



IMAM ALI
IBN ABI
TALEB (PBUH)

The Commander
of The Faithful

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Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (pbuh)

The Commander of
The Faithful

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

1. Amid the brilliance of the revelation bestowed upon the Messenger of Allah, prayers and peace be upon him, a tower of praise and exalted status is erect, illuminating the virtues of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, may peace be upon him. Thus, declared the words of the Prophet of Allah on Ali's subject, 'If people were to gather in their love for Ali ibn Abi Talib, Allah would have never created the Fire,' among many other sayings of his.

Among what some scholars affirm that he, may peace be upon him, 'his followers concealed his virtues in fear while his adversaries concealed *them in envy. Yet brilliant virtues were all apparent, which filled the hearts.*' Some scholars express their inability to describe him, stating, '*What can I say about a man*

to whom every virtue is attributed, around whom every faction revolves, and to whom every group looks up? For he is the head of virtues, the fountain and excuse of their existence, the forerunner in their arena, the brightener of their pathways. Anyone who emerged after him took from him, followed his footsteps, and emulated his example."

After them, others spoke, both above and below that, so what more can I say in the following pages?

Indeed, I can say: these pages are signs and displays of loyalty, a symbol of identity, and a guide on the map. It's as if I, addressing the Commander of the Faithful, the Vicegerent of God, embody what is mentioned in the Book of Allah, ("O Aziz! Affliction has touched us and our family, and we have come with merchandise poor in quality, so give us full measure and be charitable to us. Surely Allah rewards the charitable.") – Surah Yusuf 12:88.

2. In this book, I commenced – as is the case in all the biographies of the infallibles from this series – with an concise presentation of his life, peace be upon him, from before his birth to the time of his martyrdom. I then expanded to discuss his roles during the eras of those who preceded him in rule, intertwined roles. The evaluation of this period was approached through the Shiqshiqiyya Sermon. It was necessary to delve into the wars and battles waged against him, may Allah's blessings be upon him. We explored his encounters with the treacherous, the transgressors, and the rebellious. Pausing briefly to shed light on the known narrative of his martyrdom in the Kufa Mosque, I swiftly touched upon his reform program in the nation and his

governance afterward.

I delved into a facet of oppression he was victimized by, peace be upon him, among the Muslims, whether during his time or in the ongoing oppression until our present day! Despite the relentless efforts to suppress and falsely interpret his virtues, which have filled the books, they still shine like a gentle light guiding towards his leadership. Finally, I touched upon some aspects of his scholarly legacy and glimpsed into his family life, all with the purpose of introducing a portion of the biography of this great Imam.

3. I should mention to the esteemed readers, as is commonly known, that during the process of transferring texts from their sources, especially the books of the school of the Caliphs, I have not altered anything, despite the noticeable biases such as their omission of the prayers upon the Prophet's family, unfortunately. I left it to the discerning reader to understand that conveying them in this manner, along with similar expressions, does not imply agreement with them."

The esteemed readers will also notice the numerous accounts from the books and sources of the school of the Caliphs. I must clarify here, the reason is not of the greater accuracy or reliability of these sources, but of another reason. Namely, if a subjects discussed by two opposing opinions, are drawn from different schools of thought or sources, then the relayed account must be from the sources accepted by the adversary, and not rejected by the presenter, while respecting the boundaries of argument.

4. The title 'Commander of the Faithful' was chosen because it is the most fitting title for him, beyond any other. It corresponds to his assumed leadership over every believing man and woman, Muslim (male) and Muslimah (female).

Even though this title, as expressed by poet Da'bal al-Khuza'i, regretfully acknowledges the state of the Muslim affairs when the caliphate became disputed by the deviant and the affluent, it became a title of 'Commander of the Faithful' at this level:

"If Ibrahim, indeed, is worthy of it,

Then let it be ratified after him for Mukhariq,

And let it be ratified after that for Zalzal,

And let it be ratified after that for the transgressor.

How can it be, yet that cannot not occur,

That the caliphate is inherited by a sinful one from another sinful one."⁽¹⁾

"In truth, this title is specifically tailored to fit Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon him. In fact, there is a prohibition against applying this title to the twelve Imams of guidance from his descendants. The prohibition emphasizes that it is exclusively for Imam Ali, peace be upon him.

5. I express my gratitude to all the brothers and sisters who participated in the preparation of this book, offering valuable assistance that contributed to shortening its completion period. I ask Allah, glorified be He, to reward them

abundantly and to include them, along with us, in the intercession of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, peace be upon him, and his progeny. I also extend my thanks to my beloved family, who generously provided time that could have been spent on and with them, allowing a beautiful opportunity for engagement in preparation and writing. I pray to Allah to share them in the rewards of all of this. I also remember my late parents; may Allah have mercy on them. They hold the greatest share – after the blessings of Allah – in everything I am. I ask Allah to grant them a share of reward and recompense.

Fawzi Muhammad Taqi Al-Sayf

On the day of the demise of the Chosen Prophet, prayers and peace be upon him and his family

28 Safar 1445

Tarout, Qatif – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Imam Ali from Pre-Birth to Martyrdom

1. A Pre-Birth World

Some err in imagining that life, in all its stages, begins when a person emerges from their mother's womb and concludes when they return to dust.

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Religion and prophets have corrected this misconception, informing people that life precedes birth by a considerable period and does not cease merely upon the return to the earth.

Signs of the pre-"biological life" world abound, just as texts regarding the world of the afterlife and the Hereafter proliferate. What concerns us in these lines is the first world, sometimes referred to as the world of atoms⁽²⁾⁽³⁾, at other times as the world of lights, or the world before Adam⁽⁴⁾, and so forth.

Perhaps due to this misguided perception, some reject the narratives and traditions that mention the virtues of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family, and his connection to those realms.”

Among the responses from the Umayyad approach, based on what was mentioned earlier, is the narration reported by the Hanbali Imam Ahmad in his book ‘Virtues of the Companions.’ Salman narrated: ‘I heard my beloved, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying: ‘Ali and I were a divine radiance in the presence of Allah, Exalted and Glorious, before Adam was created for fourteen thousand years. When Allah created Adam, He divided that divine radiance into two parts: one part for me and one part for Ali, peace be upon him.’⁽⁵⁾

Perhaps this meaning is distributed across many narrations reported from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, including his statement: “I and Ali were created from one divine radiance before Allah created Adam for four thousand years. When Allah created Adam, He placed that radiance within his loins, and it remained in one entity until it separated in the loins of Abdul-Muttalib, indicating prophethood for me and caliphate⁽⁶⁾ for Ali.”⁽⁷⁾

And similarly in the books of the Imamiyah [Shi’a Twelvers], there are many narrations akin to this. ⁽⁸⁾

From this narration and its counterparts, the beginning of the life of Imam Ali, peace be upon him, is linked to the life of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, as they are one divine radiance. Their radiance predates the creation of Adam, and based on this, the former is from the latter

and the latter is from the former. Their flesh is one flesh, their blood is one blood, and this unity persists beyond existence in the world.

The only distinction before that is the division of that radiance after Abdul-Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet, into his two sons: the father of the Prophet, Abdullah, and the father of Ali, Abu Talib, peace be upon them."

Starting from this point makes it easy for the observer to comprehend the many stations and positions that Ali occupied with the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family. From his birth in the Kaaba to opening the door of the Prophet's Mosque exclusively (as the two are purified from impurity), from the Prophet's upbringing of him to his companionship, marriage to Fatimah by Allah's command, to his testament, and his leadership over the people, asserting that he has more authority over them than they have over themselves, just as the Messenger of Allah did. All of these aspects unfold in a coherent and natural trajectory.

2. His Birth in the Kaaba

Ali ibn Abi Talib, son of Abdul Muttalib, was born on the 13th of Rajab in the year 30 after the Year of the Elephant, corresponding to the 10th year before the Prophet's mission. This blessed birth took place inside the honorable Kaaba in an unprecedented event in human history. The incident encompassed various miraculous aspects, which will be detailed later.

Before delving into the essence of the incident – the miracle – it is worth mentioning briefly, with the hope of elaborating

later, that the virtues and merits mentioned for the Prophet, Imam Ali, or the other Imams are not intended solely to highlight the greatness of these individuals or the exalted nature of their status. Rather, in addition to that, it aims to emphasize that they are God's proof upon His creation, and Allah has endowed them with what He did not grant to others among His creatures. After acknowledging this, it becomes natural not to question his status as a prophet – as is the case with the Prophet Muhammad – or as a successor, as is the case with Ali the chosen and accepted one. These hadiths indicating high stations and exceptional ranks serve as traffic signs on the "Sirat", straight path and a roadmap to the ultimate destination, which is guidance through the divine proof. Further explanation of this concept will be provided when discussing the virtues of the Imam.

We return to explain the origin of the incident, the story of the birth in the Kaaba:

The Sheikh Saduq, may God have mercy on him (d. 381 AH), mentioned the birth of the Imam in the Kaaba in several of his works, with his chain of transmission to "Sa'id bin Jubair. He said: *"I was sitting with Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib and a group from the family of Abdul Uzza, opposite the Sacred House, when Fatimah bint Asad, the mother of the Commander of the Faithful Ali, peace be upon him, approached. She was pregnant with him for nine months, and the labor pains had taken hold of her. She said: 'O my Lord, I believe in You and in what has come from You through messengers and scriptures. And I bear witness to the words of my grandfather Ibrahim Al-Khaleel, [the Intimate Friend of the Almighty], who built the ancient House [the Kaaba]. I be-*

search you by [the right of] the One who erected this sacred edifice and by [the right of] this unborn child in my womb, sooth my pains during this childbirth."

Yazid ibn Qa'nab narrated: "We saw the Kaaba opening from its back. Fatimah entered, vanishing in front of our eyes, and the walls sealed behind her. We sought for the door to open for us, but it did not open. We realized it was a command from Allah. Then she came out after the fourth [call to prayer], with Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him) in her hands. She said: 'I have precedence over all the women because Assia, the daughter of Muzahim, secretly worshipped Allah in a place where Allah would not like to be worshipped except out of necessity. And Maryam, the daughter of Imran, shook a dry palm tree with her hand until fresh dates fell from it. And I entered the Sacred House of Allah, partaking in the fruits of paradise and its provisions. When I intended to leave, a caller called out to me, 'O Fatimah, name him Ali [of high status], and Allah is the Most High of status, I have bestowed his name derived from My name, educated him with My teachings, and established him upon the profound mysteries of My knowledge. He is the one who will shatter the idols in My House, the one who will call the Adhan upon the roof of My House, sanctifying and glorifying Me. So, glad tidings to those who love and obey him, and woe to those who disobey and harbor enmity against him.'"⁽⁹⁾

Given that we have already discussed this topic in detail in our book 'A'lam al-Usrah al-Nabawiyyah' [Luminaries from the Prophet's Household], concerning Fatimah bint Asad, the mother of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali, peace be upon them, there seems to be no need to rewrite or research it. I will convey what

I wrote there, stating: 'The scholars and historians, including al-Hakim al-Nishaburi in his book al-Mustadrak 'alá al-Ṣaḥīḥayn [Addendum of the Two Authentic Books], have mentioned that the event of her giving birth to Ali inside the Kaaba is narrated in successive hadiths. He responded to the claim of Mus'ab al-Zubayri that Ali was not born before or after anyone else wise. Al-Nishaburi said, countering Mus'ab's assertion, 'Mus'ab has erred in this. It is established through successive reports⁽¹⁰⁾ that Fatimah bint Asad gave birth to Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah honor his face, inside the Kaaba.'⁽¹¹⁾

For those seeking further investigation and detailed scrutiny of the narrators and the authenticity of the stories mentioned in Al-Nishaburi's collection and its chain of transmission, they should refer to specialized books on this subject⁽¹²⁾. However, in another context, it is stated that no one was born before or after Imam Ali within the Kaaba. Al-Kanji al-Shafi'i (died 658 H) quoted Al-Nishaburi as saying: *"Amir al-Mu'mineen Ali ibn Abi Talib was born in Mecca inside the Kaaba on the night of Friday, thirteen nights into the month of Rajab in the year thirty after the Year of the Elephant. No one was born before or after him in the Kaaba, honoring him in this way and venerating his status in reverence."*⁽¹³⁾

This opinion, stating that Imam Ali was born inside the Kaaba, is embraced by Shia Muslims, especially the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt, and also by a considerable number of other Muslims. However, another group questions this virtue, as well as questioning Ali killing Marhab [The Jewish Hero], claiming that Muhammad ibn Muslima al-Ansari is the killer, attributing the virtue of being born inside the Kaaba to Hakim ibn Hizam

ibn Khulayd.

Muslim al-Nishapuri, an older authority who reported this virtue without a chain of transmission, mentioned Hakim in his Sahih. When discussing Hakim, he stated, *"One of his virtues is that he was born in the Kaaba."* He continues to say: "Some scholars say no one before has ever shared this virtue with him!!"

These two points should be noted here: Firstly, no reliable source for this virtue of Hakim ibn Hizam was found before Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Nishapuri, who passed away in the year 261 AH, except for what will be mentioned regarding Zubair ibn Bakkar's mention of it.

Secondly, his mention of it lacks a chain of narration; rather, it is his own opinion or belief, which weakens its credibility. If some consider Muslim reliable, it is solely based on his status as a hadith narrator. However, in this instance, he did not narrate it.

And it is more explicit in its discontinuity and the absence of the chain after him⁽¹⁴⁾, as clarified by scholars like al-Nawawi, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, and others. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (died 852 AH) explained the origin of this idea, saying: "And al-Zubair ibn Bakkar narrated that Hakim ibn Hizam was born inside the Kaaba. He said, 'He was one of the leaders of the Quraysh in both the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods.'" ⁽¹⁵⁾

Al-Zubair ibn Bakkar al-Asadi al-Qurashi, who passed away in the year 256 AH, could not have directly narrated this from Ibn Hajar, making the narration disconnected. The gap between al-Zubair ibn Bakkar and Hakim ibn Hizam's death is

around 200 years. Furthermore, this report about Hakim bin Hizam is also Mursal [a hadith with an incomplete chain of narrators]. Indeed, Hakim bin Hizam bin Khulayd would be a cousin to Zubair bin al-Awwam bin Khuwailid (and Zubair bin Bakkar is from his descendants). The attribution of this virtue to Hakim bin Hizam was likely due to confusion or intentional misattribution. It is not far-fetched to assume that Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Nishapuri may have transmitted it from Zubair bin Bakkar without explicitly attributing it to him. This could be a strategic move to avoid accusations, considering that Muslim was a cousin of Zubair's grandfather.

During both the Umayyad and Abbasid eras, it was not feasible for anyone to attribute established virtues directly to Imam Ali (peace be upon him).⁽¹⁶⁾

The merits of Hakim bin Hizam!

Perhaps you wonder, what is the virtue of Hakim bin Hizam over other people? Is it because he embraced Islam only after the conquest, meaning he converted around twenty years after the start of the Prophet's mission (13 years in Mecca + 6 years until its conquest from Medina)? Or is it because he was counted among those who are *al-mu'allafati quloobuhum*, "hearts were stubborn", whose "hearts are to be reconciled"⁽¹⁷⁾.

It is assumed that giving birth within the Kaaba is a position of honor and reverence. Why?

Because it signifies a transcending of the law, which dictates the "Purify My House for those who make circuit and those who abide [in it for devotion] and those who bow down [and] those who prostrate themselves"⁽¹⁸⁾, as the venerated verse 125

of Surat Al-Baqara states. The necessity for the Kaaba to be pure is evident, and it is well-known that any woman giving birth must inevitably go through postpartum, and postpartum involves a state contrary to physical purity. On the other hand, the Kaaba is the holiest spot, deeply ingrained in the minds of Muslims and even non-Muslims. Therefore, one born within it is expected to possess qualities befitting such a sacred context.

Yes, he has a distinctive quality, perhaps that it advocated for him. He shares a kinship with the Zubayris because Zubayr ibn al-Awam and Hakeem ibn Hizam ibn Khuwailed are both from the same family. They are cousins. When the writing of the biography and Islamic history began, a significant portion of it was contributed by the Zubayris, including Urwah and Zubayr ibn Bakkar.

The first step was the denial by some antagonists of this virtue attributed to the Commander of the Faithful, linking it instead to Hakeem ibn Hizam.

As for the second step, it comes from some later individuals who, after the first step failed to achieve what they wanted by dismissing it as a virtue, questioned the significance of someone being born in the Kaaba. They argued, "What value does it hold for someone to be born in the Kaaba? The Kaaba, which was filled with idols, has no value for being born in it. It is better for a person to be born in his own house than in the midst of idols!"

Why is it that some earlier individuals viciously persist in asserting and emphasizing the virtue to some specific not-to-be-named? And that nobody before or after him was born in it?

And that this was, according to Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj, a scholarly consensus.

Regarding the miraculous nature⁽¹⁹⁾ of Fatimah bint Asad giving birth of Imam Ali, is it comparable to an ordinary birth in one's house? Does the presence of idols in the Kaaba, due to the actions of disbelievers, render the Kaabah valueless? Allah, in reference to Safa and Marwa, emphasizes that they are among the ceremonies of Allah, (Surely the Şafa and the Marwah are among the signs of Allah; So whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or performs Umrah thereof, there is no blame on him to go round them both)⁽²⁰⁾. Many Muslims were hesitant to walk between the hills because of all the idols standing around the two ends. However, Allah our lord, emphasized that they were ceremonies of his and the presence of idols do not diminish their ceremonious sanctity.⁽²¹⁾

3. His Father and Mother

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Regarding his father, Abu Talib, the master and elder of land and the believer of the Quraysh, who concealed his faith. Allah rewarded him twice, and although he was known for supporting the Prophet during his lifetime and sponsoring him, later, he became the target for those who opposed Ali, the Commander of the Faithful. They insisted on rejecting his faith. All of this was merely an attempt to diminish the status of his son, Ali, peace be upon him. Our scholars and the scholars of the school of just caliphs have authored books establishing evidence and proofs of his precedence to embracing the faith and the concealment of his Islam. We have mentioned some of these in the biography of his character in 'A'lam al-Urah al-Nabawiyyah' [Lumi-

naries from the Prophet's Household].

Similarly, regarding his honorable mother, Fatima bint Asad, peace be upon her, she preceded in embracing Islam. She played the role of a guardian for the Prophet during his youth, and he expressed her significance by saying that she is like a mother to him after his own mother. For those interested in learning more about her and her husband, Abu Talib, they can refer to the mentioned book.

4. The Prophet's Care to His cousin Ali

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, showed extraordinary care and attention to his cousin Ali, even before the call to prophethood when Ali was around thirty years old. The Prophet deliberately demonstrated his deep affection and nurturing by carrying and cradling Ali in the gatherings of the Quraysh, emphasizing the strength of their relationship, attachment, and upbringing. Imam Ali, peace be upon him, spoke about this, stating, *"Certainly, you know my position of close kinship and special relationship with the Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants. When I was only a child he took charge of me. He used to press me to his chest and lay me beside him in his bed, bring his body close to mine and make me smell his smell. He used to chew something and then feed me with it. He found no lie in my speaking, nor weakness in any act."* ⁽²²⁾

This early care, even before the actual prophethood or the call to message, can only be understood in light of the mentioned oneness of their light and the early preparation for the

personality of Ali, peace be upon him, who later became known as the "Protege [educated, mannared, scribe] of the Messenger of Allah."⁽²³⁾

This text reveals the time period of these details, likely occurring when Ali was less than four years old. The Prophet would take Ali from his home, demonstrating significant care.

This might have been around the fifth year of Ali's life and the thirty-fifth year of the Prophet's life, when the Prophet fully took charge of Ali, placing him under his care in his own home. This happened around ten years after the Prophet's marriage to Khadijah. During a difficult year for the Quraysh, the Prophet and Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib proposed to ease the burden on Abu Talib by taking care of their respective relatives, with Abbas taking Ja'far and the Prophet taking Ali, fully integrating him into his household.

The Imam speaks about this stage, saying, *"I used to follow him*

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like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day he would show me in

the form of a banner some of his high traits and commanded me to follow it. Every year he

used to go in seclusion to the hill of Hira', where I saw him but no one else saw him.⁽²⁴⁾"

At the age of forty for the Prophet and the age of ten for Ali, the Messenger of Allah received the divine message.

5. Imam Ali, from the Prophet's mission to his migration

Can we say that Ali embraced Islam? Or Believed? When was it ever otherwise? In any case, he was the first presented with faith in the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family. Of course, he was the first to manifest his belief in the one and only God and in His Prophet, who was sent to all humanity. Emphasizing this absolute primacy of Ali was the methodology of the Ahlul Bait [descendants of the prophet], while corrupting this absolute primacy by making it irrelevant was the approach of the Umayyad house.

That methodology attempted to deny that Ali was the first, but can one eclipse the sun? Afterward, they sought to attribute it, saying, "Yes, he was the first to embrace Islam! But among the children." They said, "The first man to embrace Islam was so-and-so! The first slave to embrace Islam was such-and-such! The first Abyssinian to embrace Islam was like this!" In this way, they tried to undermine the primacy of his Islam and give it to others⁽²⁵⁾. The Umayyad direction then took another step, saying, "There is a difference between the Islam of a mature elderly person and the Islam of a non-adult boy!" So, primacy would be for the Islam of the mature adult! They thus nullified this distinction from him, peace be upon him, in two stages.

On the contrary, the Ahlul Bait focused on this aspect. Imam Ali, peace be upon him, reiterated it firmly⁽²⁶⁾, as affirmed by the 12 Imams of guidance, peace be upon them, on numerous occasions, supported by historical evidence.

The successor of the Prophet, the Imam, and the designated heir from the “Day of the Home [hadith of the warning, The Day of the Feast]”

In the third year of the Prophet's mission, he declared among an assembly of his family members that Ali ibn Abi Talib is his successor, guardian, and the Imam for all people after him. This announcement was surprising for his close relatives, including those with seniority and prestige. The Prophet appointed Ali in a leadership role, causing potential embarrassment for those who claimed that Ali's acceptance of Islam was of lesser significance than some of the elders. In a masterful stroke, the Prophet emphasized that Ali, despite his young age⁽²⁷⁾, could be appointed to positions of leadership, including guardianship and imamate over the people after the Prophet.

This appointment was not just symbolic but translated into action, as Imam Ali began actively protecting and accompanying the Prophet and praying⁽²⁸⁾ after him, fulfilling his responsibilities faithfully.

We notice that the Prophet assigned Ali, peace be upon him, the responsibility of arranging the affairs of the invitation to the Banu Abd Manaf tribe and preparing food for them.⁽²⁹⁾ Despite having uncles who were capable, Ali was relatively young compared to them.

Ali continued to defend the Prophet, especially against the children incited by their fathers to harm the Prophet⁽³⁰⁾. This role became more significant after the death of his father, Abu Talib, in the tenth year of the Prophet's mission. Quraish intensified their harassment of the Prophet, to the point where the

prophet said: Quraish had not harmed me until the day when my uncle Abu Talib died.

After three years, in the thirteenth year of the Prophet's mission, when the Prophet decided to migrate, he transferred all his debts and trusts to Ali.

Ali slept in the Prophet's bed in Makkah, an event that Allah Almighty boasted to his great angels⁽³¹⁾. Facing great danger and allowing the Prophet to leave safely for Madinah, Ali confronted a group of young warriors selected by Quraish, numbering around fifty, defeating them to protect the Prophet's life.

The first practice of the Prophet's succession and his will.

The Prophet instructed Ali, upon them be peace, to confront the leaders of Quraysh after a few days following the Prophet's departure to Medina (to ensure his safe arrival) by standing on in front of their leaders to inform them that he is leaving Mecca for Medina shortly. He emphasized that the trusts of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, are in Ali's hands. Anyone who has a trust or deposit with the Prophet should come to Ali and retrieve it before he departs for Medina!

Perhaps the slap directed at the pride and arrogance of Quraysh was more significant than the Prophet's safe arrival in Medina! The tyrannical Quraysh had no objection if anyone from their midst left secretly to any place, as it wouldn't harm their pride or shatter their dignity. However, for a young man in his early twenties to come and inform them openly that he would depart in three days, accompanying the three -or four- ladies [all named Fatimah] and the possessions of the Mes-

senger of Allah in his trust, posed a significant threat. It was essentially saying that they meant nothing in comparison!

This action by the Messenger of Allah was a practical implementation of his instructions to Ali, emphasizing Ali's role as his successor and heir, as stated during the event of the Day of the House.

6. Ali's First Battle Against Quraysh

History notes Ali's first battle against Quraysh, marking the moment when he wielded a sword in defense of Islam. This occurred in the same year as the Prophet's migration, and it's documented in Sheikh al-Tusi's *Amali*: "The Prophet sent a letter to Ali, instructing him to leave and migrate. Ali, informed the weak and vulnerable accompanying him and directed them to sneak out and hide under the cover of night to reach a destination called Dhi Tuwa. Ali led accompanying Fatimah bint Muhammad, his mother Fatimah bint Asad and Fatimah bint Zubair bin Abd al-Muttalib. Came along Ayman ibn Umm Ayman, a freedman of the Prophet, and Abu Waqid. Abu Waqid was leading the camels and began to scold and urge their pace. Ali, however, calmed him down. Abu Waqid explained that he was concerned by the chasing party.

Ali assured him, saying, "calm and breath, as the Messenger of Allah said to me: They will not reach you with anything you dislike from now on."

And they gained upon them near Dhujnan. Seven mounted knights veiled, and the eighth was a servant of Harith ibn Umayyah named Janaah. Ali (peace be upon him) brought the

women down, and he advanced towards the group, ready with his sword. They ordered him to return back with them, and he asked, "What if I refuse?"

They said, "You will either return willingly or we will return carrying the most of you with hair, boasting of his severed head as trophy to their elders."

As the knights approached with malicious intent towards the ladies' camels. Ali (peace be upon him) stood between them. Janaah lunged with his sword, and Ali avoided his strike, countering by hitting Janaah on the shoulder. The sword sped through, reaching his horse's mane, and Ali (peace be upon him) pulled back his sword, declaring:

"Make way for the warrior who strives in battle,

I've sworn to devote to none but the true One." [metered poetry form]

The group retreated, and they said, "spare yourself the trouble son of Abu Taleb, for we are not worth it."⁽³²⁾

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After days of relentless and exhausting travel, Ali (peace be upon him), along with the group of women and those weak among the Muslims who joined him, arrived at Quba on the outskirts of Medina. The Prophet had been eagerly awaiting his arrival for days, refusing to enter the city without Ali!

Upon his arrival, Ali busied himself arranging a dwelling for him and his mother, Fatima bint Asad. At the age of about 24, he took on various jobs to earn a living, not relying solely on his proximity to the Prophet, setting an example for those willing to

learn. He worked in date palm cultivation, providing for himself and his mother through those efforts.

7. Ali's marriage to Fatimah al-Zahra (peace be upon them)

In the second year of the Hijra, when Ali (peace be upon him) was twenty-five years old, after the victory at the Battle of Badr showcased his valor, he married Fatimah in a captivating story. Although I'll provide a brief overview, the details of their marriage are significant.

Fatimah, having reached the age of ten, the customary age for marriages during that time, attracted the interest of several companions of the Prophet. Her exceptional qualities, lineage to the Prophet, and the natural desire to be connected to the ruler of the city made her a sought-after bride.

In the month of Ramadan, the Prophet arranged the marriage of Fatimah to Ali, and their wedding took place in the month of Dhul-Hijjah.

We must recount these points:

F. The Prophet's decision of the marriage was not based solely on family ties or personal opinions but was a union declared by the divine⁽³³⁾. Comparisons with other marriages, such as Uthman's marriage to Rukaiyah, overlook the profound spiritual dimension unique to the marriage of Ali and Fatimah. And Ali among men, would be the only deserving match to Fatimah, for without him, there would be no deserving match to Fatimah.⁽³⁴⁾

- G. The Prophet, following divine guidance, rejected previous proposals from his companions⁽³⁵⁾ for Fatimah's hand, emphasizing that he awaited Allah's command regarding her. When Ali's proposal came on the same day, it was welcomed, and the marriage was arranged.
- H. The marriage of Ali and Fatimah was part of the divine plan connecting them spiritually even before their births. They were both considered radiant lights, and their union aligned with the divine lineage, ensuring continuity through the progeny of the Prophet and Ali. The Ahl al-Bayt, as heirs to the Prophet's knowledge, would carry forward the divine plan.
- I. The Prophet, in the marriage sermon, stated that Allah had commanded him to marry Fatimah to Ali, and he testified that he had married them with a dowry of four hundred silver coins, asking Ali if he approves, and Ali responded positively. While scholars generally emphasize the recommendation of modest dowries, the mention of the four hundred silver coins prompts reflection. This amount, when considered in terms of its purchasing power at that time, was significant. Calculating it based on the value of a sheep, which was around one dinar⁽³⁶⁾, and a dinar being ten dirhams, Ali's dowry for Fatimah was equivalent to about forty sheep, making it substantial and not trivial.
- J. Certainly, the apparent dowry mentioned in the marriage sermon represents the visible aspect. The actual dowry, as narrated in various traditions, can be a complex and puzzling matter.

K. Ali and Fatimah, may peace be upon them, lived a marital life that extended from the end of the second year of the Hijra until around the middle of the eleventh year. During this time, they bore witness to the birth of Hasan, Husayn, Zainab, and Umm Kulthum. However, Mohsin, their other son, did not survive infancy, as recounted in the incident of the attack on the house after the death of the Prophet, which has been discussed in our book, "Indeed, I am Fatimah and My Father is Muhammad."

This family encapsulated what could be considered an exemplary marital life, especially given the immaculate nature of both partners. Imam Ali succinctly expressed it by stating, "By Allah, I never angered her, nor did I dislike any of her actions until Allah, the Almighty, took her soul. She never angered me, nor did she disobey me in any matter. Indeed, I would look at her, and all worries and sorrows would vanish from me."⁽³⁷⁾

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With this explicit statement, it is possible to dismiss all and any notion of marital issues and difficulties affecting the relationship between Ali and Fatimah, as mentioned in a number of narrations influenced by the Umayyad agenda. The infallibility of the couple contradicts such narratives, a belief upheld by the Imamiyyah, further reinforced by the Imam's clear declaration.

8. The Knight of Battles and the Man of Challenging Missions

In the city of Medina, Commander of the Faithful Ali played a prominent role in the battles led by the Prophet, showcasing

his excellence in jihad, bravery, sacrifice, and initiative.

The Battle of Badr in the second year of the Hijra was the title of a divine intervention. It marked the opening verse in a Quranic Victory, where the Muslims' banners was born by Ali ibn Abi Talib. The B in the Bismillah of the Battle, was that Ali, Hamza and Ubaydah (Sons and Grand-sons of Abdul-Muttaleb) confronted and killed in man-to-man combat, prominent knights from Quraysh, all of the Banu Umayya (Shayba and Utbah sons of Rabe'ah and Al-Waleed son of Utbah). Midst the battle, it was reported that Ali alone killed half the Mushrikeen who died in the battle (all 72 of them).

In the Battle of Uhud in the third year of the Hijra, Ali ibn Abi Talib initiated the fighting by killing the Mushrik Talha ibn Abi Talha Al-'Abdari, who had challenged the Muslims to send someone to hasten him to their paradise. Ali swiftly sent him to the hell fire, followed by his brother Uthman, killed by Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib, and their brother Abu Saeed. This continued until seven members of the Banu Abd ad-Dar were killed, shared between Ali and Hamza. It seemed as if the banner of the Mushrikeen carried misfortune, as none of them bore it without being killed.

As the battle unfolded the tides turn against the Muslims with the disobedience of the archers, who descended from their position of the mountain, the deaths of Hamza and Musab, the attack intensified against the Prophet. Ali stood firm on the slopes of Mount Uhud, defending the Prophet with few others remaining. The Prophet called out to Ali, "*Stand firm against them!*" Abu al-Hasan dispersed them until Jibreel descended, praising Ali's actions, and the Prophet remarked, "*He is from*

me, and I from him." Jibreel added, "And I am with both of you."⁽³⁸⁾

And a heavenly sound heard to be saying: "No sword but *Zulfikar*, and no knight but *Ali*". highlighting the valor and bravery of Ali ibn Abi Talib.⁽³⁹⁾

In the Battle of the Trench (Al-Ahzab) in the fifth year of the Hijra, the Quranic description suffices to capture the scene. When Amr ibn Abd Wudd Al-Aamiri infiltrated among the Muslims after breaching the trench, the Qur'an vividly portrays the moment: "(When they came upon you from above and below you, and when the eyes rolled and the hearts leapt to the throats, and you entertained misgivings about Allah (*) It was there that the faithful were afflicted and jolted with a severe convulsion.)"⁽⁴⁰⁾. Ali's sword awaited him as he emerged, echoing the words of his brother and cousin, the Prophet: "Faith has altogether emerged to confront the Shirk in its entirety." Ali decisively handled Amr sheering off his legs and severing his head, securing victory and marking the beginning of the defeat of the Mushrikeen. It is a blow with Ali's sword that quantifies to all the worshiping of both humans and jinn.

In the year 7 of the Hijra

In the year 7 of the Hijra, during the Battle of Khaybar, Ali, who was around thirty years old at that time, emerged as a key figure. When some companions of the Prophet faced the formidable forts of Khaybar on consecutive days but faltered, each returning with dismay, the Prophet declared, "Tomorrow, I shall give the banner to a man who loves Allah and his Messenger and whom Allah and His Messenger love, A persistent charger, Never a retreater, Who comes back only when Allah

grants victory through him.”

[A metered rhymed Poem describing the scene]

“The successor [Ali] came [to the Prophet] with ailing eyes;
he healed him with his saliva;

and continued to seek the ranks; turning away from him with
knowledge that he is the sharpest;

Slaughtered Marhab with an able fist; demonstrating the
mightiest over the weaker ones;

And he struck its gate with powerful might; if the heavenly
stars descend to protect it, he would shatter them along;

The Prophet is the city of knowledge; and he [Ali] is its gate
if you seek the gate you will reach the city.”⁽⁴¹⁾

In the Battle of Hunayn in the 8th year of the Hijra

In the Battle of Hunayn in the 8th year of the Hijra, the Muslims were deceived by their large numbers, still, they were routed, and the Prophet called to rally them. Malik ibn Awf, a leader of the disbelievers, challenged, “Show me Muhammad!” Yet, Ali’s sword swiftly reached his head and came down rolling between his legs. When Abu Jarwal plotted to kill the Prophet, Ali awaited him among the Muslims. He struck the disabled camel of Abu Jarwal, causing him to fall and be split into two halves. ⁽⁴²⁾

The only place where the sword of Ali found rest was:

The Battle of Tabuk in the 9th year of the Hijra. It was the last military expedition led by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. During this expedition, the Prophet appointed Ali

as the ruler of Medina. (Was this for the sole purpose to set the precedence of appointing him on Medina so that the inhabitants would remember him as a governor after the Prophets parting? To set him in his place after his departure?) Some enemies of Ali tried to use this to imply that the Prophet did not want Ali to accompany him on the journey. However, Allah intended to highlight this as an apparent virtue, known and valued by those who understand its significance. When the Prophet heard their insinuations, he said to Ali, peace be upon him, in front of everyone: "You are to me like Aaron to Moses, except that there is no prophet after me."⁽⁴³⁾

The Man of Daunting Tasks; The Prophets Designate

Ali ibn Abi Talib wasn't just a military leader and a courageous warrior; he was the unique individual entrusted with tasks and responsibilities specifically designated by the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. His role extended beyond being a military leader to someone who fulfilled duties on behalf of the Prophet that were not undertaken by others.

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The story of Yemen Embracing Islam and the origins of Surat At-Taubah are but examples of this.

Regarding the Islamic conquest of Yemen, it proved challenging for those who initially approached it. The people of Yemen were reluctant to open their hearts, either peacefully or through warfare, except to the Prophet or someone deemed equivalent to him. Despite sending various commanders like

Khalid ibn al-Walid, al-Tufail ibn Amr, and Khalid ibn Saeed ibn al-Aas in different years, the Yemeni tribes did not respond positively. When these earlier expeditions attempted to fight, they were met with fierce resistance.

When matters became challenging regarding the call to the tribes of Hamadan in Yemen, the Prophet, peace be upon him, sent the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon him, to them in the month of Ramadan of the tenth year. This call was like raindrops nourishing the thirsty land, as the tribes of Hamadan and the surrounding areas responded abundantly to the call of Islam.

Imam Ali described these people, saying in poem text:

"If I were a gatekeeper to paradise, I would say to Hamadan, 'Enter in peace.'"

This highlights the importance of having a figure representing the entire religion in such complex relationships between the Muslim community and non-Muslim communities. This figure should either be the Prophet himself or someone appointed in person of the Prophet. In this context, Ali ibn Abi Talib embodies the suitable personality. This is why when Surat At-Taubah was revealed, and one of the companions held it to resite it to Quraysh, Angel Jibreel descended upon the prophet and inspired him to command the written verses back and handed it to Ali ibn Abi Talib, for no man is to announce the verses except for the prophet or a man in his person⁽⁴⁴⁾. We can Also site his own saying "The Banu Wulay'ah are to yield their transgressions, or I shall send them a man of my person, to be

obeyed as if I'm obeyed and if disobeyed, he will cast them with the sword."⁽⁴⁵⁾

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Innumerable virtues

Innumerable virtues are attributed to Ali during this extended period, from the days of his birth adorned with the garlands of praise and commendation by the Prophet. He was adorned with the crowns of nobility, and the motivation behind this was not merely kinship or the purpose of boasting and pride. Rather, it was to serve as: (a clear statement for men, and a guidance and an admonition for the pious ones)⁽⁴⁶⁾, Ali's life was a roadmap to guide people toward what is upright, introducing them to the Imams who are (giving guidance under Our Command)⁽⁴⁷⁾. Otherwise, this entire mundane life holds little value; a sandal's strap is more significant. How could they be concerned with pride, knowing that pride is worst of vices in it?

The Prophet declared: "Whoever loves to live my life, die my death, and enter the paradise promised by my Lord, should hold onto the leadership of Ali and his descendants. They are like the bars of the eternal paradise, firmly planted in its gardens. Let them cling to Ali and his progeny after me. They shall never lead them away from a door of righteousness and never lead them into a door of misguidance."⁽⁴⁸⁾ According to the Prophet: "Ali's peace is my peace and his war is my war". Also, According to the Prophet: Ali is the gate of the city of knowledge. Whoever seeks the city must enter through its gate, otherwise, they would be considered a thief."⁽⁴⁹⁾

Hundreds, if not thousands, of hadiths are attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, sometimes in large gatherings and other times during specific events like Ghadir. He spoke in times of peace and in times of war, offering concise statements at times and detailed explanations at others.

We specifically aim to highlight some aspects of the Prophet's hadiths concerning his brother and cousin, Ali. A detailed exploration of these hadiths will be reserved for a separate discussion.

Firstly, it's noteworthy how abundant these hadiths are, to the extent that attempts to conceal and punish those spreading them during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods proved futile. As some have remarked, "What could I say about a person whose virtues were concealed by his supporters out of fear and his adversaries out of envy. Then, what was hidden by the two concealing parties eventually emerged to fill the hearts."⁽⁵⁰⁾ The sheer abundance of these hadiths makes it challenging for deniers to suppress them, aiming to provide clear guidance to people, even if the deniers attempt to conceal them.

Moreover, we have observed the diversity in their content and themes. While each of these hadiths explicitly or implicitly indicates the desired outcome of affirming and adhering to Ali's leadership, culminating in the confirmation of his Imamate and guardianship over the Muslims, they do not use a repetitive or uniform language. Instead, they employ various styles and diverse methodologies, all serving the same purpose.

These hadiths commenced by elucidating the virtues of the Imam from the very beginning, extending to a period preceding

the Prophet's demise, and they reached their climax on the day of Ghadir, about seventy days before the Prophet's departure to meet our creator.

From the hadith 'Day of the Home' to the hadith 'Aaron to Moses' to the hadith 'I will give the banner' to the hadith 'Your most beloved creation to yourself' and the hadith 'I am the city of knowledge', and thus stating him as "[Always] with the truth, and the truth is with him," as well as "with the Quran, and the Quran is with Ali," and many more."

As mentioned earlier, we will delve into them and examine how Muslims have counted and written about them. We will discuss other characteristics of these hadiths in a later study, God willing.

10. Ali and the Death of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family

After the Prophet fulfilled his entrusted duties in the best way, delivered the message at its clearest, and advised the Umma to a point where his Creator took pity on and mercy on him⁽⁵¹⁾, he faced what is faced by every living being through the signs of death. Whether it was through the act of a perpetrator and poisoning by an enemy, or not, he was addressed by his Lord ("You will surely die, and they will surely die too")⁽⁵²⁾.

If the creation was affected by the loss of the Messenger of Allah, then when the calamity and loss befell the family of Muhammad, peace be upon them, the greatest impact was on their leader, Ali, may peace be upon him. The situation was de-

scribed as follows: 'When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, passed away, the family of Muhammad, peace be upon them, experienced the longest night, to the extent that they thought there was no sky to shelter them and no earth to bear them, because the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, was the closest and dearest to them in the path to Allah.'⁽⁵³⁾

The calamity was compounded by the refusal of some companions of the Prophet to write a document confirming the leadership of Ali ibn Abi Talib, and with which, they would never go astray after him. The matter escalated to the exclusion of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, from the leadership over the people.

When calamities arrive, as is apparant, one follows the next. It is as if the Ahlul Bayt haven't experienced enough by the passing of the Prophet and his absence from there life, like a dry land missing the rain. "The orders of the Prophet of Allah was never upheld in regards to the [latter] guider, after the [former] guiders"

In spite of the bitterness of this exclusion, where the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali describe it as: "*there was pricking in the eye and suffocation [of Mortification] in the throat.*"⁽⁵⁴⁾. However, Imam Ali, who had two choices: to maneuver without supporters and allies, or to patiently waite like a stumbling blind man in midst this new situation, decides that patience is a better and more prudent option. He explains: "*You have certainly known that I am the most rightful of all others for the Caliphate. By Allah, so long as the affairs of Muslims remain intact and there is no oppression in it save on myself I shall keep*

quiet seeking reward for it [from Allah] and keeping aloof from its attractions and allurements for which you aspire..”⁽⁵⁵⁾

“His patience, peace be upon him, and his silence were not due to cowardice in facing confrontation. How could it be when he was a knight in the battlefield, stating, “If the Arab peoples congregated to fight me, I would never shy away.” Nor was it due to satisfaction with the good administration of those who came after the Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. Instead, he withheld his hand, as he said, *‘till I found the heretics had openly taken to heresy and schism and were trying to undermine and ruin the religion preached by our Holy Prophet (s). I felt afraid that, even after seeing and recognizing the evil, if I did not stand up to help Islam and the Muslims it would be a worse calamity to me than my losing authority and power over you, which was only a transient and short-lived affair.’*⁽⁵⁶⁾

The caliphate of the first caliph marked the beginning of a period that would last about a quarter of a century, during which leadership and religious matters deviated from the guidance of Ali, peace be upon him (except for what will be discussed later). The Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, summarized his assessment of those years in his sermon after his apparent vicegerency⁽⁵⁷⁾ as Caliph, known as the Shiqshiqiyya sermon. We will elaborate on it later due to its significance in understanding Imam Ali’s position towards those leaders.”

11. The Relationship of Imam Ali, peace be upon him, with the Early Caliphs

At the same time when Imam Ali, peace be upon him, was

influenced by the scheme orchestrated by the Quraysh party⁽⁵⁸⁾, which resulted in excluding him and his household from the leadership of the Muslim community, he expressed his grievances about that orchestrated movement even after twenty-five years in his Shiqshiqiyya sermon⁽⁵⁹⁾. He also voiced his complaints about the Quraysh party even after the caliphate reached Imam Ali, despite the will of that party: *"O' my Allah! I beseech Thee to take revenge on the Quraysh and those who are assisting them, for they have cut asunder my kinship and over-turned my cup and have joined together to contest a right to which I was entitled more than anyone else."*⁽⁶⁰⁾

With all that, Imam Ali, peace be upon him, exhibited noble stances befitting his status as the heir of the chosen Prophet, the trustworthy guardian of his Sharia, and the rightful authority after him. What could be expected from him other than nobleness, and what emanates from him but the truth?

This is despite the emotional wounds inflicted upon him by the horrific and tragic departure of Fatima Al-Zahra, by which his sorrows never eased. Suffice to say that he is Ali ibn Abi Talib. Suffice to say that if the people were to agree upon dedicating their love and devotion to him, it would be sufficient cause for Allah not to create Hell-fire, as stated in various hadiths and narrations.

Imam Ali provided sincerest of advice in matters of consultation, whether in legal judgments where he was known as the one with the most knowledge and wisdom, or in crucial military plans. Innumerable times, was it said: absent were Ali, dead would be the Caliph. Other times it was said: May Allah spare not those, to face a dilemma without Abu al-Hassan [Ali]. For

example, during the Counsel with Caliph Umar about confronting the Persians, Imam Ali advised against leading the army to avoid Arab factions on the peripheries turning against them. Similarly, he warned the foreign enemies, seeing him leading the army, would intensify their determination to kill and eradicate him.⁽⁶¹⁾

Imam Ali allowed his followers and companions to work within the actual caliphate system, even if there were discussions about its legal origins. Abdullah ibn Abbas, his prominent student, was what would be equivalent to the head of the council for jurisprudence and fatwa, convincing the second caliph entirely.

During the incident of the apostasy led by Tulayha al-Asadi, with the supportive environment of the Tae tribe, Imam Ali selected one of his sincere companions, Adi ibn Hatim al-Tai⁽⁶²⁾, to assist the caliphate in dispersing the rebellion. Adi went to them and managed to persuade many to abandon Talha's deviant call.⁽⁶³⁾

Some researchers suggest⁽⁶⁴⁾ that a significant portion of the military leaders who participated in the Islamic conquests were supporters of Imam Ali. It was inconceivable for them to engage in these conquests without consulting him. This was also observed among the governors and judges in different regions.

Imam Ali corrected the mistakes made by the caliphate apparatus from a legal perspective, which historical event documented very well. Notable instances include his statement "absent were Ali, dead would be the Umar" and "May Allah spare me not, to face a dilemma without Abu al-Hassan [Ali]."⁽⁶⁵⁾

These statements are acknowledged even by followers of the Caliphs' school, emphasizing Imam Ali's complete harmony with the caliphate for the greater good of Islam. However, this was done with the aim of preserving the overall Islamic entity and correcting what could be rectified, even if it meant the flow of water would be redirecting from its truly intended course.

A dedicated discussion on this topic with its details will be provided, by the will of Allah.

12. Ali ibn Abi Talib's Apparent Vicegerency as Caliph after 25 Years

The Imamiyyah School believes that Ali ibn Abi Talib, may peace be upon him, is the Imam of the Islamic community since the time when Muhammad ibn Abdullah was its prophet. They believe that both were a single light in the realm of eternity until they diverged in Abd al-Muttalib. A portion of that light went to Abdullah, and another portion to Abu Talib. Muhammad was the Prophet sent as a mercy to the worlds, while Ali ibn Abi Talib served as his minister, successor, and Imam over creation after him.

However, the tides of events took an unexpected turn, delaying the Imam (or more accurately delaying the progress of the Ummah) for twenty-five years.

After people endured what they endured, they came like thirsty camels to the source, seeking refuge with the Commander of the Faithful. They gathered around him like moths to a flame.

He began his reformist program. It was clear from the start that there would be no compromise on enforcing the boundaries set by Allah. There would be no partiality in the rights of God's creation. So understood, the young among the Muslims and the elderly. He openly states: *"By Allah, even if I had found that by such money women have been married or slave-maids have been purchased I would have resumed it because there is wide scope in dispensation of justice, and he who finds it hard to act justly should find it harder to deal with injustice."*⁽⁶⁶⁾

This reflects his commitment to the principle of justice among the Muslims, whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs, whether they are free or enslaved. His motto is, 'I find no preference for the descendants of Isma'il over the descendants of Ishaq.'⁽⁶⁷⁾

When some politicians tried to persuade him to take truce with leaders and those in power in order to consolidate his own rule, so he may then follow his base vision, he rejected that and said, *"Do you command me that I should seek support by oppressing those over whom I have been placed? By Allah, I won't do so as long as the world goes on, and as long as one star leads another in the sky. Even if it were my property, I would have distributed it equally among them, then why not when the property is that of Allah."*⁽⁶⁸⁾

He also began teaching people what they missed from the Sunnah of the Prophet, and he sought to rectify the deviations that emerged after the Prophet.

So, the Qurayshi faction and its supporters understood the message to the last line! They realized that there was no room

for them with Ali ibn Abi Talib except through war, or else they would lose the wealth they had seized, the positions they had exploited, and the false leadership positions they had taken. Thus, this faction fortified itself in the Sham Region [Levant] as its stronghold, declared rebellion against the city of the Prophet [Medina] and the true successor of the Prophet. Subsequently, some companions of the Prophet, his wife, and those who followed them mobilized, leading to the first clear military confrontation between two camps of Muslims. In one front of the battle, stood the rebellious treacherous faction against the true successor of the Prophet, Ali ibn Abi Talib. In deed, all battles against Ali hosted a rebellious, treacherous, perpetrating rogue⁽⁶⁹⁾ enemy factions. It is noted that all these adjectives were used as synonyms to the most famous of them [rebellious]. However, all adjectives actually apply to any given faction.

The only option left for Imam Ali, peace be upon him, was to engage in combat after numerous correspondences with which he debunked their baseless arguments and invalidated their false justifications. In his dialogues with them, and in face with the persistent aspirations of those seeking power and dominance, the only recourse for Imam Ali was either to fight or to reject what was revealed to the Prophet.⁽⁷⁰⁾

13. Wars of Ali against His Enemies during His Caliphate

While warfare was a familiar venue to Ali, peace be upon him, as he actively participated in battles alongside Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, and even held the standard and faced the greatest challenges, the three wars

imposed on him during his apparent Vicegerency were entirely different.

Battle of the Camel:

The Battle of the Camel took place in the month of Jumada in the year 36 AH. Those who fought against Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, fail to find justifications for their actions. At times, they claim they did not give allegiance, while the truth is they did pledge allegiance and later broke it. Even if they did not pledge allegiance, engaging in a war that claimed the lives of Muslims after Ali had been appointed and people had given him allegiance cannot be justified.

The leaders of the opposing side in the Battle of the Camel were Talha ibn Ubaidullah, Zubair ibn al-Awwam, and Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr. The battle was named the Battle of the Camel because Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, rode a camel in the conflict.

Amir al-Mu'minin, Ali, peace be upon him, exposed⁽⁷¹⁾ the true motives of the original leaders, Talha and Zubair, saying, *"Both of these two [Talhah and az-Zubayr] wishes the Caliphate for himself, and is drawing towards himself as against the other fellow. They do not employ any connection for getting access to Allah nor proceed towards Him through any means. Both of them bear malice against the other. Shortly his veil over it will be uncovered. By Allah, if they achieve what they aim at, one of them will kill the other, and one will finish the other."*⁽⁷²⁾ This became evident when they reached Basra, where each of them wanted to lead the congregational prayer, leading to conflict and delaying the prayer. "They went out, dragging the Proph-

et's inviolable [his wife], as if they were dragging out a slave girl, aiming for Basra."⁽⁷³⁾

After the Imam corresponded with them and tried to convince them to abandon the war, their response was: "You have taken a path that would incur what is to come. Neither would you return from it, with a wish you realize for yourself. Nor would you be appeased, were we not enter the realm of your obedience. We would never enter into that realm, so seek what you must. Farewell."⁽⁷⁴⁾

The escalation toward war was clear, led by Talha and Abdullah bin Zubair⁽⁷⁵⁾. Abdullah carried his father with him, cutting off any idea or option of retreat. He took advantage of his close relation to Aisha, the Prophet's wife. As her nephew, he flagrantly placed her in the midst of the turmoil, how ever willing she was to be there. The result was the clash of the two armies, and defeat loomed over the Camel army. Camel's back was broken, and Aisha's military fell apart. It was as if the center of command had fallen, and the lure of worldly gains, promises of booty, and status vanished. Talha was killed by friendly fire⁽⁷⁶⁾, struck by Marwan bin al-Hakam.

It is said that Zubair bin al-Awam, at the beginning of the defeat, decided to withdraw and started retreating from the battle. However, it was too late as blood was already flowing, and he was killed by Amr bin Jarmouz, When zubair was isolated of the Army he came with.

And thus, The first battle in Islam came to an end. A battle involving Muslims divided between a loyal group and a treacherous one. A steadfast party and a rebellious one. The cost of

the treacherous ones' desires and their worldly ambitions, at the very least, is reported to be 2,500 killed among them. Some accounts suggest double this number. It could be even more.⁽⁷⁷⁾

For the life of me, the killing of a single Muslim man, in the pursuit of the aspirations of those seeking leadership, betraying allegiance, and opposing the rightful Imam is indeed a significant tragedy. What are your thoughts on these numbers?

The War of Siffin; Month of Safar, 37 AH:

This war, initiated by Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and his army from the Levant, took place in the Siffin region near the city of Raqqa in Syria. The conflict unfolded intermittently until it concluded with arbitration in the month of Ramadan, 38 AH⁽⁷⁸⁾. This implies that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and his government experienced the war's atmosphere for a year and eight months.

The circumstances leading to this war began when Imam Ali (peace be upon him) removed Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan from the governance of the Sham [Levant] as part of a campaign to purge, reform, and dismiss appointed governors before his caliphate. While many complied⁽⁷⁹⁾ and resigned from their positions in favor of the new governors, Muawiyah refused. Instead of stepping down, he rejected pledging allegiance to the Imam and accused him of inticing the killing of Uthman ibn Affan and covering up the killers. He demanded they be arrested and surrendered to his jurisdiction. Only then can the Muslims sit and discuss the selection of a new Caliph! As if all that took place since the year 35AH was a game of fools, namely the public consensuss to pledge for Imam Ali.

Trying to prevent escalation by using as soft a tone as pos-

sible, Imam Ali replied: "Now then, The oaths of allegiance in Medina is binding onto you in Sham. [I encourage you to] Enter unto what Muslims had entered into, as what I like most for you is to be safe. However, once you expose yourself to woeful attitude, I will fight you, So help me God. You have indulged in [the subject of] The murderers of Othman. Enter unto what Other people had entered into. And present your pleading against them to me, and I shall present your case and theirs before the book of Allah. But, that [ploy] which you pursue fervently, is but a feeble design to remove the toddler from his bottle. For the life of me, if you examine it, mindfully not fancily, You would find me the most innocent of Quraysh from the blood of Othman."⁽⁸⁰⁾

However, Muawiyah, who believed that his resignation from the governance of Sham meant the end of his political career and even the future of the Umayyad dynasty, feared accountability for the funds spent without justification. Especially since Imam Ali clearly announced his intention to pursue the public funds that were misappropriated, regardless of their status.

While Imam Ali publicly declared his pursuit of the embezzled public funds, Muawiyah chose the path of war as the only option, knowing that acceptance of his dismissal implied the aforementioned consequences. He initiated a campaign of mobilization and psychological preparation among the people of Sham, circulating a shirt stained with what he claimed to be Uthman's blood. Additionally, he pointed to fingers, alleging they belonged to Uthman's wife, Naila, claiming they were severed when they attacked the caliph in his palace. Although Imam Ali was innocent of these accusations, this was the way of political intrigue.

"He also began to gather his closest friends and like-minded people. People who were as ambitious for the caliphate as he was. He summoned Amr ibn al-Aas to consult with him and seek his help. Amr knew that he would not get anything that compromises the afterlife of Ali ibn Abi Talib, so why not get something from the worldly life of Muawiyah? So he agreed to cooperate with him on condition that Egypt would be his fiefdom if Muawiyah won. He wrote a document to this effect and had witnesses attest to it.

He also attracted to his side Ubayd Allah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab, Abd al-Rahman ibn Khalid ibn al-Walid, Marwan ibn al-Hakam, Muawiyah ibn Hudayj, Basr ibn Artabah, and their like.

At that point, He wrote a letter to the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abi Talib, stating: "The people of Syria insist on fighting you until you hand over the killers of Uthman. If you do so, it will be a matter of consultation among the Muslims. I swear by my life, your argument against me is not as strong as your argument against Talha and Zubair because they pledged allegiance to you, while I did not. Your argument against the people of Syria is not like your argument against the people of Basra because they obeyed you, unlike the people of Sham."⁽⁸¹⁾

After mobilizing his supporters from Kufa, Basra, and other regions, Ali ibn Abi Talib faced Muawiyah, who had gathered his forces from Syria and its surroundings, heading towards Siffin near the city of Raqqa in present-day Syria.

The oppression in the army of Sham was clear; as soon as they reached the battlefield, they surrounded the river, pre-

venting Ali's army from reaching it, either causing them to die of thirst or weakening them for battle. Upon the arrival of Ali's army led by Malik al-Ashtar, who received strict instructions from Ali not to initiate the fight, the Sham army attacked immediately upon their arrival. Despite Malik al-Ashtar removing their access to the water, he did not prevent them from drinking.

The course of the war indicated a clear victory for the army of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali, as good planning, courage from Ali and his leaders, and the impact of the martyrs on morale added strength to Ali's forces and negatively affected Muawiyah's army. For example, when Ammar ibn Yasir was martyred, people remembered the Prophet's saying, causing a shock in Muawiyah's army, as they considered the Prophet describing them as a rebellious faction. Muawiyah and Amr ibn al-As's attempts to disguise their army's actions by claiming, "He was killed by the one inciting him to fight," were ineffective. If this were true, then the one who killed Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib would be the Prophet Muhammad himself, as he was the one who incited him to fight. This argument is false.

However, another deception had an impact on a portion of Ali's army. When Amr ibn al-As ordered the Qurans to be raised on spears, pretending to call for arbitration, it created confusion among some of Ali's forces. This was a manipulative tactic to exploit religious sentiment and manipulate perceptions on the battlefield.

The battle was reaching its conclusion, and Malik al-Ashtar was giving them respite comparable to the time it takes for a she-camel to satisfy its thirst. He was about to reach the tent of

Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, who had prepared his mounts ready for escape. However, the fitnah (discord) showed its horns, and ignorant individuals (those with long spears and short intellects) branched off, raising their swords against Ali, who represented the living Quran. If he did not accept the arbitration of the Quran, they threatened to impose it upon him with their swords.

The Imam's words didn't benefit them: "Woe unto you! I am the first to call to the Book of Allah and the first to respond to it. It is neither permissible nor fitting for me in my religion to be invited to the Book of Allah, and I do not accept it. I fight against them so that they may be judged by the Quranic Code, for they have disobeyed Allah in His commands, violated His covenant, and abandoned His Book. But I have informed you that they have deceived you, and they seek not to implement the Quran's ruling."⁽⁸²⁾

However, ignorance led twenty thousand of those who used to stand with the Imam, lacking insight⁽⁸³⁾, to oppose him. The Imam had to prevent a civil war within his army by bringing the fighting to a halt. The war stopped, and Muawiyah's army returned to their positions, while the leaders of Ali's army regretted missing the rare opportunity.

The fighting ceased, reconciliation was postponed, and an agreement was reached for both armies to return. Each side⁽⁸⁴⁾ would send a representative for an arbitration meeting, and the Muslims awaited the results of that gathering!

After nearly seventy thousand casualties (including, as reported, twenty-five thousand martyrs under the banner of the

Commander of the Faithful and forty-five thousand killed from Muawiya's army), the matter concluded with an arbitration manipulated by the cunning Amr ibn al-As, using Abu Musa al-Ash'ari as a pawn. Abu Musa, insisted upon by the previous simpletons who rejected Abdullah ibn Abbas, participated in the arbitration in the month of Ramadan of the thirty-eighth year of the Hijra. Ironically, the arbitration, guided by the naivety of Abu Musa, proved to be worse than ceasing the fighting with Muawiya!⁽⁸⁵⁾

Because the ignorant fool, even if devout with good intentions, does not pause to reflect on his mistakes but persists in them until his demise, these individuals continued in their ignorance. They separated from the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, and demanded repentance from him for the alleged apostasy(!). This demand came after he had initially agreed to the principle of arbitration. Ironically, they were the ones who raised swords against him to force him into arbitration; otherwise, they threatened to fight him with their swords! Then, despite the outcome reached through the arbitration, where they insisted on Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, the Imam wished for his disciple Abdullah ibn Abbas. However, he yielded to them, fearing internal strife and civil war.

They tripled down on their deviation by declaring war against the Imam and rebelling against him, thus earning the label "Kharijites." This set the stage for the third war against the Imam, known as the Battle of Nahrawan, as a result of their actions!

Battle of Nahrawan and the Kharijite War

Although the Kharijites formed a group resentful of Imam Ali and misjudging his actions, sometimes accusing him of apostasy, their transformation into active combatants against the Commander of the Faithful occurred in the month of Shawwal in the year 37 AH. This was after they had separated from the Imam and gathered in a place called Harura, near Kufa. During this period, they engaged in sabotage, killing the Imam's supporters⁽⁸⁶⁾, and disturbing the peace in Kufa and other regions as part of their tactics. They assembled their followers to confront Imam Ali.

Despite the Imam's customary approach of gentleness and avoiding war whenever possible, he repeatedly communicated and protested against them. He even sent envoys to engage with them. To engage in a discussion with them, even on the day they gathered for war in Nahrawan⁽⁸⁷⁾, where they numbered twelve thousand (12,000) as reported. Imam Ali appointed the banner of peace in the hands of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, stating that anyone seeking refuge under it would be safe and not held accountable. Hundreds among them came under that banner. Abdullah ibn Abbas was sent to discuss and debate with them, leading to several hundred more siding with him. Some even refrained from fighting, such as farwah ibn Nawfal al-Ashja'i, as he found no justification or clear argument for opposing the Imam in battle. And so on.

When Abdullah ibn Wahb al-Rasibi, their leader, saw that his army was weakening due to the departure of these factions, he feared the disintegration of his forces. In response, he attacked the supporters of Imam Ali, immersing himself in their

ranks along with those with him. The companions of the Imam, led by Ali, confronted them, defeated them, and Ali did not allow any harm to come to the wounded among them. Instead, he ordered their wounded to be sent back to their tribes for treatment. As for the rest, they were killed, and less than ten individuals survived from that army, similar to the approximate number of martyrs from Imam Ali's side⁽⁸⁸⁾. Among those survivors was Abdul Rahman ibn Muljam al-Muradi, who would later bear the deadly sin of assassinating Imam Ali.

14. The Martyrdom of the Imam (peace be upon him) in the year 40 AH

Although the Imam's enemies preoccupied him with successive wars against him, preventing him from implementing his reform program for the nation, the short period of his caliphate, which lasted four years and nine months⁽⁸⁹⁾, and the even shorter period of peace during that time, witnessed a model that suffices for any Muslim ruler who comes after the Imam to contemplate and adopt as a program for just rule, if he so desires. The following chapters will explain some of the features of this model.

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This period was indeed short but not insignificant. It had not even reached a span of two years; from the end of the Kharijite war in Shawwal 38 AH to the martyrdom of the Imam in the month of Ramadan 40 AH).

The Kharijites, who came to an end as a military force with their defeat at Nahrawan, did not end as an idea. They would continue for centuries to come. The state of extremism that

arises from ignorance is not limited to one generation after another. In our own time, we have seen their likes who have destroyed the image of Islam in the eyes of Muslims and others. They have killed, raped, and destroyed, all in their ignorance, and what they call Islam is far from it.

Among these there is the one who would commit the crime of killing the vi, the soul of the Prophet, the speaking Qur'an, the most beloved of Allah's creation to Allah, the trustee, and the one most deserving of people after the Messenger of Allah. As he killed him, he said: "The judgment is for Allah, not for you, O Ali!"

Damned be such ignorance, nay, to سَعْيًا stupidity! Woe to this idea and its owner!

Yes, after the defeat of the Kharijites at Nahrawan, several of them began to plan the assassination of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), in revenge for those of their companions who had been killed, and in execution of their idea of killing a Kafir (unbeliever)!! So it was, that Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam al-Muradi came to Kufa with a poisoned sword, and seized the opportunity of the Imam's preoccupation with the dawn prayer and the emptiness of the mosque of worshippers, and assassinated the Imam while he was prostrating in prayer in his prayer niche with a blow to the head. The Imam (peace be upon him) attained the ultimate reward in meeting the Lord of the Kaaba, and this was on the nineteenth day of the month of Ramadan in the year 40 AH.⁽⁹⁰⁾

15. Economic Reform Program of Imam Ali (AS):

During the short period of his leadership, Imam Ali (AS) had a clear program for economic reform. Some aspects of his program included:

- *Tax Reduction: Imam Ali reduced taxes and burdens on the people to alleviate economic pressures.*
- *Agricultural Development: He focused on improving agriculture and enhancing conditions for farmers to boost agricultural production.*
- *Trade and Market Improvement: He paid attention to organizing markets and improving trade conditions to enhance commerce and support traders.*
- *Combatting Corruption: He took decisive measures to combat corruption in the economic and governmental systems.*
- *Support for the Poor and Needy: He provided support for the poor and needy through relief projects and the distribution of zakat.*

These initiatives reflected a commitment to improving living conditions for the people and enhancing economic and social justice.

References:

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- (1) Translation note: Ibrahim in this context refers to an Abbasid caliph and not the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). Additionally, Mukhariq and Zalzal were famous court singers. Singing and singers are not considered honourable nor respectful deeds for Islamic rulers.
- (2) (When thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves, [saying]: "Am I not your Lord [who cherishes and sustains you]?"- They said: "Yea! We do testify!" [This], lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: "Of this we were never mindful") Al-A'raf: 172.

According to the Qur'anic exegesis of al-Qurtubi, this verse refers to the covenant that God took from all of humanity before they were created. In this covenant, God asked them if He was their Lord, and they all replied, "Yes, we testify."

In the school of Ahl al-Bayt, there are two interpretations of this verse. The first interpretation is that when Adam was created, all of his descendants were created in the form of

particles. These particles had the ability to hear, understand, and respond to God's question.

The second interpretation is that the covenant was made in the world of potentiality, when all of humanity was still in the form of particles. In this world, all of humanity had the potential to accept the truth of monotheism.

- (3) [Translation Note: according to narrative sources, world of atoms is a transcendent metaphysical world in which Allah presented the covenant to mankind and where they accepted it as a pre-condition to the descent to this life.]
- (4) Al-Shaybani; Abu Bakr ibn Abi Asim: Kitab al-Sunnah [Book of Sunnah], with Dhilal al-Jannah by al-Albani volume 1, page 179 "Maysarah al-Ghajar narrated: I said, "O Messenger of Allah, when were you written as a prophet?" He said, "When Adam was between the spirit and the body." Al-Albani said about it: Its chain of transmission is sahih."
- (5) Al-Shaybani; Ahmad ibn Hanbal: Fadhail al-Sahaba [Virtues of the Sahaba] volume 2 page 662
- (6) [Translation Note: the word caliphate is to be taken in the broader sense of the meaning in this context. It is not merely the caliphate of statesmanship but, in fact, the broader Arabic meaning which hold the meaning of inheritance. In such, it means scholarly inheritance and legal inheritance. The Arabic caliphate in its basic meaning relates to a legal descendant or successor].
- (7) al-Daylami, Abu Shuja': al-Firdaws bi-Mathur al-Khitab volume 2, page 191.
- (8) The blessed late al-Rai Shahri has collected in his encyclopedia of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, volume 4, page 408, a large number of hadiths under the title "I and Ali are from one light," and under the title "From one tree."
- (9) Ibn Babaweh; Mohammad bin Ali bin Al-Hussain: Ma'ani Al-Akhar [the Meaning of Historical Events] page 62, Al-Amali page 195.
- (10) 7) The observer of what was narrated from al-Nishapurī, the author of al-Mustadrak [Addendum of the Two Authentic Books], notes three patterns of dealing with the issue of birth in the

Kaaba. In one of the narrations, he indicates that Hakim ibn Hizam was born in the Kaaba: "I heard Abu al-Fadl al-Hasan ibn Ya'qūb say: I heard Abu 'Aḥmad Muḥammad 'Abd al-Wahhāb say: I heard 'Alī ibn 'Uthām al-'Amrī say: Hakim ibn Hizam was born in the interior of the Kaaba. His mother entered the Kaaba, went into labor there, and gave birth in the house." He then moves on. Then, in another narration in another place in his book al-Mustadrak, he denies that Hakim is the only one who was born there, but that the news about 'Alī (peace be upon him) has been transmitted continuously. He considers Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī to be mistaken in saying that Hakim is the only one! Then, in a third place, as transmitted from him by al-Kānji al-Shāfi'ī in Kafāyat al-Ṭālib /407, he explicitly states that the one who was born in the Kaaba is 'Alī (peace be upon him) and that no one was born before or after him in it!! It is likely that this third narration is the one that agrees with what he believes!

- (11) al-Nishaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn volume 3, page 550.
- (12) For example: the title: "Ali Waleed al-Ka'ba" [Ali, Child of Ka'ba] by al-Ardobadi and the title: Fadha'il Ameerul Mu'mineen Ali alayhis salam al-Mansubah Li Ghairih [Virtues of Ali, peace be upon him, Attributed to Others] by Dr. Jawad Kadhemi Munshed al-Nasrallah.
- (13) Al-Shaafi'i al-Kanji: Kafaayat al-Talib fi Mana'ib Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib [Sufficiency of the Student in the virtues Ali bin Abi Talib] /407
- (14) Dr. Jawad al-Nasserallah concluded two results after his detailed research: First, The narrations of the birth of Hakim are all mursal, meaning that there is no single narration with a complete chain of transmission. Second, If we accept the validity of the birth, despite the weakness of its narrations, then it occurred by chance and was not the result of the intention of the mother of Hakim ibn Hazam.
- (15) Al-'Asqalanī; Ibn Hajar; Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb, volume 2, page 44.
- (16) When Khalid al-Qasri, one of the Umayyid governors, asked Muhammad ibn Shihab al-Zuhri to write for him the biography of the Prophet and his campaigns, and he knew Khalid al-Qasri's position towards Imam Ali (peace be upon him), he asked Ibn

Shihab al-Zuhri, saying: "If something from the biography of Ali ibn Abi Talib comes across me, should I mention it?" Khalid said: "No, unless you see him in the depths of Hell." Refers to the Al-Aghani [the Songs] by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani, vol. 22 /281. As for the Abbasids, the story of the hadith narrator al-Jah-dhami suffices, who narrated that whoever loved the Prophet, Ali, his two sons, and Fatima (peace be upon them) was with the Messenger of God in Paradise, so he ordered him to be whipped a thousand times, it was, however, held after the mediation of intermediaries who denied his Shi'ism for Ali ibn Abi Talib!!

- (17) Ibn Abd al-Barr said in his book al-Isti'ab [the comprehension] volume 1 page 362: The phrase al-mu'allafati quloobuhum (those whose hearts have been reconciled) is used to refer to a group of Muslims whose inner belief in Islam was weak. They were given sums of money in order to remain steadfast in the religion of Islam. This is not a virtue, but rather a reproach and a slur.
- (18) Sura Al-Baqarah: 125: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (19) Review the image that is conveyed by the narration of Sheikh al-Sadouq that was mentioned earlier.
- (20) Sura Al-Baqarah: 158: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (21) Al-Sayf, Fawzi: 'A'lam al-Usrah al-Nabawiyyah' [Luminaries from the Prophet's Household] page 65. Such a beautiful coincidence that I am writing these pages next to the shrine of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him. I ask God to grant us his intercession, peace be upon him.
- (22) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 191. – Some take this quote to be a sign of his infallibility.
- (23) Al-BroJurdi, Hussain: Jame' Ahadeeth al-Shi'a [the Compendium of Shi'a Hadeeths], volume 13, page 615. I am the Protégé of Allah and Ali is my Protégé.
- (24) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 191.
- (25) Asad al-Ghaba [The Lion of the Forest], vol. 1, Ibn al-Athir, page

91. The funny thing is that this is narrated on the authority of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him). They say that on the day that Abu Bakr died: "Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) came quickly, crying and lamenting, saying, 'Today the caliphate of the Prophethood has been cut off.' He stopped at the door of the house where Abu Bakr was, then said, 'May Allah have mercy on you, Abu Bakr. You were the first of the people to embrace Islam, the most sincere of them in faith, the most certain of them in conviction, and the greatest of them in generosity.'"

(26) In the Encyclopedia of Imam Ali (a.s.) by Rishahuri, volume 5, page 220, the following narrations are quoted: From the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family): "The first of the believers to embrace Islam, and the most sincere of them in faith, is Ali ibn Abi Talib." From Ali (a.s.): "I am the greatest Siddiq, and I am the first Farouq. I embraced Islam before the people, and I prayed before them." From Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) in his ziyarah to his grandfather, the Commander of the Faithful: "You were the first of the people to embrace Islam, and the most sincere of them in faith." In Fadhail al-Sahaba [Virtues of the Sahaba] by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, volume 2, page 590, from Zayd ibn Arqam and Ibn Abbas from the Prophet: "Ali was the first to embrace Islam and the first to pray with the Prophet."

(27) The discussion of the biography of Imam al-Jawad (peace be upon him) will show that the divine Imamate is not limited by old age, nor does it prevent small age. A person may be seventy years old and not be qualified for it, and a seven-year-old may be qualified for it. Here the Prophet appointed Ali and announced it since then.

(28) Al-Nasa'i; Ahmad ibn Shu'aib: Khasa'is Ali [The Distinct Attributes of Ali], p. 23; and he mentioned in it the narration of Afif and his description of the prayer of the Prophet, Ali, and Khadija facing the Kaaba, and that Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib said at the end of that: "Do you know who this young man is? I said: No! He said: This is Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib, this is my nephew. He said: Do you know who this boy is? I said: No. He said: Ali ibn Abi Talib ibn Abd al-Muttalib, this is my nephew. Do you know who this woman is who is behind them? I said: No. He said: This is Khadija bint Khuwaylid, the

wife of my nephew. He told me that his Lord, the Lord of the heavens and the earth, commanded him with this religion that he is upon, and by Allah, there is no one on the face of the earth who is on this religion other than these three."

- (29) Al-Tabari; Mohammad bin Jareer: *Tafseer Jami' Al-Bayan* [Exegesis of Compendium of Eloquence]: Narrated by Ali ibn Abi Talib: When this verse was revealed to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him: (And warn [all, starting with] your closest relatives) – Ash-Shu'ara 214, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, called me and said to me: "O Ali, Allah has commanded me to warn my closest relatives." He said: "I was very distressed by that, and I knew that when I called them to this matter, I would see from them what I would hate. So I was silent until Gabriel came and said: "O Muhammad, if you do not do what you are commanded, your Lord will punish you. Make us a sa' of food, and put a sheep's head on it, and fill us a jar with milk, then gather for me the sons of Abdul-Muttalib, until I speak to them, and I inform them of what I have been commanded." So I did what he commanded me to do."
- (30) Ameen; Sayyid Mohsen: *Aayan al-Shia* [The Luminaries of the Shi'a] volume 3 page 24. Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Qummi narrated in his interpretation that when Talha al-Abdri asked for a duel on the day of Uhud, Ali al-Alaihis Salam came out to him. Talha said to him: "Who are you, O boy?" He said: "I am Ali ibn Abi Talib!" He said: "I know, O Qadim! That no one dares to attack me except you!" Then he narrated with his chain of narration from al-Sadiq al-Alaihis Salam that he was asked about the meaning of Talha's saying, "O Qadim!" He said: "The Messenger of Allah (S) was in Mecca and no one dared to attack him because of the position of Abu Talib. The boys were incited against him, and when he went out they would throw stones and dirt at him. He complained about that to Ali al-Alaihis Salam, and he said: "By my father and mother, O Messenger of Allah! If you go out, take me out with you." So he went out with him, and the boys exposed themselves to him as they usually did. Ali al-Alaihis Salam attacked them, and he would bite them in their faces, noses, and ears. They would return crying to their fathers and say, "Ali bit us!" So he was called Qadim for that."

(31) Al-Jazari; Ibn al-Atheer: *Asad Al-Ghabah Fi Ma'rifat Al-Sahabah* [Lion of the Forest in Knowing the Sahabah], volume 3 page 601. ...So God revealed to them, "Would you not be like Ali ibn Abi Talib? I have made him a brother to my Prophet Muhammad. He slept in his place, offering himself in sacrifice for him and preferring him to live. Descend to the earth and protect him from his enemy." So they descended, and Gabriel was at Ali's head and Michael at his feet. Gabriel called out, "Congratulations! Who is like you, O son of Abu Talib, with whom God Almighty boasts to the angels?" Then God Almighty revealed to His Messenger, while he was heading to Medina regarding Ali: ("And there are those who would dedicate their lives to Allah's pleasure. And Allah is Ever Gracious to 'His' servants") Al-Baqarah – 207.

(32) Al- Tusi; Mohammad ibn al-Hassan, Shaykh al-Ta'ifah: *al-Amali* Page 500.

(33) Al-Ya'qubi; Ahmad ibn Abi Ya'qub: *The History of al-Ya'qubi* volume 2 page 42. "And a group of the Muhajirun proposed to her to the Messenger of Allah, but when he married her to Ali, they said about that, the Messenger of Allah said: "I am not her husband, but Allah married her."

In the "Mu'jam al-Kabir" by the hadith scholar Abu al-Qasim al-Tabarani, it is narrated from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud that the Prophet Muhammad said: "Verily, God has commanded me to marry Fatimah to Ali."

(34) Al-Tusi; Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, Shaykh al-Ta'ifah: *Tahdhib al-Ahkām* volume 7 page 470. From Abu 'Abd Allah (peace be upon him) said: "If God had not created the Commander of the Faithful, Fatima (peace be upon her) would not have had a match on the face of the earth, Adam and those below him."

(35) Al-Basti; Mohammad ibn Habban: *Sahih ibn Habban: al-Taqa-seem wal Anwa'* volume 4, page 204. From Anas ibn Malik, he said: Abu Bakr came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and sat before him. He said, "O Messenger of God, you know my sincerity and my seniority in Islam, and that I am and I am." He said, "And what is that?" He said, "Marry me Fatima." He said, "So he was silent about him, so Abu Bakr returned to Umar and said to him, "I have perished and I am destroyed."

He said, "And what is that?" He said, "I proposed Fatima to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), and he turned away from me." He said, "Stay where you are until I come to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and ask for the same thing you asked for." So Umar came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and sat before him. He said, "O Messenger of God, you know my sincerity and my seniority in Islam, and that I am and I am." He said, "And what is that?" He said, "Marry me Fatima." So he was silent about him, so Umar returned to Abu Bakr and said to him, "He is waiting for the command of God in it. Come with us to Ali until we order him to ask for the same thing we asked for."

Ali said: So they came to me while I was treating a fistula for me, and they said, "We came to you from your cousin with a proposal." Ali said: So they alerted me to something, so I stood up dragging my cloak, until I came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and sat before him. I said, "O Messenger of God, you know my seniority in Islam and my sincerity, and that I am and I am." He said, "And what is that?" I said, "Marry me Fatima." He said, "And do you have anything?"...

- (36) Bukhari; Muhammad ibn Ismail: Sahih al-Bukhari volume 4, page 207: Narrated by Urwah al-Barqi: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) gave him a dinar to buy a sheep for him. He bought two sheep for it, sold one of them for a dinar, and came to him with a dinar and a sheep. He prayed for him for blessing in his sale, and he would have profited even if he had bought dust."
- (37) Al-'Irbily; Ali ibn Abi al-Fath: Kashf al-Ghummah fi Ma'rifat al-A'imma volume 1 page 383
- (38) Ibn Hanbal; Ahmad: Fadha'el Al-Sahabah: volume 2, page 657. Narrated by Ali: When it was the day of Uhud, the people fled and I said: The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would not flee. So I charged at the people, and behold, I was with the Messenger of Allah. Gabriel said: This is indeed the act of compassion. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "He is from me, and I am from him." Gabriel said: And I am from you.
- (39) Al-Tabari: Tarikh al-Rusul wal Muluk [History of the Prophets

and Kings], volume 2, page 514. "They heard a voice: 'There is no sword except the Sword of Zul Fiqar ... and no youth except Ali.'"

- (40) Sura Al-Ahzab: 10-11: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (41) Azeri; Sheikh Kazem al-Tamimi: Al-Azriyya, page 62.
- (42) Al-Naqdi; Ja'afar, al-Anwar al-Alawiyyah, Page 205.
- (43) The hadith is too famous to need to mention its sources. It was narrated by al-Bukhari in his Sahih volume 5, page 19, Muslim as well volume 4, page 1870, and many others. As for the books of the Imamiyyah, there is no book that deals with the merits of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) that does not mention it.

The important thing in it is to contemplate and reflect on what is that status? The Qur'an has specified it, saying, narrating from the tongue of Moses (peace be upon him): "And make for me a minister from my people, Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back with him. And make him a partner in my affair. So that we may praise You much. And remember You much. Indeed, You are with us, seeing. He said, "Your request has been granted, O Moses." (Ta-Ha 29-36), so it established for him: the ministry, brotherhood, and partnership. And to this is added what is mentioned in another verse: "Succeed me among my people and do good and do not follow the way of the corrupters." (Al-A'raf:142), so it established his succession.

Indeed, of his positions is that Aaron, because he was the best of his people, then the one who is in his position will be like that. And one of them is that he himself chose him and asked his Lord to make him an assistant to him, a minister and a partner in fulfilling his mission, so the matter is then divine. Here too, it is also the same. And there is no doubt that Aaron's word is a proof against his people, so likewise, whoever is in his position, his word is a proof against the people of the Messenger of God. There are other aspects that we may address later.

- (44) Ibn Hanbal; Ahmad: Fadha'el Al-Sahabah, volume 2, page 599. Habshi ibn Junada al-Salooli said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: "Ali is from me,

and I from him. No one can deliver my message except me or Ali." And from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas in a hadith: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) sent Abu Bakr to announce [the revelation of] Sura At-Tawbah, then he sent Ali, and he took it from him. Abu Bakr returned, disappointed, and said: "O Messenger of Allah!" He said: "No one can deliver my message except a man from me."

- (45) Shaykh al-Saduq: Al-Khisal, page 555.
- (46) Sura Āl-'Imrān: 138: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (47) As-Sajdah: 24
- (48) Al-Tabari: Tarikh al-Rusul wal Muluk [History of the Prophets and Kings] volume 11, page 589.
- (49) Al-Nishaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn volume 3, page 137
- (50) Al-Tustari; Shaike Mohammad Taqi: Qamus al-Rijag [The Registry of Men] volume 4, page 201. It was said to al-Khaleed ibn Ahmad al-Farahidi who laid the foundation of Arabic poetry metrics: What can we say about Ali ibn Abi Taleb? He said...
- (51) ("Then maybe you will kill (bakhiun) yourself with grief over them if they do not believe in this announcement") Al-Kahf: 6: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (52) Az-Zumar: 30: Translated by Said Akhtar Razvi
- (53) Al-Kulaini; Mohammad ibn Ya'qoub: al-Kafi volume 1, page 493.
- (54) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 3.
- (55) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 73.
- (56) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. "A letter to the Egyptians which Imam Ali (a) handed over to Maalik bin Haarith Ashtar to take with him when he was appointed as the Governor of that province."
- (57) [Apparent vicegerency is the formal statesmanship of the Imam, as opposed to the spiritual vicegerency, appointed by divine command]

- (58) It may not have been a party in the modern sense of the word, which would include a written constitution, organized meetings, a known presidency, etc. However, there is no doubt that it was a gathering of people whose opinions, aspirations, and way of life were compatible, and who shared their interests.
- (59) [The term “Shiqshiqiyya sermon” refers to a famous sermon delivered by Imam Ali, peace be upon him, expressing his grievances and detailing his position after the assassination of the third caliph, Uthman ibn Affan.]
- (60) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 216.
- (61) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 145. “You should remain like the axis for them, and rotate the mill [of government] with [the help of] the Arabs, and be their root. Avoid battle, because if you leave this place the Arabs will attack you from all sides and directions till the unguarded places left behind by you will become more important than those before you. If the Persians see you tomorrow they will say, ‘He is the root (chief) of Arabia. If we do away with him we will be in peace.’”
- (62) Adi ibn Hatim al-Ta’i, one of the closest companions of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib. He converted to Islam in 9 AH, and witnessed the conquest of Iraq. He then settled in Kufa and witnessed the Battle of the Camel, the Battle of Siffin, and the Battle of Nahrawan with the Imam. He lost an eye in the Battle of Siffin. He was the son of Hatim al-Ta’i, who was known for his highest standard of generosity. It is said that he lived for over a hundred years and died in Kufa in 68 AH.
- (63) Al-Waqidi; Mohammad ibn Omar: Kitab al-Ridda [Book of Apostates] page 63.
- (64) Al-Kurani; Shaikh Ali: Jawaher al-Tareekh [Jewels of History] volume 3, page 324. In his explanation for the lack of serious conquests in the days of Mu’awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, he mentioned some reasons, including: Thirdly: The brave field commanders of the conquests were Shi’ites of Ali (peace be upon him), except for a very small number. Most of them were killed in Siffin, or they became old, or they were hostile to Mu’awiya.

This is a fact that needs special study. Fourthly: Mu'awiya's supplementary conquests in Iran and India faltered and failed, and only the conquests of the Shi'a Moses ibn Nusayr and Uqba ibn Nafi' continued.

- (65) Ibn Abdulbar; Yousef ibn Abdullah: *al-Isti'ab fi Ma'rifat al-Ashab* volume 3, page 1103. Saeed ibn al-Musayab narrated that: Umar used to seek refuge in Allah from a difficult situation without Abu al-Hasan [Ali] tackling it. He said in the case of the insane woman whom he ordered to be stoned, and in the case of the woman who gave birth to a six-month-old fetus, and Umar wanted to stone her. Ali said to him, "Indeed, Allah Almighty says: ('Their [period of] bearing and weaning is thirty months...') (Quran 2:233). And he said to him, 'Indeed, Allah lifted the pen from the insane ...' (Quran 4:43). So Umar used to say, 'If it were not for Ali, Umar would have perished.' A similar story has been narrated for Uthman with Ibn Abbas, and Ibn Abbas took it from Ali, and Allah knows best.
- (66) Imam Ali: *Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha)* – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 60.
- (67) Al-Thaqafi; Ibrahim ibn Mohammad Al-Kufi: *al-Gharat [The Raids]* volume 1, page 70. Two women came to Ali -peace be upon him- during the booty division, one of them was an Arab, the other was a freed girl. He gave each of them twenty-five dirhams and a weight of food. The Arab woman said: "O Commander of the Faithful, I am an Arab woman and this is a woman from the non-Arabs?" Ali - peace be upon him - said: "By God, I do not find for the sons of Ismail in this booty any preference over the sons of Isaac."
- (68) Imam Ali: *Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha)* – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 125.
- (69) According to the categorical classification, they say: The people of the Camel are the apostates, considering that they pledged allegiance and then broke their pledge. The people of Siffin were transgressors. The Khawarij of Nahrawan are the renegades. Imam Ali referred to them in the Shiqshiqiyya sermon when he said, "When I stood up to the matter, a group broke their pledge, another group defected, and yet another group became unjust."

- (70) Al-Dainuri; ibn Qutaiba: al-Akhbar al-Tiwal [The Lengthy Reports] page 188. This matter has distracted me and kept me awake, and I have struck its nose and eyes, but I have found nothing but fighting disbelief in what God has revealed upon Muhammad.
- (71) Infact the situation required no investigation after they declared to Ali -peace be upon him- as reported by ibn Qutaiba: "After the completion of the pledge of allegiance, Zubayr and Talha came to Ali and said, "Do you know on what we have pledged allegiance to you, O Commander of the Faithful?" Ali said, "Yes, on obedience and listening." They said, "No, but we have pledged allegiance to you on the condition that we are your partners in the matter!" Ali said, "No, but you are partners in speech, uprightness, and helping the weak. Zubayr did not doubt that he would be given the governorship of Iraq, and Talha the governorship of Yemen. When it became clear to them that Ali was not giving them anything, they showed their discontent."
- (72) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha)
- (73) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha)
- (74) Al-Koufi; Ahmad ibn A'tham: al-Futuh [The Conquests] volume 2 page 466.
- (75) It reached the point that he [Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan] would give a speech to the people of Basra, saying as in the previous source: "O people! Ali ibn Abi Talib is the one who killed the caliph Uthman ibn Affan. Then he has now come to you to usurp your authority. So be angry for your caliph, and protect your womenfolk, and fight for your honor..."
- (76) Al-'Asqalānī; Ibn Hajar, Al-Isaba fi Tamyeez al-Sahabah volume 3, page 432. When that day of the Battle of the Camel came, Marwan looked towards Talha and said: I will no longer persue my revenge. He took an arrow, afterwards, and killed him.
- (77) Al-Tabari: Tarikh Al-Tabari volume 4, page 539. The casualties of the Battle of the Camel, laid around the Camel. Half of them were companions of Ali, the other half were of Mu'awiya.
- (78) Others claim the arbitration was in the year 37AH.
- (79) Among them was Jarir ibn Abdullah al-Bajali, the governor of

Hamdan

- (80) Al-Manqari; ibn Muzahem: Waq'at Siffin [The battle of Siffin] page 29.
- (81) Al-Mubarrad; Mohammad ibn Yazeed: al-Kamel fi al-Lugha wal Adab, volume 1, page 258.
- (82) Al-Manqari; ibn Muzahem: Waq'at Siffin [The battle of Siffin] page 490.
- (83) It is necessary to distinguish between the Imam's companions who followed him with insight and knowledge of him, and the general army that was (under service, as they say) and which the Imam inherited from his predecessors. The Muslim state had an army and fighters, and they received a reward for that. It was the same army that was under the command of the previous caliphs. Among these were the weak and the strong, the dry and the green! It was on such people that the trick of raising the Qur'ans, which was planned by Amr ibn al-As, was successful.
- (84) One of the wonders of time is that Ali, who is the Prophet's soul, says in one of his correspondences: Whenever doubt took place in my heart with the first one? It became a group and Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan became another group. And eventually the saying of the Imam was confirmed: "I was lowered by time then I was lowered until it was said Ali and Muawiyah!"
- (85) To be addressed in a chapter dedicated for the transgressors.
- (86) To be addressed in a coming chapter.
- (87) About 35KM away from Baghdad.
- (88) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by Askari Jafri. Sermon 58. "When Amir al-mu'minin showed his intention to fight the Kharijites he was told that they had crossed the bridge of Nahrawan and gone over to the other side. Amir al-mu'minin said: Their falling place is on this side of the river. By Allah, not even ten of them will survive while from your side not even ten will be killed."
- (89) From Dhul Hujja, 35AH to Ramadhan 40AH.
- (90) Imam Ali: Peak of Eloquence (Nahjul Balagha) – Translated by

Askari Jafri. Sermon 58. "When Amir al-mu'minin was told that the Kharijites had been totally killed, he said: By Allah, no, not yet. They still exist in the loins of men and wombs of women."

