --- whether by the decay and fall of your forefathers, or by the sleeping places of your mothers under the ground? How much you looked after them in their illness and nursed them during sickness, desiring them to be cured and consulting physicians for them on the morning when your medicine did not avail them and your waiting for them did not benefit them. Your worry about them did not prove useful to



them and you could not achieve your aims. You could not ward off (death) from them with all your power. In fact, through the dying man the world presented an illustration for you and showed you by the example of his falling down how you would (also) fall. Certainly this world is a house of truth for him who appreciates it, a place of safety for him who understands it, a house of riches for him who collects provision from it (for the next world) and a house of instructions for him who draws instruction from it. It is the place of worship for the lovers of Allah, the place of praying for the angels of Allah, the place where revelation of Allah descends and the marketing place for the devotees of Allah. Herein they earned mercy and herein they acquired Paradise by way of profit. Therefore who can abuse it when it had announced its departure and called out that it would leave! It has given news of its own destruction and the death of its people. By its hardship it set an example of their hardships. By its pleasures it created eagerness for the pleasures (of the next world). It brings ease in the evening and grief in the morning by way of persuasion, dissuasion, alarm and warning. People abuse it on the morning of their repentance but there are others who would praise it on the Day of Judgement. The world recalled to them the next life and they bore it in mind. It related to them (things of the next life)

and they acknowledged them. It preached to them and they took lesson therefrom.<sup>39</sup>

131. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There is an angel of Allah who calls out every day "beget children for death, collect wealth for destruction and raise construction for ruin".
132. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: This world is a place for transit, not a place for stay. The people herein are of two categories: One is the man who sold away his self (to passions) and thus ruined it, and the other the man who purchased his self (by control against passions) and freed it.
133. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A friend is not a friend unless he affords protection to his comrade on three occasions --- in adversity, in his absence and at his death.

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<sup>39</sup> Every speaker and preacher manifests the force of his speaking in subjects in which he is well-versed. If he has to change the subject neither his mind would move nor would his tongue be able to speak out. But he whose intellect has the capability of adaptation and whose mind has power of imagination, can revolve his utterances in whatever manner he likes, and can show the excellence of speaking on whatever subject he desires. Consequently when the tongue which had so long been abusing the world and unveiling its deceitfulness starts praising the world it shows the same mastery of speaking and power of arguing that had ever been its chief distinction. And then, the use of commendatory words does not alter the principle and although the ways are different the objective remains the same.

134. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is bestowed four things is not disallowed four things --- he who prays is not disallowed response to it, he who offers repentance is not disallowed its acceptance, he who seeks forgiveness is not disallowed forgiveness and he who is grateful is not disallowed furtherance of favours.<sup>40</sup>
135. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: For the God-fearing prayers is a means of seeking nearness to Allah, for the weak the Hajj (pilgrimage) to Ka'aba is as good as Jihad (fighting for Allah). For every thing there is a levy; the levy of the body is fasting. The Jihad of a woman is to afford pleasant company to the husband.
136. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Seek livelihood by giving alms.
137. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is sure of a good return is generous in giving.

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<sup>40</sup> This is confirmed by Quran. About praying Allah says: Call you to Me. I will answer yo... (Quran 40:60) About forgiveness Allah says And whoever does evil, or wrongs his own self and thereafter seeks pardon of Allah, shall find Allah Oft-forgiving, Merciful (Quran 4:110). About gratefulness He says: If you be grateful I will increase (my favours) to you. (Quran 14:7) About repentance He says: Verily Allah desires to turn (Merciful to you. (Quran 4:21).



138. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Assistance is allowed according to need.
139. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is moderate does not become destitute.
140. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Small family is one of the ways of (securing) ease.
141. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Loving one another is half wisdom.
142. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Grief is half old age.
143. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Endurance comes according to the affliction. He who beats his hand on thigh in his affliction ruins all his good actions.
144. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There is Many a faster whose fast is nothing but just hunger and thirst, and many an offerer of prayers whose prayer is no better than wakefulness and hardship. The sleep as well as eating and drinking of the intelligent (God-knowing) person is far better.
145. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Protect your belief by charity: guard your wealth by paying Allah's share and ward off the waves of calamity by praying.

146. Amirul Momineen's conversation with Kumail bin Ziad-in-Nakhaee: Kumail has related: Amirul Momineen caught hold of my hand and took me to the graveyard. Then he breathed a deep sigh and said: O' Kumail these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which preserves (its contents). So preserve what I say to you. People are of three types. One is the scholar and divine. Then the seeker of knowledge who is also on the way to deliverance. Then (lastly) the common rot who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind. They seek no light from the effulgence of knowledge and do not take protection of any reliable support.

O' Kumail, knowledge is better than wealth. knowledge guards you while you have to guard the wealth. Wealth decreases by spending while knowledge multiplies by spending and the results of wealth die as the wealth decays.

O' Kumail, knowledge is belief which is acted upon. With it man acquires obedience during his life and good name after his death. Knowledge is the ruler while wealth is ruled upon. O' Kumail, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living while those endowed with knowledge would remain so long as the world lives. Their bodies are not available but their figures exist in the hearts. Look, here is a heap of knowledge (and Amirul Momineen pointed to his bosom). I wish I could

get some one to bear it. Yes, I did find; but either it was one who could not be relied upon. He would exploit the religion for worldly gains, and by virtue of Allah's favours on him he would domineer over the people and through Allah's pleas he would boss over His devotees. Or it was one who was obedient to the hearers of truth but there was no intelligence in his bosom. At the first appearance of doubt he would entertain misgivings in his heart. So neither this nor that was good enough. Either the man is eager for pleasures, easily led away by passions, or is covetous for collecting and harding wealth. Neither of them has any regard for religion in any matter. The nearest example of these is the loose cattle. This is the way how knowledge dies away with the death of its bearers.

Yes; but the earth is never devoid of those who maintain Allah's plea either openly and reputedly or, being afraid, as hidden in order that Allah's pleas and proofs should not be rebutted. How many are they and where are they? By Allah they are few in number, but they are big in esteem before Allah. Through them Allah guards His pleas and proofs till they entrust them to others like themselves and sow the seeds thereof in the hearts of those who are similar to them. Knowledge has led them to real understanding and so they have associated themselves with the spirit of conviction. They take easy what the easy going regard as hard.



They endear what the ignorant took as strange. They lived in this world with their bodies here but their spirits resting in the high above. They are the vicegerents of Allah on the earth and callers to His religion. How I yearn to see them. Go away, now, O' Kumail wherever you wish.<sup>41</sup>

147. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Man is hidden under his tongue.<sup>42</sup>
148. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who does not know his own worth gets ruined.
149. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to a man who had requested him to preach: Do not be like him who hopes for (bliss of) the next life without action and delays repentance by lengthening

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<sup>41</sup> Kumail bin Ziad Nakhaee was the holder of the secrets of Imamate and one of the chief companions of Amirul Momineen. He held great position in knowledge and attainments and a chief place in abstinence and Godliness. He was Amirul Momineen's governor at Haait for some time. He was killed by Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqafi in the year 83 A.H. at the age of ninety years and was buried outside Kufa.

<sup>42</sup> The meaning is that a man's worth can be known by his speech because the speech of every person is indicative of his mind and manners, and by virtue of it his feelings and temperament can be very easily assessed. Therefore so long as he is silent his weakness as well as attainments are concealed but when he speaks his real self manifests itself.

A man is hidden under his tongue.

Unless he speaks you cannot know his worth and value.

desires, who utters words like ascetics in this world but acts like those who are eager for it; if he is allowed something from it he does not feel satisfied, if he is denied he is not content; he is not grateful for what he gets and covets for increase in whatever remains with him; he refrains others but not himself; he commands others for what he himself does not do; he loves the virtuous but does not behave like them; he hates the vicious but is himself one of them; he dislikes death because of the excess of his sins but adheres to that for which he is afraid of death; if he falls ill he feels ashamed; if he is healthy he feels secure and indulges in amusements; when he recovers from illness he feels vain about himself; when he is afflicted he loses hope; if distress befalls him he prays like a bewildered man; when he finds ease of life he falls into deceit and turns his face away; his heart overpowers him by means of imaginary thing while he cannot control his heart by his conviction; for others he is afraid of small sins, but for himself he expects more reward than his performance; if he gets wealthy he becomes self-conscious and falls into vice; if he becomes poor he despairs and becomes weak; he is brief when he is doing a good thing but goes too far when he is begging; when passion overtakes him he is quick in committing sin but delays repentance; if hardship befalls him he goes out of the canons of the (Islamic) community; he describes instructive events but does not take instruction himself; he preaches at length but

does not accept any preaching for himself, he is tall in speaking but short in action; he aspires for things that would perish and ignores things that would last for good; he regards profit as loss and loss as profit; he fears death but does nothing in its anticipation; he regards the sins of others as big but considers the same things for himself as small; if he does something in obedience to Allah he considers it much but if others do the same he considers it small; he therefore rebukes others but flatters himself; entertainment in the company of the wealthy is dearer to him than remembrance (of Allah) with the poor; he passes verdicts against others for his own interests and does not do so against himself for others interests; he guides others but misguides himself; he is obeyed by others but he himself disobeys (Allah); he seeks fulfilment (of obligations towards himself, but does not fulfil his obligations (towards himself) but does not fulfil his obligations (towards others); he fears the people (and acts) for other than Allah and does not fear Allah in his dealings with the people.<sup>43</sup>

150. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Every human being has to meet the end, sweet or sour.

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<sup>43</sup> Syed Razi's Note: If this book had contained nothing save that short utterance it would have sufficed as a successful piece of preaching and specimen of high philosophy, object of wisdom for the onlooker and source of instruction for the meditative watcher.



151. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Every comer has to get back and after getting back it is as though he never existed.
152. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The endurer does not miss success although it may take a long time.
153. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who agrees with the action of a group of persons is as though he joins them in that action. And every one who joins in wrong commits two sins --- one sin for committing the wrong and the other for agreeing with it.
154. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Adhere to contracts and entrust their fulfilment to steadfast persons.
155. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: On you lies obedience of the person about whom you cannot plead excuse of his ignorance.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Just as Allah sent down a series of prophets by way of His Justice and Mercy for guiding and directing towards religion. In the same way He laid down the system of Imamate for protecting religion from alteration and change so that every Imam may in his days see the Divine teachings from the onslaught of personal desires and give directions about the correct canons of Islam. And just as it is obligatory to know the originator of the religion (i.e. the Prophet) in the same way it is necessary to know the protector of the religion: and he who remains ignorant of him cannot be excused because the issue of Imamate is supported by so many proofs and testimonies that no intelligent person can find any way to

156. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Admonish your comrade by good behaviour towards him, and ward off his evil by favouring him.<sup>45</sup>

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deny it. Thus the Holy Prophet has said: Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time would die pre-Islamic death. Ibne Abil Hadeed also agrees that the personality about whom no one's ignorance can be executed is that of Amirul Momineen. He also acknowledges the obligation to obey him and holds that he who does not believe in the issue of Imamate would not achieve deliverance. In this connection he writes:

He who is ignorant of the position of Ali, peace be upon him, as Imam and denies its veracity or obligatory character would, according to our associates, remain in Hell for ever, his fasting or prayers being of no avail to him, because the knowledge of this matter is among the basic principles which constitute the foundations of religion. However, we do not regard one who denies his Imamate as an unbeliever but only a sinner, a transgressor or a deviator etc.

Sharh ibn Abil Hadeed : Vol. 4, p. 1319.

- <sup>45</sup> If evil is done in return for evil and abuse in return for abuse the door for animosity and quarrel is opened. But if an evil-doer is met with kindness and gentleness he too would be compelled to change his behaviour. Thus, once Imam Hasan was passing through the market place of Medina when a Syrian noticing his majestic personality enquired from the people who he was and on being told that he was Hasan son of Ali (Peace be upon him) he was exasperated and coming close to him began to abuse him. The Imam heard him quietly. When he finished the Imam said, "You seem to be a stranger here". He affirmed and the Imam continued, "Then better come with me and stay with me. If you have any need I shall fulfil it, and if you need financial assistance I would render it". When he saw this kindness and fine manners in

157. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who visits ill-reputed places should not blame those who entertain bad ideas about him.
158. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever gets authority adopts partiality.
159. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who acts solely by his own opinion gets ruined, and he who consults other people shares in their understanding.
160. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who guards his secrets retains control in his own hands.
161. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: destitution is the biggest death.
162. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who fulfils the right of a man who does not fulfil his right (is as though he) worships him.
163. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There should be no obeying anyone against Allah's commands.

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return for his harsh and hard words he was extremely ashamed, and admitting his fault sought his forgiveness. When he left the Imam he did not have better regard for any one else on the surface of the globe.

“If you are a proper human being do good to the evil-doer”.



164. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: No person is to be blamed for delay in (securing) his own right but blame lies on him who takes what he is not entitled to.
165. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Vanity prevents progress.<sup>46</sup>
166. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The Day of Judgement is near and our mutual company is short.
167. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: For the man who has eyes the dawn has already appeared.
168. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Abstention from sin is easier than seeking help afterwards.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> A person who seeks perfection and believes that he is still in need of it can be expected to attain the aim of perfection, but a person who is under the illusion that he has reached the zenith of progress and perfection would not feel the need for striving to attain it, but according to his own view he has already traversed all the stages of perfection and now he has no stage in sight to strive for. Thus this vain and illusioned man would always remain deprived of perfection and this vanity would end all possibility of his rise.

<sup>47</sup> It is not so difficult to keep aloof from sin on the first occasion as it is after becoming familiar with it and tasting it, because a man does not feel difficulty in doing a thing to which he becomes habituated, but is really hard to give it up. As the habits get confirmed the conscience becomes weaker and difficulties crop up in the way of repentance. To console the heart by postponing repentance is therefore usually without avail. Surely when there is difficulty in keeping off

169. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Many a single eating prevents several eating.<sup>48</sup>
170. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: People are enemies of what they do not know.<sup>49</sup>
171. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who secures several opinions understands the pitfalls.
172. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who sharpens the teeth of anger for the sake of Allah

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sin even in the beginning the lengthening of the period of sins would make repentance still more difficult.

<sup>48</sup> This is a proverb which is used when a man runs after one advantage so vehemently that he has to give up several other advantages like the man who eats too much or against appetite and has to go without several meals.

<sup>49</sup> A man attaches great importance to the science and art which he knows and regards that science of no importance which he does not know, and belittles it. This is because whenever such a matter is discussed he is regarded not worth of attention and is ignored, whereby he feels slighted. This slight pains him, and a man naturally dislikes a thing that pains him and would hate it. In this connection. Plato was asked what was the reason that he who does not know hates him who knows, but he who knows does not bear malice or hatred towards him who does not know. He replied that he who does not know realises that he suffers from a defect and thinks that he who knows must be regarding him low and humble on account of this defect, so he hates him. On the other hand he who knows does not have the idea that he who does not know should be regarding him low, and so there is no reason why he should hate him.

acquires strength for killing the stalwarts of the wrong.<sup>50</sup>

173. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The means to secure high authority is breadth of chest (i.e. generosity).

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<sup>50</sup> The person who rises to face wrong for the sake of Allah is afforded support and assistance from Allah and despite lack of power and means the forces of wrong cannot shake his determination or create tremor in his steady feet. But if there is a tinge of personal benefit in his action he can be very easily prevented from his aim. In this connection Syed Nematullah Jazaeri has written in *Zahrur Rabi'* that a man saw some people worshipping a tree. Moved by religious spirit he decided to fell that tree. When he went forward with an axe Satan detained him on the way and asked what his intention was. He said he wanted to fell the tree so that people should keep away from the heretic way of worship. Satan said "Why would you worry: let them alone with their actions"; but the man adhered to his view. Noticing that he would certainly accomplish his intention Satan said to him, "if you get back I shall pay you four Dirhams every day. You will get them from your bed". Hearing this his intention became wavery and he asked if it would be really so. Satan said "Better try. If it is not so you can again get the chance to fell the tree". Consequently the man felt greedy and went back. The next day he got four Dirhams from under the bed but after a few days the process discontinued. Now he became furious and advanced towards the tree with the axe but Satan came forward and said "Now it is not within your power to cut the tree because on the former occasion you had come out only to seek Allah's favour while now you have come out for a few chips. Therefore if you hold out your hands shall break your neck". The man returned disappointed.



174. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Rebuke the evil doer by rewarding the good-doer.<sup>51</sup>
175. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Cut away evil from the chest of others by snatching it away from your own chest.<sup>52</sup>
176. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Stubbornness destroys (good) advice.
177. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Greed is a lasting slavery.

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<sup>51</sup> This means that award of full reward to the virtuous for their good actions and appreciating them puts the evil-doers also on the right path. This would be more effective than ethical preaching, warning and rebuke. This is because by temperament man inclines towards things from which benefits accrue to him, and his ears (yearn to) resound with eulogies in his praise and admiration.

<sup>52</sup> This sentence can be interpreted in two ways. One is that if you will bear malice against anyone, he too will bear malice against you. Therefore destroy the malice from his heart by removing it from your heart. Since heart is the index of other's hearts, if your heart will have no malice there will remain no malice in his heart too. That is why a man assesses the purity of another person's heart by the purity of his own heart. Thus a man asked his friend. "How much do you love me"? and the reply was, "Ask your own heart". This is, "I love you as much as you love me".

The second interpretation is that if you want to dissuade another person from evil, first you should yourself refrain from that evil. In this way your advice can be effective on others, otherwise it will remain ineffective.

178. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The result of neglect is shame while the result of far-sightedness is safety.
179. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There is no advantage in keeping quiet about an issue of wisdom just as there is no good in speaking out an unintelligent thing.
180. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If there are two different calls than one must be towards misguidance.
181. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I never entertained doubt about right since I was shown it.
182. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I have neither spoken lie nor have been told a lie. I have neither deviated nor have I been made to deviate.
183. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who takes the lead in oppression has to bite his hand (in repentance) tomorrow.
184. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever turned away from right got ruined.
185. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If patience does not give relief to a man impatience kills him.

186. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: How strange? Would Caliphate be by (Prophet's) companionship and kinship?<sup>53</sup>
187. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: In this world man is the target towards which arrows of death shoot, and is like wealth whose destruction is quickened by hardships. (In this world) with every drink there is suffocation and with every morsel there is choking. Here no one gets any thing unless he loses something else, and not a day of his age advances till a day passes out from his life. Thus we are helpers of death and our lives are the targets of mortality. How then can we expect everlasting life since the night and day do not raise anything high without quickly arranging for the destruction of whatever they have built and for splitting as under whatever they have joined together.
188. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: O' son of Adam, whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you would only keep vigil over it for the others.

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<sup>53</sup> Syed Razi's Note: Verses have also been related from Amirul Momineen in the same strain. They are---

If you claim to have secured authority by consultation, how did it happen when these to be consulted were absent! If your have scored over your opponents by kinship then someone else has greater right for being nearer to the Prophet.



189. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Hearts are imbued with passion and power of advancing and retreating. Therefore approach them for action at the time of their passionateness and when they are in the mood of advancing, because if hearts are forced (to do a thing) they get blind.
190. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) used to say: If I am angry when shall I curb my anger whether when I am unable to take revenge and it be said, "better you endure" or when I have power to take revenge and it be said, "better forgive"?
191. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) passed beside a dump of rubbish full of filth and remarked: This is what the misers used to be niggardly about.<sup>54</sup>
192. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The wealth that teaches you lesson does not go waste.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> In another tradition it is related that he said: This is about what you used to vie with each other upto yesterday!

<sup>55</sup> The person who secures lesson and experience by spending money and wealth should not lament its loss but should deem the experience more valuable than the wealth because wealth is in any case wasted away while the experience would protect him against the dangers of the future. Thus a scholar who had become destitute after having been wealthy was asked what had happened to his wealth and he replied: "I have purchased experiences with it and they have proved more useful than the wealth. After losing all that I had have not been in the loss."

193. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The hearts get tired as the bodies get tired. You should therefore search for beautiful sayings for them (to enjoy by way refreshment).
194. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) heard the slogan of the Kharijites "There is no verdict save of Allah", he said : This sentence is true but it is interpreted wrongly.
195. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: about the crowd of people: There are the people who, when they assemble together, are overwhelming but when they disperse they cannot be recognised.

It is related that instead of this Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: These are the people who when they assemble together cause harm but when they disperse, they are beneficial. It was pointed out to him: We know their harm at the time of their assembling but what is their benefit at the time of their dispersal? Then he replied! The workers return to their work and people get benefit out of them, for example, the return of the mason to the place of construction, that of the weaver to his place of weaving and that of the baker to his place of baking.

196. An offender was brought before Amirul Momineen (A.S.) and there was a crowd of people with the man, so Amirul Momineen

remarked: Woe to the faces who are seen only on foul occasions.

197. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: With every individual there are two angels who protect him; when death approaches they make way between it and him. Certainly death is a protective shield.
198. When Talha and Zubair said to him: We are prepared to swear allegiance to you on condition that we have share with you in this matter (of Caliphate), Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: No; but you will have share in strengthening (the caliphate) and in affording assistance and you will both be helping me at the time of need and hardship.
199. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: O' people, fear Allah who is such that when you speak He bears and when you conceal (a secret) He knows it. Prepare yourself to meet death which would overtake you even if you run away, catch you even if you stay and remember you even if you forget it.
200. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If one is not grateful to you that should not prevent you from good actions because (possibly) such a person would feel grateful about it who has not even drawn any benefit from it and his gratefulness would be more than the ingratitude of the denier; and Allah loves those who do good.



201. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Every container gets narrower with what is placed in it except knowledge which expands instead.
202. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The first reward the exerciser of forbearance gets is that people become his helpers against the ignorant.
203. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If you cannot forbear feign to do so because it is seldom that a man likens himself to a group and does not become as one of them.<sup>56</sup>
204. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever takes account of his self is benefited, and whoever remains neglectful of it suffers. Whoever fears remains safe; whoever takes instruction (from things around) gets light, and whoever gets light gets understanding and whoever gets understanding secures knowledge.
205. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The world would bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards

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<sup>56</sup> It means that if a person is not temperamentally forbearant he should try to be so in the sense that he should put up a show of forbearance against his temperament. Although he would feel some difficulty in curbing down his temperament but the result would be that by and by forbearance would become his temperamental trait and then there will remain no need of feigning, because habit slowly develops into second nature.

its young. Then Amirul Momineen recited the verse "And intend We to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were considered weak in the land and to make them the Imams (guides in faith), and to make them the heirs."<sup>57</sup>

(Quran 28:5).

206. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Fear Allah like him who gets ready after extracting himself (from worldly affairs) and after so getting ready strives, then he acts quickly during the period of this life, hastens in view of the dangers (of falling into error) and has his eye on proceeding towards the goal, on the end of his journey and on the place of his (eventual) return.
207. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Generosity is the protector of forbearance is the bridle for the fool; forgiveness is the levy of success; disregard is the punishment of him who betrays, and consultation is the chief way of guidance. He who is content with his own opinion faces danger. Endurance braves calamities while impatience is a helper of the hardships of the world. The best contentment is to give up desires. Many a slavish mind is subservient to

<sup>57</sup> This saying is about the awaited Imam who is the last of the series of Imams. On his emergence all the states and governments would come to an end and a complete picture referred to in the verse would appear before the eyes.

Whoever may rule in this world but in the end the rule will be in the hands of the descendants of Ali.

overpowering longings. Capability helps preservation of experience. Love means well-utilised relationship. Do not trust one who is grieved.

208. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A man's vanity for himself is the enemy of his intelligence.<sup>58</sup>
209. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Ignore pains otherwise you would never be happy. (Or according to another interpretation: Ignore pain and grief; you would ever be happy).<sup>59</sup>
210. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The tree whose trunk is soft has thick branches.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> It means that just as an envious person cannot appreciate any good in him whom he envies similarly vanity cannot tolerate the emergence of intelligence or the prominence of good qualities as a result of which the envious person remains devoid of those qualities which are deemed to be good by human intellect.

<sup>59</sup> Every individual has some shortcoming or other. If a person keeps aloof from others because of their faults and weaknesses, he would by and by, lose all his friends and become lonely and forlorn in this world whereby his life would become bitter and his worries would multiply. At such a moment he should realise that in this society he cannot get angels with whom he may never have any cause of complaint, that he has to live among these very people and to pass life with them. Therefore as far as possible he should ignore their shortcomings and pay no regard to the troubles inflicted by them.



211. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Opposition destroys good counsel.
212. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who gives generously achieves position (Or according to another reading: He who achieves position begins to make wrong use of it).
213. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Through change of circumstances the metal of men is known.
214. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Jealousy by a friend means defect in his love.
215. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Most of the deficiency of intelligence occurs due to the flash of greed.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The person who is haughty and ill-tempered can never succeed in making his surroundings pleasant. His acquaintances would feel wretched and sick of him. But if a person is good tempered and sweet-tongued people would like to get close to him and befriend him. At the time of need they would prove his helpers and supporters whereby he can make his life a success.

<sup>61</sup> When a man falls into greed and avarice, he gets entangled in evils like bribery, theft, misappropriation, usury and other immoral acts of this type while the mind is so dazzled with the brilliance of the evil desires that it fails to see the ill effects and consequences of those bad deeds and to prevent him from them or awaken him from his slumber of un-

216. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: It is no justice to pass a verdict by relying on probability.
217. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The worst provision for the Day of Judgement is high-handedness over the people.
218. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The highest act of a noble person is to ignore what he knows.

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mindfulness. Nevertheless when he prepares to depart from this world and finds that whatever he had amassed was for this world only and that he cannot take it with him, then alone his eyes get opened.

219. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whomever modestly clothes with its dress people cannot see his defects.<sup>62</sup>
220. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Excess of silence produces awe; Justice results in more friends; generosity heightens position; with humility blessings abound in plenty, by facing hardships leadership is achieved; by just behaviour the adversary is overpowered and with forbearance against a fool there is increase of one's friends against him.
221. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: It is strange that the jealous do not feel jealous about bodily health.<sup>63</sup>

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62 If a person adorns himself with the quality of modesty then it prevents him from committing evil acts. Therefore he has no evil for the people to find in him. Even if a bad act is ever committed by him he does not commit it openly because of his feeling of modesty lest the people notice him.

63 The jealous feels jealous of the property and position of others but not of their health and physical power, although this blessing is the best of all others. The reason is that the effects of wealth and riches remain before the eyes through external pageantry and means of ease and comfort, whereas health is the victim of disregard for being a routine matter, and it is regarded so unimportant that a jealous person does not consider it worth his feeling of jealousy.

Thus, if he sees a labourer carrying burden over his head all the day he does not feel envious, as if health and energy is not an object of envy. Nevertheless when he himself fails ill he realises the value and worth of healthiness. It is now that



222. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The greedy is in the shackles of disgrace.
223. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about Belief when he said: Belief means appreciation with heart, acknowledgement with tongue and action with limbs.
224. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is sorrowful for this world is in fact displeased with the dispensation of Allah. He who complains of a calamity that befalls him complains of Allah. He who approaches a rich man and bends before him on account of his riches then one third of his religion is gone. If a man reads Quran and on dying goes to Hell then it means that he was among those who treated Divine verses with mockery. If a man's heart gets attached to the world, then it catches three things, namely worry that never leaves him, greed that does not abandon him and desire which he never fulfils.
225. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: contentment is as good as estate and courtesy is as good as a blessing.

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he realises that it was this health which upto now carried no importance in his eyes but was the most deserving for being envied. The intention is that one should regard health as a highly valuable blessing and remain attentive towards its protection and care.

226. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about Allah's saying "We will certainly make him Live a life good and pure" (Quran 16:97) when he said: that means contentment.<sup>64</sup>
227. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Be a sharer with him who has abundant livelihood because he is more appropriate for getting more riches and likely to secure increase of share therein.
228. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said about Allah's saying "Verily, God enjoins justice and benevolence" (Quran 16:90): Here "Adl" means equal distribution and "Ehsan" means favour.
229. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who gives with his short hand is given by a long hand.<sup>65</sup>

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64 The reason for calling courtesy as a blessing is that just as blessing brings forth pleasure in the same way a man can make his environment pleasant by endearing others' hearts through courtesy and can thus succeed in procuring ways for his happiness and ease. And contentment has been regarded as capital and estate for the reason that just as the estate and area under sway dispels need in the same way when a man adopts contentment and feels happy ever his livelihood he becomes free of turning to others at the time of need.

Whoever is contented with morsel he gets dry or wet is the king of all the land and sea.

65 Syed Razi's Note: The meaning of this saying is that even though what a man spends in charity from his possessions may be small, yet Allah gives good reward for it. And the two hands referred to here mean two favours. Thus Amirul Momineen has differentiated between the favour of man and

230. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to his son Hasan, peace be upon them both: do not call out for fighting, but if you are called to it do respond, because the caller to fighting is a rebel and the rebel deserves destruction.<sup>66</sup>
231. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The best traits of women are those which are the worst traits of men, namely: vanity, cowardice and miserliness. Thus since the woman is vain she would not allow anyone access to herself; since she is miserly she would preserve her own property and the property of her husband, and

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favour of Allah, since he has described the first as small and the other as big. This is because the favours of Allah are ever superior to the favours of man since Allah's favours are basic in the sense that every other favour springs from it and turns to it.

- 66 The meaning of this is that if the enemy aims at fighting and takes the initiative in it, then one should advance to face him, but one should not initiate the attack because this would be clear high-handedness and excess, and whoever commits high-handedness and excess would be disgracefully vanquished and thrown down. That is why Amirul Momineen always entered the battle-field on being challenged by the enemy. He never offered the challenge from his side, In this connection Ibne Abil Hadeed writes:-

We have never heard that Amirul Momineen ever challenged anyone for confrontation. Rather when either he was particularly challenged or the enemy flung a general challenge, then alone he would go to out to meet the enemy and would kill him. (Sharh Ibne Abil Hadeed : Vol. 4, p. 433)



since she is weak-hearted she would be frightened with everything that befalls her.

232. It was said to Amirul Momineen (A.S.) Describe the wise to us; and he said: Wise is one who places things in their proper positions. The he was asked to describe the ignorant and he said: I have already done so.<sup>66</sup>
233. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: By Allah this world of yours is more lowly in my view than the intestines of hog in the hand of a leper.
234. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A group of people worshipped Allah out of desire for reward; this is the worship of traders. Another group worshipped out of fear, this is the worship of slaves. Still another group worshipped Allah out of gratefulness; this is the worship of free men.
235. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Woman is evil, all in all; and the worst of it is that one cannot do without her.
236. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who is sluggard loses his rights and he who believes in the backbiter loses the friend.

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<sup>66</sup> Syed Razi's Note: The meaning is that the ignorant is one who does not place things in their proper positions. In this way Amirul Momineen's abstention from describing was a way of describing him because his attributes are just the opposite of the wise.

237. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: One ill gotten piece of stone in a house is a guarantee for its ruin.<sup>67</sup>
238. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The day of the oppressed over the oppressor would be severer than the day of the oppressor over the oppressed.<sup>68</sup>
239. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When replies are numerous the correct point remains obscure.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Syed Razi's Note: In one tradition this saying is attributed to the Prophet (S.A.) It is no wonder that the two sayings should resemble each other because they are driven from the same source and dispersed through the same means.

<sup>68</sup> It is easy to bear oppression in this world but it is not easy to face its punishment in the next world, because the period of bearing oppression even though life-long is after all limited, but the punishment for oppression is Hell whose most fearful aspect is that the life there would last for ever and death would not save from the punishment. That is why, if an oppressor kills some one then with that killing the oppression would come to an end, and there would be no further scope for any further oppression on the same person, but its punishment is that he would be thrown in Hell where he would ever suffer his punishment.

Says the Persian couplet: The effect of the oppression on us has passed away but it would ever remain on the oppressor.

<sup>69</sup> If replies to question begin to be given from all sides, every reply would raise another question and thus open the door for arguing, and as the number of replies would further necessitate search for the real truth, detection of the correct

240. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Surely in every blessing there is a right of Allah. If one discharges that right Allah increases the blessing and if one falls short of doing so one stands in the danger of losing the blessing.
241. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When capability increases desire decreases.
242. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Keep on guard against slipping away of blessings because everything that runs away does not come back.
243. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Generosity is more prompting for good than regard for kinship.
244. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If a person has good idea about you make his idea true.
245. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Best act is that which you have to force yourself to do.

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reply would become more and more arduous, because every one would try his reply accepted as correct as a result of which try to collect arguments from here and there for having his reply accepted as correct as a result of which the whole matter would get confused and this dream would into an aimless one because of multiplicity of interpretation



246. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I came to know Allah through the breaking of determinations, change of intentions and losing of courage.<sup>70</sup>
247. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The sourness of this world is sweetness of the next world while the sweetness of this world is the sourness of the next one.
248. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Allah has laid down Belief for purification from polytheism, prayer for purification from vanity, zakat (levy) as a means of livelihood, fasting as a trial of the people, Hajj as a support for religion, Jihad (fighting in the name of Allah) for the honour of Islam, persuasion for good for the good of the common people, dissuasion from evil for the control of the mischievous, regard for kinship for increase of number, for realisation of importance of the prohibitions, the abstinence from drinking wine for protection of wit, avoidance of theft for inculcating chastity, abstinence from adultery for safeguarding of

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<sup>70</sup> The breaking of determinations and losing of courage can be argued to prove existence of Allah in this way that for example, a man determines to do a thing but before the determination is transformed into action, it changes and some other idea takes its place. This alteration of ideas and determinations and the emergence of change therein is proof that there is some higher controlling power over us which has the capacity to bring them from non-existence to existence and again from existence into non-existence, and this is what is beyond human power. Therefore it would be necessary to acknowledge a super authority who effects change and alteration in determinations.

descent, abstinence from sodomy for increase of progeny, tendering evidence for furnishing proof against contentions, abstinence from lie for increasing esteem for truth, maintenance of peace for protection from danger, trusts for the orderliness of the community and obedience as mark of respect to the Imamate.<sup>71</sup>

- 71 Before describing some of the aims and good points of the commands of Shariat (i.e. religious law) Amirul Momineen has begun with the aims and objects of Faith, because Faith serves as the basic of religious commands, and without it no need is felt for any religious code or jurisprudence. Faith is the name of acknowledging the existence of the Creator and admission of His singularity. When this belief takes root in the heart of a man then he does not agree to bow before any other being, nor is he overawed or affected by any power or authority. Rather, getting mentally freed of all ties he regards himself a devotee of Allah and the result of this adherence to Unity is that he is saved from the pollution of polytheism.

**Prayer (Salat)** is the most important of all forms of worship. It consists of standing, sitting, bending and prostration, and these postures are a successful way of destroying the feeling of vanity and pride, erasing self-conceit and egotism and creating humility and submissiveness, because actions and movements of a vain person produce pride and haughtiness while humble actions engender the quality of submissiveness and humbleness in the mind. With the exercise of these acts a man, by and by, acquires humble temperament. This is how the Arabs who were so vain that if their whip fell off during riding they would not bend down to pick it up or if the strap of the shoe gave way they took it insulting to bend down to mend it, began to rub their faces on dust during prostration in prayers, and place their foreheads in the position of others feet during the congregational prayer, and in this way acquired the true spirit of Islam after abandoning the pre-Islamic vanity and partisanship.



**Zakat** namely that a person who is able to do so should pay annually out of his money or property a fixed share for those who are either destitute or do not have means of livelihood for a year, is an obligatory command of Islam, the purpose behind which is that no individual in the community should remain poor and they should remain safe from the evils that result from need and poverty. Besides, another objective is that wealth should keep rotating from one individual to another and should not be centred in a few persons.

**Fasting** is a form of worship in which there is not an iota of show, and no motive is active in it except that of pure intention. As a result, even in seclusion when hunger perturbs a man or thirst makes him uneasy he does not extend his hand for eating, nor does the longing for water make him lose his control although if something is eaten or drunk no one is to peep into his stomach, but the purity of conscience prevents his will from deflecting. This is the greatest good of fasting that it engenders purity of will in action.

The purpose of **Hajj** (pilgrimage to Ka'ba) is that Muslims from all corners of the globe should assemble at one place so that this world assembly should prove to be an occasion for the manifestation of Islam's greatness, renewal of the passion for worship and the creation of bonds of mutual brotherhood.

The purpose of **Jihad** (fighting for Allah) is to fight with all possible might those forces which oppose Islam, so that Islam may achieve stability and progress. Although there are dangers for life in this course and difficulties crop up at every step, yet the tidings for eternal ease and everlasting life produces the courage to bear all these hardships.

The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil are effective ways of showing others the correct path and



preventing them from wrong. If a community has no persons to perform these duties nothing can save it from ruin and it falls in extreme depth morally and socially. That is why Islam has laid great stress on it as compared to other matters, and held disregard to it as in unpardonable sin.

Doing good for kinship means that a man should do favours to his relations and at least should not stop mutual accosting and speaking with them so that spirits may become clean and family ties may develop, and the scattered individuals may render strength to one another.

Seeking vengeance is a right given to the survivors of the person killed. They can demand life for life so that for fear of punishment no one would dare kill any person, and at the same time the survivor's passion for revenge should not result in the killing of more than one person. No doubt forgiveness or pardon does carry weight in its own place but where it means trampling of an individual's right or a danger to world peace it cannot be regarded as good. Rather, on such an occasion revenge would be the sole way of stopping bloodshed and killing for safety of human life. Thus Allah says: And for you there is (security of) life in (the law of) Recall at on O' you men of understanding. (Quran 2:175).

The purpose behind the awarding of penalties is to make the offender appreciate the seriousness of violating the prohibitions of Allah so that he may keep off the prohibitions for fear of punishments.

Wine causes diffusion of thinking, dispersion of senses and weakness of understanding. As a result, a man commits such actions which would not be expected of him in the state of being in senses. Besides, it ruins health and renders the body liable to catch infectious diseases while, sleeplessness, nervous weakness and rheumatism are its chief effects. Shariat has prohibited it in view of these ill-effects.

**Theft**, that is, taking over some one else's property is an evil habit which is produced by the sway of greed and evil passions and since bringing down evil passions from the position of excess to the bounds of moderation means chastity the abstinence from theft by curbing greed and evil passions would produce chastity.

**Adultery** and sodomy have been prohibited in order that lineage may be regulated and the human race may continue and prosper, because the issues by adultery are not regarded legitimate for purposes of lineage and consequently they are not entitled to inheritance, while there is no question of issues in the case of unnatural practices. Besides, as a consequence of these evil practices one contracts such diseases which cause ruination of life in addition to discontinuity of progeny.

The law of evidence is needed because of one party denies the right of another party the latter may establish it through evidence and safeguard it thereby.

**Abstention** from lie and falsehood has been commanded so that the standing and importance of its contrary namely truth may become prominent and on observing the benefits and advantages of truth the moral weaknesses of falsehood may be avoided.

**"Salam"** means peace and peace-loving and it is obvious that peaceful attitude is a successful way of protection from dangers and prevention of war and fighting. Generally commentators have taken the word "Salam" to mean mutual greetings and well-wishing but the context and the fact that it has been mentioned in the series of obligations does not support this interpretation. However, according to this interpretation "Salam" is a means of safety from dangers because it is regarded as a way of peace and peace-loving. When two Muslims meet each other they offer Salam one to the other. It means that they announce the wishes of each for



249. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) used to say: If you want an oppressor to take oath ask him to swear like this that he is out of Allah's Might and His power, because if he swears falsely in this way he would be quickly punished, while if he swears by Allah who is such that there is no god but He, he would not be quickly punished since he would be expressing Unity of Allah.<sup>72</sup>

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the welfare of the other where after each feels safe with the other.

**Trust** is not only related to property but failing in the performance of one's duties is also lack of trustworthiness. So if the Muslims remain dutiful in all relevant matters the object of order and organisation of the nation would be achieved and the unification of the community would be completed.

The institution of Imamate is intended to cater to the unification of the nation and to protect the commandments of Islam from alteration and change, because if there is no head of the nation and no protector of religion, neither the order of the nation can be maintained nor can the commandments of Islam remain safe from interference by others. This object can be achieved only when his obedience is obligatory on the people, because if he is not obeyed and followed as an obligation he would neither be able to maintain justice and equity, not secure the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor, not issue and enforce the laws of Shariat and consequently the extinction of evil and mischief from the world cannot be expected.

72. Ibne Meetham has written that someone levied some charges against Imam Ja'far-e-Sadiq before Abbaside Caliph Mansur whereupon Mansur sent for the Imam and told him that such and such person had told him so and so about him. The Imam said it was all wrong and there was not an iota of truth



250. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: O' son of Adam, be your own representative in the matter of your property and do about it whatever you want to be done with it after your death.<sup>73</sup>
251. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Anger is a kind of madness because the victim to it does repent afterwards. If he does not repent his madness is confirmed.
252. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Health of body comes from paucity of envy.<sup>74</sup>

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therein, and desired the man to be sent for and questioned, before him. Consequently he was sent for and questioned. He said that whatever he had said was true and correct. The Imam said to him, "If you are speaking truth then you swear as I ask you to swear". Thereafter the Imam made him swear by saying "I am out of Allah's might and power". Soon on swearing like this he got an attack of paralysis and he became motionless. The Imam, (A.S.) returned with full honour and prestige.

73. The meaning of it is that if a person desires that after his death a portion of his property should be spent on charity, he should not wait for his death but spend it wherever he desires even during his lifetime: for it is possible that after his death his successors may not act upon his will or he may not get an opportunity to will.

A person couplet says: Give away money and property while you are living as after you it would be out of your control.

- <sup>74</sup> Envy produces such a poisonous matter in the body which destroys the natural heat of the body as a result of which the

253. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: (to Kumail bin Ziad Nakhaee) : O' Kumail direct your people to go out in the day for achieving noble traits and to go out in the night for meeting the needs of those who might be sleeping, for I swear by Him Whose hearing extends to all voices if ever someone pleases another's heart Allah will create a special thing out of this pleasing so that whenever any hardship befalls him it would come running like flowing water and drive away the hardship as wild camels are driven away.
254. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When you fall in destitution, trade with Allah through charity.
255. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Faithfulness with faithless people is faithlessness with Allah, while faithlessness with faithless people is faithfulness with Allah.
256. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There is many a man being gradually brought towards punishment by good treatment with him, many a man who remains in deceit because his evils are covered, and many a man who is in illusion

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body weakens and the spirit withers. That is why an envious person never prospers and melts away in the heat of envy.

because of good talk about him, while there is no greater ordeal by Allah than giving of time.<sup>75</sup>

Section wherein we have included selections from wonderful sayings of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) which require explanation.

1. A tradition related from Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: When the situation will be this then the head of the religion would rise and people would gather round him as piece of waterless clouds collect during autumn.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This saying has appeared earlier as well but here it contains a beautiful and useful addition.

<sup>76</sup> Syed Razi says: "Ya'soob" is the great chief who is in charge of the people's affairs, and "Qaza" means the pieces of cloud which have no water.

Ya'soob is the name given to the chief of the bees and "Ya'soob-ud-Deen" (the head of religion and Shariat) stands for the present Imam. The reason for naming him with this word is that just as the head of the bees is pure in his in and out and it collects its feed from the blossoms and flowers keeping away from pollution, in the same way the present Imam is free from all pollutions and is perfectly clean and pure. This saying has been interpreted in several ways:

Firstly, that it means that "when the present Imam settles at his seat after his tour and rotation round the world."

Secondly, that it means that "when the Imam would move about on the earth along with his friends and associates". In this case the word "Zarb" would mean moving about and the word "Zanb" would mean helpers and associates.



2. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: He is a versatile speaker.<sup>77</sup>
3. A tradition from Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: Quarrels bring about ruin.<sup>78</sup>

Thirdly, that it means that "when the Imam would rise with sword in hand". In this case the word "Zanb" would mean stinging by the bee.

Fourthly, that it means that "when the Imam would rise for propagation of true faith with full fervour". In this case the sentence would be suggestive of the state of rage and the posture for attack.

- 77 Syed Razi Says: "Shahshah" means one expert and free in speech, and every one who is free in speech or walking is called "Shahshah", while in other sense this word means a miserly and niggardly person.

The reference by the versatile speaker is to Sa'sa'a bin Sauhaan who was among the chief companions of Amirul Momineen. This saying throws light on the greatness of his speaking quality and force of utterances. In this connection Ibne Abil Hadeed has written:

It is enough for Sa'sa'a's greatness that a personality like Ali, (A.S.) has praised him for versatility and eloquence of speech.

- 78 Syed Razi says: "Quhm" means ruin because quarrels often drive men into ruin and grief. In the same way it is said "Quhmat-ul-Aaraab" which means the period (of drought) when the cattle owned by the country Arabs are reduced to bones, and this is their being driven to it. Another argument

4. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: When girls reach the stage of (realising) realities the relations on the father's side are preferable.<sup>79</sup>

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is also advanced in this matter: namely that the situation drives them to green areas, in other words the hardship of the country life drives them to cities.

- 79 Syed Razi's Note: Instead of "Nass-al-Haqeeq" the combination "Nass-al-Hiqaq" has also been related. "Nass" means the last end of things or their remotest limit, such as "nass fis sair" means the maximum a beast can walk. Or you say "Nasast-ar-rajula anil amr" when you have questioned him to the extreme for making him utter all he has. Thus Nassul Hiqaq means prudence because it is the last limit of childhood and is the time when a child crosses childhood into majority and this is very eloquent reference to the point, and strange too. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) intends to say: When girls reach this stage her relations on father's side have a better right than their mother provided they are those with whom marriage is prohibited like brothers and uncles, to arrange for their marriage if they so desire. Hiqaq also means quarrelling of the mother with a girl's paternal relations. This quarrel is that every one of them says he has a better right for her. That is why it is said "Haaqaqtuhu hiqaqan" on the lines of "jadaltuhu jidalan". It has also been said that "Nass ul Hiqaq" means acquiring understanding and this is prudence, because Amirul Momineen (A.S.) refers to the stage when rights and duties become applicable. The person who has related the word as Haqaa-eq intends to signify the plural of Haqeeqat (reality).

The above is what Abu Ubaid (al Qasim bin Salam) has stated: but I think that the intention here by the word Nass al Haqaq is a girl's reaching the stage when it is possible to marry her and to allow her to dispose of her rights herself on

5. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: Faith produces a "Lumza" in the heart. As faith develops, the Lumza also increases.<sup>80</sup>
6. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: If a man has a "dain uz-zunoon" (i.e. doubtful loan) it is his duty to pay Zakat thereon for all the past years when he recovers it.<sup>81</sup>

the analogy of Hiqaq-il-Ibil (a camel's attaining majority) wherein Hiqaq is the plural of Hiqqa or Hiqq and it means completion of three years (of age) and entry into the fourth, which is the time when it reaches the age when it is possible to ride on its back and to exert it in walking. Haqaaeq too is the plural of Hiqqa. Thus both the versions point to the same meaning, and this interpretation is more in keeping with the way of Arabs than the other one stated earlier.

80. Syed Razi's Note: Lumza is a white spot or something like that. On that analogy if a horse has a white spot on its lower lip it is called "fars un almazu", that is, a white-spotted horse.
81. Syed Razi's Note: Zunoon is the loan about which the lender does not know whether he would be able to recover it from the borrower. He is like the one who hopes as well as loses hope. This is the most eloquent way of expression. In this way everything about which you do not know where you stand would be Zunoon. In the same strain post A'asha says:

The Zunoon well (i.e. the one that may or may not have water) which is also deprived of the rain of the raining clouds cannot be compared to the Euphrates (river) whose waves are rising high and which is pushing away the boat as well as the adept swimmer.

"Judd" means the well (situated in a wilderness), while Zunoon is that about which it is not known whether or not it has water.



7. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) relates that he arranged a force for advancing for jihad and said: Eizeboo (turn away) from women so far as you can.<sup>82</sup>
8. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) says: Like the successful shooter who looks forward at achieving success at his first shot.<sup>83</sup>
9. A tradition of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) runs: When crisis assumed redness we sought refuge with the Prophet of Allah (S.A.), and none of us was closer to the enemy than he himself.<sup>84</sup>

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82 Syed Razi's Note: It means that "keep off from thoughts of women and from clinging your heart to them, and do not have union with them; because all this produces weakness in the enthusiasm, affects the firmness of determination, weakens against the enemy and prevents from exerting in fighting. Whatever prevents from something is called "A'azaba anhu" i.e., turned away from it. Thus "Al-Aa'zib" and "Al azoob" mean one who gives up eating and drinking.

83 Syed Razi's Note: "Al-yaseroon" means those who shoot with arrows on the slaughtered camel by way of gambling; while "Al-falij" means successful or victorious, for example it is said: "Falaja Alaihim" or "Falajahum" (that is, he got victory over them or overpowered them). A poet has said by way of war recital:

"When I noticed a successful person securing victory."

84 Syed Razi says: This means that when fear of the enemy increased and fighting became serious the Muslims would

256-B. When the news of attack of Muawiya's men on Anbar reached Amirul Momineen (A.S.) he himself came out walking till he reached Nakheela, where people overtook him and said, "O' Amirul Momineen, we are enough for them". Then he said: You cannot be enough for me against yourselves, how can you be enough for me against others? Before me the people used to complain of the oppression of their rulers but now I have to complain of the wrongful actions of my people; as though I am led by them and they are the leaders or that I am the subject and they the rulers.<sup>85</sup>

begin to wish that if the Prophet of Allah (S.A.) takes up fighting himself Allah might give them victory through him and they would be safe from all the dangers because of his existence.

And the words "Iza ahmarra-al-baasu" (when crisis assumes redness) refers to the seriousness of the matter. For this purpose several expressions have been used out of which this is the best one, since Amirul Momineen has likened war with fire which combines heat and redness both in action as well as colour. This is confirmed by the words of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.) when on the day of Hunain he noticed people of Hawazin fighting he said "now Vatees has heated up" and Vatees is the place where fire is lighted. In this way the Prophet of Allah (S.A.) likened the seriousness of fighting by men to the seriousness of the fire and its flames.

This Section ends and we return to the original theme of the Chapter.

<sup>85</sup> Syed Razi's Note: When Amirul Momineen (A.S.) uttered this during his slang speech which we have included in the collection of sermons two individuals from his companions



257. It is said that Harith bin Hoot came to Amirul Momineen and said: Do you believe I can ever imagine that the people of Jamal were in the wrong? Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: O' Harith: You have seen below yourself but not above yourself, and so you have been confused. Certainly you have not known the right, how can you know who is on the right? And you have not known the wrong, how can you know who is on the wrong? The Harith said: In that case I am retiring along with Sa'ad bin Maalik and Abdullah bin Umer; whereupon Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Oh! Sa'ad and Abdullah bin Umer have neither sided with Right nor forsaken Wrong.<sup>86</sup>

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advanced towards him and one of them said: I have no control except over myself and my brother. So you order us whatever you wish. O' Amirul Momineen and we would accomplish it. Thereupon Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: How can you two accomplish what I aim at.

86. Sa'ad bin Maalik (i.e., Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas) and Abdullah bin Umer were among those who were keeping themselves away from Amirul Momineen's help and support. As for Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas, after the killing of Osman he retired to some wilderness and passed his life there, but did not agree to swear allegiance to Amirul Momineen (as Caliph). As for Abdullah bin Umer, although he had sworn allegiance but had refused to help Amirul Momineen in the battles putting forth the excuse "I have sought seclusion to devote myself to worship and do not therefore want to involve myself in war and fighting."

A persian couplet says: Intelligence regards such excuses worse than the offence itself.



258. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The holder of authority is like the rider on a lion --- he is envied for his position but he well knows his position.<sup>87</sup>
259. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Do good with the bereaved ones of others so that good is done to your bereaved ones also.
260. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When the utterance of the wise is to the point it serves as cure but if it is wrong it proves like illness.<sup>88</sup>
261. Someone asked Amirul Momineen (A.S.) to define religion for him, so he said: Come to me

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<sup>87</sup> The intention is that if a person holds high position in the royal court people look at his rank and position and honour and prestige with envy, but he himself has always the fear lest the royal pleasure turns against him and he falls in the pit of disgrace and dishonour or death and destruction, like the rider on a lion with whom people get awed but he himself is ever facing the danger lest the lion devours him, or throws him in some fatal pit.

<sup>88</sup> The group of the learned and the reformers is responsible for improvement as well as deterioration because the common people are under their influence and, regarding their words and action as correct and standard, rely on them and act upon them. In this way if their teaching caters for improvement then thousands of individuals would acquire improvement and betterment thereby; but if there be evil in it then thousands of individuals would get involved in mis-guidance and get strayed. That is why it is said "when a scholar gets into evil the whole world gets into evil".

tomorrow so that I enlighten you in the presence of all the people, so that if you forget what I say others might retain it, because an utterance is like a fluttering prey which may be grappled by someone but missed by others.<sup>89</sup>

262. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: O' son of Adam, do not inflict the worry of the day that has not yet come on the day which has already come, because if that day be in your life Allah would bestow its livelihood also.
263. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Have love for your friend upto a limit for it is possible he may turn into your enemy some day: and hate your enemy upto a limit for it is possible he may turn into your friend some day.
264. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: There are two kinds of workers in the world, One is a person who works in this world for this world and his work of this world keeps him unmindful of the next life. He is afraid of destitution for those he would leave behind but feels himself safe about it. So he spends his life after the good of others. The other is one who works in this world for what is to come hereafter, and he secures his share of this world without effort. Thus he gets both the benefits together and becomes the

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<sup>89</sup> Syed Razi's Note: We have already stated in the earlier chapter what Amirul Momineen replied to this man, namely his saying "Belief has four aspects".

owner of both the houses together. In this way he is prestigious before Allah. If he asks Allah any thing He does not deny him.

265. It is related that during the days of (Caliph) Umer bin Khattab the question of the plenty of ornaments of the Ka'ba was mentioned to him and some people suggested: If you prepare with it an army of Muslims that would be a matter of great reward; and what would Ka'ba do with ornaments? Umer thought of doing so but asked Amirul Momineen (A.S.) when he said: When Quran was descended on the Prophet (S.A.) there were four kinds of properties. One, the property of the Muslim individuals which he distributed among the successors according to fixed shares. Second, the tax which he distributed to those for whom it was meant. Third, the One Fifth levy for which Allah had fixed the ways of disposal. Fourth, amounts of charity whose disposal was also fixed by Allah. The ornaments of Ka'ba did exist in those days but Allah left them as they were, but did not leave them by omission, nor were they unknown to Him. Therefore you retain them where Allah and His Prophet placed them. Thereupon Umer said: If you had not been here we would have been humiliated; and he left ornaments as they were.
266. It is related that two persons were brought to Amirul Momineen. They had committed theft of the public property. One of them was a slave



purchased from the public money and the other purchased by some one among the people. Then Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: As for this one who is the property of the public money, there is no punishment for him for it means one property of Allah having taken another property of Allah. As for the other, he should get the punishment. Consequently his hand was cut.

267. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If my steps acquire firmness out of these slippery places I would alter several things.<sup>90</sup>

90 It cannot be denied that after the Prophet of Islam changes had come into being in the religion when some people acting upon their imagination amended or altered the commands of Shariat although no one has the right to make alteration in the Shariat, namely that he may ignore the clear commands of Quran and Sunnah and enforce commands produced by his own imagination and thinking. Thus, Quran contains this clear method of divorce that "Revocable Divorce" (i.e. divorce in which resumption of conjugal relations is permissible without a third man coming in) may be twice", but in view of certain supposed advantages Caliph Umer ordered three divorces to be pronounced in a single sitting. Similarly he introduced the system of Aul in inheritance and introduced four Takbeers in the funeral prayer. In the same way Caliph Osman added an Azan in Juma prayer, ordered offering of full prayer in place of Qasr (shortened) ones, and allowed the sermon to precede the Eid prayer. In fact hundreds of commands of this type were fabricated as a result of which even correct commands got mixed with the wrong ones and lost authenticity.

Amirul Momineen (A.S.) who was the greatest scholar of the Shariat used to protest against these commands and had his

268. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Know with full conviction that Allah has not fixed for any person more livelihood than what has been ordained in the Writing of Destiny, even though his means (of seeking it) may be great, his craving for it intense and his efforts for it acute; nor does the weakness of a person or the paucity of his means stand in the way between what is ordained in the Book of Destiny and himself. He who realises it and acts upon it is the best of them all in point of comfort and benefit; while he who disregards it and doubts it exceeds all men in disadvantages. Very often a favoured person is being slowly driven (towards punishment) through those favours; and very often an afflicted person is being done good

own views as against the Companions. In this connection Ibne Abil Hadeed writes:

There is no possibility for us to deny that Amirul Momineen had views on commands of Shariat and verdicts other than those of the Companions. (Sharh Ibne Abil Hadeed: Vol 4. P. 372).

When Amirul Momineen assumed charge of formal Caliphate, soon thereafter revolts cropped up on all sides and he did not get rid of these troubles till the last moment. Consequently the altered commands could not be fully corrected and many wrong or doubtful commands gained currency in areas away from the centre. Nevertheless the group of people who were associated with Amirul Momineen used to enquire about the commands of Shariat from him and preserved them as a result of which the correct commands did not become extinct and the wrong ones did not become unanimously accepted.



through his affliction. Therefore, O' listener increase your gratefulness, lessen your haste and stay at the bounds of your livelihood.

269. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Do not turn your knowledge into ignorance or your conviction into doubt. When you gain knowledge act (upon it) and when you acquire conviction proceed (on its basis).<sup>91</sup>
270. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Greed takes a person to the watering place but gets him back without letting him drink. It undertakes responsibility but does not fulfil it. Often the drinker gets choked before quenching of his thirst. The greater the worth of a thing yearned for the greater is the grief for its loss. Desires blind the eyes of understanding. The destined

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<sup>91</sup> Knowledge and conviction require that they should be acted upon. If they are not acted upon they cannot be called knowledge and conviction. Consequently if a man says he knows the dangers that exist in a particular path but he adopts that very path for his journey instead of the path that has no dangers then who can say that this man had not full certainty about the dangers of that path because the consequence of such certainty should have been that he would have avoided going on that path. Similarly the person who has belief in resurrection and revival of life or in chastisement and reward cannot be overpowered by those things of this world that make a man neglectful so as to disregard the next life nor can he fall short of good actions for fear of chastisement and evil consequences.



- share would reach him who does not approach it.
271. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: My Allah, I seek Your protection from this that I may appear to be good in the eyes of the people whilst my inward may be sinful before You and that I may be guarding myself (from sins) only for show before the people although You are aware of all about me. Thus I would be appearing before the people in good shape although my evil deeds would be placed before You. This would mean achieving nearness to the people but remoteness from Your pleasure.
272. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I swear by Him Who let us pass the dark night after which there was a bright day that it did not happen so and so.
273. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Little action which is continued with regularity is more beneficial than the long one performed with disgust.
274. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When optional issues stand in the way of obligatories, abandon them.
275. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Whoever keeps in view the distance of the journey keeps prepared.

276. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Perception with eyes is not real observation because eyes sometimes deceive the people; but wisdom does not deceive whomever it counsels.
277. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Between you and the preaching there is a curtain of deception.
278. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The ignorant among you get too much while the learned are just put off.
279. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Knowledge dispels the excuse of those who advance excuses.
280. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He whom death overtakes early seeks time while he whose death is deferred puts forth excuses for postponement (of doing good actions).
281. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: For every thing to which people say "how good!" there is an evil hidden in this world.
282. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about destiny, when he said: It is a dark path, do not tread upon it, it is deep ocean, do not dive in it and it is the secret of Allah, do not take trouble about (knowing) it.

283. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: When Allah intends humiliating a person He denies him knowledge.
284. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: In the past I had a brother-in-faith, and he was a prestigious in my view because the world was humble in his eyes, the needs of the stomach did not have sway over him, he did not long for what he did not get, if he got a thing he would not ask for more, most of his time he was silent, if he spoke he silenced the other speakers, he quenched the thirst of questioners, he was weak and feeble but at the time of fighting he was like the lion of the forest or the serpent of the valley, he would not put forth an argument unless it was decisive, he would not abuse any one in an excusable matter unless he would have head the excuse, he would not speak of any trouble except after its disappearance, he would say what he would do, and would not say what he would not do, even if he could be exceeded in speaking, he could not be excelled in silence, he was more eager for keeping quiet than speaking and if two things confronted him he would see which was more akin to the longing of the heart and he would oppose it. These qualities are incumbent upon you. So you should acquire them and excel each other in them. Even if You cannot



acquire them you should know that acquiring a part is better than giving up the whole.<sup>92</sup>

285. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Even if Allah had not warned of chastisement on those disobedient to Him it was obligatory by way of gratefulness for his favours that He should not be disobeyed.
286. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Condoling Asha's bin Qais about his son: O' Asha'a, if you grieve over your son, certainly it is the consequence of blood relationship; but if you endure then Allah provides recompense for every affliction. O' Asha's, if you endure even then matters will move on as ordained by Allah but in that case you will deserve reward; while if you lose patience matters will again move as ordained by Allah but in this case you will be bearing the burden (of sins). O' Asha's, your son (when he lived) gave you happiness although he was a trial and hardship and (when he died) he grieved you although he has proved a source of reward and mercy for you.

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92. The man whom Amirul Momineen (A.S.) has referred to as brother and has stated his qualities, has been taken by some commentators to mean Abu Zar Ghafari, by some Osman bin Mazu'oon and by some Miqdad bin Aswad; but it would not be far that no particular individual is referred to at Ali because it is usual with the Arabs that they speak of a brother or a comrade in their speech while there is no particular individual before them.

287. Amirul Momineen' (A.S.) said: On the grave of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.) at the time of burial: Certainly endurance is good except about you, fretting is bad except over you, and the affliction about you is great while every other affliction before or after it is small.
288. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Do not associate with a fool because he would beautify his actions before you and long that you too be like him.<sup>93</sup>
289. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about the distance between East and West when he replied: One day's travelling for the sun.
290. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Your friends are three and your enemies are (also three. Your friends are --- your friend, your friend's friend and your enemy's enemy. And your enemies are

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<sup>93</sup> A fool considers his ways of action as appropriate and wants his friend also to adopt the same ways and that he should become as he himself is. This does not mean that he desires that his friend should become as foolish as he is. He cannot desire so because he does not consider himself foolish. If he considered himself foolish then he would not have been foolish. He rather considers his way of action as correct and desires his friend also to be equally "wise". That is why he presents his view before him in embellished form and desires him to act upon it. It is possible his friend may be influenced by his advice and tread on the same path. Therefore it is better to keep away from him.

— your enemy, your friend's enemy and your enemy's friend.

291. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) saw a man busy against his enemy with what was harmful to himself too, so he said: You are like one who pierces a spear through himself in order to kill the person sitting behind him.
292. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: How many are the objects of lessons but how less the taking of lessons.<sup>94</sup>
293. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: He who goes too far in quarrelling is a sinner, but if one falls short in it one is oppressed and it is difficult for a quarreller to fear Allah.
294. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I am not worried by a fault after which I get time to offer prayer in two chapters and beg safety from Allah.

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<sup>94</sup> If the vicissitudes and changes of the world are seen, the circumstances and conditions of the people are observed and their histories are listened to, then from every corner such a lesson-bearing story can be heard which would be fully capable of arousing the mind out of the oblivious slumber, for providing instruction and for imparting lesson and clear-sightedness: Thus the making and unmaking of every thing in this world, the blossoming of flowers and their withering, the thriving of vegetation and its withering away and the subjugation of every atom to alteration are such instructive lessons that they are enough to curb out the hope of attaining eternity in this deceitful life provided the eyes and ears are not closed to these instructive objects.



295. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked how Allah would conduct the accounting of all persons despite their large number. He replied: Just as He provides them livelihood despite their large number. Then it was said to him: How would He conduct their accounting without their seeing Him. He replied: Just as He provides them livelihood although they do not see Him.
296. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Your messenger is the interpreter of your intelligence while your letter is more eloquent than his speaking.
297. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The person who is afflicted with hardship is not in greater need of praying than the one who has been spared affliction but is not immune from it.
298. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: People are the progeny of the world and no one can be blamed for loving the mother.
299. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The destitute is the messenger of Allah. Whoever denies him denies Allah and whoever gives him gives Allah.
300. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A self-respecting man never commits adultery.

301. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The fixed limit of life is enough to remain watchful.<sup>95</sup>
302. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: A man can sleep on the death of his child, but cannot sleep at loss of property.<sup>96</sup>
303. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Mutual affection between fathers creates a relationship between the sons. Relationship is more in need of affection than affection is of relationship.
304. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Be afraid of the ideas of Believers because Allah has put truth on their tongues.
305. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: The belief of a person cannot be regarded true unless hi trust in

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<sup>95</sup> The intention is that the lightning may flash a hundred thousand times, tempests may rise, the earth may quake and mountains may coiled with each other, but if the fixed period of life is yet to run no occurrence can cause any harm, nor the typhoon of death put off the flame of life, because there is a fixed hour for death and nothing can cut it short before that time. In this way doubtlessly death is itself the watchman and guard of life.

The hemstitch of a verse says: What is known as death is the watchman of life.

<sup>96</sup> Syed Razi's Note: It means that a man keeps patience on the death of his children but does not do so on the loss of property.

what is with Allah is more than his trust in what he himself has.

306. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) came to Basra he sent Anas bin Malik to Talha and Zubair to make them recall what he himself had heard the Prophet (S.A.) say concerning them both, but he avoided doing and when he came back to Amirul Momineen he said that he forgot the point. Thereupon Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: If you are speaking lie Allah may afflict you with white spots (leucoderma) which even the turban may not cover.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Syed Razi says: White spot means leucoderms. After some time this disease did occur to Anas in the face so much so that he was never seen without a veil.

The occasion and position of this saying pointed out by Syed Razi is that when at the time of the Battle of the Camel Amirul Momineen sent Anas bin Maalik to Talha and Zubair with the purpose that he should recall to them the Prophet's saying to the effect "you two would fight Ali and would be committing excess over him", he came back and stated that he forgot to mention it. The Amirul Momineen uttered these words about him. However when he wanted Anas to confirm the Prophet's saying "Whosoever master I am, Ali is his master. My Allah, loves him who loves Ali and hates him who hates Ali". Consequently numerous persons testified to this saying but Anas kept quiet. Then Amirul Momineen said to him, "You too were present at Ghadeer Khum, what is keeping you silent on this occasion?" and he said, "I have grown old and my memory does not serve me". Then Amirul Momineen pronounced this curse. In this connection Qutaibs writes:



307. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Sometimes the hearts move forward and sometimes they move backward. When they move forward got them perform the optional (as well). But when they move backward keep them confined to obligatories only.
308. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Quran contains news about the past, foretelling about the future and commandments for the present.
309. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Throw a stone in return from where one comes to you because evil can be met only with evil.

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People have related that Amirul Momineen asked Anas Bin Maalik about the Prophet's saying "My Allah, loves him who loves Ali and hates him who hates Ali." And he replied "I have grown old and I have forgotten it". Then Ali said: "If you are a liar Allah may afflict you with white sports which even the turban may not cover." (Al-Maarif, p. 251)

Ibne Abil Hadeed has also supported this view and denying the incident mentioned by Syed Razi writes:

The incident mentioned by Syed Razi that Amirul Momineen sent Anas to Talha and Zubair is an unknown occurrence. If Amirul Momineen had sent him to recall to them the Prophet's saying particularly concerning them then he could not have come back and said that he forgot it because when he left Amirul Momineen and went towards these two persons he should have admitted and remembered the saying, and as such how could he, on his return after an hour or a day placed that he forgot it and deny it. This is something that does not happen. (Sharh Ibne Abil Hadeed: Vol. 4. P. 388).

310. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: to his Secretary Ubaidullah bin Abi Rafey: Put cotton flake in the inkpot, keep the nib of your pen long, leave space between lines and close up the letters because this is good for the beauty of the writing.
311. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: I am the Yasoob (leader) of the believers, while wealth is the leader of the wicked.<sup>98</sup>
312. Some Jews said to Amirul Momineen (A.S.) "You had not buried your Prophet when you picked up differences about him", when Amirul Momineen replied: We did not differ about him but we differed after him (i.e. about his succession); whereas you had not dried up your feet after coming out of the river (Bile) when you began asking your Prophet Make you for us god as they have gods of their own. Said he: verily you are a people behaving ignorantly.<sup>99</sup>

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98 Syed Razi's Note: It means that the believers follow me while the wicked follow wealth just as the bees follow their "yasoob" who is their leader.

99 The purpose behind this criticism by the jews was to show that the prophethood of the Prophet Mohammad was a controversial matter, but Amirul Momineen clarified the exact focus of controversy by using the word "after him" as against "about him", namely that the controversy was not about his prophethood but about his succession and vicegerency. Then commenting on the position of the jews he pointed out that those who were today criticising the

(Quran 7:138)

313. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked "with what did he overpower his adversaries"? He answered: whenever I confronted a person he helped me against himself.<sup>100</sup>

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mutual differences of Muslims after the Prophet were such that they had become wavery about the belief in unity of Allah even in the lifetime of Moses. Thus when on getting rid of the slavery of the Egyptians they reached across the river and saw the figure of a calf in a temple at Senai they asked Moses to get a similar figure for them whereupon Moses rebuked them that they were still as stubborn as they were in Egypt. This meant that a people who were so immersed in the passion for idol-worship that even after being initiated into the belief in the Unity of Allah they became restless on seeing an idol and made the request for a similar idol being made for themselves had no right to criticise any difference among Muslims.

- 100 Syed Razi says that Amirul Momineen is pointing out to the striking of his awe in the hearts.

The man who is over-awed by his adversary is sure to be defeated because for facing a foe physical prowess is not enough but the steadfastness of heart and the strength of courage is also necessary. When the adversary would lose courage and would feel sure that he would be defeated then he would certainly be defeated. This is what happened to the adversary of Amirul Momineen namely that he was so affected by his acknowledged reputation that he was sure of death as a consequence of which his spiritual power and self confidence came to an end and eventually this mental state dragged him to his death.



314. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to his son Mohammad bin Hanafiyya: My son, I fear lest destitution overtakes you. So you should seek Allah's protection from it, because destitution is deficiency of religious belief, perplexity of intelligence and conducive to the hatred of the people.
315. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) replied to a man who had asked him a difficult question: Ask me for understanding but do not ask me for getting confused, because the ignorant person who tries to learn is like the learned man, but the learned man who tries to create confusion is like the ignorant.
316. Abdullah bin Abbas once advised Amirul Momineen (A.S.) against his views, so he said: You have only to advise me and then I have to see (what to do): and if I act against your advice you have to follow me.<sup>101</sup>
317. When Amirul Momineen (A.S.) returned to Kufa from Siffin he passed by the residences of

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<sup>101</sup> Abdullah bin Abbas had advised Amirul Momineen to issue a letter of appointment to Talha and Zubair as governors of Kufa and to retain Muawiya as governor of Syria till such time as his position got established and the government gained strength, in reply to which Amirul Momineen said that he could not expose his own religion to danger for the sake of the worldly benefit of others, adding that "therefore instead of insisting on your own point you should listen to me and obey me."

Shabamites and heard the women weeping over those killed in Siffin. At that time a Shabamite, Harb bin Sharhbil, who was one of the nobles of those people came to him. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to him : Do your women enjoy control over you as regards weeping that I am hearing? Do you not refrain them from this crying? Harb began to walk with him while Amirul Momineen said to him, "Get back because the walking of a man like you with one like me is mischief for the ruler and disgrace for the believer."

318. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) passed by the dead bodies of the Kharijites on the day of the Battle of Nahravan and said: Woe to you; you have been harmed by him who deceived you. He was asked: Who deceived them, and he replied: Satan, the deceiver, and the inner spirit that leads one to evil deceived them through passions, made it easy for them to get into sins, promised them victory and eventually threw them into Hell.
319. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Beware of disobeying Allah in solitude, because the Witness (of that situation) is also the Judge.
320. When the news of killing of Mohammad bin Abi Bakr reached Amirul Momineen (A.S.) he said: Our grief over him is as great as their (i.e., the enemy's), joy for it except that they have lost an enemy and we have lost a friend.

321. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The age upto which Allah accepts any excuse from a human being is sixty years.
322. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : He whom sin overpowers is not victorious, and he who secures victory by evil is (in fact) vanquished.
323. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Allah has fixed the livelihood of the destitute in the wealth of the rich. Consequently whenever a destitute remains hungry it is because some rich person has denied (him his share). Allah will question them about it.
324. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Not to be in need of putting forth excuse is better than putting forth true excuse.<sup>102</sup>
325. The last right of Allah on you is that you should not make use of His favours in committing His sins.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> The meaning is that obligations should be so discharged that there is no occasion for putting forth excuses, because after all in making excuse there is a tinge of shortcoming and presence of humbleness, even though it may be true and correct.

<sup>103</sup> There are a few grades of denial of favours and ingratitude. The first is that a person may not be able to appreciate the (real significance of) favour; for example, the sight of the eye, the power of speaking of the tongue, the power of hearing of the ears and the movements of the hands and feet.



326. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : When the disabled persons fall short in performing acts of obedience to Allah it is good opportunity given by Allah for the intelligent to perform such acts.
327. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The sovereign is watchman of Allah on earth.
328. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said describing a believer: A believer has cheerful face, sorrowful heart, very broad chest (full of generosity), and very humble heart. He hates high position, dislikes renown. His grief is long, his courage is far-reaching, his silence is much and, his time is occupied. He is grateful, enduring buried in his thoughts, niggardly in begging (from others), of bright demeanour and of soft temperament. He is stronger than stone but humbler than a slave.
329. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : If a man happens to see the end of life and its final fate, he would begin hating desires and their deception.

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These are all favours bestowed by Allah but many people do not realise them to be favours, so that they may have the feeling of gratitude. The second grade is that a person may see a favour and appreciate it but may not feel grateful for it. The third grade is that a person may oppose the Bestower of the favour. The fourth grade is that instead of using the favours granted by Him a person may use them in committing His sins. This is the highest grade of denial of favours.

330. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : There are two sharers in the property of every person --- the successors and the accidents.
331. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The person who is approached with request is free till he promises.
332. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : He who prays but does not make effort is like the one who shoots without bow-string.
333. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Knowledge is of two kinds --- that which is absorbed and that which is just heard. The heard one does not benefit unless it gets absorbed.
334. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : correctness of decision goes with power. It emerges with its emergence and disappears when the other disappears.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> When anyone's star is auspicious and the position of luck is on the high, his steps automatically advance towards the goal in view, and the mind confronts no perplexity in determining the correct way of approach; but the person whose luck is about to ebb stumbles even in the light and his mental faculties get paralysed. Consequently when the downfall of the Bermakites set in ten persons from among them assembled for consultation about a matter but could not take a decision even after long discussion. Seeing this Yahya said by Allah, it is a forerunner of our decline and sign of our downfall that even ten of us have not been able to settle a

335. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The beauty of destitution is chastity and the beauty of riches is gratefulness.
336. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The day of justice will be severer on the oppressor than the day of oppression on the oppressed.
337. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The biggest wealth is that one should not have an eye on what others have.
338. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Utterances are preserved and actions are to be tried. "Every soul, for what it earned, is held in pledge". (Quran 74:38). People are to be made deficient (as regards bodies) and meddled with (as regards minds) except those whom Allah protects. The questioner among them aims at confusing and the answerer creates hardship. It is possible that the man who has the best view among them would get deviated from the soundness of his thinking by pleasure or displeasure, and it is possible that a single glance may affect even the man with the best wisdom among them or a single expression may transform him.
339. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : O' group of people fear Allah, for there is many a man who

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matter while when we were in ascendancy one of us used to solve ten problems easily.



aspires for what he does not get, many a builder of house who does not live in it, and many a collector of that which he would just leave behind. Possibly he might have collected it wrongfully or by denying a right. He acquired it unlawfully and had to bear the weight of sins on account of it. Consequently he returned (from this world) with that weight and came before Allah with sorrow and grief. Loses he both this world and (also) the hereafter; that is a loss (which is) manifest. (Quran 22:11).

340. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Lack of access to sins is also a kind of chastity.
341. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The dignity of your face is solid but begging dissolves it; therefore see carefully before whom you dissolve it.
342. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : To praise more than entitlement is sycophancy; to do it less is either because of inability to speak or of envy.
343. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The most serious sin is that which the doer considers light.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> The result of lack of restraint and care in respect of small sins is that a man becomes a bit careless in the matter of sins and by and by this habit produces boldness for big sins. Then he begins to commit them without demur. Therefore one should regard small sins as a harbinger of bigger sins and avoid

344. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : He who sees his own shortcomings keeps away from looking into other's shortcomings. He who feels happy with the livelihood that Allah provides him does not grieve over what he misses. He who draws out the sword of revolt got killed with it. He who strives without means perishes. He who enters tumultuous surges gets drowned. He who visits places of ill repute would get blame. He who speaks more commits more errors. He who commits more errors becomes shameless. He who is shameless would have less fear of Allah. He whose fear of Allah is less his heart dies. He whose heart dies enters Hell. He who observes the shortcomings of others and disapproves them then accepts them for himself is definitely a fool. Contentment is capital that does not dwindle. He who remembers death much is satisfied with small favours of this world. He who knows that his speech is also a part of his action speaks less except where he has some purpose.
345. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The oppressor among the people has three signs; he oppresses his superior by disobeying him, and his junior by posing authority and he supports the other oppressors.

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them so that the stage for committing big sins does not come.

346. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : At the extremity of hardship comes relief and at the narrowness of the rings of tribulation comes ease.
347. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to one of his companions: Do not devote much of your activity to your wife and your children, because if your wife and children are lovers of Allah then He would not leave them un-cared for and if they be enemies of Allah then why should you worry and keep yourself busy about enemies of Allah.
348. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The worst defect is to regard that thing (in others) defect which is present in you.<sup>106</sup>
349. Some one congratulated another person in the presence of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) on the birth of a son saying "congratulations for getting a horse-rider", then Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not say so; but say "You have occasion to be grateful to Allah the Giver, and be blessed with what you have been given. He

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106 What can be worse defect than that a man should criticise those defects in others which exist in himself. The requirement of justice is that before casting one's eye on the =defects of other's one should look at his own defects and realise that defect is defect whether it be in others or in oneself.

A person couplet says: Looking at others' defects is neither propriety nor manliness. Better look at your own self since you are full of defects.



may attain full life and you may share his virtue.

350. One of the officers of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) built a stately house, about which Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: This is the silver coins showing forth their faces. Certainly this house speaks of your riches.
351. It was said to Amirul Momineen (A.S.) "If a man is left in his house and the door is closed, from <sup>107</sup> where will his livelihood reach him", and he replied: From whatever way his death would reach him.
352. Condoling people among whom some one had died Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: This thing has not commenced from you nor does it end with you. This companion of yours was in the course of a journey and therefore better take

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107 If Allah considers it appropriate to keep a man living while he is confined to a closed house, then He is certainly powerful enough to provide means of life to him, and just as a closed door cannot prevent death in the same way it cannot prevent the entry of livelihood, because the Might of Allah the Mighty is equally capable of either.

The intention is that a man should be content in the matter of livelihood because whatever is destined for him would in any case reach him wherever he may be.

A person couplet says: Livelihood like death would reach a man even if the door be closed but greed keeps people (unnecessarily) anxious.

him still to be in his journey. He would have reached you or else you would reach him.

353. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : O' people, let Allah see you fearing at the time of bliss just as you fear at the time of distress. Certainly he who is given ease (of life) and does not consider it as a means of slow approach towards tribulation (wrongly) considers himself safe against what is to be feared while he who is afflicted with straitness but does not regard it a trial loses the coveted reward.
354. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : O' slaves of desires cut them short because he who leans on the world gets nothing out of it except the pain of hardships. O' people take upon yourselves your own training and turn Away from the dictates of your natural inclinations.
355. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not regard an expression uttered by any person as evil if you can find it capable of bearing some good.
356. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : If you have a need towards Allah the Glorified, then begin by seeking Allah's blessing on His Prophet (S.A.) then ask your need, because Allah is too generous to accept one of the two requests made to Him and deny the other.
357. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : He who is jealous of his esteem should keep off quarrel.

358. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : To make haste before proper time or to delay after proper opportunity, in either case it is folly.
359. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not ask about things which may not happen because you have enough to worry about with what exists.
360. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Imagination is a clear mirror, and taking of instructions (from things around) provides warning and counsel. It is enough to improve yourself that you avoid what you consider bad in others.
361. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Knowledge is associated with action. Therefore he who knows should act, because knowledge calls out for action; if there is response well and good, otherwise it departs from him.
362. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : O' people, the wealth of this world is like straw that brings epidemic ; therefore keep off this grazing land, Leaving it is better than peacefully staying in it, and its share just for subsistence is more blissful than its riches. Destitution has been ordained for those who are rich here, while comfort has been destined for those who keep away from it. If a person is attracted by its dazzle it blinds both his eyes, and if a person acquires eagerness towards it then it fills his heart with grieves



which keep alternating on the black part of his heart, some grief worrying him and another giving him pain. This goes on till death suffocation overtakes him. He is flung in the open while both the shrines of his heart are severed. It is easy for Allah to cause him die and for his comrades to put him in the grave. The believer sees the world with eyes that derive instructions and takes from it food enough for barest need. He hears in it with ears of hatred and enmity. If it is said (about some one) that he has become rich it is also said that he has turned destitute; and if pleasure is felt on one's living, grief is felt over his death. This is the position although the day has not yet approached when they would be disheartened.

363. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Certainly Allah has laid down reward for His obedience and punishment for committing His sins, in order to save men from His chastisement and to drive them towards Paradise.
364. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : A time will come when nothing will remain of Quran except its writing, and nothing of Islam except its name. The mosques in those days would be busy with regard to construction but desolate with regard to guidance. Those staying in them and those visiting them would be the worst of all on earth. From them mischief would spring up and towards them all wrong would turn. If any one would isolate himself from it they

would fling him back to it and if any one would step back from it they would push him towards it. Says Allah the glorified "I swear by Myself that I shall send upon them an evil wherein the endurer would be bewildered" and He would do so. We seek Allah's pardon from stumbling through neglect.

365. It is related that it was seldom that Amirul Momineen (A.S.) ascended the pulpit and did not utter the following before his sermon: O' people, fear Allah for man has not been created for naught so that he may waste himself, nor has he been left un-card for so that he may commit nonsense acts. This world which appears beautiful to him cannot be the replacement of the next world which appears bad in his eyes, not is the vain person who is successful in this world through his high courage like him who is successful in the next world even to a small extent.
366. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : There is not distinction higher than Islam; no honour more honourable than fear of Allah, no asylum better than self restraint, no intercessor more effective than repentance, no treasure more precious than contentment and no wealth is bigger remover of destitution than being satisfied with mere sustenance. He who confines himself to what is just enough for maintenance achieves comfort and prepares abode in ease. Desire is the key of grief and the conveyance of distress. Greed,

vanity and jealousy are incentives to falling into sins and mischief-mongering is the collection of all bad habits.

367. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari: O' Jabir the mainstay of religion and world are four persons --- the scholar who acts on his knowledge, the ignorant who does not feel ashamed of learning, the generous who is not niggardly in his favours and the destitute who does not sell his next life with his worldly benefits. Consequently when the scholar would waste his knowledge the ignorant would feel shame in learning; and when the generous would be niggardly with his favours the destitute would sell his next life with the worldly benefits.

O' Jabir, if favours of Allah abound on a person the people's needs towards him also abound. Therefore he who fulfils for Allah all that is obligatory on him in this regard would be sending them for his everlasting life while he who does not fulfil those obligations would be exposing them to decay and destruction.

368. Ibne Jareer Tabari has, in his history, related from Abdur Rahman bin Abi Laila, the theologian, who was one of those who has risen with Ibne Asha'th to fight Habbab, that he was exhorting people to the Jihad by recalling that on the occasion of encounter with the people of Syria he heard Amirul Momineen (A.S.) saying:



O' believers, whoever observes excesses being committed and people being called towards evil and disapproves it with his heart is safe and free from responsibility for it, and whoever disapproves of it with his tongue would be rewarded and he is in a higher position than the former but whoever disapproves it with his sword in order that the world of Allah may remain superior and the word of the deniers may remain inferior, catches hold of the path of guidance and stands on the right way, while his heart is lighted with conviction.

369. Another saying in the same strain runs as follows: There is he who disapproves the evil with his hand, tongue and heart. This man has perfectly appropriated the virtuous habits. Then there is he who disapproved the evil with his tongue and heart but not with hand. This man appropriates only two virtuous habits but lacks one. There is the third who disapproves evil with his heart but not with tongue and hand. This is the one who lacks the two better qualities out of three and holds only one. Then there is also he who does not disapprove the evil either with his tongue, heart or hand. He is just a dead man among the living. All the virtuous deeds including the war in the name of Allah as compared to the persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil are just like spitting in the deep ocean. The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil do not bring death nearer nor do they lessen the livelihood. And better

than all this is to utter a just expression before the rightful Imam.

370. It is related from Abi Juhaifa who said that he heard Amirul Momineen (A.S.) say: The first fighting with which you will be overpowered is the fighting with hands, thereafter with your tongues and then with your hearts. Consequently he who does not recognise virtue with his heart or does not disapprove evil would be turned upside down. Thus his upside would be turned downwards and his lowside would be turned upwards.
371. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Certainly right is weighty and wholesome while wrong is light and epidemical.
372. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not feel safe from the punishment of Allah even about the best man in the whole community because Allah the glorified says: But feels not secure any one save the people (who are the) losers. (Quran 7:99). Again, do not lose hope even for the worst man of the community because Allah says: Verily despairs not of Allah's mercy but the disbelieving people. (Quran 12:87).
373. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Miserliness contains all other evil vices and is the rein with which one can be led to every evil.



374. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Livelihood is of two kinds: the livelihood which you seek and the livelihood which seeks you: if you do not reach it would come to you. Therefore do not turn your one day's worry into a year's worry. Whatever you get every day should be enough for you for the day. If you have a whole year of your life even then Allah will give you every best day what He has destined as your share. If you do not have a year in your life then why should you worry for what is not for you. No seeker would reach your livelihood before you nor would any one overpower you in the matter of livelihood. Similarly whatever has been destined as your share would not be delayed from you.<sup>108</sup>
375. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Many a man faces a day after which he finds no day and many a man is in an enviable position in the earlier part of the night but is wept over by bewailing women in its later part.
376. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Words are in your control until you have not uttered them; but when you have spoken them out you are under their control. Therefore guard your tongue as you guard your gold and silver, for

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<sup>108</sup> Syed Razf's Note: This saying has already appeared elsewhere in this chapter except that here it is clearer and more detailed. This is why we have repeated it according to the principle laid down in the beginning of the book.



often one expression snatches away a blessing and invites punishment.

377. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not say what you do not know; rather do not say all that you know, because Allah has laid down some obligations for all your limbs by means of which He would put forth pleas against you on the Day of Judgement.
378. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Fear lest Allah sees you while committing His sins or misses you when it is time for obeying Him and as a result thereof you become a loser. Therefore when you are strong be strong in obeying Allah and when you are weak be weak in committing sins of Allah.
379. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Leaning towards this world despite what you see of it, is folly, and lagging behind in good deeds when you are convinced of good reward for them is obvious loss, while trusting on every one before trying is weakness.
380. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It is (the proof of) humbleness of the world before Allah that He is disobeyed only herein and His favours cannot be achieved except by abandoning it.
381. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : That good is no good after which there is Hell and that hardship is no hardship after which there is Paradise.

Every bliss other than Paradise is inferior and every calamity other than Hell is comfort.

382. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Beware that destitution is a calamity, but worse than destitution is ailment of the body while worse than bodily ailment is the disease of the heart. Beware that plenty of wealth is a blessing but better than the plenty of wealth is the health of the body while still better than the health of the body is the chastity of heart.
383. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whomever his action detains behind his lineage cannot put him forward. In other version it is thus: Whoever misses personal attainment cannot be benefited by his forefathers' attainments.
384. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The believer's time has three periods: the period when he is in communion with Allah, the period when he manages for his livelihood and the period when he is free to enjoy what is lawful and pleasant. It does not behove a wise person to be away (from his house) save for three matters, namely for purposes of earning, or going for something for the next life or for enjoying what is not prohibited.
385. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Abstain from the world so that Allah may show you its real evils and do not be neglectful because (in any case) you would not be neglected.

386. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Take of the favours of the world whatever comes to you and keep away from what keeps away from you. If you cannot do so be moderate in your seeking.
387. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Many an expression is more effective than an attack.
388. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Every small thing that is contented upon, suffices.
389. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Let it be death but not humiliation. Let it be small but not through others. He who does not get while sitting would not get by rising either. The world has two days one for you and the other against you. When the day is for you, do not feel proud but when it is against you endure it.
390. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The best scent is musk; its weight is light while its smell is scented.
391. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Put off boasting, give up self-conceit and remember your grave.
392. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The son has a right on the father while the father too has a right on the son. The right of the father on the son is that the latter should obey the former in every matter save in committing sins of Allah



the Glorified, while the right of the son on the father is that he should give him a beautiful name, give him good training and teach him Quran.

393. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Evil effect of sight is right; charm is right; sorcery is right, and taking good omen is right, while taking bad omen is not right, and spreading of a disease from one to the other is not right. Scent gives pleasure, honey gives pleasure, riding gives pleasure and looking at greenery gives pleasure.<sup>109</sup>

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109 "Teera" means bad omen while "Taufai" means good omen. From the point of view of religious law to take bad omen from anything has no basis and it is just the product of whim. The taking of bad omen began in this way that the sons of Keumars heard the cooing of a cock in the earlier part of the night and in the morning Keumars died. This caused them to believe that the untimely cooing of a cock is the harbinger of evil event. Consequently they slaughtered this cock. Later different incidents were got specially connected with different events.

However, taking good omen is not objectionable. For example, when after the migration of the Prophet (from Mecca to Medina) the Quraish announced that whoever would apprehend the Prophet would be given one hundred camels as prize. Thereupon Abu Buraida Aslami set off in his search with seventy of his men and when they met at a halting place the Prophet asked him who he was and he said he was Buraida on hearing which the Prophet remarked "Barada Amruna" (our consequence will be wholesome). Then he asked him what tribe he came from and on his replying that he was from Aslam the Prophet remarked "Salimna" (We would be safe). Then he asked from which

394. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Nearness with the people in their manners brings about safety from their evil.
395. Someone uttered an expression above his position, then Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to him: You have started flying soon on growing of feathers and commenced grumbling before attaining youth.<sup>109</sup>
396. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever hankers after contraries gets no means of success.
397. On being asked the meaning of the expression "LA HAULA WA LA QUWWATA ILLAH BILLAH" Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: We are not master of any thing along with Allah and we are not master of anything save what He makes us master of. So when He makes us

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secion he was and when he replied that he was from Bani Sahm the Prophet remarked "Kharaja Sahmuka" (your arrow has missed the aim). Buraida was much impressed by this pleasing conversation and enquired from the Prophet who he was. The Prophet replied. "Muhammad bin Abdullah". Hearing this he spontaneously exclaimed "I do stand witness that you are the Prophet of Allah", and forsaking the prize announced by the Quraish acquired the wealth of Belief.

<sup>109</sup> Syed Razi's Note: here "Shakeer" means the first feathers that grow on a bird before it is strong enough to fly. And "Saqb" means the young camel, who does not grumble unless it becomes maior.



master of anything of which He is a superior Master over us He also assigns some duties to us: and when He takes it away He would take away those duties as well.<sup>110</sup>

398. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) heard Ammar bin Yathir conversing with Mugheera bin Sha'ba and said: Let him alone O' Ammar, for he has entered religion only to the extent of his deriving advantage of the world and he has willfully involved himself in misgivings in order to adopt them as cover for his shortcomings.
399. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It is good for the rich to show humility before poor to seek reward from Allah, but better than that is the

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<sup>110</sup> What Amirul Momineen (A.S.) means is that man does not enjoy regular mastery over any thing, but such mastery as he is assigned by Allah, and so long as this mastery lasts the obligations of Shariat also continue, whereas when the mastery is taken away the obligations too are lifted off, since in such a case the laying of obligations would mean placing of responsibility beyond capacity which cannot be allowed by any wise or prudent person. This is why Allah has placed the responsibility of performing various acts after having conferred the necessary energy in the limbs. It follows that this responsibility would remain only so long as the energy subsists and that on the disappearance of the energy the responsibility for action would also disappear. For example the obligation to pay Zakat (tax) applies only when there is wealth; but when Allah would take away the wealth He would lift off the liability to pay Zakat because in such a case the laying of obligation is against prudence.



haughtiness of the poor towards the rich with trust in Allah.

400. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Allah does not grant wisdom to a person but some day He would save him from ruin with its help.
401. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever clashes with Truth would be knocked down by it.
402. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Heart is the book of eye.
403. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Fear of Allah is the chief trait of human character.
404. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do not try the sharpness of your tongue against Him Who gave you the power to speak, nor the eloquence of your speaking against Him Who set you on the right path.
405. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It is enough for your own discipline that you abstain from what you dislike from others.
406. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : One should endure like the free people, otherwise one should keep quiet like the ignorant.
407. In another tradition it is related that Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: to Asha's bin Qais by

way of condolence; Either endure like the great people or else you will forget like the animals.

408. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : about the world: It deceives it harms and it passes away. Allah did not approve it as a reward for His lovers nor as a punishment for His enemies. In fact the people of this world are like those riders that as soon as they alighted the driver called out to them and they marched off.
409. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : to his son Hasan (A.S.) : Do not leave anything of this world behind you, because you would be leaving it for either of two sorts of persons: either a person who uses it in obeying Allah; in this case he would acquire virtue through what was evil for you; or it would be a person who uses it in disobeying Allah and in that case he would be earning evil with what you collected for him, and so you would be assisting him in his sinfulness; and neither of these two deserves to be preferred over yourself.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Syed Razi says : This saying is also related in another version namely Whatever of this world is now with you was with others before you and it would be passing to some others after you. Thus you are collecting things for either of two sorts of men: either a man who uses whatever you collected in obedience of Allah and so acquires virtue with what was evil for you, or a man who uses it in disobedience of Allah and so you would be getting evil for what you collected. And neither of these two is such that you may prefer him over yourself or you may burden yourself for him. Therefore hope

410. Someone said before Amirul Momineen (A.S.) "As Taghfirul Lah", then Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: Your mother may weep for you; do you know what Istighfar is Istighfar is meant for people of high position. It is a word that stands on six supports. The first is to repent over the past; the second to make a firm determination never to revert to it; the third is to discharge all the rights of the people so that you may meet Allah quite clean with nothing to account for; the fourth is to fulfil every obligation which you ignored (in the past) so that you may now do justice with it; the fifth is to aim at the flesh grown as a result of unlawful earning, so that you may melt it by grief (of repentance) till the skin touches the bone and a new flesh grows between them; and the sixth is to make the body taste the pain of obedience as you (previously) made it taste the sweetness of disobedience. On such an occasion you may say "As Taghfirullah".
411. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : How wretched the man is: his death is hidden, his ailments are concealed, his actions are preserved, the bite of a mosquito pains him, choking causes his death and sweat gives him bad smell.

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for mercy of Allah for him who has passed away and for divine livelihood for him who survives.



412. It is related that Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was sitting with his companions when a beautiful woman passed by them and they began to look at her whereupon Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The eyes of these men are covetous and this glancing is the cause of their becoming covetous. Whenever any one of you sees a woman whom he likes he should meet his wife, because every woman is a woman. The one of the Kharijites said: Allah may kill this heretic. How logical he is! The people then leapt towards him to kill him but Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Wait a bit. There should either be abuse for abuse or also pardon from the offence.
413. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It is enough if your wisdom distinguishes for you the ways of going astray from those of guidance.
414. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Do good and do not regard any part of it small because its small is big and its little is much. No one of you should say that another person is better than I in doing good, otherwise it would really be so. There are people of good and evil. When you would leave either of the two others will perform them.
415. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever sets right his innerside, Allah sets right his outside. Whoever performs acts for his religion, Allah accomplishes his acts of this world. Whoever's dealings between himself and

Allah are good, Allah turns the dealings between him and other people good.

416. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Forbearance is a curtain for covering, and wisdom is a sharp sword. Therefore conceal the weakness in your conduct with forbearance and kill your desires with your wisdom.
417. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : There are some people whom Allah particularises with favours for the benefit of the people, therefore He stays them in their hands so long as they give them to others; but when they deny them to others He takes them away from them and sends the favours to others.
418. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It does not behove a man to have trust in two positions, health and riches because there is many man whom you see healthy but he soon falls sick and many a rich man who turns destitute.
419. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever complains of a need to a believer, it is as though he has complained it to Allah; but whoever complains of it to an unbeliever it is as though he complained of Allah.
420. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said on some Eid: It is an Eid for him whose fasting Allah accepts and for whose prayers He is grateful; and (in fact)

every day wherein no sin of Allah is committed is an Eid.<sup>112</sup>

421. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : On the Day of Judgement the greatest regret would be felt by the man who earned wealth through sinful ways but it was inherited by a person who spent it in obeying Allah and would be awarded Paradise on that account while the first one went to Hell on account of it.
422. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The worst in bargaining and the most unsuccessful in striving is the man who exerted himself in seeking riches but fate would not help him in his aims and consequently he went from this world in a sorrowful state while in the next life too he would face its ill consequences.<sup>113</sup>

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112 If feeling and conscience is alive even the remembrance of a sin destroys the peace of mind because tranquillity and happiness are achieved only when the spirit is free from the burden of sin and one's robe is not polluted with disobedience. And this real happiness is not bound by time, but on whatever day a man desires he can avoid sin and enjoy this happiness and this very happiness would be the real happiness and the harbinger of Eid.

113 Despite efforts throughout life a man does not always achieve all the success of life. If on some occasions he succeeds as a result of effort and seeking on many others he has to face defeat and to give up his objectives admitting defeat before fate. A little thinking can lead to the conclusion that when things of this world can not be achieved despite effort and seeking how can the success of the next life be achieved without striving and seeking.



423. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Livelihood is of two kinds: the seeker and the sought. Therefore he who hankers after this world death traces him till it turns him out of it; but he who hankers after the next life, the worldly ease itself seeks him and he receives his livelihood from it.
424. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The lovers of Allah are those who look at the inner side of the world while the other people look at its outer side, they busy themselves with its remoter benefits while the other people busy themselves in the immediate benefits. They kill those things which they feared would have killed them, and they leave here in this world what they think would leave them. They took the amassing of wealth by others as a small matter and regarded it like losing. They are enemies of those things which others love while they love things which other hate. Through them Quran has been learnt and they have been given knowledge through Quran. With them Quran is staying while they stand by Quran. They do not see any object of hope above what they hope and no object of fear above what they fear.

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A persian couplet says: You hankered after the world but did not attain the object. O' Allah, what would be the result when the good of the next world has not even been sought.

425. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Remember that pleasures would pass away while the consequences would stay.
426. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Try (a man) and you would hate him.<sup>114</sup>
427. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : It is not that Allah may keep the door of gratitude open for a person and close the door of plenty upon him, or to open the door of prayer to a person and close the door of acceptance upon him, or to open the door of repentance on a person and close the door of forgiveness upon him.
428. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The most appropriate person for honourable position is he who descends from the people of honour.
429. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked which of the two is better; justice or generosity. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) replied : Justice puts things in their places while generosity takes them out from their directions; justice is the general caretaker while generosity is a particular benefit. Consequently justice is superior and more distinguished of the two.

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<sup>114</sup> Syed Razi's Note: some people say this saying is of the Prophet (S.A.) but what confirms that it is the saying of Amirul Momineen (A.S.) is the statement related by Tha'lab from Iben Aa'rabi namely that Caliph Mamun said: If Ali had not said "Ukhbur taqlih", I would have said "Aqlih Takhbur" (hate a man in order to try him).

430. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : People are enemies of what they do not know.
431. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The whole of asceticism is confined between two expressions of Quran. Allah, the Glorified says: "lest distress you yourselves for what escapes you, and be overjoyous for what He has granted you"; (Quran 57:23). Whoever does not grieve over what he misses and does not revel over what comes to him acquires asceticism for both its sides.
432. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : What a breaker sleep is for resolutions of the day!
433. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Governorates are the places of trial for the people.
434. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : No town has greater right on you than the other. The best town for you is that which bears you.
435. When the news of the death of Ashtar (R.A.) reached Amirul Momineen (A.S.) he said: Malik, what a man Malik was! By Allah if he had been a mountain he would have been a big one, and if he had been a stone he would have been tough; no horseman could have reached it and no bird could fly over it.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Syed Razi says: "Find" means a lonely mountain.



436. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : A little that lasts is better than the much that brings grief.
437. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : If a man possesses a revealing quality wait and see his other qualities.<sup>116</sup>
438. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said to Ghalib bin Sa'sa Abil Farzdaq during a conversation between them: What about your large number of camels? The man replied: They have been swept away by (discharging of) obligations, O' Amirul Momineen. Whereupon Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said: That is the most praiseworthy way (of finishing them).
439. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever trades without knowing the rules of religious law would be involved in usury.
440. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whoever regards small distresses as big Allah involves him in big ones.

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<sup>116</sup> The good or bad quality that is found in a man springs from his natural temperament. If the temperament produces one quality, his other qualities would also be akin to this one because the dictates of temperament would be equally effective in either. Thus if a man pays Zakat and Khumus it means that his temperament is not miserly. Therefore it is expected that he would not be niggardly in spending in other items of charity as well. Similarly if a man speaks lie it can be expected that he would indulge in backbiting too, because these two habits are similar to each other.

441. Whoever has his own respect in his view his desires appear light to him.
442. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Whenever a man cuts a joke he separates away a bit from his wit.
443. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Your turning away from him who inclines towards you is a loss of your share of advantage while your inclining towards him who turns away from you is humiliation for yourself.
444. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Riches and destitution would be after presentation before Allah.
445. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said :Zubair remained a man from our house till his wretched son Abdullah came forth.
446. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : What has man to do with vanity. His origin is semen and his end is carcass while he cannot feed himself nor ward off death. <sup>117</sup>

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117 If a man ponders over his original condition and the eventual breaking up and ruining of his body he would be compelled to admit his lowliness and humble position instead of being proud and vain, because he would see that there was a time he did not exist and Allah originated his existence with a humble drop of semen which took the shape of a piece of flesh in the mother's womb and continued feeding and

447. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about the biggest post and he said: The whole group of them did not proceed on the same lines so as to know the height of glory; but if it has to be done then it is the "Malik uz Zaleel" (the mislead king).<sup>118</sup>

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growing on thick blood. When on completion of the body he set foot on the earth he was so helpless and incapable that he had neither control over his hunger and thirst nor on sickness and health, nor any command over benefit or harm, or any authority over life and death, not knowing when the energy of limbs may exhaust, fooling and sense may leave, eyesight may be taken away, power of hearing may be snatched and when death may separate the soul from the body and leave the latter to be cut into pieces by vultures and kites or worms may eat it in the grave.

An Arabic couplet says: How does one whose origin is semen and end is carcass dare be vain?

- 118 According to Syed Razi Amirul Momineen means Umracl Qais.

This means that a comparison can be made among the poets when their imagination runs in the same field: but when the expression of one differs from the other, and the style of one varies from that of the other it is difficult to decide who is defeated and who has won the field. Consequently from various considerations one is preferred over the other and some one is considered greater for one consideration and the other for other consideration, as the famous saying goes:

The biggest poet of Arabia is Umracl Qais when he rides; A'sha when he is eager for something and Nabegha when he is afraid.



448. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Is there no free man who can leave this chewed morsel (of the world) to those who like it? Certainly the only

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Nevertheless, despite this categorisation Umrael Qais is regarded to be on the high position among poets of the first era because of beauty of imagination, excellence of description, inimitable similes and rare metaphors, although many of his couplets are below the moral standard and comprise obscene subjects. But inspite of this obscenity the greatness of his art cannot be denied, because an artist looks at a poetic protection from the point of view of art ignoring the other factors which do not affect art.

However, Umra'el Qais was a celebrated poet of Arabia and his father Hajar Kindi was the last one of the kings of Kinda and enjoyed the honour of his own standard and army, while the famous poets and men of letters of Bani Taghiab namely Kulaib and Muhalhil were his maternal uncles, Therefore apart from his natural inclination he also inherited poetic genius from his maternal line. Due to the free atmosphere of Najd and his bringing up in wealth and ease his mind had been thoroughly immersed in ideas of passion and love. Consequently he was completely lost in the joyous atmosphere of beauty, love, rhythm and poetry. The father tried to keep him away from this but his admonition proved futile. At last he was obliged to turn him out. After separation from the father there was no check or hindrance upon him and he engaged himself fully in enjoyments and merry making. When he learned of the murder of his father he decided to avenge his blood and visited various tribes to seek their support. When he could not secure the desired support he went to the Byzantine Emperor and sought his help. It is said that there too he committed some immoral act as a result of which the Byzantine emperor resolved to do away with him. He gave him a poisoned robe on wearing which the poison went through his body and eventually he died and was buried in Ankara.

price for yourselves is Paradise. Therefore do not sell yourself except for Paradise.

449. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Two greedy persons never get satiated, the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of this world.
450. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Belief means that you should prefer truth (even) when it harms you and falsehood benefits you; that your words should not be more than your action and that you should fear Allah when speaking about others.
451. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Destiny over-  
sways pre-determination till effort itself brings  
about ruin.<sup>119</sup>
452. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Forbearance  
and endurance are twins and they are the  
product of high courage.
453. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Backbiting is  
the tool of the helpless.
454. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Many a man  
gets into mischief because of being spoken of  
well.

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<sup>119</sup> Syed Razi's Note: something of this meaning has already appeared earlier though in words different from these.

455. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : This world has been created for other than itself and has not been created for itself.
456. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The Bani Ummayya have a fixed period wherein they are having their way. But when differences would arise among them then even if the hyena attacks them it would overpower them.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Syed Razi's Note: Herein "Murwad" is the objective form from "Irwad" and it means to allow time, to wait for. It is an extremely eloquent and wonderful expression. It is as though Amirul Momineen (A.S.) has likened the period of Bani Ummayya to a limited area meant for training of horses for racing wherein they are running towards its end, so that when they would reach its extremity their organisation would be destroyed.

This is the prophecy about the decline and fall of Bani Ummayya that proved true word by word. This rule was founded by Muawiya bin Abi Sufian and ended with Marwan el Himar in 132 A.H. after a life of ninety years, eleven months and thirteen days. The Ummayyad period was second to none in point of tyranny, oppression, harshness and despotism. The despotic rulers of this period perpetrated such tyranny which put blots on Islam, blackened the pages of history and injured the spirit of humanity. They allowed every kind of ruin and destruction only to retain their own personal authority. They led armies on Mecca, hurled fire on Kaaba, made Medina the victim of their brute passions and shed streams of Muslim blood. At last this bloodshed and ruthlessness resulted in revolts and conspiracies from all sides and their internal strife and agitation and their mutual fighting paved the way for their ruin. Although political unrest had set in among them earlier yet during the days of Waleed bin Yazeed open disturbances began to occur. On



457. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said eulogising the Ansars: By Allah they nurtured Islam with their generous hands and eloquent tongues as a year old calf is nurtured.
458. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The eye is the strap of the rear.<sup>121</sup>
459. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said about some of his own saying: A ruler came in position over

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the other side Bani Abbas (the Abbasides) also started preparations and, during the reign of Marwan el Himar they started a movement under the name of "Khilafat-e-Ilahia" (the Caliphate of Allah). For successful piloting of this movement they got a martial leader in Abu Muslim Khurasani who, in addition to his knowledge of political events and occurrences was also an expert in the art of warfare. Making Khurasan as the base he spread a whole net against the Ummayyads and succeeded in bringing the Abbasides to power.

In the beginning this man was quite unknown and it is for this unknownness and low position that Amirul Momineen likened him and his associates to the hyena as this simile is used for low and humble people.

<sup>121</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This is a wonderful metaphor; it is as though Amirul Momineen (A.S.) has likened the rear part of the body with a bag and the eye with a strap. When the strap is let loose the bag cannot retain anything. According to the well-known and reputed view it is the saying of the Prophet (S.A.) but some people have stated it to be of Amirul Momineen (A.S.). Mubarrid has mentioned it in his book "Muqtazab" under the chapter "Words of single letters". We too have discussed this metaphor in our book named Majazat el Aathar in Nabaviyya.

them. He remained upright and made them upright till the entire religion put its bosom on the ground.

460. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : A severe time will come upon the people wherein the rich would seize their possessions with their teeth (by way of miserliness) although they have not been commanded to do so. Allah the Glorified says: forget not generosity among yourselves. (Quran 2:238). During this time the wicked would rise up while the virtuous would remain low and purchases would be made from the helpless although the Prophet (S.A.) has prohibited purchasing from the helpless.<sup>122</sup>
461. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Two types of persons would get into ruin about me --- the lover who exaggerates and the other who lays false and baseless blames.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Generally purchases are made from the helpless people in such a way that taking advantage of their need and necessity things are purchased from them at cheap rates and are sold to them at high prices. No religion allows taking advantage of such helplessness and extreme need, nor is it permissible in moral ethics that profiteering should be resorted to at the time of others helplessness.

<sup>123</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This is on the lines of Amirul Momineen (A.S.)'s own saying which runs as "Two categories of persons would be ruined about me--- the exaggerating lover and the hater and malice bearer.

462. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) was asked about Oneness of Allah and Justice, when he replied: Oneness means that you do not subject Him to the limitations of your imagination and justice means that you do not lay any blame on Him.<sup>124</sup>
463. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : There is no good in silence over matters involving wisdom just as there is no good in speaking with ignorance.

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124 The belief in Oneness of Allah is not complete unless it is supported by belief in freedom of Allah from all imperfection; that is, one should regard Him above the limitation of body, shape, place or time and should not subject him to one's own imagination and whims, because the being who would be contained within imagination and whims would not be Allah, but a creation of human mind while the field of mental activity remains confined to things which are seen and observed. Consequently the greater a man would try to appreciate Him through illustrations connected by human mind or his imaginative effects the remoter he would get from reality. In this connection Imam Mohammad Baqir says:

Whenever you contain Him in your imagination and whim he would not be Allah but a creation like yourself and revertible towards you.

Justice means that whatever the form of injustice and inequity it should be denied about Allah and He should not be given such attributes which are evil and useless and which the mind can in no way agree to attribute to Him. In this connection Allah says: And perfect is the word of your Lord in truth and justice: There is none who can change words.

(Quran 6:115).



464. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said in his prayer for seeking rain: My Allah send us rain by submissive clouds not by unruly ones.<sup>125</sup>
465. It was said to Amirul Momineen (A.S.) : We wish you should have changed your grey hair, O' Amirul Momineen. Then he (A.S.) said: Dye is a way of adornment while we are in a state of grief.<sup>126</sup>
466. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The fighter in the way of Allah who gets martyred would not get a greater reward than him who remains chaste despite means. It is possible a chaste person may become one of the angels.
467. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Contentment is a wealth that does not exhaust.
468. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) put Ziad bin Abeeh (Ziad son of unknown father) in place of Abdullah bin Abbas over Faris and its revenues he had a long conversation with him in which

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<sup>125</sup> Syed Razi's Note: This is an expression of wonderful eloquence, because Amirul Momineen (A.S.) has likened the cloud which is accompanied by thunder, lightning, wind and flashes with unruly camels who throw away the saddle and throws down the riders, and likened the clouds free from these terrible things to the submissive camels which are easy to milk and obedient to ride.

<sup>126</sup> Syed Razi's Note: Amirul Momineen (A.S.) is referring to the death of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.)

he prohibited him from advance recovery of revenue. Therein he (A.S.) said: Act on justice and keep aloof from violence and injustice because violence would lead them to forsake their abodes while injustice would prompt them to take up arms.

469. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The worst sin is that which the committer takes lightly.
470. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : Allah has not made it obligatory on the ignorant to learn till He has made it obligatory on the learned to teach.
471. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : The worst comrade is he for whom formality has to be observed.<sup>127</sup>

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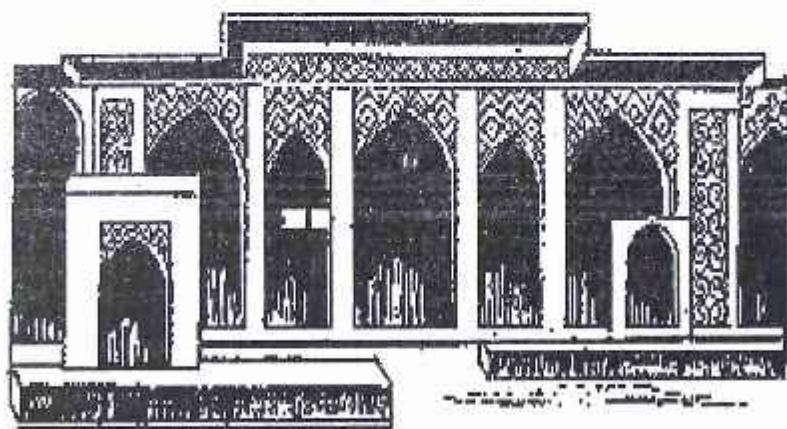
127 Syed Razi's Note: This is because formality is inseparable from hardship and it is an evil that is caused by a comrade for whom formality is observed. Consequently he is the worst of all comrades.

The friendship that is based on love and sincerity makes a man free from ceremonial formalities, but the friendship for which formalism is necessary is unstable and such a friend is not a true friend, because true friendship requires that a friend should not be a cause of trouble for the friend. If he is a cause of trouble he would prove tedious and harmful and this harmfulness is a sign of his being the worst friend.

472. Amirul Momineen (A.S.) said : If a believer enrages his brother it means that he leaves him.<sup>128</sup>

This is the end of our selection of the utterances of Amirul Momineen (A.S.). We are praiseful to Allah the Glorified for having enabled us to collect the scattered utterances from various sides and to bring together from different places the material what was lying far away.

Allah may send blessings on our master Mohammad, the last of the Prophets (PBUH) who guided towards the best path, and his chaste descendants and his companions who are the stars of conviction.



<sup>128</sup> Syed Razi's Note: It is said "Hashamahu" or "Ahshamahu" to mean "he enraged him". According to another view it means "He humiliated him", While "Ahtashamahu" means "he sought these for him", and that is most likely to cause him to separate.



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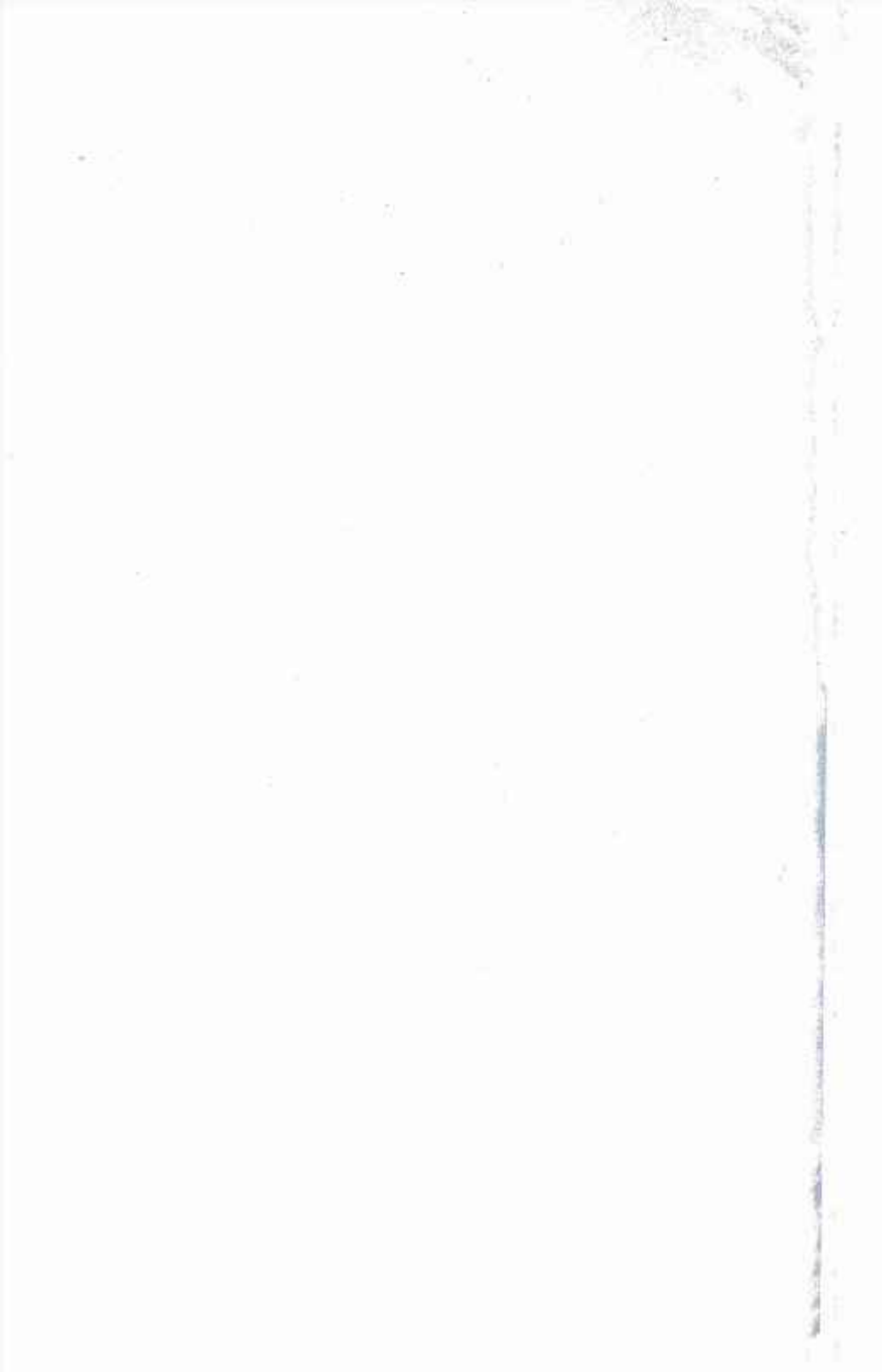
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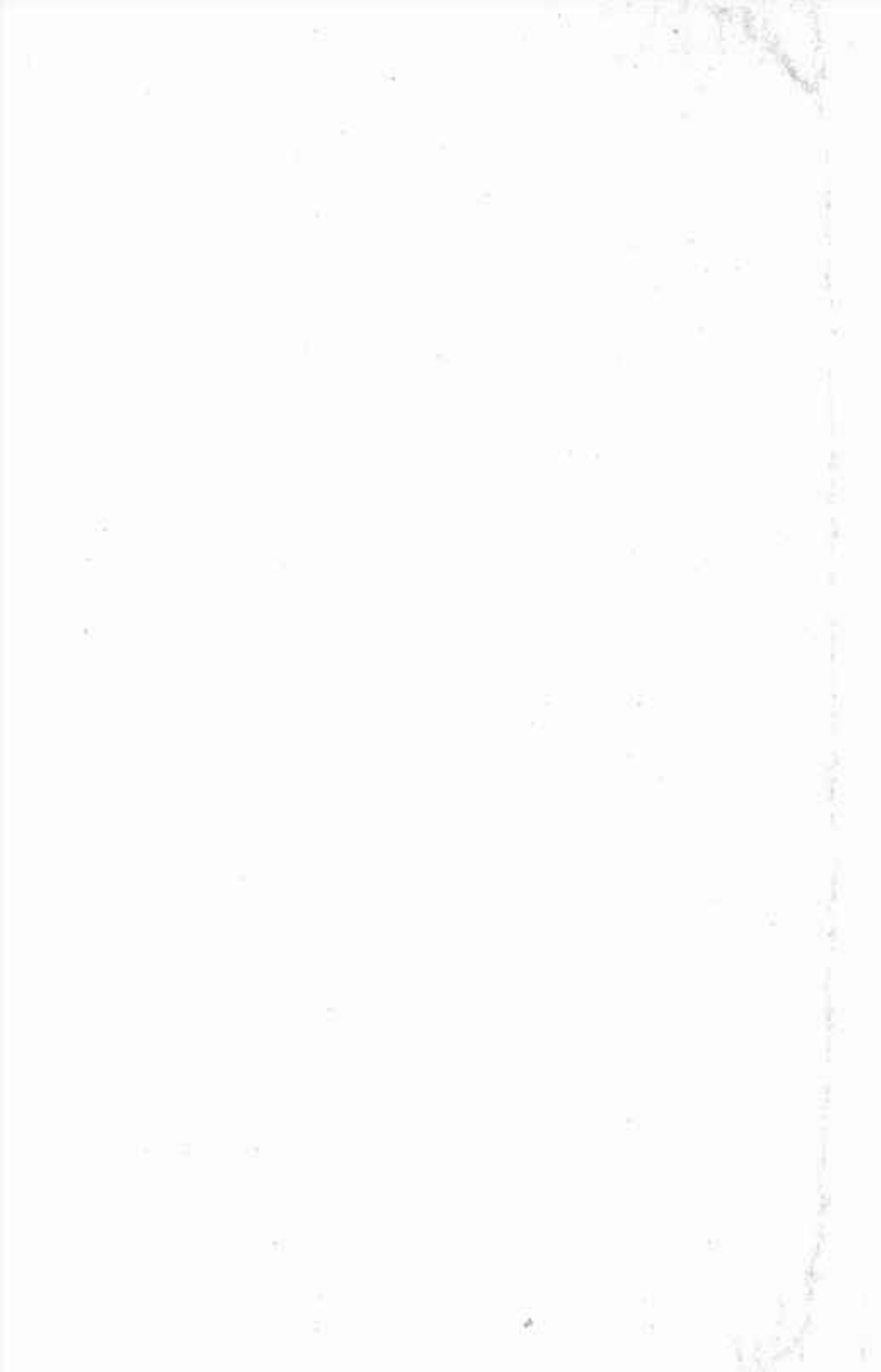


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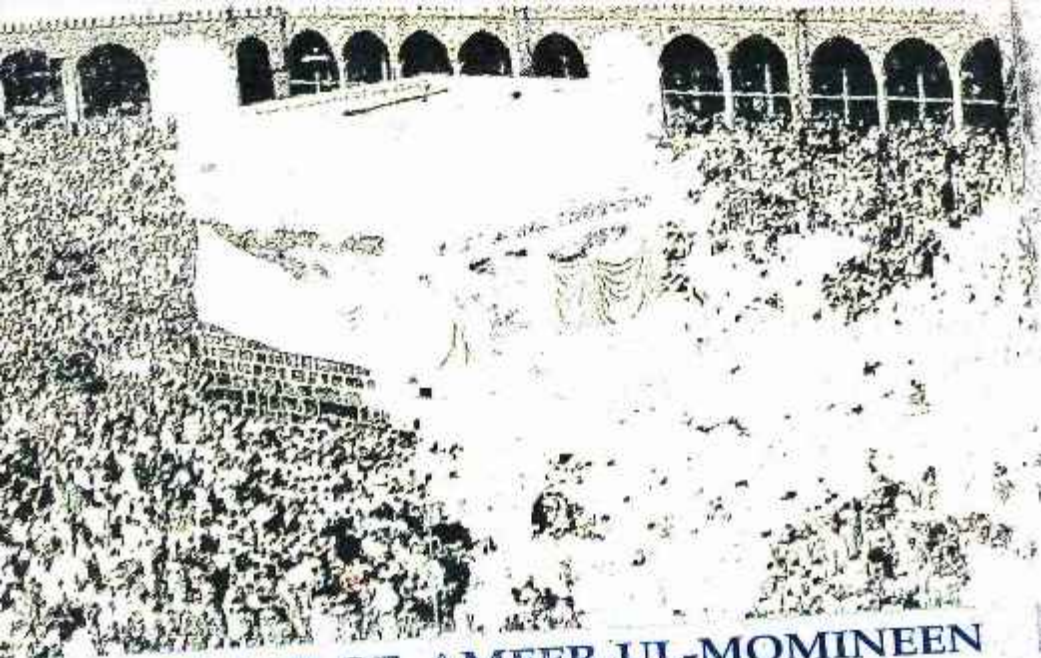












BIRTH PLACE OF AMEER-UL-MOMINEEN



TOMB OF AMEER-UL-MOMINEEN